

AA History Lovers

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moderated by

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purse, only to take

them over again with equally spectacular lack of success, suddenly have become total abstainers, apparently without anything to account for their reform. Yet something must account for the seeming miracle. Something does.

Alcoholics Anonymous has reached the town.

Fellowship

Every Thursday evening at the home of some ex-drunk in Cleveland, 40 or 50 former hopeless rummies meet for a social evening during which they buck each other up. Nearly every Saturday evening they and their families have a party -- just as gay as any other party held that evening despite the fact that there is nothing alcoholic to drink. From time to time they have a picnic, where everyone has a roaring good time without the aid of even one bottle of beer. Yet these are

men and women who, until recently, had scarcely been sober a day for years, and members of their families who all that time had been emotionally distraught, social and economic victims of another's addiction.

These ex-rummies, as they call themselves, suddenly salvaged from the most socially noisome of fates, are the members of the Cleveland Fellowship of an informal society called "Alcoholics Anonymous." Who they are cannot be told, because the name means exactly what it says. But any incurable alcoholic who

really wants to be cured will find the members of the Cleveland chapter eager to help.

The society maintains a "blind" address: The Alcoholic Foundation, Box 657, Church Street Annex Postoffice, New York City. Inquiries made there are forwarded to a Cleveland banker, who is head of the local Fellowship, or to a former big league ball player who is recruiting officer of the Akron fellowship, which meets Wednesday evenings in a mansion loaned for the purpose by a non-alcoholic supporter of the movement.

Cured

The basic point about Alcoholics Anonymous is that it is a fellowship of "cured" alcoholics. And that both old-line medicine and modern psychiatry had agreed on the one point that no alcoholic could be cured. Repeat the astounding fact: These are cured.

They have cured each other.

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

Anonymous, an organization of former drinkers who have found a solution to liquor in association for mutual aid. This is the second of a series.

Religion

There is no blinking the fact that Alcoholics Anonymous, the amazing society of ex-drunks who have cured each other of an incurable disease, is religious. Its members have cured each other frankly with the help of God. Every cured member of the Cleveland Fellowship of the society, like every cured member of the other chapters now established in Akron, New York, and elsewhere in the country, is cured with the admission that he submitted his plight wholeheartedly to a Power Greater than Himself.

He has admitted his conviction that science cannot cure him, that he cannot control his pathological craving for alcohol himself, and that he cannot be cured by the prayers, threats, or pleas of his family, employers, or friends. His cure is a religious experience. He had to have God's aid. He had to submit to a spiritual housecleaning.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a completely informal society, wholly latitudinarian in every respect but one. It prescribes a simple spiritual discipline, which must be followed rigidly every day. The discipline is fully explained in a book published by the society.

Discipline

That is what makes the notion of the cure hard for the usual alcoholic to take, at first glance, no matter how complete his despair. He wants to join no cult. He has lost faith, if he ever had it, in the power of religion to help him. But each of the cures accomplished by Alcoholics Anonymous is a spiritual awakening. The ex-drunk has adopted what the society calls "a spiritual way of life."

How, then, does Alcoholics Anonymous differ from the other great religious movements which have changed social history in America? Wherein does the yielding to God that saves a member of this society from his fatal disease, differ from that which brought the Great Awakening that Jonathan Edwards preached, or the New Light revival of a century ago, or the flowering of Christian Science, or the campmeeting evangelism of the old Kentucky-Ohio frontier, or the Oxford Group successes nowadays?

Every member of Alcoholics Anonymous may define God to suit himself. God to him may be the Christian God defined by the Thomism of the Roman Catholic Church. Or the stern Father of the Calvinist. Or the Great Manitou of the American Indian. Or the Implicit Good assumed in the logical morality of Confucius. Or Allah, or Buddha, or the Jehovah of the Jews. Or Christ the Scientist. Or no more than the Kindly Spirit implicitly assumed in the "atheism"

organization of former drinkers, banded to overcome their craving for liquor and to help others to forego the habit. This is the third of a series.

Help

The ex-drunks cured of their medically incurable alcoholism by membership in Alcoholic Anonymous, know that the way to keep themselves from backsliding is to find another pathological alcoholic to help. Or to start a new man toward cure. That is the way that the Akron chapter of the society, and from that, the Cleveland

fellowship was begun.

One of the earliest of the cured rummies had talked a New York securities analyst into taking a chance that he was really through with liquor. He was commissioned to do a stock promotion chore in Akron. If he should succeed, his economic troubles also would be cured. Years of alcoholism had left him bankrupt as well as a physical and social wreck before Alcoholics Anonymous had saved him.

His Akron project failed. Here he was on a Saturday afternoon in a strange hotel in a town where he did not know a soul, business hopes blasted, and with scarcely money enough to get him back to New York with a report that would leave him without the last job he knew of for him in the world. If ever disappointment deserved drowning, that seemed the time. A bunch of happy folk were being gay at the bar.

At the other end of the lobby the Akron church directory was framed in glass. He looked up the name of a clergyman. The cleric told him of a woman who was worried about a physician who was a nightly solitary drunk. The doctor had been trying to break himself of alcoholism for twenty years. He had tried all of the dodges: Never anything but light wines or beer; never a drink alone; never a

drink before his work was done; a certain few number of drinks and then stop; never drink in a strange place; never drink in a familiar place; never mix the drinks; always mix the drinks; never drink before eating; drink only while eating; drink and then eat heavily to stop the craving - and all of the rest.

Every alcoholic knows all of the dodges. Every alcoholic has tried them all. That is why an uncured alcoholic thinks someone must have been following him around to learn his private self-invented devices, when a member of Alcoholics Anonymous talks to him. Time comes when any alcoholic has tried them all, and found that none of them work.

Support

Alcoholics Anonymous Makes Its Stand Here

By ELRICK B. DAVIS

In three previous articles, Mr. Davis has told of Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization of former drinkers banded to break the liquor habit and to save others from over drinking. This is the fourth of a series.

Understanding

What gets the pathological drinker who finally has reached such state that he is willing to listen to a cured rummy member of Alcoholics Anonymous, is that the retrieved alcoholic not only understands what only another alcoholic can understand, but a great deal that the unreformed drunk thinks no one else could

know because he has never told anyone, and his difficulties or escapades must be private to his own history.

Fact is the history of all alcoholics is the same; some have been addicts longer than others, and some have painted brighter red patches around the town -- that is all. What they have heard in the "cure" hospitals they have frequented, or from the psychoanalysts they have consulted, or the physicians who have tapered them

off one bender or another at home, has convinced them that alcoholism is a disease. But they are sure (a) that their version of the disease differs from everyone else's and (b) that in them it hasn't reached the incurable stage anyway.

Head of the "cure" told them: "If you ever take another drink, you'll be back." Psychoanalyst said "Psychologically, you have never been weaned. Your subconscious is still trying to get even with your mother for some forgotten slight." Family or hotel physician said "If you don't quit drinking, you'll die."

Reproof

Lawyers, ministers, business partners and employers, parents and wives, also are professionally dedicated to listening to confidences and accepting confessions without undue complaint. But the clergyman may say: "Your drinking is a sin." And partner or employer: "You'll have to quit this monkey business or get

out." And wife or parent: "This drinking is breaking my heart." And everyone: "Why don't you exercise some will power and straighten up and be a man."

"But," the alcoholic whispers in his heart. "No one but I can know that I must drink to kill suffering too great to stand."

He presents his excuses to the retrieved alcoholic who has come to talk. Can't sleep without liquor. Worry. Business troubles. Debt. Alimentary pains. Overwork. Nerves too high strung. Grief. Disappointment. Deep dark phobic fears. Fatigue. Family difficulties. Loneliness.

The catalog has got no farther than that when the member of Alcoholics Anonymous begins rattling off an additional list.

"Hogwash," he says. "Don't try those alibis on me. I have used them all myself."

Understanding

And then he tells his own alcoholic history, certainly as bad, perhaps far worse than the uncured rummy's. They match experiences. Before he knows it the prospect for cure has told his new friend things he had never admitted even to himself. A rough and ready psychiatry, that, but it works, as the cured members of the Cleveland Chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous all are restored to

society to testify. And that is the reason for the fellowship's weekly gatherings. They are testimonial meetings. The members meet to find new victims to cure, and to buck each other up. For years their social and emotional life has all been elbow-bending. Now they provide each other a richer society to replace the old. Hence, the fellowship's family parties and picnics.

Never for a moment do they forget that a practicing alcoholic is a very sick person. Never for a moment can they forget that even medical men who know the nature of the disease are apt to feel that failure to recover is a proof of moral perversity in the patient. If a man is dying of cancer, no one says: "Why doesn't he exercise some will power and kill that cancer off." If he is coughing his lungs out with tuberculosis, no one says: "Buck up and quit coughing; be a man." They may say to the first: "Submit to surgery before it is too late;" to the second: "Take a cure before you are dead."

Religion

Retrieved alcoholics talk in that fashion to their uncured fellows. They say: "You are a very sick man. Physically sick -- you have an allergy to alcohol. We can put you in a hospital that will sweat that poison out. Mentally sick. We know how to cure that. And spiritually sick.

"To cure your spiritual illness you will have to admit God. Name your own

Usually a drunk needs hospitalization at the time that he is caught to cure. He is required to pay for that himself. Doubtless he hasn't the money. But probably his family has. Or his employer will advance the money to save him, against his future pay. Or cured members of the society will help him arrange credit, if he has a glimmer of credit left. Or old friends will help.

At the moment members of the Cleveland Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous are searching the slum lodging houses to find a man, once eminent in the city's professional life. A medical friend of his better days called them in to find him. This friend will pay the hospital bill necessary to return this victim of an "incurable" craving for drink to physical health, if the society will take him on.

The society has published a book, called "Alcoholics Anonymous," which it sells at \$3.50. It may be ordered from an anonymous address, Works Publishing Co., Box 657, Church Street Annex Postoffice, New York City; or bought from the Cleveland Fellowship of the society. There is no money profit for anyone in that book.

It recites the history of the society and lays down its principles in its first half.

Last half is case histories of representative cures out of the first hundred alcoholics cured by membership in the society. It was written and compiled by the New York member who brought the society to Ohio. He raised the money on his personal credit to have the book published. He would like to see those creditors repaid. It is a 400-page book, for which any regular publisher would charge the same price.

Copies bought from local Fellowships net the local chapters a dollar each.

The Rev. Dr. Dilworth Lupton, pastor of the First Unitarian Church of Cleveland, found in a religious journal an enthusiastic review of the book by the Rev. Harry Emerson Fosdick, and sent it to the president of the local Fellowship. It has been similarly noted in some medical journals.

The Foundation

To handle the money that comes in for the book, and occasional gifts from persons interested in helping ex-drunks to cure other "incurable" drunks, the Alcoholics Foundation has been established, with a board of seven directors.

Three of these are members of Alcoholics Anonymous. Four are not alcoholics, but New Yorkers of standing interested in humane movements. Two of them happen also to be associated with the Rockefeller Foundation, but that does

cures to the satisfaction of their physicians, families, employers and psychotherapists, they

published a book.

It is a 400-page volume of which half is a history of the movement and a description of its methods, and the other half a collection of 30 case histories designed to show what a wide variety of persons the fellowship has cured. It is called "Alcoholics Anonymous," and may be bought for \$3.50 from the Works Publishing Co., Box 657, Church Street Annex Postoffice, New York.

The name of the publisher is that adopted by Alcoholics Anonymous for its only publishing venture. The address is "blind" because the name "Alcoholics Anonymous" means exactly what it says. ..

Among the first reviews of the book to see print was that written by the Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick for the Religious Digest. That review so attracted at least one well-known Cleveland minister that he obtained a copy of the book, got in touch with the Cleveland chapter of the society, and plans to preach a sermon about the movement.

Dr. Fosdick is himself the author of seventeen books. His review of

"Alcoholics Anonymous" follows:

"This extraordinary book deserves the careful attention of anyone interested in the problem of alcoholism. Whether as victims, friends of victims, physicians, clergymen, psychiatrists or social workers there are many such, and this book will give them, as no other treatise known to this reviewer will, an inside view of the problem which the alcoholic faces. Gothic cathedral windows are not the sole things which can be truly seen only from within. Alcoholism is another. All outside views are clouded and unsure. Only one who has been an alcoholic and has escaped the thralldom can interpret the experience.

Truth

"This book represents the pooled experience of 100 men and women who have been victims of alcoholism-and who have won their freedom and recovered their sanity and self-control. Their stories are detailed and circumstantial, packed with human interest. In America today the disease of alcoholism is increasing. Liquor

has been an easy escape from depression. As an English officer in India, reproved for his excessive drinking, lifted his glass and said, "This is the swiftest road out of India," so many Americans have been using hard liquor as a means of flight from their troubles until to their dismay they discover that, free to begin, they are not free to stop. One hundred men and women, in this volume, report their experience of enslavement and then of

The first appraisal in a scientific journal of Alcoholics Anonymous, former drunkards who cure themselves by curing each other with the help of religious experience, was published in the July issue of the journal *Lancet*. It was "A New Approach to Psychotherapy [in] Chronic Alcoholism" by W. D. Silkworth, M.D. physician in charge, Charles B. Town's Hospital, New York City. A drunkard during

a moment of [deep] depression had the spontaneous "religious experience" which started his cure. This was the seed from which came Alcoholics Anonymous. Dr. Silkworth was at first skeptical. He is no longer. Excerpts from his paper follow:

"The beginning and subsequent development of a new approach to the problem of permanent recovery for the chronic alcoholic has already produced remarkable results and promises much for the future. This statement is based upon four years of close observation. The principal answer is: Each ex-alcoholic has had and is able to maintain, a vital spiritual or 'religious' experience, accompanied by marked changes of personality. There is a radical change in outlook, attitude and habits of thought. In nearly all cases, these are evident within a few months, often less.

"The conscious search of these ex-alcoholics for the right answer has enabled them to find an approach effectual in something more than half of all cases. This is truly remarkable when it is remembered that most of them were undoubtedly beyond the reach of other remedial measures.

Religion

"Considering the presence of the religious factor, one might expect to find unhealthy emotionalism and prejudice. On the contrary, there is an instant readiness to discard old methods for new which produce better results. It was early found that usually the weakest approach to an alcoholic is directly through his family or friends, especially if the patient is drinking heavily. Ex-alcoholics

frequently insist a physician take the patient in hand, placing him in a hospital when possible. If proper hospitalization and medical care is not carried out, this patient faces the danger of delirium tremens, 'wet brain' or other complications. After a few days' stay, the physician brings up the question of permanent sobriety. If the patient is interested, he tactfully introduces a member of the group. By this time the prospect has self-control, can think straight, and the approach can be made casually. More than half the fellowship have been so treated. The group is unanimous in its belief that hospitalization is desirable, even imperative, in most cases...

"An effort is made for frank discussion with the patient, leading to self-understanding. He must make the necessary readjustment to his

Foundation.)

In September, when the LIBERTY piece hit the newsstands, Bill thought it was a bit lurid, and that the title, "Alcoholics and God," would scare off some prospects. Perhaps it did, but LIBERTY received 800 urgent pleas for help, which were promptly turned over to Bill Wilson who turned them over to his secretary, Ruth Hock, for a response. "She wrote fine personal letters to every one of them," wrote Bill, "enclosing a leaflet which described the A.A. book. The response was wonderful. Several hundred books sold at once at full retail price of \$3.50. Even more importantly, we struck up a correspondence with alcoholics, their friends, and their families all over the country."

When Dr. Bob read the story he was elated. "You never saw such an elated

person in your life," said Ernie G. the second (there were two Ernie G's) "We all were," said Ernie's wife, Ruth. Anne Smith said "You know, it looks like we might be getting a little bit respectable."

It was A.A.'s first successful piece of national publicity. The stories in the Cleveland Plain Dealer followed shortly hereafter. (See posts 1 through 7.)

One result of the article was that A.A. was started in Philadelphia. George S. of

Philadelphia, one of the first "loners" had sobered up after reading the article. "When the issue of LIBERTY first arrived, George was in bed drinking whiskey for his depression and taking laudanum for his colitis. The Markey piece hit George so hard that he went ex-grog and ex-laudanum instantly." He wrote to New York, his name was given to Jim Burwell (see "The Vicious Cycle" in the Big Book), who was a traveling salesman, "and that's how A.A. started in the City of Brotherly Love," wrote Bill.

Jim and George gathered others to them, and the first A.A. meeting in

Philadelphia was held in George's home.

Chicago also reported getting several new prospects as a result of the

LIBERTY article.

Bill wrote to Dr. Bob "We are growing at an alarming rate, although I have no

further fear of large numbers." A few weeks later he wrote Dr. Bob that "the press of newcomers and inquiries was so great that we have to swing more

to the take-it-or-leave-it attitude, which, curiously enough, produces better results than trying to be all things at all times at all places to all men."

Sources:

Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age.

Bill W., by Francis Hartigan.

Bill W., by Robert Thomsen.

The Language of the Heart, Bill W.'s Grapevine Writings.

Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers.

Here is the text of a Liberty Magazine article which appeared in the September 1939 issue.

Alcoholics and God

Is there hope for habitual drunkards?

A cure that borders on the miraculous -- and it works!

For twenty-five or thirty cents we buy a glass of fluid which is pleasant to the taste, and which contains within its small measure a store of warmth and good-fellowship and stimulation, of release from momentary cares and anxieties. That would be a drink of whisky, of course -- whisky, which is one of Nature's most generous gifts to man, and at the same time one of his most elusive problems. It is a problem because, like many of his greatest benefits, man does not quite know how to control it. Many experiments have been made, the most spectacular being the queer nightmare of prohibition, which left such deep scars upon the morals and the manners of our nation. Millions of dollars have been spent by philanthropists and crusaders to spread the doctrine of temperance. In our time the most responsible of the distillers are urging us to use their wares sensibly, without excess.

But to a certain limited number of our countrymen neither prohibition nor wise admonishments have any meaning, because they are helpless when it comes

to obeying them. I speak of the true alcoholics, and before going any further I had best explain what that term means.

For a medical definition of the term, I quote an eminent doctor who, has spent twenty-five years treating such people in a highly regarded private hospital: "We believe . . . that the action of alcohol in chronic alcoholics is a manifestation of an allergy-that the phenomenon of craving is limited to this class and never occurs in the average temperate drinker. These allergic types can never safely use alcohol in any form at all."

They are, he goes on, touched with physical and mental quirks which prevent them from controlling their own actions. They suffer from what some doctors call a "compulsion neurosis." They know liquor is bad for them but periodically, they are driven by a violent and totally uncontrollable desire for a drink. And after that first drink, the deluge.

Now these people are genuinely sick. The liquor habit with them is not a vice. It is a specific illness of body and mind, and should be treated as such.

By far the most successful cure is that used by the hospital whose head doctor I have quoted. There is nothing secret about it. It has the endorsement of the medical profession. It is, fundamentally, a process of dehydration: of removing harmful toxins from all parts of the body faster than Nature could accomplish it. Within five or six days -- two weeks at the maximum -- the patient's body is utterly free from alcoholic poisons. Which means that the physical craving is completely cured, because the body cries out for alcohol only when alcohol is already there. The patient has no feeling of revulsion toward whisky. He simply is not interested in it. He has recovered. But wait. How permanent is his recovery?

Our doctor says this: "Though the aggregate of full recoveries through physical and psychiatric effort its considerable, we doctors must admit that we have made little impression upon the problem as a whole. For there are many types which do not respond to the psychological approach.

"I do not believe that true alcoholism is entirely a matter of individual mental control. I have had many men who had, for example, worked for a period of months on some business deal which was to be settled on a certain date. For reasons they could not afterward explain, they took a drink a day or two prior to the date . . . and the important engagement was not even kept. These men were not drinking to escape. They were drinking to overcome a craving beyond their mental control.

"The classification of alcoholics is most difficult. There are, of course, the psychopaths who are emotionally unstable.... They are overremorseful and make many resolutions -- but never a decision.

"There is the type who is unwilling to admit that he cannot take a drink

just like the rest of the boys. He does tricks with his drinking -- changing his brand, or drinking only after meals or changing his companions. None of this helps him strengthen his control and be like other people. Then there are types entirely normal in every respect except in the effect which alcohol has upon them . . .

"All these, and many others, have one symptom in common: They cannot start drinking without developing the phenomenon of craving.... The only relief we have to suggest is complete abstinence from alcohol.

"But are these unfortunate people really capable, mentally, of abstaining completely? Their bodies may be cured of craving. Can their minds be cured?

Can they be rid of the deadly compulsion neurosis?"

Among physicians the general opinion seems to be that chronic alcoholics are doomed. But wait!

Within the last four years, evidence has appeared which has startled hard-boiled medical men by proving that the compulsion neurosis can be entirely eliminated. Perhaps you are one of those cynical people who will turn away when I say that the root of this new discovery is religion. But be patient for a moment. About three years ago a man appeared at the hospital in New York of which our doctor is head physician. It was his third "cure."

Since his first visit he had lost his job, his friends, his health, and his self-respect. He was now living on the earnings of his wife.

He had tried every method he could find to cure his disease: had read all the great philosophers and psychologists. He had tried religion but he simply could not accept it. It would not seem real and personal to him.

He went through the cure as usual and came out of it in very low spirits. He was lying in bed, emptied of vitality and thought, when suddenly, a strange and totally unexpected thrill went through his body and mind. He called out for the doctor. When the doctor came in, the man looked up at him and grinned.

"Well, doc," he said, "my troubles are all over. I've got religion."

"Why, you're the last man . . ."

"Sure, I know all that. But I've got it. And I know I'm cured of this drinking business for good." He talked with great intensity for a while and then said, "Listen, doc. I've got to see some other patient -- one that is

about to be dismissed."

The doctor demurred. It all sounded a trifle fanatical. But finally he consented. And thus was born the movement which is now flourishing with almost sensational success as Alcoholics Anonymous.

Here is how it works:

Every member of the group -- which is to say every person who has been saved -- is under obligation to carry on the work, to save other men.

That, indeed, is a fundamental part of his own mental cure. He gains strength and confidence by active work with other victims.

He finds his subject among acquaintances, at a "cure" institution or perhaps by making inquiry of a preacher, a priest, or a doctor. He begins his talk with his new acquaintance by telling him the true nature of his disease and how remote are his chances for permanent cure.

When he has convinced the man that he is a true alcoholic and must never drink again, he continues:

"You had better admit that this thing is beyond your own control. You've tried to solve it by yourself, and you have failed. All right. Why not put the whole thing into the hands of Somebody Else?"

Even though the man might be an atheist or agnostic, he will almost always admit that there is some sort of force operating in the world--some cosmic power weaving a design. And his new friend will say:

"I don't care what you call this Somebody Else. We call it God. But whatever you want to call it, you had better put yourself into its hands. Just admit you're licked, and say, 'Here I am, Somebody Else. Take care of this thing for me.'"

The new subject will generally consent to attend one of the weekly meetings of the movement.

He will find twenty-five or thirty ex-drunks gathered in somebody's home for a pleasant evening. There are no sermons. The talk is gay or serious as the mood strikes. The new candidate cannot avoid saying to himself, "These birds are ex-drunks. And look at them! They must have something. It sounds kind of screwy, but whatever it is I wish to heaven I could get it too."

One or another of the members keeps working on him from day to day. And presently the miracle. But let me give you an example: I sat down in a quiet room with Mr. B., a stockily built man of fifty with a rather stern, intelligent face.

"I'll tell you what happened a year ago." He said, "I was completely washed up. Financially I was all right, because my money is in a trust fund. But I was a drunken bum of the worst sort. My family was almost crazy with my incessant sprees."

"I took the cure in New York." (At the hospital we have mentioned.)
"When I came out of it, the doctor suggested I go to one of these meetings the boys were holding. I just laughed. My father was an atheist and had taught me to be one. But the doctor kept saying it wouldn't do me any harm, and I went.

"I sat around listening to the jabber. It didn't register with me at all. I went home. But the next week I found myself drawn to the meeting. And again they worked on me while I shook my head. I said, 'It seems O.K. with you, boys, but I don't even know your language. Count me out.'

"Somebody said the Lord's Prayer, and the meeting broke up. I walked three blocks to the subway station. Just as I was about to go down the stairs-bang!" He snapped fingers hard. "It happened! I don't like that word miracle, but that's all I can call it. The lights in the street seemed to flare up. My feet seemed to leave the pavement. A kind of shiver went over me, and I burst out crying.

"I went back to the house where we had met, and rang the bell, and Bill let me in. We talked until two o'clock in the morning. I haven't touched a drop since, and I've set four other fellows on the same road."

The doctor, a nonreligious man himself, was at first utterly astonished at the results that began to appear among his patients. But then he put his knowledge of psychiatry and psychology to work. These men were experiencing a psychic change. Their so-called "compulsion neurosis" was being altered -- transferred from liquor to something else. Their psychological necessity to drink was being changed to a psychological necessity to rescue their fellow victims from the plight that made themselves so miserable. It is not a new idea. It is a powerful and effective working out of an old idea. We all know that the alcoholic has an urge to share his troubles. Psychoanalysts use this urge. They say to the alcoholic, in basic terms: "You can't lick this problem yourself. Give me the problem -- transfer the whole thing to me and let me take the whole responsibility."

But the psychoanalyst, being of human clay, is not often a big enough man for

that job. The patient simply cannot generate enough confidence in him. But the patient can have enough confidence in God -- once he has gone through the mystical experience of recognizing God. And upon that principle the Alcoholic Foundation rests. The medical profession, in general, accepts the

Evening Post. He persuaded Bok to do a story on A.A. Bok urged his editors to assigned Jack Alexander, an experienced, even cynical reporter, to do a feature story.

Alexander was chosen because he had a reputation for being "hard nosed."

He had just completed a major story exposing the New jersey rackets and prided himself on his cynicism.

Alexander had many doubts about doing a story on a bunch of ex-drunks. In a story he wrote for the A.A. Grapevine in May 1945 ("Was My Leg Being Pulled?") he said: "All I knew of alcoholism at the time was that, like most other nonalcoholics, I had had my hand bitten (and my nose punched) on numerous occasions by alcoholic pals to whom I had extended a hand -- unwisely, it always seemed afterward. Anyway, I had an understandable skepticism about the whole business."

But he spent a week with Bill Wilson and other AA members in New York. "We gave him the most exhaustive briefing on Alcoholics Anonymous any writer has ever had," according to Bill. "First he met our Trustees and New York people, and then we towed him all over the country."

One of the people he interviewed in New York was Marty Mann, the first woman to achieve lasting sobriety in AA. (See "Women Suffer Too" in the Big Book.) She is called "Sara Martin" in the story, and she is disguised further by changing her time in London to time in Paris. But Sarah Martin is without doubt, Marty Mann. When the story came out Marty said "it was the most exciting thing that had ever happened, because we wanted publicity so badly. We wanted somebody to know about us."

Alexander felt the week was a success from one standpoint. "I knew I had the makings of a readable report," he wrote, "but, unfortunately, I didn't quite believe in it and told Bill so." But Bill convinced him that he should visit other cities to visit groups, and interview and get to know other members.

Bill, Dr. Bob and elders of the groups at Akron, New York, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Chicago spent uncounted hours with him. But when he reached his own home town of St. Louis, he met a number of his own friends who were now A.A. members, and the last remnants of skepticism vanished. "Once rollicking rumpots, they were now sober. It didn't seem possible, but there it was," he wrote.

When Alexander "could feel A.A. in the very marrow of his bones," he proceeded to write the story that rocked drunks and their families all over the world.

"Came then the deluge," Bill wrote. Six thousand frantic appeals from alcoholics and their families hit the New York office, PO Box 658. Bill and Ruth Hock, AA's first secretary, pawed at random through the mass of letters, laughing and crying by turns. But it was clear they couldn't handle the mail by themselves, and form letters wouldn't be enough. Each letter had to have an understanding personal reply.

Fortunately, they had anticipated this problem and Lois Wilson, in anticipation of the story bringing a strong response, had been organizing anyone who could type into squads, and scheduling those who could not type to answer the telephones in preparation for the expected deluge.

But even so, the response exceeded anyone's wildest expectations. Within days, meeting attendance doubled. Within weeks, newcomers were being sent out on Twelve Step calls to other alcoholics. Ruth Hock and Bobbie Berger, along with Lois and her volunteers, worked day and night for five or six weeks to answer all the mail.

The chain reaction Bill had envisioned when he was still a patient at Towns Hospital had become a fact, and nothing would stop it. A.A. was now established as an American institution.

Bill realized that he must, for the first time, ask the groups for assistance. It was determined that if each group gave \$1 a year per member, they would eventually have enough money to pay the New York office's expenses and rely no further upon outside charity or insufficient book sales. Most groups were happy to contribute to pay the expense of the New York office, and most continue to do so today.

Thus the tradition of self-support had a firm beginning.

The magazine's decision to do a feature story on A.A. would have been enough for editors all across the country to find A.A. newsworthy, but the story didn't stop with merely reporting on AA. It endorsed its effectiveness. It is hard for us today to imagine the enormous excitement that this article generated among A.A. members. By 1950, AA membership was approaching a hundred thousand and there were thirty-five hundred groups worldwide.

In April of that year the Saturday Evening Post featured another article by Alexander entitled the "Drunkards Best Friend."

were members of Alcoholics Anonymous, a band of ex-problem drinkers who make an avocation of helping other alcoholics to beat the liquor habit.

The man in the bed was a mechanic. His visitors had been educated at Princeton, Yale and Pennsylvania and were, by occupation, a salesman, a

lawyer and a publicity man. Less than a year before, one had been in shackles in the same ward. One of his companions had been what is known among alcoholics as a sanitarium commuter. He had moved from place to place, bedeviling the staffs of the country's leading institutions for the treatment of alcoholics. The other had spent twenty years of life, all outside institution walls, making life miserable for himself, and his family and his employers, as well as sundry well-meaning relatives who had had the temerity to intervene.

The air of the ward was thick with the aroma of paraldehyde, an unpleasant

cocktail smelling like a mixture of alcohol and ether which hospitals sometimes use to taper off the paralyzed drinker and soothe his squirming nerves. The visitors seemed oblivious of this and of the depressing atmosphere of psychopathic wards. They smoked and talked with the patient for twenty minutes or so, then left their personal cards and departed. If the man in the bed felt that he would like to see one of them again, they told him, he had only to put in a telephone call.

THEY MADE it plain that if he actually wanted to stop drinking, they would

leave their work or get up in the middle of the night to hurry to where he was. If he did not choose to call, that would be the end of it. The members of Alcoholics Anonymous do not pursue or coddle a malingering prospect, and they know the strange tricks of the alcoholic as a reformed swindler knows the art of bamboozling.

Herein lies much of the unique strength of a movement, which in the past six

years, has brought recovery to around 2,000 men and women, a large percentage of whom had been considered medically hopeless. Doctors and clergymen, working separately or together, have always managed to salvage a few cases. In isolated instances, drinkers have found their own methods of quitting. But the inroads into alcoholism have been negligible, and it remains one of the great, unsolved public-health enigmas.

By nature touchy and suspicious, the alcoholic likes to be left alone to work

out his puzzle, and he has a convenient way of ignoring the tragedy which he

inflicts meanwhile upon those who are close to him. He holds desperately to

a conviction that, although he has not been able to handle alcohol in the past, he will ultimately succeed in becoming a controlled drinker. One of medicine's queerest animals, he is, as often as not, an acutely intelligent person. He fences with professional men and relatives who attempt to aid him and he gets a perverse satisfaction out of tripping them up in argument.

THERE IS no specious excuse for drinking which the troubleshooters of Alcoholics Anonymous have not heard or used themselves. When one of their

prospects hands them a rationalization for getting soused, they match it with

a half a dozen out of their own experience. This upsets him a little, and he gets defensive. He looks at their neat clothing and smoothly shaved faces and charges them with being goody-goodies who don't know what it is to struggle with drink. They reply by relating their own stories: the double Scotches and brandies before breakfast; the vague feeling of discomfort which precedes a drinking bout; the awakening from a spree without being able to account for the actions of several days and the haunting fear that possibly they had run down someone with their automobiles.

They tell of the eight-ounce bottles of gin hidden behind pictures and in

caches from cellar to attic; of spending whole days in motion-picture houses to stave off the temptation to drink; of sneaking out of the office for quickies during the day. They talk of losing jobs and stealing money from their wives' purses; of putting pepper into whiskey to give it a tang; of tipping on bitters and sedative tablets, or on mouthwash or hair tonic; of getting into the habit of camping outside the neighborhood tavern ten minutes before opening time. They describe a hand so jittery that it could not lift a pony to the lips without spilling the contents; drinking liquor from a beer stein because it can be steadied with two hands, although at the risk of chipping a front tooth; tying an end of a towel about a glass, looping the towel around the back of the neck, and drawing the free end with the other hand; hands so shaky they feel as if they were about to snap off and fly into space; sitting on hands for hours to keep them from doing this.

These and other bits of drinking lore usually manage to convince the alcoholic that he is talking to blood brothers. A bridge of confidence is thereby erected, spanning a gap, which has baffled the physician, the minister, the priest, or the hapless relatives. Over this connection, the troubleshooters convey, bit by bit, the details of a program for living which has worked for them and which, they feel, can work for any other alcoholic. They concede as out of their orbit only those who are psychotic or who are already suffering from the physical impairment known as wet brain. At the same time, they see to it that the prospect gets whatever medical attention is needed.

MANY DOCTORS and staffs of institutions throughout the country now suggest

Alcoholics Anonymous to their drinking patients. In some towns, the courts

and probation officers cooperate with the local group. In a few city psychopathic divisions, the workers of Alcoholics Anonymous are accorded the same visiting privileges as staff members. Philadelphia General is one of these. Dr. John F. Stouffer, the chief psychiatrist, says: "the alcoholics we get here are mostly those who cannot afford private treatment, and this is by far the greatest thing we have ever been able to offer them. Even among those who occasionally land back in here again, we observe a profound change in personality. You would hardly recognize them."

The Illinois Medical Journal, in an editorial last December, went further than D. Stouffer, in stating: "It is indeed a miracle when a person who for years has been more or less constantly under the influence of alcohol and in whom his friends have lost all confidence, will sit up all night with a drunk and at stated intervals administer a small amount of liquor in accordance with a doctor's order without taking a drop himself."

This is a reference to a common aspect of the Arabian Nights adventures to which Alcoholics Anonymous workers dedicate themselves. Often it involves sitting upon, as well as up with, the intoxicated person, as the impulse to jump out a window seems to be an attractive one to many alcoholics when in their cups. Only an alcoholic can squat on another alcoholic's chest for hours with the proper combination of discipline and sympathy.

During a recent trip around the East and Middle West, I met and talked with scores of A.A.s, as they call themselves, and found them to be unusually calm tolerant people. Somehow, they seemed better integrated than the average group of nonalcoholic individuals. Their transformation from cop fighters, canned-heat drinkers, and, in some instances, wife beaters, was startling. On one of the most influential newspapers in the country, I found that the city editor, the assistant city editor, and a nationally known reporter were A.A.s, and strong in the confidence of their publisher.

IN ANOTHER city, I heard a judge parole a drunken driver to an A.A. member.

The latter, during his drinking days, had smashed several cars and had had his own operator's license suspended. The judge knew him and was glad to trust him. A brilliant executive of an advertising firm disclosed that two years ago he had been panhandling and sleeping in a doorway under an elevated structure. He had a favorite doorway, which he shared with other vagrants, and every few weeks he goes back and pays them a visit just to assure himself he isn't dreaming.

In Akron, as in other manufacturing centers, the groups include a heavy

element of manual workers. In the Cleveland Athletic Club, I had luncheon with five lawyers, an accountant, an engineer, three salesmen, an insurance man, a buyer, a bartender, a chain-store manager, a manager of an independent store, and a manufacturer's representative. They were members of a central committee, which coordinates the work of nine neighborhood groups. Cleveland, with more than 450 members, is the biggest of the A.A. centers. The next largest are located in Chicago, Akron, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Washington and New

York. All told, there are groups in about fifty cities and towns.

IN DISCUSSING their work, the A.A.s spoke of their drunk rescuing as "insurance" for themselves. Experience within the group has shown, they said, that once a recovered drinker slows up in this work he is likely to go back to drinking himself. There is, they agreed, no such thing as an ex-alcoholic. If one is an alcoholic -- that is, a person who is unable to drink normally -- one remains an alcoholic until he dies, just as a diabetic remains a diabetic. The best he can hope for is to become an arrested case, with drunk saving as his insulin. At least, the A.A.s say so, and medical opinion tends to support them. All but a few said that they had lost all desire for alcohol. Most serve liquor in their homes when friends drop in, and they still go to bars with companions who drink. A.A.s tipple on soft drinks and coffee.

One, a sales manager, acts as bartender at his company's annual jamboree in Atlantic City and spends his nights tucking the celebrators into their beds.

Only a few of those who recover fail to lose the felling that at any minute they may thoughtlessly take one drink and skyrocket off on a disastrous binge. An A.A. who is a clerk in an Eastern city hasn't had a snifter in three and a half years, but says that he still has to walk fast past saloons to circumvent the old impulse; but he is an exception. The only hangover from the wild days that plagues the A.A. is a recurrent nightmare. In the dream, he finds himself off on a rousing whooper-doooper, frantically trying to conceal his condition from the community. Even this symptom disappears shortly, in most cases. Surprisingly, the rate of employment among these people, who formerly drank themselves out of job after job, is said to be around ninety percent.

One-hundred-percent effectiveness with non-psychotic drinkers who sincerely want to quit is claimed by the workers of Alcoholics Anonymous. The program will not work, they add, with those who only "want to want to quit," or who want to quit because they are afraid of losing their families or their jobs. The effective desire, the state, must be based upon enlightened self-interest; the applicant must want to get away from liquor to head off incarceration or premature death. He must be fed up with the stark social loneliness, which engulfs the uncontrolled drinker, and he must want to put some order into his bungled life.

As it is impossible to disqualify all borderline applicants, the working percentage of recovery falls below the 100-percent mark. According to A.A.'s estimation, fifty percent of the alcoholics taken in hand recover immediately; twenty-five percent get well after suffering a relapse or two; and the rest remain doubtful. This rate of success is exceptionally high. Statistics on traditional medical and religious cures are lacking, but it has been informally estimated that they are no more than two or three percent effective on run-of-the-mill cases.

Although it is too early to state that Alcoholics Anonymous is the definitive answer to alcoholism, its brief record is impressive, and it is receiving hopeful support. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. helped defray the expense of getting it started and has gone out of his way to get other prominent men interested.

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++++Message 11. The Saturday Evening Post, March 1941 -- Part 2
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/2/2002 7:05:00 AM

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ROCKEFELLER'S GIFT was a small one, in deference to the insistence of the originators that the movement be kept on a voluntary, non paid basis. There are no salaried organizers, no dues, no officers, and no central control. Locally, the rents of assemble halls are met by passing the hat at meetings. In small communities, no collections are taken, as the gatherings are held in private homes. A small office in downtown New York acts merely as a clearinghouse for information. There is no name on the door, and mail is received anonymously through a post-office box. The only income, which is money received from the sale of a book describing the work, is handled by the Alcoholic Foundation, a board composed of three alcoholics and four non-alcoholics.

In Chicago, twenty-five doctors work hand in hand with Alcoholics Anonymous, contributing their services and referring their own alcoholic patients to the group, which now numbers around 200. The same cooperation exists in Cleveland and to a lesser degree in other centers. A physician, Dr. W. D. Silkworth, of New York City, gave the movement its first encouragement. However, many doctors remain skeptical. Dr. Foster Kennedy, an eminent New York neurologist, probably had these in mind when he stated at a meeting a year ago: "The aim of those concerned in this effort against alcoholism is high; their success has been considerable; and I believe medical men of goodwill should aid."

The active help of two medical men of goodwill, Drs. A. Wiese Hammer and C. Dudley Saul, has assisted greatly in making the Philadelphia unit one of the more effective of the younger groups. The movement there had its beginning in an offhand way in February 1940, when a businessman who was an A.A.

convert was transferred to Philadelphia from New York. Fearful of backsliding for lack of rescue work, the newcomer rounded up three local barflies and started to work on them. He got them dry, and the quartet began ferreting out other cases. By last December fifteenth, ninety-nine alcoholics had joined up. Of these, eighty-six were now total abstainers -- thirty-nine from one to three months, seventeen from three to six months, and twenty-five from six to ten months. Five who had joined the unit after having belonged in other cities had been nondrinkers from one to three years.

At the end of the time scale, Akron, which cradled the movement, holds the intramural record for sustained abstinence. According to a recent checkup, two members have been riding the A.A. wagon for five and a half years, one for five years, three for four and a half years, one for the same period with one skid, three for three and a half year, seven for three years, three for three years with one skid each, one for two and a half years, and thirteen for two years. Previously, most of the Akronites and Philadelphians had been unable to stay away from liquor for longer than a few weeks.

In the Middle West, the work has been almost exclusively among persons who have not arrived at the institutional stage. The New York group, which has a similar nucleus, takes a sideline specialty of committed cases and has achieved striking results. In the summer of 1939, the group began working on the alcoholics confined in Rockland State Hospital, at Orangeburg, a vast mental sanitarium, which get the hopeless alcoholic backwash of the big population centers. With the encouragement of Dr. R. E. Baisdell, the medical superintendent, a unit was formed within the wall, and meetings were held in the recreation hall. New York A.A.s went to Orangeburg to give talks, and on Sunday evenings, the patients were brought in state-owned buses to a clubhouse which the Manhattan group rents on the West Side.

Last July first, eleven months later, records kept at the hospital showed that of fifty-four patients released to Alcoholics Anonymous, seventeen had had no relapse and fourteen others had had only one. Of the rest, nine had gone back to drinking in their home communities, twelve had returned to the hospital and two had not been traced. Dr. Baisdell has written favorably about the work to the State Department of Mental Hygiene, and he praised it officially in his last annual report.

Even better results were obtained in two public institutions in New Jersey, Greystone Park and Overbrook, which attract patients of better economic and social background, than Rockland, because of their nearness to prosperous suburban villages. Of seven patients released from the Greystone Park

institution in two years, five have abstained for periods of one to two years, according to A.A. records. Eight of ten released from Overbrook have abstained for about the same length of time. The others have had from one to several relapses.

WHY SOME people become alcoholics is a question on which authorities disagree. Few think that anyone is "born an alcoholic." One may be born, they say, with a hereditary predisposition to alcoholism, just as one may be born with a vulnerability to tuberculosis. The rest seems to depend upon environment and experience, although one theory has it that some people are allergic to alcohol, as hay fever sufferers are to pollens. Only one note is found to be common to all alcoholics - emotional immaturity. Closely related to this is an observation that an unusually large number of alcoholics start out in life as an only child, as a younger child, as the only boy in a family of girls or the only girl in a family of boys. Many have records of childhood precocity and were what are known as spoiled children.

Frequently, the situation is complicated by an off-center home atmosphere in which one parent is unduly cruel, the other overindulgent. Any combination of these factors, plus a divorce or two, tends to produce neurotic children who are poorly equipped emotionally to face the ordinary realities of adult life. In seeking escapes, one may immerse himself in his business, working twelve to fifteen hours a day, or in what he thinks is a pleasant escape in drink. It bolsters his opinion of himself and temporarily wipes away any feeling of social inferiority, which he may have. Light drinking leads to heavy drinking. Friend and family are alienated and employers become disgusted. The drinker smolders with resentment and wallows in self-pity. He indulges in childish rationalizations to justify his drinking: He has been working hard and he deserves to relax; his throat hurts from an old tonsillectomy and a drink would ease the pain; he has a headache; his wife does not understand him; his nerves are jumpy; everybody is against him; and so on and on. He unconsciously becomes a chronic excuse-maker for himself.

All the time he is drinking, he tells himself and those who butt into his affairs that he can really become a controlled drinker if he wants to. To demonstrate his strength of will, he goes for weeks without taking a drop. He makes a point of calling at his favorite bar at a certain time each day and ostentatiously sipping milk or a carbonated beverage, not realizing that he is indulging in juvenile exhibitionism. Falsely encouraged, he shifts to a routine of one beer a day and that is the beginning of the end once more. Beer leads inevitably to more beer and then to hard liquor. Hard liquor leads to another first-rate bender. Oddly, the trigger, which sets off the explosion, is as apt to be a stroke of business success as it is to be a run of bad luck. An alcoholic can stand neither prosperity nor adversity.

THE VICTIM is puzzled on coming out of the alcoholic fog. Without his being aware of any change, a habit has gradually become an obsession. After a while, he no longer needs rationalization to justify the fatal first drink.

All he knows is that he feels swamped by uneasiness or elation, and before he realizes what is happening, he is standing at a bar with an empty whisky pony in front of him and a stimulating sensation in his throat. By some peculiar quirk of his mind, he has been able to draw a curtain over the memory of the intense pain and remorse caused by preceding stem-winders. After many experiences of this kind, the alcoholic begins to realize that he does not understand himself; he wonders whether his power of will, though strong in other fields, isn't defenseless against alcohol. He may go on trying to defeat his obsession and wind up in a sanitarium. He may give up the fight as hopeless and try to kill himself. Or he may seek outside help.

If he applies to Alcoholics Anonymous, he is first brought around to admit that alcohol has him whipped and that his life has become unmanageable.

Having achieved this state of intellectual humility he is given a dose of religion in the broadest sense. He is asked to believe in a Power that is greater than himself, or at least to keep an open mind on that subject while he goes on with the rest of the program. Any concept of the Higher Power is acceptable. A skeptic or agnostic may choose to think of his Inner Self, the miracle of growth, a tree, man's wonderment at the physical universe, the structure of the atom, or mere mathematical infinity. Whatever form is visualized, the neophyte is taught that he must rely upon it and, in his own way, to pray to the Power for strength.

He next makes a short moral inventory of himself with the private aid of another person -- one of his A.A. sponsors, a priest, a minister a psychiatrist, or anyone else he fancies. If it gives him any relief, he may get up at a meeting and recite his misdeed, but he is not required to do so. He restores what he may have stolen while intoxicated and arranges to pay off old debts and to make good on rubber checks; he makes amends to persons he has abused and in general, cleans up his past as well as he is able to. It is not uncommon for his sponsors to lend him money to help out in the early stages.

This catharsis is regarded as important because of the compulsion, which a feeling of guilt exerts in the alcoholic obsession. As nothing tends to push an alcoholic toward the bottle more than personal resentments, the pupil also makes out a list of his grudges and resolves not to be stirred by them. At this point, he is ready to start working on other, active alcoholics. By the process of extroversion, which the work entails, he is able to think less of his own troubles.

The more drinkers he succeeds in swinging into Alcoholics Anonymous, the greater his responsibility to the group becomes. He can't get drunk now without injuring the people who have proved themselves his best friends. He is beginning to grow up emotionally and to quit being a leaner. If raised in an Orthodox Church, he usually, but not always, becomes a regular communicant again.

SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH the making over of the alcoholic goes the process of adjusting his family to his new way of living. The wife or husband of an alcoholic, and the children, too, frequently become neurotics from being exposed to drinking excesses over a period of years. Reeducation of the family is an essential part of a follow-up program, which has been devised.

Alcoholics Anonymous, which is synthesis of old ideas rather than a new discovery, owes its existence to the collaboration of a New York stockbroker and an Akron physician. Both alcoholics, they met for the first time a little less than six years ago. In thirty-five years of periodic drinking, Dr. Armstrong, to give the physician a fictitious name, had drunk himself out of most of his practice. Armstrong had tried everything, including the Oxford Group, and had shown no improvement. On Mother's Day 1935, he staggered home, in typical drunk fashion, lugging an expensive potted plant, which he placed in his wife's lap. The he went upstairs and passed out.

At that moment, nervously pacing the lobby of an Akron hotel, was the broker from New York, whom we shall arbitrarily call Griffith. Griffith was in a jam. In an attempt to obtain control of a company and rebuild his financial fences, he had come out to Akron and engaged in a fight for proxies. He had lost the fight. His hotel bill was unpaid. He was almost flat broke. Griffith wanted a drink.

During his career in Wall Street, Griffith had turned some sizable deals and had prospered, but, through ill-timed drinking bouts, had lost out on his main chances. Five months before coming to Akron, he had gone on the water wagon through the ministrations of the Oxford Group in New York. Fascinated by the problem of alcoholism, he had many times gone back as a visitor to a Central Park West detoxicating hospital, where he had been a patient, and talked to the inmates. He effected no recoveries, but found that by working on other alcoholics he could stave off his own craving.

A stranger in Akron, Griffith knew no alcoholics with whom he could wrestle. A church directory, which hung in the lobby opposite the bar, gave him an idea. He telephoned one of the clergymen listed and through him got in touch with a member of the local Oxford Group. This person was a friend of Dr. Armstrong's and was able to introduce the physician and the broker at dinner. In this manner, Dr. Armstrong became Griffith's first real disciple. He was a shaky one at first. After a few weeks of abstinence, he went east to a medical convention and came home in a liquid state. Griffith, who had stayed in Akron to iron out some legal tangles arising from the proxy battle, talked him back to sobriety. That was on June 10, 1935. The nips the physician took from a bottle proffered by Griffith on that day were the last drinks he ever took.

GRIFFITH'S lawsuits dragged on, holding him over in Akron for six months. He moved his baggage to the Armstrong home, and together the pair struggled with

other alcoholics. Before Griffith went back to New York, two more Akron converts had been obtained. Meanwhile, both Griffith and Dr. Armstrong had withdrawn from the Oxford Group, because they felt that its aggressive evangelism and some of its other methods were hindrances in working with alcoholics. They put their own technique on a strict take-it-or-leave-it basis and kept it there.

Progress was slow. After Griffith had returned East, Dr. Armstrong and his wife, a Wellesley graduate, converted their home into a free refuge for alcoholics and an experimental laboratory for the study of the guest's behavior. One of the guest, who unknown to his hosts, was a manic-depressive as well as an alcoholic, ran wild one night with a kitchen knife. He was overcome before he stabbed anyone. After a year and a half, a total of ten persons had responded to the program and were abstaining. What was left of the family savings had gone into the work. The physician's new sobriety caused a revival in his practice, but not enough of one to carry the extra expense. The Armstrongs, nevertheless, carried on, on borrowed money.

Griffith, who had a Spartan wife, too, turned his Brooklyn home into a duplicate of Akron ménage. Mrs. Griffith, a member of an old Brooklyn family, took a job in a department store and in her spare time played nurse to inebriates. The Griffiths also borrowed, and Griffith managed to make odd bits of money around the brokerage houses. By the spring of 1939, the Armstrongs and the Griffiths had between them cozened about one hundred alcoholics into sobriety.

IN A BOOK, which they published at that time, the recovered drinkers described the cure program and related their personal stories. The title was Alcoholics Anonymous. It was adopted as a name for the movement itself, which up to then had none. As the book got into circulation, the movement spread rapidly. Today, Dr. Armstrong is still struggling to patch up his practice. The going is hard. He is in debt because of his contributions to the movement and the time he devotes gratis to alcoholics. Being a pivotal man in the group, he is unable to turn down the requests for help, which flood his office.

Griffith is even deeper in the hole. For the past two years, he and his wife have had no home in the ordinary sense of the word. In a manner reminiscent of the primitive Christians, they have moved about, finding shelter in the home of A.A. colleagues and sometimes wearing borrowed clothing.

Having got something started, both the prime movers want to retire to the fringe of their movement and spend more time getting back on their feet financially. They feel that the way the thing is set up, it is virtually self-operating and self-multiplying. Because of the absence of figureheads and the fact that there is no formal body of belief to promote, they have no fears that Alcoholics Anonymous will degenerate into a cult.

The self-starting nature of the movement is apparent from letters in the files of the New York office. Many persons have written in saying that they stopped drinking as soon as they read the book, and made their homes meeting places for small local chapters. Even a fairly large unit, in Little Rock, got started in this way. An Akron civil engineer and his wife, in gratitude for his cure four years ago, have been steadily taking alcoholics into their home. Out of thirty-five such wards, thirty-one have recovered.

TWENTY PILGRIMS from Cleveland caught the idea in Akron and returned home to start a group of their own. From Cleveland, by various means, the movement has spread to Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, Los Angeles, Indianapolis, Atlanta, San Francisco, Evansville, and other cities. An alcoholic Cleveland newspaperman with a surgically collapsed lung moved to Houston for his health. He got a job on a Houston paper, and through a series of articles, which he wrote for it, started an A.A. unit, which now has thirty-five members. One Houston member has moved to Miami and is now laboring to snare some of the more eminent winter-colony lushes. A Cleveland traveling salesman is responsible for starting small units in many different parts of the county. Fewer than half of the A.A. members has ever seen Griffith or Dr. Armstrong.

To an outsider who is mystified, as most of us are, by the antics of problem-drinking friends, the results, which have been achieved, are amazing. This is especially true of the more virulent cases, a few of which are herewith sketched under names that are not their own.

Sara Martin was a product of the F. Scott Fitzgerald era. Born of wealthy parents in a Western City, she went to Eastern boarding schools and "finished" in France. After making her debut, she married. Sara spent her nights drinking and dancing until daylight. She was known as a girl who could carry a lot of liquor. Her husband had a weak stomach, and she became disgusted with him. They were quickly divorced. After her father's fortune had been erased in 1929, Sara got a job in New York and supported herself. In 1932, seeking adventure, she went to Paris to live and set up a business of her own, which was successful. She continued to drink heavily and stayed drunk longer than usual. After a spree in 1933, she was informed that she had tried to throw herself out a window. During another bout, she did jump or fall -- she doesn't remember which -- out of a first-floor window. She landed face first on the sidewalk and was laid up for six months of bone setting, dental work, and plastic surgery.

In 1936, Sara Martin decided that if she changed her environment by returning to the United States, she would be able to drink normally. This childish faith in geographical change is a classic delusion, which all alcoholics get at one time, or another. She was drunk all the way home on the boat. New York frightened her and she drank to escape it. Her money ran out and she borrowed from friends. When the friends cut her, she hung around Third Avenue bars, cadging drinks from strangers. Up to this point she had

diagnosed her trouble as a nervous breakdown. Not until she had committed herself to several sanitariums did she realize, through reading, that she was an alcoholic. On advice of a staff doctor, she got in touch with an Alcoholics Anonymous group. Today, she has another good job and spends many of her nights sitting on hysterical women drinkers to prevent them from diving out of windows. In her late thirties, Sarah Martin is an attractively serene woman. The Paris surgeons did handsomely by her.

Watkins is a shipping clerk in a factory. Injured in an elevator mishap in 1927, he was furloughed with pay by a company, which was thankful that he did not sue for damages. Having nothing to do during a long convalescence, Watkins loafed in speakeasies. Formerly a moderate drinker, he started to go on drunks lasting several months. His furniture went for debt, and his wife fled, taking their three children. In eleven years, Watkins was arrested twelve times and served eight workhouse sentences. Once, in an attack of delirium tremens, he circulated a rumor among the prisoners that the county was poisoning the food in order to reduce the workhouse population and save expenses. A mess-hall riot resulted. In another fit of D.T.'s, during which he thought the man in the cell above was trying to pour hot lead on him, Watkins slashed his own wrists and throat with a razor blade. While recuperating in an outside hospital, with eighty-six stitches, he swore never to drink again. He was drunk before the final bandages were removed. Two years ago, a former drinking companion got him to Alcoholics Anonymous, and he hasn't touched liquor since. His wife and children have returned, and the home has new furniture. Back at work, Watkins has paid off the major part of \$2,000 in debts and petty alcoholic thefts and has his eye on a new automobile.

AT TWENTY-TWO, Tracy, a precocious son of well-to-do parents, was credit manager for an investment-banking firm whose name has become a symbol of the money-mad twenties. After the firm's collapse during the stock market crash, he went into advertising and worked up to a post, which paid him \$23,000 a year. On the day his son was born, Tracy was fired. Instead of appearing in Boston to close a big advertising contract, he had gone on a spree and had wound up in Chicago, losing out on the contract. Always a heavy drinker, Tracy became a bum. He tumbled on Canned Heat and hair tonic and begged from cops, who are always easy touches for amounts up to a dime. On one sleety night, Tracy sold his shoes to buy a drink, putting on a pair of rubbers he had found in a doorway and stuffing them with paper to keep his feet warm.

He started committing himself to sanitariums, more to get in out of the cold than anything else. In one institution, a physician got him interested in the A.A. program. As part of it, Tracy, a Catholic made a general confession and returned to the church, which he had long since abandoned. He skidded back to alcohol a few times, but after a relapse in February 1939, Tracy took no more drinks. He has since then beat his way up again to \$18,000 a year in advertising.

Alcoholics Anonymous.

Since that time these self-rehabilitated men -- and women -- have sobered up an astonishing number of America's heaviest drinkers.

This is how they do it.

When a farmer in Aroostook County, Maine, announces that he is going to bake a cake, he is speaking figuratively. What he means is that he is bored with the loneliness of Aroostook's vast reaches, with the county's most famous product, potatoes, and with life in general; and that, to relieve his boredom, he is going on a vanilla-extract bender. In order to buy liquor he might have to drive as much as a hundred miles over drifted or rutted roads, to reach a town uninhibited by local option. He tipples on vanilla, which is rich in alcohol, because it is easily and legally obtainable, in quantity, at the nearest grocery store. Grocers in local-option towns ordinarily do a thriving vanilla business with alcoholically inclined agrarians, but of late the strange society known as Alcoholics Anonymous has taken root in Aroostook and a disturbing effect on the vanilla turnover has been observed. "You wouldn't believe it, Ned," one storekeeper lamented to a drummer on a gray day last November, " but my vanilla sales is almost down to normal."

The impact of Alcoholics Anonymous upon a community is not always that

striking, but it is doing quite well at its self-appointed task, which, as almost everyone knows by now, is that of helping confirmed drunks to quit drinking. The help is provided solely by alcoholics who, through adhering to a specified program of living, have managed to arrest their own disastrous drinking habits. (A. A. members never call themselves ex-alcoholics, regardless of the length of their sobriety, the theory being that they are ineradicably alcoholics by temperament, and are therefore always vulnerable to a relapse.)

During the past few years Alcoholics Anonymous has extended its influence overseas, and one of its more dedicated workers is the honorable secretary of the Dublin group. A Sandhurst graduate and a veteran of twenty-six years in the British Army, he is still remembered in some portions of the Middle East for his inspired work with the bottle. Now an abstainer, he lives off his major's pension and the profits of a small retail business. Like all faithful members of A.A., he spends much of his spare time in shepherding other luses toward total abstinence, lest he revert to the pot himself.

The honorable secretary is a man of few spoken words, but he carries on a large correspondence within the fraternity. His letters, which are notable for their eloquent understatement, are prized by fellow A.A.'s in this country and are passed around a meetings. One of his more fascinating communiques, received here in October, described a missionary trip to Cork, in company with another A.A. gentleman. The purpose of the trip was to bring the glad

tidings of freedom to any Corkonians who might happen to be besotted and unshriven, and to stimulate the local group, which was showing small promise.

This was the honorable secretary's chronological report:

8 P.M. The chairman and myself sat alone.

8:05 One lady arrived, a nonalcoholic.

8:15 One man arrived.

8:20 A County Cork member arrived to say he couldn't stay, as his children had just developed measles.

8:25 The lone lady departed.

8:30 Two more men arrived.

8:40 One more man arrived, and I decided to make a start.

8:45 The first man arrival stated that he had to go out and have a drink.

8:50 He came back.

8:55 Three more arrived.

9:10 Another lady, propped up by a companion, arrived, gazed glassily around, collected some literature and departed unsteadily.

9:30 The chairman and I had finished speaking.

9:45 We reluctantly said good night to the new members, who seemed very interested.

In summing up, the secretary said: "A night of horror at first, developing quite well. I think they have good prospects, once the thing is launched."

To a skeptic, the honorable secretary's happy prognosis in the face of initial discouragement may sound foolishly hopeful. To those already within the fraternity and familiar with the sluggardly and chaotic character of A.A. local-group growth in its early stages, he was merely voicing justifiable optimism. For some years after its inception, in 1935, the Alcoholics Anonymous movement itself made slow progress. As the work of salvaging other drunks is essential to maintaining the sobriety of the already-salvaged brethren, the earnest handful of early salvagees spent some worrisome months. Hundreds of thousands of toppers were prowling about in full alcoholic cry, but few would pause long enough to listen.

Six years after it all began, when this magazine first examined the small but

encouraging phenomenon (Post, March 1, 1941), the band could count 2000 members, by scraping hard, and some of these were still giving off residual fumes. In the nine years which have intervened since that report, the small phenomenon has become a relatively large one.

Today its listed membership exceeds 90,000. Just how many of these have substantial sobriety records is a matter of conjecture, as the movement,

which has no control at the top and is constantly ridden by maverick tendencies, operates in a four-alarm-fire atmosphere, and no one has the

time to check up. A reasonable guess would be that about two-thirds have been sober for anywhere from six months to fifteen years, and that the rest have stretched out their periods of sobriety between twisters to the point where they are at least able to keep their jobs.

The intake of shaky-fingered newcomers, now at its highest in A.A. history, is running at the rate of around 20,000 a year. The number that will stick is, again, a matter of conjecture. If experience repeats, according to A.A. old-timers, about one half will stay sober from the start, and one-fourth will achieve sobriety after a few skids; the other one-fourth will remain problem drinkers. A problem drinker, by definition, is one who takes a drink for some compulsive reason he cannot identify and, having taken it, is unable to stop until he is drunk and acting like a lunatic. How Many of the Four Million Will Join?

IT is tempting to become oversanguine about the success of Alcoholics Anonymous to date. Ninety-thousand persons, roaring drunk or roaring sober, are but a drop in the human puddle, and they represent only a generous dip out of the human alcoholic puddle.

According to varying estimates, between 750,000 and 1,000,000 problem drinkers are still on the loose in the United States alone. Their numbers will inevitably be swelled in future years by recruits from the ranks of between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 Americans who, by medical standards, drink too much for their own good. Some of these millions will taper off or quit when they reach the age at which the miseries of a hang-over seem too great a price to pay for an evening of artificially induced elation; but some will slosh over into the compulsive-drinker class.

The origins of alcoholism, which is now being widely treated as a major public-health problem, are as mysterious as those of cancer. They are perhaps even harder to pin down, because they involve psychic as well as physical elements. Currently, the physical aspect is being investigated by universities and hospitals, and by publicly and privately financed foundations. Some large business and industrial firms, concerned about educed productivity and absenteeism, are providing medical and psychiatric aid to alcoholic employees. The firms' physicians are also digging into the alcoholic puzzle.

The most plausible tentative explanation that any of these investigative efforts has come up with is that alcoholism is a sickness resembling that caused by various allergies.

Psychiatry has its own approach to the problem; it is successful in only a small percentage of cases. Clergymen, using a spiritual appeal, and the beset relatives of alcoholics, using everything from moral suasion to a simple bat in the jaw, manage to persuade a few chronics to become unchronic. So does one school of institutional treatment, which insists that alcoholism is

solely the result of "twisted thinking" and aims at unraveling the mental quirks. But the Alcoholics Anonymous approach -- which leans on medicine, uses a few elementary principles of psychiatry and employs a strong spiritual weapon -- is the only one which has done anything resembling a mop-up job. Whatever one's attitude toward A.A. may be, and a lot of people are annoyed by its sometimes ludicrous strivings and its dead-pan thumping of the sobriety tub, one can scarcely ignore its palpable results. To anyone who has ever been a drunk or who has had to endure the alcoholic cruelties of a drunk -- and that would embrace a large portion of the human family -- 90,000 alcoholics reconverted into working citizens represent a massive dose of pure gain. In human terms, the achievements of Alcoholics Anonymous stand out as one of the few encouraging developments of a rather grim and destructive half century.

Drunks are prolific of excuses for their excessive drinking, and the most frequent alibi is that no one really understands what a struggle they have. With more than 3000 A.A. groups at work in the United States, and every member a veteran of the struggle, this excuse is beginning to lose its validity, if it ever had any validity. In most cities of any size the fraternity has a telephone listed in its own name. A nickel call will bring a volunteer worker who won't talk down to a drunk, as the average nonalcoholic has a way of doing but will talk convincingly in the jargon of the drunk. The worker won't do any urging; he will describe the Alcoholics Anonymous program in abbreviated form and depart. The drunk is invited to telephone again if he is serious about wanting to become sober. Or a drunk, on his own initiative or in tow of a relative, may drop in at the A.A. office, where he will receive the same nonevangelistic treatment. In the larger cities the offices do a rushing trade, especially after week ends or legal holidays. Many small-town and village groups maintain clubrooms over the bank or feed store; in one Canadian town the A.A.'s share quarters with a handbook operator, using it by night after the bookie has gone home. Some of these groups carry a standing classified advertisement in the daily or weekly newspaper. If they don't, a small amount of inquiry will disclose the meeting place of the nearest group; a local doctor, or clergyman, or policeman will know.

To some extent, the same easy availability obtains in the twenty-six foreign countries where A.A. has gained a foothold. This is especially true of the nations of the British Commonwealth, particularly Canada, Australia and New Zealand, which together list more A.A. members than the whole movement could boast nine years ago; and of the Scandinavian countries, where membership is fairly strong.

At a recent A.A. banquet in Oslo, Norway, 400 members celebrated their deliverance, drinking nothing stronger than water. Throughout Scandinavia the members bolster the program by using Antibus, the new European aversion drug. This practice is deplored by some A.A. members as showing a lack of faith in the standard A.A. program, but, of course, nothing is done, or can be done, about it, since the program is free to anyone who thinks he needs

it and he may adapt it in any way that suits him.

More often than not, though, disregard of the standard admonitions backfires. A bibulous Scottish baronet found this out when, returning from London, where he caught the spark from a local group, he set out ambitiously to dry up Edinburgh, a hard-drinking town.

But he tried it by remote control, so to speak, hiring a visiting American A.A. to do the heavy work. This violated the principle that the arrested drunk must do drunk-rescuing work himself in order to remain sober. Besides, the Scottish drunks wouldn't listen to a hired foreign pleader. In no time at all, and without getting a convert, the baronet and his hireling were swacked to the eyeballs and crying on each other's shoulders. After the American had gone home, the baronet stiffened up, abandoned the traditions of his class and started all over again, cruising the gutters himself, visiting drunks in their homes and in hospitals and prisons. Edinburgh is now in the win column, and there are also groups in Glasgow, Dundee, Perth and Campbeltown, all offshoots of Edinburgh.

Alcoholism on a large scale seems to be most common in highly complex civilizations.

These tend to breed the basic neuroses of which uncontrolled drinking is just one outward expression. A man in a more primitive setting, bound closely to earthy tasks and the constant battle with Nature, is apt to treat his frustrations by ignoring them or by working them off.

Alcoholics Anonymous has nevertheless caught on in some out-of-the-way places. A liquor salesman for a British firm, who was seduced by his own merchandise, started a group in Cape Town, South Africa, which now has ninety members. There are also groups in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Bloemfontein, Durban and East London, and in Salisbury and Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia.

The group at Anchorage, Alaska, which started in a blizzard, has a dozen members, including one slightly puzzled Eskimo, and there are small groups in Palmer and Ketchikan. There is a small group in the leper colony at Molokai, nurtured by A.A.'s from Honolulu, who fly there occasionally and conduct meetings.

The figures perhaps give too rosy a picture of the turbulent little world of Alcoholics Anonymous. Most of the members of any standing seem to be exceptionally happy people, with more serenity of manner than most nonalcoholics are able to muster these jittery days; it is difficult to believe that they ever lived in the drunk's bewitched world.

But some are still vaguely unhappy, though sober, and feel as if they were walking a tight wire. Treasurers occasionally disappear with a group's funds and wind up, boiled, in another town. After this had happened a few times, groups were advised to keep the kitty low, and the practice now is to spend

any appreciable surplus on a cake-and-coffee festival or a picnic. This advice does not always work out; last year the members of a fresh and vigorous French-Canadian unit in Northern Maine, taking the advice to heart, debated so violently about how to spend their fifty-four dollars that all hands were drunk within twenty-four hours. It is difficult at first for the recruit to achieve serenity.

As most groups are mixtures of men and women, a certain number of unconventional love affairs occur. More than one group has been thrown into a maelstrom of gossip and disorder by a determined lady whose alcoholism was complicated by an aggressive romantic instinct. Such complications are no more frequent than they are at the average country club; they merely stand out more baldly, and do more harm, in an emotionally explosive society.

Special A.A. groups in sixty-six prisons around the nation are constantly trickling out graduates into the civilian groups. The ex-convicts are welcomed and are, for some reason, usually models of good behavior. A sanitarium or mental-hospital background causes no more stir in an A.A. group than a string of college degrees would at the University Club; the majority of A.A.'s are alumni of anywhere from one to fifty such institutions. Thus Alcoholics Anonymous is something of a Grand Hotel.

The ability of the arrested drunk to talk the active drunk's language convincingly is the one revolutionary aspect of the A.A. technique, and it does much to explain why the approach so often succeeds after others have failed. The rest of the technique is a synthesis of already existing ideas, some of which are centuries old. Once a community of language and experience has been established, it acts as a bridge over which the rest of the A.A. message can be conveyed, provided the subject is receptive.

Across the bridge and inside the active alcoholic's mind lies an exquisitely tortured microcosm, and a steady member of Alcoholics Anonymous gets a shudder every time he looks into it again. It is a rat-cage world, kept hot by an alcohol flame, and within it lives, or dances, a peculiarly touchy, defiant and grandiose personality.

There is a sage saying in A.A. that "an alcoholic is just like a normal person, only more so." He is egotistical, childish, resentful and intolerant to an exaggerated degree. How he gets that way is endlessly debated, but a certain rough pattern is discernible in most cases. Many of those who ultimately become alcoholics start off as an only child, or as the youngest child in a family, or as a child with too solicitous a mother, or a father with an oversevere concept of discipline. When such a child begins getting his lumps from society, his ego begins to swell disproportionately -- either from too easy triumphs or, as a compensation, from being rebuffed in his attempts to win the approval of his contemporaries.

He develops an intense power drive, a feverish struggle to gain acceptance of

himself at his own evaluation. A few of the power-drive boys meet with enough frustrations to send them into problem drinking while still in college or even while in high school. More often, on entering adult life, the prospective alcoholic is outwardly just about like anyone else his age, except that he is probably a little more cocky and aggressive, a little more hipped on the exhibitionistic charm routine, a little more plausible. He becomes a social drinker -- that is, one who can stop after a few cocktails and enjoy the experience.

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++++Message 13. The Saturday Evening Post, April 1950 -- Part 2
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/2/2002 8:21:00 AM

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Part 2 of Jack Alexander's story in the Saturday Evening Post, April 1950:

But at some place along the line his power drive meets up with an obstacle it cannot surmount -- someone he loves refuses to love him, someone whose admiration he covets rejects him, some business or professional ambition is

thwarted. Or he may encounter a whole series of rebuffs. The turning point may come quickly or it may be delayed for as long as forty or fifty years. He begins to take his drinks in gulps, and before he realizes it he is off on a reeler. He loses jobs through drunkenness, embarrasses his family and alienates his friends. His world begins to shrink. He encounters the horrors of the "black-out," the dawn experience of being unable to remember what he did the night before -- how many checks he wrote and how large they were, whom he insulted, where he parked his car, whether or not he ran down someone on the way home. In the alcoholic world a nice distinction is made between the "black-out" and the simple "pass-out," the latter being the relatively innocuous act of falling asleep from taking too much liquor. He jumps nervously whenever the doorbell or telephone rings, fearing that it may be a saloonkeeper with a rubber check, or a damage-suit lawyer, or the police.

He is frustrated and fearful, but is only vaguely conscious that his will, which is strong in most crises, fails him where liquor is concerned, although this is apparent to anyone who knows him. He nurses a vision of sobriety and tries all kind of self-rationing systems, none of which works for long. The great paradox of his personality is that in the midst of his troubles, his already oversize ego tends to expand; failure goes to his head. He continues, as the old saying has it, to rage through life calling for the headwaiter. In his dreams he is likely to see himself alone on a high mountain, masterfully surveying the world below. This dream, or some variant of it, will come to him whether he is sleeping in his own bed, or in a

twenty-five-dollar-a-day hotel suite, or on a park bench, or in a psychopathic ward.

If he applies to Alcoholics Anonymous for help, he has taken an important step toward arresting his drink habit; he has at least admitted that alcohol has whipped him. This in itself is an act of humility, and his life thereafter must be a continuing effort to acquire more of this ancient virtue. Should he need hospitalization, his new friends will see that he gets it, if a local hospital will take him. Understandably, many hospitals are reluctant to accept alcoholic patients, because so many of them are disorderly. With this sad fact in mind, the society has persuaded several hospitals to set up separate alcoholic corridors and is helping to supervise the patients through supplying volunteer workers.

To the satisfaction of all concerned including the hospital managements, which find the supervised corridors peaceful, more than 10,000 patients have gone through five-day rebuilding courses. The hospitals involved in this successful experiment are: St. Thomas' (Catholic) in Akron, St. John's (Episcopal) in Brooklyn and Knickerbocker (nonsectarian) In Manhattan.

They have set a pattern which the society would like to see adopted by the numerous hospitals which now accept alcoholics on a more restricted basis. Early in the game the newcomer is subjected to a merciful but thorough deflating of his ego. It is brought home to him forcefully that if he continues his uncontrolled drinking -- the only kind he is capable of -- he will die prematurely, or go insane from brain impairment, or both. He is encouraged to apologize to persons he has injured through his drunken behavior; this is a further step in the ego-deflation process and is often as painful to the recipient of the apology as it is to the neophyte A.A. He is further instructed that unless he will acknowledge the existence of a power greater than himself and continually ask this power for help, his campaign for sobriety will probably fail. This is the much-discussed spiritual element in Alcoholics Anonymous. Most members refer to this power as God; some agnostic members prefer to call it Nature, or the Cosmic Power, or by some other label. In any case, it is the key of the A.A. program, and it must be taken not on a basis of mere acceptance or acknowledgment, but of complete surrender.

This surrender is described by a psychiatrist, Dr. Harry M. Tiebout, of Greenwich, Connecticut, as a "conversion" experience, "a psychological event in which there is a major shift in personality manifestation." He adds: "The changes which take place in the conversion process may be summed up by saying that the person who has achieved the positive frame of mind has lost his tense, aggressive, demanding, conscience-ridden self which feels isolated and at odds with the world, and has become, instead, a relaxed, natural, more realistic individual who can dwell in the world on a live-and-let-live basis."

The personality change wrought surrender is far from complete, at first.

Elated by a few weeks of sobriety, the new member often enters what is known as the "Chautauqua phase" -- he is always making speeches at business meetings on what is wrong with the society and how these defects can be remedied. Senior members let him talk himself out of this stage of behavior; if that doesn't work, he may break away and form a group of his own. If he does this, he gradually becomes a quiet veteran himself and other Chautauqua-phase boys either oust him from leadership of his own group or break away themselves and form a new group. By this and other processes of fission the movement spreads. It can stand a lot of outstanding foolishness and still grow.

Drunks, as such, are too individualistic to be organized, and there is no top command in Alcoholics Anonymous to excommunicate, fine or otherwise penalize irrational behavior.

However, services -- such as publishing meeting bulletins, distributing literature, arranging for hospitalization, and so on -- are organized in the larger centers. The local offices, which are operated and financed by the groups thereabouts, are autonomous.

They are governed by representatives elected by the neighborhood groups to a rotating body called the Inter-group. There are no dues; all local expenses are met by a simple passing of the hat at group meetings. A certain body of operational traditions has grown up over the years, and charged with maintaining them -- by exhortation only -- is something called the Alcoholic Foundation, which has offices at 415 Lexington Avenue New York City. For a foundation it acts queerly about money; much of its time is consumed in turning down proffered donations and bequests. One tradition is that A.A. must be kept poor, as money represents power and the society prefers to avoid the temptations which power brings. As a check on the foundation itself, the list of trustees is weighted against the alcoholics by eight to seven.

The nonalcoholic members are two doctors, a sociologist, a magazine editor, a newspaper editor, a penologist, an international lawyer and a retired businessman.

Preserving the principle of anonymity is one of the more touchy tasks of the foundation.

Members are not supposed to be anonymous among their friends or business acquaintances, but they are when appearing before the public -- in print or on radio or television, for example -- as members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

This limited anonymity is considered important to the welfare of the movement, primarily because it encourages members to subordinate their personalities to the principles of A.A. There is also the danger that if a member becomes publicized as a salvaged alcoholic he may stage a spectacular skid and injure the prestige of the society. Actually, anonymity has been

breached only a few dozen times since the movement began, which isn't a bad showing, considering the exhibitionistic nature of the average alcoholic.

By one of the many paradoxes which have characterized its growth, Alcoholics Anonymous absorbed the "keep it poor" principle from one of the world's wealthiest men, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. The society was formed in 1935 after a fortuitous meeting in Akron between a Wall Street broker and an Akron surgeon, both alcoholics of long standing. The broker, who was in Akron on a business mission, had kept sober for several months by jawing drunks -- unsuccessfully -- but his business mission had fallen through and he was aching for a drink. The surgeon, at the time they got together, was quite blotto. Together, over a period of a few weeks, they kept sober and worked out the basic A.A. technique. By 1937, when they had about fifty converts, they began thinking, as all new A.A.'s will, of tremendous plans -- for vast new alcoholic hospitals, squadrons of paid field workers and the literature of mercy pouring off immense presses. Being completely broke themselves, and being promoters at heart, as most alcoholics are, they set their sights on the Rockefeller jack pot.

Rockefeller sent an emissary to Akron to look into the phenomenon at work there, and, receiving a favorable report, granted an audience to a committee of eager-eyed alcoholics. He listened to their personal sagas of resurrection from the gutter and was deeply moved; in fact, he was ready to agree that the A.A.'s had John Barleycorn by the throat. The visitors relaxed and visualized millions dropping into the till. Then the man with the big money bags punctured the vision. He said that too much money might be the ruination of any great moral movement and that he didn't want to be a party to ruining this one. However, he did make a small contribution -- small for Rockefeller -- to tide it over for a few years, and he got some of his friends to contribute a few thousand more.

When the Rockefeller money ran out, A.A. was self-supporting, and it has remained so ever since.

Although A.A. remains in essence what it has always been, many changes have come along in late years. For one thing, the average age of members has dropped from about forty-seven to thirty-five. The society is no longer, as it was originally, merely a haven for the "last gaspers." Because of widespread publicity about alcoholism, alcoholics are discovering earlier what their trouble is.

As A.A. has achieved wider social acceptance, more women are coming in than ever before. Around the country they average 15 per cent of total membership; in New York, where social considerations never did count for much, the A.A.'s are 30 per cent women.

The unmarried woman alcoholic is slow to join, as she generally gets more coddling and protection from her family than a man does; she is what is known

in alcoholic circles as a "bedroom drinker." The married-woman alcoholic has a tougher row to hoe. The wife of an alcoholic, for temperamental and economic reasons, will ordinarily stick by her erring husband to the bitter end. The husband of an alcoholic wife, on the other hand, is usually less tolerant; a few years of suffering are enough to drive him to the divorce court, with the children in tow. Thus the divorced-woman A.A. is a special problem, and her progress in sobriety depends heavily upon the kindness shown her by the other A.A. women. For divorcees, and for other women who may be timid about speaking out in mixed meetings, special female auxiliary groups have been formed in some communities. They work out better than a cynic might think.

Another development is the growth of the sponsor system. A new member gets a sponsor immediately, and it is the function of the sponsor to accompany him to meetings, to see that he gets all the help he needs and to be on call at any time for emergencies. As an emergency usually amounts only to an onset of that old feeling for a bottle, it is customarily resolved by a telephone conversation, although it may involve an after-midnight trip to Ernie's gin mill, whither the neophyte has been shanghaied by a couple of unregenerate old drinking companions. As the membership of A.A. cuts through all social, occupational and economic classes, it is possible to match the sponsor with the sponsored, and this seems to speed up the arrestive process.

During the past decade or so, the society, whose original growth was in large cities, has strongly infiltrated the grass-roots country. Its arrival in this sector was delayed largely because of the greater stigma which attaches to alcoholism in the small town. Because of this stigma and the effect it has on his business, professional or social standing, the small-town alcoholic, reveling in his delusion that nobody knows about his drinking -- when actually it is the gossip of Main Street -- takes frequent "vacations" or "business trips" if he can afford it. He or she -- the banker, the storekeeper, the lawyer, the madam president of the garden club, sometimes even the clergyman -- is actually headed for a receptive hospital or clinic in the nearest large city, where no one will recognize him.

The pattern of small-town growth begins when the questing small-towner seeks out the big-city A.A. outfit and its message catches on with him. To his surprise, he finds that half a dozen drinkers in towns near his own have also been to the fount. On returning to his home, he gets in touch with them and they form an intertown group; or there may be enough drinkers in his own town to begin a group. Though there is a stigma even to getting sober in small towns, it is less virulent than the souse stigma, and word of the movement spreads throughout the county and into adjoining counties. The churches and newspapers take it up and beat the drum for it; relatives of drunks, and doctors who find themselves unable to help their alcoholic patients, gladly unload the problem cases on A.A., and A.A. is glad to get them. The usual intrafellowship quarrel over who is going to run the thing inevitably develops and there are factional splits, but the splits help to

spread the movement, too, and all the big quarrels soon become little ones, and then disappear.

Nowhere is Alcoholics Anonymous carried on with more enthusiasm than in Los Angeles. Unlike most localities, which try to keep separate group membership, for easier handling, Los Angeles likes the theatrical mass-meeting setting, with 1000 or more present. The Los Angeles A.A.'s carry their membership as if it were a social cachet and go strongly for square dances of their own. Jewelry bearing the A.A. monogram, though frowned upon elsewhere, is popular on the Coast. After three months of certified sobriety a member receives a bronze pin, after one year he is entitled to have a ruby chip inserted in the pin and, after three years, a diamond chip. Rings bearing the A.A. letters are widely worn, as well as similarly embellished compacts, watch fobs and pocket pieces.

Texas takes A.A. with enthusiasm too. In the ranch sector, members drive or fly hundreds of miles to attend A.A. square dances and barbecues, bringing their families. In metropolitan areas such as Dallas-Fort Worth -- there are upwards of a dozen oil-millionaire members here -- fancy club quarters have been established in old mansions and the brethren and their families rejoice, dance and drink coffee and soda pop amid expensive furnishings. One Southwestern group recently got its governor to release a life-terminer from the state penitentiary for a week end, so that he could be the guest of honor of the group. "We had a large open meeting," a local member wrote a friend elsewhere in the country, "and many state and county officials attended in order to hear what Herman (the lifer) had to tell about A.A. within the walls. They were deeply impressed and very interested. The next night I gave a lawn party and buffet supper in Herman's honor, with about fifty A.A.'s present. This was the first occasion of this kind in the state and to our knowledge the first in the United States."

Some A.A.'s believe that this group carried the joy business too far. Others think that each section of the country ought to manifest spirit in its own way; anyway, that is the way it usually works out.

The Midwest is businesslike and serious. In the Deep South the A.A.'s do a certain amount of Bible reading and hymn singing. The Northwest and the upper Pacific Coast help support their gathering places with the proceeds from slot machines. New York, a catchall for screwballs and semiscrewballs from all over, is pious about gambling, and won't have it around the place.

New England is temperate in its approach, and its spirit is characterized by the remark of one Yankee who, writing a fellow A.A. about a lake cottage he had just bought, said, "The serenity hangs in great gobs from the trees."

The serene mind is what A.A.'s the world over are driving toward, and an epigrammatic expression of their goal is embodied in a quotation which members carry on cards in their wallets and plaster up on the walls of their

Dear Russ,

Am right sorry for my delay in answering. Lois and I were a long time out of the country and this was followed by an attack of the marathon type of flu that has been around here in New York. We are okay now, however, but I did want to explain my delay.

Now about the business of adding the Lord's Prayer to each A.A. meeting.

This practice probably came from the Oxford Groups who were influential in the early days of A.A. You have probably noted in AA. Comes of Age what the connection of these people in A.A. really was. I think saying the Lord's Prayer was a custom of theirs following the close of each meeting. Therefore it quite easily got shifted into a general custom among us.

Of course there will always be those who seem to be offended by the introduction of any prayer whatever into an ordinary A.A. gathering. Also, it is sometimes complained that the Lord's Prayer is a Christian document.

Nevertheless this Prayer is of such widespread use and recognition that the arguments of its Christian origin seems to be a little farfetched. It is also true that most A.A.s believe in some kind of God and that communication and strength is obtainable through His grace. Since this is the general consensus it seems only right that at least the Serenity Prayer and the Lord's Prayer be used in connection with our meetings. It does not seem necessary to defer to the feelings of our agnostic and atheist newcomers to the extent of completely hiding our light under a bushel.

However, around here, the leader of the meeting usually asks those to join him in the Lord's Prayer who feel that they would care to do so. The worst that happens to the objectors is that they have to listen to it. This is doubtless a salutary exercise in tolerance at their stage of progress.

So that's the sum of the Lord's Prayer business as I recall it. Your letter made me wonder in just what connection you raise the question.

Meanwhile, please know just how much Lois and I treasure the friendship of you both. May Providence let our paths presently cross one of these days.

Devotedly yours,

Bill Wilson

WGW/ni

Mr. Russ

use and took its place alongside our two other favorites, the Lord's Prayer and the Prayer of St. Francis."

Thus did the "accidental" noticing of an unattributed prayer, printed alongside a simple obituary of an unknown individual, open the way toward the prayer's daily use by thousands upon thousands of A.A.s worldwide.

But despite years of research by numerous individuals, the exact origin of the prayer is shrouded in overlays of history, even mystery. Moreover, every time a researcher appears to uncover the definitive source, another one crops up to refute the former's claim, at the same time that it raises new, intriguing facts. What is undisputed is the claim of authorship by the theologian Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, who recounted to interviewers on several occasions that he had written the prayer as a "tag line" to a sermon he had delivered on Practical Christianity. Yet even Dr. Niebuhr added at least a touch of doubt to his claim, when he told one interviewer, "Of course, it may have been spooking around for years, even centuries, but I don't think so. I honestly do believe that I wrote it myself."

Early in World War II, with Dr. Niebuhr's permission, the prayer was printed on cards and distributed to the troops by the U.S.O. By then it had also been reprinted by the National Council of Churches, as well as Alcoholics Anonymous.

Niebuhr was quite accurate in suggesting that the prayer may have been "spooking around" for centuries. "No one can tell for sure who first wrote the Serenity Prayer," writes Bill in *A.A. Comes of Age*. "Some say it came from the early Greeks; others think it was from the pen of an anonymous English poet; still others claim it was written by an American Naval officer... ." Other attributions have gone as far afield as ancient Sanskrit texts, Aristotle, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas and Spinoza. One A.A. member came across the Roman philosopher Cicero's *Six Mistakes of Man*, one of which reads: "The tendency to worry about things that cannot be changed or corrected."

No one has actually found the prayer's text among the writings of these alleged, original sources. What are probably truly ancient, as with the above quote from Cicero, are the prayer's themes of acceptance, courage to change what can be changed and the free letting go of what is out of one's ability to change.

The search for pinpointing origins of the prayer has been like the peeling of an onion. For example, in July 1964, the A.A. Grapevine received a clipping of an article that had appeared in the *Paris Herald Tribune*, by the paper's correspondent in Koblenz, then in West Germany. "In a rather dreary hall of a converted hotel, overlooking the Rhine at Koblenz," the correspondent wrote, is a tablet inscribed with the following words:

"God give me the detachment to accept those things I cannot alter;

the courage to alter those things I can alter;

and the wisdom to distinguish the one thing from the other."

These words were attributed, the correspondent wrote, to an 18th century pietist, Friedrich Oetinger (1702-1782). Moreover, the plaque was affixed to a wall in a hall where modern day troops and company commanders of the new German army were trained "in the principles of management and . . . behavior of the soldier citizen in a democratic state."

Here, at last, thought A.A. researchers, was concrete evidence -- quote, author, date -- of the Serenity Prayer's original source. That conviction went unchallenged for fifteen years. Then in 1979 came material, shared with G.S.O.'s Beth K., by Peter T., of Berlin. Peter's research threw the authenticity of 18th century authorship out the window. But it also added more tantalizing facts about the plaque's origin.

"The first form of the prayer," Beth wrote back, originated with Boethius, the Roman philosopher (480-524 A.D.), and author of the book, *Consolations of Philosophy*. The prayer's thoughts were used from then on by "religious-like people who had to suffer first by the English, later the Prussian puritans . . . then the Pietists from southwest Germany . . . then A.A.s . . . and through them, the West Germans after the Second World War."

Moreover, Beth continued, after the war, a north German University professor, Dr. Theodor Wilhelm, who had started a revival of spiritual life in West Germany, had acquired the "little prayer" from Canadian soldiers. He had written a book in which he had included the prayer, without attribution, but which resulted in the prayer's appearance in many different places, such as army officer's halls, schools and other institutions. The professor's *nom de plume*? Friedrich Oetinger, the 18th century pietist! Wilhelm had apparently selected the pseudonym Oetinger out of admiration of his south German forebears.

Back in 1957, another G.S.O. staff member, Anita R., browsing in a New York bookstore, came upon a beautifully bordered card, on which was printed:

"Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, give us Serenity to accept what cannot be changed, Courage to change what should be changed, and Wisdom to know the one from the other; through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

The card, which came from a bookshop in England, called it the "General's Prayer," dating it back to the fourteenth century! There are still other claims, and no doubt more unearthings will continue for years to come. In any event, Mrs. Reinhold Niebuhr told an interviewer that her husband was definitely the prayer's author, that she had seen the piece of paper on

which he had written it, and that her husband -now that there were numerous variations of wording - "used and preferred" the following form:

"God give us grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed, Courage to change the things which should be changed,

and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other."

While all of these searchings are intriguing, challenging, even mysterious, they pale in significance when compared to the fact that, for fifty years, the prayer has become so deeply imbedded into the heart and soul of A.A. thinking, living, as well as its philosophy, that one could almost believe that the prayer originated in the A.A. experience itself.

Bill made this very point years ago, in thanking an A.A. friend for the plaque upon which the prayer was inscribed: "In creating A.A., the Serenity Prayer has been a most valuable building block-indeed a corner-stone."

And speaking of cornerstones, and mysteries and "coincidences"-the building where G.S.O. is now located borders on a stretch of New York City's 120th St., between Riverside Drive and Broadway (where the Union Theological Seminary is situated). It's called Reinhold Niebuhr Place.

(A long version of the Prayer)

God grant me the SERENITY to accept the things I cannot change;

COURAGE to change the things I can; and WISDOM to know the difference.

Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time;

accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it: Trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His Will; that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with Him forever in the next. Amen

(Another long version of the Prayer from Ireland)

God take and receive my liberty, my memory, my understanding and will, All that I am and have He has given me.

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can,

And wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,

produce

a history of the group is unknown. As a part of this project he contacted

Margaret B., [Bobbie Burger] secretary for the Alcoholic Foundation, for any information she might have concerning the origins of the Washington Group. He also asked her if she had any information on the history of the Serenity Prayer.

Margaret replied:

"... I think the true story of the little serenity prayer would be interesting to everyone. I can only tell that, too, from my standpoint, but we've heard some very interesting data from all over the world. We first saw those few potent lines in the obit column of the Herald Tribune in June of 1941. It was addressed "To Mother," and signed, "Good bye, Your Son." We tried to dream of the story in back of it and came up with one which made a little sense. We thought perhaps it was put in the paper by a boy who was leaving home suddenly and wanted to get a message to his mother on some difference of opinion they had had. One of the members, Horace C., took the clipping from the papers and had 100 cards made up. Those of us who were there the night we first saw it, each got a card and I have my original one.

The balance Horace gave to Ruth Hock to send out to the A.A.'s with whom she was corresponding. Not long ago, one of those original cards came in the mail to me here from a man in Japan, who said someone gave it to him while he was in the Army and he thought that Alcoholics Anonymous might be interested in the saying. Quite a few of these little cards have been returned to us from time to time, as "originating" elsewhere. Only last week, one of our members wrote and said that his young daughter had found this little prayer in her Catholic Sunday School book. We've also heard that it appears in an early Episcopal prayer book.

One of our members in New York says that he can trace it back to Aristotle.

Someday, it might be fun to really find the background of this prayer, but I can give you its introduction into A.A. in the spring of 1941.

The Washington Group was instrumental in a number of A.A. practices and the development of traditions. The 100 little cards mentioned in Margaret's

letter were made possible by Henry S., whose family owned a printing business. This was the same Henry who in 1948 started to write the Washington Group history. There is also reason to believe that the Twelve Steps as we know them and the little cards that they are printed on were, in part, the product of Fitz M. and Henry S. of the Washington Group.

A.A. program. It is by this very exertion of the will that the alcoholic corresponds with the grace by which his drinking obsession can be expelled.

(N.C.C.A. 'Blue Book', Vol.12, 1960)

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+++Message 20. "Let's Ask Bill," #2 -- Do alcoholics as a class differ from other people?

From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/5/2002 3:43:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - Do alcoholics as a class differ from other people?

A - Some years ago the doctors began to look at Alcoholics Anonymous and they got about thirty of us together and they said to themselves "Well, now that these fellows are in A.A., and they won't lie so badly, and maybe for the first time we'll get a good look at what the interior of a drunk is like." So a number of us were examined at great length by psychiatrists, and all sorts of tests taken, and the object of this particular inquiry was to see whether alcoholics as a class differed from other people, and if they did, just why and how much.

A number of us were invited to attend the conclave, and a number of learned papers were read, and finally one of these physicians (a very noted one -- the meeting took place at the New York Academy of Medicine) began to sum up what he thought the conclusion which they had arrived at was this: that the alcoholic is emotionally on the childish side. That the alcoholic is a person who is more sensitive emotionally than the average person. And then, they ascribed another quality to us -- they used the word "grandiosity," they were grandiose (meaning by that that as a type we were what you might call "All of nothing people.") Someone once described it by saying all alcoholics hanker for the moon when perhaps the stars would have done just as well. As a class, we're like that, said the doctors. (Memphis, Tenn., Sept. 18-20, 1947)

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+++Message 21. "Let's Ask Bill," #3 -- Are Alcoholics neurotic?

From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/5/2002 3:49:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - Are alcoholics neurotic?

A - It is possible that about half our members, had they not been drinkers, would have appeared in ordinary life to be normal people. The other half would have appeared as more or less pronounced neurotics (N. Y. State J. Med., Vol.44, Aug. 1944)

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+++Message 22. "Let"s Ask Bill," #4 -- What is alcoholism?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/5/2002 3:52:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - What is alcoholism?

A - Alcoholism is a malady; that something is dead wrong with us physically; that our reaction to alcohol has changed; that something has been very wrong with us emotionally; that our alcoholic habit has become an obsession, an obsession which can no longer reckon even with death itself. Once firmly set, one is not able to turn it aside. In other words, a sort of allergy of the body which guarantees that we shall die if we drink, an obsession of the mind which guarantees that we shall go on drinking. Such has been the alcoholic dilemma time out of mind, and it is altogether probable that even those alcoholics who did not wish to go on drinking, not more than five out of one hundred have ever been able to stop before A.A. (Yale Summer School of Alcohol Studies, June 1945).

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+++Message 23. "Let"s Ask Bill," #5 -- What is meant by mental obsession?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/5/2002 4:07:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - What is meant by mental obsession and the obsessional character of alcoholism?

A - Well, as I understand it, we are all born with the freedom of choice. The degree of this varies from person to person, and from area to area in our lives. In the case of neurotic people, our instincts take on certain patterns and directions, sometimes so compulsive they cannot be broken by any ordinary effort of the will. The alcoholic's compulsion to drink is like that. As a smoker, for example, I have a deeply ingrained habit - I'm almost an addict. But I do not think that this habit is an actual obsession.

Doubtless it could be broken by an act of my own will. If badly enough hurt, I could in all probability give up tobacco. Should smoking repeatedly land me in Bellevue Hospital, I doubt that I would make the trip many times before quitting. But with my alcoholism, well, that was something else again. No amount of desire to stop, no amount of punishment, could enable me to quit. What was once a habit of drinking became an obsession of drinking -- genuine lunacy.

Perhaps a little more should be said about the obsessional character of alcoholism. When our fellowship was about three years old some of us called on Dr. Lawrence Kolb, then Assistant Surgeon General of the United States. He said that our report of progress had given him his first hope for alcoholics in general. Not long before, the U.S. Public Health Department had thought of trying to do something about the alcoholic situation. After a careful survey of the obsessional character of our malady, this had been given up. Indeed, Dr. Koib felt that dope addicts had a far better chance.

Accordingly, the government had built a hospital for their treatment at Lexington, Kentucky. But for alcoholics -- well, there simply wasn't any use at all, so he thought.

Nevertheless, many people still go on insisting that the alcoholic is not a sick man -- that he is simply weak or willful, and sinful. Even today we often hear the remark "That drunk could get well if he wanted to."

There is no doubt, too, that the deeply obsessional character of the alcoholic's drinking is obscured by the fact that drinking is a socially acceptable custom. By contrast, stealing, or let us say shop-lifting, is not. Practically everybody has heard of that form of lunacy known as kleptomania. Oftentimes kleptomaniacs are splendid people in all other respects. Yet they are under an absolute compulsion to steal -- just for the kick. A kleptomaniac enters a store a pockets a piece of merchandise. He is arrested and lands in the police station. The judge gives him a jail term. He is stigmatized and humiliated. Just like the alcoholic, he swears that

never, never will he do this again.

On his release from the jail, he wanders down the street past a department store. Unaccountably he is drawn inside. He sees, for example, a red tin fire truck, a child's toy. He instantly forgets all about his misery in the jail. He begins to rationalize. He says, "Well, this little fire engine is of no real value. The store won't miss it." So he pockets the toy, the store detective collars him, he is right back in the clink. Everybody recognizes this type of stealing as sheer lunacy.

Now, let's compare this behavior with that of an alcoholic. He, too, has landed in jail. He has already lost family and friends. He suffers heavy stigma and guilt. He has been physically tortured by his hangover. Like the kleptomaniac he swears that he will never get into this fix again. Perhaps he actually knows that he is an alcoholic. He may understand just what that means and may be fully aware of what the fearful risk of that first drink is.

Upon his release from jail, the alcoholic behaves just like the kleptomaniac. He passes a bar and at the first temptation may say, "No, I must not go inside there; liquor is not for me." But when lie arrives at the next drinking place, he is gripped by a rationalization. Perhaps he says, "Well, one beer won't hurt me. After all, beer isn't liquor." Completely unmindful of his recent miseries, he steps inside. He takes that fatal first drink. The following day, the police have him again. His fellow citizens continue to say that he is weak or willful. Actually he is just as crazy as

the kleptomaniac ever was. At this stage, his free will in regard to alcoholism has evaporated. He cannot very well be held accountable for his behavior. (The N.C.C.A. 'Blue Book', Vol. 12, 1960)

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++++Message 24. "Let"s Ask Bill," #6 -- Is A.A. based totally on your own experiences?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/5/2002 4:24:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - Is A.A. based totally on your own experiences?

A - Let's look. Dr. Bob recovered. Then we two set to work on alcoholics in Akron. Well, again came this tendency to preach, again this feeling that it

has to be done in some particular way, again discouragement, so our progress was slow. But little by little we were forced to analyze our experiences and say, "This approach didn't work very well with that fellow. Why not? Let's try to put ourselves in his shoes and stop this preaching and see how he might be approached if we were he." That began to lead us to the idea that A.A. should be no set of fixed ideas, but should be a growing thing, growing out of experience. After a while we began to reflect: "This wonderful blessing that has come to us, from what does it get its origin?" It was a spiritual awakening growing out of adversity. So then we began to look harder for our mistakes, to correct them, to capitalize on our errors.

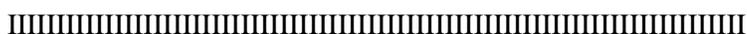
Little by little we began to grow so that there were 5 of us at the end of that first year; at the end of the second year 15; at the end of the third 40; and at the end of the fourth year, 100.

During those first four years most of us had another bad form of intolerance. As we commenced to have a little success, I am afraid our pride got the better of us and it was our tendency to forget about our friends. We were very likely to say, "Well, those doctors didn't do anything for us, and as for these sky pilots, well, they just don't know the score." And we became snobbish and patronizing.

Then we read a book by Dr. Carrell (Man, The Unknown). From that book came

an argument which is now a part of our system. Dr. Carrel wrote, in effect; The world is full of analysts. We have tons of ore in the mines and we have all kinds of building materials above ground. Here is a man specializing in this, there is a man specializing in that, and another one in something else. The modern world is full of wonderful analysts and diggers, but there are very few who deliberately synthesize, who bring together different materials, who assemble new things. We are much too shy on synthetic thinking -- the kind of thinking that's willing to reach out now here and now there to see if something new cannot be evolved.

On reading that book some of us realized that was just what we had been groping toward. We had been trying to build out of our own experiences. At this point we thought, "Let's reach into other people's experiences. Let's go back to our friends the doctors, let's go back to our friends the preachers, the social workers, all those who have been concerned with us, and again review what they have got above ground and bring that into the synthesis. And let us, where we can, bring them in where they will fit." So our process of trial and error began and at the end of four years, the material was cast in the form of a book known as Alcoholics Anonymous. (Yale Summer School of Alcohol Studies, June 1945)



Now, when one alcoholic who has got well talks to another who hasn't, such objections seldom arise, for the new man sees in a few minutes that he is talking to a kindred spirit, one who understands. Neither can the recovered A.A. member be deceived, for he knows every trick, every rationalization of the drinking game. So the usual barriers go down with a crash. Mutual confidence, that indispensable of all therapy, follows as surely as day does night. And if this absolutely necessary rapport is not forthcoming at once it is almost certain to develop when the new man has met other A.A.s. Someone will, as we say, "click with him."

As soon as that happens we have a good chance of selling our prospect those very essentials which you doctors have so long advocated, and the problem drinker finds our society a congenial place to work them out for himself and his fellow alcoholic. For the first time in years he thinks himself understood and he feels useful; uniquely useful, indeed, as he takes his own turn promoting the recovery of others. No matter what the outer world thinks of him, he knows he can get well, for he stands in the midst of scores of cases worse than his own who have attained the goal. And there are other cases precisely like his own -- a pressure of testimony which usually overwhelms him. If he doesn't succumb at once, he will almost surely do so later when Barleycorn builds a still hotter fire under him, thus blocking off all his other carefully planned exits from dilemma.

The speaker recalls seventy-five failures during the first three years of A.A. -- people we utterly gave up on. During the past seven years sixty-two of these people have returned to us, most of them making good. They tell us they returned

because they knew they would die or go mad if they didn't. Having tried everything else within their means and having exhausted their pet rationalizations, they came back and took their medicine. That is why we never need to evangelize alcoholics. If still in their right minds they come back, once they have been well exposed to A.A.

Now to recapitulate, Alcoholics Anonymous has made two major contributions to the programs of psychiatry and religion. These are, it seems to us, the long missing links in the chain of recovery:

1. Our ability, as ex-drinkers, to secure the confidence of the new man -- to "build a transmission line into him."
2. The provision of an understanding society of ex-drinkers in which the newcomer can successfully apply the principles of medicine and religion to himself and others.

Of alcoholics who stay with us and really try, 50% get sober at once and stay that way, 25% do so after some relapses and the remainder show some improvement. But many problem drinkers do quit A.A. after a brief contact, many, three or four out of five. Some are too psychopathic or damaged. But the majority have powerful rationalizations yet to be broken down. Exactly this does happen, providing they get what A.A. calls a "good exposure," on first contact. Alcohol then burns such a hot fire under them that they are driven back to us, often years later. They tell us that they had to return; it was A.A. or else. Such cases leave us the agreeable impression that half of our original exposures will eventually return, most of them to recover. (Amer. J. Psychiatry Vol. 106, 1949)

A - About two thousand recoveries now take place each month. Of those alcoholics who wish to get well and are emotionally capable of trying our method, 50 per cent recover immediately, 25 per cent after a few backslides. The remainder are improved if they continue active in A.A. Of the total who approach us, it is probable that only 25 per cent become A.A. members on the first contact. A list of seventy-five of our early failures today discloses that 70 returned to A.A. after one to ten years. We did not bring them back; they came of their own accord. (N.Y. State J. Med., Vol.50, July 1950)

A - As we gained in size, we also gained in effectiveness. The recovery rate went up. Of all those who really tried A.A., 50 per cent made it at once, 25 per cent finally made it; and the rest, if they stayed with us, were definitely improved. That percentage has since held, even with those who first wrote their stories in the original edition of "Alcoholics Anonymous."

In fact, 75 per cent of these finally achieved sobriety. Only 25 per cent died or went mad. Most of those still alive have been sober for an average of twenty years.

In our early days and since, we have found that great numbers of alcoholics approach us and then turn away -- maybe three out of five, today. But we have

happily found out that the majority of them later return, provided they are not too psychopathic or too brain damaged. Once they have learned from the lips of other alcoholics that they are beset by an often fatal malady, their further drinking only turns up the screw. Eventually they are forced back into A.A., they must or die. Sometimes this happens years after the first exposure. The ultimate recovery rate in A.A. is therefore a lot higher than we at first thought it could be.

Yet we must humbly reflect that Alcoholics Anonymous has so far made only a scratch upon the total problem of alcoholism. Here in the United States, we have helped to sober up scarcely five per cent of the total alcoholic

Alcoholics Anonymous itself?

A - Some of us used to think so, but several experiences of quick expansion have largely dissipated that fear. We had a striking example at Cleveland, Ohio. In the fall of 1939 Cleveland had, perhaps, 30 members. Most of them had become Alcoholics Anonymous by traveling to the nearby city of Akron where our first group had taken root in the summer of 1935. At this juncture the Cleveland Plain Dealer published a striking and forceful series of articles about us. Placed on the editorial page, these pieces told the people of Cleveland that Alcoholics Anonymous worked; that it cost nothing; that it stood ready to help any alcoholic in town who really wanted to get well. Cleveland quickly became Alcoholics Anonymous conscious. Hundreds of inquiries by phone and mail descended upon the Plain Dealer and the expectant but nervous members of Alcoholics Anonymous. The rush was so great that new members sober themselves but a week or two, had to be used to instruct the still newer arrivals. Several private hospitals threw open their doors to cope with the emergency and were so please with the result that they have cooperated with us ever since. To the great surprise of everyone, this rapid growth, hectic though it was, did prove very successful. Within 90 days the original group of 30 had expanded to 300; in six months we had about 500; and within two years we had mushroomed to 1200 members distributed among a score of groups in the Cleveland area. Although we have no precise figures, it is probably fair to say that 3 out of 4 who came during that period, and who have since remained with the groups, have recovered from their alcoholism. (Quart. 3. Stud. Alc., Vol.6(2), September 1945)

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+++Message 29. "Let"s Ask Bill" No. 11 -- How can A.A. best assure its continued existence?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/5/2002 5:16:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

This installment in the series is a very powerful response by Bill W.

Q - How can A.A. best assure its continued existence?

A - Since the beginning of recorded time, many societies and nations of civilizations have passed in review. In those great ones that have left their mark for good, in contrast with those who have left their mark for evil, there has always been a sense of history, a true and high constant purpose, and there has always been a sense of destiny.

In the societies which failed to leave a bright mark in the annals of the world, there was always a false or boastful sense of history, always a mistaken or inadequate purpose and always the presumption of an infinite, a glorious and an exclusive destiny.

In the societies that left their mark of goodness on time, the sense of history was not a matter for pride or for glory; it was the substance of the learning of the experience of the past. In the purpose of such a society there was always truth and constancy, but never a supposition that the society had apprehended all of the truth -- or the superior truth. And in the sense of destiny there was no conceit, no supposition that a society or nation or culture would last forever and go on to greater glories. But there was always a sense of duty to be fulfilled, whatever destiny the society might be assigned by providence for the betterment of the world.

This is the crossroads at which we in A.A. stand. This is a good time to re-examine how well we have looked upon our A.A. history and how much we

have profited by it, what false insights or false glories we may have been extracting from history -- to our future detriment. It is a moment to examine the purpose of this Society. Indeed, we are very lucky to be able to state as the nucleus of that purpose a single word: sobriety.

Quite early we saw, however, that sobriety in abstinence from alcohol could never be attained unless there was sobriety and more quietude in the false motivation that underlay our drinking.

When the Twelve Steps were cast up -- without any real experience and therefore under some Guidance, surely -- we were given keys to sobriety in its wider implications. We have been blessed with a concrete definition of purpose but, for all its concreteness, we could still abuse it and misuse it in a very natural way.

Some times we begin to think that perhaps, according to Scriptural promise, the first shall be last and the last -- meaning us -- shall really be first. That would indeed be a very dangerous presumption and never should we indulge it. If we do, we shall compete in history with other societies who have been ill-advised enough to suppose that they had a monopoly on truth or were in some way superior to other attempts of men to think and to associate in love and in harmony.

We may look out upon our destiny with no violation of our principle that we are to live one day at a time. We mean that, emotionally, each in his personal life is never to repine upon the past glory too much, in the present, or presume upon the future. We shall attend to the day's business but we shall try to apprehend ever more truth from the lessons of our history, not the lessons of our successes but the lessons of our defections,



From Jim Blair.

Here is installment No. 13 in the series. It has multiple responses.

Q - What effect did Ebby's message have on you?

A - Well, by this time I knew how hopeless my alcoholism was, and yet I still rebelled -- the idea of a dependency on some intangible God who might not even be there. Oh, if I could swallow it, but could I! I went on drinking for a number of days and gradually I got jittery enough to think about the hospital and then it came to me "Of a sudden" one day -- "Fool! -- why should you question how you're going to get well, why should beggars be choosers? If you had a cancer and you were sure of it and your physician said "This is so malignant that we can't touch it with our art and even if your physician came along with the improbable story that there were many who got over cancer by standing on their head in the public square crying 'Amen' and if he could really make a case that it was so, yes Bill Wilson, if you had cancer, you too would be out in the public square ignominiously standing on your head and crying 'Amen'- anything to stop the growth of those cells and that would be the first priority, and your pride would have to go."

And then I asked myself "Is my case different now? Have I not an allergy of the body; have I not a cancer of the emotions -- yes, and maybe I have a cancer of the soul which has resulted in an obsession which condemns me to drink and an increasing tolerance of liquor which condemns me to go mad or die? Yes, I'm going to try this. And then there was one more flicker of obstinacy when I said to myself, "But I don't want any of these evangelical experiences, I mean it will have to be a kind of intellectual religion that I'll get, so just to be sure that I don't go into my emotional tizzy, I believe I'll go up to see dear old Dr. Silkworth and have him dry me out.

(Memphis, Tenn., Sept. 18-20, 1947)

A - What then did happen at that kitchen table? Perhaps this speculation were better left to medicine and religion. I confess I do not know. Possibly conversion will never be fully understood.

My friend's story had generated mixed emotions; I was drawn and revolted by turns. My solitary drinking went on, but I could not forget his visit. Several themes coursed in my mind: First, that his evident state of release was strangely and immensely convincing. Second, that he had been pronounced hopeless by competent medicos. Third, that those old-age precepts, when transmitted by him, had struck me with great power. Fourth, I could not, and would not, go along with any God concept. No conversion nonsense for me. Thus did I ponder. Trying to divert my thoughts, I found it no use. By cords of understanding, suffering, and simple verity, another alcoholic had bound

For many years, my old friend Ebby was on the wagon and off. Sometimes he could stay sober for a year or more. He tried living with Lois and me for another considerable period but apparently this was of no help. Maybe we actually hindered him. As A.A. began to grow his position became difficult. For a long time things went from bad to worse.

About six years ago the groups down in Texas decided to try their hand. Ebby was shipped non-stop to Dallas and placed in an A.A. drying out place. In these new surroundings in Texas, far from his old failures, he has made a splendid recovery. Excepting for one slip which occurred about a year after his arrival down there he has been bone dry ever since. This is one of the deepest satisfactions that has ever come to me since A.A. started and many another A.A. can say the same. (N.C.C.A. 'Blue Book,' Vol.12, 1960)

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++++Message 33. "Let's Ask Bill" No. 15 -- Could you describe your spiritual experience?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/5/2002 5:55:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - Could you describe your spiritual experience for us and your understanding of what happened?

A - In December 1934, I appeared at Towns Hospital, New York. My old friend,

Dr. William Silkworth shook his head. Soon free of my sedation and alcohol I

felt horribly depressed. My friend Ebby turned up and although glad to see him, I shrank a little as I feared evangelism, but nothing of the sort happened. After some small talk, I again asked him for his neat little formula for recovery. Quietly and sanely and without the slightest pressure he told me and then he left.

Lying there in conflict, I dropped into the blackest depression I had ever known. Momentarily my prideful depression was crushed. I cried out, "Now I am ready to do anything -- anything to receive what my friend Ebby has." Though I certainly didn't expect anything, I did make this frantic appeal, "If there be a God, will He show Himself!" The result was instant, electric, beyond description. The place seemed to light up, blinding white. I knew only ecstasy and seemed on a mountain. A great wind blew, enveloping and

penetrating me. To me, it was not of air but of Spirit. Blazing, there came the tremendous thought, "you are a free man." Then the ecstasy subsided. Still on the bed, I now found myself in a new world of consciousness which was suffused by a Presence. One with the Universe, a great peace came over me. I thought, "So this is the God of the preachers, this is the great Reality." But soon my so-called reason returned, my modern education took over and I thought I must be crazy and I became terribly frightened.

Dr. Silkworth, a medical saint if ever there was one, came in to hear my trembling account of this phenomenon. After questioning me carefully, he assured me that I was not mad and that perhaps I had undergone a psychic experience which might solve my problem. Skeptical man of science though he then was, this was most kind and astute. If he had of said, "hallucination," I might now be dead. To him I shall ever be eternally grateful.

Good fortune pursued me. Ebby brought me a book entitled "Varieties of Religious Experience" and I devoured it. Written by William James, the psychologist, it suggests that the conversion experience can have objective reality. Conversion does alter motivation and it does semi-automatically enable a person to be and to do the formerly impossible. Significant it was, that marked conversion experience came mostly to individuals who knew complete defeat in a controlling area of life. The book certainly showed variety but whether these experiences were bright or dim, cataclysmic or gradual, theological or intellectual in bearing, such conversions did have a common denominator -- they did change utterly defeated people. So declared William James, the father of modern psychology. The shoe fitted and I have tried to wear it ever since.

For drunks, the obvious answer was deflation at depth, and more of it. That seemed plain as a pikestaff. I had been trained as an engineer, so the news of this authoritative psychologist meant everything to me. This eminent scientist of the mind had confirmed everything that Dr. Jung had said, and had extensively documented all he claimed. Thus William James firmed up the foundation on which I and many others had stood all these years. I haven't had a drink of alcohol since 1934. (N.Y. Med. Soc. Alcsm., April 28, 1958)

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Dr. William Silkworth shook his head. Soon free of my sedation and alcohol I felt horribly depressed. My friend Ebby turned up and although glad to see him, I shrank a little as I feared evangelism, but nothing of the sort happened. After some small talk, I again asked him for his neat little formula for recovery. Quietly and sanely and without the slightest pressure he told me and then he left.

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worked very hard with Freddy for three years, but alas, he remained drunk for eleven years afterward.

Other people came to us out of those Oxford Group audiences. We began to go

down to Calvary Mission, an adjunct of the church in those days, and there we found a bountiful supply of real tough nuts to crack. We began to invite them to Clinton Street, and at this point the Groupers felt that we were over doing the drunk business. It seemed that they had the idea of saving the world and besides they'd had a bad time with us. Sam and his associates, he now laughingly tells me, were very much put out that they gathered a big batch of drunks in Calvary House, hoping for a miracle. They put them upstairs in those nice apartments and had them completely surrounded with sweetness and light but the drunks imported a flock of bottles and one of them pitched a shoe out of the apartment window and it went through a stained-glass window of the church. So the drunks were not exactly popular when the Wilsons showed up.

At any rate, we began to be with alcoholic all the time, but nothing happened for six months. Like the Groupers, we nursed them. In fact, over in Clinton Street, we developed in the next two or three years something like a boiler factory, a sort of clinic, a hospital, and a free boarding house, from which practically no one issued sober, but we had a pile of experience.

We began to learn the game, and after our withdrawal from the Oxford Group -- a year and a half from the time I sobered in 1934 -- we began to hold meetings of the few who had sobered up. I suppose that was really the first A.A. meeting. The book had not yet been written. We did not even call it Alcoholics Anonymous; people asked who we were and we said, "Well, we're a nameless bunch of alcoholics." I suppose that use of the word "nameless" sort of led us to the idea of anonymity, which was later clapped on the book at the time it was titled.

There were great doings in Clinton Street. I remember those meetings down in the parlor so well. Our eager discussion, our hopes, our fears -- and our fears were very great. When anyone in those days had been sober a few months and slipped, it was a terrific calamity. I'll never forget the day, a year-and-a-half after he came to stay with us, that Ebby fell over, and we all said, "Perhaps this is going to happen to all of us." Then, we began to ask ourselves why it was, and some of us pushed on.

At Clinton Street, I did most of the talking, but Lois did most of the work, and the cooking, and the loving of those early folks. Oh my! The episodes we had there! I was away once on a business trip (I'd briefly got back into business), one of the drunks was sleeping on the lounge in the parlor. Lois woke up in the middle of the night, hearing a great commotion. One of the drunks had gotten a bottle and was drunk; he had also gotten into the kitchen and had drunk a bottle of maple syrup and he had fallen into the

Groups, which have since as such, passed off the scene and have left us with a rich heritage of both what and what not to do. Anyway, a friend comes to me and I go to other alcoholics and try to make them my friends and some did become my friends but not a damn one got sober.

Then came that little man that we who live in this area saw so much, him with the kind blue eyes and white hair, Doc Silkworth. You'll remember that Doc said to me, "Look Bill, you're preaching at these people too much. You've got the cart before the horse. This 'white flash' experience of yours scares those drunks to death. Why don't you put the fear of God into them first? You're always talking about James and The Varieties of Religious Experiences and how you have to deflate people before they can know God, how they must have humility. So, why don't you use the tool of the medical hopelessness of alcoholism for practically all those involved. Why don't you talk to the drunk about that allergy they've got and that obsession that makes them keep on drinking and guarantees that they will die? Maybe when you punch it into them hard it will deflate them enough so that they will find what you found."

So, another indispensable ingredient was added to what is now this successful synthesis and that was just about the time I set out for Akron on a business trip. It had been suggested by the family that it was about time that I went back to work. I went out there on this venture which fortunately fell through. I was in the hotel and was tempted to drink and needed to look up another alcoholic, not to save him but to save myself, for I had found that working with others had a vast bearing on my own sobriety.

Then we were brought together by a woman who was the last person on a long list of people I had been referred to. The only one who had time enough and who cared enough was a woman in Akron, herself no alcoholic. Her name was Henrietta Seiberling. She invited me out to her house and became interested at once. She called the Smiths and we learned that Smithy had come home with a potted plant for dear old Annie and he put it on the dining room table, but as Annie said that, just then, he was on the floor and they could not come over at that moment.

You remember how he put in an appearance the next day. Haggard, worn, not wishing to stay and how we then talked for three hours. Now I have often heard Dr. Bob say "it was not so much my spirituality that affected him," he was a student of those things and I certainly know that he was never affected by any superior morality on my part. So, what did affect him? Well, it was this ammunition that dear old Doc Silkworth had given me, the allergy plus the obsession. The God of science declaring that the malady for most of us is hopeless so far as our personal power is concerned. As Dr. Bob put it in his story in the book "here came the first man into my life that seemed to know what this thing alcoholism was all about."

Well, if it wasn't the dose of spirituality I poured into Dr. Bob, it was that dose of indispensable medicine to this movement, the dose of hopelessness so far as one doing this alone is concerned. The bottle of medicine that Dr. Silkworth had given me that I poured down the old grizzly bear's throat. That's what I used to call him.

Well, he gagged on it a little, got drunk once more and that was the end. Then he and I set out looking for drunks, we had to look some up. There is a little remembered part of the story. The story usually goes that we immediately called up the local city hospital and asked the nurse for a case but that isn't quite true. There was a preacher who lived down the street and he was beset at this time by a drunk and his name was Eddie and we talked to Eddie and it turned out that Eddie was not only a drunk but something which in that high faluting language is now called a manic-depressive, not very manic either, mostly depressed. Eddie was married with two or three kids, worked down at the Goodrich Company and his depression caused him to drink and the only thing that would stop the depression was apparently baking soda. When he got a sour stomach, he got depressed so he was not only drinking alcohol but we estimated that in the past few years he had taken a ton of baking soda. Well, we tried for a while, of course, we thought we had to be good Samaritans so we got up some dough to try to keep the family going, we got Eddie back on the job but Eddie kept right on with the alcohol and baking soda both. Finally, Dr. Bob and Annie took Eddie

along with me into their house, a pattern which my dear Lois followed out to the nth degree later, and we tried to treat Eddie and my mind goes back so vividly to that evening when Eddie really blew his top. I don't know whether it was the manic side or the depressive side but boy did he blow it. Annie and I were sitting at the kitchen table and Eddie seized the butcher knife and was about to do us in when Annie said very quietly, " Well Eddie, I don't think your going to do this." He didn't. Thereafter, Eddie was in the State Asylum for a period of a dozen or more years but believe it or not he showed up at the funeral of Dr. Bob in the fall of 1950 as sober as a judge and he had been that way for three years.

So even that obscure little talk about Eddie made the grade. So then Dr. Bob and I talked to the man on the bed, Bill Dotson, who some of you have heard. A.A. No.3. Here was another man who said he couldn't get well, his case was too tough, much tougher than ours besides he knew all about religion. Well, here it was, one drunk talking with another, in fact, two drunks talking to one. The very next day the man on the bed got out of his bed and he picked it up and walked and he has stayed sober ever since. A.A. No.3, the man on the bed.

So the spark that was to become Alcoholics Anonymous was struck. I came back to New York after having taken away a great deal from Akron. I never can

forget those mornings and the nights at the Smiths. I can never forget Annie reading to us two or three drunks who were hanging on, out of the bible. I couldn't possibly say how many times we read Corinthians on love, how many times we read the entire book of James with loving emphasis on that line "Faith without works is dead." It did make a very deep impression on me, so from the very beginning there was reciprocity, everyone was a teacher and everyone was a pupil and nobody need look up or down to the other because as Jack Alexander put it years later "We are all brothers and sisters under the skin."

Smithy, unlike me and the man on the bed, was bothered very badly by the temptation to drink. Smithy was one of those continuous drinkers. He wasn't what you would call one of those panty waist periodics. He guzzled all the time and apparently by the time he got to be sixty odd which was when he got to A.A., he was so rum soaked that he just had a terrible urge to drink. Long after, he told me that he had that urge for six or seven years and that it was constant and that his basic release from it was doing what we now call the Twelfth Step. So Smitty, greatly out of love and partly being driven began to frantically work on those cases, first in City Hospital in Akron and then as they got tired of drunks in the place, finally over at St. Thomas where there is now a plaque which bears an inscription dedicated to all those who labored there in our pioneering time and describing St. Thomas in Akron as the first religious institution ever to open it's doors to Alcoholics Anonymous.

Ah, how much of a drama, how much of a struggle, how much misery, how much joy lies in the era before the plaque was put there. No one can say. There was a Sister in the hospital, a veritable Saint, if you ever saw one. Our beloved Sister Ignatia. Dr. Bob often mentioned her. He told how she would deny beds to people with broken legs in order to stick drunks in them. She loved drunks. She was a sort of female Silkworth, if you know what I mean.

So finally a ward was provided and you remember that Dr. Bob was an M.D. and a mighty good one. Now you know that quite within the A.A. Tradition, Dr. Bob might have charged all those drunks who went through that place for his medical services. He treated 5,000 drunks medically and never charged a dime, even in that long period when he was very poor. For unlike most of us to whom it is a credit to belong to Alcoholics Anonymous, it was no credit to a surgeon at that time. "It was lovely that the old boy got sober," his patients said, "but how the hell do I know he'll be sober when he cuts me open in the morning." And so that frantic effort went on in Akron and New York and we got back and forth a bit. You have no conception these days of



From Jim Blair.

Q - What did A.A. learn from the Oxford Group and why did they leave them?

A - AA's first step was derived largely from my own physician, Dr. Silkworth, and my sponsor Ebby and his friend, from Dr. Jung of Zurich. I refer to the medical hopelessness of alcoholism -- our "powerlessness" over alcohol.

The rest of the Twelve Steps stem directly from those Oxford Group teachings that applied specifically to us. Of course these teachings were nothing new; we might have obtained them from your own Church. They were, in effect, an examination of conscience, confession, restitution, helpfulness to others, and prayer.

I should acknowledge our great debt to the Oxford Group people. It was fortunate that they laid particular emphasis on spiritual principles that we needed. But in fairness it should also be said that many of their attitudes and practices did not work well at all for us alcoholics. These were rejected one by one and they caused our later withdrawal from this society to a fellowship of our own -- today's Alcoholics Anonymous.

Perhaps I should specifically outline why we felt it necessary to part company with them. To begin with, the climate of their undertaking was not well suited to us alcoholics. They were aggressively evangelical, they sought to revitalize the Christian message in such a way as to "change the world." Most of us alcoholics had been subjected to pressure of evangelism and we never liked it. The object of saving the world -- when it was still very much in doubt if we could save ourselves -- seemed better left to other people. By reason of some of its terminology and by exertion of huge pressure, the Oxford Group set a moral stride that was too fast,

particularly for our newer alcoholics. They constantly talked of Absolute Purity, Absolute Unselfishness, Absolute Honesty, and Absolute Love. While sound theology must always have its absolute values, the Oxford Groups created the feeling that one should arrive at these destinations in short order, maybe be next Thursday! Perhaps they didn't mean to create such an impression but that was the effect. Sometimes their public "witnessing" was of such a character to cause us to be shy. They also believed that by "converting" prominent people to their beliefs, they would hasten the salvation of many who were less prominent. This attitude could scarcely appeal to the average drunk since he was anything but distinguished.

The Oxford Group also had attitudes and practices which added up to a highly coercive authority. This was exercised by "teams" of older members. They

were the years of flying blind, those ensuing two or three years. A slip in those days was a dreadful calamity. We would look at each other and wonder who might be next. Failure! Failure! Failure was our constant companion.

I returned home from Akron now endowed with a more becoming humility and

less preaching and a few people began to come to us, a few in Cleveland and

Akron. I had got back into business briefly and again Wall Street collapsed and took me with it as usual. So I set out West to see if there was something I could do in that country. Dr. Bob and I of course had been corresponding but it wasn't until one late fall afternoon in 1937 that I reached his house and sat in his living room. I can recall the scene as though it were yesterday and we got out a pencil and paper and we began to put down the names of those people in Akron, New York and that little sprinkling in Cleveland who had been dry a while and despite the large number of failures it finally burst upon us that forty people had got a real

release and had significant dry time behind them. I shall never forget that great and humbling hour of realization. Bob and I saw for the first time that a new light had begun to shine down upon us alcoholics, had begun to shine upon the children of the night.

That realization brought an immense responsibility. Naturally, we thought at once, how shall what we forty know be carried to the millions who don't know? Within gunshot of this house there must be others like us who are thoroughly bothered by this obsession. How shall they know? How is this going to be transmitted?

Up to this time as you must be aware, A.A. was utterly simple. It filled the full measure of simplicity as is since demanded by a lot of people. I guess we old timers all have a nostalgia about those halcyon days of simplicity when thank God there were no founders and no money and there were no meeting places, just parlors. Annie and Lois baking cakes and making coffee for those drunks in the living room. We didn't even have a name! We just called ourselves a bunch of drunks trying to get sober. We were more anonymous than we are now. Yes, it was all very simple. But, here was a new realization, what was the responsibility of the forty men to those who did not know?

Well, I have been in the world of business, a rather hectic world of business, the world of Wall Street. I suspect that I was a good deal of a promoter and a bit of a salesman, rather better than I am here today. So I began to think in business man's terms. We had discovered that the hospitals did not want us drinkers because, we were poor payers and never got well. So, why shouldn't we have our own hospitals and I envisioned a great chain of drunk tanks and hospitals spreading across the land. Probably, I could sell stocks in those and we could damn well eat as well as save drunks.

Then too, Dr. Bob and I recalled that it had been a very tedious and slow business to sober up forty people, it had taken about three years and in those days we old timers had the vainglory to suppose that nobody else could really do this job but us. So we naturally thought in terms of having alcoholic missionaries, no disparagement to missionaries to be sure. In other words, people would be grubstaked for a year or two, moved to Chicago, St. Louis, Frisco and so on and start little centers and meanwhile we would be financing this string of drunk tanks and began to suck them into these places. Yes, we would need missionaries and hospitals! Then came one reflection that did make some sense.

It seemed very clear that what we had already found out should be put on paper. We needed a book, so Dr. Bob called a meeting for the very next night and in that little meeting of a dozen and a half, a historic decision was taken which deeply affected our destiny. It was in the living room of a nonalcoholic friend who let us come there because his living room was bigger than the Smith's parlor and he loved us. I too, remember that day as if it were yesterday.

So, Smitty and I explained this new obligation which depended on us forty. How are we to carry this message to the ones who do not know? I began to wind up my promotion talk about the hospitals and the missionaries and the book and I saw their faces fall and straight away that meeting divided into three significant parts. There was the promoter section of which I was definitely one. There was the section that was indifferent and there was what you might call the orthodox section.

The orthodox section was very vocal and it said with good reason, "Look! Put us into business and we are lost. This works because it is simple, because everybody works at it, because nobody makes anything out of it and because no one has any axe to grind except his sobriety and the other guy's. If you publish a book we will have infinite quarrels about the damn thing. It will get us into business and the clinker of the orthodox section was that our Lord, Himself, had no book.

Well, it was impressive and events proved that the orthodox people were practically right, but, thank God, not fully right. Then there were the indifferent ones who thought, well, if Smitty and Bill think we ought to do these things well its all right with us. So the indifferent ones, plus the promoters out voted the orthodoxy and said "If you want to do these things Bill, you go back to New York where there is a lot of dough and you get the money and then we'll see."

Well, by this time I'm higher than a kite you know. Promoters can stay high on something besides alcohol. I was already taking about the greatest medical development, greatest spiritual development, greatest social development of all time. Think of it, forty drunks. (Chicago, Ill., February 1951)

A - That evening Bob and I told them that we were within sight of success and that we thought that this thing might go on and on, that a new light indeed was shining in our dark world. But how could this light be reflected and transmitted without being distorted and garbled? At this point, they turned the meeting over to me and being a salesman, I sat right to work on the drunk tanks and subsidies for missionaries, I was pretty poor then.

We touched on the book. The group conscience consisted of eighteen men good and true. . . and the good and true men, you could see right away, were dammed skeptical about it all. Almost with one voice they chorused "let's keep it simple, this is going to bring money into this thing, this is going to create a professional class. We'll all be ruined."

"Well," I countered, "That's a pretty good argument. Lots to what you say, but even within gunshot of this house, alcoholics are dying like flies. And if this thing doesn't move any faster than it has in the last three years, it may be another ten before it gets to the outskirts of Akron. How in god's name are we going to carry this message to others? We've got to take some kind of chance. We can't keep it so simple that it becomes an anarchy and gets complicated. We can't keep it so simple that it won't propagate itself, and we've got to have a lot of money to do these things."

So, exerting myself to the utmost, which was considerable in those days, we finally got a vote in that little meeting and it was a mighty close vote by just a majority of maybe 2 or 3. The meeting said, with some reluctance, "Well Bill," if we need a lot of dough then you had better go back to New York where there's plenty of it and you raise it." Well, boy, that was the word I had been waiting for. (Fort Worth, Tx., 1954)

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++++Message 40. "Let's Ask Bill" No. 22 -- Was the writing of the Big Book a difficult job?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/5/2002 10:03:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - Was the writing of the Big Book a difficult job?

A - As the chapters were done, we went to A.A. meetings in New York with the chapters in the rough. It wasn't like chicken-in-the-rough, the boys didn't eat those chapters up at all. I suddenly discovered that I was in a terrific

big argument and we yelled and shouted at each other and I finally went and laid on the bed with my ulcer and said, "Poor me."

There was a pad of paper by the bed and I reached for it and said, "You've got to break this program up into small pieces so they can't wiggle out." So I started writing, trying to bust it up into little pieces and when I got the pieces set down on that piece of yellow paper, I put numbers on them and was rather agreeably surprised when it came out to twelve. I said, "That's a good significant number in Christianity and mystic lore." Then I noticed that instead of leaving the God idea to the last, I'd got it up front but I didn't pay too much attention to that, it looked pretty good. Well, the next meeting comes along; I'd gone on beyond the steps trying to amplify them in the rest of that chapter and I presented it at the meeting. Well, pandemonium broke loose. "What do you by mean changing the program, what about this, what about that, this thing is overloaded with God. We don't like this, you've got these guys on their knees...stand them up because a lot of these drunks are scared to death of being Godly . . . let's take God out of it entirely." Such were the arguments that we had. Out of that terrific hassle came the Twelve Steps.

Those arguments caused the introduction of a phrase which has been the lifesaver to thousands. It was certainly none of my doing. I was on the pious side then, you see, still suffering from the big hot flash of mine. The idea of "God as you understand Him" came out of that perfectly ferocious argument and we put it in the book. (Transcribed from tape, Fort Worth, 1954)

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+++Message 42. "Let's Ask Bill" No. 24 -- How did you meet Father Ed Dowling?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/5/2002 10:27:00 AM

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From Jim Blair

Q - How did you meet Father Ed Dowling?

A - My first unforgettable contact with Father Ed came about in this way. It was early 1940, though late in the winter. Save for old Tom, the fireman we had lately rescued from Rockland Asylum, the club was empty (24th St. clubhouse in N.Y. City where Bill and Lois were living as they had been evicted from their Clinton St. home.) My wife Lois was out somewhere. It had been a hectic day, full of disappointments. I lay upstairs in our room, consumed with self-pity. This had been brought on by one of my

Q - Can the Twelve Steps be compared to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius?

A - In 1941, I visited St. Louis and Father Ed Dowling met me at the field. This was a blistering day and he had come to bring me to the (Jesuit) Sodality Headquarters. I was struck by the delightful informality. Of course I had never been to such a place before. I had been raised in a small Vermont village, Yankee style. Happily there was no bigotry in my grandfather who raised me but neither was there much religious contact or understanding. So here I was in some kind of a monastery. Even then, believe it or not, I still toyed with the notion that Catholicism was somehow a superstition of the Irish!

Then Father Ed and his Jesuit partners commenced to ask me questions. They wanted to know about the recently published A.A. book and especially about AA's Twelve Steps. To my surprise they had supposed that I must have had a Catholic education. They seemed doubly surprised when I informed them that at the age of eleven I had quit the Congregational Sunday School because my teacher had asked me to sign a temperance pledge. This had been the extent of my religious education.

More questions were asked about AA's Twelve Steps. I explained how a few years earlier some of us had been associated with the Oxford Groups; that we had picked up from these good people the ideas of self-survey, confession, restitution, helpfulness to others and prayer, ideas that we might have got in many other quarters as well. After our withdrawal from the Oxford Groups, these principles and attitudes had been formed into a word-of-mouth program, to which we had added a step of our own to the effect "that we were powerless over alcohol." Our Twelve Steps were the result of my effort to define more sharply and elaborate upon these word-of-mouth principles so that the alcoholic readers would have a more specific program: that there could be no escape from what we deemed to be the essential principles and attitudes. This had been my sole idea in their composition. This enlarged version of our program had been set down rather quickly -- perhaps in twenty or thirty minutes -- on a night when I had been very badly out of sorts. Why the Steps were written down in the order in which they appear today and just

yourself, be strong and you will be able to face life. Religion says, know thyself, ask God for power, and you will become truly free.

In Alcoholics Anonymous the new person may try either method. He sometimes

eliminates "the spiritual angle" from the Twelve Steps to recovery and wholly relies upon honesty, tolerance and working with others. But it is interesting to note that faith always comes to those who try this simple approach with an open mind -- and in the meantime they stay sober.

If, however, the spiritual content of the Twelve Steps is actively denied, they can seldom remain dry. That is our A.A. experience. We stress the spiritual simply because thousands of us have found we can't do without it.

(N.Y. State 3. Med., Vol. 44, Aug. 15, 1944)

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++++Message 45. "Let's Ask Bill" No. 27 -- What about those who cannot possibly believe in God?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/6/2002 3:32:00 AM

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From Jim Blair

Q - What about the alcoholic who says that he cannot possibly believe in God?

A - A great many of them come to A.A. and they say that they are trapped. By

this they mean that we have convinced them that they are fatally ill, yet they cannot accept a belief in God and His grace as a means of recovery.

Happily this does not prove to be an impossible dilemma at all. We simply suggest that the newcomers take an easy stance and an open mind; that he proceeds to practice those parts of the Twelve Steps that anyone's common sense would readily recommend. He can certainly admit that he is an alcoholic; that he ought to make a moral inventory; that he ought to discuss his defects with another person; that he should make restitution for harms done; and that he can be helpful to other alcoholics.

We emphasize the 'open mind,' that at least he should admit that there might be a 'Higher Power.' He can certainly admit that he is not God, nor is mankind in general. If he wishes he could place his own dependence upon his own A.A. group. That group is certainly a "Higher Power," so far as recovery

terrible sinner, that he's a rotter, that he's in disgrace, and all that sort of thing, you're not improving the condition of the family at all because, as they become persuaded of it, they get highly intolerant of the alcoholic and that merely generates more intolerance in him. Therefore, the gulf which must be bridged is widened, and that is why moralizing pushes people, who might have something to offer, further away from the alcoholic. You may say that it shouldn't be so, but it's one of those things that is so. (Yale Summer School of Alcohol Studies, June 1945.)

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++++Message 48. "Let's Ask Bill" No. 30 -- What is AA's relationship with the community?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/6/2002 3:59:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - What is AA's relationship with the community?

A - Now that our methods and results are better known we are receiving splendid cooperation everywhere from clergymen, doctors, employers, editors -- in fact, from whole communities. While there is still a well-understood reluctance on the part of city and private hospitals to admit alcoholic patients, we are pleased to report a great improvement in this direction. But we are still very far, in most places, from having anything like adequate hospital accommodations.

Over and above this traditional activity, we may give some counsel to those who work upon various aspects of the total problem. It may be possible that our experience fits us for a special task. Writing of Alcoholics Anonymous, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick once said: "Gothic Cathedral windows are not the sole thing which can be seen from within. Alcoholism is another. All outside views are clouded and unsure." Thus, with our inside view-one best seen by those drinkers who have suffered from alcoholism -- we would help those working on alcohol problems who have not had our first hand experience.

While we members of Alcoholics Anonymous are not scientists, our special insight may help science; while we are of all religions and sometimes none, we can assist clergymen; although not educators, we shall, perhaps, aid in clearing away unsure views; not penologists, we do help in prison work; not a business or organization, we nevertheless advise employers; not sociologists, we constantly serve families, friends and communities; not prosecutors or judges, we try to promote understanding and justice; emphatically not doctors, we do minister to the sick. Taking no side on

controversial questions, we may sometimes mediate fruitless antagonism, which have so often blocked effective cooperation among those who would solve the riddle of the alcoholic.

These are the activities and aspirations of thousands of the members of Alcoholics Anonymous. While our organization as a whole has but one aim -- to

help the alcoholic who wishes to recover -- there are a few of us, indeed, who as individuals do not wish to meet some of the broader responsibilities for which we may be especially fitted. (Quart. J. Stud. Alc., Vol.6, Sept.,

1945.)

A - Many an alcoholic is now sent to A.A. by his own psychiatrist. Relieved of his drinking, he returns to the doctor a far easier subject. Practically every alcoholic's wife has become, to a degree, his possessive mother. Most alcoholic women, if they still have a husband, live with a baffled father. This sometimes spells trouble aplenty. We AA's certainly ought to know! So, gentlemen, here is a big problem right up your alley.

We of A.A. try to be aware that we may never touch but a segment of the total alcohol problem. We try to remember that our growing success may prove to be a heady wine; will you men and women of medicine be our partners; physicians wielding well your invisible scalpels; workers all, in our common cause? We like to think Alcoholics Anonymous a middle ground between medicine and religion, the missing catalyst of a new synthesis. This to the end that millions who still suffer may presently issue from their darkness into the light of day! (Amer. J. Psychiat., Vol. 106, 1949)

A - Alcoholics Anonymous once stood in no-mans land between medicine and religion. Religionists thought we were unorthodox; medicine thought we were totally unscientific. The last decade brought a great change in this respect. Clerics of every denomination declare that, while A.A. contains no shred of dogma, it has an impeccable spiritual basis, quite acceptable to men of all creeds, even the agnostic himself. You gentlemen of medicine also observe that AA is psychiatrically sound so far as it goes and that A.A. refers all bodily ills of its membership to your profession. Therefore, it is now clear that Alcoholics Anonymous is a synthetic construct which draws upon three sources, namely, medical science, religion and its own particular experience. Withdraw one of these supports and its platform of stability falls to earth as a farmer's three-legged milk stool with one leg chopped off. That you have invited me, an A.A. member, to sit in your councils today is a happy token of that fact, for which our society is deeply grateful.

What, then, has Alcoholics Anonymous contributed as third partner of the recovery synthesis which promises so much to sufferers everywhere? Does

Alcoholics Anonymous contain any new principles? Strictly speaking it does not. A.A. merely relates the alcoholic to the tested truths in a brand new way. He is now able to accept them where he couldn't before. Now he has a concrete program of action and the understanding support of a successful society of his fellows in which he carries that out. In all probability, these are the long-missing links in the recovery chain. (N.Y. State J. Med., Vol. 50, July 1950)

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++++Message 49. "Let's Ask Bill" No. 31 -- How did the connection with the Rockefellers develop?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/6/2002 4:11:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - How did the connection between the Rockefeller's and Alcoholics

Anonymous develop?

A - After the meeting in Akron in the Fall of 1937, I went back to New York as we say, all steamed up. I then made the dismal discovery that the very rich who had the money that we needed had not the slightest interest in drunks, they just didn't give a damn. I solicited and I solicited and I became very worried. I even approached the Rockefeller Foundation, you know, I figured John D. would have an interest in alcoholism, sociology, medicine and religion and this should just fit the bill. But no, we didn't fit into any category with the Rockefeller Foundation and they felt a little poor at the time what with the depression.

One day I'm in my brother-in-law's office, he a doctor. I was moaning about the stinginess of the rich, our need for money and how it looked like this thing wasn't going to go anywhere. He said, "Have you tried the Rockefeller Foundation." And I told him that I had. "Well," he said, "it might help if you saw Mr. Rockefeller personally." I said, "I don't want to seem facetious, but could you recommend me to the Prince of Wales, he might help out too." And then came one of those strange turns of fate, if you like, or providence, if you prefer and the slender thread was this, My brother-in-law the doctor sat there scratching his head and he said, "When I was a young fellow I used to go to school with a girl and I think the girl had an uncle and it seemed to me that his name was Willard Richardson and it seems he was a pretty old guy and he might be dead now but it does seem to me that he had something to do with the Rockefeller charities. Supposing I call the

Rockefeller offices and see if he is around and if he would remember me. He

called this dear old gentleman on the phone, one of the greatest nonalcoholic friends that A.A. ever had. Immediately he remembered my brother-in-law and said, "Leonard where have you been all these years. I'd love to see you."

Unlike me, my brother-in-law is a man of very few words and he rather tensely explained that he had a relative who was trying to help alcoholics and was making some headway and could we come over to Mr. Rockefeller's offices and talk about it. "Why certainly," said the old man, and soon we were in the presence of this wonderful Christian gentleman who was incredibly one of John D's closest friends. When I saw that I thought that now we are really getting close to the bankroll and the old man asked me a few shrewd questions and I told the yarn so far as it had been spun. Then he said, "Mr. Wilson, would you like to come to lunch with me early next week."

Oh boy, would I. Now we were really getting warm. So we had lunch and at the

lunch he said, "I know of three or four fellows who would be real interested in this. I'll get a meeting together with them as they are friends or are associated with Mr. Rockefeller and some were recently on a committee, which recently recommended the discontinuance of the prohibition experiment.

So presently, several of us alcoholics, Smitty and a couple from Akron, some of the boys from New York, found ourselves sitting in the company of these friends of Mr. Rockefeller in Mr. Rockefeller's private boardroom. In fact, In fact I was told that I was sitting in a chair that Mr. Rockefeller had sat in only a half-hour

before. I thought, now we are really getting hot.

Well, we were nonplussed, a little lost for words, so each of us alkies just started telling his story. Our new friends listened with rapt attention and then with reluctance and modesty I brought up the subject of money and at once you see that God has worked through many people to shape our destiny.

At once, Mr. Scott who had sat at the head of the table said, "I am deeply

impressed and moved by what has been said here but aren't you boys afraid that if you had money you might create a professional class, aren't you afraid that the management of plants, properties and hospitals would distract you from your purely good will aims."

Well, we admitted, we had certainly thought of those difficulties. They had been urged upon us by some of our own members, but we felt that the risk of not doing these things was greater than the risk of doing at least some of them. "At least," we said, "Mr. Scott, this society needs a book in which we

can record our experience so that the alcoholics at a distance can know what has happened."

One of the gentlemen said that he would go out to Akron and we kind of steered him that way as the mortgage on the Smith's house was bigger than mine and he went out to Akron and came back with a glowing report which Mr. Richardson placed in front of Mr. Rockefeller. This marked another turning point. After hearing the story and reading the report on Akron Group No. 1, Mr. Rockefeller expressed his deep interest and feelings about us. "But Dick," he said, "if we give these fellows real money its going to spoil them and it will change the whole complexion. Maybe you fellows think it needs money and if you do go ahead and get them up some." He said, "I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll put a small sum in the Riverside Church treasury and you can draw it out and at least try to help these two men for a while but this thing should be self sustaining. Money, Dick, will spoil it."

What a profound realization. God did not work through us but through Mr.

Rockefeller whose every interest we had actually claimed from that moment. This man who had devoted his life to giving away money said "not this time." And he never did give us real money, praise God. (Chicago, Ill., February 1951)

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++++Message 50. "Let's Ask Bill" No. 32 -- What led to the Twelve Traditions?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/6/2002 4:25:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - What were the conditions that led to the Twelve Traditions?

A - After the Jack Alexander article was published in 1941 it brought down a deluge on our little New York office of thousands upon thousands of inquiries from frantic alcoholics, their wives, their employers and at that moment we passed out of our infancy and embarked upon our next phase -- the phase of adolescence.

Well, adolescence by definition is a troubled time of young life and we were no exception as groups began to take shape all over the land and these groups immediately had trouble. We made the very sad discovery that just because you sobered up a drunk you haven't made a saint out of him by a long shot. We found that we could be bitterly resentful and we discovered that we

had a much better booze cure than we thought possible. A lot of us found that we could gripe like thunder and still stay sober. We found that we were in all sorts of petty struggles for leadership and prestige. A lot of us were very suspicious of the Book enterprise in the hands of that fellow Wilson who has a truck backed up to Mr. Rockefeller who has all the dough. And we began to have all sorts of troubles.

Money had entered the picture -- it had to. We had to hire halls that didn't come for nothing, the book cost something, we had dinners once in a while. Yes, money came into it.

Then we found little by little that the groups had to have chores done. Who was going to be the Chairman, would we hand pick him or elect him or what? You know what those troubles were and they became so fearsome that we went

through another period of flying blind. The first period of flying blind you remember had to do with whether the individual could be restored into one piece, whether the forces of destruction in him could be contained and subdued. Now, we were beginning to wonder in the early part of our adolescence, whether the destructive forces in our groups would rend us apart and destroy the society. Ah, those were fearsome days.

Our little New York office began to be deluged with mail from these groups, growing up at distances and not in contact with our old centers and they were having these troubles: There were people coming out of the insane asylums. Lord, what would these lunatics do to us? There were prisoners, would we be sandbagged? There were queer people. There were people, believe it or not whose morals were bad and the respectable alcoholics of that time shook their heads and said, "Surely these immoral people are going to render us asunder." Little Red Riding Hood and the bad wolves began to abound. Ah, yes, could our society last?

It kept growing, more groups, more members. Sometimes the groups divided

because the leaders were mad at each other and sometimes they divided

because they were just too big. But by a process of fission and subdivision this movement grew and grew and grew. Ten years later it had spread into thirty countries.

Out of that vast welter of experience in our adolescence it began to be evident that we were going to take very different attitudes towards many things than our fellow Americans. We were deeply convinced for example, that the survival of the whole was far more important than the survival of any individual or group of individuals. This was a thing far bigger than any one of us. We began to suspect that once a mass of alcoholics were adhering even halfway to the Twelve Steps, that God could speak in their Group conscience and up out of that Group conscience could come a wisdom greater than any

inspired leadership.

In the early days we all had membership rules. Where have they gone now? We're not afraid anymore. We open our arms wide, we say we don't care who you are, what your difficulties are You just need say, "I'm an alcoholic and I'm interested." You declare yourself in. Our membership idea is put exactly in reverse.

Years ago we thought this society should go into research and education, to do everything for drunks all the time. We know better now. We have one sole object in this society, we shoemakers are going to stick to our last and we will carry that message to other alcoholics and leave these other matters to the more competent. We will do one thing supremely well rather than many things badly.

And so our Tradition grew. Our Tradition is not American tradition. Take our public relations policy. Why, in America everything runs on big names, advertising people. We are a country devoted to heroism, it is a beloved tradition and yet this movement in the wisdom of it's Group's soul, knew that this was not for us. So our public relations policy is anonymity at the public level. No advertising of people, principles before personalities. Anonymity has a deep spiritual significance -- the greatest protection this movement has.

As our society has grown up it has developed its way of life, it's a way of relating ourselves together, it's way of relating ourselves to these troublesome questions of property, money and prestige and authority and the world at large. The A.A. Tradition developed not because I dictated it but because you people, your experience formed it and I merely set it on paper and tried beginning four years ago (1946) to reflect it back to you. Such were our years of adolescence and before we leave them I must say that a powerful impetus was given the Traditions by the Gentleman who introduced me. (Earl Treat.)

One day he came down to Bedford Hills after the long form of the Traditions were written out at some length because in the office we were forever having to answer questions about Group troubles so the original Traditions were longer and covered more possibilities of trouble. Earl looked at me rather quizzically and he said "Bill, don't you get it through your thick head that these drunks do not like to read. They will listen for a while but they will not read anything. Now, you want to capsule these Traditions as simply as are the Twelve Steps to Recovery."

So he and I started the capsulizing process, which lasted a day or two and that put the Traditions into their present form. Well, by this time we had a lot of experience on these principles, which we began to think might bind us together in unity for so long as God might need us. And at Cleveland (1950), seven thousand of us did declare "Yes, these are the traditional principles

upon which we are willing to stand, upon which we can safely commit ourselves to the future and so we emerged from adolescence.

Again, last year we took destiny by the hand. (Transcribed from tape. Chicago, IL, February 1951).

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+++Message 51. "Let's Ask Bill" No. 34 -- Have the Traditions been widely accepted?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/6/2002 4:37:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - Have the Traditions been widely accepted?

A - When they were first written in early 1946 as tentative guides to help us hang together and function, nobody paid any attention except a few "againers" who wrote me and asked what the hell they were about.

Nobody paid the slightest attention but little by little as these Traditions got around we had our clubhouse squabbles, our little rifts, this difficulty and that and it was found that the Traditions indeed did reflect experience and were guiding principles. So they took hold a little more and a little more so that today the average A.A. coming in the door learns at once what they're about, about what kind of an outfit he has really landed in and by what principles his group and A.A. as a whole are governed. (Transcribed from tape, Fort Worth, TX, 1954)

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+++Message 52. "Let's Ask Bill" No. 33 -- What are the ideas embodied in the Twelve Traditions?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/6/2002 4:33:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - What are the ideas embodied in the Twelve Traditions?

A - That, touching all matters affecting A.A. unity, our common welfare

should come first; that A.A. 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 A.A. member if he says so -- we exclude no one; that every A.A. Group may manage its own affairs as it likes, provided surrounding groups are not harmed thereby; that we A.A.'s have but a single aim, the carrying of our message to the alcoholic who still suffers; that in consequence we can not finance, endorse or otherwise lend the name "Alcoholics Anonymous" to any other enterprise, however worthy; that A .A., 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 A.A. should forever remain 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 full-time 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 out 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 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. (Tape - Twelve Traditions, Cleveland, July 1950)

A - We sometimes congratulate ourselves on the Traditions as though they were a list of virtues singular to us. Actually, they are a codification of the lessons of our past experience during the early days of A.A.

These Traditions are not fixed absolutely. There may be room for improvement. However, they should not be lightly cast aside, since they bear on our unity, survival and growth under Gods grace.

We are entering a new era of growth with vast forces tearing at the world. The problems and difficulties of the future may be greater than those we have already survived. Still, there is a love among us that passeth all understanding and that will sustain us through all the trials that lie ahead, no matter how formidable." (Transcribed from tape, GSC, 1968)

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+++Message 53. "Let's Ask Bill" No. 35 -- Why the General Service Conference?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/6/2002 4:54:00 AM

To these problems of tomorrow many are giving prayerful reflection. A.A. s are commencing to say what, or who, is going to guarantee the operation of our General Headquarters when the old-timers who inaugurated it have passed off the scene, especially very early ones like Dr. Bob and Bill. Known so well to us from the pioneering period of A.A., these early ones still occupy a unique position. They command a wider confidence and still wield more personal influence than anyone else could again, or for that matter, ever should. Having helped set up our universal Service Center they asked the rest of us to have confidence in it. And we do have that confidence, not that we much know the present Trustees, but because we know Bob and Bill and the other oldsters, in the long future, when these oldsters can no longer assure us, who is going to take their place? Does it not seem clear that the A.A. movement and its Service Center must soon be drawn closer together?

Though we know our General Office and our Grapevine fairly well, shouldn't we somehow draw closer to our Trustees? Shouldn't we take steps to allay our feelings of remoteness while the older ones are still around, and there is still time to experiment? Such are the questions now being asked, and they are good ones.

Perhaps the best suggestion for closing the gap between our Alcoholic

Foundation and the A.A. Groups is the idea of creating what we might call the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous. (Proposal by Bill W.

and Dr. Bob to the Alcoholic Foundation, April 1947)

A - Let's face these facts (October 1950).

First. Dr. Bob and I are perishable, we can't last forever.

Second. The Trustees are almost unknown to the A.A. membership.

Third. In future years our Trustees couldn't possibly function without direct guidance from A.A. itself. Somebody must advise them. Somebody, or something must take the place of Dr. Bob and me.

Fourth. Alcoholics Anonymous is out of its infancy. Grown up, adult now, it has full right and plain duty to take direct responsibility for its own Headquarters.

Fifth. Clearly then, unless the Foundation is firmly anchored, through State and Provincial representatives, to the movement it serves, a Headquarters breakdown will someday be inevitable. When its old timers vanish, an isolated Foundation couldn't survive one grave mistake or serious controversy. Any storm could blow it down. Its revival wouldn't be simple. Possibly it could never be revived. Still isolated, there would be no means

and that within Alcoholics Anonymous the main outlines of the basis for recovery, of the basis for unity and of the basis for service or function

were already evident.

At St. Louis I made talks upon each of those subjects which largely concerned themselves about what A.A. had done about these things but here we are in a much wider field and I think that the sky is the limit. I think that I can say without any reservation that what this Committee has done with the aid of its great friends who are now legion as anyone here can see. I think that this Committee has been responsible for making more friends for Alcoholics Anonymous and of doing a wider service in educating the world on the gravity of this malady and what can be done about it than any other single agency.

I'm awfully partial and maybe I'm a little bias because here sits the dean of all our ladies (Marty Mann), my close, dear friend. So speaking out of turn as a founder, I want to convey to her in the presence of all of you the best I can say of my great love and affection is thanks.

At the close of things in St. Louis, I remember that I likened A.A. to a cathedral style edifice whose corners now rested on the earth. I remember saying that we can see on its great floor the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and there assembled 150,000 sufferers and their families. We have seen side walls go up, buttressed with the A.A. Tradition and at St. Louis, when the elected Conference took over from the Board of Trustees, the spire of service was put into effect and its beacon light, the beacon light of A.A. shone there beckoning to all the world.

I realized that as I sat here today that that was not a big enough concept, for on the floor of the cathedral of the spirit there should always be written the formula from whatever source for release from alcoholism, whether it be a drug, whether it be the psychiatric art, whether it be the ministrations of this Committee. In other words, we who deal with this problem are all in the same boat, all standing upon the same floor. So let's bring to this floor the total resources that can be brought to bear upon

this problem and let us not think of unity just in terms of A.A. Tradition but let us think of unity among all those who work in the field as the kind of unity that befits brotherhood and sisterhood and a kinship in the common suffering. Let us stand together in the spirit of service. If we do these things, only then can we declare ourselves really come of age. And only then, and I think that this is a time not far off. I think we can say that the future, our future, the future of the Committee, of A.A. and of the things that people of good will are trying to do in this field will be

completely assured. (Transcribed from tape. Address to The National Committee for Education on Alcoholism. March 30, 1956).

school of hard experience on its thousands of anvils, we had our very, very dark moments.

It was sure recovery was in sight, but how could there be recovery for many?

Or how could recovery endure if we were to fall into controversy and so into dissolution and decay?

Well, the spirit of the Twelve Steps which have brought us release from one of the grimmest obsessions known -- obviously, this spirit and these principles of retaining grace had to be the fundamentals of our unity. But in order to become fundamental to our unity, these principles had to be spelled out as they applied to the most prominent and the most grievous of our problems.

So, out of experience came the need to apply the spirit of our steps to our lives of working and living together. These were the forces that generated the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

But, we had to have more than cohesion. Even for survival, we had to carry the message and we had to function. In fact, that had become evident in the Twelve Steps themselves for the last one enjoins us to carry the message. But just how would we carry this message? How would we communicate, we few, with those myriad's who still don't know? And how would this communication be handled? How could we do these things. how could we authorize these things in such a way that in this new, hot focus of effort and ego that we would not again be shattered by the forces that had once ruined our lives?

This was the problem of the Third Legacy. From the vital Twelfth Step call right up through our society to its culmination today. And, again, many of us said: "This can't be done. It's all very well for Bill and Bob and a few friends to set up a Board of Trustees and to provide us with some literature, and look after our public relations and do all of those chores for us that we can't do for ourselves. This is fine, but we can't go any further than that. This is a job for our elders, for our parents. In this direction only, can there be simplicity and security.

And then came the day when it was seen that the parents were both fallible and perishable and Dr. Bob's hour struck and we suddenly realized that this ganglion, this vital nerve center of World Service, would lose its sensation the day the communication between an increasingly unknown Board of Trustees and you was broken. Fresh links would have to be forged. And at that time many of us said: This is impossible, this is too hard. Even in transacting the simplest business, providing the simplest of services, raising the minimum amounts of money, these excitements to us, in this society so bent on survival have been almost too much locally. Look at our club brawls. My God, if we have elections countrywide and Delegates come down here and look

constructive outlook, there will be bound to be still another, a destructive one. We shall always be tempted to throw out the baby with the bathwater. We shall suffer the illusion that change, any plausible change, will necessarily represent progress. When so animated, we may carelessly cast aside the hard won lessons of early experience and so fall back into many of the great errors of the past.

Hence, a prime purpose of these Twelve Concepts is to hold the experience and lessons of the early days constantly before us. This should reduce the chance of hasty and unnecessary change. And if alterations are made that happen to work out badly, then it is hoped that these Twelve Concepts will make a point of safe return. (GSC, 1960)

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+++Message 62. "Let"s Ask Bill" No. 44 -- What purpose does the right of appeal serve?
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/6/2002 10:08:00 AM

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From Jim Blair.

Q - What purpose does the right of appeal serve?

A - There came to this country some hundred years ago a French Baron whose family and himself had been wracked by the French revolution, De Toqueville, and he was a worshipful admirer of democracy. And in those day's democracy seemed to be mostly expressed in people's minds by votes of simple majorities. And he was a worshipful admirer of the spirit of democracy as expressed by the power of a majority to govern. But, said de Toqueville, a majority can be ignorant, it can be brutal, it can be tyrannous - and we have seen it. Therefore, unless you most carefully protect a minority, large or small, make sure that minority opinions are voiced, make sure that minorities have unusual rights, you're democracy is never going to work and its spirit will die. This was de Toqueville's prediction and, considering today's times, is it strange that he is not widely read now?

So that is why in this Conference we try to get a unanimous consent while we can; this is why we say the Conference can mandate the Board of Trustees on a two - thirds vote. But we have said more here. We have said that any Delegate, any Trustee, any staff member, any service director - any board, committee or whatever - that wherever there is a minority, it shall always be the right of this minority to file a minority report so that their views

which I had not known.)

But there is one man who does not want to be acknowledged. "I don't like to

take credit for anything I do for A.A.," is I think how he put it. But this man not only proofread and offered editorial suggestions on the nearly 150 pages, but also researched the net to find information for me. So I will risk his friendship by saying THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, to Tony C. of Texas.

To me the amazing thing about all this is that I have never met any of these

benefactors in person.

I've done my level best to be sure the stories are accurate. Nonetheless, I am sure there are mistakes. Please send any corrections or additional information to me personally rather than to the whole list, giving me your sources for the information (no guess work please). If it seems appropriate I will then post a corrected biography, giving credit where due for the new information.

Here is the first, the only story in the original manuscript which was not

included in the first edition.

Nancy

Ace Full-Seven-Eleven -- Author unknown, Akron, Ohio.

(Original Manuscript (OM), p. 62.)

There are different theories as to why the story was not included in the first edition. Some have suggested that the author became suspicious of Bill

Wilson and Hank Parkhurst ("The Unbeliever" in the first edition) when Hank

set up Works Publishing to raise money to publish the book, with himself as the self appointed president, and Bill began talking of listing himself as author of the Big Book. Bill would then be entitled to royalties. Others claim that the author wanted to be paid for his story, or to receive a share of the royalties on the book. None of these theories can be verified.

According to his story, he was the son of a pharmacist and studied pharmacy,

but before he could take the state board examination he was drafted. In the Army he began gambling, and learning to manipulate the dice and cards to his own advantage.

After the war he became a professional gambler. He spent some time in jail, perhaps for gambling or drinking. One source claims it was for bootlegging.

He was hospitalized many times, and eventually his wife had him committed to an insane asylum. He was in and out of the asylum several times. During one of his confinements he met another alcoholic who had lost nearly all. This man had been a hobo, and may have been Charlie Simonson ("Riding the Rods" in

the first edition). During his last confinement his friend was not there, but soon he came to visit and to carry the message of A.A.

An agnostic or atheist when he entered, he eventually came to believe in a Divine Father, and that His will was the best bet.

No further information is available.

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+++Message 64. BB Authors, 1st edition -- Florence Rankin, NYC "A Feminine Victory"
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/6/2002 10:43:00 AM

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A Feminine Victory -- Florence Rankin, New York City.

(OM, p. 217 in 1st edition.)

Florence was the first woman to get sober in A.A., even for a short time. She came to A.A. in New York in March of 1937. She had several slips, but was sober over a year when she wrote her story for the Big Book.

It must have been difficult for Florence being the only woman. She prayed for inspiration to tell her story in a manner that would give other women courage to seek the help that she had been given.

She was the ex-wife of a man Bill Wilson had known on Wall Street. She thought the cause of her drinking would be removed when she and her husband were divorced. But it was her ex-husband who took Lois Wilson to visit her at Bellevue. Bill and Lois got her out of Bellevue and she stayed in their home for a time. After she left their home she stayed with other members of

He was known as a notorious alcoholic and a regular consumer of paregoric,
an

over-the-counter opiate then easily available to the general public.

Too young to enlist in World War I, he earned high wages as a machinist, and did very well at his work. He confined his drinking to weekends or occasional parties after work. But he was unsettled and dissatisfied.

He got married, and in 1924 moved to Akron, where he got a job in the largest

industrial plant. Things were going well until the stock market crashed and work slowed down. Finally he was laid off.

He found another job that required him to travel. Away from home his drinking increased, and he finally lost that job. A series of jobs followed, but things continued to go down hill.

He was hospitalized several times. During one of his hospitalizations, the chief resident physician, during his rounds, asked him if he would like to stop drinking, and suggested that he send another doctor to see him. The other doctor he sent was Dr. Bob.

For two years he stayed sober and his life was greatly improved. Then he started to miss meetings, and stopped working the program. He soon started drinking again.

On either August 16 or 18, 1939, he was the first alcoholic admitted by Dr. Bob and Sister Ignatia for the purpose of detoxification. Sister Ignatia labeled his problem as "acute gastritis" in order to admit him. She first put him in a double room. Dr. Bob asked her to move him to a private room so that he could have visitors. No private room being available she moved him to the "flower room," where the nurses watered the flowers that patients had received. The room was also used as a temporary holding room for corpses awaiting transfer to the morgue.

He had probably been in this hospital before under various diagnoses. He talks in his story about many hospitalizations and mentions that in one Catholic hospital, a Sister had talked religion to him and had brought a priest in to see him. They were sorry for him, he said, and assured him he would find relief in Mother Church. He wanted none of it.

When he wrote his story he had been sober about a year, and intended to stay

from the hospital.

Charlie asked his wife to try to find this group. She was skeptical, but the next day Charlie had a visit from Dr. Bob. When he was released from the hospital, his friend, who had been released a few days earlier, introduced him to several of the other members.

Two years later, when Charlie wrote his story, he said that the way had not been easy, but helping others had strengthened him and helped him to grow. He had obtained a measure of happiness and contentment he had never known before. He knew he would have difficulties every day of his life, but now there was a difference. Now he had a new and tried foundation for every new day.

Charlie may have been the first -- but probably not the last -- to be 12th stepped by a relapsed A.A. member.

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+++Message 72. BB Authors, 1st edition -- Bob Oviatt, Richfield, OH. "The Salesman."
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/6/2002 12:06:00 PM

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The Salesman -- Bob Oviatt, Richfield, Ohio.

(OM, p. 317 in 1st edition.)

Bob entered the program in December of 1936, but after six months had a slip. He stopped drinking again in May 1937.

His teenage years were uneventful. He was raised on a farm but wanted to be a businessman, so he took a business college course. His first business was buying produce from the family farm and selling it to customers in the city. The business theory he had learned in college helped him to become successful

and he soon expanded his business. But in 1921, during an economic slump, he

was wiped out. With more time on his hands, his drinking increased.

He worked at a variety of jobs from then on, but most often as a salesman -- a career at which he was very good.

He started drinking during Prohibition, and it soon became a habit. Bob at

(OM, p. 325 in 1st edition.)

Probably Wally first entered A.A. in May of 1937, but one source says October

1938. But after several years he slipped and had a hard time getting back.

He was an engineer. He must have been handsome, one Akron member described him as having iron-gray hair and looking like President Warren Harding.

He described himself as a man of extremes. When he learned to dance, he had

to go dancing every night; when he worked or studied he wanted no interruptions; and of course when he drank he could never stop until he was drunk. He started getting drunk before he was sixteen.

Wally must have been a good worker because he rarely had a problem finding a job, and often was rehired by the same company and given another chance. But

he was fired again and again. He was once fired from the WPA (Works Progress Administration, a Federal job program instituted during the Depression of the 1930s.)

He was irritated by efforts to help him. His family once persuaded him to enter a sanitarium for thirty days. He left with the firm resolve never to drink again. Before he left the sanitarium he answered an advertisement for an engineer in

Akron and after an interview, got the job. In about three months he was out of a job again.

Finally, a neighbor, who had heard of Dr. Bob's work, told his wife, Annabelle, about it and she went to see Dr. Bob. Soon Wally was hospitalized by Dr. Bob and began his recovery. About twenty men called on him while he was still in the hospital. He knew five of them, three of whom he had never before seen completely sober.

Annabelle was at first was hard to convince that the program would work, because Wally once brought home an A.A. member he had met in a bar. This was Paul Stanley ("Truth Freed Me!") during his slip in early 1936. Then her own doctor urged her to see Dr. Bob. Finally, her clergyman, J.C. Wright, got a woman to talk to Annabelle and then made an appointment for her with Dr. Bob. This was probably the neighbor Wally talks about in his story.

Dr. Bob called Maybelle Lucas, wife of Tom Lucas ("My Wife and I") and told

Parkhurst could be quite personable and was considered a handsome man. He was tall, broad-shouldered, and red-haired and had been a good athlete in school. He and Kathleen had two sons: Henry G. Parkhurst, Jr. (Hank Jr., and Robert Stewart Parkhurst (Bob) and at least one grandson.

Hank was an agnostic when he came to AA. But, he evolved spiritually into a belief in a "universal power." He and Jim Burwell led the fight against any mention of God in the Big Book. Parkhurst and Burwell wanted to leave God out of the book altogether, to make it a psychological book and refer only to the spiritual nature of recovery, produced by the practice of the principles of the Twelve Steps. The verbal war over the mention of God produced the compromise "as we understood Him" which became part of the Big Book.

Parkhurst was renting an office at that time at 11 Hill Street, Newark. This office housed Hank's company, Honor Dealers. It was a cooperative firm. Through it, gas station owners could buy gasoline, oil and automotive parts at lower prices through joint purchasing. Some thought it was Hank's way of getting back at Standard Oil for firing him. But, the business went nowhere. It is considered likely that Bill authored the first two chapters of the Big Book in this Hill Street office.

Hank then moved to another office at 17 William Street in Newark, one block north of the Hill Street address. The new office, #601, faced east, the preferred exposure. But, Hank's money ran out, he didn't pay the rent and the county sheriff evicted him. He then moved to a smaller office on the same floor of the same building, #604, which faced west. Bill dictated much of the remainder of the Big Book to Ruth Hock in this building. Ruth was a secretary for Honor Dealers and served in a similar capacity to the energetic effort, which would produce AA.

It was Hank who was the driving force behind the idea of forming a private company to publish the Big Book. The Trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation had opposed the idea of self-publishing. There were rewards, to be sure. Self-publishing could produce a financial return six times greater than author's royalties. But, among the Trustees, the common feeling was that self-publishing was risky, that most such enterprises failed out of ignorance of the publishing business and that neither Bill nor Hank knew anything about publishing. That opinion was expressed by a majority of the Trustees at the Foundation's first meeting, April 11, 1938. (The Foundation was established on that date as a charitable, tax-exempt entity to provide the movement with a legally formed, New York-based center.)

Hank told Bill that since the Board of Trustees had not and would not raise a cent for the publishing project, he and Bill should not wait but should publish the book by themselves. They had little or no money, so: Hank convinced Bill that they should form a stock company and sell shares to their fellow alcoholics. Not only did Hank guarantee Bill that this approach

would succeed, he insisted it was the only way to get the Book published. Bill felt somewhat reassured because a widely respected publishing executive, Eugene Exman of Harper Brothers, had told him that drafts of the first two chapters looked good and that a society like theirs really should own, control and publish its own literature.

So: Hank and Bill formed Works Publishing Company, Incorporated, on September 21, 1938. (Some historians say that the company never was legally incorporated.) They issued six hundred shares of stock with a par value of \$25.00 per share. Bill and Hank each received one-third of the shares. The remaining two hundred shares were to be sold to their fellow alcoholics. Money from the sale of stock would be used to pay expenses of the Newark office and to enable Bill and Hank to continue their work full time on the publishing project. The Alcoholic Foundation would receive author's royalties from the book sales. Hank signed the certificates as "President." Sales were slow.

Parkhurst, the self-appointed "President," had handled all the finances for Works Publishing. But, later, when he was asked to account for the money, he had no records. It appeared he had mixed the funds for Works, Honor and the fledgling fellowship together, along with his personal money and had no idea how to separate them.

The publication date of the Big Book was April 1, 1939. It was printed by Cornwall Press, in Cornwall, New York. The US Copyright Office says there were 4,730 copies in the first printing. The first ten copies were delivered April 10th of that year to the Newark office Hank and Bill shared. It was a joyous moment!

But, things soon went downhill for Hank. First, Bill obtained a postal box for the young fellowship across the Hudson River in lower Manhattan. Bill felt this location was the most convenient for reaching the area they intended to serve: New York City, Long Island and New Jersey. Bill then proposed moving the Alcoholic Foundation office itself to a point nearer the postal box. He felt there was no need to keep an office in Newark; Hank had closed Honor Dealers. But, since it had been his office, Parkhurst was upset about Bill's decision. The actual move, on March 16, 1940, to 30 Vesey Street, Room 703, in lower Manhattan angered Hank. And, when the furniture from his office moved across the Hudson, Hank was furious, even though he had sold the furniture to Bill. (That furniture remained with Bill Wilson for the rest of his life. First it went to AA headquarters in Manhattan. Later it moved to Bill's studio, "Wits End," at his home, "Stepping Stones," at Bedford Hills, in the rolling, wooded hills of picturesque, suburban Westchester County, just north of New York City.)

For Hank, this troubling episode appears to have been the least of it. In other

respects, he was beginning to collide with life and getting bruised heavily in the process. He was becoming (as Dr. Silkworth previously described it) "restless, irritable and discontented."

He had taken a new job—one he did not want -- in western New Jersey. He had intended to take the office, the furniture and Ruth Hock with him.

Further, Hank wanted to divorce his wife, Kathleen, and marry Ruth. But, Ruth declined to go west with him and moved instead to the young fellowship's new office in lower Manhattan. Ultimately she said "No" to Hank's marriage proposal. Hank blamed Bill for her refusal.

Hank further resented Bill's asking him to turn in his stock certificates in Works Publishing, Inc. Members of the fellowship had decided in 1940 that all book sales profits should go to the Alcoholic Foundation. They decided that Bill and Hank should return their shares in Works Publishing. And, they asked those other members who had purchased shares of the stock to sell them to the Foundation at par value. In this way, the alcoholics reasoned, the fellowship would own the Big Book and anything it published in the future. Bill and Dr. Bob were to receive author's royalties from the book sales, so that they both might continue to devote their full time to the affairs of the fellowship.

Bill complied immediately. He turned in his shares of Works Publishing, Inc. stock to the Alcoholic Foundation. But, Hank, who had started drinking again, refused. He held onto the stock until he appeared unexpectedly one day, scruffy, drunk and destitute, at the New York office. He insisted the furniture in that office was his and demanded payment for it, even though he had been paid for it previously. Bill offered to pay for it again if Hank would hand in his stock. Hank accepted two hundred dollars and handed over his shares. He subsequently accused Bill of taking advantage of him in his drunken state. Later, Hank approached Bill several more times claiming he had never been paid for the furniture and Bill paid him again each time.

Then Hank learned that AA had granted Bill a \$25.00 a week payment from the sale of the Book. Hank considered the arrangement wrong. He resented it and was said to have become quite jealous of all the attention showered on Bill as A.A.'s co-founder.

Hank's oldest son, Henry G. Parkhurst, Jr., later that Hank always felt Bill had treated him unfairly with respect to the stock, the revenue from the Book sales and his office furniture. Years later sales of the Book mushroomed. But, Hank received no share of the profits.

It is difficult to say precisely when Hank returned to drinking, but it appears to have been late in 1939. Lois Wilson's diary for September 6, 1939, says Hank was drunk. Kathleen Parkhurst had reported Hank was drinking on September 5th. He never recovered, completely, although there were some

occasional, brief periods of dryness.

Hank and Kathleen divorced in 1939 and Hank married at least two other women during a return to drinking that lasted on and off for approximately eleven years. One of the women he married and divorced was a sister-in-law of Cleveland AA pioneer, Clarence Snyder. He later married an oil heiress from a wealthy Houston family. She died about 1950 of a cerebral hemorrhage. Sources say Kathleen married a Wally van Arc, who, they say, was involved, somehow, in the publishing of the Big Book. (AA's Archivists at GSO New York say they have no information whatever on anyone named Wally van Arc.) Later, during a brief period of dryness, Hank re-married Kathleen. Several sources say Kathleen was also an alcoholic: an episodic or periodic drunk. Hank's obituary identified Kathleen as his widow. Exact dates of these marriages, divorces and the re-marriage have proven unavailable.

Hank moved to Ohio and began spreading malicious stories there about Bill, charging that Wilson had diverted AA's money to his own personal use. Despite the fact that Hank was drinking, some Ohio AAs believed him, including Clarence Snyder, who had started AA in Cleveland. A number of the Ohio AA's began calling for Bill's expulsion, accusing him of financial trickery and dishonesty. One Ohio A.A. swore he knew personally that Wilson had taken as much as \$65,000 from A.A. during the previous year. Several groups in Ohio wanted to secede from A.A. because of the charges and turmoil.

To meet the situation head-on, Bill and Dr. Bob, hosted a dinner for all concerned in June 1942 in Cleveland. After dinner, they all gathered in a hotel parlor, where a local committee, complete with its own attorney and certified public accountant, interrogated Bill. Both Bill and Dr. Bob quietly but firmly denied all allegations and answered all questions. Wilson presented the committee with a recent audit of all of A.A.'s financial affairs, showing, openly and clearly, his 25-dollar a week payment from sales of the Big Book. An identical payment had been arranged for Dr. Bob. (Bob had given some of his money to Bill and returned much of the rest to AA.) And, although it had nothing to do with the AA treasury, both Bill and Bob voluntarily told the committee of the 30-dollar-a-week income each received from a private fund set up to support them by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. so that both of them could continue their AA work full-time. The committee's CPA carefully examined the audit, read it aloud, pronounced it accurate beyond question, and thus completely exonerated Bill. The committee members apologized to him.

But, the emotional scars remained for Wilson. All this grief and scandal had been caused by a man he had helped to stop drinking, a man who once had been his partner. Opinions vary as to whether they ever completely settled their differences.

Hank Parkhurst died January 18, 1954, at Mercer Hospital in Pennington, New

radio engineer, a ballet master, and hairdresser. At the time he enlisted in the Navy during World War I, he was working as a host at a celebrated Restaurant and Cabaret. Having been a radio operator in the navy, he soon became interested in amateur radio. He got a federal license and made a transmitting radio set. Broadcasting radio was just in its infancy then, so he began to make small receiving sets for his friends and neighbors. Finally he worked up quite a business and opened a store, then two stores, with eleven people working for him. However, within three years time he had lost both stores, probably in large part due to his drinking.

He drifted from one job to another, peddled brushes, did odd jobs such as painting, and finally got established with a well known piano company as assistant service manager. But when the stock market crashed in 1929 he lost that job. He worked for one of his old competitors who owned a radio store, until his drinking got so bad and he was in such poor physical condition that

he had to quit.

His family was concerned about his drinking. His wife had to go to work and, so that they would have someone to care for his son they moved in with his parents.

His wife contacted a well-known psychiatrist and Harold saw him for a few months. He doctor advised hospitalization from three months to a year, Harold knew he would just go back to drinking as soon as he was released. What he thought and wanted at the time was "not to want to want to take a drink." He knew it could only be done by himself, but how?

After going to as many as six or eight other doctors, some of his own



Educated Agnostic - Norman Hunt, Darien, Connecticut.

(OM, p. 351 in 1st edition.)

Norman's date of sobriety is uncertain. One source says it was February 1938, another says June 1938.

He had been hospitalized four times. The first three times he left the hospital determined never to drink again. Now, on his fourth visit, he told the kindly doctor (perhaps Dr. Silkworth) that he was a thoroughly hopeless case and would probably continue to return as long as he could beg, borrow, or steal the money to get in.

On the second day in the hospital the doctor told him that he knew of a way he could stop drinking forever. On the third day a man came to talk with him. He talked about alcoholism and a spiritual way of life.

Norman was deeply impressed by his seriousness, but nothing that he said made

sense to him. He spoke about God, and Norman did not believe in a God. It was not for him. War, illness, cruelty, stupidity, poverty and greed were not and could not be the product of any purposeful creation.

The next day another man visited him. He, too, was an alcoholic who no longer drank. This second man had not had a drink in over three years. This was probably Fitz Mayo ("Our Southern Friend") or Hank Parkhurst ("The Unbeliever").

He told him of other men who had found sobriety through the recognition of some power beyond themselves, and invited him to a meeting on the following

Tuesday at Bill Wilson's home in Brooklyn.

He told his wife about this group, and she thought he was mentally unbalanced. But she had met this kindly doctor and, since he recommended it, she was willing for him to try it.

The following Tuesday, hardly daring to hope and fearful of the worst, he and his wife attended their first meeting. He had never been so inspired. That was, for him, the beginning of a new life. Almost imperceptibly he began to change. In the process of this change, he recognized two immensely significant steps for him. He admitted to himself for the first time that all my previous thinking might be wrong, and he consciously wished to believe.

In his story, Norman ends by addressing himself directly to atheists or agnostics, who might read the book. He assured them that their questions had been in his mind also. He could see no satisfactory solution to any of them. But he kept hard to the only thing that seemed to hold out any hope, and gradually his difficulties were lessened. He said he had not given up his intellect for the sake of his soul, nor had he destroyed his integrity to preserve his health and sanity. "All I had feared to lose I have gained and all I feared to gain I have lost."

As a result of this experience he was convinced that to seek is to find, to ask is to be given. The day never passed that he did not silently cry out in thankfulness, not merely for his release from alcohol, but even more for a change that had given his life new meaning, dignity, and beauty.

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+++Message 79. BB Authors, 1st edition -- Ralph Furlong, "Another Prodigal Story."
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/6/2002 5:00:00 PM

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Another Prodigal Story -- Ralph Furlong, Springfield, Massachusetts? Darien, Conn.?

(p. 357 in 1st edition.)

Ralph had his last drink on June 6, 1938.

He begins by telling of his last drunk. He and a man he met at the bar planned how they would convince his wife that he had been about to commit suicide and how his new friend had saved his life, so that she would be sympathetic rather than angry at his drunken state. When the man started playing with a gun, Ralph got nervous and ran away.

Only the day before he had been in an accident. A Good Samaritan saw his condition and got him away quickly, before the police came, and drove him home. He was dreadfully drunk that day and his wife consulted a lawyer as preliminary to entering divorce action. He swore to her that he wouldn't drink again and within 24 hours, he was dead drunk.

Several months previously he had spent a week in a New York hospital for

Hindsight - Myron Williams, New York City.

(p. 370 in 1st edition.)

Myron sobered up in April of 1936.

His is another story that could have been titled, "Fired Again." He was fired repeatedly, but often could find a still better job. During the Great Depression he was making \$10,000 a year -- an enormous salary at that time.

He would stop drinking for weeks or even months, then begin to drink moderately. He could do that for a time, but soon he would be back to problem drinking. How many times this happened, he didn't know and didn't even want to know.

His story could also have been called "The Car Smasher." During this period he completely smashed nine new automobiles, but escaped without injury to himself. Even this, he said, didn't convince him that there might be a God who was looking out for him, perhaps in answer to the prayers of others.

He abused his friends; he didn't want to, but when it was a question of a friendship or a drink, he usually took the drink.

In a final effort to escape, he moved to New York thinking he could leave his

reputation and troubles behind him. He was hired by eight nationally known

organizations and fired just as quickly when they had checked his references. He felt the world was against him. They wouldn't give him a chance. So he

continued his drinking and took any mediocre job he could get.

He visited churches occasionally, hoping to find something that would help him. On one of these visits he met a girl he thought could be the answer to all of his problems. He was honest with her about his problems, but she knew better than to marry a man thinking she could reform him. She suggested prayer instead. And she told him "You must be decent for your own sake. And because you want to be decent, not because someone else wants you to be." Myron then started bargaining with God but found that God didn't work that way. He got neither the girl nor his old job back.

Six months later he was sitting in a small hotel, full of remorse and desperate. A middle-aged man approached him and said, "Do you really want to stop drinking?" When he answered yes, the man wrote down a name and address.

"When you are sure you do, go and see this man." He walked away. Myron

Manhattan.

According to his story he was drinking heavily by the age of fifteen and sixteen. Then he decided to leave school. The next few years were spent in civil engineering work, travel, sports, and idleness, and he seemed not to have serious difficulties because of his drinking.

By the time he married and sailed for France during World War I, alcohol had begun to play a big part in his life. Soon he knew he was an alcoholic, but would admit it to no one.

Sometime after he was divorced from his first wife, he stopped being a social

drinker and became a periodic drunkard, with sprees lasting from three days to three weeks, and the dry intervals lasting from three weeks to four months.

He married again by the age of thirty-five and had a beautiful home. He had a kind understanding, lovely wife; a partnership in a firm he had helped to found years before; a more than comfortable income; many luxuries and friends; opportunity to follow his interests and hobbies; a love of his work;

pride in his success; great health; optimism; and hope.

But he had a growing, gnawing fear about his drinking. Soon he slipped to the bottom, sleeping in cheap hotels, flop houses, police stations and once in a doorway. (Since they appear to have been a wealthy family, this may have been because his wife had kicked him out, or he didn't quite make it home due to his condition.)

He was sent many times to the alcoholic ward of a hospital. Sometimes he could pull himself together and work, but not for long. He became helpless, hopeless, bitter.

When he finally found A.A., he found that his intelligence, instead of drawing him further away from spiritual faith brought him closer to it. He was finally able to see that God could do an eminently more capable job of running the universe than he. At last he believed he was on his way.

It was Popsy and his wife who took Marty Mann ("Women Suffer Too") to her first meeting, on April 15, 1939. His sister-in-law had given the manuscript of the Big Book to Dr. Tiebout. Marty was a patient of Dr. Tiebout at Blythewood. Dr. Tiebout handed her a card with an address and told her to take the five o'clock train into New York, grab a cab, and go to the address

He developed into a steady drinker and, when going to sea, took enough liquor

along to last for the trip. At foreign ports if American liquor was not available or cost too much he tried the native drinks, which were often very potent. He visited most of the ports in the world, stayed in some of them for some time, and every place he went he found alcoholic beverages available. At twenty he stopped going to sea, and eventually got into the building trade. He made good money, but never stayed in one place for very long, ever the "rolling stone."

When World War I started he was twenty-nine and living in Texas. When he left Texas, he learned that the train would be stopping in his hometown for an hour. He saw his mother very briefly for the first time in eleven years. He promised her that after the war he would come home.

He tried to stop drinking but could not. There were many visits to doctors and sanitariums. He was then his mother's sole support, and he caused her mother much misery.

Finally, he heard about Doctor Bob in Akron, and went to see him. Dr. Bob put him in the hospital, and told him that unless he was sincere in wanting to quit he was just wasting their time. But Lloyd was willing to do anything. Eventually he had a religious awakening.

He was active in 12th step work and it was his name and address that Dr. Bob

gave Dorothy Snyder, then married to Clarence Snyder ("The Home Brewmeister"), when she appealed to him for help for her husband. Lloyd

became Clarence's sponsor. But when Clarence announced that he was starting

a meeting in Cleveland, which would be called Alcoholics Anonymous, Lloyd

stayed with the Oxford Group, at least until the Akron group also broke away.

He was fifty years old when he wrote his story, and unmarried. But he had

become sane and sensible again, had made his mother happy and made many new friends. He had gained the respect of his fellow men, and learned how to

enjoy life. He had been sober nearly six and a half years when he wrote his

story.



he was already reaching out to help other alcoholics.

So they sent him a wire asking his permission to use the letter anonymously in the book, as the first example of what might be accomplished without personal contact. He wired back the next day: "Permission granted with pleasure. Lots of Luck."

This was the first time anyone had sobered up just from reading the book, so everyone was very excited. After the exchange of correspondence, which appears in the first edition, a collection was taken up to buy a bus ticket to bring him to New York.

When the bus showed up in New York, a man fitting his given description did NOT exit the vehicle. Confused, the welcoming party asked the driver if he had seen a man of the description aboard the bus at any time. He replied that the man was sleeping it off UNDER the back seat! So the story was removed from the second printing of the Big Book.

In the MSCA Archives is a letter from Kaye Miller, a non-alcoholic who started the first A.A. meeting in LA, to Bill Wilson in New York. Bill had asked her to put on paper her early recollection of A.A. in Southern California. He also asked about Pat Cooper. In this 1944 letter she writes that Pat was attending meetings again and had been sober about a year.

The story was ghost written by Ruth Hock, Bill Wilson's secretary, from correspondence between the New York office and Pat and his mother.

Note:

This is the last post of 1st edition authors. There were seven other stories in the 1st edition that were retained in later editions. I will post pieces on them

when I post the 3rd edition stories. They are:

The Doctor's Nightmare - Dr. Robert H. Smith, Akron, Ohio. It was renamed "Dr. Bob's Nightmare" in later editions.

The European Drinker -- Joe Doppler (Doepler?), Cleveland, Ohio.

Our Southern Friend -- John Henry Fitzhugh (Fitz) Mayo, Cumberstone, Maryland.

Travel, Editor, Scholar - Jim Scott, Akron, Ohio. It was edited and renamed

in February of 1949.

He was born in Atlanta, Georgia, and had a thick southern accent. He described himself as having always been shy, sensitive, fearful, envious, and resentful, which in turn lead him to be arrogantly independent, a defiant personality. He believed he got his Ph.D. degree principally because he wanted to either outdo or defy everybody else. He published a great deal of scholarly research, perhaps for the same reason.

He finished graduate school at the age of 30, and taught English at the University of Alabama for 21 years. That is where he was working when he entered A.A. He later taught at Kent State University in Ohio. (He joked in a talk he gave in 1978 about teaching Shakespeare with a southern accent, and having taught freshman English to Jim Nabors, television's Gomer Pyle. Had he known Nabors was going to make so much money, he would have sat in Nabors' seat and let Nabors teach the class.)

He began as a social drinker, in his early twenties, and did not experience any problems with drinking until well after he finished graduate school. But as the tensions and anxieties of his life mounted, and the set-backs from perfection began to increase, he "slipped over the line between moderate drinking and alcoholism."

John said "there are all kinds of drunks: melancholy drunks, weeping drunks, traveling drunks, slap-happy and stupid drunks, and a number of other varieties." He was a self-aggrandizing and occasionally violent drunk. His crises came when, during a drunk, he became "violently insane" and landed in the City Jail. Soon after he was ready for A.A.

John gave very humorous talks. For example, he said in his 1978 talk that he did not know why his story was removed from the third edition, perhaps the New York office thought he had died. He also joked about how having your story in the Big Book could sometimes cause problems. He told how after he had talked at a state A.A. convention in Little Rock, Arkansas, he overheard a man say that he was a fake, a liar, and a thief. The man thought he had stolen every word of his story out of a story in the Big Book which the man had just read the night before.

He discusses four paradoxes in his story. (A paradox, he explains, is a statement seemingly self-contradictory; a statement which appears to be false, but which, upon careful examination, in certain instances proves to be true.) The four paradoxes are, (1) we surrender to win, (2) we give away to keep, (3) we suffer to get well and (4) we die to live.

John updated his story for the January 1968 A.A. Grapevine. In the update he

said that in A.A. we don't just quit drinking. "We learn to change our self-centeredness, to stop running away from things we don't like, and to remove or at least adjust our emotional shortcomings. We do these things by taking seriously and honestly our Twelve Steps, the nearest thing to a 'cure' for alcoholism that anybody has yet discovered. We learn to do these things not by just memorizing the Steps (though that is a good idea), but by attempting to live and act them each day of our lives. And eventually, often when we least expect it, we discover that as a result of all this we are happy and contented and full of thanksgiving -- something I once knew (or thought I knew) I could never be, without drinking."

(Special thanks to Charles K. of California for some of the information on John Parr.)

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+++Message 87. BB Authors, 2nd edition -- Author unknown, Canada. "His Conscience."
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/7/2002 2:13:00 AM

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From "They Stopped in Time."

His Conscience - Author unknown, Canada.

(p. 365 in 2nd edition.)

Heading: "It was the only part of him that was soluble in alcohol."

It is believed that this author first got sober in 1938. He came from a family of five children and had a very happy childhood in a small Canadian town. His parents were religious, without over emphasizing it.

He never drank until he joined the Army in World War I, and drank very little while in the service. In France he gave his rum ration away far more often than he drank it. He was sent back to Canada in the middle of the war because he was wounded and suffering from shock. He did some drinking with friends while waiting for his final discharge papers, but out of the Army he only had a drink or

two on special occasions, two or three times a year. That continued for ten years.

home. This secret drinking caused him to feel very guilty. He was very unhappy and knew his family was unhappy. The worst part was that in his guilt he lost God. He felt he had no right to pray to God, no right to go into the temple or church. When they had lived in Rome he used to go into one of the cathedrals every night on his way home from work and, to him, a house of God was a house of God and was beautiful and dedicated to His worship. Now he was robbed of God, because he was so ashamed.

One day he was asked to help the crippled son of his "wash-woman" Gabrielle, with his artwork. He was happy to do so, but when he arrived he was drunk. At the door he prayed to God to help him. Miraculously he was able to spend two and-a-half hours helping the boy. But when he left he started drinking again. He didn't remember much about the next ten days. But when he remembered how he had prayed to help the crippled boy, he again turned to God for help. He didn't drink again for the next ten years, but said they were miserable years.

A week or two before Decoration Day 1947, a friend asked him how he was doing with his alcohol problem. He answered that he had no alcohol problem and

that on Decoration Day he and his wife were going to try a bottle of champagne.

His friend was an A.A. member and asked him, before he took that first drink, to go to a meeting with him. At the meeting the leader stated "Alcoholism is an incurable, progressive disease. Whether you are dry one year, ten years or fifty years, you're still one drink away from a drunk." Fred's reaction was "Thank God I didn't take that first drink! Thank God I am here."

He remembered what his mother had said years before when he came home drunk. Weeping, she said, "This must be somehow good. This cannot be all negative. Some good must come out of it." Toward the end of his first A.A. meeting, he heard about the Twelfth Step. Immediately, his mother's words came to his mind. "That's somehow good," he thought. "Thank God," he wrote, "I have been able to turn it into "Somehow good."

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+++Message 89. Big Book Authors, 2nd edition -- Joe
Mina, the Bronx, NY. "Joe's Woes."
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/7/2002 2:30:00 AM

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From: "They Lost Nearly All."

Joe's Woes - Joe Mina, the Bronx, NY.

(p. 445 in 2nd edition.)

Heading: "These were only beginning when he hit Bellevue for the thirty-fifth time. He still had the State hospital ahead of him; and even after A.A., a heartbreaking test of his new-found faith."

Joe joined A.A. in April of 1939, but slipped in November 1939 and returned

in February 1940. Joe had been to Bellevue's alcoholic ward thirty-five times. He thought that should qualify him for A.A. because "they don't take you in the Bellevue alcoholic ward for sinus trouble." His first trip to Bellevue was at the age

of seventeen, and he was called an alcoholic at eighteen or nineteen. He was in jail perhaps sixty-five or seventy-five times.

He got married in 1926, thinking he would be able to stop drinking, and fathered three children. After eleven years his wife decided to leave with the children, but his sister intervened and suggested that she pay for him to be treated by a psychiatrist. He agreed because he had begun hallucinating. But he did not cooperate with the psychiatrist. The psychiatrist suggested he go back to Bellevue. They put him in the mental hospital, but he found he could get alcohol there too. His ten-year-old son tried to support the family by shining shoes. A doctor suggested he sign himself out and try to support his family. But he couldn't hold a job and he couldn't stop drinking.

He went from one job to another, until no one would hire him any more. He would go to his son and tell him his mother had sent him to get the money, and the son never refused him.

Eventually he was arrested for a very serious crime that he didn't remember committing, and could have been sent Sing Sing for fifteen years. But he was

sentenced to the State hospital again. It was there, in early 1939, that a doctor called him into his office to meet Bill Wilson and five other A.A.s who were trying to get A.A. into the hospital. Some time later he went to his first meeting in South Orange, New Jersey.

For seven months his wife accompanied him to the meetings. The first time he

hospital where the doctor suggested he try A.A. He told his wife A.A. didn't allow women at the meetings, and that they had alcohol there to test them. When he came home smelling of alcohol, he would tell her he had been "testing." When he finally came home dead drunk he said to her "Madam, they put me to the test, and I have failed!" He called the clubhouse and he and his wife went there. The women took his wife aside and explained A.A. to her, a different version from what he had told her.

At the end of three months they asked him to speak. All he could say was "I'm glad to be here." He sat down to tremendous applause.

Soon he learned that A.A. did not need him, but that he needed A.A. That gave him the beginnings of a little humility. He had divorced himself from the Church when he was twenty-one. But he talked to "Father McNulty" who told him not to worry "you'll develop an awareness of God."

He did. He began to see God in nature and in people. He would meet someone

he knew and the first thing that entered his mind was "What is there good about that guy that I know?" Big people, he said, discuss ideals, average people discuss things, and little people -- they just talk about other people. And you realize that if you put this all together, you get a little humility, a little tolerance, a little honesty, a little sincerity, and a little prayer -- and a lot of A.A.

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++++Message 91. BB Authors, 2nd edition -- Annie Collohouse, NYC. "Annie the Cop Fighter."
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/7/2002 2:51:00 AM

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From: "They Lost Nearly All."

Annie the Cop Fighter - Annie Collohouse, New York City.

(p. 514 in 2nd edition.)

"For thirty-five years she fought God, man, and the police force to keep on being what she wanted to be -- a drunk. But a telephone call from a gin mill where she was celebrating Mother's Day brought in the nosey A.A.s to change her life."

Annie came to A.A. in April of 1947, at the age of sixty-seven. She was a "scrub lady," poor, and uneducated. She lived in a tenement house on First

Avenue. Her husband had left her, taking the children with him. At one point he invited her to move back with him and she did. She says that by then the oldest boy was married, and the youngest was studying to become a policeman. "Brother!"

She had her first drink at age 31. She fought with police and was frequently arrested for being drunk and disorderly. She cleaned rooms in a hotel, but got drunk on an occupant's liquor and fell asleep on his bed. She got fired. At one point she was drinking with the boys on the Bowery.

At her first meeting she met Nancy F. ("The Independent Blonde") who reports

"She laughed and said 'You're jealous of me because I've had a few drinks and

you can't have any.'" Nancy replied, "You're so right."

She had a slip, after which she went to High Watch Farm. When she returned

Nancy suggested she take the fifth step, either with Dr. Silkworth or with a priest. She chose to do it with a priest. (The priest was probably also an A.A. member.)

She and the priest met at Nancy's apartment. Nancy made coffee and suggested

that Annie attend the meeting on 58th Street when they were finished, then left. When Annie arrived at the meeting she seemed clearly relieved. Even though Nancy had told her this was not a confession, she was just to tell him her story, she did make a confession. She told the priest: "Father, I'll tell you everything, but don't ask me how many times."

She was a very simple, uninhibited woman. She cursed a lot when she spoke, but then would look at a priest in the audience say, "Excuse me, Father, but I'm trying to be careful."

Nancy was a hairdresser, and when Annie came to the beauty shop she would

charge her a dollar "because I never wanted her to think I just gave her anything because she was very proud." Annie later went to another beauty shop and when they charged her six dollars she said, "Hell, I can get it done for a buck up on Park Avenue."

She is said to have had the time of her life in A.A. She had nothing, but she was sober, and she was having a ball. She was happy as a lark.

Annie died when she was about seventy-four.

younger and "presentable." They bought little hats with flowers on them, and wore little black dresses and pearls on these occasions. Once they went to the apartment of a celebrated actress, and she told them such wonderful stories, they forgot why they were there. "We didn't have the nerve to tell her that she was a drunk. Later she did get sober," Nancy said years later.

She didn't like to work with the families in the beginning. "I was mad at the families. I wouldn't talk to anybody but the alcoholic." She said "I was so eager to give what I had, I went right from the First Step to the last Step. For me it was just wonderful. I got in with people and I cared for somebody. You see, I had never cared for anybody, not even myself. When you care for somebody, you begin to heal yourself. You don't even know it."

Nancy said everyone in A.A. knew each other in those days because they were

all in one clubhouse. She often went to Dr. Silkworth for advice. "If we were in trouble, we'd go to Dr. Silkworth. If we were in a situation and we didn't know how to get out of it or were afraid we might get drunk, we could talk it over with him. He was a very simple, wonderful man. He said to me once, 'The day that you

can sit down and just be honest with yourself in this situation, you will know what to do.' That was the kind of a man he was."

Nancy went to the clubhouse every day from eleven o'clock in the morning when

they opened until they closed at night. It was the only place she felt safe. For the first five years, she did nothing but go to A.A. She didn't know what else to do. For fifteen years she attended a women's meeting that Marty Mann started in the home of a woman whose husband was an alcoholic. It was on 58th Street in midtown Manhattan. Marty wanted to hire her as a speaker for the National Council on Alcoholism, but she declined.

When she arrived at A.A. she didn't believe in God and didn't want to hear anything about it. But she began searching. Later she became a Quaker and

taught English to migrant workers.

Nancy is a good example of what people can accomplish after they get sober.

She went to high school in her fifties and went to college when she was seventy. She studied behavioral science. She went to college for nine and a half years. She graduated cum laude.

She now lives in Pennsylvania, and spoke at the 2000 A.A. International

Convention in Minneapolis.

the rubber prosperity fell apart in the twenties. His marriage deteriorated and they were divorced.

He began to think he was insane. He didn't want to neglect his children, but he did; he didn't want to get into fights, but he did; he didn't want to get arrested, but he did; he didn't want to jeopardize the lives of innocent people by driving while

intoxicated, but he did.

On one occasion when he was hospitalized after a terrible automobile accident, Sister Ignatia stuck her head in the door and told him she thought they might be able to make something human out of his face after all. He was in the hospital fourteen days, but drank again after getting out.

One day after a binge he woke to find his brother, Paul, and Dr. Bob at his

bedside. When he asked Dr. Bob if he were ever going to drink again, he answered: "So long as I'm thinking as I'm thinking now, and so long as I'm

doing the things I'm doing now, I don't believe I'll ever take another drink."

Dick became a very enthusiastic, hard working early member. He was one of

several unidentified people pictured in the March 1, 1941, Saturday Evening

Post story, most of whom have their backs to the camera. When a committee was formed to develop plans for the first A.A. International Conference, Dick was elected General Chairman. However, according to Bill Wilson, he was not, at least initially, in favor of a General Service Conference.

Dick stayed close to Dr. Bob until his death. He traveled to the West Coast after Anne Smith's death, to renew old acquaintances. Dick accompanied him. He wrote Bill Wilson after returning from the trip, reporting on how much good the trip had done Dr. Bob, but complaining about "well-wishing friends -- one in particular who stayed four hours and damned near drove him nuts."

Ironically, while Dick's story was titled "The Car Smasher," it was his brother Paul, who died as a result of an automobile accident on September 19, 1953. However, both brothers remained completely sober until their respective deaths.

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+++Message 94. BB Authors, 3rd edition -- Joe Doppler, Cleveland, OH. "The European Drinker."

house.

His wife complained about his drinking, so he hid bottles all over the house. At times he would resolve never to drink again and pour out full pints and smash the bottles, only to find himself frantically searching for any he missed so he could have a drink.

He began to absence himself from the church where he had formerly been a member of the choir. He never asked the priest to give him the pledge like many other Catholic alcoholics did. (It was common at that time for Roman Catholics who had problems with alcohol to pledge to a priest that they would stop drinking. It usually didn't work if the man was an alcoholic.)

Then occurred the event that saved him. Dr. Bob visited him. He did not ask any questions except whether he was definite about his desire to quit drinking. There were no more than four or five in Dr. Bob's group at the time, but they befriended him. He was advised "You've been trying man's ways and they always fail. You can't win unless you try God's way."

He had no problem with what they were teaching him because his church taught the same thing. He put into practice what he was being taught and soon Dr. Bob sent him to talk to other alcoholics.

The first few months were hard: business trials, little worries, and feelings of general despondency nearly drove him to the bottle, but he made progress in the spiritual life.

"As I go along I seem to get strength daily to be able to resist more easily. And when I get upset, cross-grained and out of tune with my fellow man I know that I am out of tune with God. Searching where I have been at fault, it is not hard to discover and get right again, for I have proven to myself and to many others who know me that God can keep a man sober if he will let him."

Dorothy Snyder, the wife of Clarence Snyder ("The Home Brewmeister"), was

eager to help this group reach other alcoholics. She approached Rev. Dilworth Lupton, of the First Unitarian Church in Cleveland, concerning the group, but he was negative about the Oxford Group and wanted nothing to do with it. After the Cleveland members broke away from the Oxford Group, she approached him again, this time with a copy of the book and with the names of some Roman Catholics who were members. Among the names was that of Joe Doppler. The fact Joe Doppler was associated with this new Cleveland group was sufficient proof to Reverend Lupton that the alcoholic fellowship had indeed broken with the Oxford Group, and he offered to help in any way he could.

seven. Her

father was an alcoholic. They moved from the country to the city when she was at an age where girls want nice things and to be like the other girls at school. She felt the others were making fun of her, and feared that she wasn't dressed as well as the rest.

At the age of sixteen she was invited to spend the summer with an aunt in Liberty, Indiana. Her aunt told her she could have boy friends visit, but that she must stay away from one boy, Russ Macy, (his name was Roscoe, but he was called Rollo or Russ), who came from a fine family but drank too much. Four months later, she married him, even though he drank and he was seven years her senior. She was sure his family disapproved of her because she was from the wrong side of the tracks.

They had two daughters, but about seven or eight years after they were married his drinking became so bad that she took her children and went home. She didn't see Russ or hear from him for a year. She was about twenty-five at the time and had never touched a drop of alcohol.

At the end of a year the children received a card from their father, which she kept and cherished. It said "Tell Mommy I still love her." Soon Russ himself arrived. She welcomed him with open arms, though he had little but the clothes on his back. He told her he would never drink again and she believed him.

He got a job and went back to work, and stayed "dry" for thirteen years. By the end of the thirteen years their older daughter was married and she and her husband were living with them and the other daughter was in her last year of high school.

Then one night their son-in-law and Russ went to a prizefight. Russ came home drunk. She told him "The children are raised, and if this is the way you want it, this is the way we'll have it. Where you go I'll go, and what you drink I'll drink." And thus Ethyl started drinking.

They went on vacations in the car, drinking all the way. Ethyl did the driving. One Sunday afternoon she got picked up for drunk driving and they both were thrown in jail. On another occasion she got drunk and set the house on fire.

In 1940 they read something about A.A. in the newspaper. They talked about it and thought there might come a time when they needed it. She was having a drink in a barroom one day, and told the woman behind the bar she wished she never had to take another drink. She was told to talk to Jack, the owner of the place, whom they had always tried to buy a drink, but who always refused saying he couldn't handle alcohol. (This may have been John Munier, one of the early Cleveland members.)

in part because some Roman Catholic priests in Cleveland were refusing to let Catholics

attend the Oxford Group meeting in Akron.

This was the first group to use the name Alcoholics Anonymous. Nell Wing, Bill Wilson's long-time secretary, said that Bill had been using the name since 1938 in letters and a pamphlet, but on this slender basis, Clarence forever claimed to have founded A.A.

Dorothy also was very active and did much to help A.A. in Cleveland. They were divorced before Clarence was drafted into the Army in 1942. Dorothy and their son moved to California.

Unfortunately, Clarence had an abrasive personality, and as one of his friends said, you either loved him or hated him. According to Nell Wing, had he not been so abrasive he probably would have been considered a co-founder of A.A.

When Clarence left Cleveland for military service a farewell party was held for him and he was presented with a wristwatch as a gift from all the West Side groups who acclaimed him for his pioneer work in Cleveland and particularly on the West Side. In a letter from basic training, Private Snyder said the going was rough, and he wished he were fifteen or twenty years younger. He supplied his address at Fort Knox, Kentucky, for anyone who wished to write him, and said he missed the association of the groups and was looking for other A.A. members in Kentucky.

He became very hostile toward Bill Wilson. He opposed the traditions and continued to use his full name in public. He led a small group to oppose the Conference and the General Service Office.

After the war he married his second wife, Selma, who worked at the Deaconess Hospital, where her father was the director. Clarence often took alcoholics there to sober them up. Clarence and Selma moved to St. Petersburg, Florida. Eventually they divorced.

Clarence then married his third wife, Grace (also an A.A. member), and joined

her as a member of the Assembly of God Church in Winter Park. They did much

A.A. work together and conducted many religious retreats. Unlike Bill Wilson, he always used his full name in public, and was honored with several prestigious awards for public service during his life, which he did not

(p. 353 in 3rd edition.)

Heading: "Just three years of drinking pushed a shy, lonely young girl to the depths of depression. Out of sheer despair, she called for help."

Lisa's story was first named "The Story of Lisa" in an early printing of "Young People and A.A." She began to drink at fifteen, and never drank socially, but always as often as much as she could. She wanted to drink herself to death. It seemed that her whole life had been spent on the outside looking in. She had been unhappy, lonely, and scared for so long that when she discovered alcohol it

seemed to be the answer to all her problems.

But it became a painful answer as hangovers, blackouts, trouble, and remorse set in. She recounted driving her parents' car down a bank, ramming the steel fence around someone's backyard. She was informed the next morning that she had not behaved like her shy, quiet self. She remembers lying on a cold cement floor shredding into little bits several pieces of stolen identification cards, and washing her face in the toilet bowl trying to sober up, and screaming hysterically while clinging to bars too high to see out of and cursing everyone that came near her. She lost her driver's license and became a ward of the court, and was put on

probation. None of this impressed her.

Thinking that school was interfering with her drinking, she ran away from home, despite the fact that she was near graduation and her mother was sick in a hospital. She recounts hitchhiking with a friend to Las Vegas from Washington State, spending a month drinking, taking drugs, and finding shelter where they could and accepting meals from anyone, begging and stealing anything they needed. They were arrested and her friend was institutionalized for eight months.

But Lisa, who had turned eighteen during the trip, and was allowed to return home to a pair of miserable, hurt parents.

She began to hate herself, and drank primarily to ease her conscience and forget. But things got progressively worse. Finally, she began to take a good look at herself: she had managed to drink her way through all her friends, had no one in the world to talk to, was increasing guilt ridden and depressed. She was too weak to continue this day-by-day suicide.

Thank God she knew of A.A. and called. She had no idea what would happen, she just knew she didn't want to live if life was going to go on like it was. At the time she wrote her story she was counting her blessings, instead of her troubles. A.A. became a way of life and living for her. It brought

During Prohibition he had his first taste of moonshine. For the next twenty-five years he drank anything and everything at the slightest excuse.

When he made it home in 1920, he re-entered school and did a year's work in three months, proving that he could do it when he wanted to. During the roaring '20s, he drank a great deal and thought he was having a grand time. He got to Europe for a few weeks, had cards entitling him to an entrée in the better joints between Cleveland and New York, got married, and built a home in a fashionable suburb of Cleveland. This high living ended with the 1929 stock market crash. In a couple of years he lost his worldly goods, and his wife left him.

He then made a geographic cure -- to New York. He began working in the broadcasting business. He worked for a Chicago firm that represented several large radio stations. It was his job to sell time on these stations to advertising agencies in New York.

Then he met a woman he wanted to marry, but she refused him at first. He persisted. In January 1938 he took a job managing a small radio station in Vermont, and again proposed to the girl. She was then working in Salt Lake City, but said, if he would curtail his drinking she would consider marrying him. They were married in Montreal in November 1938. But on their first Christmas he came home drunk.

In 1940 they moved to Pittsburgh where he managed two radio stations under the same ownership. His wife tried everything she could to help him, but by early spring of 1944, his drinking had become so troublesome that she left him and moved to her parents' home in Florida. She told him she was not leaving because she didn't love him, but because she did love him and could not bear to be there when he lost the respect of others and, above all, of his own self respect.

Full of self-pity he staggered home one day determined to kill himself. "Then, by George, she'd be sorry!" But he passed out, and when he woke, looking straight at him was a large oil painting of his wife, and he remembered her words: "I'm not leaving you because I don't love you, but because I love you." This was about ten p.m. (He pointed out that the hour is important.)

He called A.A. After a few meetings he drove to Florida unannounced and showed his wife the A.A. literature he had brought with him to convince her that he was trying to change. She returned with him to Pittsburgh.

In September he went to New York alone and got drunk. It was a one-day drunk and he didn't tell anyone. He began skipping meetings. On New Year's Day he

almost took a drink, but did not. It frightened him and he started going back to meetings. He met an old friend new in AA, and full of enthusiasm. This fired his spirits again, and he started really working the program.

Then, when the group was celebrating his one years of sobriety, he told the truth. It had only been nine months since his last drink. He had thrown off the big lie that had been burdening him for months. "What a wonderful relief."

His first spiritual experience came early. While in Florida trying to convince his wife that he was serious about A.A., she picked up a clipping from the St. Petersburg Times about A.A. She had considered sending it to him. She cut out that clipping at about ten o'clock on the same night, and at the same time as he called A.A. in Pittsburgh, some 1300 miles away.

In his 1969 update of his story, Pete said that when he came to A.A. he believed in God, but that was about the limit of his spiritual qualifications. He was in the program about three years before he found comfort and deep satisfaction in prayer. Insight came gradually through the voices of oldtimers.

When he and his wife moved to a new neighborhood in Pittsburgh, several ministers called on them asking them to visit their churches. It was embarrassing to his wife when the ministers groped around to find out just what their religion was. One young minister came quickly to the point by asking his wife what religion her husband followed. Without hesitancy she said, Alcoholics Anonymous. The minister replied that he knew of no better one. Pete went on to say that A.A. is not a religion, but certainly is a spiritual program.

He expressed dismay that responsibility to our group, to A.A. as a whole, and

especially to General Services is a subject dwelt upon far too lightly by many of our members. He said it distresses him particularly when older members gradually drop out of the picture. We need their good experience, and they should be grateful enough to carry on the message as their responsibility to the future of Alcoholics Anonymous and, in many instances, to their very own sobriety. He hated to meet members who consider that they have graduated from A.A. They are missing so much! Pete knows now that sobriety is not a destination, but an endless journey, and he hastened to add, a very beautiful journey. (This update was written from Cleveland, Tennessee.)

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+++Message 104. BB Authors -- Author unknown, "Any Day was Washday."
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/8/2002 4:24:00 AM

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From: They Stopped in Time

Any Day Was Washday -- Author unknown.

(p. 369 in 3rd edition.)

Heading: "This secret drinker favored the local Laundromat as a watering hole. Now, she no longer risks losing her home, her self-respect, or her laundry."

One source says this woman's date of sobriety was April 1973. Her father was a big Irish oilman who came up through the "school of hard knocks" and so had to be a two-fisted drinker. Her sweet mother said he had a "weakness." The author realized that something was wrong and developed a great sense of insecurity.

She married at nineteen and had six children. In the beginning she and her husband drank on social occasions, but without problems. Then a series of tragedies occurred. Her father died from falling down a flight of stairs while drunk, after his death her mother took up drinking and died of cirrhosis of the liver; then her five-year-old girl was killed by a neighbor's car. She couldn't take all the stress and was soon admitted to a state hospital for the mentally ill. After a few months she was "released and left the world of insanity, only to return to the world of alcoholic insanity."

Her husband disapproved of her drinking so she would gather up the soiled clothes and go the Laundromat, buying alcohol on the way. She would get drunk at the Laundromat, lose shirts, and once lost the entire wash. (During this time she was considering doing laundry for the neighbors as a part-time job, so that she could spend all her time at the Laundromat.) Finally her husband decided he wanted a divorce and told her to leave because she was "unfit as a mother, a wife, and a laundress."

Fortunately her sister-in-law knew of a place that helped alcoholic women, a halfway house. There she found A.A. and learned that she didn't have a "weakness" but the disease of alcoholism.

moved to Oklahoma. The drinking got worse; her husband would come home day after day to find her passed out. She was sent to a mental hospital where they kept her seventeen days.

When they moved to Houston the drinking continued. She went out one day to walk the dog. A patrol car passed and saw her staggering and stopped to take her home, but she got "sassy" with him so he took the dog home and took poor Esther to jail. She was only there a few hours. When her husband came to get her the look of disgust on his face helped her to hit bottom.

He had read a story about A.A. in the Saturday Evening Post a few weeks before. He finally showed it to her with the ultimatum "If you will try this thing, I'll go along with you. If you don't, you will have to go home. I cannot sit by and watch you destroy yourself!"

She wrote to the GSO office in New York. Within a week a letter came back with A.A. literature. It was the routine letter they sent everyone, but with it was a hand-written letter from, Ruth Hock, A.A.'s non-alcoholic secretary. That personal touch did a lot to help Esther. Esther was full of gratitude to her husband, and to A.A. members who had paved the way for her.

During her second year in A.A. they were transferred to Dallas, and she started an A.A. group there in 1943. The telephone number in Dallas that Ruth Hock had given her had been disconnected when she arrived. But undaunted, she started seeking other alcoholics to 12th step.

Esther had lived in Dallas from 1927 to 1932 and, according to a letter she wrote to New York dated March 29, 1943, "This is where I had been so sick for five years. Where I started trying out all the doctors, hospitals and cures (the Sanitarium three times) so I've lots to do. First off, four doctors to call on and let them look over 'exhibit A' (me)! My minister (Episcopal) has two prospects for us. He tried so hard to help me for years, had never heard of A.A." She added "Hope I have much A.A. to report in my next letter. You'll be hearing from me!" They did indeed.

A week later, April 5, she wrote "Dear Bobbie [Margaret R. Burger, Bill's secretary at the time]: The new Dallas Group met for their first time last night! Three inactive alkie, one active from Detroit and two non-alcoholics who brought the active one." The group met for some time in Esther's home.

Esther died on June 3, 1960, with slightly more than 19 years of sobriety. Her copy of the Big Book, which is signed by Bill Wilson, is on display in the Dallas Central Office.

always felt guilty because she became an alcoholic after their divorce. She was able to explain that she would have become an alcoholic anyway, that she had been a sick person, unfit for marriage.) She married Dudley de Lavigne in 1934, (the husband mentioned on page 493), but was again divorced less than a year later. She married again after her recovery. Her third husband, John Kennedy Magruder, whom she married in 1958 and divorced in 1964. For most of her professional career she went by the name of Felicia Gizycka.

Through her first two marriages, and several geographic cures in Europe, her drinking caused more and more degradation. By 1943 she had moved to New York and was living a Bohemian life in the Village. Her daughter, Ellen, was taken away from her during this period.

Felicia sank lower and lower, but eventually had the good fortune to find a new analyst, Dr. Ruth Fox (who later became the medical director of the National Council on Alcoholism). Dr. Fox told her about A.A., gave her the Big Book, and finally persuaded her to meet with Bill Wilson. Bill arranged for her to meet Marty Mann. (Marty told how Bill called and said "I have a dame down here whose name I can't pronounce. I don't know what to do with her.")

The woman who answered the door at Marty's apartment (page 413 in the 3rd edition) was Marty's longtime lesbian partner, Priscilla Peck, a very glamorous art director at Vogue magazine. Felicia speaks of Priscilla on page 414. They took Felicia to her first AA meeting and Felicia and Priscilla became lifelong friends.

Marty was sponsor to them both.

When Marty spoke at Felicia's 16th anniversary celebration, she joked about how at their first meeting Felicia said little. But Marty talked on and on about her own history. Finally, Felicia admitted she drank a little too, "not much -- once in a while. Nothing very serious, you understand." It was a long time before Marty heard the full story. Little by little episodes came out that were not so mild. "I remember as though it were yesterday the first time I heard about her fighting ability." She turned to Felicia and asked: "What was it they used to call you?" Felicia replied, "Sadie, the fighting Pollock." It wasn't until after Felicia had a slip that she dropped her defenses and started to really talk about what alcohol had done in her life.

She was a talented writer and -- with Marty and Priscilla - helped start the A.A. Grapevine. She also kept journals, one of them entitled "To Those Who Didn't Make It." In this journal she describes Marty's form of sponsorship. She called Marty from a bar expecting Marty to run to her rescue. Instead, Marty said "Well, honey, what can I do about it?" Marty didn't let her dramatize herself.

graduate in high school, and the "good boy" to whom mothers pointed when their sons went astray. He was awarded a scholarship to a famous old eastern college, but began to drink at the end of his freshman year. By junior year he had to transfer to an easier state university to keep his grades up.

He entered dental school, his admission, oddly enough, arranged by the dentist who started A.A. in Amarillo, Texas. During his first year there, he married. He went through dental school sober, for the most part, except that he imitated his father's periodic drinking pattern by getting drunk at a few parties and on vacation. He graduated with honors, but could feel no real responsibility as a father or a husband.

Then he served a four-year tour in the Navy, two of which were spent in the Philippines. He described his life there as "a nightmare of periodic binges on alcohol and pills, adultery, unhappy hours at the dental office, seeing my life give birth to our second child and have several miscarriages, living in a turbulent household, and making continual attempts to be the respectable dentist, husband, father, and community leader."

His return to the United States proved effective as a geographical cure, and he was sober for a while, with the help of the Church. He had another brief period of sobriety when he went back to his hometown to go into private practice, but it did not take long for the pressures to bring out his immaturity and his insecurity.

By the age of twenty-eight he was well established and had been elected president of a civic club, was a deacon and a Sunday-school teacher, and had a lovely wife and three children. His wife was in the Junior League, and he was on the board of directors of the local center for the mentally retarded. But he had a queasy feeling in the pit of his stomach, which hinted to him that everything was phony. He had no real peace of mind, nor any gratitude.

In less than two years he had lost his practice, his home, his wife and children. He tried the church and psychiatry and finally came to A.A. He was twenty-nine when he had his last drunk. During that last drunk, which lasted four days, he threatened to kill his children, beat his wife at home and on the Church steps, mistreated a child in his office, and ran to a hospital for mental illness to avoid jail.

He came to A.A. simply because there were no other doors of help open to him in his hometown. After coming to A.A. he was divorced, lost his practice, was legally restrained from seeing his children, went broke, and the dental society

threatened him with the loss of his license. Only A.A. kept him from running

imitate the men he worked with by talking out of the side of his mouth as they did. He smoked as much, tried to drink as much, and do everything they did, only more so. He boosted his income by filching money from the Coke machine, short-sticking customers on oil, and selling oil he'd drained out of other cars.

He quit school when he was just past sixteen, already with a drinking problem. His parents both drank excessively and were getting progressively worse. He wanted love and affection from his parents but didn't get it so did what he pleased most of the time. He and another boy ran away to Omaha from his home in Chicago. They broke into a church to find a place to sleep and accidentally set the church on fire. He spent the next three days in jail. His father, a newspaperman, had meanwhile filed a missing person report on him. He was identified and put on a train back to Chicago. He went to work for the newspaper that employed his father, and began dating a girl he worked with.

Nearly eighteen he enlisted in the Navy to escape the Army draft. The night before he left for active duty he had planned to stay home, but his parents were drunk so he spent the night with his girlfriend and got very drunk himself. He was drunk when he was sworn in next morning, and drunk when he was discharged three years later.

At Great Lakes Boot Camp he landed a soft job which exempted him from ordinary recruit training activities. Although he wasn't allowed visitors for the first eight weeks, his dad pulled some strings and his parents managed to visit him after three weeks. They smuggled in a couple of pints for him, but he'd already made connections to get a regular supply of alcohol.

When stationed at Pearl Harbor he managed to be allowed to live in the photo lab where he worked, and to get a constant supply of alcohol. The result was that he woke up one day in a hospital. The doctor told him he had been brought into the hospital "like a madman, crying, raving, ranting, swearing, completely in the throes of delirium tremens." The diagnosis was acute alcoholism. At the court martial that followed he received only thirty days confinement, fifteen in solitary.

Two months later he was sent back to the States to be discharged. When the plane landed in San Diego he headed for Tijuana where he landed in jail for being drunk and causing a brawl. He was escorted back to San Diego the next morning by the Shore Patrol, but was discharged on schedule.

A Five-Time Loser Wins -- Morris B., Long Island, New York.

(p. 457 in 3rd edition.)

Heading: "The worst of prison treatment couldn't break this tough con. He was serving time on his fifth felony conviction when a miracle happened."

Morris said that, like most alcoholics, for him it was "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you die." But he couldn't die. He kept painfully awakening each time, mentally, physically, and spiritually, sick.

There are worse things than dying, he points out, "but is there any death worse than the progressive, self-induced, slow suicide of the practicing alcoholic?"

Morris described himself as a five-time loser, and explained that this means that he had five felony convictions (not including the cases beaten). He served time in four penitentiaries and several prison camps, including a maximum-security camp. He spent eleven months in solitary confinement, bouncing in and out of the "hole" (a bare concrete-and-steel cubicle) about five times during those eleven months. The crimes that he committed were the result of drinking and using drugs. Even in prison he was always fighting the system, even to the extent of using his body: he cracked his leg with a sixteen-pound sledge hammer in the rock hole; he let lye and water eat away at four of his toes and his foot for five hours.

At the age of forty-four, he finally hit bottom. And then the miracle happened. He saw a wooden sign with the Serenity Prayer printed on it. He had been to A.A. before, in and out of A.A. in Los Angeles, Phoenix, and San Francisco. He remembered that at one of his first A.A. meetings he had heard, "If you are an alcoholic and if you continue to drink, the end is death or insanity." He added, "They hadn't mentioned the living hell before death."

After seeing that sign, he took the first three Steps for the first time. He surrendered totally. Now he began to sleep, to relax, to accept his plight. He started going to A.A. in prison at the group's next meeting.

While still in prison, Morris was given training and after he was paroled he went to work as a counselor in Corrections, then worked for a County Mental Health organization, and when he wrote his story had been an alcoholism counselor for over a year and was off parole.

Morris was almost fifty years old when he wrote his story, and was expecting soon to meet his ex-wife and his two children, whom he had not seen in

twenty-three years. His son was to be married and wanted Morris at the wedding. His ex-wife, from whom he had not heard in over twenty-three years, had telephoned him three weeks earlier about the wedding.

He wrote: "I am still arrogant, egocentric, self-righteous, with no humility, even phony at times, but I'm trying to be a better person and help my fellowmen. Guess I'll never be a saint, but whatever I am, I want to be sober and in A.A." He ended his story by saying: "God bless all you people in A.A. and especially you fellows in prison. Remember, now you have a choice "

When last heard of Morris was living in North Carolina.

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+++Message 111. BB Authors, 3rd edition -- Author unknown, "Belle of the Bar."
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/8/2002 5:58:00 AM

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From: They Lost Nearly All

Belle of the Bar - Author unknown.

(p. 478 in 3rd edition.)

Heading: "Waitress by day, barfly by night, she drifted down the years into jail. Then A.A. showed her the beauty of normal living, in a whole family reborn."

This alcoholic woman had been "slinging hash" for eighteen years, and she thought she was managing. She had a beat-up car that wasn't paid for, no clothes, no money, no home, no real friends to speak of, mentally and physically pooped, "but I was doing all right!"

She began drinking at the age of twelve and quit at thirty-two. She also had a pill problem and for two years she was also addicted to heroin, using as many as twenty caps a day. She felt she had wasted twenty years of her life, but was fortunate not to have brain damage.

After being arrested and serving six months on drug charges she didn't go back to heroin. Her poor mother had "three of her kids in jail that year -- two sons and a daughter." A few years later an older brother died in a house fire because of "pills and booze." She attempted suicide on several occasions "making sure there was always somebody within reaching distance."

From: They Lost Nearly All

The Prisoner Freed - Author unknown, New York City

(p. 495 in 2nd edition, 508 in 3rd edition.)

Heading: "After twenty years in prison for murder, he knew A.A. was the spot for him -- if he wanted to stay on the outside."

This alcoholic first heard of A.A. and went to his first meetings when he was in prison. He probably joined the fellowship in 1950 or 1951. He slipped after ten months, but by the time he wrote his story for the 2nd edition he had four years sobriety.

He started drinking when he was about sixteen, but had to hide it from his father. After his father died he "rolled along with the mob," for years until one day, returning from a four-day drunk, a detective was waiting for him. He had shot and killed one person and almost killed a second.

He was indicted for murder in the first degree, and feared he would get the death penalty, but the jury brought back a verdict of murder in the second degree, for which he received a sentence of twenty years to life. He received an additional sentence of fifteen years for attempted murder of the other man. He was sent to Sing Sing expecting to serve a minimum of thirty-five years, as at that time there was no time off for good behavior. Eventually the laws were changed and he was released after serving twenty years and nine months.

During that time he was incarcerated at Sing Sing, Dannemora in the Adirondacks, and a place Wallkill, "a so-called rehabilitation center." It was at Wallkill that he first heard of A.A. from two other inmates. He didn't like A.A., but his two friends kept insisting he go back to the meetings.

When he was released from prison he made excuses to his parole officer for not going to A.A. Then one day he ran into the old crowd and got drunk. His mother, was heartbroken and asked if he were going to do this to her all over again. He told her he would not. She was still alive at the age of eighty-two when he wrote his story.

So he finally joined A.A., and after a slip at ten months stayed sober. Life was no bed of roses, but when something happened that upset him, instead of walking in and throwing a buck at the barman, he walked into a phone booth and dropped a dime in the box to call an A.A. member.

He considered himself very lucky to have found A.A. and the A.A. program to hand on to and carry him through.

Grapevine, which he signed with the initials E.B.R.

He had wanted to be a great author, and write plays, but was stuck in a job he hated, with people he disliked. Disappointed with his life, he decided to kill himself, but instead decided to drink himself to death. Instead he drank himself into lost jobs, jails, hospitals, and heavy debt.

At the point he first went to A.A. it had not worked for him -- because he had not worked for A.A. His serious drinking lasted seven or eight years. After recovery he entered a new field -- perhaps alcoholism -- in which he taught and about which he published a book. He still wanted to write a fine play.

In his 1967 update he reported: "The bad old years of suffocating in the deep morass of alcoholism, are years I could have used to good advantage had I not been trapped by this hideous disease. There were seven or eight years before I found A.A. -- oh, how I could have used those years! But they were not wasted; they stripped me of everything, including self-respect; but they made me ready for the happiness of the last twenty years in A.A."

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+++Message 118. BB Authors, 4th edition -- Bill Dotson, Akron, OH. "A.A. Number Three."
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/8/2002 7:33:00 AM

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From Pioneers of A.A.

Alcoholics Anonymous Number Three -- Bill Dotson of Akron, "The man on the bed,"

(p. 182 in 2nd, 3rd and 4th editions.)

Heading: "Pioneer member of Akron's Group No. 1, the first A.A. group in the world. He kept the faith, therefore, he and countless others found a new life."

Bill's date of sobriety was the date he entered Akron's City Hospital for his last detox, June 26, 1935, where Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob visited him on June 28. His wife, Henrietta, recalled years later that she had asked her pastor to try to help him, and had prayed with another that someone who

could help would visit him at the hospital.

He was a prominent lawyer, had been a city councilman, and was a well-adjusted family man and active in his church. Nonetheless, he had been hospitalized eight times in the past six months because of his alcoholism and got drunk even before he got home. When admitted this time he had DTs and had blacked the eyes of two nurses before they managed to strap him down. A nurse commented that he was a grand chap "when sober."

He walked out of that hospital on July 4, never to drink again. A.A.'s first group dates from that day. Within a week, he was back in court, sober, and arguing a case. The message had been successfully shared a second time. Dr. Bob was no fluke, and apparently you did not have to be indoctrinated by the Oxford Group before the message could take hold.

He immediately began working with Dr. Bob and Bill, and went with them to visit Ernie Galbraith ("The Seven Month Slip" in the 1st edition) and others.

Oldtimers in Akron said he was indeed a grand chap, when sober, one of the most engaging people they ever knew. One said: "I thought I was a real big shot because I took Bill Dotson to meetings." Another noted that, though Bill Dotson was influential, he was not an ambitious man in A.A., just a good A.A. If you went to him for help he would help you. He never drove a car, but he went to meetings every night, standing around with his thumbs in his vest like a Kentucky colonel.

A.A.'s first documented court case was one Phil S., who was released to the care of Dr. Bob through the efforts of Bill Dotson, who talked with the judge who agreed to release him.

Bill never submitted his story for the 1st edition. Various theories include (1) he wanted to be paid for the story, (2) he was too prominent a person, (3) he was too humble to have his story appear. But in 1952 he told an interviewer that he hadn't been much interested in the project or perhaps thought it unnecessary. He added that Bill Wilson had come to Akron to record his story, which would appear in the next edition of the book. Perhaps by 1952 he was embarrassed that he'd originally wanted to be paid for the story so didn't mention it. But apparently he cooperated to have it appear in the 2nd edition.

Bill Dotson died September 17, 1954, in Akron. Bill Wilson wrote, "That is, people say he died, but he really didn't. His spirit and works are today alive in the hearts of uncounted A.A.s, and who can doubt that Bill already dwells in one of those many mansions in the great beyond. The force of the great example that Bill set in our pioneering time will last as long as A.A. itself."

week. He later rebelled against this and decided he wasn't going into a church again except for funerals or weddings. And he didn't -- for about forty years. But the religious education stood him in good stead in future years. Smitty said his father was one of the few people he knew who had read the Bible from cover to cover three times.

He entered St. Johnsbury Academy at fifteen. At a dance during his senior year he met Anne Ripley of Oak Park, Illinois, a student at Wellesley on holiday with a friend. It was not a whirlwind marriage. They weren't married until seventeen years later. He first had to finish his education, and later she may have been reluctant to marry him because of his drinking.

Except for a secret taste of hard cider when he was about nine, he didn't drink until he was about nineteen and attending Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, described as "the drinkingest" of the Ivy League schools. A tattoo he wore the rest of his life was probably from those days at Dartmouth: a dragon and a compass tattoo. The dragon wound around his left arm from the shoulder to the wrist. It was blue with red fire. His son thinks "he had to have been drunk to have it put there, and you didn't do something that complicated in a day. When I asked him how he got it, he said, 'Boy, that was a dandy!' And it must have been, too."

He wanted to be a doctor, but for some reason his mother opposed it, so he spent the next three years in Boston, Chicago, and Montreal working. Finally he began studying medicine, first at the University of Michigan, and then at Rush University near Chicago. His drinking interfered with his medical education repeatedly, but he eventually received his medical degree, and secured a coveted internship at City Hospital in Akron. After his two years internship he opened an office.

Soon his alcoholism progressed and he was hospitalized repeatedly. His father sent a doctor to Akron to take him back to Vermont where he stayed for a few months, then he returned to his practice, sufficiently frightened that he did not drink again for some time. During this sober period he married Anne.

During Prohibition he thought it would be safe to try a little drinking, since it would not be possible, so he thought, to get large quantities. But it was easy for doctors to obtain alcohol. He also used sedatives to hide his "jitters." Things went from bad to worse.

In the late 1920s, he decided that he wanted to be a surgeon, perhaps because

he would be able to control his schedule more easily in this specialty than he could as a general practitioner. The patients wouldn't be calling him for help all hours of the day or night, so they wouldn't catch him when he was drinking.

He went to Rochester, Minnesota, and studied under the Mayo brothers. He

became a rectal surgeon, and did nothing but surgery for the balance of his life. But Smitty says that the other doctors knew he was a drunk, so the referrals were scarce and his practice small. (Despite the financial problems, they were able to keep the house during the Great Depression because the Federal Government placed a moratorium on foreclosures.)

When he was introduced to the Oxford Group he tried hard for three years to

follow their program, and did a lot of study, both of spirituality and of alcoholism. But it wasn't until Bill Wilson arrived in the spring of 1935 that Dr. Bob found the kind of help he needed -- one alcoholic talking to another.

Smitty describes Bill Wilson as being the opposite of his dad and both of them were needed for the success of A.A. He once joked: "If it had been up to my dad, A.A. would never have spread beyond Akron. Had it been up to Bill, they would have sold franchises." On another occasion he said: "Bill was garrulous, Bill was a promoter, Bill was a visionary. I think Bill W. could see further in the world than anyone I've ever known. My dad wasn't that way." (Dr. Bob was quiet, cautious, conservative, steady, insistent on keeping things simple.)

Anne Smith died on June 2, 1949. Bill noted that she was "quite literally, the mother of our first group, Akron Number One. In the full sense of the word, she was one of the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous."

Serenely remarking to his attendant, "I think this is it," Dr. Bob died on November 16, 1950. The funeral service was held at the old Episcopal Church by Dr. Walter Tunks, whose answer to a telephone call fifteen years earlier had led to the meeting between Bob and Bill. He was buried at Mt. Peace Cemetery, next to Anne.

There is no large monument on his grave. Doctor Bob, who always admonished

A.A. to "keep it simple," when he heard that friends were planning a monument, remarked "Annie and I plan to be buried just like other folks."

Alcoholics Anonymous itself is Dr. Bob's monument.

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+++Message 121. BB Authors, 4th edition -- Margaret ("Marty) Mann, NYC. "Women Suffer, Too"
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/8/2002 8:33:00 AM

her alcoholism got out of hand and soon she was in real trouble and attempted suicide twice. She came home to America, broke and desperate. Things got even worse.

She entered Bellevue Hospital's neurology ward under the care of Robert Foster Kennedy, M.D. Eventually she entered Blythewood Sanitarium, as a charity patient, under the care of Dr. Harry Tiebout, who gave her the manuscript of the Big Book to read and arranged for her to go to her first meeting.

She said "I went trembling into a house in Brooklyn filled with strangers and I found I had come home at last, to my own kind. There is another meaning for the Hebrew word that in the King James version of the Bible is translated 'salvation.' It is: 'to come home.' I had found my salvation. I wasn't alone any more."

In a July 1968 Grapevine update of her story, Marty said the Twelve Steps were still very important to her. They gave her more than sobriety. They gave her a glimpse at something she had never known -- peace of mind, a sense of being comfortable with herself and with the world in which she lived, and a lot of other things which could be summed up as a sense of growth, both emotional and spiritual.

Marty was a visionary and a pioneer who took on an unpopular cause during an era when women were supposed to remain silent. With the encouragement of

Bill Wilson, Marty founded the National Council on Alcoholism, through which she educated the general public about alcoholism and helped shape the modern alcoholism movement.

She wrote two authoritative books on alcoholism, ("Marty Mann's Primer on Alcoholism," (1950), which was rewritten and published as "Marty Mann's New

Primer on Alcoholism," in (1958), and "Marty Mann Answers Your Questions About Drinking and Alcoholism" (1970).

Marty influenced alcoholism legislation at the State and national levels. She is considered to be "the mother of the Hughes Act," the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation Act of 1970, which greatly enhanced the federal government's role in alcoholism treatment and prevention.

Mel B., in "My Search for Bill W.," described Marty as one of Bill Wilson's closest friends and allies. "A refined, attractive woman, she impressed me as being the kind of person who can handle great responsibilities with confidence and ease. While some men may have felt threatened by such a strong woman, Bill supported her work and went out of his way to encourage

(p. 238 in 2nd and 3rd editions, p. 219 in the 4th edition.)

Heading: "How it finally broke a Southerner's obstinacy and destined this salesman to start A.A. at Philadelphia."

Jim was twelfth stepped into the fellowship on January 8, 1938. But he had a slip in June of that year. His last drink was June 16, 1938. He was described as having red hair, and being rather slim, at least in his last years.

He spent his early life in Baltimore where his father was a physician and a grain merchant. They lived in very prosperous circumstances, and while both parents drank, sometimes too much, they were not alcoholics. Home life was reasonably harmonious. There were four children, and both of his brothers later became alcoholics. One of his brothers died from alcoholism. His sister never took a drink in her life.

He attended public schools until thirteen, then was sent to an Episcopal school for boys in Virginia where he stayed four years. But there he developed a real aversion to all churches and established religions. At school they had Bible readings before each meal and church services four times on Sunday.

At seventeen he entered the university to please his father who wanted him to study medicine, as he had. There he took his first drink and he always remembered it. He blacked out the first time he drank.

In the spring of 1917, because he feared he would be kicked out of school, he

joined the Army. Due to his OTC training, he entered with the rank of sergeant, only later to come out a private. During his military service he became a periodic alcoholic. On November 5, 1918, the troops heard a false report that the Armistice would be signed the next day, so Jim had a couple of cognacs to celebrate, then hopped a truck and went AWOL. His next thing he knew he was in Bar le Duc, many miles from base. It was November 11. The bells were ringing, and whistles blowing, for the real Armistice.

Back in the States he migrated from job to job, unable to hold any for very long. The boss who fired him from one job was Hank Parkhurst ("The Unbeliever" in the 1st edition.) In the eight years before he stopped drinking, he had over forty jobs.

Finally, January 8, 1938, his boyhood friend Fitz Mayo ("Our Southern Friend") sent one of his early sponsees, Jackie Williams, to try to help him. When Jackie got drunk Jim called New York and was told that the two of them should come to New York. Hank, who had fired him eleven years before, offered Jim a job working with him and Bill Wilson at Honor Dealers. (See bottom of page 149 of the Big Book.) Hank fired him again, at least briefly, when he had his slip in June of that year.

Jim met his wife, Rosa, on a 12th step call. (The only time he ever 12th stepped a woman.) They were married a year later, and reportedly both did much service work in A.A. and were elected to various offices.

On February 13, 1940, with about two years of sobriety, Jim moved to the Philadelphia area and started a group there. He also helped start A.A. in

Baltimore.

He wrote a history of A.A. in Philadelphia, and also wrote a history called "The Evolution of Alcoholics Anonymous." It contains some factual errors and his memory differed in spots from some of the other early A.A. members and of

Bill Wilson, but it is the first historical piece written about A.A.

Jim is usually given credit for the third tradition, that the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. He also is credited with the use of "God as we understood Him" in the Steps. (Jim, an agnostic, was militantly opposed to too much talk of God in the Big Book, but he said later that his agnostic stance had mellowed over the years.)

When he updated his story for the May 1968 edition of the A.A. Grapevine, he

told how in the early days in New York he started fighting all the things Bill and the others stood for, especially religion, the "God bit." But he did want to stay sober, and did love the understanding Fellowship. Soon he was number four in seniority in the New York group.

He said he learned later that the New York group had a prayer meeting on what to do with him. The consensus seemed to have been that they hoped he would either leave town or get drunk. He added that his spiritual growth over the past thirty years had been very gradual and steady.

Later he moved to San Diego, CA, where he lived until his death. After

breaking his hip in a freak accident from which he never fully recovered, Jim

was often in a wheelchair. Following a long illness, he was admitted to the

Jim attended elementary and high schools in Washington, D.C. and then attended Howard University. His internship was in Washington. Because of his mother's Puritanical training about sex, he married much younger than he might have otherwise. (His mother didn't like his wife, Vi, in part because she had been married before.) They had three children. After they had their first child his parents became allies, but when Jim became an alcoholic they both turned against him.

Jim's real trouble with alcohol began about 1935 during the Great Depression. He had lost practically all his property except the place they were living. He had to give up a lot of things to which he had been accustomed. His wife expressed concern about his drinking so he started lying about it and hiding bottles.

Then in 1940 a man whom he had known for years came to his office. He filled a prescription for the man's wife while in a blackout. That frightened him and he talked to a psychiatrist about it, and a minister for whom he had a lot of respect. But nothing seemed to be the answer. He went to work for the Federal Government, while still maintaining evening office hours. Then he went to North Carolina because they told him the county he was going to was "dry." He managed to stay sober there about six months. Vi had secured work with the government in Washington and did not move to North Carolina, as he had expected. So he started drinking again. His physical condition deteriorated (he had his first stomach hemorrhage), and he was in financial difficulties, having borrowed money and drunk it all up, so he decided to return to Washington.

His wife received him graciously, although she was living with the children in a one-room apartment. When he struck her with his fist, she got a court order against him and he went back to his mother. Things continued to get worse for Jim until one day, in a blackout, he stabbed Vi with a penknife. Vi testified that he was basically a fine fellow and a good husband, but that he drank too much. He was committed for thirty days observation. He moved around the country for a time after that but soon went back to Washington.

When repairing an electric outlet for a friend, to earn some drinking money, he met Ella G., whom he had known years before but didn't recognize. Ella arranged for Jim to meet "Charlie G." who became his sponsor. Charlie was a white man. The following Sunday he met with Ella, Charlie, and three or four others at Ella's house. "That was the first meeting of a colored group in A.A.," so far as Jim knew.

Soon Jim began looking for a place for them to hold meetings and was finally allowed to use a room at the YMCA at two dollars a night. In the beginning the meetings were often only Jim and Ella, but gradually the group began to grow. Charlie and many other white members of A.A. came to their meeting and

taught them a great deal about how to hold meetings and about Twelve Step work. "Indeed," wrote Jim, "without their help we couldn't possibly have gone on. They saved us endless time and lost motion. And, not only that, but they gave us financial help. Even when we were paying that two dollars a night, they often paid it for us because our collection was so small."

Jim was unemployed at the time and being supported by Vi. So he devoted all his time to the building of that group. Jim had found this new "something," and wanted to give it to everybody who had a problem. "We didn't save the world, but we did manage to help some individuals," he wrote.

Jim spoke at the "God as We Understand Him" meeting held Sunday morning at the International Convention in St. Louis in 1955. Bill wrote in "A.A. Comes of Age": "Deep silence fell as Dr. Jim S., the A.A. speaker, told of his life experience and the serious drinking that led to the crises which had brought about his spiritual awakening. He re-enacted for us his own struggle to start the very first group among Negroes, his own people. Aided by a tireless and eager wife, he had turned his home into a combined hospital and A.A. meeting place, free to all. Ase told how early failure had finally been transformed under God's grace into amazing success, we who listened realized that A.A., not only could cross seas and mountains and boundaries of language and nation but could surmount obstacles of race and creed as well."

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+++Message 125. BB Authors, 4th edition -- Archie Trowbridge, "The Man Who Mastered Fear."
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/8/2002 10:20:00 AM

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From Pioneers of A.A.

The Man Who Mastered Fear -- Archie Trowbridge, Grosse Point, Michigan.

(OM, p. 332 in 1st edition, p. 275 in 2nd and 3rd editions, p. 246 in the 4th edition. Titled "The Fearful One," in the 1st edition. It was rewritten and renamed for the later editions.)

Heading: "He spent eighteen years in running away; and then found he didn't have to run. So he started A.A. in Detroit."

Archie's date of sobriety was November 1938. He came from a good upper middle class family in Grosse Point, Michigan. By the time he was twenty-one he had lived in foreign countries for six years, spoke three languages

fluently, and had attended college for two years.

Then, family financial difficulties necessitated his going to work. He entered the business world with every confidence that success lay ahead. He had endless dates and went to countless dances, balls and dinner parties. But this was suddenly shattered when he had a devastating nervous breakdown. Doctors could find nothing physically wrong with him. Psychiatry might have helped, but psychiatrists were little known in his town at that time.

Recovery from the nervous breakdown came very slowly. He ventured out of the house for a walk, but became frightened by the time he reached the corner.

Gradually he was able to do more, and even to work at various jobs. He found that alcohol helped relieve his many fears.

His parents both died when he was thirty, leaving him a sheltered and somewhat immature man, on his own. He moved into a "bachelor hall," where the men all drank on Saturday nights and enjoyed themselves. Archie drank with them, but also drank himself to sleep every night.

With bravery born of desperation and abetted by alcohol, he married a young and lovely girl. But the marriage lasted only four years, then she took their baby boy and left. He locked himself in the house and stayed drunk for a month.

The next two years he had less and less work and more and more whisky. He ended up homeless, jobless, penniless and rudderless, the problem guest of a close friend whose family was out of town. When the family returned his friend turned Archie over to a couple, perhaps Oxford Group members, who knew Dr. Bob, and who were willing to drive him to Akron. The only stipulation they made was that he had to make the decision himself. What choice did he have? Suicide or finding out whether this group of strangers could help him.

Dr. Bob put him in the hospital for a few days. He then stayed with Dr. Bob and Anne for ten months. He was in bad shape physically, mentally, and spiritually. At first Dr. Bob thought he was "kind of simple." He was penniless, jobless, and too ill to get out during the day to look for work. Anne nursed him back to health, and while in their home he got down on his knees one day for the first time in thirty years. "God. For eighteen years I have been unable to handle this problem. Please let me turn it over to you." Immediately, a great feeling of peace descended on him, intermingled with a feeling of being suffused with a quiet strength.

After he left school he lived with his parents and worked in Akron. When he drank he hid it from his parents. This continued until he was twenty-seven.

He then started traveling on his job throughout the United States and Canada. This gave him freedom and with an unlimited expense account he was soon

drinking every night, not only with customers, but alone.

In 1930 he moved to Chicago. With the Depression limiting his opportunity for employment, and with a lot of time on his hands, he began drinking in the morning. By 1932 he was going on two or three day benders. His wife became fed up and called his father to take him back to Akron. For the next five years he bounced back and forth between Chicago and Akron to sober up.

In January of 1937, back in Akron with his father to be sobered up, his father told him about the group in Akron, who had the same problem but had found a way to stay sober. Earl knew two of them, one of them, Howard, was an ex-doctor whom he had once seen mooching a dime for a drink. He didn't think he was that bad and would have none of it. He told his father he could lick it on his own. He said he would drink nothing for a month and after that only beer.

Several months later his father was back in Chicago to pick him up again, but

this time his attitude had changed, and he was willing to talk to the men in Akron. When they got to Akron they routed Howard out of bed. He spent two hours talking to Earl that night.

He was indoctrinated by eight or nine men, after which he was allowed to attend his first meeting, which was led by Bill Dotson ("A.A. Number Three"). There were eight or nine alcoholics at the meeting and seven or eight wives. There was no Big Book yet and no literature except various religious pamphlets. The meeting lasted an hour and closed with the Lord's Prayer. Then they had coffee and doughnuts and more discussion until the small hours of the morning.

He stayed in Akron two or three weeks and spent a lot of time with Dr. Bob, who took him through the steps in one afternoon. Dr. Bob helped with the moral inventory by pointing out some of his bad personality traits or character defects. Earl wished every alcoholic could have the benefit of this type of sponsorship today.

He returned to Chicago in 1937 to start A.A. there. He got angry and got drunk when his wife criticized his coffee drinking and smoking. (Earl is the heavy smoker and coffee drinker mentioned on page 135 in "The Family

The Keys to the Kingdom -- Sylvia Kauffmann, Chicago, IL.

(p. 304 in 2nd and 3rd editions, p. 268 in the 4th edition.)

Heading: "This worldly lady helped to develop A.A. in Chicago and thus passed her keys to many."

According to member list index cards kept by the Chicago group, Sylvia's date

of sobriety was September 13, 1939. Because of slips by Marty Mann ("Women Suffer Too,") Sylvia may have been the first woman to achieve long term sobriety.

Sylvia was raised in a good environment with loving and conscientious parents and given every advantage: the best schools, summer camps, resort vacations and travel. She had her first drink at sixteen and loved what it did for her.

She was the product of the post-war prohibition era of the roaring '20s. She married at twenty, had two children, and was divorced at twenty-three. This gave her a good excuse to drink. By twenty-five she had developed into an alcoholic.

She began making the rounds of the doctors in the hope that one of them might find a cure for her accumulating ailments, most of whom prescribed sedatives and advised rest and moderation.

Between the ages of twenty-five and thirty she tried everything. She moved to Chicago thinking a new environment would help. She tried all sorts of things to control her drinking: the beer diet, the wine diet, timing, measuring, and spacing of drinks. Nothing worked. The next three years saw her in sanitariums, once in a ten-day coma from which she very nearly died. She wanted to die, but had lost the courage to try.

For about one year prior to this time there was one doctor who did not give up on her. He tried everything he could think of, including having her go to Mass every morning at six a.m., and performing the most menial labor for his charity patients. This doctor apparently had the intuitive knowledge that spirituality and helping others might be the answer.

In the 1939 this doctor heard of the book Alcoholics Anonymous and wrote to New York for a copy. After reading it he tucked it under his arm and called on Sylvia. That visit marked the turning point of her life.

He must have studied the book carefully because he took its advice. He gave her the cold, hard facts about her condition, and that she would either die of acute alcoholism, develop a wet brain, or have to be put away permanently. Then he told her of the handful of people in Akron and New York who seemed to have worked out a technique for arresting their alcoholism. He asked her to read the book and to talk with a man who experiencing success by using this plan. This was Earl Treat ("He Sold Himself Short"), the "Mr. T." to whom she refers on page 273 of the 4th edition.

Earl suggested she visit Akron. According to Bill Wilson, she got off to a slow start there, and may also have been a pill addict. She took a lot of "little white pills" which she claimed were saccharin, and no one could understand why she was so rubber-legged. A nurse was flown in, presumably from Chicago, to take care of her.

Sylvia stayed two weeks with the Snyders (Clarence Snyder, "The Home Brewmeister) in Cleveland. She met Dr. Bob, who brought other A.A. men to meet her. Dorothy Snyder said that the men "were only too willing to talk to her after they saw her." Sylvia was a glamorous divorcee, extremely good looking, and rich. But these attractions probably did not help her with the wives of the alcoholics, who were known on occasion to run women out.

After meeting Dr. Bob she wanted to move to Akron, but this caused great consternation, since her presence threatened to disrupt the whole group. Someone told her it would mean a great deal more if she could go back and help in Chicago.

She went back to Chicago where she eventually got sober. She worked closely with Earl Treat, and her personal secretary, Grace Cultice, became the first secretary at the Intergroup office in Chicago, the first in the country.

Sylvia updated her story in the January 1969 issue of the "A.A. Grapevine." She told how busy her first ten years in A.A. were, but how all this tremendous activity, by bringing her into almost constant contact with other members, provided her with everything she most desperately needed to save her life. As she looked back she realized this was the most excitingly beautiful period of her life.

alcoholic meant shame, defeat, and failure to her. Now she was able to interpret that defeat, and that failure, and that shame, as seeds of victory. It was only through feeling defeat and feeling failure, the inability to cope with her life and with alcohol, that she was able to surrender and accept the fact that she had the disease of alcoholism and that she had to learn to live again without alcohol.

In A.A. she found that for the first time she could face her problems honestly and squarely. She took everything that A.A. had to give her. She surrendered. To her surrender brought with it the ability to run her home, to face her responsibilities, to take life as it comes day by day. She had surrendered once to the bottle, and couldn't do those things. She was brought up to believe in God, but not until she found A.A. did she know faith in the reality of God, the reality of His power that is now with her in everything she does.

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+++Message 130. BB Authors, 4th edition -- Dr. Earle M., CA. "Physician Heal Thyself!"
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/8/2002 12:15:00 PM

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From They Stopped in Time

Physician Heal Thyself! -- Dr. Earle M., San Francisco Bay Area, CA.

(p. 393 in 2nd edition, p. 345 in 3rd edition, p. 301 in the 4th edition.)

Earle had his last day of drinking and using drugs on June 15, 1953. An A.A.

friend, Harry, took him to his first meeting the following week, the Tuesday

Night Mill Valley A.A. group, which met in Wesley Hall at the Methodist Church. There were only five people there, all men: a butcher, a carpenter, a baker, and his friend Harry H, a mechanic/inventor. He loved A.A. from the start, and though he has been critical of the program at times, his devotion has remained constant.

Described in his story heading as a psychiatrist and surgeon, he was qualified in many fields. During his long career, he has been a prominent professor of obstetrics and gynecology, and an outstanding clinician at the University of California at San Francisco. He was a fellow of the American College of Surgeons and of the International College of Surgeons, a diplomat

of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, board-certified psychiatrist, vice-president of the American Association of Marital and Family Therapists, and a lecturer on human sexuality.

He was raised in San Francisco, but was born on August 3, 1911, in Omaha,

Nebraska, and lived there until he was ten. His parents were alcoholics. In Omaha they lived on the wrong side of the tracks, and he wore hand-me-down

clothes from relatives. He was ashamed of this, and could not begin to accept it until years later. He revealed none of this in his story. Instead he talked about how successful he had been in virtually everything he had done. He said he lost nothing that most alcoholics lose, and described his skid row as the skid row of success. But in 1989 he wrote an autobiography by the same title, which reveals much more of his story.

During his first year in A.A. he went to New York and met Bill Wilson. They became very close and talked frequently both on the phone and in person. He frequently visited Bill at his home, Stepping Stones. He called Bill one of his sponsors, and said there was hardly a topic they did not discuss in detail. He took a Fifth Step with Bill. And Bill often talked over his depressions with Earle.

In a search for serenity Earle studied and practiced many forms of religion:

Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and ancestor worship.

He has long been a strong advocate for the cross-addiction theory, and predicted that over time we would see the evolution of Addictions Anonymous.

When he was sober about ten years, Earle developed resentments against newcomers and began a group in San Francisco for oldtimers. It was called

The Forum. He wrote a credo for it designed of ten steps for chemically

dependent people. He felt that addiction represents a single disease with many open doors leading to it: alcohol, opiates, amphetamines, cocaine, etc. Most of the Forum members were also devoted A.A. members. He also established a new kind of A.A. group, which used confrontational techniques. Some A.A. members disliked it intensely, while others seemed to

gain a great deal from it.

Many alcoholics make geographic changes when they are drinking. But Earle

seems to have made his after achieving sobriety. He has lived in many

places, both in this country and abroad, traveled around the world three times, and attended A.A. everywhere he went.

He also married several times. In 1968 he divorced his first wife, Mary, whom he had married in 1940. She once told him she had great respect for him as a doctor, but none as a human being. He admitted that he'd had affairs during the marriage, even after joining A.A. His relationship with their only child, Jane, who was a very successful opera singer, was strained, but he gave her an opportunity to air her feelings in his book. She wrote that when she received the gold medallion at the International Tchaikovsky Voice Competition in Moscow in 1966, a high honor, her father did not attend. Some people told her that it was not easy for him to see her become such a success -- to be so in the public eye. She added that their paths were still separate, but she did not ever totally close a door because he WAS her father.

In the 1960s he was experimenting with encounter and sensitivity awareness groups, which were then in vogue. At one of the encounter marathons he met his second wife, Katie, and within a year they were married and soon moved to

Lake Tahoe. They lived separately except for two brief periods, and after a few years were divorced.

Later he accepted a job with the U.S. State Department at the University of Saigon Medical School, in Korea. He spent five years there, after which he returned to San Francisco, hoping to rekindle his marriage to Katie.

In September 1975 he moved to Hazard, Kentucky, to work at the Hazard Appalachian Regional Hospital. There he met his third wife, Freda, thirty years younger than he was. Freda came from a truly humble background. She was the daughter of a miner who had died of black lung disease. She and her six brothers were raised in a typical two-room coal miner's house in Hazard. During his relationship with her and her family he was able to put to rest some ghosts concerning his Nebraska background. This wonderful family helped him to re-evaluate his memories of Omaha.

In 1978 his feet began again to itch again. He accepted short-term job in Nepal. When he was offered a long-term assignment Freda and his stepsons did not want to leave Kentucky. Disappointed, he returned to Kentucky, and obtained work as a gynecologist in a family planning clinic, and also lectured to medical students on human sexuality at the University of Louisville Medical School. When he moved again, this time to Kirkland,

Washington, Freda again refused to leave Kentucky. They were divorced soon after. They remained friendly and talked to one another on the phone about twice a year.

From all his travels, he always seemed to return to the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1980 he accepted a position as medical director of the Institute for Advanced Study of Human Sexuality in San Francisco. There he met his fourth wife, Mickey. She was a Ph.D. candidate at the Institute. He described her as a vibrant, open, honest, direct woman without pretense, non-threatening, sexually on fire, lacking in prejudice, and tolerant about all aspects of life -- including human sexuality. She was already an Al-Anon member when they met, having been married to an alcoholic. She also made contributions in the field of alcoholism and recovery at Merritt Peralta Chemical Dependence Recovery Hospital in Oakland, California. They married and remained together until her death in 2000. His book is dedicated to her.

I talked to Earle on July 27, 2001. He told me he still gets to an A.A. meeting almost every day. His eyesight is not too good, but otherwise he is full of vim and vigor. Form his voice, I would have taken him for a man of 40. He missed the A.A. International Convention last year because of Mickey's ill health, but he hopes to attend the one in 2005.

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+++Message 131. BB Authors, 4th edition -- Chet Rude,
"It Might Have Been Worse."
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/8/2002 12:29:00 PM

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From: They Stopped in Time

It Might Have Been Worse -- Chet Rude

(p. 382 in 2nd edition, p. 373 in 3rd edition, p. 348 in the 4th edition.)

Heading: "Alcohol was a looming cloud in this banker's bright sky. With rare foresight he realized it could become a tornado."

Chet's sobriety date and place of entry into A.A. are unknown. He was raised in a family of modest circumstances, in a small town in the Midwest. He attended public schools, worked part-time after school and during vacations, and participated in some athletics. But ambition to succeed was instilled in him by his Scandinavian parents who had come to this country because they thought there were better opportunities here.

Wartime service in the Army (presumably World War II) interrupted his plans for success. After the war he continued his education, married and had a family, and got started in business. He worked hard and in time became an officer and director of a large commercial bank, and also became a director in many important institutions.

His drinking did not start until he was thirty-five and fairly successful in his career, but success brought increased social activities which involved alcohol. At first it was just an occasional drink, then the "nineteenth hole" at the golf course, then cocktail hours. Eventually the increased drinking substituted for what he really enjoyed doing. Golf, hunting, and fishing became excuses to drink excessively.

He made promises and broke them many times; went on the wagon and fell off;

tried psychiatry but gave the psychiatrist no cooperation. Blackouts, personality changes, hangovers and remorse resulted in his living in constant fear. He thought no one knew the extent of his drinking and was surprised to learn later than that everyone knew. His wife tried to control the amount he drank; tried leaving or threatening to leave. Nothing seemed to work.

After a drunk which ruined his wife's birthday party, his daughter said "It's Alcoholics Anonymous -- or else!"

A lawyer in A.A. called on him the next day, spent most of the day with him, and took him to his first meeting that night. At first he wondered if he belonged in AA because he hadn't had the experience of jails, lost jobs, lost families that he heard others describe. But the answer was in the first step. Most certainly he was powerless over alcohol, and for him his life had become unmanageable. It wasn't how far he had gone, but where he was headed. He was wise enough to recognize that.

He began to realize how his obsession with alcohol had lead to self-pity, resentments, dishonest thinking, prejudice, ego, a critical and antagonistic attitude toward anyone and everyone who dared to cross him, and vanity. It took him some time to realize that the Twelve Steps were designed to help correct these defects of character and so help remove the obsession to drink.

A willingness to do whatever he was told to do simplified the program for him. He was told to study the AA book, not just read it, to go to meetings, and to get active.

He was desperately in earnest to follow through and understand what was

expected of him as a member of A.A. and to take each Step of the Twelve as

rapidly as possible. The fact that A.A. is a spiritual program didn't scare him or raise any prejudice in his mind. He couldn't afford that luxury. He had tried his way and had failed.

When he joined A.A. he did so for the sole purpose of getting sober and staying sober. But he found it was so much more. A new and different outlook on life started opening up almost immediately. Each day seemed to be so much more productive and satisfying. He got so much more enjoyment out of living, and found an inner pleasure in simple things. Above all, he was grateful to A.A. for his sobriety, which meant so much to his family, friends and business associates, because God and A.A. were able to do for him something he was unable to do for himself.

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+++Message 132. BB Authors, 4th edition -- Author unknown, "Me an Alcoholic?"
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/8/2002 12:37:00 PM

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From They Stopped In Time

Me an Alcoholic? -- Author unknown.

(p. 419 in 2nd edition, p. 432 in 3rd edition, p 382 in the 4th edition.)

Heading: "Alcohol's wringer squeezed this author - but he escaped quite whole."

This author's date of sobriety is believed to be November 1947. He reveals little of his childhood years or his origin, just the hint when discussing his seven years in psychotherapy that someone had coddled him and built him up, and then turned and beat him savagely.

He was a father, husband, homeowner, athlete, artist, musician, author, editor, aircraft pilot, and world traveler. He was listed in "Who's Who in America." He had been successful in the publishing business, and his opinions were quoted in "Time" and "Newsweek" with pictures, and he addressed the public by radio and television.

He drank heavily as was common in the literary circles in which he traveled. "Evening cocktails were as standard as morning coffee," and his average daily consumption ran a little more or less than a pint. This did not seem

to affect his work. He was never drunk on the job, never missed a day's work, was seldom rendered totally ineffective by a hangover and kept his liquor expenses well within his adequate budget. How could he possibly be an alcoholic?

But he occasionally went on binges, usually one-night stands. In twenty-five years of drinking there were only a few occasions when he took a morning drink. He usually had excuses for the binges and tried several methods of controlling his drinking. These plans seemed to work for short periods.

Inwardly unhappy he turned to psychoanalysis. He spent seven years and ten thousand dollars on psychiatric care and emerged in worse condition than ever, although he learned a lot about himself, which would be useful later. His binges got closer and closer together and with more and more disastrous results. Soon he was in suicidal despair.

After his last binge, during which he did considerable damage to his home, he crawled back to his analyst and told him he thought he was an alcoholic. His doctor agreed. He said he hadn't told him because he hadn't been sure until recently. The line between a heavy drinker and an alcoholic is not always clear, and that he wouldn't have believed him had he told him. The doctor admitted that there was nothing he could do for him, and that there was nothing medicine could do for him. But he suggested A.A. Many times in the years that followed the author thanked God for that doctor, a man who had the courage to admit failure and the humility to confess that all the hard-won learning of his profession could not turn up the answer.

In A.A. he found the power he needed. In the seven years since he had come to A.A. he had not had a drink. He still had some hell to go through. His tower of worldly success collapsed, his alcoholic associates fired him, took control, and ran the enterprise into bankruptcy. His alcoholic wife took up with someone else and divorced him, taking with her all his remaining property. But the most terrible blow was when his sixteen-year-old son was tragically killed. "The Higher Power was on deck to see me through, sober. I think He's on hand to see my son through, too. I think He's on hand to see all of us through whatever may come to us.

Some wonderful things had happened, too. His new wife and he didn't own any property to speak of and the flashy successes of another day were gone. But they had a baby "who, if you'll pardon a little post-alcoholic sentimentality, is right out of Heaven." His work was on a much deeper and more significant level than it ever was before, and he was, at the time he wrote his story, a fairly creative, relatively sane human being. "And should I have more bad times," he wrote, "I know that I'll never again have to go through these alone."



the alcohol and pills, but when he wrote his story he said: "Today, I find I can't work my A.A. program while taking pills, nor may I even have them around for dire emergencies only. I can't say 'Thy will be done,' and take a pill. I can't say, 'I'm powerless over alcohol, but solid alcohol is okay.' I can't say 'God could restore me to sanity but until He does, I'll control myself -- with pills.'"

He started Pills Anonymous and Chemical Dependency Anonymous, but did not attend them because he got all he needed from A.A. He did not introduce himself as an alcoholic and addict, and was irritated by people who want to broaden A.A. to include other addictions.

He wrote an article for the Grapevine on why doctors shouldn't prescribe pills for alcoholics, and because he had a dual problem was asked to write his story for the Big Book. It was originally published in the A.A. Grapevine with the title "Bronzed Moccasins" and an illustration of a pair of bronze moccasins. It was eventually renamed and included in the Big Book. His book, "There's More to Quitting Drinking than Quitting Drinking," was published in 1995 by Sabrina Publishing, Laguna Niguel, CA.

Paul complained in an interview with A.A. Grapevine that the story might have

"overshot the mark." One of the most uncomfortable things for him was people run up to him at a meeting and tell him how glad they are the story is in the book. "They say they were fighting with their home group because their home group won't let them talk about drugs. So they show their group the story and they say, 'By God, now you'll have to let me talk about drugs.' And I really hate to see the story as a divisive thing. I don't think we came to A.A. to fight each other."

But he denied that there is anything in the story he would want to change. The story "makes clear the truth that an alcoholic can also be an addict, and indeed that an alcoholic has a constitutional right to have as many problems as he wants! But that doesn't mean that every A.A. meeting has to be open to a discussion of drugs if it doesn't want to. Every meeting has the right to say it doesn't want drugs discussed. People who want to discuss drugs have other places where they can go to talk about that."

How did he work his program? "Pretty much every morning, before I get out of bed, I say the Serenity Prayer, the Third Step Prayer, and the Seventh Step Prayer. Then Max and I repeat those prayers along with other prayers and meditations at breakfast."

made to feel different in any way.

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+++Message 135. BB Authors, 4th edition -- Wynn Corum
Laws, CA. "Freedom From Bondage."
From: NMOlson@aol.com 4/8/2002 4:27:00 PM

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From They Lost Nearly All

Freedom From Bondage - Wynn Corum Laws, California

(p. 553, 2nd edition, p. 544 3rd edition, p. 544 4th edition.)

Heading: "Young when she joined, this A.A. believes her serious drinking was the result of even deeper defects. She here tells how she was set free."

Wynn joined A.A. in California in 1947 at age thirty-three. She was described by the novelist, Carolyn See, one of her several step children, as "tall, and with a face that was astonishing in its beauty. She had "translucent skin with a tiny dusting of freckles, Katharine Hepburn cheekbones, bright red hair, and turquoise eyes." She was a "knockout."

She believed that her alcoholism was a symptom of a deeper trouble, and that her mental and emotional difficulties began many years before she began to drink. But AA taught her that she was the result of the way she reacted to what happened to her as a child.

She was born in Florida and, like Bill Wilson before her, her parents separated when she was a child, and she was sent to live with her grandparents in the Mid West. She reports feeling "lonely, and terrified and hurt." (This common childhood experience may have been one of the reasons for the reported close friendship she had with Bill Wilson.)

She married and divorced four times before finding A.A. The first time she married for financial security; her second husband was a prominent bandleader and she sang with his band; her third husband was an Army Captain she married during World War II; her fourth husband was a widower, with several children.

One A.A. friend quipped when first hearing Wynn's story, that she had always been a cinch for the program, for she had always been interested in mankind, but was just taking them one man at a time.

Sometime after 1955 when her story appeared in the Big Book, she married her fifth husband, George Laws, another A.A. member. George and Wynn were married for several years and his daughter Caroline lived with them when they were first married. After they were divorced, according to Caroline, she dated a wealthy insurance executive whom she had hoped to marry.

George and Wynn were a popular team speaking at meetings. "My dad was Wynn's opening act," said Carolyn. "He couldn't help but be funny. Then he would defer to Wynn, whose tale was hair-raising."

Carolyn writes: "Wynn's mother had deserted her in order to go out and live a selfish life. An unloving grandmother reared her in strict poverty. She contracted typhoid fever and hovered between life and death for about ninety days. All her hair and (though she would not admit this) her teeth fell out."

She recovered at about age sixteen. Her beautiful red hair grew back in and she wore dentures "stuck in so firmly that no one saw her without them." According to Caroline, "she began carving out a career as a femme fatale, and started drinking to bridge the gap between the grim hash-slinging reality she was born to, and the golden mirage of American romance she yearned for."

Wynn said in her story that she didn't know how to love. Fear of rejection and its ensuring pain were not to be risked. When she found alcohol it seemed to solve her problems -- for a time. But soon things fell apart and jails and hospitals followed. When she wound up in a hospital for detoxification, she began to take stock and realized she had lived with no sense of social obligation or responsibility to her fellow men. She was full of resentments and fears.

When she wrote her story she had been in A.A. eight years and her life had changed dramatically. She had not had a drink since her first meeting, and had not only found a way to live without having a drink, but a way to live without wanting a drink.

Wynn believed she had many spiritual experiences after coming to the program, many that she didn't recognize right away, "For I'm slow to learn and they take many guises."

On the last page of her story Wynn says: "As another great man says, 'The only real freedom a human being can ever know is doing what you ought to do because you want to do it.'" That "great man" may have been Bill Wilson.

Wynn and Jack P. of Los Angeles started more than 80 meetings in hospitals, jails and prisons in Southern California from about 1947 to 1950. Jack P. reports that during this period they were widely criticized by other members of the Fellowship who thought this was not something A.A. should be doing.

Bob joined A.A. in New York City in 1961, probably never dreaming one day he would be the manager of A.A.'s General Service Office.

Bob was born in Houston, Texas, but raised in Kansas, the only child of loving parents. His parents drank only socially, and his father gave him his first drink -- a tiny glass of sherry to celebrate the New York -- when he was thirteen. He immediately saw the effect it had on him and prayed he wouldn't drink any more. But in college he began to drink at fraternity parties and beer busts.

The family moved frequently and Bob found himself in a different school every year until high school, where he was always the new kid who had to prove himself. He retreated into a fantasy world. He became the classic over-achiever and sold his first article to a national magazine while still an undergraduate.

After graduation from college he moved to New York to pursue a writing career and landed a good job. He was soon regarded as a "boy wonder." But by age twenty-two he was a daily drinker.

He then had difficulty in every aspect of his life. His service in the Navy was marred when he was given a "Captain's Mast," i.e., discipline for trouble he got into while drinking. His marriage suffered, his values became distorted, and by forty his health was severely damaged.

When the doctor told him he would have to stop drinking he did, for ten months, with no apparent difficulty, but he did not enjoy life without drinking, and soon he was drinking again and his physical condition deteriorated further. He developed cirrhosis of the liver, had frequent blackouts, severe nosebleeds, angry bruises which appeared mysteriously all over his body. Despite three episodes of losing large quantities of blood by vomiting and from his rectum, he drank again.

His doctor finally gave up on him and referred him to a psychiatrist in the same suite of offices. "He happened to be, by the grace of God," Bob wrote, "Dr. Harry Tiebout, the psychiatrist who probably knew more about alcoholism than any other in the world." At that time Dr. Tiebout was serving as a nonalcoholic trustee on the General Service Board.

Dr. Tiebout sent him to High Watch to dry out. There he read the Big Book and began his slow road back to health and sanity.

When Bob had been in A.A. only a short time, an oldtimer told him that A.A. does not teach us how to handle our drinking, but it teaches us how to handle sobriety.

Not only did his health recover, so did his marriage, his relationship with

his children, his performance on his job. All these things A.A. gave him, but most of all it taught him how to handle sobriety, how to relate to people, how to deal with disappointments and problems. He learned that "the name of the game is not so much to stop drinking as to stay sober."

"God willing, we members of Alcoholics Anonymous may never again have to deal with drinking, but we have to deal with sobriety every day. How do we do it? By learning -- through practicing the Twelve Steps and through sharing at meetings -- how to cope with the problems that we looked to booze to solve, back in our drinking days."

Bob has served A.A. in many ways. He worked for G.S.O. for twelve and a half years. He was a director and trustee of the General Service Board for six years and office general manager for a decade. Upon retirement from G.S.O. in 1986, he took on the task for G.S.O. of writing an update of A.A.'s history covering the period from the publication of "Alcoholics Anonymous Comes to Age," through its fiftieth year. Unfortunately, this manuscript was never published.

At the 1986 General Service Conference, Bob gave what the 1986 Final Report called "a powerful and inspiring closing talk" titled "Our greatest danger: rigidity."

He said: "If you were to ask me what is the greatest danger facing A.A. today, I would have to answer the growing rigidity - the increasing demand for absolute answers to nit-picking questions; pressure for G.S.O. to 'enforce' our Traditions, screening alcoholics at closed meetings, prohibiting non-Conference approved literature, i.e., 'banning books,' laying more and more rules on groups and members. And in this trend toward rigidity, we are drifting farther and farther away from our co-founders. Bill, in particular, must be spinning in his grave, for he was perhaps the most permissive person I ever met. One of his favorite sayings was 'Every group has the right to be wrong.'"

Bob continues to give his service to A.A. in many ways. At the International Convention in Minneapolis in 2000, he appeared to be handling many jobs. He filled in to lead at least one of the small meetings, "Pioneers in A.A." The program does not list him as the Moderator. He was probably filling in for someone else at the last minute.

Source for some of the information about Bob is "Not God, a History of Alcoholics Anonymous" by Ernest Kurtz, expanded edition, Hazelden, 1991.



is a way of sharing some of the insightâ€™s which made and still make Alcoholics Anonymous a vital force in peopleâ€™s lives. I ask only that the transcript be held in the spirit in which it is offered and not used for publicity or in an effort to magnify any individual.

John F. Seiberling

Transcript Of Remarks

Henrietta B. Seiberling:

I would like to tell about Bob in the beginning. Bob and Ann came into the Oxford group, which, as you know, was the movement which tried to recapture the power of first Century Christianity in the modern world, and a quality of life which we must always exercise. Someone spoke to me about Bob Smithâ€™s drinking. He didnâ€™t think that people knew it. And I decided that the people who shared in the

Oxford group had never shared very costly things to make Bob lose his pride and share what he thought would cost him a great deal. So I decided to gather together some Oxford Group people for a meeting, and that was in T. Henry Williamsâ€™ house. We met afterwards there for five or six years every Wednesday night.

I warned Ann that I was going to have this meeting. I didnâ€™t tell her it was for Bob, but I said, â€œCome prepared to mean business. There is going to be no pussyfooting around. And we all shared very deeply our shortcomings, and what we had victory over, and then there was silence, and I waited and thought, â€œWill Bob say something?â€ • Sure enough, in that deep, serious tone of his, he said, â€œWell, you good people have all shared things that I am sure were very costly to you, and I am going to tell you something which may cost me my profession. I am a silent drinker, and I can't stop.â€ • This was weeks before Bill came to Akron. So we said, â€œDo you want to go down on your knees and pray?â€ • And he said, â€œYes.â€ • So we did.

And the next morning, I, who knew nothing about alcoholism (I thought a person should drink like a gentleman, and that's all), was saying a prayer for Bob. I said, â€œGod, I don't know anything about drinking, but I told Bob that I was sure that he lived this way of life, he could quit drinking. Now you have to help me.â€ • Something said to me â€œI call it â€œguidanceâ€ • â€œ it was like a voice in the top of my head â€œ â€œBob must not touch one drop of alcohol.â€ • I knew that wasn't my thought. So I called Bob, and said I had guidance for him â€œ and this is very important.

He came over at 10 in the morning, and I told him that my guidance was that he mustn't touch one drop of alcohol. He was very disappointed, because he thought guidance would mean seeing somebody or going someplace. And then â€œ

this is something very relevant " he said, "Henrietta, I don't understand it. Nobody understands it." • Now that was the state of the world when we were beginning. He

said, some doctor had written a book about it, but he doesn't understand it. I don't like the stuff. I don't want to drink. I said, "Well, Bob, that is what I have been guided about." • And that was the beginning of our meetings, long before Bill ever came.

Now let me recall some of Bill's very words about his experience. Bill, when he was in a hotel in Akron and down to a few dollars and owed his bill after his business venture fell through, looked at the cocktail room and was tempted and thought, "Well, I'll just go in there and get drunk and forget it all, and that will be the end of it." • Instead, having been sober five months in the Oxford Group, he said a prayer. He got the guidance to look in a ministers directory, and a strange thing happened.

He just looked in there, and he put his finger on one name: Tunks. And that was no coincidence, because Dr. Tunks was Mr. Harvey Firestone's minister, and Mr. Firestone had brought 60 of the Oxford Group people down there for 10 days out of gratitude for helping his son, who drank too much. His son had quit for a year and a half or so. Out of the act of gratitude of this one father, this whole chain started.

So Bill called Dr. Tunks, and Dr. Tunks gave him a list of names. One of them was Norman Sheppard, who was a close friend of mine and knew what I was trying to do for Bob. Norman said, "I have to go to New York tonight but you can call Henrietta Seiberling," • When he told the story, Bill shortened it by just saying

that he called Dr. Tunks, but I did not know Dr. Tunks. Bill said that he had his last nickel, and he thought, "Well, I'll call her." •

So I, who was desperate to help Bob in something I didn't know much about, was ready. Bill called, and I will never forget what he said: "I'm from the Oxford Group and I'm a Rum Hound." • Those were his words. I thought, "This is really manna from Heaven." • And I said, "You come right out here." • And my thought was to put those two men together. Bill, looking back, thought he was out to help someone else. Actually, he was out to get help for himself, no thought of helping anyone else, because he was desperate. But that is the way that God helps us if we let God direct our lives. And so he came out to my house, and he stayed for dinner. And I told him to come to church with me next morning and I would get Bob, which I did.

Bill stayed in Akron. He didn't have any money. There was a neighbor of mine, John Gammeter, who had seen the change in my life brought by the Oxford Group, and I called him and asked him to put Bill up at the country club for two weeks or so, just to keep him in town. After that, Bill went to

stay with Bob and Ann for three months, and we started working on Bill Dotson and Ernie Galbraith.

The need was there, and all of the necessary elements were furnished by God. Bill the promoter, and I, not being an alcoholic, for perspective. Every Wednesday night I would speak on some new experience or spiritual idea I had read. That's the way we all grew. Eventually the meetings moved to King School. Some man from Hollywood came, an actor, and he said that he had been all over the country and that there was something in the King School group that wasn't in any other group. I think it was our great stress and reliance on guidance and quiet times.

Bill did a grand job. We can all see in his life what the Oxford Group people had told us in their message: that if we turn our lives to God and let him run it, he will take our shortcomings and make them valuable in His way and give us our hearts desire. And when I got the word that Bill had gone on, I sat there, and it was just as if someone had spoken to me again on top of my head. Something said to me, "Verily, verily, he has received his reward." So I went to the Bible, and there it was, in Matthew VI. Then I looked at Bill's story in Alcoholics Anonymous where

Bill had said that all his failures were because he always wanted people to think he was somebody.

In the first edition of the book, he said he always wanted to make his mark among people. And by letting God run his life, God took his ego and gave him his hearts desire in God's way. And when he was gone, he was on the front page of the New York Times, famous all over the world. So it does verify what the Oxford Group people had told him.

Father Dowling, a Jesuit Priest, had first met our group in the early days in Chicago, and he came to Akron to see us. And then he went on to New York to see the others. And he said to one of our men, "This is one of the most beautiful things that has come into the world. But I want to warn you that the devil will try to destroy it." Of course, it's true, and one of the first things that the devil could have used was having money, and having sanitariums' as the men were planning. Much to Bob's and Bill's and Ann's surprise, I said, "No, we'll never take any

money."

Another way where I saw that the devil could try to destroy us was having prominent names. The other night I heard on TV special about alcoholics, a man explaining why they are anonymous. And he showed that he didn't really know why. He just said that it wouldn't do to let people know that you were an alcoholic. That's not the reason. In fact, the surest way to stay sober is to let people know that you are an alcoholic because then you have lost something of yourself.

I would say that the second way that I saw that the devil would be trying to destroy

us was to have any names. Those who think that they are prominent or that they have become leaders, all fail people because no one is on top spiritually all the time. So I said, "We'll never have any names."

I feel that the whole wonderful experience of Alcoholics Anonymous came in answer to a growing great need in the world, and this was met by the combination of Bill, who was a catalyst and promoter, and Bob, with his great humility (if you spoke to him about his contribution, he'd say, "Oh, I just work here.") and Ann, who supplied a homeyness for our men in the beginning.

And I tried to give to the people something of my experience and faith. What I was most concerned with is that we always go back to faith. This brings me to the third thing that would be destructive to the early days, Bob and Bill said to me. "Henrietta, I don't think we should talk too much about religion or God." I said to them, "Well, we're not out to please the alcoholics. They have been pleasing themselves all these years. We are out to please God. And if you don't talk about what God does, and your faith, and your guidance, then you might as well be the

Rotary Club or something like that. Because God is your only source of power." And finally they agreed. And they weren't afraid any more. It is my great hope that they will never be afraid to acknowledge God and what he has done for them.

The last A.A. dinner that I went to, over 3,000 people were there. And it was the first meeting that I went to which I was disappointed in. There were two witnesses there, a man and a woman, and you would have thought they were giving you a description of a psychiatrist's work on them. Their progress was always on the level of psychology. And I spoke to Bill afterwards and I said that there was no spirituality there or talk of what God had done in their lives. There were giving views, not news of that God had done. And Bill said, "I know, but they think there were so many people that need this and they don't want to send them away." So

there again has come up this same old bugaboo "without the realization that they

have lost their source of power.

This makes me think of the story of the little Scotch minister who was about to preach his first sermon, and his mother hugged him and said, "Now, Bobbie, don't forget to say a word for Jesus. Your mother always wants a word for God."

And then there is one other thought I'd always like to stress, and that is the real fact of God's guidance. People can always count on guidance, although it seems elusive at times.

Congressman John Sieberling placed this in the Congressional Record on September 11, 1973

I would like to share a small story about Congressman Sieberling. In 1975, when Robert Thomsen's biography of "Bill W." was published, the National Council on Alcoholism arranged for a Congressional reception to be held in one of the House of Representatives' office buildings. They invited all the Members of Congress from Ohio and New York, because AA had started in those two states, and they invited all the members of the committees which had jurisdiction over the alcoholism legislation. I suggested a few other names of Members of Congress, primarily those on the Appropriations Committees who would be deciding how much money to earmark for alcoholism.

John Sieberling was the only member of the House of Representatives who showed up. (One Senator, Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, also attended.)

I saw Congressman Sieberling at the reception, just milling around. No one else seemed to recognize him. So I introduced myself and saw that he met the NCA people who were there, and that they knew his connection to A.A.

The next day I wrote him a brief note thanking him for coming to the reception and mentioning that I owed my life to what his mother had helped start. When he received my note he showed up unexpectedly in my office to ask my permission to send the note to his mother. Of course, I gave the permission. Then Sieberling said: "I called Mother this morning and told her that I had attended the reception. Mother replied: 'you were touched.' I asked her what she meant and she said 'John, you were touched by God, that's why you were there.'"

Sieberling humorous reply was "Mother, I don't know if I was touched, but I do know that I was invited."

John Seiberling continued to support our efforts to bring more federal attention to alcoholism during his entire time in Congress.

Nancy Olson



think it's a living problem. We do not deny the allergy of the body or the obsession of the mind. I had them both. I tried for the last ten years of a 25-year drinking career to prove that I didn't have an allergy of the body or obsession of the mind. However, I knew nothing about them, because I knew nothing about the disease of alcoholism. I tried to beat this thing myself for the last 10 years of a 25-year drinking career; and I proved to myself conclusively that I do have both the

allergy and the obsession.

Now with 24 years of sobriety, 25 years of drinking, and the time before I drank to look at, I believe that our problem is primarily a living problem, and that alcohol is pretty much a symbol of it or a symptom of it.

For instance; I never had a drink until I was out of athletics. I was an athlete in my youth. I was always in training and I never smoked and never drank until I was out of school and out of athletics. When I took my first drink it was not a problem. It was an answer -- providing that the problem was already with me. If I hadn't already had the problem I wouldn't have needed an answer. I used alcohol as an answer for 15 years. But being the wrong answer, it finally turned on me and beat me to death making it necessary for me to find the right answer and, of course, it came through my association with drunks in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Now, we feel that the medical approach and psychological approach, and the religious approach are all good. We feel that all approaches to this disease should be brought to bear upon it, but most of us are convinced that if we're

going to get rid of the bottle we have to replace it with something better, with a state of being that makes drinking unnecessary.

For instance, why am I not drunk this morning? I'm an alcoholic. I'm an alcoholic of the tongue chewing, babbling, idiot variety: so why am I not drunk this morning? Because I have the thing I was looking for in the bottle. And what is the thing? It is a state of being that makes drinking absolutely unnecessary. There is nothing that a drink or a sedating or tranquilizing pill or needle can do for me but tear me down; therefore, there's no necessity for it at all. It can't do anything for me. I have the answer that I was looking for.

Now, we have been in existence as Alcoholic Anonymous for 34 years. We have

a membership of perhaps some 500,000 but we see that's just a slight percentage, it may be 2 percent, of the problem drinkers. And that's all we've been able to accomplish in 34 years. But we're not selling it short. We love it, but much more has to be done.

We think that before long it might be the legal opinion that they can't throw us in jail any more just for being a drunk, that we have to be taken care of as sick people. And it looks as though there will have to be detoxification centers and halfway houses throughout the country.

And it's going to take a lot of money. It's going to take a lot of know-how. We are very pleased about the fact that there is a separate committee now that is very much interested in this problem and that it is manned by knowledgeable people. We think that perhaps through the medium of these meetings throughout the country more interest will be brought to bear on the Senate as a whole and that as a result you will get appropriations which will make it possible for you to do some things -- such as setting up these detoxification centers and halfway houses.

In this event what would be the position of Alcoholics Anonymous?

Traditionally we neither endorse or oppose any causes. We cooperate but we do not affiliate. We are on tap in most of these things, but never on top. So I think our position would be this: That when the detoxification has been accomplished, that we would, as individual members of Alcoholics Anonymous, then be available to share our experience, strength and hope with those who are coming through the halfway houses. And it is from this angle that I think that it would be of the greatest benefit to your program. We cannot take an active part as a society, but we can take an active part as individuals.

Senator Hughes: Sir, would you mind me interrupting you for a moment as you

go along? I'd like to ask a question for the record. I have received a lot of mail from people who know nothing about Alcoholics Anonymous wondering why

we don't appropriate money to Alcoholics Anonymous to handle the job since they obviously do pretty well. Would you like to reply to that?

Mr. Chuck C. We also have the tradition that we are self supporting. We don't take any moneys from any outside sources whatsoever. We support ourselves through our own contributions. We have no paid teachers or speakers. We do this work on a voluntary basis. And I'd like to throw this in for the record, also, that I suspect that in the last 23 years half of my waking time has been spent working with alcoholics throughout this country and Canada and in many of the other

countries. And I find it a very fascinating and rewarding experience - I think that's what you wanted.

A very interesting fact has been brought out already: When I came to the

program the average age probably would have been 45. I don't think it would have been less than that. It might have been nearer 50. But over the years the age has come down, down, down, until today the face of Alcoholics Anonymous has changed considerably. They are coming to us much younger.

For instance, we have a man in our own group in Laguna Beach who had his first birthday in Alcoholics Anonymous before his eighteenth birthday. We find this is true pretty much throughout the country. Brought about through better educational programs such as the Committee on Alcoholism for instance, and things of that kind. People are coming to us much much younger than in my day and that is a very good sign.

One of the things that I would like very much to speak on for a minute (and this certainly is my own opinion), we've heard a little about the seriousness of the problem. And, of course, the problem is serious. I suspect it's the most serious problem that we face in our country today. And I know that if we put pills with it it would be by far and away the most serious problem that affects our society today.

But it is my opinion that the individual alcoholic cannot be dealt with seriously. Let me give you an example. I was sitting in Edmonton, Canada, at a banquet and I had six judges around me, and they were saying to me, "We only have so many dollars and so many days and that's the only thing we can put out. We know that isn't the answer, but how can we help you; what can we do to help you?" And I said, "Well, don't sell yourselves short with so many dollars and so many days, because you and the highway patrolmen probably are responsible for my life, because you've taken me off the street at times when I was a great danger to anybody who was there, including myself. So don't sell yourselves short with so many dollars and so many days.

But perhaps the one thing that you could cut out could be the lecture that you give. When you sentence us, don't give us that lecture, because we can't take it. We've given the same lecture to ourselves many many times, so instead of giving us a lecture, as we go by you poke us in the ribs with your elbow and say, "Look, dad, when you are sick enough of being sick, and tired enough of being tired, I know a place you can go for an answer." And laugh right in our teeth; because we can understand that, but we can't take the preachment or the lectures.

So, indeed, in A.A. we have a lot of fun. I find it the most fascinating thing that has ever crossed my path. I love it. I happen to have hated alcoholics worse than anybody in the world. As a matter of fact, when I ran out of time I didn't care for the human race. I thought it was a cosmic mistake. I didn't even like the good people and the drunks I hated. Because I was a drunk and hated myself. I hated all drunks. In the last 24 years, however, I've come to the place where I think I love all of God's children,

and of all of them I love the drunks the most. So my dedication, my love, and my life, are in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, working with drunks.

And, again, we are most happy that you, all of you, are headed in the direction in which you're headed. And we want to help as much as it is humanly possible for us to help, both in seeing to it that you get an appropriation - maybe by doing a little work on the rest of the Senate by letters, and so forth - and also by being on tap when you need to call on us later on.

And that would be all I have to say.

Senator Hughes. Thank you very much, Chuck. I'd like to point out that the camera in the back of the room was not taking pictures.

I'd like to ask you, just for the record, to explain that fact when you say you want to be of help. I happen to have been visiting a lot of halfway houses around the country and in all of them I found Alcoholics Anonymous is a stable working factor within the halfway house. You point out, of course, that you accept no money and all of this is on a voluntary basis. I take it then, that should appropriations someday be made, whether it's on a sharing basis with States or communities and the Federal Government, that all these members of A.A. will be around and will be working with the people who come into these facilities. Is that right?

Mr. Chuck C. That would be a fair statement, I'm quite certain Individual members of the society can and do work as counselors and are paid for it in industry and other places. But, in the main, I think that most of the effective work in all the hospitals, in all the penitentiaries, and in many of the halfway houses that we have

throughout the country today, is and will be on a voluntary basis by individual members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Senator Hughes. Could you, perhaps, elaborate just a little bit on the changes you have seen in this 24 years in hospital treatment of patients and doctor's treatment of patients? Have you seen any changes?

Mr. Chuck C. There's been great change, of course. In my last 10 years of

drinking, I went to all the recognized sources for help. I went to the clergy, to men of medicine and to a few people who knew more psychiatry than there is. And my answer from all of them was willpower, backbone and stand-up-and-be-a man.

I never heard of the disease of alcoholism until I came to my first Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. Today this is common knowledge now amongst all

informed, all who want to be informed about this subject.

It is only recently that we have been able to get alcoholics into most hospitals. There are beds for us in most of them now and this was not the case for a long, long time. Everything has changed for the better. It's not fast enough, but it has changed for the better over the years.

Again, due, I think, not only to what we have done in Alcoholics Anonymous, but to the great educational programs of such organizations as the National Committee on Alcoholism.

Senator Hughes. I'd like to ask you a question and answer it any way you see fit. Why the word, "anonymous" Why do alcoholics want to remain anonymous?

Mr. Chuck C. There are many reasons for it. But the two great reasons - the fundamental reasons, I believe, are these: There is a little verse in the Good Book that says, "Let not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth," and this is probably the first time in our lives that we have ever been willing to do things like getting up in the middle of the night and going clear across town, at our own expense, to a dark room with an alcoholic who is really suffering. It's the first time in our lives we've been willing to do these things free - maybe even hoping that

nobody will ever find out about it.

And the second reason is that. As long as we are anonymous people can come to

us without feeling that they're going to have their problems become general knowledge. And people will come to us with problems when they won't go to anybody else, because, they don't want it known that they have this problem.

Senator Hughes. Why don't they?

Mr. Chuck C. It's a holdover from the days when the only descriptive adjectives used for people like me were bums, spineless people, dregs of society, a cancer on the social body, and all that sort of thing.

Senator Hughes. The great stigma.

Mr. Chuck C. Yes, it was a great stigma, but this is changing much for the better.

Senator Hughes. Senator Dominick?

Senator Dominick. I just first want to say it's highly refreshing, Chuck, to find a group of people who are not asking for appropriations from the Federal Government. [Audience laughter.]

May I congratulate you and your group, of which I have a fair knowledge because of my association with people afflicted with the problem.

I want to get back to this treatment center and halfway house. I'm sure that there must be some method of detoxification, but I also - only based on my own experience, and you have got a lot more than I have - have grave doubts whether detoxification, in fact, does the job. A lot of people go and get dried out. This is a kind of social phenomena, particularly in the East. You go and get dried out and then go out and start all over again.

Questions will be raised in the subcommittee and later on the Senate floor as

we move forward. Senators will ask: "What good does it do? Isn't there an

organization which is doing a lot better than this voluntarily? Is a treatment center, in fact, going to be more than just a way station for drying out to give them strength to start in all over again? And will a halfway house follow enough of a detoxification process to be able to bring people back into the mainstream, particularly those who don't particularly want to, and how large a proportion of the ones that we have that are afflicted with this disease really want to recover; really want to admit to themselves that they're an alcoholic and that they can't take that first drink?"

I don't have any facts and figures. I know we're going to develop some as we go along in these hearings, but I'd just like to get your comments on this, which I think is a very grave communication problem that we've got.

Mr. Chuck C. This is the reason I spoke of the detoxification centers and halfway houses.

Senator Dominick. I notice that you couple them together all the time.

Mr. Chuck C. I think that the detoxification center is where the professional people can get us defogged so that we may hear what's said to us. And then the great rehabilitation work starts.

For instance, in Alcoholic Anonymous, we have nothing in our program that tells a person how to get sober, how to get physically sober. There's

nothing in the book that tells you how to do that.

But we, as members of Alcoholics Anonymous, help each other get sober. It's a great part of our work and we wouldn't change it. We help each other get sober only that we might then take care of our problem - which is alcoholism; but before we can talk about the problem itself, we've got to get people so they can hear. And so they're detoxified, or gotten sober and then we talk with them. In our work we talk with them mainly in their homes or in ours. But, again, the job is too

great for that.

And we are going to have the problem dumped in our laps whether we like it or

not, because one of these days we're not going to have any place to put drunks if we do not have detoxification centers and halfway houses; because we're not going to take them to jail. (If you go back prior to 24 years ago you can find me all over the blotter of this town. I was no respecter of jails. I went to all of them.) So we are going to have to have places where we get sober and then we are going to have to have therapy that comes not only from members of Alcoholic Anonymous but from professional people like psychiatrists.

Now this thing is seemingly proven in our work. Any alcoholic who sits through an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, leaves knowing the answer is there - whether or not he admits that he has a problem.

Now, he might say to himself. "Well, I'm not one of these people. I haven't gone to this extent. Therefore, I'm not an alcoholic." But he knows, before he leaves that meeting, that the answer's in the room for an alcoholic and maybe many years later when he runs out of time he remembers and comes back, and he isn't lost.

So I believe that no one, no alcoholic, regardless of whether he has admitted

it or not, who is exposed to this therapy about which we are talking, leaves with any questions in his mind. I think he knows immediately that the answer is in the room.

Does that help you any?

Senator Dominick. Yes, I think it does with respect to the Alcoholics Anonymous. My problem is trying to get the people that I have known to go to you.

Mr. Chuck C. Yes --

Senator Dominick. You know, they just say, "No. No, I don't want to do that. I want to drink."

Mr. Chuck C. But we have it. We have it in the setup that we are talking about. They are going to be sent to these detoxification centers. But they're going to be sent there by the court or by the police instead of being sent to jail. They will have to go through that. But to a large extent they will have to go to the halfway houses once they are set up.

Senator Dominick. That program has worked; that's what I want to know?

Mr. Chuck C. Yes.

Senator Dominick. Where they say you go there or you go to jail?

Mr. Chuck C. Very definitely. I happen to be very familiar with Judge Harrison's work up in Des Moines. But I believe Judge Taft in Santa Monica was one of the first to use this approach many, many years ago.

And I've talked at meetings where there were over a hundred men and women who had been sober a year or more who had initially been sentenced to the program by Judge Taft and it worked.

Senator Dominick. Let's use another word. Let's say recommended.

Mr. Chuck C. Recommended. Okay. (audience laughter).

Senator Hughes. Don't stop. I just wanted to make a comment. Senator Dominick, my limited experience with this has been that some of the time the private institutions for detoxification are rather protected and they are not really exposed when they are dried out.

Also, we see right now in Washington, D.C., for example, the detoxification center which was originally set up for 5 days of detoxification and then building into the therapy. Now they're down to 24 hours because of the crush of patients.

The court is sending the patients there. They have no bed space. Their unit of 800 beds over at Lorton is completely filled with the so-called recovery part. The physical part of the detoxification stage has been taken care of, unless there is serious complications. You're right, it's got so easy that in many instances the guy who runs through the mill to be detoxified feels great again and he's ready to go. So often there is no followup. It can serve as a revolving door drying out process.

Excuse my interruption.

now seeing the beginning of the achievement of the impossible.

Because of my appearance here as an A.A. member, I have to limit myself pretty

much to statements about AA. But you must remember that as time passes in these hearings a great many AA's will be testifying as citizens, and they will be far more free to express opinions on the general field and their activities in it than I am.

So I take it that my mission here today will be to acquaint you with the resources

that A.A. may reveal for treatment, for education and so on.

I shall start off by taking the dry part of my recital first: a few figures. Our

national magazine, "The AA Grapevine," makes a brief and simple statement as

to what A.A. is: "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who

share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve

their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

"The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no

dues or fees for membership. We are self-supporting through our own contributions.

"AA is not allied with any sect denomination, politics, organization or institution,

does not wish to engage in controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to

achieve sobriety."

Now, as a little more background for my presentation, let me present just a few

figures. Our last census, that is to say, reports of our group sessions, shows that we have 15,000 AA groups throughout the world and an active membership of 285,000.

Besides the 285,000 there are hundreds of thousands -- maybe 200,000, for all

we know, 300,000 recovered A.A.'s on the sidelines who do not get caught up in the active statistics, people who have remained for the greater part sober, who

are carrying A.A. attitudes and practices and philosophies into the community life.

So AA is much more in reality than a generator of mere sobriety, it is returning us

to citizenship in the world.

Now, then, that breaks down these figures into something like this: groups in the

United States, 9,000, active members, 148,000; groups in Canada, 1,500; members in Canada, 21,000; groups overseas, 3,300, membership, 62,000;

internationalists, 344. We mean by that, people on ships, largely, who travel from port to port spreading the AA message.

We have 648 groups in hospitals, members in hospitals (and this means largely

mental institutions), 18,500; and groups in prisons, 33,000. And lone members

throughout the world, who correspond with the world headquarters, 522.

Those statistics are of interest, but they are scarcely inspiring, because they are

not as yet connected with the flesh and blood of human experience. I think the best way of presenting some of that experience would be to relate to you certain fragments of AA history that have a particular bearing upon this occasion.

Oddly enough, and contrary to the information of most people, Alcoholics

Anonymous, we see in retrospect, very definitely had its start in the offices of one of the founders of modern psychiatry. I refer to Karl Jung, who in the early 1930s received a patient from America, a well-known businessman. He had run the gamut of the cures of the time, and desperately wanted to stop and could get no help at all.

He came to Jung and stayed with him about a year. He came to love the great man. During this period the hidden springs of his motivation were revealed. He felt now with this new understanding, plus communication with this new and wonderful friend that he had really shed this strange illness of mind, body and spirit.

Leaving there, he was taken drunk, as we AA's say, in a matter of a month, perhaps, and coming back, he said, "Karl, what does this all mean?" Then this man made the statement which I think led to the formation of AA. It took a great man to make it.

He said, "Rowland, up until recently I thought you might be one of those rare

cases who could be aided and made to recover by the practice of my art. But

like most who will pass through here, I must confess that my art can do nothing for you."

"What," said the patient, "Doctor, you are my port of last resort. Where shall I

turn now? Is there no other recourse?"

The Doctor said "Yes, there may be. There is the off-chance. I am speaking of the possibility of a spiritual awakening, if you like, a conversion."

"Oh," said the patient "but I am a religious man. I used to be a vestryman in the

Episcopal Church. I still have faith in God, but He has little in me, I should think."

Jung said, "I mean something that goes deeper than that Rowland, not just a question of faith. I am talking about a transformation of spirit that can motivate you and set you free from this.

"Time after time alcoholics have recovered by these means. The lightning strikes

here and there, and no one can say why or how. All I can suggest is that you expose yourself to some religious environment of your own choice."

The patient went to England. He became associated with the group of that day in

later years called "Moral Rearmament," [the Oxford Groups] and to his great surprise he began to feel released from this hideous compulsion.

He returned to America. He had a place in Vermont. There he ran into a friend

of mine about to be committed, a friend that we A.A.'s lovingly call Ebby. Ebby, at the time a wealthy man, had just run his car through the house of a farmer, into the kitchen, pushing in the wall, and when he stopped, out stepped a horrified lady from inside and he said, "How about a cup of coffee?"

This was the extent of his illness and he was about to be committed. The patient,

Roland, got hold of him, took him to New York, exposed him to the Oxford Groups,

whose emphasis was upon admission of hopelessness, in a sense, on one's unaided resources a human being could not go too far.

Another was self-survey. Another was a species of confession, and then there was restitution and belief in a Higher Power.

That movement was rather evangelical, but AA owes it a great debt in what to do

and also in what not to do.

Then, thinking of me, and I was about at the end of my rope, my friend visited me. In the previous summer I had been in a drying-out emporium in New York

City, and there my doctor, who was to make a crucial contribution to A.A., had

said to my wife, "Lois, I am afraid, my dear, that I can do nothing. I thought that he might be one of those rare instances in which I could help him stay sober, but I am afraid not. He is the victim of a compulsion to drink against his will, and, as much as he desires, that compulsion I don't think can be broken; and this compulsion is coupled with what I call an allergy.

"It is a misnomer, but it is indicating that there is something wrong with this man

physically. Therefore, the eternal dilemma has been this eternal compulsion to drink, to the point almost of lunacy, coupled with the physical allergy that guarantees insanity and death. I think you will have to lock him up."

After that treatment I came home and a few months later this friend appeared, sat across the kitchen table where there was a big pitcher of gin and pineapple juice. I was a solitary drinker of about two or three bottles of bathtub gin a day. The year is 1934.

Enters this friend of mine that I had known to be a very hopeless case. At once it struck me that he was in a state of release, this just was not another drunk on the wagon. Then he told me this story, how he had felt this relief, the moment he had gotten honest with himself and adhered to their simple program, he began to feel this release, how much more he had gotten through his friend, Rowland. He told me the story about him.

Finally I put the question to him. I said, "Ebby, you say you don't want to drink, you are not drinking today. What does this mean?"

He said, "Well, I have got religion." I said, "Well, what brand is it?" So he revealed to me his story. I was deeply impressed, really, because here was

somebody that I knew had lived in this strange world of alcoholism, where I, too, was a denizen. So this transmission of the fatal nature of this malady in many cases struck me. I think it caused a great personal deflation and laid the ground for what was subsequently to happen.

My friend went off. I didn't see him for a few days. In no waking hour could I forget the face across the kitchen table. Yet I gagged on this concept of a Higher Power, even in its lowest denominator.

So I finally decided I would go to the hospital, get detoxified. I appeared at the

hospital. Dr. Silkworth began treatment. I announced that I had found something new, I thought, I wanted to get sobered up.

I could not have any emotional conversion. So after about 3 days detoxification, I

found myself falling into a terrible depression. I felt trapped. In other words, I was asking the impossible, to believe in a Higher Power, let alone cast my dependence on it on the one side, and yet my guide in science [Dr. Silkworth] was saying, "But medically you are pretty hopeless."

Out of this eventuated a very sudden spiritual awakening in which I was released

from this compulsion to drink, a compulsion on my mind morning, noon and night for several years. I was suddenly released from it.

Mine was a rather spectacular experience. But it is quite identical to what happens to any good A.A. In other words, their experiences are apt to take a

longer time and they are not so sensational, but we do get the transforming effect on motivation.

With the experience came this thought: Why can't this be induced chain style?

In other words, I can identify myself with another alcoholic through this kinship of

suffering, then why can't that inflame him and perhaps he will be motivated and one can talk to the other.

I came out of the hospital, began to feverishly work with alcoholics. We had a

house full of them. I was so keyed up with the paranoid side with my spiritual

awakening, I even thought I had a kind of divine appointment about all the alcoholics in the world.

There was 6 months of complete failure. Finally I went to Akron on a business trip to see if I could regain my fortunes. I was away from my friends. The business deal fell through. I had hardly carfare home and all of a sudden the old desire to drink started to come back. I was frightened.

Then I realized that in talking and trying to help other alcoholics, this had a great deal to do with my staying sober. These were the elements of the process and through a strange set of circumstances I was led ... the doctor in town who was to become my partner in this thing.

He, too, when the nature of his malady was revealed to him in medical terms, one

drunk talking to another, achieved sobriety that he had long since thought impossible.

Shortly after that, in one of the Akron hospitals, No. 3 got sober, and an A.A. group, the first one really, came into existence in June 1935 in Akron, Ohio. Then

there was a return to New York and a group started there. A few people in from Cleveland began to come to the group meetings in Akron.

We grew very, very slowly, trial and error all along the line. If it seemed to work,

get with it, if it failed, discard it. That was our practice until about 4 years later, after hundreds of failures, we found that we had a hundred people sober. At that time, having retired from the Oxford Group, and yet having no name actually, we just called ourselves a nameless bunch of drunks trying to help each other get

well.

At that time we began to think in terms of a book, which supported by case histories would portray our approach. The book is called "Alcoholics Anonymous" and it was published when we had a hundred members.

Up to this time we had been virtually a secret society. Then we realized that we would have to be publicized. So we were very reluctant about this, what kind of people would come in?

We were publicized first by Liberty magazine, and flooded by 6,700 inquiries into a post office box in New York. We gave these inquiries to a few of our traveling people out of the small established groups. Then came an experience in mass production of sobriety which I think is most relevant to any presentation here.

Up until the fall of 1939, 5 years after I had sobered up, we had thought that the

presentation of our case to the other alcoholics was up to the founding fathers or the elder hierarchy or whatnot. We thought it to be a very slow business indeed.

The idea of a mass revival was very far from our minds. The Cleveland Plain

Dealer decided to publish a series of articles about us. There was a chap doing the articles who himself was an alcoholic. The poor devil never recovered, but he could talk our language.

These articles were placed in a box on the editorial page every 3 or 4 days and a

supporting editorial was written. Then our friends of the press and the communications media began this benign process of bringing us customers.

At this time the group in Cleveland numbered only about 20 people. They were

suddenly confronted with hundreds of frantic telephone calls to hospitals and

people with or without money, people who were hospitalized this week, next-week were going with an older member to see somebody in the hospital. This thing pyramided so that in the succeeding year of 1940 these 20 had pyramided themselves into what had turned out to be several hundred sound recoveries.

Now this is the final suggestion, that the resources of Alcoholics Anonymous

for mass society have hardly been touched. This set of figures shows in the last

10 years Alcoholics Anonymous membership has pyramided at the rate of only 8

or 10 percent a year, when in the early days, in the first decade, increases of 100 percent 500 percent 1,000 percent were very common. Therefore, we have a tremendous lot of people with whom to deal. This is partly due to the reluctance of the alcoholic himself.

Figures tell us that we have 5 million alcoholics in America. This means 5 million poor souls who are in all stages of this dissolution and in the early years scarcely one of these people can be brought to believe that he is actually beginning to be sick.

This rationalization can exist right through all sorts of evidence of sickness right

down to the undertaker himself. It is this mass capability of the alcoholic to rationalize himself out of this predicament. This is one of the great obstacles to bringing alcoholics toward treatment. In fact this is the obstacle that all of the remarkable agencies we now have at work are running against, how do we get these people in?

It is a process of education, but what kind of education we simply don't know.

Another part of the resistance of Alcoholics Anonymous stems from the fact that it has a spiritual content and a great many of our professional friends are apt to believe Alcoholics Anonymous is for the religiously susceptible only.

Well, this is a very mistaken impression. At last year's New York dinner, we were talking about this topic and it suddenly occurred to me that of the four speakers on the platform, only one of us four had any religious background whatever.

Why were they in A.A.? They were driven there because there was no other place to go, no other place to get well.

So these are the treatment resources.

How can the resources of experience which have to do with the other agencies

and disciplines in the field be brought to this committee by our friends and by AA

members who are also working in these area? You have begun to surmise that in effect, we are coming out of the woodwork, we are in practically all of these efforts bringing the AA experience to them, making it available and that kind of experience can be made available by any members here in these committee hearings if they come here acting as citizens and recovered alcoholics [but not as AA members].

We have to do that as a protective thing for AA. Now we have great numbers of

friends. Those, too, can be called upon and I notice that some are going to be available here. For instance here is Jack Norris, a nonalcoholic.

Many of you know him. He is chairman of our board of trustees. He is second in charge, or was until his retirement in the medical department of Eastman Kodak, the second industrial company to give the nod to AA and make use of the resources.

In Wilmington, for example, we have Dr. Glanto, the head of the medical department of the first company ever to make arrangements with A.A. I think he

would be quite happy to testify.

On our board we have Mr. Austin McCormick, one of the country's great criminologists, and I think he could throw much light on the situation. We have A.A. members beyond count.

So you have that sort of resource available for treatment and for experience.

Well, I think I am presenting this overlong and perhaps you gentlemen would like

to ask questions at this point.

Senator Hughes. Bill, I thank you for your bring us up to date on the beginnings

and where you are now. I would like to ask some pointed questions. No. 1, I

have never been in a prison institution, I have never been in mental hospital

institution, where there was not an A.A. group in my years in public life, not only of the inmates but of people coming in from the outside who were conducting meetings in an effort to help these people recover. This is also true in the case of halfway houses, private treatment centers, and every public treatment center that I know of dealing with the alcoholic where there are Government programs sponsored by State, community, or county divisions.

I take from your testimony that as a cofounder of AA you certainly believe that in

any program this committee and this Congress might develop, that there would be a place and a willingness for AA members to work in recovery, education, and counseling of the ailing alcoholics, and prevention also?

Mr. Bill W. I should think so. Of course, this is the pleasure of our friends. But

certainly this experience is of great value and in respect of this communication one alcoholic is certainly of unique value.

Senator Hughes. I think what you indicated is what I expected. No. 1, we have available through Alcoholics Anonymous a resource of willing people whom you

have indicated have the capabilities of multiplying not 100 percent, but 1,000 percent if they can get to the people.

Mr. Bill W. If we can get to the people.

Senator Hughes - This is the essence of my question. Undoubtedly knowing the

organization quite well myself, these people have dedicated themselves to doing the job of calling on alcoholics and assisting in any way they can in their recovery.

Mr. Bill W. Yes. Of course, it ought to be observed at this point that the virtues

of AA are not really earned virtues. It is a matter of do or die. Nothing is

too good for the next sufferer. So our dedication is first based on the fact that our lives and fortunes have been saved and we want to share this with the next fellow, knowing that it is a part of the maintenance of our own recovery and life or death.

So this is the source of the great dedication that you see among the A.A.

Senator Javits. I would like to just join the Chair in what he has said and assure

you, sir, from what I see here, we will do our utmost to utilize to the fullest these

resources which you have so eloquently testified to.

Senator Hughes. Thank you very much, Senator Javits. Senator Yarborough?

Senator Yarborough. Mr. Bill W., I am astonished to learn that AA had its beginning in 1934 and 1935 and was very small until 1939. Because the escalation was so fast after that, so well known nationally now, that you have an idea this has gone on for generations.

Mr. Bill W. When you consider the enormous ramifications of this disease, we have just scratched the surface. I think we should humbly remember this.

Senator Yarborough. The experience you personally described when this burden fell away from you, I have thought back in my reading, I know of only two other men who have had such a dramatic experience. One was Saul of Tarsus, on the road to Damascus and the other was Sam Houston, the great national hero.

Sam Houston, who once was called by the Indians, Big Drunk, became, while he was a U.S. Senator, a temperance lecturer all over the United States. Congratulations on what you have done for so many hundreds of thousands who are in your debt and the millions I believe who will be reached in the not distant future.

Senator Hughes. Bill, I thank you kindly for your willingness to come forward as

a cofounder of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and express the basis of its founding, its willingness to cooperate, and the hope of people over the last

in, no matter what we did. Then something strange stirred within us. As we became willing to accept the help of those who went before us, who understood us, good things happened. We followed in their footsteps and found freedom from the bondage of self. What resulted was a sense of identification, of belonging, of unity. But lest we become too clannish, we must remember that without guidance and support of nonalcoholic friends in the early years, A.A. would not be here for us. Maryland-born Samuel Shoemaker was the first of such friends.

His influence began on December 7, 1934, when a tall, gaunt, drunk -- William Griffith Wilson -- made his first visit to Calvary Episcopal Church, where the reverend Samuel Shoemaker was rector.

At this stage, Bill was stealing money from his wife, pawning household items, falling down drunk and having blackouts and delirium tremens. Bill had visited the mission under stimulus from an old drinking buddy, Ebby Thatcher, who had gotten sober through the Oxford Group, which was headquartered at Calvary Methodist Church, on 23rd Street in New York City. Shoemaker had helped convert drunkards at this Calvary Mission using Oxford Group principles.

Four days after he visited the mission, Bill was admitted to Towns Hospital for a one week stay, during which time he had a profound spiritual experience and never drank again. After leaving Towns, Bill associated himself with Shoemaker's Oxford Group, Calvary Mission and Towns Hospital, dedicating himself to other alcoholics.

Born in Baltimore in 1893, Rev. Shoemaker published over 25 books and many Pamphlets on spirituality. One pamphlet, "What the Church Has Learned From Alcoholics Anonymous," is an interesting commentary on how we learn by helping each other. Shoemaker died in October 1963 and was buried in Garrison.

In "Language of the Heart," Bill says, "Dr. Shoemaker was one of A.A.'s indispensables. Had it not been for his ministry to us in our early time, our Fellowship would not be in existence today. He will always be found in our annals as the one whose inspired example and teaching did the most to show us how to create the spiritual climate in which we alcoholics may survive and then proceed to grow ..."

For the next few months after meeting Sam Shoemaker, Bill haunted the mission and Towns Hospital trying to help other drunks, but with little success. Then he made his fateful trip to Akron, Ohio.

We A.A.'s say that our program began there on June 10, 1935, when Dr. Bob Smith had his last drink, one month after his historic meeting with Bill W. But one could argue that it really began in April 1939 when the book Alcoholics Anonymous was published.

Up to the time the Big Book appeared, our program had no name or written guidelines or principles. The early "nameless bunch of alcoholics" followed a "word-of-mouth" program that had evolved mainly from their affiliation with the Oxford Group, a movement based on the philosophy of First Century Christianity. Bill W. summed up the six-point word-of-mouth program as follows

1. Admit powerlessness over alcohol.
2. Take a moral inventory
3. Confess shortcomings with another person.
4. Make restitution for wrongs done to others.
5. Pray for power to practice these principles.

After several years of association with the Oxford Group, the small groups in New York and Ohio broke off and started their own meetings. Up until then, alcoholics were doomed, except for rare cases where they experienced profound religious conversions. But with the A.A. approach of one drunk trying to help another came hope for the previously hopeless. The several dozen members of the infant fellowship had come across something wonderful. They had discovered a way out, and it had to be documented so alcoholics everywhere could be helped.

Bill agreed to write the book. As he finished the rough drafts of the chapters, Bill would have them read and discussed at the meetings in New York and Ohio so all members could have their say. The review of the first four chapters generated enthusiastic arguments. But things really became hectic when Bill released Chapter Five. (Bill said by then he had become the umpire rather than the author!)

Members had drifted into two opposite groupings -- a pro-religion faction led by Fitz Mayo argued that the book should reflect the teachings of the churches, missions, and, especially, the Oxford Group. An agnostic action spearheaded by Hank Parkhurst and Jim Burwell was passionately against theological orientation, believing in a practical, psychological approach.

Heated discussions went on for days and nights, but out of it all came the answer. The agnostics persuaded the others to accept the compromise language of "God, as we understand Him." This non-dogmatic idea opened the door to uncountable numbers of alcoholics who otherwise would not have entered our recovery program.

Eventually the book was almost ready for printing, but still hadn't been titled. Various recommendations were dropped from consideration until two

choices remained. The Way Out was Ohio's choice; Alcoholics Anonymous was New York's. A check of book titles in the Library of Congress by Fitz showed 12 books named The Way Out and none named Alcoholics Anonymous. The choice was thereby made easy, and both the book and the Fellowship acquired names.

In April 1939, the Big Book was published, and our program was established. As Bill said in his 1953 Grapevine article, "Little did we guess that our Twelve Steps would soon be approved by clergy of all denominations and even by our latter-day friends, the psychiatrists ..."

The Big Book is now over 55 years old. [At the time of this writing.] Over 14 million copies have been published in 27 languages without one word of the basic text being changed. And our program has become the model for some 114 other self-help groups.

Although Fitz and Jim Burwell were miles apart on spiritual philosophy, they were always close family friends. And their final resting places are also close, just a few yards apart on the grounds of Christ Episcopal Church at Owensville, MD.

The two were born in Maryland and were boyhood friends in southern Anne Arundel County. As previously mentioned, Shoemaker was also a Marylander. Had not this Maryland trio played their critical roles in AA's infancy, our Fellowship in all likelihood would not have been born and survived its growing pains. They are among the many unsung heroes to whom we A.A.'s owe a debt that we cannot repay but partially by continuing to carry the message to alcoholics who still suffer from our devastating disease.

Part 2: Two Boyhood Friends Made Crucial Contributions

Two friends from boyhood who lie buried in the cemetery of Christ Episcopal Church at Owensville, Maryland, made vital contributions to Alcoholics Anonymous in the Fellowship's infancy. But for their individual input, countless thousands would never have joined AA and the Fellowship itself might have been short-lived.

One of the pair -- John Henry Fitzhugh Mayo "Our Southern Friend" in A.A.'s Big Book -- was among the first few to get and stay sober in New York. The other was Jim Burwell, whose Big Book story is "The Vicious Cycle." Their early efforts formed the foundation of A.A.'s rich history in Maryland.

The pair's friendship flowered in southern Anne Arundel County after Fitz's minister father became rector of Christ Episcopal Church at Owensville when Fitz was about four years old. Jim Burwell was the son of a Baltimore physician and grain merchant with family ties at Cumberstone, just a few miles from Owensville. As teenagers they attended the Episcopal School for Boys at Alexandria, VA.

Alcohol began to take its toll on both in their twenties. Fitz had a promising career with an established firm aborted by the Great Depression and took a teaching position in Norfolk, VA, where he drank heavily, lost his job, and his health deteriorated. Feeling great compassion for Fitz, another friend from childhood gave him part of his own farm at Cumberstone to homestead.

Jim's story relates that, after losing several fine positions, he drifted into sales work and lost 40 jobs in eight years "before A.A. found me."

In the fall of 1935, Fitz heard that Towns Hospital in New York was having some success in treating alcoholics, and he went there for the "cure." This was just a few months after Bill Wilson's historic meeting with Dr. Bob in Akron that marked the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous. On Bill's return to New York, he had set about trying to "fix" drunks he found at the Calvary Mission and Towns Hospital. His first successful project was Hank Parkhurst, whom he had rescued at Towns; Fitz was the second to be picked up there and maintain sobriety. After returning to Cumberstone, Fitz brought a number of prospects into his home in a vain effort to get them sober, much to the distress of his wife. He also began to make frequent trips to New York to join Bill and Lois Wilson and Hank at meetings of the Oxford Group, a "First Century Christian movement" with which early members of the fellowship were affiliated. When weekly meetings of the small group of alcoholics soon began to be held at the Wilson home, Fitz usually came up to attend. Fitz formed a close friendship with the Wilsons, who were frequent visitors to his Cumberstone home for several years, starting in 1936. Lois Wilson recalled in her book, "Lois Remembers," that they often visited "Fitz and Co" at

Cumberstone and that on different occasions she was called on to care for Fitz's ailing wife and diabetic daughter. (When queried some years later, Lois said that Bill did not write any of the Big Book at Cumberstone, but some Maryland old timers believe he made notes there as he formulated ideas for the book.)

At least as early as 1937, Fitz was spending much of his time trying to help drunks and gain a foothold for the Fellowship in Washington, DC, where his sister Agnes worked and provided Fitz shelter and a base of operations for his A.A. work. His early efforts met with minimal success, but by the fall of 1939 he and Ned Foote had established the nucleus of a small group with staying power that began to function in Washington as A.A.'s southernmost outpost.

One of Fitz's early reclamation projects was the ill-fated Jackie Williams. Fitz sent Jackie to see his old chum Jim Burwell, who was just coming off a binge at his mother's home in DC. Jim describes the encounter in his Big Book story: "January 8, 1938 -- that was my D-Day; the place Washington, DC. This last real merry-go-round had started the day before Christmas and I had really accomplished a lot in those fourteen days. First, my new wife had

walked out, bag, baggage and furniture; then the apartment landlord had thrown me out of the empty apartment and the finish was the loss of another job. After a couple of days in dollar hotels and one night in the pokey, I finally landed on my mother's doorstep -- shaking apart with several days' beard ... That is the way Jackie found me, lying on a cot in my skivvies, with hot and cold sweats, pounding heart and that awful scratchiness all over.

"I had not asked for help and seriously doubt that I would have, but Fitz, an old school friend of mine, had persuaded Jackie to call on me. Had he come two or three days later I think I would have thrown him out, but he hit me when I was open for anything..."

Jim and Jackie took the train to New York, where they met Bill and Hank. It turned out that Hank had fired Jim from a job years earlier. Jim was impressed by the sobriety of the New Yorkers and decided to join them "and take all that they gave out except the 'God Stuff'." He also took a job as a traveling salesman for a business Hank and Bill had started. Burwell later recalled that his association with the little band in New York started about the time that Hank began pressing Bill to put something of the program in writing; up to that time, the "program" was carried solely by word of mouth in the New York and Akron meetings.

The Akron contingent was initially against any publication -- it was still closely affiliated with the Oxford Group, from which the New Yorkers had severed ties in September 1937. Akron finally acquiesced, and Bill began writing in the sprint: of 1938.

As Bill finished a chapter it would be reviewed and discussed by the New York members and a copy sent to Dr. Bob for review in Akron. This procedure brought lively debate in New York, particularly over the language of Chapter Five and the Twelve Steps. As related in Part 1 of this series, Fitz and Jim became central characters in the discussions, with Fitz favoring a Christian religious approach and Jim aligned with those wanting a philosophical text devoid of references to God. The resulting compromise language of "God as we understood Him" was hailed by Bill Wilson as a "ten strike" that opened the way for those of all faiths and little or no faith to embrace and be embraced by Alcoholics Anonymous.

And when disagreement developed over the title of the Big Book, it was Fitz to whom Bill turned for help: his search at the Library of Congress found a dozen books titled *The Way Out* and none named Alcoholics Anonymous. Thus both the book and the Fellowship were named. Fitz and Jim were also prototype "service workers." In addition to "Twelve Stepping" prospects and founding groups, they pioneering institutional relations community/public emissaries.

Fitz's efforts in Washington led to groups forming in Georgetown, Chevy

Chase, Silver Spring, Bethesda, Rockville and Colmar Manor in Maryland; and Arlington, Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church in Virginia. The other traveling salesman Burwell's need for the company of other alcoholics led him to establish groups in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Harrisburg, PA, and Wilmington, DE.

His seed-planting in Baltimore doubtless eventually sprouted groups in Towson, Glen Burnie and other points in Maryland. Both developed excellent relationships with hospitals in DC and Philadelphia to the point where A. A.'s could admit and take home alcoholics from alkie wards to which they had were and access any hour of the day or night. Through his liaison with top government officials, Fitz also gained A.A. access to the workhouse to which drunks were sent by DC courts.

An invaluable bonus growing out of Jim's founding the first group in Philadelphia was the famous Jack Alexander article in The Saturday Evening Post, which Burwell was instrumental in getting published. Publicity in the immensely popular and widely circulated Post brought thousands of letters to AA and spurred phenomenal growth of the Fellowship in 1941 and subsequent years. Burwell can also be credited with adoption of AA's Third Tradition -- "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking"-- as reported by Bill Wilson in "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions." (pp. 143-145).

In World War II, Fitz rejoined the army where he was found to have cancer. He died October 4, 1943, eight years sober. Jim migrated to San Diego and continued active in A.A. until his death on September 8, 1974.

Fittingly they rest a few yards apart just outside the chancel of Christ Church at Owensville, where their paths first crossed as youngsters. Undoubtedly there were many other unsung heroes among "early timers" whose efforts helped Alcoholics Anonymous through its perilous first years, but few if any made critical contributions like those of the two Maryland men of south Anne Arundel County.

Part 3 - How it happened in Baltimore.

The first request for help from Baltimore was received by the New York AA/office in mid-December 1939, eight months after publication of the Big Book. In his letter, Louis M. wrote that he was tired of making and breaking promises to his wife and pastor. He saw himself in many of the stories in the book and wanted, if possible, to get in touch with some of the men who had the same problems.

The Office promptly responded, " ... we are sorry that at present we have no members in Baltimore, and we are hoping it is possible for you to make the trip to Washington, DC, where we do have a few members . . ."

Louis was advised to contact Ned Foote, who along with Fitz Mayo (see Parts 1 and 2 of Margenser series), had begun the nucleus of a small group in DC several months earlier. His was to be the first on-going group outside the New York and Ohio areas.

About the time of Louis' letter, Jim Burwell -- one of the earliest members to stay sober in New York -- got a traveling sales job that took him to Philadelphia. Upon arriving, and recognizing the need to work with other alcoholics to stay sober, he went out into the community to carry the message as was done in New York and Ohio. As a result, he was able to start the first group in Philadelphia on February 26, 1940.

Jim's job also brought him to Baltimore, his old hometown.

There he was able to locate a former drinking buddy, Jim Ridgely, who had been sober four years after a religious recovery at Keswick Colony, New Jersey. Ridgely had been working with two other alcoholics without success.

Burwell's arrival was timely -- he had 12th step experience and had already started up an AA group in Philly. On June 16, 1940, the two Jims met with three other men at Ridgely's home on St. Paul Street. Several days later, Burwell received a letter in Philadelphia from a Baltimore lawyer who wanted to help his

alcoholic brother and offered his office in the Munsey Building on Fayette Street as a meeting place. On June 22, 1940, the six men held the second Baltimore A.A. meeting in that office.

In early October the group moved to the Altamount Hotel basement on Eutaw St. for several months, after which the group had to leave to make room for processing of World War II draftees into the military.

About that time, the members located a run-down, second-floor mail-order house at 857 Eutaw Street. With only six dollars in the treasury, four members signed a two-year lease at \$45.00 per month. Several sobering-up members removed shelving, painted the interior, and put down a new floor. An employer who was so pleased that one of his workers got sober, donated 50 chairs to the cause.

The group moved into "857" in early 1941 and remained there until 1987 when it moved to 123 N. Clinton Street in Highlandtown. Club 857 - the No. 1 group in Baltimore - is still in operation after 53 years. [At this writing.]

Publicity contributed greatly to the public knowledge and growth of Baltimore's budding AA group:

*February 16, 1941 -- Baltimore Sunday Sun article by Harrison Johnston

*April 1941 -- Saturday Evening Post magazine article, "Alcoholics Anonymous"

by Jack Alexander

*October 25, 1941 -- Baltimore News American article by Louis Azreal

Early members said that as each article came out, the phones would start ringing. The AAs were like firemen, always ready to go. "857" -- also called the Rebo Club -- had grown to about 50 members in 16 months, which included several women. The group had no traditions to guide them in those early days, so they tried whatever they thought might work. For example, they asked judges to lock up drunks until they got sober and the A.A.'s would then try to help them; they asked the Salvation Army to provide beds; and they gave out meal tickets, which didn't work because the drunks sold the tickets for booze money.

Looking back, the local and national publicity had an incalculable impact on the growth of A.A. By the end of 1941, there were over 50 active groups in the United States, according to estimates provided by A.A.'s New York office.

"857" continued to grow, and the need to start up another group became apparent. Transportation was a problem as trolleys or busses were sometimes not available. People often didn't have automobiles, and gas was limited because of World War II rationing. Because of periodic overcrowding, the Baltimore Fire Department said the club site was unsafe.

Several suburban members decided to start the second group in Towson. The first meeting of seven people was held in the study of an Episcopal minister on April 18, 1945. Two months later, they moved to a rented room above a store on York Road. At that first meeting, the gathering included a judge, a probation officer, a doctor, and two clergymen.

In late 1945, the group found new quarters in an apartment building basement at 212 Washington Avenue, away from streetcar and traffic noise, and large enough to accommodate the growing membership. This location became well known to drunks, as it was only a block away from the police station.

The Towson group remained on Washington Avenue for 40 years. In late 1985, it moved to and remains at the Carver Annex at Jefferson Street and Towsontown Boulevard. The Maryland General Service Archives are also located at the Carver Annex.

Fifty years ago drunks had little chance for a decent life.

They were viewed as psychos by the medical profession and as spiritual lepers

by the churches. Now, here was an answer, and the several dozen recovering

Baltimore alcoholics were eager to pass it on.

Tom S. and Lib S. -- two of our pioneer members -- came across a beat-up, downtown Baltimore row house being auctioned off. They were living in a boarding house and had limited assets, but nevertheless made a down payment. Tom recruited 18 friends, each of whom advanced \$1,000 for working capital. One floor would be a club house, one a business office for educating the public about alcoholism, and another for detoxing and housing drunks.

Sailors awaiting sea duty would help with the renovations.

At a business meeting requested by Towson members, Tom and Lib representing "857" members faced heated disagreement and squabbling. To muster support for their plan, they and a friend went to New York to see Bill Wilson. Bill said that if he had been asked about it five years prior, he would have been all for it. But now he was against it because experience showed that A.A. should be self-supporting, should not have any outside affiliation, and should focus on attraction rather than promotion.

As a suggestion, it was noted that Cleveland and Boston were growing faster than other cities and each had an effective central AA office, separate from clubs and groups. Tom and Lib decided to drop the big plan, to return the \$18,000, and to recommend that Baltimore follow the Cleveland-Boston arrangement. At another briefing of Baltimore members, tempers flared once again. Club house advocates believed they could more effectively handle 12th-step calls and walk-ins. But after about a one-week cooling-off period, the members became agreeable.

A tiny room in the Bromo-Seltzer Tower Building was rented in late 1948. Lib S. stated that if you stood in the middle of the room and extended your hands, you would touch the walls.

Since 1948, the Intergroup Office has moved four times and has been located at 5438 York Road since July 1986. Operating Intergroup back in the 1940's was a rather simple but important job. Since then, responsibilities have snowballed. Over 3000 calls ring monthly. The volume of activity requires special workers: one full-time and three part-time. In addition to regular staff, about 30 volunteers answer calls for help and meeting information. The staff coordinates with employers, clergy, media, hospitals, professionals and institutions as required. Intergroup conducts all of its affairs according to the Traditions.

This volume of work would be impossible to handle without the aid of modern

technology. A computer database helps keep accurate information on meeting locations and times. Twelfth Step lists are kept up to date. The over 900 meetings need constant assistance. All groups receive bulletins and council reports twice monthly. Twenty-thousand directories are printed for distribution every eight months. Also, the office stocks and sells conference-approved literature ... Action is the magic word in AA and there is lots of action at the Intergroup Office, the Baltimore service hub.

The enclosed graph shows Baltimore's remarkable meeting growth. Early members were innovative, carry-the-message activists. They took it upon themselves to get spot information, announcements and interviews on the radio and place simple ads and articles in the newspapers. They informed the clergy, the medical profession, and law enforcement personnel. They took meetings to

mental institutions and prisons. One of our early embers, Tom B. (see box), was instrumental in starting the first half-way house, the American Council on Alcoholism, and the annual AA Sobriety Show to celebrate recovery.

Along with A.A.'s growing success came a change in public attitude. People started to recognize alcoholism -- once thought to be a moral deficiency -- as a health problem. U. S. medical societies, including the World Health Organization in 1954, declared alcoholism a disease. Recovering employees convinced their companies to implement programs to help alcoholic employees, and labor unions were very supportive. Our own Jim Burwell provided guidance to the DuPont Company, using A.A. as the vehicle for recovery. (DuPont may have been the first company to have a viable program.)

Government action had far-reaching impact. James C. of Baltimore was able to develop and have passed the 1968 Maryland Comprehensive Intoxication and Alcoholism Control Act, the first such law in the country.

This act preceded by two years the famous U. S. Public Law 96-616, the so-called Hughes Act, which declared that alcoholism was a disease and all U.S. Government agencies were to have employee assistance programs. The positive examples set by recovering alcoholics and actions such as those mentioned above generated many calls for help. Members would meet face-to-face with the callers to share their AA experiences and encourage meeting attendance.

Membership and meetings spread in all directions, and by 1970 there were about 140 weekly meetings. Then growth increased dramatically to about 900 meetings by 1991.

However from 1991 to mid-1994, meetings increased only by 33. This dramatic decline in growth may surprise A.A. members, especially since the trend is

The original members of AA, between 1935 and 1939 went to only one meeting per week, and that meeting wasn't an AA meeting - they were Oxford Group meetings. They got well and they recovered. Why?

There was no 90-in-90 back then. It is not even mentioned in the first 164 pages of the Big Book. There were no conventions, retreats or treatment centers as we know them today. There weren't even the 12 Steps until 1938. Why did they stay sober, on a continuous basis until their deaths?

The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous and the way of life described within its pages is probably the most sane way of living possible. It promises a changed life, removal of obsession, removal of fear and being "rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence of which we have not even dreamed."

Were these people who wrote the book long-term members of AA? Did they have decades of recovery behind them which gave them the wisdom to write such a "prescription for a miracle?"

What they did have was a program of recovery and determination to do whatever it took to stop drinking forever. The longest term of sobriety for those who wrote this book was just over four years. The average was about eighteen months. All were relative newcomers, those who wrote and described what this writer and many others describe as the greatest spiritual movement of the 20th Century.

They didn't have the benefit of daily meetings, many didn't have telephones and there were no 28-day treatment centers. What they did have was a program of recovery and determination to do whatever it took to stop drinking forever.

The study of the history of AA will show you what it was that worked so many wonders which resulted in so many miracles. Learning about where AA came from and what they did will give you an idea of what they had.

Remember, "If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any lengths to get it..."

Strengthening the fellowship:

It is this writer's hope and prayer that a continuing dialogue and forum be made available to study the history of AA. Hopefully, this continuing open discussion will not only serve to strengthen your personal recovery but also begin the serve to strengthen AA as a whole.

Revolving Door Recovery will eventually lead AA towards the fate of the Washingtonians and the Oxford Group. For the sake of the future generations of alcoholics I pray that AA remain strong.

couldn't help very much in alcoholism. So they suggested that they get out and form their own group. Which they did.

Earl came back to Chicago at Dr. Bob's suggestion, and Dr. Bob always said to Earl, "When the time is ripe and you are right, then you will form a group." So Earl began to run around frantically to all the doctors in Evanston, the suburbs, Chicago, and tell them of this wondrous program. Now remember, there was no literature. The doctors would say to him, "Mr. T., how long have you been sober?" And he would say, "Well, about a month." And they'd say, "Come back in five years, and we'll talk to you."

All the alcoholics had apparently gone underground in Chicago, because Earl couldn't find any of them. (Smile in her voice.) But his first break came when one of his friends told him about a young man in his thirties who had been taken up to the North Shore Sanitarium, which was a sanitarium for nervous disorders and also a drying-out place.

So Earl went up there and found Dick. Dick was about 5 foot 3, and a lot of fun. He was a lawyer. His family had lots of money, but his only interest was in playing golf and drinking. So he wanted to get out of the sanitarium to do a little more of drinking and playing golf, so he listened to Earl. But he wasn't at all interested. So Earl bundled him up, got him out of there, and brought him home. And Dick lived with us for quite a number of months. In those days, in Akron, the idea was to take any prospect into your home and keep them. Because then you could give them the word; they were right there, under your nose, and you could really tell them. There still was no book.

So Dick came to live with us, and I must say, we loved him, but he was a problem child. He would be sober for 3 or 4 days, and then he'd disappear. And Earl and I would go down on Howard Street and do all the bars at night where he hung out, and then if we didn't find him, we'd go down to the Near North Side and find him in one of these hangouts. Usually he had a couple black eyes. And we'd take him home and get him back again in the groove. And he would last for about a week, and then he'd be gone again.

Well, he finally did pretty well; not real well, but well enough to get a room. And he went out on his own. And do you know, for many years, Dick never made the program. But after I guess 20-some years, he finally made it. And Dick passed away in the 50s.

But anyway, we loved Dick. He was our good friend, and the first prospect.

Conrad: What year was that Earl went out to Akron?

Katie: He went out in '37, I believe, '37 and '38; and he returned to Akron about every 3 weeks, because it gave him insurance, he said. He was up here all alone.

Well, after that, the doctors didn't do very much for him, but one man who was a surgeon at the Osteopathic Hospital in Chicago called him and said he had a prospect for him. And Earl always took me along for moral support, I guess. He always contended in the future that the non-alcoholics should be aware of what went on in the big meetings; they should know about the program because it was so helpful to the alcoholic. There would be no frustrations, no jealousies, and so on.

So we were always included, which was nice. But we never tried to take over their program. We did the coffee, and we helped in any way we could. But it was the alcoholic's program, and he had to use it for himself. It was not ours. Since then, they have Al Anon, which is a group of relatives -- wives, husbands, children -- who meet and discuss their own problems.

We went out to find Sadie. She was a middle-aged grandmother, and she lived in a very nice apartment on Stony Island in Chicago. We went up to see her; she lived with her son. She was a charming little lady with two black eyes. She had fallen down and she had a hangover, but she was interested. So Sadie was the second one that we found.

Then in rapid succession, Ed came into the group, through his sister; they lived downstate. She rather pushed him in, and he was glad to come. And then Sylvia, who was from Washington, and she was living here; and her roommate, who was a non-alcoholic, Gracie K. Grace worked for an advertising company, J. Walter Thomas. Thompson? Is that it? Thompson.

And so, she volunteered to be the secretary of these five people. And she was the secretary through the years, until she passed away. And she ran the downtown office, and she did a marvelous job. She was a non-alcoholic. So as time went on, they decided they must have a meeting. The first meeting was held in our apartment.

There were five alcoholics and two of us non-alcoholics, Grace and myself. That made seven. And Earl was a nervous wreck about the whole thing. He didn't know what they could do or talk about. He finally said, "Well, we better pattern ourselves after the Oxford Group." And they had used the Bible.

Of course, a lot of these people had not read a Bible for forever. But we got down the old Bible and brushed it off, and when they came, they picked out a chapter and it was read. Then they discussed it. This was the first meeting.

Conrad: Do you recall the date of the first meeting?

Katie: Well, it was in the fall of '38, I believe, 'cause Chan came in '39 -'40. After that, after the final prayer, and they were all willing -- they

agreed upon this spiritual thing -- there was great discussion and they all opened up and told about their problems and so on, which was good; and drank gallons of coffee and stayed until four a.m. in the morning!

The things that came out of that first meeting were rather interesting. They decided that there would be no money taken from anybody outside of the group. The theory was that the alcoholics had always taken money, wherever they could get it, from whoever they could get it, and now it was time for them to be on their own. So there would be no money taken.

And this was a great problem, because Ed's sister had sent \$5. And they didn't know what in the world to do with it. To give it back would be insulting to her, because she had given it in such good faith; they couldn't accept it, they thought. Well, that was why they sat up till 4 in the morning, trying to figure out what to do with this \$5. And I don't know what they did with it; probably bought coffee.

The next thing they decided that once a week they would have a general meeting of the five and the non-alcoholics. And that was a must. You must save that evening, and you must be there. In between, every day, you were to contact one or all of the people who were there at that meeting, either by phone, or by dropping in and having coffee, or at their office, or wherever they were. But you must keep in touch with them. And Earl and I used to drive around in the evening to see if they were all home (laugh) and in good shape.

The friendliness and the love that was given was what bound them together. We were all good friends.

The next thing they decided upon was a quiet time. I guess that has gone by the boards, but it was a wonderful thing. The alcoholic was to rise an hour before his usual time; he had always been in such a hurry and such a mess to do ninety-five things at the wrong time, and he was to get his day straightened out and in some order before he started out.

He was also to offer a prayer, ask for guidance, and at night when he came home, to review what had happened to him, and also to offer a prayer of thankfulness. So the quiet time was born that night. Which was great. There were other things that they were to do that they talked about that evening. Apparently it worked because everybody stayed sober, which was great! Except Dick. And Dick was still running away every few days and getting drunk. But he always came to the meetings. So that was the beginning of the first AA meeting in our apartment.

It continued on there until we got 25 members, and we couldn't get them all in.

Conrad: Your apartment was on Central Street in Evanston?

Katie: On Central Street in Evanston. But the group was known as the Chicago Group. In the interim, Bob and Bill had gotten their heads together and had gotten a name for this group. It was Alcoholics Anonymous, which I thought was a marvelous name. The alcoholic was promised anonymity and we non-alcoholics never broke it. We were careful.

I guess the others were too, because people began to be very curious. What were you doing, and you know, and particularly in our building, when these people would come and go and stay so late. But we never told. (Laugh.) But anyway, that was the first meeting.

Then, when there were 25 people, we felt we had grown enough. And I say "we" because, we were the non-alcoholics, but included in this. But it was not our program, per se.

So Earl went down and talked to someone at the Medical and Dental Arts Building, and he made a deal with them, that if they would give us their lounge to set 25 or 50 people and have a meeting, we would use their restaurant and guarantee 25 meals. And I was in charge of the meals, and I used to stand at the darn counter, because we had to have 25 people.

The roast beef dinners were 75 cents, and 10 cents for a tip. Most of us couldn't afford that because most of us were broke. It was all we could do to afford coffee and cake.

But they were well attended, and we had a little publicity by Jack Alexander, and then they began to come in. At that time, we rose from 25 to 50, and then we went to different places that were larger, and finally ended up at the Engineering Building, where we could have hundreds.

AA has grown by leaps and bounds all over the world. I have traveled a lot, when Earl was alive and after he passed away. Invariably, they find me. I've gone to meetings in little motor homes, where they sit out on the prairie, in Texas; I've gone to Fort Wayne, Indiana.

By the way, in the early days, those men used to travel at night. They would go down to St. Louis; they would go to Springfield; they would go to Milwaukee; to Madison, Iowa, all around, helping start groups. After work, if they had a job, they would leave, and talk to the groups down there, and then come home that same night, at 5 in the morning. It was a rugged deal, but all of those groups started from the Chicago area.

It was great. It was good AA. The book came out, that was helpful. The steps -- I believe in the beginning, they had planned on 15 steps, but they cut it down to 12. And it's been revised a bit, too. Are there any questions you would like to ask?

Dr. Bob and Annie S. had relatives in Kenilworth, the suburb. They came once or twice a year. And of course, we always got together with them. And Earl frequently went to Akron, because his father lived there. He was so fond of Dr. Bob, who had sponsored Earl, really. Earl was only 35 when he went over there, and most of these men were 50s and 60s. Earl was the youngest one.

They used to put everyone who came into Dr. Bob's hospital, because they could all go and pinpoint him there and talk with him. There was no literature, so they had to do it that way.

Earl begged and pleaded not to put him in the hospital, so they made an exception, let him stay at home. He said, "I'll sit right here. I won't leave." And they all called upon him. He left at something like seven or eight o'clock at night, and didn't get into Akron until -- his father was with him -- until it was one or two in the morning, and they all came that early morning to see him.

Conrad: Did they all come to the train station to meet him?

Katie: No, but they called at the house, and they continued. Two would come at a time, and then maybe another one, and so on. And they continued all day and every day. He had lots of company, believe me. They saturated him with this program.

To them it was the last hope. They had hit bottom. As Earl often said, "Without sobriety, I'm nothing." Which was true. So they worked hard at it, believe me.

Conrad: Did Bill W. come to Evanston?

Katie: Bill W. always stayed with us. We would get him a room at the Palmer House, and the next thing, he landed in a cab outside of our door. He said, "I don't want to stay down there. I'd rather stay with you!" (Laugh.) So he always came to us and stayed with us.

Dr. Bob and Annie stayed with their relatives, which they should have. And when we went to Akron, we did not stay at their home, because we had a home there. Earl had been born and reared in Akron. But we saw Annie and Bob constantly. Annie was a marvelous woman, and every body loved her. And they were a great couple.

Bob's last words, as you know, at the Cleveland Convention, were, "Just remember to keep it simple." And I hope they always do.

A lawyer called Earl and asked him to come down to his office. He had a proposition for him.

Earl went down, and he said, "There is a woman in town who is very wealthy

and would like to give you some money." And he said, "Well, we don't take money." And he said, "This is for you." And Earl said, "No, I don't accept any money. Oh maybe the group would take five or ten dollars." The lawyer laughed, and he said, "This is a million."

Conrad: A million dollars?

Katie: Well, Mr. T. almost fell over backwards. (Laugh.) There were many offers of great amounts of money, and many to Earl, because he was the first man here.

What is Nancy, the politician's wife, what was her name before she married him? Well, it doesn't make any difference. Her mother called her, and said that she had a friend, that she had been on the stage, and she had a friend who also was with her in vaudeville, and he was in great trouble at the Blackstone. But she was going to move him up to their house.

She was married to L. D., the doctor, surgeon. Would Earl come to their home and talk to this man? So Earl galloped down there and Nancy opened the door. She was probably a teenager. She wasn't too old. In her twenties, maybe.

And it was an actor who was in trouble. He really was. He would go to the Blackstone and hole in there, and just drink himself to death. Then, they would go and get him, and take him home.

Earl kept track of him and every time the actor came to town, he called Earl, and they would have lunch or dinner together. And Earl would tell him, but the actor didn't stop drinking. He kept right on. So finally, he said to Earl, "How would you like to go to Hollywood?"

Earl said that he had never thought about going to Hollywood.

The actor said, "I'll move your family out there. I'll give you a house and a car, and all the servants you need, if you'll dance attendance on me and keep me sober."

Earl said, "I'm going to tell you something. If I accepted that, I'd be drunk in a week."

But Earl would call him on the phone, and we kidded him, because he'd say, "How are ya, S, old boy?" (Laugh.) But they liked each other.

Then the actor continued to drink. But he found the actress (name deleted). And she had some magical power over him. And they used to put the actor on a boat when they were filming and send him out in the bay and keep him there until the film was done, so he couldn't get anything to drink. But the actress took over, and he did pretty well. He sobered up.

There have been a lot of people that Earl and I have had the privilege of meeting that were interesting. And they're just as common as all the rest of us, I mean, and they all have the same problems. But it was fun to know them.

A President's son, we knew him. A nice man; I think he died recently. He was very old. A lot of dignitaries, and nice. Earl served on the Board, the AA board in New York, for several years. He would go to New York, and Bill and he would get together and talk about AA. They did a lot of things together.

Conrad: Did Earl do anything with the downtown office, or the general service?

Katie: Oh yes, oh yes. He was very influential in that. We ran all over. I went with him because he had to go alone, he asked me to go. I can't tell you how many places we visited. And they didn't want us. They didn't want alcoholics in their building. Finally, they found a little office. I can't remember just where it was. It was sort of south, either on Wabash or someplace in there, just a hole in the wall.

The coffee pot was always on; anybody could wander in and out and have a cup of coffee and meet other AAs in there. And Grace Kaidas was established there behind the desk. She ruled over it like a matriarch. (Laugh.) She would say to some of these men who came in, "Did you go and get a bath and get de-loused like I told you to? No -- then get out of here." (Laugh.) She took good care of her boys and girls. She served many times.

From that little office, they again went on a search, and they found the Wacker Drive. And that's a nice office. Earl always spent every weekend down there. They had their committees. I don't know if he ever made a living, because he spent most of his waking hours with AA. I taught school in between times, so we made it.

Conrad: Did you have a General Service Representative? I mean a representative from this area, and other areas in the city at that time?

Katie: Well, they established the small groups. Yes, then they tried to choose somebody from the West Side, South, North and so on, and they met as a committee, and they sort of set the tone for what they were going to do. There had to be something that was put together; I mean, you can't just have a loose organization. Yeah, they did pretty well.

Conrad: What did they call the first group, in Evanston? Did it have a name?

Katie: By then, it was Alcoholics Anonymous. Right after Earl joined, the Oxford Group threw them out and said they didn't want them any more. I think Bill and Bob had gotten their heads together and decided they should have a name. And it came through as Alcoholics Anonymous, which was good. It was an

inspired thing. But I think the whole thing was an inspired, God-given thing, because up to then, you know, a person who had a problem of alcoholism was just a garden-variety drunk. And everybody looked down their nose at them and nobody did anything. But when AA came into being, it was understandable; they had respect, they said maybe after all it was a disease people had. They couldn't help it, and they treated it as such. Which was good.

As far as figures were concerned, I don't know how they could ever get counts. Oh they could make some count of how many belonged. Who cares? As long as they come in the group and are rehabilitated, doesn't make any difference if you have 10,000 or 50.

Conrad: How did they pay the rent on this office downtown?

Katie: By free will offering. They never took any money from anyone. They passed the basket on the night that they met. Every week we went. They got quite a bit of money. See, that was right after the Depression, and people didn't have much money.

Conrad: This was in 1940...

Katie: In the 40s, yes. Then we began to be a little more prosperous, so they had more money. Then we had once a year, a free will offering, that you could send in if you wished, or not. There was no obligation. And the money came in.

Conrad: Then there was, in addition to the groups in different parts of the city, there was one big meeting, wasn't there? Downtown, Tuesday nights?

Katie: One big meeting, that's right. And each group took care of its own. They usually met on a Thursday night. I don't know, do they now?

Conrad: Yes they do.

Katie: They met in homes, which seems to be a more well, better, it was not so formal. It was informal. And then when the group would get so big, they would have to either split, which caused a lot of trouble, because nobody wanted to split up with their fellow men. Or they would have to rent a hall or a church. The churches were pretty good. They gave room for them.

They had groups all over the city, up the shore, all around. Then they came together in that one annual big meeting. Usually, Bob and Bill came, and some of the Board would come. There was Mr. S., I forgot, I think he was a lawyer. He was a non-alcoholic.

They had a ratio of I think it was 3 alcoholics and 4 non, about that, because they said, (laughing) you can't trust to put too many alcoholics on.

You never know what they're going to do. So they put the non in greater proportion, 4 to 3. I think that was it. I don't know what they do now.

They had a big office in New York, much bigger than we ever had here. They did a lot of printing, sending out pamphlets and books and what have you. We never went into that.

Pamphlets that you see now that you pick up, many of them were written by some of the former first members, like Judge T and some of the others.

And I might add that Chan F, who is a wonderful AA, and I think that he and I are the only two survivors, came in '39. He sort of nosed around and thought, 'Well, maybe he didn't need this very much.' But in '40 he decided. He was a newspaperman, and everybody wondered, down at the newspaper offices, what had happened to him, because he was a good drinker. So he spread the word, and we got in rapid succession, many newspapermen. Clem came in, and Luke, and I can't tell you all the newspaper guys who came. They were good.

Then Judge T, and they had a good nucleus of people who were intelligent, and who could do things and hold it together. And that's very important I think, don't you?

Conrad: Yes.

Katie: The AAs were wonderful and we loved all of them, but some of them couldn't do that sort of thing. But these men had what it took. They were very active up until the time of their deaths. And Chan is still going strong, isn't he?

Conrad: Yes, he is.

Katie: He's wonderful.

Sylvia was one of the first members in the group, and a very beautiful gal. She lived in Washington, DC, and was married to one of the owners of a newspaper. She was the only one in the group that had any money. (Laugh.) She was divorced from him, and he paid her alimony. So whenever we needed coffee or cream, Sylvia would bring it, because she had the money.

Anyway, she was an eager beaver, and a spark plug. Every night, at 6:00, when we were about to sit down to dinner, the phone would ring, and she'd say, "Earl, can you come right over? I think I'm going to drink." (Laugh.)

And he'd say, "Well, I'm going to eat my dinner, and then I'll come over."

"Well, I've decided I'm going to China tomorrow, so you'd better come over tonight, or I won't be here tomorrow. I'm going to China."

We had a terrible time with Sylvia. (Laugh.) She was always doing something, and chasing somebody she thought that was an alcoholic. So one night, through her garage man, she heard about this man that the garage man thought needed help. So she loaded Earl and me into the car, and we went down to this street, and I don't know where it was, in Chicago some place. And in front of his rooming house, and she said, "Now the garage man says he comes out every night about 7:00 and goes to the Silver Dollar around the corner. And we'll wait for him and then we'll grab him."

This man came along, and he didn't come out of the house there, but he was staggering down the street, and Sylvia said, "There he is." Now she said, "You let him get a little distance away, Earl, and then you get out and chase him."

So he got oh, about maybe a quarter of a block away, and Mr. T. got out of the car, and started after him. In order to close some of the distance between them, Earl ran a little bit. And the man saw him, and he'd run and Earl would run, (laughing), and finally Earl caught up with him. He said, "Are you 'Spencer,'" or whatever his name was. He said, "Oh no, no." He was not this one at all.

Earl came back and we sat some more. Finally, 'Spencer came out of the house, and around the corner to the Silver Dollar. We waited for him, and finally, back he came again. Sylvia and Earl got out, and went in with him. They said, oh he lived in the most disreputable room -- it was just a mess. So they said he couldn't stay there. They took him out. They took him home.

One of the other members, the Fs, the wife and husband, were both alcoholics. They lived in south Evanston. They said that they'd take Spencer. So they took him in and T. F., the wife, finally objected.

She said, "You know, he has a wet brain." She said, "He doesn't know where he is. He wanders around and he puts cigarette ashes in my powder box." (Laughs.)

She said, "I can't have him any more."

So they put him away, and he couldn't remember his name. He would scratch it on the wall. I guess he finally died. He was in bad shape. Those were the kind that we got too. They weren't all wonderful outstanding judges and doctors and what have you. They were the dregs, some of them.

But, Dr. Bob always said, "You've got to love them, whether you like them or not. You've got to love them." So we tried to, love all of them, dirty or otherwise.

Katie: She came into the group in the 40s. Her husband was related to a

manufacturing family. They had lived over there, on the estate.

Conrad: This is Dorothy G.

Katie: Dorothy G. Jim G, her husband, was an alcoholic, but wouldn't admit it. Dorothy was. Finally they separated, and she came up here and she lived near us on Central Street. So we saw a lot of her. She had alimony of sorts, and she also had a retarded daughter who lived with her.

When they established an office downtown, Grace took over, but they needed someone else too. Earl suggested maybe Dorothy would like to work there, and she said, Oh, no; she had never worked in her life. She wouldn't know how to do that. They finally prevailed upon her, and she did a marvelous job through the years. When Grace died, she took over. Every body knew Dorothy. She knew every group in town, and every body would come in, and she could call them by name. She was really good.

She should be well thought of in the group, because she did a lot for it.

There were so many who did so much. All very humble people. We went down to Sarasota, and we stayed down there. When Earl was stricken, you know, when he was in his 50s, he had a stroke. We went down there, and it was warm and he could get out. Up here in the winter, he couldn't. We used to go to the meetings there.

He never announced who he was. We'd sit down, maybe in the back, and people would come up and greet him, and say, "How long have you been in the group?"

He'd say, "Oh I don't know," some little time, something like that. He never said, "Oh I was first in AA in Chicago." He was a very humble person, as were the other alcoholics. Once in a while, we got somebody that...

We went to a meeting in Sarasota. The speaker we had known for a good many years. He took a nip now and then, but he never told anyone. Earl always had his ear to the ground, he was like a bird dog (laughing). He knew what Clarence was doing. Anyway, Clarence was a speaker and he was expounding. Oh my, you know, how good he was, and what he'd done, and soon.... When he was halfway through, his eye lighted on Earl T. He almost fell to the ground, because he knew Earl knew what he was up to.

There were very few of those fakers, a few who didn't behave well. But I think all in all, we were lucky to have such wonderful people.

Conrad: Thank you, Katie. This is the end of the interview with Katie T...

For more information on Earl T. see post 126.

D.I.A. Log - Okay, when did you actually move back to Dallas?

Searcy W. - I moved back here in 1949.

D.I.A. Log - Tell us more about the groups that were here when you moved back

in 1949 and then how they developed through the '50s.

Searcy W. - I came to all the meetings here even in the beginning: there was no group where I lived in West Texas; there wasn't any group between Ft. Worth and Phoenix. So I had to come to meetings in Dallas, and I was a member of the Downtown Group. In September of 1946 we moved out and formed the Suburban Group at the corner of Dickason and Sale streets. I was a member of that group. The first groups were in this order: the Downtown Group at 912 1/2 Main, the Suburban Group at Dickason and Sale, and then the Oak Cliff Group was formed about the same time. Out of the Suburban Group grew the Preston Group, the Belmont Group, the Belwood Group, and several like that.

[Editor's note: Other old-timers aver that the Preston Group was a split-off from the Town North Group.] The Central Group and Town North and all of those groups grew out of the old Suburban Group: most of them did, anyway.

D.I.A. Log - That wasn't the same Central Group that was around in Dallas in the '80s, was it? That must have been a different group.

Searcy W. - No, no, that was before then, a different group.

D.I.A. Log - Right. So when did the White House Group actually get started?

Searcy W. - The White House Group started about fourteen years ago as a result of the demise of the Suburban Group which had closed its doors way back then, so the old members of Suburban Group came together at the White House where I had an office and we formed the White House Group. That was about fourteen years ago.

D.I.A. Log - So the White House Group really itself isn't that old but it's what was left of the old Suburban Group?

Searcy W. - Yeah, there were fourteen former members of Suburban Group that helped start the White House Group.

D.I.A. Log - That's really interesting. Now let's explore a bit more about the origins of Dallas AA. Our history records that a woman named Esther E. founded the first AA group in Dallas. Tell us what she was like.

Searcy W. - Well, Esther's story actually is written in detail; her story's in the Big Book. "The Southern Belle," you know. She was a good-looking lady and full of pep and knowledge about the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Of course she'd been through the ringer pretty well. She came to Dallas in 1943, and there were no groups in Dallas at that time. And there was no place, no hospital that would take an alcoholic for treatment. But you could take an alcoholic to Terrell state mental hospital. In that mental hospital was a guy named Vern G. Esther for 2 years went out there and worked there with him, and he would get out intermittently for a while but he couldn't stay sober.

She tried to give the program to him for a long while, but it failed. But then in 1945 they started the Downtown Group of Alcoholics Anonymous which was in cooperation with some early members of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ft. Worth. They had formed a little group in Ft. Worth, four or five people.

D.I.A. Log - Searcy, you have a wonderful story about you, Bill W. and the Twelve Traditions.

Searcy W. - From the time I came in 1946 through late '46 and '47 we tried to

establish groups all over Texas, and everybody all over the state worked together to form these groups. And so what happened was that a lot of groups presented problems because in the Southwest we had clubs, and they called them AA clubs - which was not right. AA is not a club, officially. But we had clubs and that caused a need for money. So money and management and those things caused problems with Bill Wilson. Day and night he was being called about so-and-so trying to run this or that club. In 1948, 25 people agreed to meet in Lubbock; they came from all over the state of Texas. Bill Wilson had been visiting his mother in Phoenix, and I got him to come to Amarillo to meet me and then go on to Lubbock to speak and help us with forming these groups and tell us what we were doing wrong. Bill and Lois came in on a plane from Phoenix, and then we got on another plane and headed toward Lubbock. Then Bill reached in his coat pocket and pulled out some handwritten notes saying, "I want you to read these notes and see what you think about it." I read them over carefully and looked at him and said, "Well, Bill, we don't need this down here. We love each other. Oh, how we love each other." But it was the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous,

the thing that saved Alcoholics Anonymous, but I didn't know it then. Very few people knew anything about these Traditions and why they were being formed, but later on of course in 1950 at the International Conference in Cleveland, Dr. Bob and Bill took me up to the room and schooled me in what we needed to do to get votes to pass the Twelve Traditions, to accept the Twelve Traditions as they were written. We were to vote on the Twelve Traditions with about 8,000-9,000 people. And at that meeting there was not a single dissenting vote.

D.I.A. Log - Can you clarify one thing for us? Bill showed you this draft of the traditions in 1948 when you were in West Texas but he had started publishing articles about his proposed Traditions two years before in the Grapevine. I'm betting not a lot of people who were members of AA down here were reading the Grapevine at that time.

Searcy W. - Very few. And very few people in the Southwest knew anything about the Traditions being formed, they didn't know anything about it. Not only in West Texas, but all over. At that convention in Cleveland where they voted to adopt the Twelve Traditions, not a lot of people knew about them, either. We voted for it for unity but we didn't know a hell of a lot about it, very little. It passed, thank God. You know, Bill worked on those traditions for four or five years previously and there may have been some things I had corresponded with him with about them, but I still didn't understand exactly why we needed them. That's how ignorant I was about it.

D.I.A. Log - Bill was incredibly farsighted, wasn't he? Tell us this: when you talked at our group a few years back you had some great reminiscences about Ebby T's sojourn in Dallas. Didn't Bill send him down here in desperation because he wasn't staying sober back East?

Searcy W. - Well, here's the story behind that. As you know, when Bill Wilson was near the end in 1934, Ebby came to see him and gave him an idea about "God as we understand Him." After AA got started Bill always said that Ebby was his sponsor. But six months after he gave Bill a clue on how to stay sober, Ebby went back out in the Bowery in New York City and had stayed drunk on and off for eighteen years. Then in early 1953 Bill Wilson came to Dallas. By then I was head of a clinic that took wet drunks. Bill and I had lunch, and after that lunch I asked Bill, "What would you rather see happen now that's never happened in AA before?" and without any hesitation he said, "I'd rather see Ebby have a chance to get sober." Bill said that it as if to say, "You sober Ebby up" - that's the way I took it. Bill didn't even know exactly where Ebby was, but a couple of mutual friends found him on the Bowery. They dried him out a bit but gave him a pint of whiskey to get on the plane with, and he flew to Dallas to sober up. Ebby was in bad shape physically, mentally, spiritually and every other way you could imagine after being drunk for the better part of eighteen years and sleeping on the streets. And he was very unruly. He cussed out Bill and Dr. Bob and me and everybody else. Ebby was still very resentful because he could have been one of the forefathers of AA. But finally, Ebby asked if he could go to a meeting with me, and we went over to the Suburban Club - he got sober and stayed that way. And he got to helping others; we got him a job and he did pretty good. He stayed 4 or 5 years before going back to New York. But his health was failing him and he fell off the wagon again. Of course Bill was in touch with him all the time, and he made arrangements for Ebby to go to a halfway house in upstate New York. The lady up there that ran it said she would gladly take care of him. He went up there in 1963 and in 1966, he

died.

D.I.A. Log - Many of us have heard stories that Ebby didn't die sober, but then there are other ones that said he did die sober. Which is true?

Searcy W. - I happen to know that Ebby was sober 2-1/2 years when he died.

D.I.A. Log - Thank you, it's good to get that straight.

Searcy W. - Most people say that Ebby died drunk, but he did not. He was sober 2-1/2 years. My source on that was directly from was Lois Wilson; she told me unequivocally that Ebby was sober 2-1/2 years when he passed away.

D.I.A. Log - I appreciate you clearing that up for all of us. Only two more questions, Searcy. I'm sitting here looking at a medallion on your desk that has a Roman number L and three IIIs on it, and, frankly, that whole idea overwhelms me - you've been sober a very long time. Apart from your own sobering up, could you tell us the one most significant event of your whole AA experience? Most significant to you, that is.

Searcy W. - That would be difficult. I always thought after I came in that this was such a great thing. The program of Alcoholics Anonymous - it's such a design for living that I thought the whole world ought to know about it. So I questioned Bill Wilson about all these things that happened and why we're here and how we were here, and he wanted me to go to the Yale Summer School and study these things, alcoholism, you know? So I did that and luckily, Dr. Jellinek moved from Yale after I attended there in 1947 and came to teach a year at Ft. Worth. [Ed. note: Dr. E. M. Jellinek co-founded the Yale School of Alcohol Studies in 1943.] Then I met a man named Horace, and he and I worked for Dr. Jellinek and did educational work. We talked to schools, churches - anybody that would listen about the disease of alcoholism. We worked colleges, universities, schools, churches, all kinds of public talks. Dr. Jellinek also suggested we needed hospitals for an alcoholic to go into to sober up and go directly into AA. So he helped me establish the clinic in Lubbock, the clinic in Dallas where Ebby sobered up, and the ones in Houston and Carlsbad, New Mexico. And in those days everybody had a problem with drinking, but there were very few drug addicts; we didn't have any. We had every once in a while a barbiturate addict, but mostly straight alcoholics. But they sobered up in those places because there were AAs in there day and night taking them to meetings and sponsoring them, helping them through the steps, and they stayed sober. About 75% of them stayed sober, because they went into AA. Because they were taken to AA

prescribe pills for alcoholics. So she knew my writing a little bit and she asked me if I had a dual problem and would I be willing to write an article about it for consideration in the Big Book. My reaction to that was the same as my reaction when it was suggested I come to AA - I thought it was one of the dumbest ideas I'd ever heard and I ignored her letter.

Later on she called and asked for the article, and I lied and said I hadn't had time to write it. She extended the deadline and called me a second time. I had a gal working in the office with me who was in the program, and she thought it would be nice to have typed a story that might end up in the Big Book, so she said to me, "You write it, I'll type it, and we'll send it in." So that's what we did. But by that time they had done another printing of the Second Edition, and I thought, Fine, that means they won't use it. But Paula said she liked it and the Grapevine published it with the title "Bronzed Moccasins" and an illustration of a pair of bronze moccasins. Eventually it was put in the Big Book, but the title was changed, and my guess is that they wanted to show that an alcoholic could be a professional and be an addict, but that wouldn't make him not an alcoholic. It worked well but maybe it overshot the mark, and now one of the most uncomfortable things for me is when people run up to me at a meeting and tell me how glad they are the story is in the book. They say they've been fighting with their home group because their home group won't let them talk about drugs. So they show their group the story and they say, "By God, now you'll have to let me talk about drugs." And I really hate to see the story as a divisive thing. I don't think we came to AA to fight each other.

Grapevine: Is there anything you regret having written in your story?

Dr. Paul: Well, I must say I'm really surprised at the number of people who come up to me and ask me confidentially if what they've heard on the very best authority - usually from their sponsor - is true: that there are things in my story I want to change, or that I regret having written it, or that I want to take it out because it says so much about drugs, or that I've completely changed my mind that AA is the answer, or even that acceptance is the answer. I've also heard -- on the best authority! -- that I've died or gotten drunk or taken pills. The latest one was that my wife Max died and that I got so depressed I got drunk. So, is there anything I'd like to change? No. I believe what I said more now than when I wrote it.

Grapevine: Do you think that your story might help those who are dually addicted?

Dr. Paul: I think the story makes clear the truth that an alcoholic can also be an addict, and indeed that an alcoholic has a constitutional right to have as many problems as he wants! But I also think that if you're not an alcoholic, being an addict doesn't make you one. The way I see it, an alcoholic is a person who can't drink and who can't use drugs, and an addict

is a person who can't use drugs and can't drink. But that doesn't mean that every AA meeting has to be open to a discussion of drugs if it doesn't want to. Every meeting has the right to say it doesn't want drugs discussed. People who want to discuss drugs have other places where they can go to talk about that. And AA is very open to living the Steps and Traditions to other groups who want to use them. I know this from

my own experience, because I wrote to the General Service Office and got

permission to start Pills Anonymous and Chemical Dependency Anonymous. I did

that when I was working in the field of chemical dependency. We started groups but I didn't go to them because I get everything I need from AA. I don't have any trouble staying away from talking about drugs, and I never introduce myself as an alcoholic/addict. I'm annoyed -- or maybe irritated is better word -- by the people who keep insisting that AA should broaden to include drugs and addictions other than alcohol. In fact I hear it said that AA should change its name to Addicts Anonymous. I find that a very narrow-minded view based on people's personal opinions and not on good sense.

History tells us that the Washingtonians spread themselves so thin they evaporated. Jim B. says the greatest thing that ever happened in AA was the publication of the Big Book, because it put in writing what the program was and made it available all over the world. So wherever you go it's the same program. I don't see how you could change the program unless you change the book and I can't see that happening.

Grapevine: It's a question of singleness of purpose?

Dr. Paul: That singleness of purpose thing is so significant. It seems to be working; why would we change it? I can't think of any change that would be an

improvement.

Grapevine: Nowadays drunks often come to meetings already dried out, but that

wasn't always the case.

Dr. Paul: No, it wasn't. You don't get Twelfth Step calls as dramatic as they used to be. Now I find that if you're called upon to make a Twelfth Step call, it'll be on somebody who is in the hospital. You find out when they're available and not in some other kind of meeting, and make an appointment. But this might change as the number of treatment programs begins to fade out.

I used to make "cold turkey" calls, where the alcoholic hadn't asked for help. One time I went to see this guy who was described to me as a big husky fellow. He was holed up in a motel. I found out from the manager of the motel that he was on the second floor, and as I was walking up the outside stairs to get to his place, I thought to myself, if this guy comes charging out the door, he could easily throw me over the stair railing and I'd end up on the concrete. So I thought, well, the good news is I'd probably be one of AA's first martyrs. Then I thought, yeah, but I'd be an anonymous martyr. I made the call anyhow, and he got sober for a while.

Grapevine: In your Big Book story, you say that acceptance is the key to everything. I wonder if you've ever had a problem accepting what life hands you.

Dr. Paul: I think today that my job really is to enjoy life whether I like it or not. I don't like everything I have to accept. In fact, if everything was to my specifications and desires there would be no problem with acceptance. It's accepting things I don't like that is difficult. It's accepting when I'm not getting my own way. Yes, I find it very difficult at times.

Grapevine: Anything specific?

Dr. Paul: Nothing major, though it sometimes seems major that I have to accept living with my wife Max and her ways of doing things! She is an entirely different person than I am. She likes clutter, I like things orderly. She thinks randomly and I like structured thinking. We're very, very different. We never should have gotten married! Last December we were married fifty-five years.

Grapevine: I guess she knows your thoughts on this matter.

Dr. Paul: Ad nauseum.

Grapevine: You're still going to meetings?

Dr. Paul: I'd say five or six a week.

Grapevine: Do you and Max go to meetings together?

Dr. Paul: Max isn't in AA, she's in Al-Anon and she's still very active in it. But I go to Al-Anon too, and that helps a great deal, and Max comes to open AA meetings with me and that helps too. It's kind of like Elsa C. used to say: when two people have their individual programs, it's like railroad tracks, two separate and parallel rails, but with all those meetings holding them together.

Grapevine: Do you think you'd still be married if you hadn't gone to meetings all these years?

Dr. Paul: I'm sure we wouldn't. I initially thought that the Serenity Prayer said I'd have to change the things I couldn't accept. So I thought, well, we can't get along so it's time to change the marriage. I used to go around looking for old-timers who would agree with me and say that's what the Serenity Prayer meant. But Max and I finally made a commitment to the marriage and stopped talking about divorce and started working our programs. In fact we tend to sponsor each other, which is a dangerous thing to do, but we help each other see when we need more meetings, or need to work a certain Step or something like that.

Grapevine: Do you have, or did you have, a sponsor?

Dr. Paul: Early on I was talking to a friend of mine, Jack N., who was sober a couple of months longer than I was. Jack and his wife and Max and I used to go to AA speaker meetings together. I was telling him how my home group was

nagging at me because I didn't have a sponsor, and on the spur of the moment I said, "Why don't you be my sponsor?" and on the spur of the moment he said to me, "I'll be your sponsor if you'll be my sponsor." And I said, "I don't know if they'll allow that." But we decided to try it and it worked out. He calls me because I'm his sponsor and I call him because he's my sponsor so I guess we call each other twice as often. We're still sponsoring each other. That's been going on for twenty-seven years. He moved to L.A. but we stay in touch, mostly by phone.

Grapevine: Is there a tool or a slogan or a Step that is particularly useful to you right now?

Dr. Paul: Pretty much every morning, before I get out of bed, I say the Serenity Prayer, the Third Step Prayer, and the Seventh Step Prayer. Then Max and I repeat those prayers along with other prayers and meditations at breakfast. And I say those three prayers repeatedly throughout the day. I grew up thinking that I had to perfect my personality, then I got into AA, and AA said, no, that isn't the way we do it: only God can remove our defects. I was amazed to find that I couldn't be a better person simply by trying harder!

What I've done with a number of problems -- like fear and depression and

insomnia -- is to treat them as defects of character, because they certainly affect my personality adversely. With depression, I've never taken any antidepressants. Instead, with any defect I want to get rid of, I become willing to have it removed, then I ask God to remove it, then I act like he has. Now, I know God has a loophole that says he'll remove it unless it's

useful to you or to my fellows. So I tell him I'd like my defect removed completely, but he can sleep on it, and in the morning he can give me the amount he wants me to have, and I'll accept it as a gift from him. I'll take whatever he gives me. I've never done that when he hasn't removed a great deal of my defect, but I've never done it when he has permanently and totally removed any defect. But the result is that I no longer fight myself for having it.

Grapevine: That's a helpful way of seeing things. It makes defects into a gift.

Dr. Paul: That's right. And it's the Rule Sixty-two business [see Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 149]. It's like Father Terry always says, "Be friendly with your defects." In fact some poet said, "Hug your demon, otherwise it'll bite you in the ass." Poets can talk like that.

Grapevine: Has your sponsoring changed over the years?

Dr. Paul: I do a lot more stuff by telephone. When I'm speaking at a meeting, if I think of it, I give out my home phone number. So I get a lot of phone calls from all over the country. People ask me if I'm willing to help them as a sponsor and I tell them, well, you call me every day for thirty days, or maybe sixty or ninety or whatever, and then they call me every day, and we get to know each other, and during that time we find out what it's like to be relating to each other. It's kind of a probationary period. Then if they still want me to be their sponsor, we'll go ahead and if they don't, we move on and there's no loss. And this gets them accustomed to calling, so when they have a problem, they don't have to analyze it at great depth and decide if it's bad enough that they should bother me with a phone call. I haven't personally been doing each Step individually with people as much, but I've

redone all the Steps myself on an average of every five years. And every time

I've done that, my sobriety has stepped up to a new plateau, just like the first time I did them.

Sometimes people call me because they're feeling in a funk, their sponsor has

moved away or died, or they've moved away from their sponsor, or the meetings

don't mean much anymore. They aren't getting anything out of AA. And because

of my relationship with pills, I've had a lot of people come to me and say

they've got -- what do you call it? -- a "chemical imbalance." They're seeing a counselor who says, "Yeah, you're depressed," and the counselor wants to start them on an antidepressant. My suggestion is, if you want to do something like that and you haven't done the Steps in a number of years, do the Steps first. And repeatedly people will do that and decide they don't need the pills

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Grapevine: When you speak at out-of-state AA meetings, does Max go with you?

Dr. Paul: I don't go unless she goes.

Grapevine: Why not?

Dr. Paul: Because I decided I didn't come to AA to become a traveling salesman and be away from home. So we go where it's a big enough event that they can take us both. And what's really more fun is if it's a mixed event where Max can speak, especially if she gets to speak first. She likes that. She likes to say that I say that she tells a perverted version of my drinking story. Then she points out that I was the one who was drinking and she was the one who was sober.

Grapevine: There are many more young people in the Fellowship now. Do you think young people have special problems because they're getting sober at such an early age?

Dr. Paul: People always say they're so glad to see the young people come in, and I agree, but I'm glad to see the old people come in too. I like to see anybody get sober. It's hard to say whether your pain is greater than my pain or mine's greater than yours. I'm sure that young people have problems, but we all have problems -- gays have problems, people who are addicted to other drugs have problems, single people have problems. I can't think of anything more of a problem than being a woman alcoholic trying to get sober, married to a practicing alcoholic male, and with a handful of kids. That must be about as big a problem as you can get. Everybody has special problems. I've said it often and I haven't had any reason to change my mind: the way I see it, I've never had a problem and nobody will ever come to me with a problem such that there won't be an answer in the Steps. That gives me a great deal of confidence. I think the program -- the Steps - covers everything conceivable.

I'm getting way off from what you asked me. I can't give short answers. I often tell people that the more I know about something, the shorter the answer, but when I don't know, I just make up stuff.

Grapevine: Did you find it helpful at some point to become familiar with the

Traditions?

Dr. Paul: I find the Steps easier to understand than the Traditions and the Traditions easier to understand than the Concepts. In fact, I find the long form of the Traditions considerably easier to understand than the short form, and I find that the long form is much more specific on the idea that AA is for alcoholics and not for just anybody who wants to come in. A lot of people like that phrase "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking," and people interpret that to mean that if you're willing to not drink, you can call yourself an alcoholic and a member of AA. That's not at all what it says. I think it means that if you're an alcoholic with a desire to stop drinking, that's the only requirement for membership.

Grapevine: How many years have you been sober now?

Dr. Paul: Twenty-seven.

Grapevine: Twenty-seven years of meetings. Have you seen any changes in the way the meetings are conducted?

Dr. Paul: All I see is that there are more meetings and bigger meetings and more variety of meetings. I just love to see AA grow. I enjoy meetings. I've been to meetings in Singapore and Hong Kong and Japan, but I think the most interesting was when Chuck C. and Al D. and I were vacationing in the Cayman Islands and we couldn't find any meetings. We were twelfth stepping alcoholics there and we decided we all needed a meeting, so we went to the local newspaper and got some publicity. We had a public information meeting, and we got a regular meeting started. As far as I know, that meeting is still going.

Grapevine: So you haven't gotten bored by Alcoholics Anonymous.

Dr. Paul: Well, I thought about that some years back. Why is it that so many people aren't around any more? Where do they go? It seems to me that most of

the people who leave AA leave because of boredom. I made up my mind I wasn't

going to get bored, and one of the things I do when I get bored, if I can't think of anything else to do, is to start a new meeting. I've probably started fifteen or twenty. The most recent one was last November. I got a couple of friends together and we started a "joy of sobriety" meeting -- it's a one-hour topic discussion meeting and it has to be a topic out of the Big Book and it has to be on the program and how you enjoy living the program. It's fast-moving and we just have a lot of fun. It's a great antidote for depression.

1993 published a memoir called *Grateful to Have Been There*. Nell never got to Mexico, but she worked for AA for thirty-six years. She still travels frequently around the country, speaking to groups about AA history. Two Grapevine staff members interviewed Nell Wing at the Grapevine office in New York.

Grapevine: You've described the Grapevine as having an "improbable history." What did you mean?

Nell Wing: It's miraculous that the Grapevine is still in existence fifty years later. The Grapevine doesn't have what a lot of magazines have, like ads or a sales force. It has to stick to its primary purpose and basically that's to ask members to write articles and to share their stories. But the Grapevine has kept going because there are many, many people who understand and appreciate it. There are always enough members who find it useful and helpful in maintaining sobriety and keep it going. Some even read it long before becoming members of AA.

Grapevine: What was it about the Grapevine that Bill W. found so appealing?

Nell Wing: He quickly saw it as a means of carrying the message. And since he couldn't connect personally with all groups and areas in AA on a regular basis, he used it as a primary source of sharing and explaining the important issues that he wanted accepted by the Fellowship. It took several years, as we know, before there was a steady and enthusiastic growth of Grapevine readers. But Bill thought that sharing his ideas in print this way was important. It was there - you could read it, you could think about it, you could refer to it later.

Grapevine: That was one of the reasons for writing the Big Book - so the program wouldn't get "garbled" in transmission.

Nell Wing: Exactly. If it's in print, it's a matter of record. And the fact is, Bill was perhaps his own worst enemy in trying to get his ideas across. He could pound you into a corner, so to speak, because of his frustration when his ideas were not understood and accepted by the trustees and the membership at large. So the Grapevine was an effective way for him to reach people - without the pounding!

Grapevine: The Grapevine is now fifty years old, and we're considering what our role for the future will be. Do you have any thoughts about where the Grapevine fits in?

Nell Wing: Preserving the experience - to my mind that's what you do in the Grapevine. The Grapevine's purpose is similar to the purpose of archives in general: to preserve the past, understand the present, and discuss the future. So many young people are coming in today and they need to know about the history of AA.

Grapevine: What was your first acquaintance with alcoholics or AA?

Nell Wing: My dad was a teacher and a justice of the peace in our small town. I knew about alcoholics very early on because the state police would often drag guys over at three in the morning, rapping on our door. And many of these drunks were professional people in our town or nearby towns, and perhaps good friends of my dad's. Occasionally he'd pay their fines for them - when you've been out drinking until three A.M., who has any money left to pay fines with?

I read about AA in the September Liberty magazine - sitting in my college dorm - in 1939. So when I first came to work at AA, I knew about it, and I also knew that a drunk was not always a Bowery bum.

Grapevine: You worked with Bill W. for twenty years. Tell us more about him.

Nell Wing: As I said, he could be adamant about what he knew had to be accomplished. He had the vision to see what was needed in order to preserve the Fellowship. But everybody liked to argue with Bill, and he liked to argue, too!

Listening to Bill was some experience. When Bill would be talking, say at a banquet, many in the audience would be very moved and even weeping at what and how he shared. He could touch you in ways that were really remarkable.

Generally, he could learn from experience. Like for example when he was advised to set the tone and tense for the text of the Big Book: don't say, you must do it this way. Just say, Look, this is what we do. He was a teacher but not a preacher!

Grapevine: What's amazing is that he listened.

Nell Wing: I always think how Bill was so much like the philosopher and writer William James. Both Bill and James were spiritual, though not necessarily deeply religious; they were also both pragmatic New Englanders. Bill had a way of talking about a deep faith inside himself the way James did. Bill liked to read about different interpretations of what God was like. He was very philosophical, and James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience* was very meaningful to him, as it was to many AAs both in those early years and since.

Grapevine: How were Bill and Dr. Bob different from each other? Was Bill the greater risk-taker?

Nell Wing: I think so. Dr. Bob, as a doctor, believed in being cautious and advising people how to evaluate ideas and solutions, to weigh them carefully - have everyone in agreement before taking action. Bill believed in putting

the goal forward and aiming for it. No matter who liked it or who didn't like it: aim for that goal. Bill always thought way ahead. Dr. Bob was the monitor, evaluator, the ground level, the supporter of Bill's ideas, even perhaps not always agreeing with the timing of an idea. Another miracle! A perfect match! A wonderful partnership, indeed. Yes, Dr. Bob was the right person to balance Bill. His view was, Keep it simple. Bill had vision; that was one of his gifts - he could see the road ahead.

Grapevine: Where do you think he got this?

Nell Wing: I don't know. He simply was of that character. He had a need to think ahead to the next step, a sense of direction, an ability to judge what the needs were, and a great ability to bring different streams of thought together. But he took time to think things through. People said that up at Stepping Stones, Lois was the one who did the yardwork, the plumbing, and the daily things that husbands usually do. It was true. Bill would be walking a lot, contemplating, just thinking ahead.

Grapevine: Did Bill have a sense of humor?

Nell Wing: Yes, he'd knock us off our chairs sometimes. He'd tell Lois and me something funny that happened to somebody he'd heard about, and the way he told it, we would just absolutely go into hysterics. He could tell a naughty story, too. It wasn't that he was always pristine about everything. In the office, Bill and I used to share a big room; I was at one end and he was at the other end. So I saw the "passing parade," as it were - people coming in to see him. Occasionally somebody would say, "Hey, Bill, I just heard this," and then tell a joke currently making the rounds. And Bill would look at him as if the guy was crazy. If he didn't relate to a story or it didn't have a spark, he'd just kind of look at you. The poor guy would be standing there, so disappointed that he was telling Bill a joke and Bill wasn't laughing.

Grapevine: Lois and Bill never had children. Do you think they wanted them?

Nell Wing: Lois did, certainly. She always wanted children but she had three ectopic pregnancies back in the twenties. She and Bill tried to adopt but the adoption facility said they needed a friend who could recommend them, and the friend they asked - an old friend of Lois's - said that quite frankly she didn't think it was the right thing to do, because of Bill's drinking. So they never got the go-ahead to adopt.

But Lois loved children. Up at Stepping Stones, young kids would come running over to visit with her. She didn't treat them like silly children but would talk to them as if they were adults. And even years later, the grown-up children would come back and see her. At Halloween time especially there were always lots of neighborhood kids - I never think of Halloween without remembering Bill and Lois. Lois always had the table full of

pumpkins and treats. When the children knocked at the door she'd be there to give them a little something. Then the kids would pull straws to see who got the biggest pumpkin.

Grapevine: You mentioned before about Bill reading. Did he like to read?

Nell Wing: He read a lot in earlier years. One of Bill's great attributes was that he could listen and learn. And a lot of very well-informed people came to visit Stepping Stones over the years. A lot of ideas were expressed there and talked about.

Grapevine: Did Bill imagine that AA was going to be as big as it is today?

Nell Wing: I remember in the late 1940s I said, "Bill, this Fellowship is going to go all over the world." He laughed and said, "Nell, you can say that - I can't." But the growth was phenomenal. After the war, many servicemen in AA were stationed overseas and were responsible for getting AA started in Japan in the late forties and in Frankfurt, Germany. Actually, in Japan, the program started out with thirteen steps, not Twelve. And do you know what the wives were called in Japan? The Chrysanthemums. Wives were invited to open meetings - well, not invited, but tolerated, and they definitely did participate!

Grapevine: Any thought on what made AA so successful?

Nell Wing: You know, one reason is that Bill wanted to avoid the mistakes of the past. He paid great attention to what made the Washingtonians and other similar movements fail back in the nineteenth century.

Grapevine: That's true, especially in a Grapevine article in 1948 - "Modesty One Plank for Good Public Relations." [In this article, Bill discusses how the Washingtonians veered from their initial singleness of purpose - which was helping alcoholics - and how they didn't have a national public relations policy - a Tradition, as AA does.]

Nell Wing: Yes, that was a marvelous article. But there were also plenty of things going on in the present that helped shape AA policy and Traditions, too.

Grapevine: Such as?

Nell Wing: Well, for one thing, when Marty M. was soliciting for the new National Committee for Education on Alcoholism (later the National Council on Alcoholism), she made a big error in 1946. She said that whoever contributed to the NCEA would also be contributing to AA, or that AA would benefit from it. Well, that created some explosion! Bill was traveling and speaking out West and AAs were bombarding him with questions: "What's going on? What is this woman saying?" The trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation had

their first press conference because of this, explaining that what Marty said was not endorsed by AA, and that the trustees had nothing to do with the solicitation announcement. Bill and Dr. Bob had earlier let their names be put on the NCEA letterhead because Bill was very supportive of what Marty was doing in the field of alcoholism. Bill never believed that AA had all the answers for every alcoholic. He always said that whatever worked for the individual was what was needed. Anyway, the Marty M. controversy lasted four years - it was a fast and furious business at the time. But it helped galvanize acceptance of the short form of the Traditions, which were later accepted in 1950 at the Cleveland Conference.

Grapevine: While Bill was clearly one of the Fellowship's old-timers, it seems he was often at loggerheads with other members about a variety of things.

Nell Wing: Well, when he wrote the Twelve Concepts in 1959, most of the Fellowship wasn't interested at all. And in the early fifties he proposed a change in the ratio of alcoholics to nonalcoholics on the Board of Trustees. And nobody wanted to hear about that proposal, either. Nevertheless, both the Concepts and the ratio proposal were eventually accepted by both the Board of Trustees and the Fellowship as a whole.

Grapevine: These are more examples of how Bill looked ahead.

Nell Wing: Absolutely. That's why he was so concerned about establishing the General Service Conference in 1951. By the late 1940s, it was no secret that Dr. Bob probably didn't have long to live. [Dr. Bob died in 1950.] And Bill was wondering how much time he himself might have. He wanted and expected the Fellowship to be able to go on without him and Dr. Bob. But nobody wanted to face the fact that he was going to die someday.

Grapevine: Weren't there a number of projects Bill wanted to get to in the years following Dr. Bob's death?

Nell Wing: In 1954, Bill had the idea of creating a writing and research team to help him with, among other things, a major history of AA. Bill's depression was still with him and he knew that if he could give a lot of time to doing something specific and keep at it, that would help the depression. He wanted to do a good, thorough history and also put together a new edition of the Big Book. The scope of the history project proved to be too much, though, and had to be scaled back. Nevertheless, the result was AA Comes of Age. The new edition of the Big Book finally did get completed, and Bill was also eager to do a summing up of what he had learned, the wisdom that had come up through the Fellowship. He had a very precise idea of the kind of book he wanted to write, but he wasn't able to do it. In the end, what took its place was As Bill Sees It - not a bad substitute!

Grapevine: What were Bill's depressions like?

Nell Wing: Most times you didn't know he was going through it. His depressions came and went. Sometimes, not often, but occasionally, when he was dictating to me in the office, he would just put his head in his hands and weep for a bit. The worst of these depressive bouts were between 1945 and 1955.

What he accomplished, AA-wise, despite his depressions, is a miracle. So many people wanted Bill's advice - not just AA and Al-Anon friends, but nearby neighbors at Bedford Hills. They'd ask if they could come over to Stepping Stones, and Bill always said yes to everyone.

To get away from the phone ringing and all the people, Bill and Lois would often go away in the middle of the week - to their "hideaway," they called it, a small rented cottage ten or fifteen miles away. Lois would write and work on Al-Anon matters and Bill would catch up on correspondence and memos regarding current AA projects.

Then, once a year they often took an overseas trip, usually in the fall, and in the spring they would take a trip around the United States and Canada, visiting AA friends and discussing AA matters. Harriet, the housekeeper, would pick up their mail, and I'd go through it to see what needed to be answered right away and what could wait for their return.

Grapevine: Bill seems to have taken every opportunity possible to communicate - through memos, letters, Grapevine articles, the Big Book, the "Twelve and Twelve," traveling around, talking to groups.

Nell Wing: Yes, he was a terrific communicator! And he felt intensely the need to share his plans for AA's future and to receive endorsement of them - despite the often feisty opposition from some.

Right here, I would like to mention the Grapevine book, *The Language of the Heart*, for I think it's a most valuable book. If you want to know what Bill W. was all about, read that book!

Grapevine: Tell us about working in the Archives of the General Service Office.

Nell Wing: I wanted the Archives started, as did Bill. My father, who valued history, had a huge library at home, and after college I took a course in library science and liked it. I always thought that it was very important to preserve AA history, preserve how it started and how it grew - to remember the mistakes in order to avoid future ones. It certainly was important to Bill, but it was hard to get others to understand the need for setting up an Archives. In Europe, in the fifties, archives were thought to be very important, but were not generally so considered here in the United States. We're a "now" people; we don't always think about the future in terms of

preserving the past.

In 1954, a fellow named Ed B. was hired to help Bill with his writing projects. Ed was a wonderful guy - a writer, a criminologist, and just newly sober - but he didn't think it was important to preserve all the material we had collected and researched. Our desks were opposite each other and I'd watch him going through pamphlets and letters, throwing many of them in the wastebasket. I'd say, "Hey, Ed, we can't throw all this away." I knew from experience that each of Bill's letters contained at least five different ideas! Ed had had a laryngectomy - so he'd write out a note, "No, that's not important any more." I didn't argue, but after he left work at four o'clock, I'd take everything out of the wastebasket and put it all safely away in storage boxes until I could sort it out.

I'm especially grateful that Bill so strongly believed in preserving AA's experience. He knew the importance of getting things done, and had a special gift for timing. I often think, suppose he hadn't possessed certain leadership abilities - where would AA be now? Maybe some little sect, who knows? I think it was destined. I think the Higher Power set this up, I really do. The fantastic success of AA is like a big puzzle and there are pieces that you know fit in, but you just don't know where until you look back into the past.

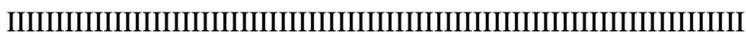
Grapevine: How has being so close to the Fellowship affected you?

Nell Wing: Well, I always like to say I'm on the outside looking in. About a week after I first came to the office, I attended an open AA meeting at a meeting hall on Forty-First Street. I remember a gentleman sharing his story and I found myself weeping - while everyone else was laughing! Right from the start, I was spellbound by AA. One person helping another who had a similar problem - that is still a stunning idea to me.

Over the years, I've gained some spiritual gifts myself. Most nonalcoholics who are familiar with AA feel the same sense of growth.

Grapevine: Hanging around with a bunch of drunks for this long - it can only go up from here!

Nell Wing: I'll tell you something, I don't know people who have lived and learned and reacted to life like AA members. I've been taught - and I'm grateful. Every morning when I wake up, I express gratitude for what's happened to me.



for me to get inside of open meetings and see sober alcoholics for myself because they're terribly inspiring.

The second is to twelfth-step your doctor - not to teach him about alcohol or Alcoholics Anonymous, but to give him a list of names that motivated patients could call. Doctors aren't experienced enough in their practices to find recovering alcoholics, so recovering alcoholics must either say "I will talk with patients," or give doctors referrals. What medical professionals need is a list of referral sources, clearly typed, and some success using those referrals, so they have hope rather than hopelessness.

Grapevine: How did you, a nonalcoholic, get to know AA?

George Vaillant: I was working for an alcohol clinic where it was a condition of employment. I had to go to a meeting a month. In addition, half the staff were recovering alcoholics, and they were the first people whom I'd met at Harvard in ten years who knew anything about the disease.

Grapevine: Is there any movement afoot to establish that kind of requirement for medical students today?

George Vaillant: For the last ten years, medical students in many medical schools have been required to go to one or two AA meetings, due in large part to the activity of AA's CPC (Cooperation with the Professional Community) committee. But the problem is that in your first two meetings, there's so much going on that you don't always get the feeling of, "My God, these people are recovering." It's more about learning what a terrible disease alcoholism is and not about realizing that the people in the meeting are the same people you see in your emergency room with the fractures.

What people are only slowly learning is that you can teach medical students anything that's noble and good about people and they get it right on the exam. But where medical students learn how to be doctors is on the hospital wards and in the emergency rooms, where they're working with residents. And interns, for very good reasons, hate active alcoholics with a passion. Therefore, the educational program has to begin again after residency. And that really is something patients can do for their doctors - not by teaching them about AA, but by telling their stories and offering whatever suits them of the Twelve Steps. And, as I said, by giving them a number to call when the roof is falling in.

Grapevine: You said about 40 percent of the people who remain abstinent do it through AA. What about the other 60 percent? Could we in AA be more open, more supportive of these?

George Vaillant: Yes. You know, if you're batting 400, it's all right to miss a few. I think the fact that AA knows the answer to an extremely complicated problem is probably all right.

But it doesn't hurt at the level of GSO for AA to have humility and understand that 60 percent do it without AA. It's also true that most of those 60 percent do it with the AA toolbox: their spirituality doesn't come from AA; their support group doesn't come from AA; and what I call "substitute dependency" doesn't come from AA. But they still use the same ingredients that AA uses.

And I don't think there's anything that the other 60 percent are doing that AA needs to learn from, except: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." If you meet someone who has stayed sober for more than three years and they're pleased and boasting that they did it without AA, thank your Higher Power for another recovery. You know, there's "little" sobriety, being dry, and there's sobriety with a big S, which includes humility and not thinking that you're the center of the earth. So if someone is doing something without your help, good enough.

Grapevine: What have you discovered about AA since becoming a trustee? Or as you put it, what if anything has made you say, "Aha!"

George Vaillant: I'd never seen the General Service Manual before, and to me as a nonalcoholic, it is a great piece of world literature, like the American Constitution. It is a great contribution to human thought.

I've also learned something about spirituality. Every time there is a board weekend, I arrive thinking, "Oh my God, this is another weekend I'm not with my family." Then I spend the next two days bathed in love and acceptance that is not from my being anyone special. So I've learned another definition of spirituality: we are each like the beautiful wave that's about to crash on the beach, saying, "This is it. This is forever." Then a voice from behind says, "Don't worry, son. You're not a wave; you're part of the ocean."

Grapevine: There is still a great deal of debate about the role of addicts in AA. What are your views on that?

George Vaillant: This is a terribly important question. AAs should focus on alcoholism. They're right. They've got enough to do, and there are enough alcoholics to go around in the world that they should never fear for their primary purpose.

But because there are a lot of people with mixed addictions, it's important for individual groups that can tolerate them to be tolerant and inclusive. There are some groups that welcome white, middle-aged Protestant males. And that's okay; they should be there, even though the rest of AA may regard them as hopeless dinosaurs and politically incorrect. And there are other groups that tolerate people who spend a little bit too much time talking about their \$5-million cocaine habit and not enough time talking about

alcoholism. And that's the wave of the future. There are increasingly fewer alcoholics. So some groups are going to have to change.

Grapevine: What are some of the other challenges that AA faces?

George Vaillant: I think there are two, really. One is to come to some meaningful terms with the individuals who are frightened that AA is a religion. This will involve some work and growth in AA to incorporate its diversity without losing its traditions. This is in keeping with the question of keeping the first 164 pages that Bill W. wrote in the Big Book and at the same time including contemporary stories about things some groups might be horrified by.

The second challenge (and this may be more important to me as a class A trustee) is to convey to the world what an extraordinary organization Alcoholics Anonymous is - not only in its ability to cure alcoholism but in its ability to conceptualize the fact that we're all one planet.

Just as an example, groups that are supposed to know about human beings and to be peaceful - the Christian church, the psychoanalytic movement, and the peace movement - are constantly splintering and fighting with each other. And somehow for sixty years, AA has kept two million very diverse individuals, who in their past lives were often a lot less peaceful than the Christians, the psychoanalysts, and the advocates of peace, working together for a common good.

I'm not sure that's a challenge to the Fellowship, or necessary to keep people sober. It's simply to me a challenge that people appreciate the depth of this message, which is expressed more in the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts than in the Twelve Steps.

Grapevine: When you spoke of religious skeptics or of those fearful that AA might have a religious agenda, were you thinking of professionals in the field of alcoholism, or alcoholics themselves?

George Vaillant: Oh, both. Alcoholics, because of the shame, are enormously sensitive to exclusion. So to say, "If you want what we have, you have to believe in a Higher Power; you have to be spiritual, or you have to fake it till you make it" is enormously threatening to some people. They're still at a point of self-absorption; the idea of depending on a power greater than themselves is something they're going to have to learn. Think of it this way: there are a lot of things parents believe, like the value of working hard and completing an education, that make no sense to an eighteen-year-old. And for some alcoholics, spirituality is like one of those things that you learn when you get older. AA has to constantly remind itself that it needs to meet people where they are and that it can only make loving suggestions.

us all sober.

You may inquire "Just how does AA work?" I cannot fully answer that question. Many AA techniques have been adopted after a ten-year process of trial and error which has led to some interesting results. But, as laymen, we doubt our own ability to explain them. We can only tell you what we do, and what seems, from our point of view, to happen to us.

At the very outset we should like it made ever so clear that AA is a synthetic concept - a synthetic gadget, as it were, drawing upon the resources of medicine, psychiatry, religion, and our own experience of drinking and recovery. You will search in vain for a single new fundamental. We have merely streamlined old and proved principles of psychiatry and religion into such forms that the alcoholic will accept them. And then we have created a society of his own kind where he can enthusiastically put these very principles to work on himself and other sufferers.

Then too, we have tried hard to capitalize on our one great natural advantage. That advantage is, of course, our personal experience as drinkers who have recovered. How often the doctors and clergymen throw up their hands when, after exhaustive treatment or exhortation, the alcoholic still insists, "But you don't understand me. You never did any serious drinking yourself, so how can you? Neither can you show me many who have recovered."

Now, when one alcoholic who has got well talks to another who hasn't, such objections seldom arise, for the new man sees in a few minutes that he is talking to a kindred spirit, one who understands. Neither can the recovered AA member be deceived, for he knows every trick, every rationalization of the drinking game. So the usual barriers go down with a crash. Mutual confidence, that indispensable of all therapy, follows as surely as day does night. And if this absolutely necessary rapport is not forthcoming at once it is almost certain to develop when the new man has met other AA's. Someone will, as we say, "click with him."

As soon as that happens we have a good chance of selling our prospect those very essentials which you doctors have so long advocated, and the problem drinker finds our society a congenial place to work them out for himself and his fellow alcoholic. For the first time in years he thinks himself understood and he feels useful; uniquely useful, indeed, as he takes his own turn promoting the recovery of others. No matter what the outer world thinks of him, he now knows he can get well, for he stands in the midst of scores of cases worse than his own who have attained the goal. And there are other cases precisely like his own - a pressure of testimony which usually overwhelms him. If he doesn't succumb at once, he will almost surely do so later when Barleycorn builds a still hotter fire under him, thus blocking off all his other carefully planned exits from dilemma. The speaker recalls seventy-five failures during the first three years of AA - people we utterly gave up. During the past seven years sixty-two of these people have

returned to us, most of them now making good. They tell us they returned because they knew they would die or go mad if they didn't. Having tried everything else within their means and having exhausted their pet rationalizations, they came back and took their medicine. That is why we never need to evangelize alcoholics. If still in their right minds they come back, once they have been well exposed to AA

Now to recapitulate. Alcoholics Anonymous has made two major contributions to the program of psychiatry and religion. These are, it seems to us, the longâ€"missing links in the chain of recovery:

1. Our ability, as ex-drinkers, to secure the confidence of the new man - to "build a transmission line into him."
2. The provision of an understanding society of ex-drinkers in which the newcomer can successfully apply the principles of medicine and religion to himself and others.

So far as we AAâ€™s are concerned, these principles, now used by us every day, seem to be in surprising agreement. Let's compare briefly what in a general way medicine and religion tell the alcoholic:

Medicine Says

1. The alcoholic needs a personality change.
2. The patient ought to be analyzed and should make a full and honest mental catharsis.
3. Serious personality defects must be cured through accurate self-knowledge and realistic adjustment to life.
4. The alcoholic neurotic retreats from life, is a picture of anxiety and abnormal self concern; he withdraws from the "herd."
5. The alcoholic must find, "a new compelling interest in life," must "get back into the herd," He should find an interesting occupation, should join clubs, social activities, political parties, or discover hobbies to take the place of alcohol.

Religion Says

1. The alcoholic needs a change of heart, a spiritual awakening.
2. The alcoholic should make an examination of the "conscience" â€" or a moral inventory and a frank discussion.
3. Character defects (sins) can be eliminated by acquiring more honesty,

humility, unselfishness, tolerance, generosity, love, etc.

4. The alcoholic's basic trouble is self-centeredness. Filled with fear and self seeking he has forgotten the brotherhood of man.

5. The alcoholic should learn the "expulsive power of a new affection," love of serving man, of serving God. He must "lose his life to find it;" he should join the church and there find self forgetfulness in service. For "faith without works is dead."

Thus far religion and medicine are seen in hearty accord. But in one respect they do differ. When the doctor has shown the alcoholic his underlying difficulties and has prescribed a program of readjustment, he says to him, "Now that you understand what is required for recovery, you should no longer depend on me. You must depend on yourself. You go do it."

Clearly, then, the object of the doctor is to make the patient self-sufficient and largely, if not wholly, dependent upon himself.

Religion does not attempt this. It says that faith in self is not enough, even for a nonalcoholic. The clergyman says that we shall have to find and depend upon a higher power - God. He advises prayer and frankly recommends an attitude of unwavering reliance upon Him who presides over all. By this means we discover a strength much beyond our own resources.

So, the main difference seems to add up to this: Medicine says, know yourself, be strong and you will be able to face life. Religion says, know thyself, ask God for power, and you become truly free.

In Alcoholics Anonymous the new man may try either method. He sometimes eliminates "the spiritual angle" from the Twelve Steps to Recovery and wholly relies upon honesty, tolerance and working with others. But it is interesting to note that faith always comes to those who try this simple approach with an open mind - and in the meantime they stay sober.

If, however, the spiritual content of the Twelve Steps is actively denied, they can seldom remain dry. That is our AA experience everywhere. We stress the spiritual simply because thousands of us have found we can't do without it.

At this point I should like to state the Twelve Steps of the Alcoholics Anonymous Program of Recovery so that you physicians may accurately compare your methods with ours.

The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol "that our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.
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 ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a 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 conscious contact with God as we understood Him, 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 these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs

Boiled down, these steps mean, simply (1) admission of alcoholism; (2) personality analysis and catharsis; (3) adjustment of personal relations; (4) dependence upon some higher power; and (5) working with other alcoholics.

Most strongly we point out that adherence to these principles is not a condition of AA membership. Any alcoholic who admits he has a problem is an A.A. member regardless of how much he disagrees with the program. Based upon our experience, the whole program is a suggestion only. The alcoholic, objecting at first to the spiritual factor, is urged to keep an open mind, meanwhile treating his own AA group as a "power greater than himself." Under these conditions the newcomer commences to undergo a personality change at such a rate and of such dimensions that he cannot fully account for it on the basis of self-realization and self-discipline. Not only does his alcoholic obsession disappear, but he finds himself progressively free of

fear, resentment, and inferiority. These changes seem to have come about automatically. Hence he concludes that "A power greater than himself" must have indeed have been at work. Having come to this point, he begins to form his own concept of God. He then develops confidence in that concept, which grows as he gets proof in everyday life that his new faith actually works, really produces results.

This is what AA's are trying to say when they talk about a spiritual experience. They mean a certain quality of personality change which, in their belief, could not have occurred without the help and presence of the creative spirit of the universe.

With the average AA, many months, may lapse before he is aware of faith in the spiritual sense. Yet I know scarcely an AA member of more than a year's standing who still thinks his transformation wholly a psychologic phenomenon based entirely upon his own normal resources. Almost everyone of our members will tell you that, while he may not go along with a clergyman's concept of God, he has developed one of his own on which he can positively depend, one which works for him.

We AA's are quite indifferent to what people may call this spiritual experience of ours. But to us it looks very much like conversion, the very thing most alcoholics have sworn they never would have. In fact I am beginning to believe that we shall have to call it just that, for I know our good friend, Dr. Harry Tiebout, is sitting in this room. As you may know, he is the psychiatrist who recently told his own professional Society, The American Psychiatric Association, that what we AA's get is conversion - sure enough and no fooling! And if the spirit of that great psychologist, William James, could be consulted, he'd doubtless refer us to his famous book, varieties of Religious Experience, in which personality change through the "educational variety of spiritual experience, or conversion is so ably explored. Whatever this mysterious process is, it certainly seems to work, and with us who are on the way to the asylum or the undertaker anything that works looks very, very good indeed.

And I'm very happy to say that many other distinguished members of your profession have pronounced our Twelve Steps good medicine. Clergymen of all denominations say they are good religion, and of course we AA's like them because they do work. Most ardently we hope that every physician here today will find himself able to share this happy agreement. In the early years of AA, it seemed to us alcoholics that we wandered in a sort of no-man's-land, which appeared to divide science and religion. But all that has changed since AA has now become a common meeting ground for both concepts.

Yes, Alcoholics Anonymous is a cooperative venture. All cases requiring physical treatment are referred to you physicians. We frequently work with the psychiatrist and often find that he can do and say things to a patient, which we cannot. He, in turn, avails himself of the fact that as

ex-alcoholics we can sometimes walk in where he fears to tread. Throughout the country we are in daily touch with hospitals and sanitariums, both public and private. The enthusiastic support given us by so many of your noted institutions is something for which we are deeply grateful. The opportunity to work with alcoholics means everything; to most of us it means life itself. Without the chance to forget our own troubles by helping others out of theirs, we would certainly perish. That is the heart of AA - it is our lifeblood.

We have torn still other pages from the Book of Medicine, putting them to practical use. It is from you gentlemen we learn that alcoholism is a complex malady; that abnormal drinking is but a symptom of personal maladjustment to life; that, as a class, we, alcoholics are apt to be sensitive, emotionally immature, grandiose in our demands upon ourselves and others; that we have usually "gone broke" on some dream ideal of perfection; that, failing to realize the dream, we sensitive folk escape cold reality by taking to the bottle; that this habit of escape finally turns into an obsession, or, as you gentlemen put it, a compulsion to drink so subtly powerful that no disaster, however great, even near death or insanity, can, in most cases, seem to break it; that we are the victims of the age-old alcoholic dilemma; our obsession guarantees that we shall go on drinking, but our increasing physical sensitivity guarantees that we shall go insane or die if we do.

When these facts, coming from the mouths of you gentlemen of science, are poured by an AA member into the person of another alcoholic they strike deep - the effect is shattering. That inflated ego, those elaborate rationalizations by which our neurotic friend has been trying to erect self-sufficiency on a foundation of inferiority, begin to ooze out of him. Sometimes his deflation is like the collapse of a toy balloon at the approach of a hot poker. But deflation is just what we AA's are looking for. It is our universal experience that unless we can start deflation, as so self-realization, we get nowhere at all. The more utterly we can smash the delusion that the alcoholic can get over alcoholism "on his own," or that someday he may be able to drink like a gentleman, the more successful we are bound to be.

In fact, we aim to produce a crisis, to cause him to "hit bottom," as AA's say. Of course you will understand that this is all done by indirection. We never pronounce sentences, nor do we tell any alcoholic what he must do. We don't even tell him he is an alcoholic. Relating the seriousness of our own cases, we leave him to draw his own conclusions. But once he has accepted the fact that he is an alcoholic and the further fact that he is powerless to recover unaided, the battle is half won. As the AA's have it, "he is hooked." He is caught as if in a psychologic vise.

If the jaws of it do not grip him tightly enough at first, more drinking will almost invariably turn up the screw to the point where he will cry

"Enough!" Then, as we say, he is softened up. This reduces him to a state of complete dependence on whatever or whoever can stop his drinking. He is in exactly the same mental fix as the cancer patient who becomes dependent, abjectly dependent, if you will, on what you men of science can do for cancer. Better still, he becomes "sweetly reasonable," truly open-minded, as only the dying can.

Under these conditions, accepting the spiritual implications of the AA program presents no difficulty even to the sophisticate. About half of the AA members were once agnostics or atheists. This dispels the notion that we are only effective with the religiously susceptible. You remember now the famous remark, "There are no atheists in the foxholes." So it is with most alcoholics. Bring them within range of the AA and "blockbusters" will soon land near enough to start radical changes in outlook, attitude, and personality.

These are some of the basic factors which perhaps partly account for such success as we have had. I wish time permitted me to give you an intimate glimpse of our life together, of our meetings, of our social side, of those fast friendships unlike any we had known before, of our participation by thousands in the war effort and the armed services, where so many AA's are discovering that they can face up to reality - no longer institutionalized, even within an AA Group. We have all found that God can be relied upon both in Alaska and India, that strength can come out of weakness, that perhaps only those who have tasted the fruits of reliance upon a higher power can fully understand the true meaning of personal liberty, freedom of the human spirit.

Surely, you who are here this morning must realize how much we A.A.'s are beholden to you, how much we have borrowed from you, how much we still depend on you. For you have supplied us with ammunition which we have used as your lay assistants - gun pointers for your artillery. I have put out for inspection our version of the factors which bring about personality change, our method of analysis, catharsis, and adjustment. I have tried to show you a little of our great new compelling interest in life - this society where men and women understand each other, where the clamors of self are lost in our great common objective, where we can learn enough of patience, tolerance, honesty, humility, and service to subdue our former masters - insecurity, resentment, and unsatisfied dreams of power.

But I must not close without paying tribute to our partner, Religion. Like Medicine, it is indispensable. At this temple of science I hope none will take it amiss if I give Religion the last word:

"God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can, and wisdom to know the difference."

Please address inquiries and requests for AA literature to The Alcoholic

Foundation, Box 459, Grand Central Annex, New York 17, New York.

DISCUSSION

Dr. C. Kirby Collier, Rochester. Realizing how ineffectual our efforts in the treatment of the chronic alcoholic through the usually accepted psychiatric procedures were was my reason for investigating Alcoholics Anonymous. With one of their members I was privileged to attend a meeting in New York and had the opportunity to discuss their philosophy with Mr. Wilson. First, I was impressed with the honesty and sincerity of those members I met, and second, with the broad socio-religious background and its psychiatric implications - chiefly man's recognition of self, his abilities as well as his inefficiencies, and that intangible power which all mankind recognizes, whether he acknowledges it or not. Upon my return home, I asked three chronic alcoholics, all of twenty to twenty-five years duration, to organize a group, after going over the situation with them as I understood it. These three contacted others and held their first meeting in the small apartment of one. Growing, they approached me as to a place for meeting. We eliminated the YMCA, Public Library, church halls, or parish homes for obvious reasons, and at last advised a room in one of our large centrally located hotels. This has worked out nicely and meetings are held each Sunday afternoon and Wednesday evening. From the original group of three, contacts have been made with over 500, of whom 60 per cent are active members, having been free from indulgence in alcohol for one to two years.

In our city we have had a Council on Alcohol for about three years. The group consists of psychiatrists, social workers, and others, who meet each month for discussion. At two of these meetings members of AA have spoken, and, as a result, two members of AA are now members of this Council. Members of AA are frequently called upon to address various groups, and it is most interesting to hear of men who have never spoken in public before being willing to get up and talk before any group. In Rochester they have become especially interested in meeting with youth groups. I might say that I have attended but few meetings of the Rochester group and these only at their invitation. I have felt that AA is a group unto themselves and their best results can be had under their own guidance, as a result of their philosophy. Any therapeutic or philosophic procedure which can prove a recovery rate of 50 to 60 per cent must merit our consideration. As stated by Tiebout in a paper read at Detroit, Michigan, before the American Psychiatric Association in May 1943, "It is highly imperative for us, as presumably open-minded scientists, to view wisely and long the efforts of others in our field of work. We may be wearing bigger blinders than we know.

Dr. Foster Kennedy, New York City, We have heard a truly moving and eloquent address, moving in its form and in its facts.

I have no doubt that a man who has cured himself of the lust for alcohol has a far greater power for curing alcoholism than a doctor who has never been

afflicted by the same curse. No matter how sympathetic and patient the doctor may be in the approach to his patient, the patient is sure either to feel, or to imagine, condescension to himself, or to the notion that he is being hectorred by one of the minor prophets.

This organization of Alcoholics Anonymous calls on two of the greatest reservoirs of power known to man — religion and that instinct for association with one's fellows which Trotter has called the "herd instinct." Religious faith has been described by Matthew Arnold as a convinced belief in a power greater than ourselves that makes for righteousness, and a sense of helpfulness from this can be acquired through a kind of spiritual conversion which might well be called a variety of religious experience.

The sick man's association with those who, having been sick, have become or are becoming well, is a therapeutic suggestion of cure and an obliteration of his feelings of being, in society, a pariah; and this tapping of deep internal forces is shown by the great growth of this sturdy and beneficent movement. Furthermore this movement furnishes an objective of high emotional driving power in making every cured drunkard a missionary to the sick.

We physicians, I think, have always had difficulty in finding an occupation for our convalescent patients of sufficient emotional driving power to replace the psychic results of the alcohol that has been withdrawn. These men grow filled with a holy zeal, and the very zealousness keeps the missionary steady while the next man is being cured.

I think our profession must take appreciative cognizance of this great therapeutic weapon. If we do not do so, we shall stand convicted of emotional sterility and of having lost the faith that moves mountains, without which medicine can do little.

Dr. Harry M. Tiebout, Greenwich, Connecticut — My first contact with AA began five years ago when a patient with whom I had been working for well over a year came under the influence of AA and within a relatively short time dried up and for at least four years has remained completely dry. At that time I was puzzled and a little indignant that my best efforts had failed but AA had worked; but I kept sending patients, and now the situation has reversed. I get puzzled and a little indignant when AA doesn't work.

As a psychiatrist, I have to think about the relationship of my specialty to AA and I have come to the conclusion that our particular function can very often lie in preparing the way for the patient to accept any sort of treatment or outside help. I now conceive the psychiatrist's job to be the task of breaking down the inner resistance so that which is inside will flower, as under the activity of the AA program.

In this respect I should like to point out that the same flowering can take place with patients who are not alcoholics, and I should like at this time

grace has oozed into us and this mist has passed from our eyes we find ourselves in a new world but we find that we are faced with immense responsibilities, responsibilities for our own growth and development as well as our societies, for the welfare of our group and for the welfare of A.A. as a whole, for better homes and for better relations with the world around us. We are met by these vast responsibilities and of course we recoil and of course we rebel. But, little by little, prodded from behind by John Barleycorn and drawn by the love we feel here and finally by the love of God, we pick up the tab for a little more responsibility. This is not maturity, this is just a step toward that distant goal. So, we pick up these tabs, sometimes rather willingly, but we pick them up because it now seems the right thing to do and then finally we come out on another plateau where some of us can stay for a while, I know I find myself there briefly and then I slip of f but finally we conform to these principles and their practice in all our affairs because this is what we really want for ourselves. Not at all because John Barleycorn is going to kill us off if we don't conform, not just because this A.A. community says they are right but because we want them for ourselves, a place of quiet, a place beyond good and evil.

So, my mind went back to those early times and I thought of how valuable to us is a sense of history. But like all things of value it can be misused. As Allen said "Let's not be deceived by nostalgia." Let us not suppose that we have all the truths or else the past can lay a dead hand on us. I am sure that in all these years in the main, we have been drawing inspiration and a measure of wisdom from the lessons of the past and this has finally brought us out to where we are now.

I think it would pay, in closing just to have a look at the Warranties, upon which the functioning of this Conference stands.

These are really in broad brush strokes, the measure of our several and selective responsibilities. Responsibilities which I feel this Conference has magnificently met. Responsibilities which do not entitle us to call ourselves mature but do entitle us to say that we are now arrived at the age of full responsibility.

Let us remind ourselves of these Warranties to A.A. of today and to A.A. of tomorrow respecting our responsibilities and conduct here:

In all its proceedings the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Tradition, taking great care that the Conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient 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 one over another; that all important decisions be reached by discussion and vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the conference may act for the service of

Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any 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.

That is the statement as to what our responsibility is to A.A. of today and A.A. of tomorrow. May each and all of us continue to be worthy of this great and unique trust which God has reposed in us and may he keep the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous to do His work in this world for as long as we are needed.

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+++Message 174. Chicago's Impressions of AA
From: Lash, William (Bill) 5/31/2002 12:07:00 PM

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Impressions of A. A.

BY THE CHICAGO GROUP (1940's)

When membership in ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS was first suggested to us by an alcoholic friend, it was with considerable misgiving that many of us agreed to the association. Prior to reading the book ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS many of us had little conception of the alcoholic problem. We had the naive idea, common among persons whose drinking habits are similar to what ours once were, that an alcoholic was a social derelict -- a forlorn object of pity, without money, without position, without family and without friends. We have since learned that while such a condition is not uncommon it is not necessarily so.

The pass key to the door of understanding of alcoholism, as we members of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS understand the problem, is the recognition and the admission on the part of the prospective member that he is an alcoholic. If he is not alcoholic, our group has nothing to offer him. If he is, an observance of our program will eliminate the alcoholic problem from his life. We have nothing to offer the controlled drinker. We are in no sense a temperance society. Neither are we crusaders in an anti-alcohol campaign. We have no quarrel with alcohol as such. Nor have we the slightest desire to cause controlled drinkers to abandon what to them is a pleasurable and entertaining diversion. We carry the torch for no one but ourselves.

In the formal sense we are not an organization at all. We have no officers, no dues, no obligations to any but ourselves and to other alcoholics. We have no axes to grind, no selfish purposes to achieve, no ambition to serve other than to save ourselves from what to us was a consuming evil. We are

not scientists. Most of us have little, if any, knowledge of the cause of alcoholism, nor do we as a group attempt to answer the age old inquiry "Why do I take the first drink?" We have made a study of ourselves in the light of the principals enunciated in our book-- the twelve principals which are appended hereto -- and through such study and a statement to others of the method of our study, we find that we can be helpful in aiding them to recognize their problem, if their problem is alcohol.

How then did we arrive at the conclusion that we were alcoholics? First, let us briefly define the term as we understand it. An alcoholic to us means an abnormal or an uncontrolled drinker. It is not so much the amount or the frequency of drinking as it is the effect of the drinks consumed. Within our Chicago group are those who for years drank as much as two quarts of whiskey a day. There are others whose monthly consumption might not exceed that much. There are those who drank daily for years to the point of intoxication, and others who would go months without so much as a glass of beer. There are those of high standing in the professional and business world and those from the flop houses of West Madison Street. There are those who have voluntarily subjected themselves repeatedly to numerous so-called "cures" some who voluntarily had themselves committed to psychopathic institutions and insane asylums; others who have experienced no more severe distress than an agonizing case of jitters. Those of us who had reached the depths of degradation prior to finding this program, and who had been long since become aware that we were alcoholics, frequently found it easier to accept the principals of A.A. than those who, by reason of less humiliating experiences, refused to acknowledge their problem.

But we are all the same in this respect; that, having started to drink, we had no self-control that would indicate a stopping point. We do not mean by this statement to be understood as asserting that in every instance where we took the first drink, that we would necessarily end in drunken stupefaction. We do mean, however, that having taken the first drink, we did not know what might be the reaction. Pausing in our way from our shop or from our office to our home for a sociable drink at the corner saloon, it might be that we would stop with two or three drinks. Sometimes we did. But frequently we did not, and never did we know when we stopped for the first how many might follow. It might be a matter of ten minutes and it might be ten days. We also observed another identifying mark and that was whether we drank to excess on every occasion when we were subjected to the first drink, or whether on many occasions we were able to control the impulse short of satiety, our inclination was always toward the former course. We might by virtue of important responsibilities release ourselves from the urge which the first few drinks had engendered, but we were always resentful of the interference. There was no occasion, once the urge had been indulged, even though meagerly, that our preference was not to continue drinking. And whether we succumbed frequently or infrequently we were all alike in that on those occasions when the urge was in command no inhibiting factors could possibly intervene. Our sense of responsibility, our will power and our

standards of value were gone.

It has been stated that the nervous system of certain individuals is allergic to alcohol; that this drug in even small quantities sets up a type of nervous disturbance which seems to require additional alcohol to satisfy its impulse. It well may be that certain individuals have the same nervous allergy for alcohol that certain other people have a physical allergy for some kinds of food. Whether this analogy be sound or otherwise, the fact remains that in the case of all of us, once we took the first drink, we had no definite assurance as to when the reaction would be. We were no longer masters of our destiny.

We know from experience that normal people do not so react to alcohol. Drink to them is a beverage or a pleasurable stimulant, but they recognize when they approach the point beyond which it ceases to be such and becomes a menace. We all know in our acquaintance men 'who drink like gentlemen', and always during our drinking careers it was our ambition to so drink. We did not enjoy in sober contemplation making spectacles of ourselves. We dreaded the remorse of the 'morning after' and we feared the terrible depression following a prolonged spree. We always felt, notwithstanding the unhappy experience of the years, that some day we could handle the stuff, but now we know that the alcoholic can never become a controlled drinker. Due to forces in his physical or psychic make-up, which we do not profess to understand, he cannot recognize or observe the danger signal.

Having recognized ourselves to be alcoholics within the above definition, the next step in our program suggested the question: Did we desire to stop drinking? Again we say that unless there is a sincere desire to abandon the practice, then our group has nothing to offer the alcoholic.

With us the desire to cease drinking was present. Years of uncontrolled drinking had made our lives unmanageable. The similarity of alcoholic experiences is amazing. The intimate exchanges of confidences, which seems to follow in group association such as ours, discloses that within certain limits we have all followed identical patterns; loss of home, of friends; self-deceit, recriminations, self-pity, envies, jealousies, dishonesty, resentments, lying, deceit and worse vices, we found common to all.

The desire to abandon the bottle must be, on the part of the neophyte in this program, something deeper than a superficial emotional revulsion from the miserable predicament into which a last bender brought him. There must be a sane, dispassionate, contemplative realization that the vices enumerated above are evil and that in our case uncontrolled drinking is the soil in which they grow.

Then proposed itself the question -- how?

Many of us felt that we had exhausted all conceivable remedies; will power,

medicine, pledges, cures, psychiatry. All had failed not once but many times.

What has ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS to offer that will power and science failed to afford us? We knew that we were powerless against alcohol; that we could neither help ourselves nor could the most intelligent of our fellowmen assist us, and in our extremity we came to the realization that most of us were beyond human aid. But wasn't there an avenue of escape that we had not explored? In our helplessness the assurance came to us that there was a power greater than ourselves, whom most men call God, who would help if humbly invoked. Before coming into this group a great many of us were agnostic, at least we were such in an academic sense. Many of us had had religious teaching in our formative years, -- some of us had none. But in the majority of our cases we had not found in religion a rule of life. We had seen much hypocrisy on the part of those who professed to be adherents of religious denominations. Our friends for the most part were those not given to religious thought or observance. When it was suggested to us as a step in this program that we turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him, there were many of us who rebelled, determining that as between the extreme of ruin from the bottle, and the boredom of evangelism, we preferred the former.

But as we inquired further into the subject, we came to the realization that the recognition of a Power greater than ourselves and upon whom we might call for help did not necessarily involve religion in a denominational sense. All that was required of us was a belief in God as we understood him. We found that once the barriers of prejudice are removed, that a practical concept of an intelligent God was not difficult for us. We have found, too, that many find comfort in the formal observation of teachings of the religion in which they were early educated, and that what they considered agnosticism was in a large part a refusal to investigate. We are not required to accept any other person's idea of God. Within our group are found Jews, Protestants and Catholics, and there is no reason why Buddhists, Mohammedans, or adherents of any other religious faith might not be included. All that is required is a recognition of a Supreme Being which would help us were He sincerely petitioned. Our experience led us to believe that there are few, if any, civilized persons who have not a belief of some kind in a Supreme Being. The individual interpretations of this Supreme Being may differ widely, but to us the simplest acceptance of such Power involved a recognition of a first cause or, in other words, a Creator.

As everything that we observe about us in the world is an effect due to some cause, we found it easy to subscribe to the proposition that we also were effects in the greater scheme of things who owe our being to a cause. That cause we designated the Supreme Power. Inasmuch as we consider ourselves as intelligent beings, and see in every act of creation order and design denoting intelligence, we concluded that the being that caused us was of greatest intelligence -- a simple recognition that the Creator is greater

than the creature. We became persuaded that this Creator, having the ability and being intelligent, would hear us in our extremity if we asked for help.

We further realized, however, that mere lip service was not sufficient and felt that in asking the Supreme Being for help, we should give something in return. What did we have to offer?

Each of us recognized that we had a conscience; that in each individual case conscience dictated what for us was right and what for us was wrong. This voice of conscience we interpreted as being a direction from the Supreme Being as to how and in what manner we should lead our lives. This conscience dictated to us that we should be honest with ourselves and in our dealings with our fellowmen; that we should be tolerant and just and charitable; in a word, that we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us. We, therefore, petitioned God, as we understood Him, asking aid in conquering the disease which had led many of us to the brink of destruction and threatened to destroy us all, promising in exchange that we would, insofar as we were able, lead lives that were in accord with the dictates of our individual consciences. In accomplishment of this purpose we realized that it was necessary to take a complete moral inventory of ourselves; and to humble ourselves by admitting our past derelictions to the Supreme Being, ourselves and at least one other person.

Years of drinking found us with large debit balances to be liquidated. A moral inventory had indicated the extent of this indebtedness. Many of these obligations required physical repayment, but by far the greater and more important part were moral. We made a mental or physical list of these physical and moral creditors and determined insofar as we were able to make restitution. As our financial condition permitted we commenced, however modestly, to repay our physical debts. But slander, injustice, ingratitude, and the daily mental cruelties which we had practiced in most part on those who were closest to us, were more formidable. The liquidation of such we realized to be the work of a lifetime which could be accomplished only by eradicating from our lives those besetting vices, some of which were earlier referred to.

We realized that being alcoholics, we would continue to remain such for the rest of our lives; that the program of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS was not a cure for alcoholism but was a rule of conduct which, if followed perseveringly in all the affairs of life, would keep us from the first drink. Too well did we know that we would never become controlled drinkers, but that the day we abandoned our program would find us at the exact point where we were when our drinking was arrested. From the foregoing it is to be concluded that the program of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS is not a cure. It is not a formula that may be grasped, applied and abandoned. Neither is it a discovery. It is the application in our daily lives of principles as old as the golden rule or the Sermon on the Mount. It is not advocated that the neophyte make a pledge to forever abstain from drink. Our approach is rather on a daily basis. We

ask for help from a Power greater than ourselves in a quiet time each day as we take our moral inventory, and our prayer is for assistance during the particular day, or oftener as the individual case may require.

Finally, it became manifest to us that as part of our regeneration, assistance to other alcoholics who sincerely wished to be rid of their addiction was necessary. We have found group association to be of inestimable assistance. Only the alcoholic can adequately understand and sympathize with the other alcoholic's problem.

While we recognize that the essential aid to overcome our problem comes from a Power greater than ourselves, it is also manifest to us that the alcoholics are the human agents through which this Power is directed. Especially in the beginning do we lean heavily upon each other. We are like those who, having suffered and recovered from a usually fatal malady, contain within the blood stream, by virtue of prior infection, the anti-toxin which will be the only means of saving the lives of other unfortunate victims of the same disease.

Probably the most emotionally satisfying part of our program is the aid which we have been able to give to others. Much of this program is not easy for all. It involves acts of humility and sacrifice. But the feeling of elation each of us has enjoyed in the knowledge that we, and in most cases only we alcoholics, can aid other alcoholics, is deeply gratifying. Everyone of us who has had the experience of assisting a fellow-alcoholic in the solution of his problem has been definitely strengthened in the conquest of his own. The gratitude and the satisfaction of seeing wives reconciled, families reunited, self-respect restored is an experience transcending in satisfaction most every other experience of our lives.

The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol -- that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.
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 ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

About twenty-five years ago, a popular television show called "To Tell the Truth," introduced three people, each of whom claimed to be Marty Mann, described as a recovered alcoholic who had founded the National Council on Alcoholism. A panel of celebrities proceeded to question the three. Only the real Marty Mann told the truth -- the others lied to fool the panel.

When "the real Marty Mann" stood, the panel of celebrities and the audience were astounded to learn that the only woman among the three, this handsome, poised, articulate, dignified woman, was Marty Mann, a former drunk.

Marty Mann was another who knew the suffering of the alcoholic. She was the first woman to achieve permanent sobriety in Alcoholics Anonymous. Her story is told in the Alcoholics Anonymous, the AA "big book," under the title "Women Also Suffer."

When she died in 1980, she had not had an alcoholic drink in more than 40 years.

When Marty testified before the Senate Special Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Narcotics in 1969 she said: "I am a recovered alcoholic. I was fortunate to have started my recovery in 1939, after five years of living hell during which I did not know what was wrong with me, I did not know that there was anything that could be done about it, and I had become convinced that I was insane.... This happens to a great many alcoholics who are baffled and bewildered and terrified by their own behavior."

An active member of A.A. since 1939, Marty felt herself a useful member of the human race at last. "I have something to contribute to humanity," she said, "I get my greatest thrill of accomplishment from knowing that I have played a part in the new happiness achieved by countless others like myself."

In 1944, a mere five years after her own recovery, she decided that an effort should be made to bring the kind of knowledge that had saved her life to all suffering alcoholics.

Asked in 1960 how she had received the inspiration for what became the National Council on Alcoholism, she said that, walking along Park Avenue in New York City one day, she had looked up at the windows of all those large apartment

buildings. It occurred to her that behind those windows were persons suffering from alcoholism, just as she had suffered. "I wanted to reach each one - I wanted to help each one -- but how?"

With the encouragement of Bill Wilson, a cofounder of Alcoholics Anonymous, Marty planned for the establishment of a national voluntary health agency patterned after those which had overcome the attitudes, fear and stigma once faced by those suffering from tuberculosis, cancer or heart disease. NCA was dedicated to the following three concepts:

1. Alcoholism is a disease and alcoholics are sick people,
2. Alcoholics can be helped and are worth helping.
3. Alcoholism is a public health problem and therefore a public responsibility.

In the beginning Marty worked on an extremely small budget, with only Yvelin Gardner, her Associate Executive Director, and a secretary to help. By 1954, all the money was running out and Yev Gardner was depressed. "Yev," said Marty, "there is a rich drunk out there somewhere who will get sober and help us," she told him.

Marty was not only beautiful, intelligent, gifted and wise, she was a prophet!

A few days after Marty tried to cheer Yev up with talk of a rich drunk, Yev was called to Towns Hospital on an A.A. Twelfth Step call.

He made his usual pitch to the man sobering up and told him that alcoholism was a disease, but that he could recover.

"It's a disease?" asked the man on the bed, "why don't you tell people that!"

Yev explained that they were trying, but that they didn't have the money they needed.

"You have it now," said the man on the bed.

Here was the man Marty had predicted. He was R. Brinkley Smithers, one of the richest men in the country.

Many A.A. members through the years have opposed such efforts by recovered

alcoholics claiming that they are a violation of the A.A. traditions.

Bill Wilson warned against this attitude, and encouraged such people as Marty Mann and Harold Hughes. He went so far as to testify at Senator Hughes's™ first Senate hearings on alcoholism in 1968.

Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith, the other co-founder of A.A., both became members of the Advisory Board of Marty's organization, even allowing their names (not their relationship to A.A.) to appear on her letterhead.

Marty rose above the criticism, and continued to work to educate the public and remove the stigma from the disease of alcoholism until her death.

"When you raise your head a little above the crowd," she told me when I became discouraged at criticism, "someone always wants to take a pot shot at it." Yes, she understood that kind of suffering, too. Many of the people who should have been supporters -- alcoholics she had helped -- turned on her, claiming she was trying to make money off AA.

[This is an excerpt from the chapter on the first hearing]

Not only Bill Wilson testified that day, but so did the greatly admired and beloved Marty Mann (the first woman to recover from alcoholism through Alcoholics Anonymous). I was more excited about hearing Marty than Bill Wilson. Of course, I had met Bill on several earlier occasions, but I had never met Marty and will never forget the warmth and graciousness Marty showed me. We became close friends, and Marty became my mentor, bucking me up when I was down, counseling me when I asked for advice -- whether on personal or professional matters.

Marty testified first. She testified, of course, not as a member of AA, but as the "founder/consultant" of the National Council on Alcoholism.

Her testimony was electrifying, and deeply moving. She told how she had begun her recovery from alcoholism in 1939, after 5 years of living hell during which she did not know what was wrong with her, did not know that there was anything that could be done about it, and had become convinced that she was insane. It was not until 1939 that Marty heard the world

"alcoholism" and learned that it was a disease.

She described how, during the first five years of her recovery she had "learned a great deal about the appalling number of other alcoholics who didn't know what I had learned and who mostly were beyond the reach of those people who wanted to help them."

She continued:

"I had discovered the strength of the stigma that lay on alcoholism. I had discovered the conspiracy of silence that existed about it. I had discovered that families were inclined to protect their alcoholic and that they were totally unaware of the fact that this protection was actually preventing their alcoholic from getting help."

Marty then described how she gained the support and backing of two eminent scientists at Yale University, Dr. Howard W. Haggard and Dr. E. M. Jellinek, who had been working on this problem for some years. And they gave her the support and encouragement -- as did Bill Wilson - to start an organization originally called the "National Committee for Education on Alcoholism," which later became the National Council on Alcoholism. On October 1, 1944, the organization first opened its doors. Today NCA has extended its work to cover drug addicts as well and is known as the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence.

Marty told us she started out stumping the country about alcoholism. She had three concepts she hoped to get across to the public: (1) that alcoholism is a disease and the alcoholic a sick person; (2) the alcoholic can be helped and is worth helping; and (3) that alcoholism is a public health problem, and therefore a public responsibility.

It was clear to all who heard the testimony that Marty was the nation's foremost authority on alcoholism. The Senators were very impressed. Senator Williams immediately asked Marty if she would be a consultant to the Subcommittee. She replied with her usual graciousness that it would give her "enormous pleasure" to be called upon in any way the Senators wished for any kind of help she could give.

Marty already had served on the National Advisory Committee on Alcoholism, which had been established by President Johnson by Executive Order, to advise the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

Thomas P. Pike of California also testified that day. He had known Marty for years, and has written that she had made many friends in Washington and for

become a part of A.A. folklore.

"There was a man we'll call 'Victor,' a former mayor of Akron, and a lady we'll call 'Lil,' who was the first woman to seek help.

"Together, Victor and the lady known as Lil started out to write the 'thirteenth step,' long before the first twelve were ever thought of. What is more, they say it began in Dr. Bob's office -- on his examination table

--
while he was at the City Club engaged in his sacrosanct Monday-night bridge game.

"In any case, Victor decided it was time for him to go home -- but Lil was loaded. So he called Ernie to explain the predicament. When Ernie arrived, he saw Lil grab a handful of little pills from Dr. Bob's cabinet.

"We started going around the examination table, and she was trying to get the pills in her mouth.' Ernie recalled. 'Then she made a dive for the window. I caught her halfway out. She was strong as a horse and used some profanity I never heard before or since.

"I got her quieted, and Doc came. We took her out to Ardmore Avenue and put her in a room in the basement. She stayed there two or three days, and then her people took her home. Of course, they were never too kind about it and thought we didn't handle her right. But we felt we had done all we could for her when she wasn't helping herself any.'

"They say Dr. Bob was leery of anything to do with women alcoholics for a long time thereafter, although he still tried to help as best he could with any who came along. And Bill Wilson, speaking with Sue Windows [Dr. Bob's daughter] in the 1950's, recalled how they all were scandalized by the episode.

"As drunks, I don't know why we should have been,' Bill said. 'But we felt that the performance of some of those early people coming in would disrupt us entirely. -- [Lil], I guess, was absolutely the first woman we ever dealt with.'

"Bill thought Lil never made it, but Sue said that she straightened out after a few years, got married, and had children. Only it wasn't in the A.A. program that Lil recovered. That was a lesson, too: A.A isn't the answer for everyone."

On page 241, "Lil" is mentioned again. It says:

"As far as we know, 'Lil' never got far enough along to attend a meeting.

when the family heard nothing further they assumed he was dead. However, when Sybil was thirteen they learned that he was alive and living in Los Angeles. The family immediately moved to California.

Sybil felt like a misfit in Los Angeles. She affected the flapper makeup popular at the time: heavy white powder on her face, and two big red spots of rouge on her cheeks and lots of lipstick and black eyebrows.

"I must have looked like a circus freak or something like that," she wailed. "I was in eighth grade out there in Los Angeles, and the other kids laughed at me. I had trouble making friends, being shy and timid by nature, but also my papa wouldn't let boys even walk home with me, let alone go to parties. I just wasn't allowed to do anything, and I knew I didn't belong anywhere.

"So naturally I started drinking at a very early age, against my better judgment, full of shame and remorse because of Papa's teachings. He was a good man. When I was fifteen, I got drunk one night, passed out, and had to be carried home and put to bed in my mother's bed. I cried the next day and promised that it would never happen again -- and I meant it. But I didn't know myself, I didn't know the disease of alcoholism. The next Saturday night the kids handed me a bottle and I drank it. And I continued to do that through a couple of semesters of high school, and I stayed drunk through seventeen years of failed marriages and more jobs than I can count."

Sybil dropped out of high school and took a secretarial course and was hired as a secretary. It was the first in along list of jobs. At various times she was a real estate broker, a taxi driver, a bootlegger, an itinerant farm worker, the editor of a magazine for pet owners, and a salesperson. "I didn't mind working," she said, "but I never seemed to get anywhere. I was just on a treadmill because of booze."

She had a child by her first husband, a sailor. She thought having the child would prevent her drinking, but she drank more than ever, and her parents eventually took the child from her.

She and her husband hitchhiked out of town to find grape picking jobs. They thought getting away from their city friends would help them quit drinking, but she soon was drunk again. During one of her drunks she heard music. At first she thought she was hallucinating, but she followed the sound and wandered into a tent where a revival meeting was in progress. The preacher asked for anyone to come forward who wanted to be saved. "Well, that was me," Sybil told AA members. "I went all the way down while the people were singing. The preacher put his hand out and placed it on my head, and I threw up all over him. It was so terrible! I was so ashamed, I couldn't bring myself to tell anyone about it until I got into Alcoholics Anonymous eleven years later."

She left her sailor husband and hitchhiked back to Los Angeles to her

mother's house. Her brother, Tex, now had a speakeasy on skid row, and to make money to take to her mother to support the child, she went into the bootlegging business with him. Eventually the speakeasy was raided and they were out of business. Then she went to work in a taxi-dance hall.

Little is known of her second husband, but she met her third husband, Dick Maxwell, while working in the taxi-dance hall. One night a rich, handsome stranger walked in and bought dance tickets with Sybil for the whole night. During intermission he bought several pitchers of beer (the girls got a dollar for every pitcher their partner bought), and she told him her sad story. He offered to marry her and adopt her child if she would promise not to drink any more.

Now she had a wonderful husband, a home, a housekeeper, and a car. But she couldn't stop drinking.

In 1939, while visiting her mother, she read the Liberty magazine article called "Alcoholics and God." She thought the story fascinating but did nothing about it and her downward spiral continued.

Eighteen months later God gave her another chance, when she read the Saturday Evening Post's March 1, 1941, issue which contained the famous Jack Alexander article about AA. She wrote to New York and received a reply from Ruth Hock, then Bill Wilson's secretary, who told her that there were no women members in California, but that Marty Mann was sober in New York. Ruth referred her to the small group of men then in the area.

On Friday, March 23, Sybil's nonalcoholic husband, Dick Maxwell, drove her to the meeting. They found ten or twelve men seated around a table and three or four women seated against the wall. When the chairman began the meeting he announced "As is our custom before the regular meeting starts, we have to ask the women to leave." Sybil left with the other women but her husband stayed and the members assumed he was the alcoholic. When he rejoined Sybil he said "They don't know you're alive. They just went on and on bragging about their drinking until I was about to walk out, when they jumped up and said the Lord's Prayer, and here I am." Sybil headed for the nearest bar and got drunk.

But she remembered the Ruth Hock had written, "If you need help, call Cliff W." and had given her his phone number. He explained: "You didn't tell us you were an alcoholic. We thought you were one of the wives. If you had identified yourself as an alcoholic, you would have been welcome as the flowers in May."

When she returned the following week, Frank R. brought in a large carton full of letters bundled into bunches of twenty to fifty. He explained that they were all inquiries and calls for help from people in southern California. "Here they are! Here they are! If any of you jokers have been

sober over fifteen minutes, come on up here and get these letters. We've got to get as many of these drunks as we can in here by next Friday, or they may die."

The last bundle was of letters from women. Frank said: "Sybil Maxwell, come on up. I am going to put you in charge of all the women."

Sybil liked the idea of "being in charge" but replied "I can't, sir. You said I have to make all those calls by next Friday, or somebody might die. Well, I'll be drunk by next Friday unless you have some magic that will change everything so I can stay sober."

Frank explained that everything she needed to know was in the Big Book. "And it says right in here that when all other measures fail, working with another alcoholic will save the day. That's what you will be doing, Sybil, working with other alcoholics. You just get in your car and take your mind off yourself. Think about someone sicker than you are. Go see her and hand her the letter she wrote, and say: 'I wrote one like this last week, and they answered mine and told me to come and see you. If you have a drinking problem like I have, and if you want to get sober as bad as I do, you come with me and we'll find out together how to do it.' Don't add another word to that, because you don't know anything yet. Just go get 'em."

It worked, and she never had another drink.

When Bill and Lois Wilson made their first visit to Los Angeles in 1943, Sybil was one of the delegation of local AA's who met them at the Town House hotel. Later she met Marty Mann.

But Dick Maxwell began to feel abandoned and lonely. He urged her to cut down on her AA activities so that they could have more of a home life. He had grown to hate AA and refused to read the Big Book or discuss the Twelve Steps. Finally he suggested that the solution to their marriage problems was for her to go back to drinking and he would take care of her.

Sybil quickly packed a bag and left. She left her lovely home and rented a housekeeping room with a gas hotplate and a bath down the hall for nine dollars a week and went to work for the L.A. Times to support herself. "AA just had to come first with me," she explained.

Her brother, Tex, joined the week after she did. He started the second AA group in the area, and appointed Sybil coffeemaker and greeter for the new group, and finally made her deliver her first shaky talk.

When Tex died in 1952, Sybil was devastated. She wrote Bill Wilson, pouring out her grief and asked "What am I going to do, Bill? I don't crave a drink, but I think I'm going to die unless I get some answers." She said Bill's answer saved her life. He wrote:

November 6, 1952

My dear Sybil,

Thanks for your letter of October 21st - it was just about the most stirring thing I have read in many a day. The real test of our way of life is how it works when the chips are down. Though I've sometimes seen AAs make rather a mess of living, I've never seen a sober one make a bad job of dying.

But the account you give me of Tex's last days is something I shall treasure always. I hope I can do half as well when my time comes. I am one who believes that in my Father's house are many mansions. If that were not so there couldn't be any justice. I can almost see Tex sitting on the front porch of one, right now, talking in the sunlight with others of God's ladies and gentlemen who have gone on before. I certainly agree with you that little was left in Tex's grave. All he had was left behind in the hearts of the rest of us and he carried just that same amount forward to where he is now. If you like what I've said, please read it to the Huntington Park Group. In any case, congratulate them for me that they had the privilege of knowing a guy like Tex.

As for you, my dear, there is no need to give you advice. How well you understand that the demonstration is the thing, after all. It isn't so much a question of whether we have a good time or a bad time. The only thing that will be asked is what we do with the experience we have. That you are doing well with our tough lot is something for which I and many others are bound to be grateful. This is but a long day in school. Some of the lessons are hard and others are easy. I know you will keep on learning and passing what you learned. What more does one person need to know about another!

Affectionately yours,

/s/ Bill

WGW/nw

Sybil Willis
2874A Randolph
Huntington Park, California

The letter touched Sybil so deeply she gave many copies to people who were at a low point in life, and a few years ago someone I met at an on-line meeting sent a copy to me.

At the time of the letter, she was married to Jim Willis, the founder of Gamblers' Anonymous.

deeply into its work, exposed unfair practices, and at the end of his four-year term was elected Governor of Iowa.

As Governor he promptly undertook reorganization of the state government with the goal of reducing a maze of 140 administrative agencies to about 30. The elderly got tax relief, a tough fair employment practices law was passed, school aid was upped 3 percent, a system of vocational-technical schools and junior colleges was started, state institutions of every sort were rehabilitated. He simply scooped the state government up in his huge hands and dropped it into the middle of the twentieth century. And, yes, as Governor he had pushed through a controversial liquor by the drink law.

And to the amazement of the world of politics, he was an admitted alcoholic.

Even in Iowa, where he was dearly loved, admired, and respected, the question was raised: should a recovered alcoholic be considered for the Presidency of the United States? Esquire asked that question of Selden Bacon, Director of the Rutgers Center of Alcohol Studies, in February of 1970. Bacon responded that _this question about the Presidency was sure to emerge. As more and more are recognized as alcoholics and as more and more recover, the possibility of this question arising becomes greater every year. The answer would seem to rest not on that vastly oversimplified label. alcoholism, but on an evaluation of the individual and his career._

Well, Harold Hughes did not become President of the United States. On July 15, 1971, he announced that he would not be a candidate. Speculation about why he pulled out was rife. Some said he just did not have the fire in his belly; others that he had too troubled a home life, and that his candidacy would reveal details of his troubled marriage and bring pain to his wife and children; some spread the lie that he still had trouble with booze and broads, and that a Presidential campaign would reveal his secrets.

So Harold Hughes remained in the U.S. Senate, where on September 5, 1973, he stunned the nation by announcing that he would not run for reelection in 1974, but would instead become a disciple of Christ.

It surprised everyone. Despite his narrow election in 1968, Hughes was now considered the best possible Democratic candidate for the Senate. He was stronger in 1973 than at any time since his landslide reelection to a second term as Governor. That a man would voluntarily abandon the United States Senate for reasons other than age, health, or certain defeat was inconceivable to most of the country.

The Washington Post devoted almost an entire page to the story. Parade

Magazine featured Harold Hughes on the front cover and examined his motives in their feature article, concluding that he was a most unusual Senator, one of a kind, truly a nonpareil. The Saturday Evening Post devoted nearly five thousand words to the decision.

So Harold Hughes was gone from public life, and few today -- even in the alcoholism field -- remember his name. But during his six years as Governor and six years as a member of the United States Senate, he had accomplished much for his fellow alcoholics.

The Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (the Hughes Act), created the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, and authorized the first major funds to be spent for this purpose.

That was just one of his many achievements on behalf of alcoholics while he served in public office. Harold Hughes worked tirelessly to help his fellow alcoholics.

Hughes understood alcoholics. He had been there. And I had been there, too.

From the time we met, our common problem made for a quick understanding and a comfortable relationship. Peggy Stanton, in her chapter on Harold Hughes in her book *The Daniel Dilemma, the Moral Man in the Public Arena*, described my relationship with the Senator like this:

_Their common problem provided an easy camaraderie. It also provided nonalcoholic staff members with a reference source. One aide asked Nancy what he should have done the evening he was attending a reception with Hughes and the Senator was given a gin and tonic instead of the straight tonic he requested. _Lord,_ the staffer told Mrs. Olson, _he took a great big gulp of it. What should I have done?_

What did the Senator do? Nancy asked. _The Senator_ replied the aide, said _Damn it! This has gin in it. I asked for a straight tonic._

Nancy could not hide her amusement at his genuine distress. _What did you think you should do, get restraining straps?_ she quipped. __

Many who had worked for Hughes for years were uncomfortable mentioning the issue of his alcoholism to him. When I came on board his staff some of them were stunned to hear the Senator and me joking with one another about drinking, and swapping drunk stories.

In 1979, when Senator Donald Riegle of Michigan became chairman of the

Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Subcommittee, I persuaded Senator Hughes to testify as a witness.

Indeed, he took a lot of persuading. _Now, Nancy, you know that I have no intention of coming up to the Hill to try to advise my former colleagues about how to do their jobs. I am spending my full time, as you know, working for Christ_, he bellowed.

I bellowed right back that there was nothing better he could do for Christ than to plead for the poorest of his poor, the drug addicts in the ghettos and the alcoholics on skid row.

He finally agreed, and came to the Senate to give the following statement:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to be back with you this morning.

When I was first approached about appearing here today I refused, because when I left the Senate four years ago it was to devote myself full time to the service of the Lord.

Because of that commitment, I have refused any request which I felt would detract from that goal.

But I was reminded by someone close to me that perhaps the way I could best serve Him on this morning of March 2, 1979, would be to appear before you to plead for the poorest of His poor.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus was often in the company of the social outcasts of that day -- the prostitutes, the tax collectors, the lepers. Were He to walk on earth today, I believe that it would be with the social outcasts of this day we would find Him - the alcoholics on the skid rows of our cities, the drug addicts in the empty tenements, the lonely and the lost.

So though I fully realize that alcoholism is no respecter of persons, and that alcoholism touches those from every walk of life, it is for that three to five percent of our Nation's alcoholics on skid row -- and the drug addicts in the ghettos -- for whom I make my plea this morning.

Mr. Chairman, another reason I hesitated to accept your invitation is that I am no longer knowledgeable about the current issues -- specific authorization levels, the needs of the research community, nor the latest prevention techniques. There are many in this room far more able than I to advise you on that.

Perhaps I can be most helpful to you if I give you a brief review of some of what I learned during the six years I sat in your chair.

A century ago an English author, Samuel Butler, wrote a book about an imaginary Utopian society called Erewhon.

And in this mythical society, when people got sick, the authorities put them in jail.

In 1969, when the subcommittee was formed, we did not have to look far to find modern-day Erewhons. Only the District of Columbia and the State of Maryland had decriminalized public drunkenness and provided for treatment in the public health system.

In this Lenten season it is interesting to note that the court decision which led to that change in Washington was called the Easter decision. In *Easter v. District of Columbia*, the courts held that a homeless alcoholic could not be punished for his public intoxication. Mr. Easter was one such. He had been incarcerated several hundred times before Peter Hutt of the law firm of Covington and Burling, used him as a test case

In every other State in the Union, alcoholic citizens were being thrown into jail for the sole crime of being sick in public. And many of them died in those jails from lack of medical attention.

And I should add, Mr. Chairman, that it is not only men. Women, too, are among their numbers. Perhaps we are not aware of the women on skid row because we rarely see a woman sleeping in the gutter. Senator, they do not need to. A woman can usually find a bed for the night -- by one dreadful method or another.

Dr. Veronica Maz, executive director of SOME - So Others Might Eat - has written a book called the *Stick-Carrier*. She tells of one such woman:

[Quote from Maz book]

June shouted, *"I just got out,"* as she ran to greet me at the front gate of our soup kitchen. I glanced at her arm and saw the identifying hospital band she was wearing.

Like many skid row women, June has experienced intense pain throughout her life but seldom discussed this with others. She had been beaten repeatedly.

Seeing her with two black eyes or a swollen, bloody lip was not uncommon. Once her arm was in a cast. On another occasion her leg had been broken in several places.

June shared a room with several other persons on the first floor of a three-story slum apartment dwelling. ...

Without any preliminary description, June explained, _He took me by my feet and dragged me like a back of potatoes up three flights of steps where he raped me._ She stated that her head had bounced on every step, and her skin was consistently bruised and scraped on the concrete steps. _He dragged me. He dragged me,_ with rising inflection she repeated what seemed to her to be the greatest pain of all.

[End of Maz quote.]

In early 1970 I talked with one of the stick carriers. His name was Prince Wright. His story is also told in Dr. Maz' book. He was a big handsome black man, and his muscles and hands showed that he was a man used to hard labor. He hid his shyness behind a gruff manner.

He told me he had been a stick carrier. _What the deuce is a stick carrier,_ I asked him. He explained a stick carrier is the name given to the homeless, destitute, needy persons who sleep in abandoned buildings, cars or trucks, and whose fears are those of being lonely, hungry, hurt, sick, burned alive, robbed, beaten, or frozen to death. They carry a stick to ward off the rats with whom they share their bed and food -- often found in trash cans.

We need a water fountain, he blurted out. Then he explained. Where does a homeless, destitute man get a drink of water? He does not have a home -- no water from there. He does not eat in restaurants, and many restaurants refuse requests for water from non customers. Public drinking fountains are practically non existent. Getting a drink of water can be a serious problem.

To my lasting shame, I refused to give him any money. I was afraid he would go off and get drunk with it. I later learned that the Sisters of the Good Shepherd donated a drinking fountain to SOME.

Because of men like Prince - and women like June - in 1974 we amended the alcoholism act to give incentive grants to states which decriminalize public drunkenness and provide for treatment. More than half the States have now done this, but in many States in this country, Senator, alcoholics are still dying in jails for lack of treatment.

Mr. Chairman, when we drafted the alcoholism bill in 1970, and amended it in 1974, we made no specific mention of women. I make no apology for that. We

did not know then that women would not receive full rights as citizens. I now know that little of the funds authorized by this Subcommittee have gone to help women.

So I am pleased to learn that in 1976 my friend, Pete Williams [Senator Harrison A. Williams of New Jersey], amended the law to provide specific help for these women.

And we paid too little attention to what our children were trying to tell us.

When heroin addiction was considered only an inner-city problem, we ignored it.

The shameful truth is that only when reports began pouring in about children from white, middle-class suburbs, children of famous Hollywood personalities -- yes, even children of politicians -- getting busted on drug charges or dying of drug overdoses, did we begin to react. ...

In 1971 I heard testimony from a Harlem mother. She was testifying about how she could not get the police to close down a hangout in her New York City neighborhood where addicts shot up drugs.

Nobody cares about us up there, she snapped. _Nobody will come and see for themselves what goes on ... and_ she glared at me, I'm sure you don't care either._

I will come, I said.

Well, she sniffed, _I will believe it when I see it._

So, a few months later, I turned up in Harlem with a few other nervous Senators. Pete Williams was with me, and Jack Javits and Dick Schweiker. She was surprised to see us.

She told me to give \$10 to a boy -- he was not more than eleven -- and see how fast he would be back with heroin. We watched out a window as he went to the hamburger stand on the corner and brought back five bags of heroin. ...

Then she challenged us to follow her to a shooting gallery across the street.

We followed her down crumbling cement steps and through a basement doorway. I was frankly scared but she assured me I would be OK as long as I was with her and some other blacks.

She pulled back a blanket hanging across a clothesline and in the light of two candles we saw six men getting ready to shoot up. They were hooking up,

a band around the arm, the needles ready. ...

Suddenly a bright white light flooded the basement. We had forgotten all about the TV cameramen who had followed us during the day and had, without warning, turned on their floodlights to film the scene. One of my staff members scrambled in front of me, trying to protect me, and then there was a massive darkness because the light from the television light went out and we scrambled to safety.

All hell broke loose. I dimly remember my staff man getting between me and a very angry black man with a knife. We fell over one another trying to get out.

When we finally scrambled to safety, I turned to our hostess and said, _I thought you said it would be safe._

Breathing heavily, she replied, _Well, I didn_t know you were going to make it into a TV special either._

Mr. Chairman, you and I cannot possibly know the frustration that woman feels when she detoxifies an addict and then has to send him back into the same conditions that fostered the addiction in the first place: poverty, unemployment, tenements infested with rats, drug pushers on every corner.

Mr. Chairman, things do not appear to be getting any better. I have heard recent reports that young kids are shifting from the use of drugs alone to mixing them with alcohol.

I hear reports of young people who have to have a drink before they leave for school; who keep bottles stashed in their school lockers or cars; who share their pills at school, dumping them together to form a fruit salad; who, in addition, take Valium as casually as we take aspirin for the common cold.

And, Senator, I am not talking about kids in the ghettos only, I am talking about kids like mine or like yours. And some parents are so concerned that their kids might get into trouble with the law by smoking a little pot that they actually encourage them to drink.

So I am also happy to learn that Senator Williams amended the law three years ago to include provisions to direct more attention to the young.

Mr. Chairman, I have been deeply involved with the problems of alcoholism -- my own and others -- for more than 30 years. If at times I sound like an angry and frustrated man, it is because I am

I see this great abundant land of ours with resources beyond compare. I see the wonderful achievements of our science and technology; the miracles of modern medicine; the explosive growth of knowledge in numberless areas; the marvelous exploits of American industry and our space programs. But I am sick to my soul by our response to alcoholism. And I am sick to my soul that even when we pass laws to help the alcoholic or the drug addict, we have remained blind to the illness that the alcoholism brings to the spouse or the young children in the family.

Mr. Chairman, it is not for nothing that the children of alcoholics are at high risk to develop alcoholism or other emotional disorders.

So what would I do now if I still sat in your chair? I would ask a lot of questions. I would ask:

Why do hospitals still discriminate against alcoholics and addicts despite laws we passed in 1974 to prevent that?

What is wrong with our society that millions of our citizens, including children as young as six -- yes, I said six -- turn to alcohol or drugs to deaden their pain?

Why are doctors so afraid of the word alcoholism that one of them told a member of your staff recently [Nancy Olson] that he would never ask her if she drank too much because she was well-dressed?

And why, when an affluent alcoholic shows up in the office of a high-priced psychiatrist, does she so often wind up also addicted to Valium?

And I would ask:

Why is it that millions of women -- at all social levels and of all races -- suffer beatings, rapes, and worse from their drunken husbands and yet many times are too ashamed to call the police or tell their ministers?

And why, when one does call the police, will the police not respond to a domestic problem?

Why is it that children who are physically and sexually abused by their own fathers -- often with the mother's cooperation -- grow into men who do the same to their own children?

And why is it that children of alcoholics often wind up in back wards of mental hospitals?

And why is it that a little old woman, carrying all her worldly goods in two

shopping bags, was refused her supplemental security income payments until a courageous doctor in New York - herself a recovered alcoholic -- was able to get her back into the system?

And while we are at it, why has that doctor talked to members of this staff over and over again only to be told there is nothing we can do to help because it is not our jurisdiction?

Why is it that we turn our back on old people who are being over-medicated to make life easier for the staffs of nursing homes?

And why is it that no one has looked into helping bring alcoholism treatment to our elderly or our physically handicapped?

And why has this same woman doctor begged again and again for that to change and still remain unheard?

And why do our colleagues on the Appropriations Committee still provide three times the money for dental research as they do for alcoholism?

Why are we unwilling to put warning labels on alcohol to warn pregnant women of the danger to their unborn children?

And why did an advertising executive sarcastically accuse a member of your staff of being a neo-prohibitionist and a reincarnation of Carey Nation, when she quietly suggested that perhaps women were entitled to that information?

Why, Senator - in God's name why?

Mr. Chairman, my family often reminds me that I sometimes talk like the drunken truck driver I once was. Today, forgive me if I sound like I am preaching.

But, Senator, I believe with all my heart that one day I will meet my Maker face to face. And on that day I do not believe that He will ask how many important offices I was elected to, nor how many acts of Congress bear my name, or even whether I went to church regularly. I believe that He will ask: What have you done unto the least of these?

Mr. Chairman, I pray that I will have the right answer.

[End of Hughes prepared statement.]

Usually, I wrote questions for the Chairman to ask each witness, but in my

hurry to prepare for this hearing, I had forgotten to write questions for Senator Riegle to ask Senator Hughes.

So I suggested to Senator Riegle that he ask Hughes to tell his own story.

He had told his own story countless times, at AA meetings, in meetings with prisoners, and in his autobiography, *The Man From Ida Grove*. He would tell the story countless times again, until his death in 1996 This is how he told it that day:

I was an alcoholic, from the first drink I ever took in my life. I was an alcoholic as a teenager in high school. I do not know what it is to drink normally ever....

Alcohol is nothing but trouble for me, and it is a progressive illness for me, and in those days I had no idea that I was sick. It was the tough and manly thing to do, to drink with everyone. The fact that everyone else did not have lapses of memory and blackouts, I did not know. I thought perhaps I was the normal one. Hell, I was a healthy and powerful man in my younger years. I was able to withstand the brutal treatment that I gave my body.... But my drinking progressed through that, after high school, through the Army, my post-war years, and I finally began to realize that my drinking patterns were destructive

The people that I was hurting the most were those that I loved the most, my wife, my children, those immediately around me.

I promised time and time again that I would quit, and every time I failed, and each time that I failed, my own self esteem went down, and I thought I was worthless in the world. I was working daily, and had as good a job as there was for a working man in the country, and to most on the outside, not really realizing the destruction within me, they were not aware of what was taking place. Even my own aunt said a month ago, that she did not know I was an alcoholic. Well, I did not know, either. People knew that I was a drunk, that I was wild, and I would fight, and that I was disruptive. The abuse that I brought on my own wife and family, though I did not beat them, the mental, the verbal abuse, the questions, the wondering whether I was alive or not, they went through for years. It was a rocky road, until one time my wife left me, she took the children and left.

One day I woke up after a long time not drinking, having drunk again, and I did not know how long I had been drunk. And I was sick, and I was hopeless, and I crawled to the window, to look out to see if the car was there, and did not see it. I did not know whether I killed someone, where my wife or

children were, and the only thing that came to me was, what is the use in going on. I do not want to live like this. If I cannot control what I am doing, then I did

not want to live. I did not have any faith in God then. Mr. Chairman, I was not at all sure that there was a God. If there was a loving God, I had seen little example of him in what I had seen in life.

The savagery in war, man's inhumanity to man, the statement that, who gave a damn to any of us, not anyone. That night I desperately decided that the only way that I could break the cycle of hurting my wife and family was to kill myself.

It seemed the logical thing to do.

My wife was still relatively young, my children were still relatively young, they would be hurt, but they were young. My wife had filed charges of inebriety, to put me in a mental institution. I had hired an attorney and beat that. I know the pain, the lonesomeness, the Godlessness of waking up and saying what the hell is the use, no one cares. I cannot hack it any more.

So I loaded a gun, lay on the bed, and put the barrel in my mouth, and found that I could reach the trigger with the thumb, and then I thought, well, what a mess I will make in the bedroom where we have lived, and had some happy hours, screwed up alcoholic thinking. I do not want to make that mess here. I will go in the bathroom.

So I got up and went in the bathroom, and suddenly something out of my youth came back, and I thought well, maybe if there is a God, I should pray. I know I should not commit suicide. I knew it was wrong. I had been raised in the church but I did not care if I had to pay the price of hell, and eternity. I would have paid to quit hurting my family.

So I knelt on the floor to pray, and I cried out in my agony -- because I knew no words of prayer - God help me because I cannot help myself. ... Or let me die, because I do not want to see the sun rise again.

Something happened in me. I do not know what it was. But tears started streaming down my face. I got a great sense of peace entering into my body, and seemingly into every cell, and I was on that floor weeping, I do not know how long, an hour or more, I guess. But I realized suddenly that God was somewhere, that he had heard my prayer, and cared about me. I got up from that floor. I did not know much about God. I unloaded the gun, and put it away, and went back to bed and slept peacefully for the first time in weeks, perhaps months.

When I arose in the morning, I called my wife, and asked her if she would come home. She had no reason to. She should have stayed away, by my old drinking record, but she sensed something, apparently, in my voice, and she returned and brought the children back, and started over again.

Mr. Chairman, that was 25 years ago last month. There was not sudden relief from the pain, the suffering and the affliction. There was a long period of growth and loneliness, and desperation. But in the years that intervened, I found the peace that I had never known. I found it because I returned to that which I had strayed away from. The Scripture, the word, my church, my family, and recommitted my life to Jesus Christ in the hope and the belief that wherever he called I would follow.

I believe that he called me into the political arena, I believe that he called me out. I placed my life in his hands, because in my own it was death, it was hell, and it was destruction.

After some further dialogue with Senator Riegle, Hughes ended his testimony by saying:

In my lifetime, and in my service in the capacity that you are now in, I never at any time desired to take \$1 from the field of mental retardation or the afflicted in any way. I do not want to deny our society of the help they so desperately need. But I believe a society as wealthy and rich as we are cannot afford to leave other segments of illness untreated. I am asking for additional money.

We dress so well, and eat so well, there is no society in history that has ever lived that has had such abundance. How can we ignore the sick in our midst and let them die in the hell that they live in, without giving them health care.

We must be concerned and care for the least of these in our midst. Not simply because it is cost effective, but because it is right, because it is just, and because it is morally sound.

I do believe that God cares about nations and people, and I believe he does care how we treat one another. To lay down our lives for one another does not mean that we live in abundance while others have little or nothing because of an illness.

In the opening paragraph of his autobiography, "Prodigal Shepherd," Father Pfau wrote: "All my life, I will carry three indelible marks. I am a Roman Catholic priest. I am an alcoholic. And I am a neurotic."

I will address these in reverse order:

HE WAS A NEUROTIC

He admits to having "nervous breakdowns," and spending time in sanitariums. He was twice relieved of his parish. Even after achieving sobriety, he continued to be plagued by depressions, which were sometimes severe and long-lasting.

HE WAS AN ALCOHOLIC

He never had a drink until about a year after his ordination. But by 1943 he was sufficiently worried about his drinking to investigate A.A. While responding to a call from a woman who said her husband was dying, he learned from the doctor that the man was not dying by merely passed out from a combination of alcohol and barbitol. As Fr. Pfau was leaving the house he noticed a book on a shelf and asked if he could borrow it. It was "Alcoholics Anonymous."

When he arrived home it was past 3 a.m., and he was longing for a drink. But he could not take a drink. He had to say Mass at 6 a.m., so could neither eat nor drink. But he knew he couldn't sleep, so he sat down in a chair and started reading the book. And he couldn't take his hands off that book.

Day after day for three or four weeks, whenever he had a spare hour or two he would sit in his room reading, studying and thinking. He didn't miss a day reading the book through at least once. It became seared in his brain, "word for word, comma for comma, question mark for question mark." He knew it from cover to cover. And to his amazement, during that entire period he did not take a drink.

One evening he noticed some AA pamphlets on a side table in the vestibule of the rectory. At supper he asked who had left the pamphlets and learned that they were left by Doherty "Dohr" Sheerin, described by the pastor as "the president or something of A.A. here in Indianapolis."

Fr. Pfau studied the pamphlets as thoroughly as he had studied the Big Book, but he couldn't believe they applied to him. He was not an alcoholic, or so he thought.

During this period of not drinking he stepped up the medication the doctor had prescribed, a combination of barbitol and Dexedrine.

He was frightened and he needed help. So one night he telephoned Dohr

Sheerin and asked "I was just wondering -- could I possibly see you some time? I'd like to talk to you about -- something. There's no hurry."

"I'll be right over," was the reply, and Dohr Sheerin hung up the phone before Fr. Pfau could reply. Sheerin invited him to attend the meeting the following Thursday. He agreed to attend "just as a spectator." They talked for a few minutes more and Dohr left. That was November 10, 1941, Fr. Pfau's 39th birthday.

For the next 25 years, despite severe problems with depressions, he never took another drink. For a short time he continued to take medications prescribed by his doctor and by Mayo Clinic. But after seeing a friend who had overdosed on seconal he hurried to a doctor in charge of the local "drying out" facility and told him that he was frightened. "I just got back from Mayo, where they gave me a couple hundred pills to take for my nervousness. But now I don't know what to do with them."

"Well," said the doctor, "those people know what they're doing up there. Did you tell them you are an alcoholic?" He then explained that if the doctors at Mayo Clinic had known he was an alcoholic they would never have given him the pills. So he went home and threw away the pills.

With the approval of his Archbishop, he devoted himself to helping other alcoholics, particularly alcoholic priests. He traveled more than 50,000 miles a year to address meetings, conduct retreats and help individuals.

His retreats were attended by thousands of Catholics and by many more thousands who were not Catholics. His retreat talks were eventually published in a series of "Golden Books." They were so named because when he held the second annual retreat in June of 1947, at the request of some of the people who had attended the first retreat his talks were printed in a fifty-six page booklet with a gold cover, and distributed as a souvenir, through the generosity of the owner of the archdiocesan newspaper in Indianapolis. People began requesting copies of "the golden book of your retreat."

His books "Sobriety Without End," and "Sobriety and Beyond," have been read by thousands.

In 1948 he founded the National Clergy Conference on Alcoholism, an organization devoted to the problems of priests, and directed it for many years. Its publications, especially "Alcoholism Source Book for Priests," and the annual "Blue Book," made a deep impact on the American Catholic Hierarchy.

Fr. John C. Ford, S. J., in an Epilogue to a new edition of Pfau's autobiography, published after his death but planned by him, says that "the whole career of Father Pfau can only be understood in the light of the fact

that he was a pioneer. He broke new ground. ... Like any pioneer he met opposition and had to have fortitude. Like any Christian innovator he had to have deep faith. It was faith and fortitude that sustained his zeal for the salvation of the countless souls he helped."

Bill Wilson had warned Fr, Pfau that he would receive opposition:

"Bill, a fine gentleman, taught me something I've never forgotten. 'Father,' he said, 'you will do a great deal of good in a great many places. As a Catholic priest and an alcoholic, you can be instrumental in helping alcoholics wherever you go. But remember this -- no matter how well you do, no matter how much you help others or how many you help, no matter what you say or how you say it, no matter what happens -- you can't and won't please everyone. Wherever you go and whatever you do, someone will find a way to criticize you.

"You must take the criticism, no matter how unjustified, with tolerance and forbearance. Remember that resentments can lead to trouble, so you must work doubly hard not to harbor them. Don't ever let anything bother you. I have taken criticism from unexpected sources many times since we began this program, and so will you. Just let it roll off your back like water off a duck's, and you'll be all right."

While Father Pfau obviously had great affection for Bill Wilson, he apparently did not always agree with him. Four o'clock on Sunday afternoon July 3, 1955, at the International A.A. Convention in St. Louis, was a watershed moment in the history of Alcoholics Anonymous. The fifth General Service Conference met during the Convention. This marked the end of the five-year trial period for the Conference.

Bill Wilson had campaigned for the Conference vigorously.

But Father Pfau, who was influential, though controversial, had announced he was going to rise and speak against it. When Bill presented his resolution and a vote of approval was requested, reported Nell Wing, "We from the office sat with baited breath." But Father Pfau did not object and the resolution passed.

Tex Brown, who died October 5, 2000, told me this story at the International Convention in Minneapolis a few months before his death. I asked him to write it for the AA History Buffs.

Tex attended the first International A.A. Convention in Cleveland in 1950. He told me "At the 'Spiritual Meeting' on Sunday morning the main speaker's topic dealt with the idea that the alcoholic was to be the instrument that God would use to regenerate and save the world. He expounded the idea that alcoholics were God's Chosen People and he was starting to talk about AA being 'The Third Covenant,' when he was interrupted by shouted objections from the back of the room. The objector, who turned out to be a small

Catholic priest, would not be hushed up. There was chaos and embarrassment as the meeting was quickly adjourned. I was upset and in full sympathy with the poor speaker. I did not realize it at the time, but I had seen Father Pfau in action and Father Pfau was right. I had heard the group conscience and I rejected it."

Bill told the story like this:

"On Sunday morning we listened to a panel of four A.A.s who portrayed the spiritual side of Alcoholics Anonymous -- as they understood it. ... A hush fell upon the crowd as we paused for a moment of silence. Then came the speakers, earnest and carefully prepared, all of them. I cannot recall an A.A. gathering where the attention was more complete, or the devotion deeper.

"Yet some thought that those truly excellent speakers had, in their enthusiasm, unintentionally created a bit of a problem. It was felt the meeting had gone over far in the direction of religious comparison, philosophy and interpretation, when by firm long standing tradition we A.A.'s had always left such questions strictly to the chosen faith of each individual.

"One member rose with a word of caution. [Apparently he was referring to Fr. Pfau.] As I heard him, I thought, 'What a fortunate occurrence.' How well we shall always remember that A.A. is never to be thought of as a religion. How firmly we shall insist that A.A. membership cannot depend upon any particular belief whatever; that our twelve steps contain no article of religious faith except faith in God -- as each of us understands Him. How carefully we shall henceforth avoid any situation which could possibly lead us to debate matters of personal religious belief."

HE WAS A ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST

For many years he doubted the validity of his priesthood. He had not chosen it. His mother wanted him to be a priest from the day he was born and would frequently introduce her little boy by saying "This is Ralph. He's going to be a priest." He was unsure he wanted to be a priest, and for many years, especially during his periods in sanitariums, and during the worst periods of his alcoholism, he continued to doubt the validity of his ordination. But he eventually came to believe that, though he had not chosen the priesthood, he was chosen for it.

Father Ford wrote at this end of his Epilogue: "Those who knew Father Ralph best, those who knew him when he was sick and when he was well, those who saw at first hand the evidence of his devotion to the cause of Christ, and to the sick alcoholic in whom he always saw Christ -- and this despite the severest trials that depression can inflict -- are the only ones who have a right to estimate the accomplishments of his life's work. Fortunately these

was just the umpire - I finally had to stipulate:

"Well boys, over here you got the Holly Rollers who say we need all the good old-fashioned stuff in the book, and over here you tell me we've got to have a psychological book, and that never cured anybody, and they didn't do very much with us in the missions, so I guess you will have to leave me just to be the umpire. I'll scribble out some roughs here and show them to you and let's get the comments in."

So we fought, bled and died our way through one chapter after another. We sent them out to Akron and they were peddled around and there were terrific hassles about what should go in this book and what should not.

Meanwhile, we set drunks up to write their stories or we had newspaper people to write the stories for them to go in the back of the book. We had an idea that we'd have a text and all and then we'd have stories all about the drunks who were staying sober.

Then came that night when we were up around Chapter 5. As you know I'd gone on about myself which was natural after all. And then the little introductory chapter and we dealt with the agnostic and we described alcoholism, but, boy, we finally got to the point where we really had to say what the book was all about and how this deal works.

As I told you this was a six step program then. On this particular evening, I was lying in bed on Clinton Street wondering what the deuce this next chapter would be about. The idea came to me, well, we need a definite statement of concrete principles that these drunks can't wiggle out of. Can't be any wiggling out of this deal at all. And this six step program had two big gaps in-between they'll wiggle out of. Moreover if this book goes out to distant readers, they have to have got to have an absolutely explicit program by which to go.

This was while I was thinking these thoughts, while my imaginary ulcer was painning me and while I was mad as hell at these drunks because the money was coming in too slow. Some had the stock and weren't paying up. A couple of guys came in and they gave me a big argument and we yelled and shouted and I finally went down and laid on the bed with my ulcer and I said, "poor me."

There was a pad of paper by the bed and I reached for that and said "you've got to break this program up into small pieces so they can't wiggle out. So I started writing, trying to bust it up into little pieces. And when I got the pieces set down on that piece of yellow paper, I put numbers on them and was rather agreeably

surprised when it came out to twelve.

I said, "That's a good significant figure in Christianity and mystic lore.
"Then I noticed that instead of leaving the God idea to the last, I'd got it up front but I didn't pay much attention to that, it looked pretty good.

Well, the next meeting comes along; I'd gone on beyond the steps trying to amplify them in the rest of that chapter to the meeting and boy, pandemonium broke loose.

"What do you mean by changing the program.. .what about this, what about that, this thing is overloaded with God. We don't like this, you've got these guys on their knees.. .stand them up!"

A lot of these drunks are scared to death of being Godly.. .let's take God out of it entirely."

Such were the arguments that we had. Out of that terrific hassle came the Twelve Steps. That argument caused the introduction of the phrase which has been a lifesaver to thousands....it was certainly none of my doing. I was on the pious side then, you see, still suffering from this big hot flash of mine.

The idea of "God as you understand Him" came out of that perfectly ferocious argument and we put that in.

Well, little by little things ground on, little by little the drunks put in money and we kept an office open in Newark which was the office of a defunct business where I tried to establish my friend.

The money ran low at times and Ruthie Hock worked for no pay. We gave her plenty of stock in the Works Publishing of course. All you had to do is tear it off the pay, par 25 have a week's salary, dear.

So, we got around to about January, 1939. Somebody said "hadn't we better test this thing out; hadn't we better make a pre-publication copy, a multilith or mimeographed copy of this text and a few of the personal stories that had come in - try it out on the preacher, on the doctor, the Catholic Committee on Publications, psychiatrists, policemen, fishwives, housewives, drunks, everybody. Just to see if we've got anything that goes against the grain anyplace and also to find out if we can't get some better ideas here?"

So at considerable expense, we got this pre-publication copy made; we peddled it around and comments came back, some of them very helpful. It went, among other places, to the Catholic

Committee on Publications in New York and at that time we had only one Catholic member to take it there and he had just gotten out of the asylum and hadn't had anything to do with preparing the book.

The book passed inspection and the stories came in. Somehow we got them edited, somehow we got the galleys together. We got up to the printing time.

Meanwhile, the drunks had been kind of slow on those subscription payments and a little further on I was able to go up to Charlie Towns where old Doc Silkworth held forth. Charlie believed in us so we put the slug on to Charlie for \$2,500 bucks.

Charlie didn't want any stocks, he wanted a promissory note on the book not yet written. So, we got the \$2,500 from Charlie routed around through the Alcoholic Foundation so that it could be tax exempt. Also, we had blown \$6,000 in these 9 months in supporting the 3 of us in an office and the till was getting low.

We still had to get this book printed. So, we go up to Cornwall Press, which is the largest printer in the world, where we'd made previous inquiries and we asked about printing and they said they'd be glad to do it and how many books would we like? We said that was hard to estimate. Of course our membership is very small at the present time and we wouldn't sell many to the membership but after all, the Readers Digest is going to print a plug about it to it's 2 million readers. This book should go out in carloads when it's printed.

The printer was none other than dear old Mr. Blackwell, one of our Christian friends and Mr. Blackwell said "How much of a down payment are you going to make? How many books would you like printed?"

"Well," we said "we'll be conservative, let's print 5,000 just to start with."

Mr. Blackwell asked us what we were going to use for money. We said that we wouldn't need much, just a few hundred dollars on account would be all right.

I told you, after all, we're traveling in very good company, friends of Mr. Rockefeller and all that.

So, Blackwell started printing the 5,000 books; the plates were made and the galleys were read. Gee, all of a sudden we thought of the Reader's Digest, so we go up to there, walk in on Mr. Kenneth Paine and say "We're all ready to shoot."

And Mr. Paine replies "Shoot what - Oh yes, I remember you two, Mr.

Parkhurst

and Mr. Wilson. You gentlemen were here last fall, I told you the Reader's Digest would be interested in this new work and in your book. Well, right after you were here, I consulted our editorial board and to my great surprise they didn't like the idea at all and I forgot to tell you!"

Oh boy, we had the drunks with \$5,000 bucks in it, Charlie Towns hooked for \$2,500 bucks and \$2,500 on the cuff with the printer. There was \$500 left in the bank.. .what in the duce would we do?

Morgan Ryan, the good looking Irishman who had taken the book over to the Catholic Committee on Publication, had been in an earlier time a good ad man.

He said that he knew Gabriel Heatter. "Gabriel is putting on these 3 minute heart to heart programs on the radio. I'll get an interview with him and maybe he'll interview me on the radio about all this," said Ryan.

So, our spirits rose once again. Then all of a sudden we had a big chill, suppose this Irishman got drunk before Heatter interviewed him? So, we went to see Heatter and lo and behold, Heatter said he would interview him and then we got still more scared. So, we rented a room in the downtown Athletic Club and we put Ryan in there with a day and night guard for ten days.

Meanwhile, our spirits rose again. We could see those books just going out in carloads. Then my promoter friend said "Look, there should be a follow-up on a big thing like this here interview. It'll be heard all over the country... .national network. I think folks that are the market for this book are the doctors.. .the physicians. I suggest that we pitch the last \$500 that we have in the treasury on a postal card shower which will go to every physician east of the Rocky Mountains. On this postal card we'll say "Hear all about Alcoholics Anonymous on Gabriel Heatter's Program - spend \$3.50 for the book Alcoholics Anonymous, sure-cure for alcoholism."

So, we spent the last \$500 on the postal card shower and mailed them out.

They managed to keep Ryan sober although he since hasn't made it. All the drunks had their ears glued to the radio. The group market in Alcoholics Anonymous was already saturated because you see, we had 49 stockholders and they'd all gotten a book free, then we had 28 guys with stories and they all got a free book. So we had run out of the A.A. books. But we could see the book moving out in carloads to these doctors and their patients.

Sure enough, Ryan is interviewed. Heatter pulled out the old tremelo stop and we could see the book orders coming back in carloads.

Well, we just couldn't wait to go down to old Post Office Box 658, Church Street Annex, the address printed in the back of the old books. We hung at it for about three days and then my friends Hank and Ruthie Hock and I went over and we looked in Box 658. It wasn't a locked box, you just looked through the glass. We could see that there were a few of these postal cards. I had a terrible sinking sensation. But my friend the promoter said "Bill, they can't put all those cards in the box, they've got bags full of it out there."

We go to the clerk and he brings out 12 lousy postal cards, 10 of them were completely illegible, written by doctors, druggists, monkeys? We had exactly two orders for the book Alcoholics Anonymous and we were absolutely and utterly stone broke.

The Sheriff then moved in on the office, poor Mr. Blackwell wondered what to do for money and felt like taking the book over at that very opportune moment, the house which Lois and I lived in was foreclosed and we and our furniture were set out on the street. Such was the state of the book Alcoholics Anonymous and the state of grace the Wilson's were in the summer of 1939.

Moreover, a great cry went up from the drunks, "What about our \$4,500?" Even Charlie (Towns) who was pretty well off was a little uneasy about the note for \$2,500. What would we do? What could we do? We put our goods in storage on the cuff, we couldn't even pay the dray man. An A. A. lent us his summer camp, another A.A. lent us his car, the folks around New York began to pass the hat for groceries for the Wilson's and supplied us with \$50 per month. So, we had a lot of discontented stockholders, \$50 bucks a month, a summer camp and an automobile with which to revive the failing fortunes of the book Alcoholics Anonymous.

We began to shop around from one magazine to another asking if they would give us some publicity, nobody bit and it looked like the whole dump was going to be foreclosed; book, office, Wilson's, everything.

One of the boys in New York happened to be a little bit prosperous at the time and he had a fashionable clothing business on Fifth Avenue which we learned was mostly on mortgage, having drunk nearly all of it up. His name was Bert Taylor. I went up to Bert one day and I said "Bert, there is a promise of an article in Liberty Magazine, I just got it today but it won't come out until next September. It's going to be called "Alcoholics and God" and will be printed by Fulton Oursler the editor of Liberty Magazine. Bert, when that piece is printed, these books will go out in carload lots. We need \$1,000 bucks to get us through the summer."

Bert asked, "Well, are you sure that the article is going to be printed?"

"Oh yes," I said, "that's final."

He said, "O.K., I haven't got the dough but there's this man down in Baltimore, Mr. Cochran, he's a customer of mine...he buys his pants in here. Let me call him up."

Bert gets on long-distance with Mr. Cochran in Baltimore, a very wealthy man, and says to him "Mr. Cochran, from time to time I mentioned this alcoholic fellowship to which I belong. Our fellowship has just come out with a magnificent new textbook... a sure cure for alcoholism... Mr. Cochran, this is something we think every public library in America should have, and Mr. Cochran, the retail price of the book is \$2.50. Mr. Cochran, if you'll just buy a couple of thousand of those books and put them in the large libraries, of course we would sell them for that purpose at a considerable discount."

Mr. Cochran, some publicity will come out next fall about this new book Alcoholics Anonymous, but in the meantime, these books are moving slowly and we need, say, \$1,000 to tide us over. Would you loan the Works Publishing Company this?"

Mr. Cochran asked what the balance sheet of the Works Publishing Company looked like and after he learned what it looked like he said "no thanks."

So Bert then said, "Now Mr. Cochran, you know me. Would you loan the money to me on the credit of my business?"

"Why certainly," Mr. Cochran said, "send me down your note." So Bert hocked the business that a year or two later was to go broke anyway and saved the book Alcoholics Anonymous. The thousand dollars lasted until the Liberty article came out.

Eight hundred inquiries came in as a result of that, we moved a few books and we barely squeaked through the year 1939. In all this period we heard nothing from John D. Rockefeller when all of a sudden, in about February, 1940, Mr. Richardson came to a trustees meeting of the Foundation and announced that he had great news.

We were told that Mr. Rockefeller, whom we had not heard from since 1937, had been watching us all this time with immense interest. Moreover, Mr.

Rockefeller wanted to give this fellowship a dinner to which he would invite his friends to see the beginnings of this new and promising start.

Mr. Richardson produced the invitation list. Listed were the President of Chase Bank, Wendell Wilkie, and all kinds of very prominent people, many of them extremely rich. I mean, after a quick look at the list I figured it would add up to a couple of billion dollars. So, we felt maybe at least, you know, there would be some money in sight. So, the dinner came, and we got Harry Emerson Fosdick who had reviewed the A.A. book and he gave us a wonderful plug. Dr. Kennedy came and spoke on the medical attitudes. He'd seen a patient of his, a very hopeless gal, Marty Mann, recover. I got up, talked about life among the "anonymie," and the bankers assembled 75 strong and in great wealth, sat at the tables with the alcoholics.

The bankers had come probably for some sort of command performance and they were a little suspicious that perhaps this was another prohibition deal, but they warmed up under the influence of the alcoholics.

Mr. Ryan, the hero of the Heatter episode and still sober, was asked at his table by a distinguished banker, "Why, Mr. Ryan, we presumed you were in the banking business."

Ryan says, "not at all sir, I just got out of Great Stone Asylum."

Well, that intrigued the bankers and they were all warming up. Unfortunately, Mr. Rockefeller couldn't get to the dinner. He was quite sick that night so he sent his son, a wonderful gent, Nelson Rockefeller, in his place instead.

After the show was over and everyone was in fine form, we were all ready again for the big touch. Nelson Rockefeller got up and speaking for his father said, "My father sends word that he is so sorry that he cannot be here tonight, but is so glad that so many of his friends can see the beginnings of this great and wonderful thing. Something that affected his life more than almost anything that had crossed his path."

A stupendous plug that was! Then Nelson said, "Gentlemen, this is a work that proceeds on good will. It requires no money." Whereupon, the 2 billion dollars got up and walked out. That was a terrific letdown, but we weren't let down for too long.

Again, the hand of Providence had intervened. Right after dinner, Mr. Rockefeller asked that the talks and pamphlets be published.

He approached the rather defunct Works Publishing Company and said he would

like to buy 400 books to send to all of the bankers who had come to the dinner and to those who had not.

Seeing that this was for a good purpose, we let him have the books cheap. He bought them cheaper than anybody has since. We sold 400 books to John D. Rockefeller Jr. for one buck apiece to send to his banker friends. He sent out the books and pamphlets and with it, he wrote a personal letter and signed every dog gone one of them.

In this letter he stated how glad he was that his friends had been able to see the great beginning of what he thought would be a wonderful thing, how deeply it had affected him and then he added (unfortunately) "gentlemen, this is a work of goodwill. It needs little, if any, money. I am giving these good people \$1,000." So, the bankers all received Mr. Rockefeller's letter and counted it up on the cuff. Well, if John D. is giving \$1,000, me with only a few million should send these boys about \$10! One who had an alcoholic relative in tow sent us \$300. So, with Mr. Rockefeller's \$1,000 plus the solicitation of all the rest of these bankers, we got together the princely sum of \$3,000 which was the first outside contribution of the Alcoholic Foundation.

The \$3,000 was divided equally between Smithy and me so that we could keep going somehow. We solicited that dinner list for 5 years and got about \$3,000 a year for 5 years.

At the end of that time, we were able to say to Mr. Rockefeller, "We don't need any more money. The book income is helping to support our office, the groups are contributing to fill in and the royalties are taking care of Dr. Bob and Bill Wilson."

Now you see Mr. Rockefeller's decision not to give us money was a blessing. He gave of himself. He gave of himself when he was under public ridicule for his views about alcohol. He said to the whole world "this is good." The story went out on the wires all over the world. People ran into the bookstores to get the new book and boy, we really began to get some book orders. An awful lot of inquiries came into the little office at Vessy Street. The book money began to pay Ruth.

We hired one more to help. There was Ruthie, another gal and me. And then came Jack Alexander with his terrific article in the Saturday Evening Post. Then an immense lot of inquiries... .6,000 or 7,000 of them. Alcoholics Anonymous had become a national institution.

Such is the story of the preparation of the book Alcoholics Anonymous and of its subsequent effect, you all have some notion. The proceeds of that book have repeatedly saved the office in New York. But, it isn't the money that

and they will be a series of yarns which cluster around the preparation of the good old A.A. bible and when I hear that it always makes me shudder because the guys who put it together weren't a damn bit biblical. I think sometimes some of the drunks have an idea that these old timers went around with almost visible halos and long gowns and they were full of sweetness and light. Oh boy, how inspired they were, oh yes. But wait till I tell you.

I suppose the book yarn really started in the living room of Doc and Annie Smith. As you know, I landed there in the summer of '35, a little group caught hold. I helped Smithy briefly with it and he went on to found the first A.A. group in the world. And, as with all new groups, it was nearly all failure, but now and then, somebody saw the light and there was progress.

Pampered, I got back to New York, a little more experienced group started there, and by the time we got around to 1937, this thing had leaped over into Cleveland, and began to move south from New York. But, it was still, we thought in those years, flying blind, a flickering candle indeed, that might at any moment be snuffed out.

So, on this late fall afternoon in 1937, Smithy and I were talking together in his living room, Anne sitting there, when we began to count noses. How many people had stayed dry; in Akron, in New York, maybe a few in Cleveland? How many had stayed dry and for how long? And when we added up the total, it sure was a handful of, I don't know, 35 to 40 maybe. But enough time had elapsed on enough really fatal cases of alcoholism, so that we grasped the importance of these small statistics.

Bob and I saw for the first time that this thing was going to succeed. That God in his providence and mercy had thrown a new light into the dark caves where we and our kind had been and were still by the millions dwelling. I can never forget the elation and ecstasy that seized us both. And when we sat happily talking and reflecting, we reflected, that well, a couple of score of drunks were sober but this had taken three long years.

There had been an immense amount of failure and a long time had been taken just to sober up the handful. How could this handful carry its message to all those who still didn't know? Not all the drunks in the world could come to Akron or New York.

But how could we transmit our message to them, and by what means? Maybe we could go to the old timers in each group, but that meant nearly everybody, to find the sum of money - somebody else's money, of course - and say to them "Well now, take a sabbatical year off your job if you have one, and you go to Kentucky, Omaha, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles and wherever it may be and you give this thing a year and get a group started."

It had already become evident by then that we were just about to be moved out of the City Hospital in Akron to make room for people with broken legs and ailing livers; that the hospitals were not too happy with us. We tried to run their business perhaps too much, and besides, drunks were apt to be noisy in the night and there were other inconveniences which were all tremendous. So, it was obvious that because of drunks being such unlovely creatures, we would have to have a great chain of hospitals. And as that dream burst upon me, it sounded good, because you see, I'd been down in Wall Street in the promotion business and I remember the great sums of money that were made as soon as people got this chain idea. You know, chain drug stores, chain grocery stores, chain dry good stores.

That evening Bob and I told them that we were within sight of success and that we thought this thing might go on and on and on, that a new light indeed was shining in our dark world. But how could this light be a reflection and transmitted without being distorted and garbled?

At this point, they turned the meeting over to me, and being a salesman, I set right to work on the drunk tanks and subsidies for the missionaries, I was pretty poor then.

We touched on the book. The group conscience consisted of 18 men good and true ... and the good and true men, you could see right away, were dammed skeptical about it all. Almost with one voice, they chorused "let's keep it simple, this is going to bring money into this thing, this is going to create a professional class. We'll all be ruined."

"Well," I countered, "That's a pretty good argument. Lots to what you say ... but even within gunshot of this very house, alcoholics are dying like flies. And if this thing doesn't move any faster than it has in the last three years, it may be another 10 before it gets to the outskirts of Akron. How in God's name are we going to carry this message to others? We've got to take some kind of chance. We can't keep it so simple it becomes an anarchy and gets complicated. We can't keep it so simple that it won't propagate itself, and we've got to have a lot of money to do these things."

So, exerting myself to the utmost, which was considerable in those days, we finally got a vote in that little meeting and it was a mighty close vote by just a majority of maybe 2 or 3. The meeting said with some reluctance, "Well Bill, if we need a lot of dough, you better go back to New York where

there's plenty of it and you raise it."

Well, boy, that was the word that I'd been waiting for. So I scrambled back to the great city and I began to approach some people of means describing this tremendous thing that had happened. And it didn't seem so tremendous to the people of means at all.

What? 35 or 40 drunks sober up? They have sobered them up before now, you know. And besides, Mr. Wilson, don't you think it's kind of sweeping up the shavings? I mean, wouldn't this be something for the Red Cross be better?

In other words, with all of my ardent solicitations, I got one hell of a freeze from the gentlemen of wealth. Well, I began to get blue and when I begin to get blue my stomach kicks up as well as other things.

I was laying in the bed one night with an imaginary ulcer attack (this used to happen all the time - I had one the time the 12 steps were written) and I said, "My God, we're starving to death here on Clinton Street." By this time the house was full of drunks. They were eating us out of house and home. In those days we never believed in charging anybody anything - so Lois was earning the money, I was being the missionary and the drunks were eating the meals. "This can't go on. We've got to have those drunk tanks, weâ€™ve got to have those missionaries, and we've got to have a book. That's for sure."

The next morning I crawled into my clothes and I called on my brother-in-law.

He's a doctor and he is about the last person who followed my trip way down. The only one, save of course, the Lord. "Well," I said, "I'll go up and see Leonard."

So I went up to see my brother-in-law Leonard and he pried out a little time between patients coming in there. I started my awful bellyache about these rich guys who wouldn't give us any dough for this great and glorious enterprise. It seemed to me he knew a girl and I think she had an uncle that somehow tied up with the Rockefeller offices. I asked him to call and see if there was such a man and if there was, would he see us. On what slender threads our destiny sometimes hangs.

So, the call was made. Instantly there came onto the other end of the wire the voice of dear Willard Richardson - one of the loveliest Christian gentlemen I have ever known. And the moment he recognized my brother-in-law he said, "Why Leonard, where have you been all these years?" "Well, my brother-in-law, unlike me, is a man of very few words, so he quickly said to dear old Uncle Willard, he had a brother-in-law who had apparently some success sobering up drunks and could the two of us come over there and see

him. "Why certainly," said dear Willard. "Come right over."

So we go over to Rockefeller Plaza. We go up that elevator - 54 flights or 56 I guess it was, and we walk promptly into Mr. Rockefeller's personal offices, and ask to see Mr. Richardson.

Here sits this lovely, benign old gentleman, who nevertheless had a kind of shrewd twinkle in his eye. So I sat down and told him about our exciting discovery, this terrific cure for alcoholics that had just hit the world, how

it worked and what we have done for them. And, boy, this was the first receptive man with money or access to money remember we were in Mr. Rockefeller's personal offices at this point and by now, we had learned that this was Mr. Rockefeller's closest personal friend.

So he said, "I'm very interested. Would you like to have lunch with me, Mr. Wilson?" Well, now you know, for a rising promoter, that sounded pretty good - going to have lunch with the best friends of John D. Things were looking up. My ulcer attack disappeared. So I had lunch with the old gentleman and we went over this thing again and again and, boy, he's so warm and kindly and friendly.

Right at the close of the lunch he said, "Well now Mr. Wilson or Bill, if I can call you that, wouldn't you like to have a luncheon meeting with some of my friends? There's Frank Amos, he's in the advertising business but he was on a committee that recommended that Mr. Rockefeller drop the prohibition business. And there's LeRoy Chipman, he looks after Mr. Rockefeller's real estate. And there's Mr. Scotty, Chairman of the Board of the Riverside Church and a number of other people like that. I believe they'd like to hear this story."

So a meeting was arranged and it fell upon a winter's night in 1937. And the meeting was held at 30 Rockefeller Plaza. We called in, posthaste, a couple of drunks from Akron - Smithy included, of course - heading the procession. I came in with the New York contingent of four or five. And to our astonishment we were ushered into Mr., Rockefeller's personal boardroom right next to his office. I thought to myself "Well, now this is really getting hot." And indeed I felt very much warmed when I was told by Mr. Richardson that I was sitting in a chair just vacated by Mr. Rockefeller. I said "Well, now, we really are getting close to the bankroll."

Old Doc Silkworth was there that night too, and he testified what he had seen happen to these new friends of ours, and each drunk, thinking of nothing

better to say, told their stories of drinking and recovering and these folk listened.

They seemed very definitely impressed. I could see that the moment for the big touch was coming. So, I gingerly brought up the subject of the drunk tanks, the subsidized missionaries, and the big question of a book or literature.

Well, God moves in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform. It didn't look like a wonder to me when Mr. Scott, head of a large engineering firm and Chairman of the Riverside Church, looked at us and said "Gentlemen, up to this point, this has been the work of goodwill only. No plan, no property, no paid people, just one carrying the good news to the next. Isn't that true? And may it not be that that is where the great power of this society lies? Now, if we subsidize it, might it not alter its whole character? We want to do all we can, we're gathered for that, but would it be wise?" Well then, the salesmen all gave Mr. Scott the rush and we said, "Why, Mr. Scott, there're only 40 of us. It's taken 3 years. Why millions, Mr. Scott, will rot before this thing ever gets to 'em unless we have money and lots of it."

And we made our case at last with these gentlemen for the missionaries, the drunk tanks and the book. So one of them volunteered to investigate us very carefully, and since poor old Dr. Bob was harder up than I was, and since the first group and the reciprocal community was in Akron, we directed their attention out there. Frank Amos, still a trustee in the Foundation, at his own expense, got on a train, went out to Akron and made all sorts of preliminary inquiries around town about Dr. Bob. All the reports were good except that he was a drunk that recently got sober. He visited the little meeting out there. He went to the Smith house and he came back with what he thought was a very modest proposal.

He recommended to these friends of ours that we should have at least a token amount of money at first, say \$50,000, something like that. That would clear up the mortgage on Smith's place. It would get us a little rehabilitation place. We could put Dr. Smith in charge. We could subsidize a few of these people briefly, until we got some more money. We could start the chain of hospitals. We'd have a few missionaries. We could get busy on the book, all for a mere \$50,000 bucks.

Well, considering the kind of money we were backed up against, that did sound a little small, but, you know, one thing leads to another and it sounded real good.

We were real glad. Mr. Willard Richardson, our original contact, then took that report into John D. Jr. as everybody recalls. And I've since heard what went on in there. Mr. Rockefeller read the report, called Willard Richardson and thanked him and said: "Somehow I am strangely stirred by all this. This interests me immensely." And then looking at his friend Willard, he said, "But isn't money going to spoil this thing? I'm terribly afraid that it would. And yet I am so strangely stirred by it."

Then came another turning point in our destiny. When that man whose business is giving away money said to Willard Richardson, "No," he said, I won't be the one to spoil this thing with money. You say these two men who are heading it are a little "stressed", I'll put \$5,000 dollars in the Riverside Church treasury. Those folks can form themselves into a committee and draw on it as they like. I want to hear what goes on. But, please don't ask me for any more money."

Well, with 50 thousand that then was shrunk to five, we paid the mortgage on Smithys house for about three grand. That left two and Smith and I commenced chewing on that too. Well, that was a long way from a string of drunk tanks and books. What in thunder would we do? Well, we had more meetings with our new found friends, Amos, Richardson, Scott, Chipman and those fellows who stuck with us to this day, some of them now gone.

And, in spite of Mr. Rockefeller's advice, we again convinced these folks that this thing needed a lot of money. What could we do without it? So, one of them proposed, "Well, why don't we form a foundation, something like the Rockefeller Foundation?"

I said, "I hope it will be like that with respect to money."

And then one of them got a free lawyer from a firm who was interested in the thing. And we all asked him to draw up an agreement of trust, a charter for something to be called the Alcoholic Foundation. Why we picked that one, I don't know. I don't know whether the Foundation was alcoholic, it was the Alcoholic Foundation, not the Alcoholics Foundation.

And the lawyer was very much confused because in the meeting which formed the Foundation, we made it very plain that we did not wish to be in the majority. We felt that there should be non-alcoholics on the board and they ought to be in a majority of one.

"Well, indeed," said the lawyer, "What is the difference between an alcoholic

and a non-alcoholic?"

And one of our smart drunks said, "That's a cinch, a non-alcoholic is a guy who can drink and an alcoholic is a guy who can't drink."

"Well," said the lawyer, "how do we state that legally?" We didn't know. So at length, we have a foundation and a board which I think then was about seven, consisting of four of these new friends, including my brother-in-law, Mr. Richardson, Chipman, Amos and some of us drunks. I think Smithy went on the board but I kind of coyly stayed off it thinking it would be more convenient later on.

So we had this wonderful new foundation. These friends, unlike Mr. Rockefeller, were sold on the idea that we needed a lot of dough, and so our salesmen around New York started to solicit some money, again, from the very rich. We had a list of them and we had credentials from friends of Mr. John D. Rockefeller. "How could you miss, I ask you, salesmen?" The Foundation had been formed in the spring of 1938 and all summer we solicited the rich.

Well, they were either in Florida or they preferred the Red Cross, or some of them thought that drunks were disgusting and we didn't get one damm cent in the whole summer of 1938, praise God!

Well, meantime, we began to hold trustee meetings and they were commiseration sessions on getting no dough. What with the mortgage and with me and Smithy eating away at it, the five grand had gone up the flu, and we were all stone broke again.

Smithy couldn't get his practice back either because he was a surgeon and nobody likes to be carved up by an alcoholic surgeon - even if he was three years sober.

So things were tough all around, no fooling.

Well, what would we do?

One day, probably in August 1938, I produced at a Foundation meeting, a couple of chapters of a proposed book along with some recommendations of a couple of doctors down at John Hopkins to try to put the bite on the rich. And we still had these two book chapters kicking around. Frank Amos said, "Well now, I know the religious editor down there at Harpers, an old friend of mine, Gene Exman." He said, "Why don't you take these two book chapters, your story and the introduction to the book, down there and show them to Gene and see what he thinks about them."

So I took the chapters down. To my great surprise, Gene who was to become a great friend of ours, looked at the chapters and said, "Why Mr. Wilson, could you write a whole book like this?"

"Well, I said, "Sure, sure." There was more talk about it. I guess he went in and showed it to Mr. Canfield, the big boss, and another meeting was had. The upshot was that Harpers intimated that they would pay me as the budding author, 15 hundred in advance royalties, bringing enough money in to enable me to finish the book. I felt awful good about that. It made me feel like I was an author or something. I felt real good about it but after awhile, not so good.

Because I began to reason, and so did the other boys, if this guy Wilson eats up the 15 hundred bucks while he's doing this book, after the book gets out, it will take a long time to catch up. And if this thing gets him publicity, what are we going to do with the inquiries? And, after all, what's a lousy 10% royalty anyway?

The \$15 hundred still looked pretty big to me. Then we thought too, now here's a fine publisher like Harpers, but if this book when done, should prove to be the main textbook for A.A., why would we want our main means of propagation in the hands of somebody else? Shouldn't we control this thing?

At this point, the book project really began. I had a guy helping me on this thing who had red hair and ten times my energy and he was some promoter [Hank Parkhurst].

He said, "Bill, this is something, come on with me."

We walk into a stationary store, we buy a pad of blank stock certificates and we write across the top of them "Works Publishing Company- Par Value 25 Dollars.

So we take the pad of these stock certificates, (of course we didn't bother to incorporate it, that didn't happen for several more years) we took this pad of stock certificates to the first A.A. meeting where you shouldn't mix money with spirituality.

We said to the drunks "look, this thing is gonna be a cinch. Parkhurst will take a third of this thing for services rendered. I, the author will take a third for services rendered, and you can have a third of these stock certificates par 25 if you'll just start paying up on your stock. If you only want one share, it's only five dollars a month, 5 months, see?"

And the drunks all gave us this stony look that said, "What the hell, you mean to say you're only asking us to buy stock in a book that you ain't written yet?"

"Why sure," we said "If Harpers will put money in this thing why shouldn't you? Harpers said it's gonna be a good book."

But the drunks still gave us this stony stare. We had to think up some more arguments. "We've been looking at pricing costs of the books, boys. We get a book here, ya know, 400 or 450 pages, it ought to sell for about \$3.50."

Now back in those days we found on inquiry from the printers that that \$3.50 book could be printed for 35 cents making a 1,000% profit. Of course, we didn't mention the other expenses, just the printing costs. "So boys, just think on it, when these books move out by the carload we will be printing them for 35 cents and we'll be selling them direct mail for \$3.50. How can you lose?"

The drunks still gave us this stony stare. No salt. Well, we figured we had to have a better argument than that. Harpers said it was a good book, you can print them for 35 cents and sell them for \$3.50, but how are we going to convince the drunks that we could move carload lots of them? Millions of dollars.

So we get the idea we'll go up to the Readers Digest, and we got an appointment with Mr. Kenneth Paine, the managing editor there. Gee, I'll never forget the day we got off the train up at Pleasantville and were ushered into his office. We excitedly told him the story of this wonderful budding society. We dwelled upon the friendship of Mr. Rockefeller and Harry Emerson Fosdick. You know we were traveling in good company with Paine. The society, by the way, was about to publish a textbook, then in the process of being written and we were wondering, Mr. Paine, if this wouldn't be a matter of tremendous interest to the Reader's Digest? Having in mind of course that the Reader's Digest has a circulation of 12 million readers and if we could only get a free ad of this coming book in the Digest we really would move something, ya see?

"Well," Mr. Paine said, "this sounds extremely interesting, I like this idea, why I think it'll be an absolutely ideal piece for the Digest. How soon do you think this new book will be out Mr. Wilson?" I said, "We've got a couple of chapters written, ahem, if we can get right at it, Mr. Paine, uh, you know, uh, probably uh, this being October, we ought to get this thing out by April or next May.

"Why," Mr. Paine said, "I'm sure the Digest would like a thing like this. Mr.

have

for our own uses and affiliation, modified their program, chiefly by designing our twelve step program in a manner that the alcoholic who feels he

needs and wants a change from what they are experiencing, can comfortably accept and apply the program and thereby change their life.

To do so, requires certain attitudes, willingness, and acts on our parts.

We have simplified the program, in the feeling that any alcoholic with an alcohol problem can live a life free of the obsession to drink.

Our program of the twelve steps is really accepted in four distinct phases, as follows:

1) Need (admission)

2) Surrender (submission)

3) Restitution

4) Construction and Maintenance

Phase #1 - Is covered in Step 1- "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol,

that our lives had become unmanageable" - this step points out phase 1- or our own need - there is a need for a change!

Phase #2 - Includes the 2nd through the 7th steps which constitutes the phase of submission.

Step#2 - "We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." Since we could not manage our own lives, of ourselves,

we found ourselves to be powerless over alcohol; we were encouraged by the power of example of someone or some others to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. In this step, we have the "proof of the pudding" before we are asked to eat it!! Others tell us of their experiences and share their deepest feelings with us and those members are alcoholics such as we are, and there they stand, sober, clean-eyed, useful, confident and with a certain radiance we envy and really want for ourselves. So, we WANT to believe it! Of course, some persons could conceivably be a bit

more startled at first by the reference to "being restored to sanity," but most of us finally conclude that in hearing of some of the experiences our new friends had during their drinking careers were anything but the actions of a rational person, and when we reflect upon our own actions and deeds prior to our own introduction to A.A., it is not difficult to recognize that we too, were pretty well out in left field also! In fact, most of us are happy in the feeling that we were not really responsible for many of our past

unpleasant and embarrassing situations and frankly, this step does much to relieve our feelings of guilt and self-condemnation.

Step #3 - "We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God..."

Now here is the step which separates the men from the boys (or the women

from

the girls) - this is the step which tells the story as to whether we are going to be in A.A., or around A.A. Yes, we can attend meetings, visit the clubs, attend the social functions, but, unless we really take step #3, we are continuing to make up our own program. Since our entire program is based upon dependence upon God and our lives are to be directed by Him! So, here we

are, making a decision which in itself is quite an accomplishment for the alcoholic, since they are one of the most indecisive creatures in society, due to their incapacity to manage their own life due to their obsession-

But-

to make a decision to turn our life and our will over to the care of God- this creature in the far blue yonder, whom we have little acquaintance with and probably much fear of, this is really asking very, very much of an alcoholic! Rest assured, that if they are not ready, if they have not reached

their "bottom" or extremity, and if they are not really "hurting more than they ever have," they are not about to take step #3. So - they go pretty much

on their own as usual, except that they do have the advantage of better company than they had been associating with and this in time, could really foul up any type of drinking life they may have in the future! Another important feature enters here, in that they know now that there is a way out of their dilemma and this is bound to "work" on them as time goes on, if they

have any pride at all in themselves! At this point - their biggest problem is

to overcome FEAR and "Let go and let God."

Step #4 - "Made a searching and fearless Moral inventory of ourselves."

This is a step which should be taken with the assistance of a sponsor, or counselor who is well experienced in this changed life - due to the capacity of the alcoholic to find justification for about anything - a sponsor can bring up through sharing - many various moral weaknesses which need attention

in their life and can smooth the way for the alcoholic to examine them in a frank fashion. The next step suggests that someone is helping with step #4 - since it reads as follows:

Step #5 - "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact NATURE of our wrongs."

We put ourselves on record and leave no options or reservations! Note that it

states, NATURE of our wrongs- not the wrongs themselves! We are not required to narrate details of our many indiscretions. Many of them we don't even remember, nor are conscious of. This is not a laundry for dirty linen; this is recognition of character defects, which need elimination or adjustments!

Step #6 - "Were entirely ready to have God remove ALL these defects of character."

This step allows for no reservations. The alcoholic, being an extremist must

go the whole route. We are not a bit ready, or about to be ready, but entirely

ready to have God, not us, remove ALL these defects of character, (the interesting ones as well as the more damnable ones!).

Step #7 - "Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings."

We tried to make no deal, as we did in the past when situations would overwhelm us. It was common to say- "Dear God, get me out of this mess and I will be a good boy (or girl), I will not do thus and such, etc., etc., etc., " NONE OF THAT! We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. The Good Book

assures us that anything we ask believing, we shall receive!

Step #8 - Begins our phase #3- that of restitution. So now we have admission in Step #1, Submission, Steps #2 through #7. Now for the Restitution in Steps

#8 and #9.

Step #8 - "Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all. Steps 8 and 9 should also be taken with the assistance of a knowledgeable sponsor or a counselor, since in our present state of impatience with almost complete lack of judgment; we could conceivably cause much harm in executing this phase of the program.

Most of us probably have persons on that list whom we just do not want to have any contact with. The step states plainly - ALL persons we had harmed! Obviously some of these persons are not available, having passed on, or disappeared etc., so we must ask God to handle those details. But step #9 states - "Made direct amends Whenever Possible except when to do so would injure them or others." We cannot and should not try to clear our slate or conscience at the expense of any others. This phase is very important and it eliminates the possibility of carrying over some details into our new life that could consciously come back to haunt or harm us in our new life. We are going into a new life, and we should "Let the dead bury the dead."

Now that we have taken 9 steps!!! We have concluded 3 phases of our program.

These 9 steps we have accomplished - so - FORGET THEM!!! They have required action and you have taken the action, so there is no need of repeating it!

There are only two occasions when one must refer back to the first nine steps, #1- is in the event that the person "resigns and resumes," obviously they must start all over again! The other occasion when we may refer to the first nine steps is when we are trying to explain them to a new member and helping them with them.

So, now we have our last phase, that of Construction - Steps 10-11- and 12.

With these steps, we construct our life. These are our living steps. We no longer must be concerned with 12 steps- ONLY 3 STEPS!! How simple, how wonderful!!

Step #10 - "Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it."

This step has absolutely no connection with step #4. Note, in step #4, it calls for a searching and fearless Moral inventory. This step calls for a personal inventory. This step is our daily check on ourselves. This is our check on the small and large and otherwise details of my life TODAY. My

simple way of handling step 10 may help someone, since I find that it is most adequate for me, and I prefer to keep things simple and uncomplicated. At night, after I am in bed, my day is over; I find this is one of my most important prayer times. I think about my day, what have I done, whom I have been with, what has transpired. Sometimes I find that I am not proud of something I have done today, and I owe someone an apology, I do not permit these things to go unattended. I have found that it is not the so-called "big" things which seriously affect the alcoholic in their new life, but the "little" things. They can go on and on and add up and become a real burden and eventually have drastic effects upon our new life. This is the reason for step 10, keep things "cleaned up," keep the walk swept! Maintain a good healthy attitude.

Step #11 - "Sought through Prayer and Meditation, to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

This is a great step, first, because it brings us into a prayer life. Back in step #3, we made a decision to turn our life and will over to the care of God. In step #11, we receive our orders!! Let us break this step down and discover how it is both simple and profound. We are seeking something, seeking to improve our conscious contact with God. What does that mean? To me it means He is not in the far blue yonder, beyond reach, but right here, close where I can talk to Him and listen to Him (the Bible states that He is closer than hands and feet, and that is most close!). So, I am seeking to make this contact through Prayer and Meditation. What does this mean? To me, Prayer is talking to God, and Meditation is listening to Him! The good Lord endowed us with one mouth and two ears, which should suggest something to us!! We are enjoined- "Be Still" - and that is how we should be while listening! The answers surely will come if we but listen. Now, the step tells us what to pray for.

"Only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out." Since we submitted ourselves and turned our will and life over to the care of God in phase #2- now we ask for His orders and strength to carry them out. We are promised that He will never expect anything from us that He won't give us the power to execute.

Now then, do you see any place in the step thus far to suggest we pray for sobriety? Of course not, and it is absolutely unnecessary - you HAVE sobriety. Thank Him for it - but it is pointless to pray for what you already have. The 11th step states very plainly how to pray and what to pray for!!

Step #12 - We have experienced 11 steps and something has happened to us. In fact, something happened at the end of step 9! Step 12 states very plainly - "Having had a Spiritual Experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other Alcoholics and to practice these principles in ALL

of our affairs."

What is a Spiritual Experience? That is the changed life we have been referring to. That is the change that comes to a person who has turned their will over to the care of God and continues to try and improve themselves, mentally, morally and spiritually. It states that we try to carry this message (not the alcoholic) to alcoholics. We practice these principles of love and service in all our affairs. Not just in A.A. meetings and associations, at home, at business, everywhere! What a blessing this fellowship is. What a great opportunity to love and be loved. Why cheat yourself? We have the prescription, the means of getting well, staying well, growing and best of all, SERVING. Come on in, the water's fine!! Friends are wonderful, the fellowship is distinct and GOD IS GREAT!!

[This was transcribed from Clarence's handwritten copy.]

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+++Message 188. My Higher Power - The Light Bulb
From: Fiona 6/3/2002 10:28:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

My Higher Power - The Light Bulb

By Clarence H. Snyder

(Clarence started AA group #3 in Cleveland & in the beginning had a higher recovery rate than Bill & Dr. Bob combined. His story, "Home Brewmeister," can be found on page 297 of the Big Book.)

In their sincere & honest attempt to maintain a "hands-off" policy regarding fellow members' religious beliefs & perhaps sensitivities, our founding fathers exercised gentle wisdom & proffered spiritual freedom. No one, it was rightly thought, should be permitted to impose his or her own religious concepts & beliefs upon any other member of the fellowship. This area was much too important to the prospective recoveree to be tampered with by mortal

man. The very life of the prospect depends, ultimately, upon his or her "personal relationship" with a "Power greater than themselves." The notion was valid in the Program's earlier days - AND IT STILL IS!

In no way, shape or form, however, was the idea conceived to avoid guiding our beloved newcomer along the path of spiritual progress. Quite the contrary, our whole purpose as recovered alcoholics, was & is to help the next person achieve sobriety. If that person is a real alcoholic his only hope is God. So in its most basic & simplest terms our only real purpose is to help the still-suffering alcoholic to find God. A loving God, a healing God is the alcoholic's only real hope.

This is no easy task. A vast array of difficulties presents themselves to thwart the new person on his journey. The foremost adversary, of course, is the illness itself. It seems that many, many alcoholics have a very fierce, emotionally charged resistance to accepting any dependence upon a Power, which, to them, may seem an abstract & remotely distant concept.

This internal resistance is most effectively broken down by the potential recoveree's initial desperation. (It seems such a shame that today's AA actually encourages the newcomer to avoid reaping the blessings of that desperation.) If intense enough & deep enough, this emotional "bottom" will be the very propellant the prospect needs to thrust him into the recovery process offered by AA through its 12 Steps.

Another stumbling block, which many people who are new to the program are currently encountering, is us! We seem to be full of fear regarding the responsibility we have been given in the area of spiritual guidance. We shirk this responsibility by evasiveness or by the direct sidestepping of the

issue by such statements as, "It's God as you understand Him, & it's up to you to come to your own conclusions." So the newcomer is left to his own devices. He is expected to arrive, alone & unguided, at a relationship with his Creator.

One of the most powerful & hope-filled statements to be found in the entire text of Alcoholics Anonymous can be found on page 25. "The great fact is just this, & nothing less: That we have had deep & effective spiritual experiences which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows & toward God's universe. The central fact of our lives today is the absolute certainty that our Creator has entered into our hearts & lives in a way that is indeed miraculous. He has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do for ourselves." Are we, today, so far removed from our founder's results of our recovery program that these words are nothing more than a "nice thought" or an exaggeration due to artificially

elated emotions? If so, we "obviously cannot transmit something we don't have." We cannot share awareness we don't have. Cannot give guidance we have never gotten. We cannot share a vision of God we have never seen. Our lack, thereby, becomes the newcomer's & he may die because of it!

Our resistance becomes his license. In his liquor befogged mind he does not seek & experience God but begins to "create" one. It's no wonder his dryness becomes so barren that in a short while he returns to drink. His "Higher Power" was a light bulb! (No joke. We have heard this comment voiced more than once & not only by a newcomer!) Or perhaps this power greater than himself was a chair, or a wall, or even a mere mortal sponsor. A quick

glance at the top of page 93 of the "Big Book" makes instantly clear a very important qualification in the concept of "...as you understand Him," & that is: "He can choose any conception he likes, PROVIDED IT MAKES SENSE TO HIM."

Power greater than himself - a light bulb? A simple flick of a switch turns off that power. A wall? Not so powerful when confronted with a bulldozer. A chair? An ax can make quick kindling of that higher power. A sponsor then? If he fails to perfect his spiritual life, his old foe alcohol is sure to reclaim him. So he won't do very well as a greater power. How about a whole group? Possibly for someone else, but not for us. If one person is powerless over alcohol, & another, we would have a group of people who are powerless over alcohol. We do not have a group who ARE POWERFUL over alcohol. Yet they do not drink! They have gained access to something more powerful than alcohol.

It was never intended that phrases such as "higher power," "power greater than ourselves," or "as we understood Him" were created as an enabling device

to justify our membership's continued avoidance of a connection with our Creator. Page 46 of the AA book says, "we found that as soon as we were able to lay aside prejudice & express even a willingness to believe in a Power greater than ourselves, we commenced to get results, even though it was impossible for any of us to fully define or comprehend that Power which is God." Again, "...that Power, which is God." Our founders apparently held no reservations, whatsoever, with Who was dealing with them. Perhaps, we would be well advised to think twice before we attempt any ourselves. Alcoholics Anonymous is not allied with any religion, as we well know. But it is allied with God, "for our very lives as ex-problem drinkers depend on it." It is allied with spirituality, for despite what our preamble states, AA is not a "fellowship," it is a spiritual way of life.

It is our most earnest desire that no one reading this feel that we are trying to impose any presentation of God of His nature on anyone. Our real hope is that a reader may be jolted from a position of complacency or spiritual evasion & get about the business of recovery.

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+++Message 189. Father Ed and AA's Bill W.
From: Fiona 6/3/2002 10:24:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

Father Ed and AA's Bill W.

by Robert Fitzgerald,

Bill Wilson, co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, was down. His feet hung over the end of the bed that nearly filled the small room he and his wife, Lois, had rented above the 24th Street AA Club in New York. It was a cold, rainy November in 1940. Lois, who supported them both with a job at a department store, was out. Bill was wondering whether the stomach pain he was feeling was an ulcer.

The walls were closing in. Thousands of copies of the Big Book were waiting in a warehouse, unsold. A few people were sober, but Bill was frustrated. How could he reach all who wanted help? Nine months earlier, a gathering of rich New Yorkers had come and gone with applause for the young movement, but no money. Hank P., after complaining for half a year, finally got drunk in April. Rollie H., a nationally famous ball-player, sobered up but broke AA's policy of anonymity by calling the press for a full name-and-photograph story.

Eventually, Bill fell into the same trap as Rollie; he began calling reporters, too, wherever he gave talks. Now he was becoming the center of attention. He had just returned from Baltimore, where a minister had asked him to face the self-pity in his own talk. He was depressed. What if he--five years sober--were to drink?

It was 10 p.m. The doorbell rang. Tom, the Club's maintenance man, said there was "some bum from St. Louis" to see him.

Reluctantly, Bill said, "Send him up." To himself, he muttered, "Not another drunk."

But Bill welcomed the stranger, all the same. As the man shuffled to a wooden chair opposite the bed and sat down, his black raincoat fell open, revealing a Roman collar. "I'm Father Ed Dowling from St. Louis," he said. "A Jesuit friend and I have been struck by the similarity of the AA twelve steps and the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius."

"Never heard of them."

Father Ed laughed. This endeared him to Bill. Robert Thomsen tells the rest of the story this way in his book, *Bill W.*:

"The curious little man went on and on, and as he did, Bill could feel his body relaxing, his spirits rising. Gradually he realized that this man sitting across from him was radiating a kind of grace...."

"Primarily, Father Ed wanted to talk about the paradox of AA, the 'regeneration,' he called it, the strength arising out of defeat and weakness, the loss of one's old life as a condition for achieving a new one. And Bill agreed with everything..."

Soon Bill was talking about all the steps and taking his fifth step (telling the exact nature of his wrongs) with this priest who had limped in from a storm. He told Father Ed about his anger, his impatience, his mounting dissatisfactions. "Blessed are they," Father Ed said, who hunger and thirst."

When Bill asked whether there was ever to be any satisfaction, the priest snapped, "Never. Never any." Bill would have to keep on reaching. In time, his reaching would find God's goals, hidden in his own heart. Thomsen continues:

"Bill had made a decision, Father Ed reminded him, to turn his life and his will over to God ... he was not to sit in judgment on how he or the world was proceeding. He had only to keep the channels open ... it was not up to him to decide how fast or how slowly AA developed.... For whether the two of them liked it or not, the world was undoubtedly proceeding as it should, in God's good time."

Father Ed continued quoting Bill's work to him. No one had been able to maintain perfect adherence to the principles. None were saints. They claimed spiritual progress, not spiritual perfection.

Before Father Ed left, he pulled his body up, and leaning on his cane he thrust his head forward and looked straight into Bill's eyes. There was a force in Bill, he said, that was all his own. It had never been on this earth before, and if Bill did anything to mar it or block it, it would never exist anywhere again.

That night, for the first time in months, Bill Wilson slept soundly.

Thus began a 20-year friendship nourished by visits, phone calls, and letters. Both men spoke the language of the heart, learned through suffering: Bill from alcoholism, Father Ed from arthritis that was turning his back to stone.

Bill turned to Father Ed as a spiritual sponsor, a friend. Father Ed, in a letter to his provincial, noted that he saw his own gift for AA as a "very free use of the Ignatian Rules for the Discernment of Spirits for the second week of the Spiritual Exercise."

Thus Father Ed endorsed AA for American Catholics with his appendix in the Big Book and his Queen's Work pamphlet of 1947. He was the first to see wider applications of the twelve steps to other addictions, and wrote about that in Grapevine (AA's magazine) in the spring 1960 issue. Bill added a last line to that Grapevine article: "Father Ed, an early and wonderful friend of AA, died as this last message went to press. He was the greatest and most gentle soul to walk this planet. I was closer to him than to any other human being on earth."

For his part, Father Ed counted many gifts from Bill. He had told his sister, Anna, that the graces he received from their meeting were equivalent to those received at his own ordination. And he thanked Bill for letting him "hitchhike" on the twelve steps. In 1942 he wrote to Bill that he had started a national movement for married couples to help each other through the twelve steps: CANA (Couples Are Not Alone). He used the steps to help people with mental difficulties, scruples, and sexual compulsions.

When chided by an AA member about his smoking, Father Ed stopped with help from the twelve steps and wrote to Bill that as a result he was becoming as "fat as a hog."

Next, he tried to use the twelve steps with his own compulsive eating. One story of his struggle ends with Father Ed one night eating all the strawberries intended to feed the whole Jesuit Community. He became so sick he had to receive last rites. He went from 242 to 167 pounds and up again like a yo-yo. He asked Bill to start an OO ("obese obvious") group.

Often Father Ed spoke of being helped by attending an open AA meeting and wrote to Bill that AA was his "lonely hearts club." In his last 20 years his ministry changed radically due to AA and his friendship with Lois and Bill. He gave CANA conferences for families, using the twelve steps, once a month from 1942 to 1960. He cheered Lois on as she started and continued with Al-Anon. Father Ed rejoiced that in "moving therapy from the expensive clinical couch to the low-cost coffee bar, from the inexperienced professional to the informed amateur, AA has democratized sanity."

He wrote his superior to free up another Jesuit, Father John Higgins, who was recovering from mental illness, to work with Recovery Inc., a group Dr. Abraham Low had started for people with mental problems. Those groups for mental illness were especially close to Father Ed's heart as there was a history of depression in his own family. He called people to be wounded healers" for each other.

Was there anything from the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius in Father Ed's gift to Bill? Father Ed pointed out parallels between the Spiritual Exercises and the twelve steps several times, but Bill had written the twelve steps before he ever heard of the Spiritual Exercises.

Father Ed did give Bill a copy of the Spiritual Exercises in 1952, underlining the "Two Standards" meditation. When Father Ed met Bill, moreover, he had called him to the place where he bottomed out and surrendered to his higher power. Father Ed believed that this was the place where humiliations led to humility and then to all other blessings. In saying this, he paraphrased Ignatius's closing prayer of the "Two Standards" meditations.

And this, Father Ed maintained, was where the Exercises become most like AA. He went a step further and invited Bill to make choices based on poverty and humiliation rather than on money, power, or fame.

This suggestion helped Bill Wilson turn down an honorary degree from Yale. On the packet of letters dealing with his decision, he wrote: "To Father Ed, with gratitude." In the letter to Yale he stated his reasons for declining the honor:

"My own life story gathered for years around an implacable pursuit of money, fame, and power, anti-climaxed by my near sinking in a sea of alcohol. Though I survived that grim misadventure, I well understand that the dread neurotic germ of the power contagion has survived in me also. It is only dormant and it can again multiply and rend me--and AA, too. Tens of thousands of AA members are temperamentally like me. They know it, fortunately, and I know it. Hence our tradition of anonymity and hence my clear obligation to decline this honor with all the immediate satisfaction and benefit it could have yielded."

This, then, is where Father Ed met Bill that rainy night long ago, in the small room where bottoming out opens up to life, where humiliations lead to humility--and to all other blessings.

condensed from "Company"

From The Catholic Digest, April 1991

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+++Message 190. Fwd: Pre-Tradition 3 (correction)
From: dand562 6/4/2002 10:05:00 AM

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--- In aahistorybuffs@y..., "Lash, William (Bill)" <wlash@a...> wrote:
> Tradition Three states, > "> The only requirement for AA membership
is a desire to stop drinking.> "> Here are two examples of why this
Tradition came about:

- >
- >
- > December 5, 1941
- >
- > From the Executive Committee of the Los Angeles Group of Alcoholics
Anonymous
- >
- > Dear Mrs. Irma L.,

> At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Los Angeles Group of Alcoholics Anonymous held December 4, 1941, it was decided that your attendance at group meetings was no longer desired until certain explanations and plans for the future were made to the satisfaction of this Committee. This action has been taken for reasons which should be most apparent to yourself. It was decided that, should you so desire, you may appear before members of this Committee and state your attitude. This opportunity may be afforded you between now and December 15, 1941. You may communicate with us at the above address by that date. In case you do not wish to appear, we shall consider the matter closed and that your membership is terminated.

> *****

> December 11, 1946

>

> To Mr. Burton R. (a member of AA in Colorado Springs, CO.)

>

> My Dear Friend,

> This is to advise you that one Bob W. who claimed to be a very good AA member has asked to appear before the Denver Group 1 Committee to defend charges unbecoming an AA member. The Committee found him guilty. All seven members voted for expulsion. He claimed unfairness of the Committee and asked to be heard before the entire group. Request granted. The final vote was 31 for expulsion and two against. Since we no longer have him with us, we look forward to less friction and more harmony at our club. Mr. K. has advised me of a request by Mr. W. to join him in a social drink. We are very sorry that occurred and assure you that all of us regret it very much. Trusting to have the pleasure of having you with us in the very near future, I wish to remain sincerely yours.

>

>

> Source: Wally P.

--- End forwarded message ---

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+++Message 191..... Sybil C.
From: Charles 6/4/2002 9:14:00 PM

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One small correction:

Sybil C passed away May 14th, 1998 and her memorial service was held on June 6th, 1998 in the War Memorial Building - 435 Fair Oaks in South Pasadena Calif. When she passed away she had 57 years of continued

sobriety. At that time, she had the most sobriety of any other female, and was believed to have even had the most sobriety in all of AA.

Charles from California

Fiona wrote:

From: NM Olson Sybil

C. was the first woman to enter AA west of the Mississippi. Her date of sobriety was March 23, 1941. Her name at the time was Sybil Maxwell, though she later opened her talks by saying, "My name is Sybil Doris Adams Stratton Hart Maxwell Willis C., and I'm an alcoholic."

She was born Sybil Doris Adams on May 20, 1908, in the small oil town of Simians, Texas. Her parents were poor but hardworking and she had a brother Herman, ten years her senior. Herman was called "Tex." Sybil adored her big brother. She remembered that when she was five and he fifteen, he would hold her and rock her to sleep.

Tex joined the Army during World War I was reported missing in action, and when the family heard nothing further they assumed he was dead. However, when Sybil was thirteen they learned that he was alive and living in Los Angeles. The family immediately moved to California.

Sybil felt like a misfit in Los Angeles. She affected the flapper makeup popular at the time: heavy white powder on her face, and two big red spots of rouge on her cheeks and lots of lipstick and black eyebrows.

"I must have looked like a circus freak or something like that," she wailed. "I was in eighth grade out there in Los Angeles, and the other kids laughed at me. I had trouble making friends, being shy and timid by nature, but also my papa wouldn't let boys even walk home with me, let alone go to parties. I just wasn't allowed to do anything, and I knew I didn't belong anywhere.

"So naturally I started drinking at a very early age, against my better judgment, full of shame and remorse because of Papa's teachings. He was a good man. When I was fifteen, I got drunk one night, passed out, and had to be carried home and put to bed in my mother's bed. I cried the next day and promised that it would never happen again -- and I meant it. But I didn't know myself, I didn't know the disease of alcoholism. The next Saturday night the kids handed me a bottle and I drank it. And I continued to do that through a couple of semesters of high school, and I stayed drunk through seventeen years of failed marriages and more jobs than I can count."

Sybil dropped out of high school and took a secretarial

course and was hired as a secretary. It was the first in along list of jobs. At various times she was a real estate broker, a taxi driver, a bootlegger, an itinerant farm worker, the editor of a magazine for pet owners, and a salesperson. "I didn't mind working," she said, "but I never seemed to get anywhere. I was just on a treadmill because of booze."

She had a child by her first husband, a sailor. She thought having the child would prevent her drinking, but she drank more than ever, and her parents eventually took the child from her.

She and her husband hitchhiked out of town to find grape picking jobs. They thought getting away from their city friends would help them quit drinking, but she soon was drunk again. During one of her drunks she heard music. At first she thought she was hallucinating, but she followed the sound and wandered into a tent where a revival meeting was in progress. The preacher asked for anyone to come forward who wanted to be saved. "Well, that was me," Sybil told AA members. "I went all the way down while the people were singing. The preacher put his hand out and placed it on my head, and I threw up all over him. It was so terrible! I was so ashamed, I couldn't bring myself to tell anyone about it until I got into Alcoholics Anonymous eleven years later."

She left her sailor husband and hitchhiked back to Los Angeles to her mother's house. Her brother, Tex, now had a speakeasy on skid row, and to make money to take to her mother to support the child, she went into the bootlegging business with him. Eventually the speakeasy was raided and they were out of business. Then she went to work in a taxi-dance hall.

Little is known of her second husband, but she met her third husband, Dick Maxwell, while working in the taxi-dance hall. One night a rich, handsome stranger walked in and bought dance tickets with Sybil for the whole night. During intermission he bought several pitchers of beer (the girls got a dollar for every pitcher their partner bought), and she told him her sad story. He offered to marry her and adopt her child if she would promise not to drink any more.

Now she had a wonderful husband, a home, a housekeeper, and a car. But she couldn't stop drinking.

In 1939, while visiting her mother, she read the Liberty magazine article called "Alcoholics and God." She thought the story fascinating but did nothing about it and her downward spiral continued.

Eighteen months later God gave her another chance, when

she read the Saturday Evening Post's March 1, 1941, issue which contained the famous Jack Alexander article about AA. She wrote to New York and received a reply from Ruth Hock, then Bill Wilson's secretary, who told her that there were no women members in California, but that Marty Mann was sober in New York. Ruth referred her to the small group of men then in the area.

On Friday, March 23, Sybil's nonalcoholic husband, Dick Maxwell, drove her to the meeting. They found ten or twelve men seated around a table and three or four women seated against the wall. When the chairman began the meeting he announced "As is our custom before the regular meeting starts, we have to ask the women to leave." Sybil left with the other women but her husband stayed and the members assumed he was the alcoholic. When he rejoined Sybil he said "They don't know you're alive. They just went on and on bragging about their drinking until I was about to walk out, when they jumped up and said the Lord's Prayer, and here I am." Sybil headed for the nearest bar and got drunk.

But she remembered the Ruth Hock had written, "If you need help, call Cliff W." and had given her his phone number. He explained: "You didn't tell us you were an alcoholic. We thought you were one of the wives. If you had identified yourself as an alcoholic, you would have been welcome as the flowers in May."

When she returned the following week, Frank R. brought in a large carton full of letters bundled into bunches of twenty to fifty. He explained that they were all inquiries and calls for help from people in southern California. "Here they are! Here they are! If any of you jokers have been sober over fifteen minutes, come on up here and get these letters. We've got to get as many of these drunks as we can in here by next Friday, or they may die."

The last bundle was of letters from women. Frank said: "Sybil Maxwell, come on up. I am going to put you in charge of all the women."

Sybil liked the idea of "being in charge" but replied "I can't, sir. You said I have to make all those calls by next Friday, or somebody might die. Well, I'll be drunk by next Friday unless you have some magic that will change everything so I can stay sober."

Frank explained that everything she needed to know was in the Big Book. "And it says right in here that when all other measures fail, working with another alcoholic will save the day. That's what you will be doing, Sybil, working with other alcoholics. You just get in your car and take your mind off yourself. Think about someone sicker than you are. Go see her and hand her the letter she wrote,

and say: 'I wrote one like this last week, and they answered mine and told me to come and see you. If you have a drinking problem like I have, and if you want to get sober as bad as I do, you come with me and we'll find out together how to do it.' Don't add another word to that, because you don't know anything yet. Just go get 'em."

It worked, and she never had another drink.

When Bill and Lois Wilson made their first visit to Los Angeles in 1943, Sybil was one of the delegation of local AA's who met them at the Town House hotel. Later she met Marty Mann.

But Dick Maxwell began to feel abandoned and lonely. He urged her to cut down on her AA activities so that they could have more of a home life. He had grown to hate AA and refused to read the Big Book or discuss the Twelve Steps. Finally he suggested that the solution to their marriage problems was for her to go back to drinking and he would take care of her.

Sybil quickly packed a bag and left. She left her lovely home and rented a housekeeping room with a gas hotplate and a bath down the hall for nine dollars a week and went to work for the L.A. Times to support herself. "AA just had to come first with me," she explained.

Her brother, Tex, joined the week after she did. He started the second AA group in the area, and appointed Sybil coffeemaker and greeter for the new group, and finally made her deliver her first shaky talk.

When Tex died in 1952, Sybil was devastated. She wrote Bill Wilson, pouring out her grief and asked "What am I going to do, Bill? I don't crave a drink, but I think I'm going to die unless I get some answers." She said Bill's answer saved her life. He wrote:

November 6, 1952

My dear Sybil,

Thanks for your letter of October 21st - it was just about the most stirring thing I have read in many a day. The real test of our way of life is how it works when the chips are down. Though I've sometimes seen AAs make rather a mess of living, I've never seen a sober one make a bad job of dying.

But the account you give me of Tex's last days is something I shall treasure always. I hope I can do half as well when my time comes. I am one who believes that in my Father's house are

many mansions. If that were not so there couldn't be any justice. I can almost see Tex sitting on the front porch of one, right now, talking in the sunlight with others of God's ladies and gentlemen who have gone on before. I certainly agree with you that little was left in Tex's grave. All he had was left behind in the hearts of the rest of us and he carried just that same amount forward to where he is now. If you like what I've said, please read it to the Huntington Park

Group. In any case, congratulate them for me that they had the privilege of knowing a guy like Tex.

As for you, my dear, there is no need to give you advice. How well you understand that the demonstration is the thing, after all. It isn't so much a question of whether we have a good time or a bad time. The only thing that will be asked is what we do with the experience we have. That you are doing well with our tough lot is something for which I and many others are bound to be grateful. This is but a long day in school. Some of the lessons are hard and others are easy. I know you will keep on learning and passing what you learned. What more does one person need to know about another!

Affectionately yours,

/s/ Bill

WGW/nw

Sybil Willis

2874A Randolph

Huntington Park, California

The letter touched Sybil so deeply she gave many copies to people who were at a low point in life, and a few years ago someone I met at an on-line meeting sent a copy to me.

At the time of the letter, she was married to Jim Willis, the founder of Gamblers' Anonymous.

Sybil is perhaps best remembered as the first executive secretary of the Los Angeles Central office of AA, a position she held for twelve years. This was a turbulent time for AA, with much disunity and controversy within the groups that led to the Twelve Traditions. Sybil remembered that the groups regarded them either with opposition or indifference and the Central Office couldn't sell many copies of the Traditions pamphlet.

Understandably, since Sybil began doing Twelfth Step work immediately, she took a dim view of the rigidity that crept into the requirements.

Some areas required six months or even a year of sobriety before one was allowed to call on new prospects. She advised "If you don't get prospects from the Central Office, look around the meeting rooms. There is always the forgotten man or woman, nervous and scared, who would love to have you come up and shake hands. Just feel what the new person is feeling. It kept me sober, it kept my brother Tex sober, and it will keep you sober when all other measures fail."

Her fifth and enduring marriage was to another AA member, Bob C. He has been described a "a high-spirited, warm, and loving man, fourteen years her junior in age and twenty-two years her junior in sobriety."

"Bob and I are very happy," Sybil declared. "This has been the best years of my life." They were both enthusiastic meeting-goers and enjoyed an incredibly wide circle of AA friends.

Sybil was honored at the International AA Convention in Montreal in 1985. She was then the longest-sober living woman in AA. When she was introduced to the 50,000 attendees from fifty-three countries, she told the colorful story of AA's beginning in Los Angeles, in which she had played such a vital role. When she finished her talk audience rose to its feet as one and gave her a standing ovation which continued so long that some thought it would never stop.

According to one source, Sybil died about 1999.

Sources:

"Women Pioneers in 12 Step Recovery," by Charlotte Hunter, Billye Jones, Joan Zieger.

"Gratefull to Have Been There," by Nell Wing.

Various tapes of Sybil's talks

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+++Message 192. 1944 A.A. Sponsorship Pamphlet
From: Fiona 6/3/2002 10:13:00 AM

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From: Lash, William (Bill)

This is the first pamphlet ever written concerning sponsorship. It was written by Clarence H. Snyder in early 1944. Its original title was to be "A.A. Sponsorship...Its Obligations and Its Responsibilities." It was printed by the Cleveland Central Committee under the title: "A.A. Sponsorship... Its Opportunities and Its Responsibilities."

1944 A.A. Sponsorship Pamphlet

by Clarence Snyder

PREFACE

Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is a potential sponsor of a new member and should clearly recognize the obligations and duties of such responsibility.

The acceptance of an opportunity to take the A.A. plan to a sufferer of alcoholism entails very real and critically important responsibilities. Each member, undertaking the sponsorship of a fellow alcoholic, must remember that he is offering what is frequently the last chance of rehabilitation, sanity or maybe life itself.

Happiness, Health, Security, Sanity and Life of human beings are the things we hold in balance when we sponsor an alcoholic.

No member among us is wise enough to develop a sponsorship program that can be successfully applied in every case. In the following pages, however, we have outlined a suggested procedure, which supplemented by the member's own experience, has proven successful.

PERSONAL GAINS OF BEING A SPONSOR

No one reaps full benefit from any fellowship he is connected with unless he whole-heartedly engages in its important activities. The expansion of Alcoholics Anonymous to wider fields of greater benefit to more people results directly from the addition of new, worth-while members or associates.

Any A.A. who has not experienced the joys and satisfaction of helping another alcoholic regain his place in life has not yet fully realized the complete

benefits of this fellowship. On the other hand, it must be clearly kept in mind that the only possible reason for bringing an alcoholic into A.A. is for that person's gain. Sponsorship should never be undertaken to -

1. Increase the size of the group
 2. For personal satisfaction and glory
 3. Because the sponsor feels it his duty to re-make the world
- Until an individual has assumed the responsibility of setting a shaking, helpless human being back on the path toward becoming a healthy useful, happy member of society, he has not enjoyed the complete thrill of being an A.A.

SOURCE OF NAMES

Most people have among their own friends and acquaintances someone who would benefit from our teachings. Others have names given to them by their church, by their doctor, by their employer, or by some other member, who cannot make a direct contact.

Because of the wide range of the A.A. activities, the names often come from unusual and unexpected places.

These cases should be contacted as soon as all facts such as: marital status, domestic relations, financial status, drink habits, employment status and others readily obtainable are at hand.

IS THE PROSPECT A CANDIDATE?

Much time and effort can be saved by learning as soon as possible if -

1. The man* really has a drinking problem?
2. Does he know he has a problem?
3. Does he want to do something about his drinking?
4. Does he want help?

*The masculine form is used throughout for simplicity, although it is intended to include women as well.

Sometimes the answers to these questions cannot be made until the prospect has had some A.A. instruction, and an opportunity to think. Often we are given names, which upon investigation, show the prospect is in no sense an alcoholic, or is satisfied with his present plan of living. We should not hesitate to drop these names from our lists. Be sure, however, to let the man know where he can reach us at a later date.

WHO SHOULD BECOME MEMBERS?

A.A. is a fellowship of men and women bound together by their inability to use alcohol in any form sensibly, or with profit or pleasure. Obviously, any new members introduced should be the same kind of people, suffering from the same disease.

Most people can drink reasonably, but we are only interested in those who cannot. Party drinkers, social drinkers, celebrators, and others who continue to have more pleasure than pain from their drinking, are of no interest to us.

In some instances an individual might believe himself to be a social drinker when he definitely is an alcoholic. In many such cases more time must pass before that person is ready to accept our program. Rushing such a man before he is ready might ruin his chances of ever becoming a successful A.A.. Do not ever deny future help by pushing too hard in the beginning.

Some people, although definitely alcoholic, have no desire or ambition to better their way of living, and until they do..... A.A. has nothing to offer them.

Experience has shown that age, intelligence, education, background, or the amount of liquor drunk, has little, if any, bearing on whether or not the person is an alcoholic.

PRESENTING THE PLAN

In many cases a man's physical condition is such that he should be placed in a hospital, if at all possible. Many A.A. members believe hospitalization, with ample time for the prospect to think and plan his future, free from domestic and business worries, offers distinct advantage. In many cases the hospitalization period marks the beginning of a new life. Other members are equally confident that any man who desires to learn the A.A. plan for living can do it in his own home or while engaged in normal occupation. Thousands of cases are treated in each manner and have proved satisfactory.

SUGGESTED STEPS*

The following paragraphs outline a suggested procedure for presenting the A.A. plan to the prospect, at home or in the hospital.

QUALIFY AS AN ALCOHOLIC*

1. In calling upon a new prospect, it has been found best to qualify oneself as an ordinary person who has found happiness, contentment, and peace of mind through A.A. Immediately make it clear to the prospect that you are a person engaged in the routine business of earning a living. Tell him your only reason for believing yourself able to help him is because you yourself are an alcoholic and have had experiences and problems that might be similar to his.

TELL YOUR STORY*

2. Many members have found it desirable to launch immediately into their personal drinking story, as a means of getting the confidence and

whole-hearted co-operation of the prospect.

It is important in telling the story of your drinking life to tell it in a manner that will describe an alcoholic, rather than a series of humorous drunken parties. This will enable the man to get a clear picture of an alcoholic which should help him to more definitely decide whether he is an alcoholic.

INSPIRE CONFIDENCE IN A.A.*

3. In many instances the prospect will have tried various means of controlling his drinking, including hobbies, church, changes of residence, change of associations, and various control plans. These will, of course, have been unsuccessful. Point out your series of unsuccessful efforts to control drinking...their absolute fruitless results and yet that you were able to stop drinking through application of A.A. principles. This will encourage the prospect to look forward with confidence to sobriety in A.A. in spite of the many past failures he might have had with other plans.

TALK ABOUT "PLUS" VALUES*

4. Tell the prospect frankly that he can not quickly understand all the benefits that are coming to him through A.A.. Tell him of the happiness, peace of mind, health, and in many cases, material benefits which are possible through understanding and application of the A.A. way of life.

SHOW IMPORTANCE OF READING BOOK*

5. Explain the necessity of reading and re-reading the A.A. book. Point out that this book gives a detailed description of the A.A. tools and the suggested methods of application of these tools to build a foundation of rehabilitation for living. This is a good time to emphasize the importance of the twelve steps and the four absolutes.

QUALITIES REQUIRED FOR SUCCESS IN A.A.*

6. Convey to the prospect that the objectives of A.A. are to provide the ways and means for an alcoholic to regain his normal place in life. Desire, patience, faith, study and application are most important in determining each individual's plan of action in gaining full benefits of A.A.

INTRODUCE FAITH*

7. Since the belief of a Power greater than oneself is the heart of the A.A. plan, and since this idea is very often difficult for a new man, the sponsor should attempt to introduce the beginnings of an understanding of this all-important feature.

Frequently this can be done by the sponsor relating his own difficulty in grasping a spiritual understanding and the methods he used to overcome his difficulties.

LISTEN TO HIS STORY*

8. While talking to the newcomer, take time to listen and study his reactions in order that you can present your information in a more effective manner. Let him talk too. Remember...Easy Does It.

TAKE TO SEVERAL MEETINGS*

9. To give the new member a broad and complete picture of A.A., the sponsor should take him to various meetings within convenient distance of his home. Attending several meetings gives a new man a chance to select a group in which he will be most happy and comfortable, and it is extremely important to let the prospect make his own decision as to which group he will join. Impress upon him that he is always welcome at any meeting and can change his home group if he so wishes.

EXPLAIN A.A. TO PROSPECT'S FAMILY*

10. A successful sponsor takes pains and makes any required effort to make certain that those people closest and with the greatest interest in their prospect (mother, father, wife, etc.) are fully informed of A.A., its principles and its objectives. The sponsor sees that these people are invited to meetings, and keeps them in touch with the current situation regarding the prospect at all times.

HELP PROSPECT ANTICIPATE HOSPITAL EXPERIENCE*

11. A prospect will gain more benefit from a hospitalization period if the sponsor describes the experience and helps him anticipate it, paving the way for those members who will call on him.

CONSULT OLDER MEMBERS IN A.A.*

These suggestions for sponsoring a new man in A.A. teachings are by no means complete. They are intended only for a framework and general guide. Each individual case is different and should be treated as such. Additional information for sponsoring a new man can be obtained from the experience of older men in the work. A co-sponsor, with an experienced and newer member working on a prospect, has proven very satisfactory. Before undertaking the responsibility of sponsoring, a member should make certain that he is able and prepared to give the time, effort, and thought such an obligation entails. It might be that he will want to select a co-sponsor to share the responsibility, or he might feel it necessary to ask another to assume the responsibility for the man he has located.

IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE A SPONSOR...BE A GOOD ONE!

(* These headings were not in the original draft for this pamphlet. They were added for the first, and subsequent printings.)

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+++Message 193. The Legacy of Recovery
From: Fiona 6/3/2002 10:19:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

The Legacy of Recovery

Twelve Steps are a group of principles, spiritual in their nature, which, if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole.

Many of us, upon first seeing those words, asked ourselves the question "Can it be just that simple?" -- and then heard a voice inside us answer "Yes."

Bill's application of AA principles to ever-changing circumstances was another of his remarkable talents. Day in and day out, letters would arrive at his desk asking for his "last word" on a matter of AA policy. And, in answer after answer Bill would fall back upon the basic principles of AA's three Legacies, tempered by wisdom, humor, perspective, and regard for the feelings of others.

One warm example occurred in 1968 when a well-meaning AA wrote to Bill, in deep concern, about an influx of youthful hippies or flower children to local AA groups, along with their distinctive manner of dress, sexual mores, and other unorthodox behavior, including the use of drugs. The writer feared that this particular invasion might be "a very real threat to our wonderful, God-given program."

Bill's reply was typical of his use of AA principles to meet new challenges.

"Your letter about the hippie problem, so-called, was mighty interesting to me. I doubt that we need to be alarmed about this situation, because there have been precedents out of the past. All sorts of outfits have tried to move in on us, including communists and heroin addicts, prohibitionists and do-gooders of other persuasions.

"Nearly all of these people, who happened to have an individual problem with

alcohol, not only failed to change AA, but, in the long run, AA changed them. I have a number of them among my closest friends today, and they are among the best AA's I know.

"You also have some people who are not alcoholics, but are addicts of other kinds. A great many AAs have taken pity on these people, and have actually tried to make them full-fledged AA's. Of course, their identification with alcoholics is no good at all, and the groups themselves easily stop this practice in the normal course of AA affairs.

"Thoughtful AAs, however, encourage these sponsors to bring addicts to open meetings, just as they would any other interested people. In the end, these addicts usually gravitate to other forms of therapy. They are not received on the platform in open meetings unless they have an alcohol problem, and closed meetings are, of course, denied them. We know that we cannot do everything for everybody with an addiction problem.

"There has also occurred lately a new development centering upon hippies who have LSD or marijuana troubles -- not so much stronger stuff. Many of these kids appear to be alcoholics also, and they are flocking into AA, often with excellent results.

"Some weeks ago, there was a young people's convention of AAs. Shortly thereafter, four of these kids visited the office. I saw one young gal prancing down the hall, hair flying, in a mini-skirt, wearing love beads and the works. I thought, 'Holy smoke, what now!' She told me she was the oldest member of the young people's group in her area -- age twenty-two! They had kids as young as sixteen. I was curious and took the whole party out to lunch.

"Well, they were absolutely wonderful. They talked (and acted) just about as good a kind of AA as I've seen anywhere. I think all of them said they had had some kind of drug problem, but had kicked that, too. When they first came around, they had insisted on their own ideas of AA, but in the end they found AA plenty good enough as it was. Though they needed their own meetings, they found interest and inspiration in the meetings of much older folks as well.

"Perhaps, as younger people come into AA, we shall have to put up with some unconventional nonsense -- with patience and good humor, let's hope. But it should be well worth the attempt. And also, if various hippie addicts want to form their own sort of fellowship along AA lines, by all means let us encourage them. We need deny them only the AA name, and assure them that the rest of our program is theirs for the taking and using -- any part or all of it.

"For these reasons, I feel hopeful and not a bit scared by this trend. Of course, I'm no prophet. I may be mistaken, so please keep me posted. This is a highly interesting and perhaps significant development. I certainly do not think it ought to be fought. Instead, it ought to be encouraged in what we

already know to be workable channels.

In affection ... Bill"

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++++Message 194. History of Sponsorship
From: Fiona 6/3/2002 9:51:00 AM

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From: Glenn Chesnut

The pamphlet which was handed out to people being checked into the hospital by Dr. Bob and Sister Ignatia in Akron in 1940 talks at length about the role of the sponsor and the sponsor's responsibilities both during and right after the hospital stay. The sponsor was responsible, for example, for making sure that a long list of other A.A. members dropped by on the new person in his hospital room to talk. It also warns the new person that some of these visitors may appear to be ignorant, some he will not like at all, and some will seem to be just plain crazy!!! But the new person is to LISTEN TO THEM ANYWAY, because they are the ones who can tell him how to stay sober. It was the sponsor's responsibility to take the new person to his first meeting after he was released from the hospital, and so on.

Interestingly, the 1940 Akron Pamphlet does NOT talk about what we now take for granted, the continuing role of the sponsor as spiritual guide to the new A.A. member over the years which followed. I suspect that the special one-on-one sponsor-pigeon relationship was something that was only starting to develop in 1940. By the end of 1943 however, when Ralph Pfau (Father John Doe) came into the A.A. program in Indianapolis, his relationship to Doherty Sheerin, his sponsor in the program, was the continuing, warm, close sponsor-pigeon relationship which we encourage in A.A. today.

For the 1940 Akron Pamphlet, a full-length version which can be printed out on your home printer is available on the Indiana University A.A. History & Archives website at www.iusb.edu/~gchesnut/

An account of the way Dohr sponsored Father Ralph is available in Ralph's autobiography, Ralph Pfau and Al Hirschberg, "Prodigal Shepherd" (1958), which is still in print, and handled now by Hazelden. (It was published by SMT Press in Indianapolis during Ralph's lifetime, and for many years after his death, one of his nieces kept that operation going; she is eighty now though, and gave Hazelden the copyright two or three years ago. Frank Nyikos and I made a trip to Indianapolis and talked with her at great length just this past Friday.)

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+++Message 195. Emmet Fox and Alcoholics Anonymous
From: Fiona 6/4/2002 1:47:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

What We Were Like

Emmet Fox and Alcoholics Anonymous

One of the very early recovering alcoholics who worked with co-founder Bill W. was a man named Al, whose mother was secretary to Emmet Fox, a popular lecturer on New Thought philosophy. When the early groups were meeting in New York, members would frequently adjourn after a meeting and go to Steinway Hall to listen to Fox's lecture. To this day there are AA groups that distribute Fox's pamphlets along with Conference-approved AA literature.

An account sets forth in "Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers" tells of the influence of Emmet Fox and his classic work, "Sermon on the Mount." An AA old-timer recollected: "The first thing he (Dr. Bob) did was to get Emmet Fox's 'Sermon on the Mount'....Once when I was working on a woman in Cleveland, I called and asked him what to do for someone who is going into DT's. He told me to give her the medication and he said, 'When she comes out of it and she decides she wants to be a different woman, get her Drummond's 'The Greatest Thing in the World.' Tell her to read it through every day for thirty days and she'll be a different woman.' Those were the three main books at the time; that and 'The Upper Room' and 'The Sermon on the Mount.'"

Perhaps the fundamental contribution of Emmet Fox to Alcoholics Anonymous was the simplicity and power of "The Sermon on the Mount." This book sets forth the basic principles of the New Thought philosophy that "God is the only power, and that evil is insubstantial; that we form our own destiny by our thoughts and our beliefs; that conditions do not matter when we pray; that time and space and matter are human illusions; that there is a solution to every problem; that man is the child of God, and God is perfect good."

Central to New Thought philosophy was the perspective which saw that love and personal forgiveness were the keys to fundamental transformation: "Love is by far the most important thing of all. It is the Golden Gate of Paradise. Pray for the understanding of love, and meditate upon it daily. It casts out fear. It is the fulfilling of the Law. It covers a multitude of sins. Love is absolutely invincible."

Fox went on to say that forgiveness was an integral part of the Pathway of Love, "which is open to everyone in all circumstances, and upon which you may step at any moment - at this moment if you like - requires no formal introduction, has no conditions whatever. It calls for no expensive laboratory in which to work, because your own daily life, and your ordinary daily surroundings are your laboratory. It needs no reference library, no professional training, no external apparatus of any kind. All it does need is that you should begin steadfastly to expel from your mentality every thought of personal condemnation (you must condemn a wrong action, but not the actor), of resentment for old injuries, and of everything which is contrary to the law of Love. You must not allow yourself to hate either person, or group, or nation, or anything whatever.

"You must build-up by faithful daily exercise the true Love-consciousness, and then all the rest of spiritual development will follow upon that. Love will heal you. Love will illumine you."

One of the cornerstones of Fox's philosophy was to live but one day at a time, to be responsible for one's own thoughts and to clear up resentments, just as AA was to teach that "resentments are our number one cause of slips." For Fox, one of the most important rules for growth was to live in the present: "Live in today, and do not allow yourself to live in the past under any pretense. Living the past means thinking about the past, rehearsing past events, especially if you do this with feeling...train yourself to be a man or woman who lives one day at a time. You'll be surprised how rapidly conditions will change for the better when you approach this ideal."

Emmet Fox emphasized the idea that thoughts are real things, and that one cannot have one kind of mind and another kind of life. According to Fox, if we want to change our lives, then we must change our thoughts first. Many of his simply stated profundities have contributed to an AA philosophy that has transformed the lives of literally two million recovering alcoholics.

Igor S., Hartford, Conn.
February 1996 AA Grapevine

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+++Message 196. Dec. 1948, AA Grapevine, "News Circuit"
From: Fiona 6/4/2002 1:50:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

The AA Grapevine

December 1948

(From the section called "News Circuit")

More than 2,000 members of Alcoholics Anonymous and guests jampacked the main ballroom of the Hotel Commodore, New York City, recently to celebrate the organization's 14th anniversary.

The event, an annual banquet, was sponsored by the New York Intergroup Association of A.A.

For the first time in A.A.'s history many of its earliest friends and supporters met under one roof with Bill W. and Bob S., founders of the movement.

Among the early friends were Dr. W.D. Silkworth, formerly of Towns Hospital, Manhattan, and now in charge of the alcoholic ward of Knickerbocker Hospital, Manhattan; Dr. Harry M. Tiebout, well known psychiatrist of Blythewood, Greenwich, Conn.; and Dr. Samuel M. Shoemaker, pastor of the Calvary Episcopal Church, Manhattan.

Austin MacCormick, former commissioner of correction for New York City, and now the director of the Osborne Association, Manhattan, was the principal speaker. Mr. MacCormick spoke of the good A.A. had done and also of the excellent work the organization is doing in many penal institutions throughout the nation.

Other speakers were members who told personal stories of experiences in living before and after joining A.A.

The NONAS Group of Richmond, Calif., started off the Fall season recently with a buffet dinner and bingo-party. They are now planning for a High Jinx party on New Year's Eve.

Spear-fishing and folk dancing (no one can say A.A.'s aren't versatile) featured a picnic held recently by the West Palm Beach, Fla., Group. At about the same time the Arlington, Calif., Group was eating chicken, playing baseball and generally having fun at a picnic given at, of all places, the Merry-go-round Picnic Ground.

The Kansas City, Mo., A.A.'s have started the fall season by renewing their enthusiasm for travel. Sixty attended the fourth anniversary party of the Jefferson City, Mo., group and 75 heard Bill at Des Moines, Ia., on successive week-ends. Several plan to attend the third anniversary at Columbia, Mo., and the fourth anniversary of the Wichita, Kans., group in November. Continuing last year's plan of having monthly parties the Women's Auxiliary opened the fall season with a Halloween tacky party which was well

attended by the members and their families. The parties were so well attended and enjoyed last year that the ladies feel that it is time and effort well spend in 12th Step work and have planned a series of such parties for this winter.

This may sound like a blend of irresponsible reporting and alcoholic exaggeration, but the young Metuchen, N.J., Group has an average attendance of better than 500%. Founded by Claude L., Lew R. and Johnny G. six months ago, the group now has a membership of seven and an average weekly attendance of 39. Good programs and a central location are credited with this unusual attendance record - Frank.

About 200 members and friends of Alcoholics Anonymous recently attended the fourth anniversary dinner of the Montpelier, Vt. Group. Guests were present from all parts of New England and Canada.

There are now two large hospitals in the Philadelphia area where alcoholics are accepted in the wards of semi-private rooms if sponsored by A.A. They take no alcoholic patients in single private rooms and the hospital treatment is physical only, mental rehabilitation is A.A.'s responsibility.

The potato empire of the world, Houlton, Me., Aroostock County now has its third group of organized 24 hour plan men and women. In six months time, membership in the Houlton Group has grown to 43 "solid senders" in the A.A. way of life. The boys and girls from the potato country extend a cordial invitation to all A.A.'s who may be traveling in the territory.

A.A. in Anchorage, Alaska reports splendid progress in the last year. The group meets every Thursday night and for the past month has had one or more newcomers at each meeting.

Since January the State Hospital for the Insane, Jamestown, N. Dak., has been working with the Jamestown A.A. Group. Patients from the alcoholic ward are taken to the group's weekly meetings. Hospital authorities feel that they have been doubly repaid for this effort in the continued sobriety of many of the patients.

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++++Message 197. A Fragment of History and a Tribute
(1957 Grapevine)
From: Fiona 6/4/2002 1:58:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

A Fragment of History and a Tribute

By Bill W.

From the May 1957 AA Grapevine

Dr. A. Wiese Hammer, seventy-seven, and a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, died at Philadelphia December 27th, 1956.

This simple account of the passing of one of America's finest surgeons stirs memories that will always be bright in the annals of Alcoholics Anonymous. Dr. A. Wiese Hammer was one of the best friends that AA will ever have.

Several of Philadelphia's old time members have written up the full story of Dr. Hammer and his benefactions. And here is the substance of what they had to say:

It was February, 1940. Jim, a New York AA, had just moved to Philadelphia and he was trying to get a local bookstore to carry the book "Alcoholics Anonymous" in their store. The bookstore's manager protested that his customers could have no possible interest in the book "Alcoholics Anonymous". As for himself, he couldn't care less.

Overhearing this turndown, a lady standing nearby got into the act. She said she had sent "Alcoholics Anonymous" to her alcoholic nephew in Los Angeles. To the astonishment of the whole family, the problem boy had sobered up instantly and he had stayed that way for some three months. This was unheard of. Nevertheless, the bookstore manager remained unimpressed.

But when Helen Hammer heard of Jim's attempt to start the group at Philadelphia, her delight was boundless. She immediately led Jim and one of his new prospects to her surgeon husband.

Dr. Hammer in all that he undertook was a huge enthusiast. This full-blooded ruddy-faced man had a mighty zest for living which poured out of him right around the clock. And this joyous contagion he could spread to just about everybody he met. The moment he heard Jim's story about AA his good work for our society began at once. As we shall see, it was not confined to Philadelphia only; Dr. Hammer went to bat for us nationally at a time when AA had great need for this kind of good friend.

Here is what Dr. Hammer did: opened his home to all AA members - secured the Philadelphia Group its first meeting rooms - introduced us to Dr. Stouffer, another great friend-to-be, who was then Chief Psychiatrist at the Philadelphia General Hospital - secured us treatment and visiting privileges there - had AAs speak before the County Medical Society - along with his good wife, Helen, attended nearly every AA meeting for years - gave free medical

and surgical aid to every AA who wanted it - visited other cities to talk about AA and paid the expenses of the Philadelphia members he took along - offered to buy the Philadelphia Group its first clubhouse (which had to be declined) - saw that his friend, Judge Curtis Bok, owner of the Saturday Evening Post, became interested in AA - and finally induced the Judge to assign Jack Alexander to do the famous article in 1941 that made our fellowship a national institution.

This is only an abbreviated list of Dr. Hammer's good works for our society. Doubtless hundreds of his benefactions will never be known, except to those individual sufferers to whom he was so notably kind.

Then, too, I find it impossible to write about Dr. Hammer without the happy recollection of Dr. Dudley Saul, another noted Philadelphia physician who constantly vied with Dr. Hammer in good works for us drunks.

To our intense astonishment - and always to our great benefit - these two great gentlemen fiercely competed with each other to figure out something bigger and better they could do for Alcoholics Anonymous. This is a great story in itself which I'm going to tell one of these days. How could AA in its infancy ever have survived without friends such as these - these Philadelphia physicians who worked shoulder to shoulder with Drs. Tiebout and Silkworth at New York?

To Helen Hammer I send AA's deepest sympathy and gratitude. And I often wonder what her memories of our early days must be.

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+++Message 198. William Duncan Silkworth
From: Fiona 6/4/2002 1:52:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

This is from Mike O., of The Just Do It Big Book Study Group of Alcoholics Anonymous, DeBary, Florida. He has graciously given permission to post it.

THE ROUNDTABLE OF AA HISTORY
January 10, 1998

WILLIAM DUNCAN SILKWORTH, MD (1873-1951)

Doctor William D. Silkworth, called, "the little doctor who loved drunks", began an indispensable contribution to Alcoholics Anonymous during the early

1930's from his position as medical director of Charles B. Towns Hospital, 293 Central Park West (89th street), New York, N.Y. Towns, founded in 1901, was well known then as a rich man's drying-out place; a rehab for the wealthy, and it served a worldwide clientele. American millionaires, European royalty and oil sheiks from the middle east walked its halls, side by side: brothers in humiliation in bathrobes and slippers.

It was Dr. Silkworth who told Bill Wilson, during the summer of 1933, of the nature of alcoholism: that, in his opinion, the problem had nothing to do with vice or habit or lack of character. It was, he said, an illness with both mental and physical components. Silkworth is quoted widely as calling the illness a combination of "---an obsession of the mind that condemns one to drink and an allergy of the body that condemns one to die" or go mad if one continues to ingest alcohol.

Dr. Silkworth was not the first highly respected authority to write about alcoholism. Solomon, considered the wise man of his era, wrote about it in Proverbs, Chapter 23, and Verses 29 through 35. Solomon's Biblical words seem an accurate description of the alcoholic of today.

Dr. Benjamin Rush, one of the signers of The Declaration of Independence, was the first member of the medical community to write about alcoholism and suggest it might be an illness. In a medical paper he wrote in 1784, Dr. Rush said he thought alcoholism was "-a disease process." He offered no further clinical evidence. So: Dr. Silkworth, it appears, was the first medical person to detail alcoholism, in writing, as an illness.

Silkworth, thus, disagreed with his employer, Charles B. Towns. Towns, who had once claimed to have a "cure" for alcoholism, believed firmly in a physiological, medical model of addiction. But, he denied that alcoholism, per se, was a disease. Silkworth argued that certain individuals were "constitutionally susceptible to sensitization by alcohol" and that drinking sparked an allergic reaction. This, he insisted, made it physically impossible for an alcoholic ever to tolerate alcohol. Moreover, he said, that problem drinkers would have to learn and accept this fact as part of their treatment.

Silkworth played a major role in many of the early recoveries from active alcoholism, particularly those in New York. It's estimated that he treated forty-thousand alcoholics during his career. The introduction to his writings in the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous" says early AA members considered the Brooklyn-born Silkworth no less than a medical saint.

Dr. Silkworth advised Bill Wilson to stop preaching at the drunks he was trying to help by telling them about his powerful spiritual experience. Silkworth urged Wilson to begin, instead, by telling each of the alcoholics that his condition was hopeless, a matter of life-or-death. Only then, Silkworth believed, would the drunks be willing to listen to a story about a spiritual remedy.

Through no fault of the doctor's, there is disagreement about parts of his professional history and about his birth year. In Silkworth's biography in the book, "Dictionary of American Temperance Biography: From Temperance Reform to Alcohol Research, the 1600s to the 1980s," the historian Mark Edward Lender lists Silkworth's date of birth as July 22, 1877. All other sources used in this compilation, which contain a date of birth for Silkworth, including his New York Times obituary, agree that Silkworth's birth year was 1873.

It's agreed, generally, that Silkworth graduated from Princeton University (A.B. 1896) and that he took his M.D. degree from New York University-Bellevue Medical School (1899). But, two principal sources, "Pass It On," published by Alcoholics Anonymous, and, "Not-God," researched and written by the widely respected historian Ernest Kurtz, Ph.D and published by Hazleden, offer differing versions of his career path thereafter.

"Pass It On," (p. 101) reports Silkworth became a specialist in neurology, a domain that sometimes overlaps psychiatry, and entered private practice in the 1920's. It says Silkworth invested his savings in a stock subscription for a new, private hospital. "Pass It On" says Silkworth's investment came with the promise of a staff position when the hospital was built. But, the report says Silkworth lost everything in the stock market collapse of 1929. And, "Pass It On" quotes Bill Wilson as saying that Silkworth, in desperation, went to Towns in 1930 for compensation of about forty dollars a week, plus board.

"Not-God," (p. 22) reports that after he received his medical degree from NYU, Silkworth began a coveted internship during 1900 at Bellevue Hospital, 462 First Avenue (27th. Street), in Manhattan. It says that in 1924--after completing specialty training as a neuro-psychiatrist---Silkworth became medical director of Towns. "Not-God" notes that Dr. Silkworth estimated his patients' rate of recovery, until Bill Wilson came along, at "approximately only two percent."

So: "Pass It On" and "Not-God" show a six-year difference in Silkworth's arrival date at Towns.

A third source offers a wider time differential but more information about Silkworth. The respected Journal of Studies on Alcohol, published monthly by The Center of Alcohol Studies at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey reports Silkworth arrived at Towns in 1932. An article by Leonard Blumberg, (Professor of Sociology, Temple University, Philadelphia Vol. 38. No. 11, 1977, "The Ideology of a Therapeutic Social Movement: Alcoholics Anonymous") says Dr. Silkworth worked at Towns from 1932 until his death in 1951.

Silkworth's entire career had a psychiatric emphasis. He was a member of the psychiatric staff at the US. Army Hospital in Plattsburgh, New York, for two years (1917-1919) during World War I.

Dr. Silkworth also served as associate physician at the Neurological Institute of Presbyterian Hospital in Manhattan from 1919 to 1929. He had also been connected with Broad Street Hospital.

The Blumberg article leaves room for speculation about the circumstances under which Silkworth left the prestigious Presbyterian Hospital in 1929. It concludes that he probably was laid off during a staff reduction following the stock market crash of that same year. The article does not attempt to fill the time vacuum of approximately three years until it says Silkworth went to Towns.

Regardless of his starting date at Towns, Wilson said Silkworth's arrival there was the turning point in the doctor's life. Nearly all sources agree that he worked there approximately nineteen years.

Additionally, Dr. Silkworth was a major influence in persuading the management of Knickerbocker Hospital in upper Manhattan to set aside a small ward, beginning in 1945, for the treatment of alcoholics. Knickerbocker was the first general hospital in New York to do so. (This is significant because many general hospitals at that time would not admit alcoholics as alcoholics. Their doctors had to admit them under false diagnoses.) Dr. Silkworth served six years at Knickerbocker as director of alcoholic treatment, attending an estimated seven thousand alcoholics. Teddy R., a nurse who was an AA member, ran the alcoholism ward. Figures as to costs at Knickerbocker are unconfirmable. But, the fees and other expenses there were much less than at Towns, where patients paid \$125.00 for one week of treatment, during the early and mid-1930's. At Knickerbocker, drunks off the street with no financial resources were de-toxified.

William Duncan Silkworth died Thursday morning, March 22, 1951 of heart attack at his home, 45 W. 81st. Street, New York. He and his wife, Marie, had lived in Manhattan during their later years. But, it's known that he commuted for part of the time he worked in New York from a home in Little Silver, New Jersey. Today, there's a train station about one block away from that house, which-as of this writing -- is still standing. But, it's unclear whether the train station was there at the time Silkworth lived in Little Silver.

As noted previously, the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous," reports that early AA members considered Dr. Silkworth a "---medical saint." It was never a secret that his personal relationship with Alcoholics Anonymous was both deep and emotional. He was called, "-the little doctor who loved drunks" because he genuinely cared for and experienced communion with alcoholics. And, they loved him. An in-depth explanation can be found in, "Language of The Heart," (p. 176).

In an article he wrote years later for The Grapevine, Bill Wilson noted that Dr. Silkworth treated some 40,000 alcoholics during his career. Wilson added, "He never tired of drunks and their problems. A frail man, he never complained

of fatigue. During most of his career he made only a bare living. He never sought distinction; his work was his reward. In his last years, he ignored a heart condition and died on the job--among us drunks, and with his boots on." All but one of the AA historians who influenced this writing believe that Dr. Silkworth held positions at both Towns and Knickerbocker Hospitals at the time of his death. But, it should be noted that the respected AA historian and author Mel B., who wrote much of "Pass It On," the official AA biography of Bill Wilson, mentions only Silkworth's affiliation with Knickerbocker Hospital at the time of the doctor's death.

Wilson showed his gratitude to Silkworth in 1950 and '51, when he and some associates tried to raise enough money to allow "Silkie" and Marie, to retire to New Hampshire. The doctor was going to be medical director of the treatment center, Beech Hill Farm, near Dublin, New Hampshire. But, Silkworth died before it could happen. So: Bill, noting Mrs. Silkworth's strained financial circumstances, raised \$25,000 for a Silkworth Memorial, to supplement the widow's small income.

Dr. Silkworth's death was announced to the Fellowship in the April 1951 version of the AA Grapevine. And, the article indicates AAs of that time considered Silkworth more than a "medical saint." To those AA's who knew him, William Duncan Silkworth was a hero. The April 1951 Grapevine article notes, "He freely risked his professional reputation to champion an unprecedented spiritual answer to the medical enigma and the human tragedy of alcoholism." Historians point out that he might have been laughed out of the American Medical Association for holding such a view. Obviously, that did not happen.

Wilson, who previously had referred to Dr. Silkworth as "-AA's first and best friend" eulogized Silkworth in the May 1951 Grapevine. And, his affection and sense of personal loss is expressed in a notation on a copy of the appeal for funds (found in the archives of the General Service Conference of A.A.) It says, "Thank Heaven we started this before Silkie went."

The Wilson article, written especially for The Grapevine, concludes with two questions: "Who of us in AA can match this record of Dr. Silkworth's? Who has his measure of fortitude, faith and dedication?"

SOURCES: The AA publications: "Alcoholics Anonymous", "Pass It On", "The Grapevine" and "Language of The Heart"; the Archives of the AA General Service Office; "Not-God" by Ernest Kurtz; "The Journal of Studies on Alcohol 1977" which contained "The Ideology of a Therapeutic Social Movement: Alcoholics Anonymous." by Leonard Blumberg; published by The Center of Alcohol Studies, Rutgers University); "Dictionary of American Temperance Biography: From Temperance Reform to Alcohol Research, the 1600s to the 1980s" by Mark Edward Lender; "Lois Remembers" by Lois Burnham Wilson; "My Search For Bill W" by Mel B.; Yale University; New York University and private conversations with AA's who knew Dr. Silkworth.

I'm grateful for the above sources. Any errors are my own.

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Researched/written for: The Round Table of AA History by Mike O. (Michael O'Neil), of The Just Do It Big Book Study Group of Alcoholics Anonymous, DeBary, Florida. Updated/revised: 1999, 2000, and 2001.

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+++Message 199. Working Together-(From the February 1980 AA Grapevine)

From: Fiona 6/4/2002 2:18:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

Working Together

(From the February 1980 AA Grapevine)

Twenty years of striving for progress in helping suffering alcoholics and ourselves to attain and maintain sobriety - and it's still a "one day at a time" process.

The South Philadelphia Group has grown, not only in good sobriety, but also in new membership in its span of twenty years. A special group for me, it has continued to exist through sharing and caring, carrying the message of this lifesaving program to alcoholics.

I wanted to find out the early beginnings of my "home away from home," where I made my roots when I started learning the basics for living sober with the principles of AA.

Most of the old-timers are still around, except the ones who have passed away, sober, through the grace of God. Originally, there were nine members in the "mother group," as it was referred to then. At the group's first location, it had permission for only one AA meeting a week. So it decided to find a permanent place in order to reach more alcoholics who truly needed and wanted sobriety.

In February of 1960, two members went to inquire about a small building ten blocks away, consisting of one large room and a kitchen. The two members took their findings to the group. After discussing all the repairs and work that had to be done, all the members decided to vote, and the group conscience was in favor of the move to the new location. Looking at the place, they knew it would take all the nickels and dimes they could scrape together to fix the

place up and make it presentable for the new meetings they were going to start. The roof leaked, and a new floor had to be put down. The local Al-Anon group donated a table and chairs. Al-Anons also held a meeting there once a week, and still do. AA members paneled the walls in plywood. Later on, a new bathroom was installed, the members doing the work themselves.

Many unexpected things happened. A fire damaged the two rooms; the people worked together to clean up the mess, and held a meeting the same night by candlelight.

There's a sign above the door that says "Come back" - sincere words from the heart of the South Philadelphia Group. It seems to work, because the membership keeps going up. There are nine meetings a week. Year after year, the steady members celebrate their anniversaries with healthy pride. They know they have received sobriety in this group through a Higher Power.

Holidays are wonderful at our group. We're open twenty-four hours on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. The members bring all kinds of good food and soda to eat and drink. Persons without a family, alone and needing our strength to stay sober for that day, are always welcome to share our fellowship and to stay for the meetings. Because ours is a friendly group, more people stay than go back out.

Today, I believe that our Higher Power works through people, that when we work together with sincere hearts, an AA group turns into a family of love - like our group.

J.A., Philadelphia, Pa.

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+++Message 200. Helping Hands (AA Grapevine 1956)
From: Fiona 6/4/2002 2:22:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

Helping Hands
(From the August 1956 Grapevine)

Psychiatry Upset By `Peace' Drugs
Association Warns Against Tranquilizing Pills for Everyday Tensions
Widespread Use Noted
Casual Dosage Is Scored as Medically Unsound and a Danger to Public

Warning against "peace pills": The American Psychiatric Association has become disturbed over the tremendous consumption of so-called "peace pills" by alcoholics and others who seek artificial aids to relaxation. The pills - containing highly-publicized tranquilizing drugs - are often prescribed by doctors to relieve tension.

"The tranquilizing drugs have not been in use long enough to determine the full range, duration and medical significance of their side effects," the Association said in a formal statement. "Casual use of the drugs is medically unsound and constitutes a public danger."

FIFTY THOUSAND LIVES MADE HAPPIER: Twelve years ago, the Philadelphia Municipal Court began a "reclamation project" to save habitual drunks from jail and from themselves. It turned to AA for help, and a member of AA attended each session of the Domestic Relations Court to talk to an average of six or seven defendants brought up every day on drunk charges.

Presiding Judge Hazel H. Brown of the Court says the twelve-years program has proved "unbelievably gratifying." Some 11,700 persons have been rehabilitated. Most of that number are married and have children, and probation officials estimate that a total of 50,000 persons have shared the peace of mind and happiness.

In addition to regular open and closed meetings, AA members conduct special Saturday morning sessions for persons out on parole. More than 300 are currently attending these meetings.

WE DON'T TAKE SIDES: "Many of the groups working in the field of problem drinking spend more time fighting each other than they devote to helping the alcoholic," according to Seldon Bacon, director of the Yale University Summer School of Alcoholic Studies. Mr. Bacon recently told the Midwest Institute on Alcohol Studies that this rivalry between groups studying the problem of alcoholism "may be more demoralizing to society than the problem drinker."

BIG BROTHER: A new "Big Brothers of AA" group has been started at Palm Beach, Fla. The group is modeled on a Big Brothers group of some 500 Ohio AAs. When AA members in prison are released, they are met by a Big Brother who helps in making AA contact outside the jail.

ARE PROBLEM DRINKERS PROBLEM PATIENTS? "Drunks require three times the amount of nursing care and attention as the average hospital patient," according to Dr. R.E. McGill, administrator of the Huey P. Long Charity Hospital at Pineville, La. Dr. McGill made the statement at the National Conferences on Problems of Alcoholism, held in New York.

On the other hand, Director Melvin Dunn of St. John's Hospital, Brooklyn, N.Y., said his hospital found alcoholics "little or no problem," because of the cooperation of AA.

COMMITTEE FOR SKID ROADERS: The committee on the Homeless Alcoholic working with the National Committee on Alcoholism, is undertaking a program to find out more about ways to help the skid road drunk. It plans to hold an institute on one or more phases of the problem every year. Chairman is John M. Murtagh, chief magistrate of the magistrates' court, New York City.

Activities and developments outside AA in the field of alcoholism...suggestions and possible contributions - information, clippings, marked publications, etc. - are invited. Please mark them "Helping Hands."

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++++Message 201. Grapevine, June 1944 -- Do you know.....?
From: Fiona 6/4/2002 2:46:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

DO YOU KNOW

What the Purpose of the Foundation Is:

Answer: The Alcoholic Foundation is comprised of seven trustees, four of whom (a majority) are non-alcoholics but keenly interested in the problem of alcoholism, and three of whom are members of A.A. These trustees maintain the Central Office, our National Headquarters, where inquiries concerning A.A. from all parts of the world are answered and from which office our literature is mailed. Beside maintaining this Central Office, the trustees of the Foundation have charge of all national publicity, and consult with the A.A. group on matters of national policy. None of the trustees receives any compensation for his or her services.

The Non-alcoholic trustees are:

Mr. Leonard V. Harrison, Chairman.
(Mr. Harrison is identified with Community Service - the combined charities of New York City.)

Mr. Willard S. Richardson, Treasurer.
(Before his retirement, religious secretary to Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.)

Mrs. Livingston Farrand
(Distinguished wife of Livingston Farrand, former President of Cornell

University.)

Dr. Leonard V. Strong, Jr.

(A physician most helpful to A.A. from its beginning.)

Two of the present A.A. members of the board are from the New York Metropolitan area, the third from Akron, Ohio.

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+++Message 202. Grapevine, June 1944 -- "Grapevine" in

Bow

From: Fiona 6/4/2002 2:49:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

Grapevine, June 1944 -- "Grapevine" in Bow.

(Author unknown, but probably Bill Wilson.)

In a big smoke-filled room six ink-stained wretches sipped at their Cokes as I shot questions after question at them.

"All right," I said, "the stork didn't bring this paper. Nobody found it in a rose bush. It didn't just grow like Topsy. Come clean, now. How'd it all begin?"

"Well," the six began. "It was just something that was in the air. Everybody, at some time or other, has had the bright idea: Let's have an A.A. paper! Then - bang - Cleveland had one; so why not us, here in the Metropolitan area? We figured to take the paper out of the talking stage and put it into print." With that the six shut up. In the silence that followed I looked these people over. Very average. A cashier; a radio script writer, an author [probably Marty Mann]; a bookseller; an art director [Priscilla Peck]; a wife and mother of two. "Do you realize," I said, "that you people are sticking your necks out to here? Starting a paper up all by your little selves. Not putting it to a vote and all that kind of thing." "Sir, we don't think you've got the correct slant," the bookseller said thoughtfully. "We six are just sort of garage mechanics, servicing the paper. We don't write it. That's the creamy part for every Jack and Doris of A.A. who can lay their hands on some news and a pencil stub. We wrestle with the punctuation, if any. Hammer for copy as the deadline creeps up. Paste up the dummy and hope for the best." "Very neat," I said, "and I wish you luck. But what's the paper going to talk about?"

"About us alcoholics, naturally," the mother of two said, "about A.A.s whole design for living. There's going to be a big, full page on local group doings (there's a Grapevine reporter in every group right now with his pencil at the ready). And we're planning to get all the big general stuff on alcoholism into the paper. Best of all, we think, is the Servicemen's Letter page. ..."

"Now you're talking," I said with satisfaction. "Thanks," the cashier said coldly. "We also hope to have a column on books and the theatre and films and radio and magazine articles which have to do with A.A. or the 12 Steps, or constructive living in general." "And," said the author, "a section called "Do you know?" which will pin down in print the things new members wonder about."

"Anything else?" I asked, reaching for my hat. "Oh yes!" the six said, "Two things, particularly. There'll be a write up on the Central Office. And a letters-to-The Grapevine where everybody can sound off - pro and con - on anything that seems to need saying out loud."

"That's positively all? I asked, rising. "No! Aren't you going to ask us how long we six are going to stick at this thing?"

"Go on. Go on," I said nervously. "Simple, the six said, "We hang on for a trial spin of three months while the Metropolitan A.A.s make up their minds whether they want a paper or not. If the verdict's NO - we bow out." "And if the verdict's Yes?" I asked, eyeing all six sharply. "We still bow out; and hand the paper to fresh new blood," they said. "Well, it still looks like a cabal to me," I said. In my most suspicious manner. "Think I'll write a letter to The Grapevine demanding to know how come you six think you can get a paper going!"

"We'll print it, sir. Goodbye, and kindly don't slam the door," was the last I hear the six say.

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+++Message 203. Grapevine June 1944 - Editorial
From: Fiona 6/4/2002 2:49:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

EDITORIAL

The Shape of Things to Come

In the book Alcoholics Anonymous There is a chapter called "A Vision for You."

Wandering through it recently, my eye was caught by the startling paragraph written a short five years ago. "Someday we hope that every alcohol who journeys will find a Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous at his destination. To some extent this is already true. Some of us are salesmen and go about. Little clusters of twos and threes and fives of us have sprung up in other communities through contact with our two large centers . " Rubbing my eyes I looked again. A lump came into my throat. "Only five years," I thought. "Then but two large centers -- little clusters of twos and threes -- travelers who hoped one day to find us at every destination." Could it be that only yesterday this was just a hope -- those little clusters of twos and threes, those little beacons so anxiously watched as they flickered, but never went out. And today -- hundreds of centers shedding their warm illumination upon the lives of thousands, lighting the dark shoals where the stranded and hopeless lie breaking up -- those fingers of light already stretching to our beach heads in other lands.

Now comes another lighted lamp -- this little newspaper called "The Grapevine." May its rays of hope and experience ever fall upon the current of our A.A. life and one day illumine every dark corner of this alcoholic world.

The aspirations of its editors and readers could well be voiced by the last words of "A Vision for You." "Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find, and join us. We shall be with you, in the Fellowship of The Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny. May God bless you and keep you -- until then."

Bill

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+++Message 204. Grapevine, June 1944 -- A.A. GOES TO SEA
From: Fiona 6/4/2002 2:48:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

Grapevine, June 1944 -- A.A. GOES TO SEA

Or rather the merchant seamen have discovered A.A.! Just over a year ago, Dr. Florence Powdermaker, a well-known psycho-analyst, sent us a patient - who promptly dried up, pleasing the good doctor no end. Then Dr. Powdermaker put on a naval uniform and took up the problems of tired or shell-shocked seamen. Oddly enough she found that many of them had just the same problem we

landlubbers are cursed with ... they were alcoholics and they wanted the worst way to get over it. She tried the A.A. literature on them - the book and the pamphlets - and it worked!

When there got to be about 40 of them, those who were still ashore put their heads together. Like the rest of us, they wanted to help others recover - but they felt they had a special field in other seamen. They know seamen, and they know that most regular seamen look at landlubbers as almost a race apart. Their name for us is "shore people," and they don't easily feel at home with us. Add that to the alcoholic apartness - and you have something. So they figured they'd catch more seamen if they had their own group - for seamen only. But we're sure that will be only at the beginning - they'll find, as we did, that alcoholics are buddies under the skin, no matter what their profession or background, and as a matter of fact the original delegation who came to tell us of their plans and ask our cooperation, were instantly absorbed, to their own and our, intense pleasure.

But if and when they form their own group and get their own clubhouse, we wish them all the luck in the world - as one drunk to another, fellows in A.A.

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+++Message 205. Chips/Medallions and the Circle and Triangle
From: Fiona 6/4/2002 2:49:00 PM

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From: "Jim Blair"

Here are some of the Grapevine articles on the "Circle and Triangle" which may provide some insight to the decisions which were made

Chips/Medallions and the Circle and Triangle

From the 1958 GSC Report

Chips, Tokens & Emblems

For the first time in the history of the Conference, Delegates were asked to record the attitude of the movement as a whole toward the use of so-called A.A. "chips," "tokens." "lapel emblems" and similar devices.

Discussion from the floor indicated that items of this type are extremely popular in certain Areas while they are used little or not at all in other sections of the U.S. and Canada. In one Area, chips are awarded for three,

five and twelve months of sobriety.

Several Delegates reported their dislike of the use of the World Directory by manufacturers who solicit the groups for business of this type.

The consensus was that this was a matter for local autonomy and not one on which the Conference should record a definite position on behalf of the movement.

This attitude was endorsed by the Literature Committee to whom the matter was referred for further study.

From The A.A. Grapevine

August 1992 - Conference Report

The Conference recommended that :

- a feasibility study be undertaken by the General Service Board of all possible methods by which sobriety chips/medallions may be made available to the Fellowship, and that a report be made to an ad hoc committee of 1993 Conference delegates who would make a recommendation to the 1993 Conference.

August 1993 - Conference Report

The Conference recommended that -

- in agreement with the consensus of the 1958 General Service Conference, the use of sobriety chips/medallions is a matter for local autonomy and not one on which the Conference should record a definite position in behalf of the movement.
- it is not appropriate for AAWS, Inc., or The A.A. Grapevine, Inc., to produce or license the production of sobriety chips/medallions.

December 1993

Whatever Happened to the Circle and Triangle?

Have you noticed that the circle and triangle symbol no longer appears at the top of the Grapevine's Table of Contents? The decision to remove it has its root in the 1993 General Service Conference, and subsequent actions by the Board of Trustees and the directors of A.A. World Services.

Adopted at the 20th Anniversary International Convention in St. Louis, the circle and triangle symbol was registered as a official A.A. mark in 1955, and has been widely used by various A.A. entities. By the mid-1980s, however, it had also begun to be used by outside organizations, such as novelty

manufactures, publishers, and occasionally treatment facilities. There was growing concern in the membership of A.A. about this situation. Some A.A. members were saying "we don't want our circle and triangle aligned with non-A.A. purposes." In keeping with the Sixth Tradition, that A.A. "...ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise....," the A.A. World Services board began in 1996 to contact outside entities that were using the circle and triangle in an unauthorized manner, and to take action to prevent such use of the symbol. AAWS implemented this policy with restraint, and did not resort to legal remedies until all attempts at persuasion and conciliation had been unsuccessful. Of about 170 unauthorized users contacted, two suits were filed, and both were settled in the very early stages.

Denying the use of the symbol to outside entities raised other problems, however. By early 1990, it was clear that some A.A. members very much wanted to be able to obtain medallions with "our" circle and triangle. Both the AAWS and Grapevine Corporate boards began receiving requests to produce sobriety chips and medallions, and the matter was discussed at a joint meeting of the two boards in October 1990. Their consensus was that production of tokens and medallions was unrelated to our primary purpose of carrying the A.A. message, and they suggested that the matter be given a thorough airing at the General Service Conference in order to seek a group conscience from the Fellowship.

At the 1992 Conference, there were presentations on why we should or should not produce medallions, and on the responsibility of AAWS to protect our trademarks and copyrights. The result was a Conference Advisory Action asking the General Service Board of trustees to undertake a feasibility study on the possible methods by which sobriety chips and medallions might be made available to the Fellowship, and to report its findings to an ad hoc committee of Delegates.

The ad hoc committee met prior to the 1993 Conference, for several full days of discussion and deliberation, and in turn presented its report and recommendations on the Conference floor. After discussion, the Conference approved two of five recommendations: 1) that the use of sobriety chips/medallions is a matter of local autonomy and not one on which the Conference should record a definite position; and 2) that it is not appropriate for AA World Services or the Grapevine to produce or license the production of sobriety chips/medallions.

In substance, the ad hoc committee report said: "We began to see that the issue is `What is best for A.A. as a whole' and not `Does the Fellowship want A.A. sobriety chips/medallions?'" The committee did not focus on the use of sobriety chips/medallions - groups and individuals are free to use them if they wish. The question is whether it is best for AA as a whole to have a sobriety chip/medallion with the AA name on it authorized and/or issued by an AA entity.

"Some of the comments made during the Traditions part of the discussion included:

"The First Tradition - At the heart of the matter is unity.....

"The Second Tradition - Therein lies our solution. Where is our ultimate authority and where is our center? Is it internal or external - principles arising from a power greater than people, or values of the world? We must keep in mind that this is also the place where Bill W. points out the `....the good is sometimes the enemy of the best.'

"The Third Tradition - WE were reminded that we are a self-correcting Fellowship....We felt that it is time for the whole Fellowship to get back to the simplicity and basis of our message.

"The Fourth Tradition makes it clear that we must separate the spiritual from the material. Keeping in mind that any action that we take could affect AA as a whole.....

"The Fifth Tradition - The Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, A.A. Comes of Age, and `The Twelve Concepts for World Service' - are the basic message, the core message of A.A. Everything else is commentary on the basic message: all literature published, comments and sharing at meetings, even the Grapevine, is a sort of national commentary. Could chips/medallions be another form of commentary, another form of a pamphlet?

"The Sixth Tradition calls on us to `divide the spiritual from the material.' Money is not a valid consideration in the question of whether or not litigation should be brought against misusers of our logo since A.A. is not in the business of making money. Similarly, the fear that others would be making money off our logo does not hurt the Fellowship on a fundamental level. How do we let go of the tiger we have by the tail?... We are at the tip of the iceberg of litigation right now....We went many, many years without lawsuits. To continue on this path threatens to keep our focus on money and property instead of allowing our view to widen spiritually.

"The Seventh Tradition reminds us "Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money and authority.'

"The Eleventh Tradition - explicitly warns against the sensationalism that follows litigation. It is essentially negative attention and puts the Fellowship risk.

"The Twelfth Tradition - Humility is the key, working from the internal to the external, from the smaller to the larger, from `I' to `We,' in a spirit of humility and trust. What course of action will keep us on the path of

spirituality?...

"The committee spent a great deal of time in the discussion of the Warranties. Warranty Five states:

"Practically all societies and governments feel it necessary to inflict personal punishment upon individual members for violations of their beliefs, principles or laws. Because of its special situation, Alcoholics Anonymous finds this practice unnecessary. When we of A.A. fail to follow sound spiritual principles, alcohol cuts us down. Therefore no humanly administered system of penalties is needed. This unique condition is an enormous advantage to us all, one on which we should never abandon by a resort to the methods of personal attack and punishment....

"In case the A.A. name should be misapplied...it would of course be the duty of our General Service Conference to press for the discontinuance of such a practice - always short, however of public quarreling about the matter.... It was recognized that a public lawsuit is a public controversy, something in which our Tradition says we may not engage.'

"The chips/medallions and trademark questions were dealt with as separately as possible. The committee felt that a distinction could be drawn between the two in terms of their respective significance to A.A. The trademark (logo) is the embodiment of the AA name. The significance of its shape is described in AA Comes of Age, page 139: 'The circle stands for the whole world of AA, and the triangle stands for AA's Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service....The priests and seers of antiquity regarded the circle enclosing the triangle as a means of warding off spirits of evil, and AA's circle and triangle of Recovery, Unity, and Service has certainly meant all of that to us and much more.'

"Medallions, on the other hand, are not universally considered an embodiment of the Fellowship as such. Many stories are told about the role that the coins play in an individual's continuing sobriety: the coins act as symbolic recognition of the length of sobriety. They are not the sobriety itself and any attempt to make medallions more than a symbol may lead perilously towards ego - inflation, self-glorification, rather than ego-deflation (see Tradition Twelve).

"The committee felt that the desire to protect the unique meaning of AA's symbol is at the foundation of litigation, as well as the fear of the trivialization of the mark. But despite the vehemence with which we feel 'ownership' of the symbol, we suspect that the belief that we (or anyone) can 'possess' the symbol is a fallacy.

"It actually works against the foundation of the Steps that lead us to sobriety. Ownership necessarily involves control and to argue over that control through litigation takes the focus away from the fact that we are

ultimately powerless. We can own the meaning of the symbol, and if someone uses the graphic, our meaning will not be diminished, as long as we keep the principles it represents in sight.

"The committee finally questioned the goals of litigation, what would be gained from a lawsuit. We suspect that the harm done internally as a result of litigation would be far worse than the harm others could do to our 'property' from the outside. At the base of this approach is trust that AA principles will work to protect our name, just as our trust in God is the foundation of our program and of our lives. Warranty Five says that we can '...confidently trust AA opinion, public opinion, and God Himself to take care of Alcoholics Anonymous....'

"Concept Seven states '[The Conference] Charter is not a legal document....it relies instead upon the force of tradition....for its final effectiveness.'

"To us, the fear is that the incorporation of the symbol by others outside the Fellowship would somehow detract from the significance of the symbol is really unfounded. No one outside the Fellowship can detract from A.A.'s strength if we stick to the Steps, Traditions and Concepts, which unite us.

"The registered trademarks, service marks and logos are symbols of our spiritual Fellowship, Alcoholics Anonymous, and should be treated as such.

"The General Service Conference is a living entity. From the group conscience will eventually emerge an expression of the will of a loving Power greater than ourselves proven to be firmly linked to the Traditions and Warranties, keeping us safe for as long as we are needed."

The ad hoc committee report was debated on Tuesday and Thursday of Conference week, and the subject of chips and medallions came up again during a final sharing session on Friday. The chairperson of the AAWS Board made the following statement at that time: "The AAWS Board will immediately begin a thorough review of its policies regarding our marks, will do everything possible to avoid initiating litigation, and will prepare a revised policy statement to be ready for next year's Conference."

Immediately after the Conference, the General Service Board accepted AAWS's recommendation to discontinue protecting the circle and triangle symbol as one of AA's registered marks. And by early June, the Trustees reached substantial unanimity in support of AAWS's statement that, to avoid the suggestion of association of affiliation with outside goods and services, A.A. World Services, Inc. would phase out the "official" or "legal" use of the circle and triangle.

If you're wondering how to identify Conference-approved literature in the future, it will carry the words "This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature." As pieces of literature are due for

reprinting, the symbol will be deleted; and new materials will carry only the Conference-approved wording.

Like the Serenity Prayer and the slogans, which have never had official recognition, the circle and triangle will most likely continue to be used widely for many A.A. purposes. The difference from the earlier practice is that its official use to denote Alcoholics Anonymous materials will be phased out.

(This material is adapted from the August-September issue of the GSO newsletter Box 4-5-9; portions of the ad hoc committee report are taken from the Final Report of the 1993 General Service Conference.)

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+++Message 209. HOW AA GOT STARTED IN THE UK
From: Fiona 6/5/2002 2:43:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

Hi, Buffs:

Our wonderful friend in England, Max C. has sent me some information on AA in the UK. I find it fascinating and hope you will too.

Nancy

Max writes:

For the sake of brevity and clarity, this takes the form of a skeleton chronology; something that may be fleshed out more fully according to interest and contributions from other members. I am particularly interested in any recollections USA members may have about their attendance at UK meetings.

As you know, I am new to AA history, apart from my own of course, but it is entirely possible now to delve in depth into archive material, which I hope to be able to do eventually: This is just a timely offering drawn from sources immediately to hand, without further research. So here goes:

1946 JULY

The earliest official record appears to be a letter to the N.Y. central office from Dorothy HE, an American who had been living in London for an

unspecified period. She gave as her replacement contact for London the name of Chris B. He apparently was 12-stepped by Albert T, that friendly Fifth Avenue tailor who was so helpful to Bill W, and of course to AA as a whole. Conor P met Richard P in Ireland at this time.

1947 - MARCH

Grace O, an American AA and her (non-AA) husband Fulton were on a visit to London. She was armed with a contact list provided by GSO N.Y., which included the Chris B mentioned above. There were also to be found in London at that date: Bob B, a Canadian who got sober in N.Y. some 19 months previously; a US serviceman Vernon W, a founder member of AA in Bermuda; and Norman R-W, an Englishman who 'wanted to want to get sober'.

Grace O convened a meeting at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, which was held in her room there. In addition to those mentioned above, she managed to pull in Patricia G, an AA from California who she had met on the ship coming over; an American stunt driver, Flash W, and an Irish airman, Tony (Pat) F.

The meeting went ahead and marks the beginning of AA proper in England. Bob B, known after as 'Canadian' Bob, became its Secretary.

I shall refer later to the difficulty experienced by the fledgling group in placing advertising for potential membership.

Later in 1947, the journal of the British Medical Association, "The Lancet", mentioned AA in an article and Dr. Lincoln Williams, who had laboured long in the field of alcoholism, with little success, took a strong supportive interest in AA from then on. I shall refer to this later.

1948 - JANUARY

Lottie T joined the London group as the first woman newcomer. She became Secretary later that year when Canadian Bob went to work in N. Rhodesia on a contract.

Bill H, who was "An English Greengrocer" in early editions of the BB, was 12-stepped by Canadian Bob. Bill H set up the first AA telephone service at his office.

1948 -- AUGUST: Marty M is guest speaker at a "large open meeting" and "performed a miracle" on her visit to London, according to Lottie T.

Vernon W, the US serviceman, registered an objection regarding meeting format concerning the Lord's Prayer and passing the hat at open meetings. I shall refer to this later.

NOVEMBER: First meeting of the Manchester group. British AA membership hits 100.

1949 - JANUARY

Membership had risen to 120

MAY

Lottie T has serious slip. Bill W declines invitation to visit London as "the time for such a trip is still early", but expressed his delight with "the way things are going, on your tight little island."

Edinburgh First and Glasgow Central groups officially established, after encouragement by Marty M.

First Liverpool group established.

1950 - JUNE

Bill W and Lois, accompanied by Agnes F, commence their tour of English, Irish and Scottish groups, staying in London at Brown's Hotel, Mayfair. More about this later.

Bill W was able to resolve the long standing problem of non-availability of AA literature caused by currency exchange control and customs regulations.

1951 - APRIL

First Welsh group meets in Cardiff, among those present was Sackville from Dublin, famous for (among other things) this epigram : "AA members are like paratroopers jumping from the aircraft. The 12 Steps are the parachute. It's suggested you pull the rip-cord, but it's entirely optional."

London service office established in Chelsea, serving UK and Ireland.

1953

First "Blue Bonnets" convention held at Dumfries.

1955

London telephone service consolidated at Chelsea office
UK membership estimated to be 5000

1956

First UK AA convention held at Cheltenham

1957

Inaugural meeting of the GSB of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain and Ireland)
Limited

1958

Visit to London by Hank, General Secretary of AA N.Y. office, whose advice on legacies led to an Act of Parliament enabling AA, a registered charity, to

refuse all legacies.

1960

The Rowntree Trust issue a brochure on alcoholism to 23,000 doctors; this included a short piece about AA.

The Joint Committee of the British Medical Association and the Magistrates' Association meet with two members of the AA UK GSB.

1962

Government Department of Health recognised alcoholism as a disease.

1966 - OCTOBER

First General Service Conference of AA UK held in Manchester
AA UK 21st Birthday party at Grosvenor House, Park Lane, London

1969

First World Service meeting in N.Y.

1971 - JANUARY

Bill W died. Heavy press coverage in UK

General Service Conference reports that 40 AA groups had been established within prisons 1971

First European Convention of AA meets in UK

1972

Second World Service meeting in N.Y. adopts London as 1974 venue
Only 10 penal establishments without AA contact in UK

1974

Republic of Ireland sets up own service board, separates from GSB AA UK
London hosts third World Service meeting.
Marie O appointed as office manager at Chelsea, runs first 'professional' telephone service.

1977

Meetings held for first time with the Confederation of British Industry, the Trades Union Congress and the Government Department of Health and Social Security, leading to the publication of the Public Information workbook in 1980.

1978

World Service Meeting, Helsinki, Finland, establishes European Information Centre at GSO London

1983

Establishment of 15th (English Speaking) European Region, mainly for American servicemen.

1986

GSO moved to York, leaving only London Region telephone service in Chelsea.

1988

Marie retired, replaced by Maria as manager of London Region telephone office, Chelsea

1997

AA UK 50th Anniversary

1999

Chelsea telephone office moved to N. London

Maria retired

John H took over as manager with wider brief

That is a bare bones outline which I hope will meet the immediate need.

There are many apparent gaps, within which the small platoons of AA and the unsung hero(ine)s are still doing their stuff, anonymously, if not necessarily quietly.

As Bill W writes in AA Comes of Age, "in London and Liverpool we met many very anonymous Englishmen". Anecdotal evidence suggests that one Liverpool group was so well hidden away that they could not be found and Bill never did get to the meeting. I have not yet read 'Lois Remembers' and wonder if she had anything to say about the trip.

In England, we do not have circuit Speakers or prominent AA personality figures, generally speaking, just AAs who include, of course, many titled people, sporting and entertainment 'stars' and the like, who for the most part retain a low profile within AA, and anonymity outside AA, whilst making their valuable contribution to the Fellowship.

It seems very clear that Marty M and Bill W, on their respective visits, were able to open the minds of the UK Pioneers to a fuller understanding of what AA is all about: similarly GSO N.Y. went to 'any lengths' to sponsor UK people appropriately in the service function.

Of the many things we AAs seem to have in common outside the alcoholism is a certain propensity to ask ourselves at many junctures: "what the hell's (been) going on here?". I certainly do. We can only clear the ground a

little. I will attempt to do that with the second part of this "potted history", where questions left hanging, such as Brown's Hotel and the Oxford Groups, English anonymity, the National Health Service and the psycho- versus bio- genic adversarial debate on alcoholism, which seems to contrive to dynamite the bridge of spirituality: the foundation precept of AA.

Some of this may be speculative or anecdotal, and could border on opinion; so I shall submit it to you first for editing, Nancy, if you do not mind, because I would not wish, unwittingly, to "engage in any controversy": indeed there is no useful purpose in that, bearing in mind the bridges AA has built over the years, (some of which are listed above) between religion, medicine and psychiatry. Those bridges seem to me to have modified much prejudice and ignorance about alcoholism, principally by adopting an attitude of open-mindedness and taking action informed by experience, as with our sobriety, odat.

Yours in fellowship, Max C.

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+++Message 212. The Start of AA in Ireland
From: Fiona 6/5/2002 2:51:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

Hi, Buffs:

One of our members, Martin M. from Ireland, has sent me this history of how AA got started in Ireland.

Martin will be in Minneapolis and those of you who will be going to the convention will have a chance to meet him there. Barbara, our member from England, will also be there.

Nancy

A brief history of the start of AA in Ireland -- the first European country to receive Bill and Bob's message.

Up to the 1940s the only treatment for Alcoholism in Ireland was to keep the bottle away from the alcoholic. The idea was to lock him/her away in an asylum/hospital for a few weeks/months, depending on how bad they were, hoping they would come to their senses when released and cease drinking for good and all.

The idea that alcoholism was a disease was never considered. That is until the message of Alcoholics Anonymous was brought to Ireland in 1946 -- the first European country to hold a meeting of this new fledgling society.

The AA message spread from America to Sydney, Australia, in 1943. In that same year an Irishman Conor F (Flynn) , from Roscommon in the west of Ireland, joined AA in Philadelphia -- both of these events were to play a significant part in the formation of the first AA group in Dublin three years later.

The Australian influence came through an Irish priest Fr. Tom Dunlea, who was based in Sydney running a Boy's Town Home and he came across an AA group and was quite impressed with their work and achievements.

On holiday back in Ireland in 1946, he gave an interview to a Dublin newspaper, the Evening Mail, mainly concentrating on his work with the Boy's Town Home. However, during the interview he spoke at length about the "Society of Alcoholics Anonymous."

Despite some of the details in the article being somewhat inaccurate regarding the principles of the fellowship (probably due to the reporter's interpretation), all the same it was the first time that AA was brought to public attention.

Around the same time, November 1946, the aforementioned Conor F. was also on holidays in his homeland -- now three years sober -- he was determined to set up an AA group in Dublin before his return to America in January 1947. With the help and encouragement of his wife he devoted the rest of his holiday to this task.

From the outset he discovered that his assignment would be a difficult one. He ran into stone walls everywhere. He was even told at one stage that there were no alcoholics in southern Ireland -- but he would probably get them in Northern Ireland.

It was pointed out to him in no uncertain terms that if people had problems with the "demon drink" all they had to do was join The Pioneer Association -- Ireland's highly respected temperance society, and not waste time with some new and unusual idea taught by Americans.

He also gave an interview to the Evening Mail newspaper outlining AA's endeavours to help people suffering from alcoholism "to overcome the obsession which compels them to drink against their will." The article also included a Box Number for people to write for information.

He received a few replies -- one from a man telling him that he should contact his brother. He made contact with a few people but nothing concrete

came from any of them.

He was just about to give up and with time running out fate played its hand -- as it did with Bill W in Akron eleven years earlier -- when once again, and in more or less similar circumstances, an understanding non-alcoholic woman played a part in the birth of AA --this time in Ireland.

Her name was Eva Jennings and she was staying in the same hotel as Conor and over breakfast he confided in her his many problems in getting AA set up in Dublin.

She was very sympathetic towards his plight and arranged for him to meet a Dr. Norman Moore from St. Patrick's Hospital in Dublin (founded by Dean Swift) whom she believed would be of some help.

Dr. Moore was quite enthusiastic and listened to what Conor had to say as he had already read about AA in a Readers Digest article. He informed Conor that he had a patient in the hospital "whom he feared he might be saddled with for life" and was willing to introduce them both stating: "If you can help this man, I'll believe in AA 100 per cent."

The patient, Richard P. (Percival) from County Down in Northern Ireland, was sent under escort to Conor's hotel and immediately they "clicked" and Richard was released from hospital.

Both men then set about arrange the first closed meeting in Dublin which took place two weeks later on November 18th 1946. Neither man was ever to drink again.

There are currently 13,000 members in Ireland with over 75,000 meeting annually.

Noted dates:

Conor F. died in Philadelphia on July 8th, 1993.

Richard P. died December 19th, 1982

Eva Jennings became a great friend of AA until she died in August 1997.

Bill W and his wife Lois paid their first visit to Dublin in 1950.

More anon

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+++Message 216. How AA Came to Australia
From: Fiona 6/5/2002 3:00:00 PM

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From: "Ted Cullen"

This article was published in the May 1978 "The Reviver", our New South Wales organ of the fellowship.

It is only a concise version of our beginnings and early days but never the less it does bring a bit of history otherwise not generally known out side of Australia.

The suburbs mentioned in the article are all around the Sydney NSW area.

I think all of the oldtimers mentioned here have passed on.

regards in the Fellowship of the Spirit

Ted Cullen

South Sydney Group of Alcoholics Anonymous

How AA came to Australia

The fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous was founded in America in 1935. Based on spiritual experience it has survived many trials and tribulations. Its growth, glory and continuing progress is manifested in the sobriety it has brought in all parts of the world.

This is the story of how A.A. came to Australia.

The year was 1942. the place Sydney.

The late Dr Sylvester Minogue, for so many years an honoured member of our fellowship, sat browsing through the pages of the American Journal of Psychiatry. His attention was captured by an .1 article about the workings of A.A. in America.

And that was the moment in Australian history that was to revolutionise the lives of thousands of men and women fallen victim to the disease of alcoholism, and ultimately to bring them from the darkness into the sunshine of happy sobriety.

For the article he had read in the American Journal of Psychiatry so impressed Dr Minogue, that he wrote to Bobbie B., then secretary of New York's A.A. headquarters, seeking all the information about A.A. that he could get.

That was the start of a correspondence which continued for two years, a correspondence in which Bobbie showed never-failing sympathy, tolerance and understanding.

It would be nice to record that from the earliest interchange of letters A.A. was off to a flying start in Australia.

But that did not happen. Far from it. Why?

Because we wanted to do things our way, the Australian way, we thought that what was good for others in far off America was not necessarily good for us.

Those pioneers in the early days went to extreme lengths to conceal the fact that they had any association with A.A., or indeed that alcohol was in any way their problem.

As an early A.A. member has since put it: "We were known as the town drunks but we did not know it."

And so no A.A. progress was made in Australia for many months. No groups were formed.

Then came 1944-and the birth of Australia's first A.A. meeting. Oddly enough, it was a non-alcoholic, Father R.J. Murphy, S.J., who played the principal organising part.

He invited Dr Minogue and the late Father Tom Dunlea, founder of Boys' Town. to join him in helping to bring a better way of life to the suffering alcoholic. Preaching . . . concerts . . . gifts of money and clothing. These were the ways in which the three tried to get through to the unfortunates who huddled together in the camps where food was

scarce but alcohol was plentiful.

The result? A dismal failure. The drunks stayed drunk. But all was not lost. In 1945 Father Murphy introduced Dr Minogue to Archie McKinnon, a non-alcoholic and an attendant at the Reception House, Darlinghurst, to which the alcoholic sufferer was often committed.

Archie, desperately anxious to help the alcoholic patients in his care, helped establish a small A.A. group, which met weekly at Dr Minogue's residence at Rydalmere, where Dr Minogue was at the time medical superintendant at the Medical Hospital.

A voluntary patient at the hospital remained sober for four months with the help of "the Big Book" ("Alcoholics Anonymous") sent to Archie as a gift from America. This patient gave his fellow group members the hope that A.A. would work. Among them was Rex, the first member and secretary, who has remained sober for many years.

It is impossible to record the names of all the early members of A.A., as

records are scarce and memories dim. However, some names come readily to mind—for example, Russ, Fred, Jack, Clive, Ossie, Bert and Betty, the first woman member. These people and others did much to advance the fellowship in this country.

It was not all sweetness and light at those early meetings. The

first recruits—and there were quite a few—looked upon A.A. as a source of revenue to buy more alcohol, free clothing, and free amusements.

Most of those at the meetings were drunk and argumentative. There was a measure of peace only when Rex played the Norwegian Cradle Song on the piano and Norm gave a violin rendering of the overture from Cavalleria Rusticana. But the faith that A.A. was the key to escape from the bondage of alcoholism burned undimmed in the hearts of those who pioneered the fellowship in this country.

Then came a move, since Rydalmere was inconvenient to reach, to Rex's room in Bligh House, Miller's Point.

That was in August, 1945.

Incidentally, Isadore Brodsky, writing in the "Sydney Sun" of June 4, 1950, about the city's historic houses, suggests that Bligh House's most interesting feature is not its problematical association with Governor Bligh, but rather its association with the foundation of A.A. in Australia.

Rex encouraged alcoholics to share his room.

Naturally, it became a refuge for those who wished to continue a night's drinking or wanted somewhere to sleep.

They stole his money and his clothes. Often he returned from work to find his room full of drunks, empty bottles everywhere. In short, a shambles. These goings on became too much for the landlord of the residential where Rex had his room - and A.A. was homeless.

For a while meetings were a pillar to post business, with no one getting sober.

Eventually a haven for the weekly meeting was found. This was of a small badly lit room, sparsely furnished, damp, on top of, a shop in Walker Street, North Sydney.

At this time A.A. claimed 12 members throughout Australia. On Christmas night, 1945, six were gathered in the unsavory Walker Street, meeting place. Five were A.A. members. The sixth, though sober, was not.

Of those six, five found the temptation of the Christmas festivities more than they could resist.

Came 1946, and with a new year the Walker Street meetings struggled on, though not for long.

The company was varied in quantity and quality alike. A few were desperately seeking sobriety. Most were there for what they could get out of A.A.

It was common to be "touched" ostensibly for the price of a night's lodging or for a new shirt, although the money, of course, probably went on more alcohol.

Then there were those who thought more of building A.A. than of their own sobriety.

They dreamed of clubrooms, hospitals. They wanted organisations with presidents and secretaries and, of course, money.

In fact, just before A.A. moved to Walker Street, Jack R., since dead, had been appointed A.A. secretary at a salary of £9 a week.

To this day no one is sure where the money to pay him came from. But it is known that the proceeds of a party helped to solve some grave financial problems.

A.A. was really hit by the organising bug - so much so that the fellowship decided to become registered as an organisation to solicit funds from the public.

This wasn't so easy. Some of the alcoholics proposed for membership of the fund-raising committee had court convictions and the law, naturally, objected to their holding positions of trust.

The money raised from the public was lost in some savings bank. No doubt it eventually finished up in Consolidated Revenue.

The operations of A.A.'s first organising committee, established in 1944 under the presidency of Ron, were far from ideal.

Intrigues and counter -intrigues for positions on the committee became the order of the day. The committee took itself very seriously and decided that it should hold its meetings in secret.

Even at an A.A. meeting, the committee would retire to another room to deliberate !

One of the greatest arguments at first was to decide who was eligible for

membership. Some argued that no one was eligible unless he had served terms of imprisonment for drunkenness or had been in the Reception House a few times.

Arguments also crept in as to the conduct of meetings. They were to be on a rigid parliamentary basis and motions and points of order became the sole topic.

There was little or no time to discuss A.A. business.

As could only be expected, conflicts grew. Once A.A. was divided into two camps; those who claimed that they had A.A. and those who thought A.A. should be modified to suit Australian conditions.

Among the latter was Jack, the first A.A. secretary. In 1945, after his salary had stopped for want of funds, he left to start another A.A. with the spiritual aspect deleted.

This emasculated version folded up after a month and all the adherents, except Jack, returned to the fold.

This breakaway movement was the first and only challenge to A.A. in Australia.

These were the days when money for A.A. work - and the control of money - became essential.

Bank accounts were opened. These were under the control of non-alcoholics, for suspicious A.A. members feared that a thirsty treasurer would be tempted to run away with the funds.

First of these accounts was opened at the Commonwealth Bank, with Mrs M. and a committee in control. Others were opened in banks in all parts of Sydney. These accounts have been inoperative for years.

Back to 1946 and, early in that year, the need for A.A. to move once again when the Walker Street tenancy was lost.

Thanks to the good offices of Father Tom, the fellowship secured a home at Vianney House, the name given to an old, disused hotel in Foveaux Street.

Yet still all was not well with A.A.

True, the change to the city brought bigger attendances at meetings. The press and radio became mildly interested in A.A., which was helpful. But there remained the problem of the drunk who was not honest in his search for sobriety, of those who came to A. A. for selfish ends.

This was a problem that was not to be solved until A.A. broke up into the groups we are familiar with today.

Meetings at Vianny House became more and more disorderly. The place became a refuge for drunks, who brought in undesirable characters. And so once again A.A. was given the order of the boot, once again we were homeless.

Yet the picture was not all black.

Radio announcer Frank Sturge Harty, a non-alcoholic who put the American A.A. story over radio early in 1944, was asked to help by Archie McKinnoh. He gave splendid service, as did Dr M.. with talks on the Twelve Steps and the A.A. Way of Life.

And there was another step forward, too.

It became the rule that no one who was drunk should take the chair at A.A. meetings and those not sober were also discouraged from speaking.

On the other hand, despite all the advice we had received from America, our enforced exit from Vianney House did nothing to curb our desire for a home of our own. Father Tom eventually managed to secure a home at Loftus on one of the most beautiful sites in Sydney. It was a cottage with a large amount of ground and away from densely populated areas.

Besides the cottage, two seven-room huts were erected upon the site. The cottage was called Christmas House because it was opened on Christmas Day.

Rex and some of the earlier members of A.A. were its first inhabitants. As was to be expected, trouble occurred - much more quickly than they anticipated. There were drunken brawls, police interference, protests by neighbors, and again the scheme had to be abandoned.

We had failed to learn from experience in America that attempts to run hospital institutions or homes for A.A.'s under A.A. control would fail completely.

Thus, with our departure from Loftus, all we could show after three years' work was an A.A. membership which by and large had little or no idea of the A.A. way. And there were few who had been sober as long as 12 months. "Slips" were common and considered normal.

Yet victory was to spring from the ashes of this apparent defeat. We had - had we but known it - reached rockbottom.

It at last dawned on us that we knew little of the essence of A.A.

We had never practised the 12 Steps. Many of us thought in our secret heart that we were not alcoholics at all.

If we had kept sober it was because our pride would not let us drink. We had been kicked out of our meeting place. Most of our members had deserted us. Our own sobriety was always a doubtful quantity.

All that we had tried to do lay in ruins about us.

Humbly, we reflected. The true practice of A.A. had rescued thousands of alcoholics in America. Would not the true practice of A.A. in Australia do the same for us ?

Providence was watching over us. It sent us Bert and Lillian from America.

Practically from the beginning we had appealed to New York to send someone over to help us in our difficulties. The appeals were insincere and were wisely disregarded. Our letters were arrogant.

Somehow, we had the idea that alcoholics in Australia were different from those in America. We told them so in our letters. The Twelve Steps could not possibly work here. Our psychology was so different; conditions were different.

We were a stolid, phlegmatic race, not a sentimental, religious crowd. Many members, after some of our numerous bust-ups wrote to New York complaining how badly A.A. was being run here. That we were tolerated at all is a tribute to the sympathy and understanding of the true A.A.'s in America.

Most new A.A.'s are arrogant and wish to change everything. Their arrogance passes away, leaving no permanent trace.

But the arrogance of the pioneer members of A.A. in Australia remains permanently in the archives in New York. The thought of this keeps many of us humble.

Lillian was a well-known theatrical and radio artist. Both she and her husband, Bert, were alcoholics, seeking to keep their own sobriety by helping other alcoholics to achieve theirs.

By lectures, newspaper and radio interviews, by spending hours with individual A.A.'s, they taught us how A.A. works.

They taught the public that alcoholism is a disease which can be arrested if the patient really wants sobriety.

Bert and Lillian taught us the course we should follow. We followed their advice implicitly. All ideas of organisation were abandoned. Bitter experience had taught us that this approach was essential.

In the early days, we sought new members everywhere. We looked after them for

days when they were on the booze: We gave them money, clothes and shelter. All had failed. Members must come to A.A. willingly. Membership cannot be bought.

Yes, that visit from Bert and Lillian was surely of immense value. Our progress since has astonished even ourselves.

One by one, in capital city and country town, groups have come into being and prospered in all parts of the Commonwealth.

Our Sydney Central Office, abandoned back in 1948 because it became a rendezvous for drunks and undesirables, has been doing most successful work for alcoholics since it was re-established in 1952.

This then, perforce briefly, is the A.A. story.

In 25 years we have come a long way.

We are, we hope, a little more tolerant, a little wiser. We are deeply grateful to that Higher Power - God as we understand Him -through which we believe A.A. came into being and upon whose love we rely for our continued sobriety.

In the early days we had nothing in common save our alcoholism. We were a mixed crew with deeply ingrained prejudices one against the other. Through setbacks and disasters, through enriching experience, we have come to know and love one another.

Friendships have remained staunch over the years.

Humility remains - for without it we will again surely fail. A.A. will live and grow - and we are but humble members playing our part in its beneficent work of helping other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

If there is one lesson more than any other that we have learned over the years it is this :

"It is not what we get out of A.A. that counts; it is what we put into it."

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+++Message 218. Re: The Start of AA in Ireland
From: John Phipps 6/8/2002 10:45:00 AM

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At 08:51 PM 6/5/2002 +0100, you wrote:

>"There are currently 13,000 members in Ireland with over 75,000 meeting
>annually."

Nancy:

This sentence baffles me. Can you tell me what it means?

John

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++++Message 226. Mr. X & Alcoholics Anonymous
From: Fiona 6/9/2002 2:24:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

Mr. X and Alcoholics Anonymous by Rev. Dilworth Lupton

This was a sermon preached on November 26, 1939 by Dilworth Lupton at the First Unitarian Church (Universalist - Unitarian), Euclid at East 82nd Street, Cleveland, Ohio.

Mr. X was Clarence H. Snyder. This was turned into one of the first pamphlets concerning A.A. and was used by A.A. members in Cleveland in the late 1930's and early 1940's.

Mr. X and Alcoholics Anonymous

My friend, Mr. X, is a young man with a family. For five years, to use his own words, Mr. X did not "draw a sober breath." His over-patient wife was about to sue him for divorce. Now for over two years, he has not had a single drink. He maintains that his "cure" is due to the efforts of a group of "ex-drunks" (their own term) who call themselves Alcoholics Anonymous.

I have had several opportunities to meet members of Alcoholics Anonymous. Not long ago I accepted an invitation from Mr. X to attend one of their meetings, held in a private home. They are simple affairs: First a brief prayer, then four or five give public testimony to their experiences, refreshments are served, and there is general fellowship. They call themselves religious, but I find no sign of excessive piety, sensationalism, or fanaticism. Furthermore they have a sense of humor, somewhat of a rarity in religious circles. They are not trying to make other people or the country into "dries." They merely

say, "We are the type that can't take it, and we have found a way of leaving it alone."

In my own home recently nine members of this group submitted themselves to questions for four hours from a prominent physician and a psychiatrist. Both were impressed by the trim appearance, sincerity, manliness of the ex-victims, and by the seeming efficacy of their methods. As the physician said to me privately, "These boys have got something!"

Thank God someone is throwing light on the problem of the chronic alcoholic, a problem that has perplexed men for centuries. There may be a million victims in the United States. Chronic alcoholism is not a vice but a disease. Its victims know that the habit is exceedingly harmful - as one of them graphically expressed it to me, "I was staring into a pine box" - but they are driven toward drink by an uncontrollable desire, by what psychologists call a compulsive psychosis.

Complete abstinence appears the only way out, but except in rare cases that has been impossible of attainment. Religion, psychiatry, and medicine have been tried, but with only sporadic success. The members of Alcoholics Anonymous, however, appear to have found an answer, for they claim that at least fifty per cent of those they interest have stopped drinking completely.

From conversations with my friend, Mr. X, and with members of the Cleveland group, I am convinced that this success comes through the application of four religious principles that are as old as the Ten Commandments.

1. The principle of spiritual dependence

Mr. X, who had been drinking excessively for years, found that he couldn't summon enough will power to stop even for a single day. Finally in desperation he consented to a week of hospital treatment. During this time he received frequent visits from members of Alcoholics Anonymous. They told him that he must stop trying to use his will and trust in a Power greater than himself. Such trust had saved them from the abyss and could save him. Believe or perish! Mr. X chose to believe. Within a few days he lost all desire for alcohol.

Trust in God seems to be the heart of the whole movement. Religion must be more than a mere set of beliefs; it must be a profound inner experience, faith in a Presence to which one may go for strength in time of weakness.

This fact is made quite clear in the book ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, which gives the philosophy behind the movement and also the testimony of thirty of those who have benefited. Although written by laymen it contains more psychological and religious common-sense than one often reads in volumes by religious professionals. The book is free from cant, from archaic phraseology. It gives with skill and intelligence an inside view of the alcohol problem and the

technique through which these men have found their freedom.

I will let "Bill," one of the contributors to ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, describe his own experience. He had been drinking in his kitchen - there was enough gin in the house to carry him through that night and the next day. An old friend came to see him. They had often been drunk together, but now he refused to drink! He had "got religion." He talked for hours...it all seemed impossible, and yet there he was, sober. But let me quote from the book:

God had done for him what he could not do for himself. His human will had failed. Doctors had pronounced him incurable. Society was about to lock him up. Like myself, he had admitted complete defeat. Then he had, in effect, been raised from the dead, suddenly taken from the scrap heap to a level of life better than the best he had ever known!

Had this power originated in him? Obviously it had not. There had been no more power in him than there was in me at that moment, and this was none at all.

That floored me. It began to look as though religious people were right after all. Here was something at work in a human heart which had done the impossible. My ideas about miracles were drastically revised right then. Never mind the musty past; here sat a miracle directly across the kitchen table. He shouted great tidings.*

*Alcoholics Anonymous (New York, AAWS, Inc., 1976), p. 11

How hard is it for us moderns to concede - much less express it as our deep conviction - that our inner lives ultimately are dependent upon a power-not-ourselves. Such an attitude seems weak and cowardly. But we go even farther; we suspect that faith in a spiritual Presence outside ourselves is absurd.

Why absurd? Our bodies are dependent ultimately upon the physical cosmos, upon air and sunlight, and upon this strange planet that bears us up. Why is it absurd then, to think of our spiritual selves - our souls, psyches, call them what you will - as being dependent upon a spiritual cosmos? Is it not absurd, rather to conceive that the material side of us is part of a material universe, but that our nature is isolated, alone, independent? Is not such an attitude a kind of megalomania?

At any rate these ex-alcoholics declare that only when they recognized their spiritual dependence was their obsession broken.

2. The principle of universality

In our great museums one usually finds paintings covering several ages of art, often brought together from widely separated localities - the primitive, medieval and modern periods; products of French, American, English, and Dutch

masters; treasures from China, Japan, and India. Yet as one looks at these productions he instinctively feels that a universal beauty runs through them all. Beauty knows no particular age or school. Beauty is never exclusive and provincial; it is inclusive and universal.

So, too, in the field of religion. We are beginning to recognize the substantial unity of all religious faiths. Back of all religions is religion itself. Religion appears in differing types, but they are all expressions of one great impulse to live nobly and to adore the highest.

This universality of religion is recognized by the Alcoholics Anonymous. Their meetings are attended by Catholics, Protestants, Jews, near-agnostics, and near-atheists. There is the utmost tolerance. It seems of no concern to the group with what religious bodies non-church-going members eventually identify themselves; indeed there is no pressure to join any church whatever. What particularly impresses me is the fact that each individual can conceive of the Power-not-himself in whatever terms he pleases.

"Bill" - the writer already quoted in ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS - makes this tolerance clear when he further narrates his conversation with his ex-alcoholic friend:

My friend suggested what then seemed a novel idea. He said, 'Why don't you choose your own conception of God?'

That statement hit me hard. It melted the icy intellectual mountain in whose shadow I had lived and shivered many years. I stood in the sunlight at last.

It was only a matter of being willing to believe in a power greater than myself. Nothing more was required of me to make my beginning. I saw that growth could start from that point. Upon a foundation of complete willingness I might build what I saw in my friend. Would I have it? Of course I would!*

*Alcoholics Anonymous (New York, AAWS, Inc., 1976), p. 12

Perhaps these laymen in Alcoholics Anonymous are laying foundations for a new universal movement in religion. Surely the conventional conceptions of religion have been too narrow. Religion, itself, is far bigger and broader than we thought. It is something we can no more capture through rigid dogmas than we can squeeze all the sunshine in the world through one window.

3. The principle of mutual aid

Consider again the case of Mr. X. When he was being hospitalized eighteen laymen visitors called on him within the brief space of five days. These men were willing to give their valuable time in trying to help a man they had never seen before. To Mr. X they related their own dramatic experiences in being saved from slavery to alcohol, and offered their assistance. Upon

leaving the hospital Mr. X began attending the weekly meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous. (editor's note- these were actually meetings of the Oxford Group as Alcoholics Anonymous was not officially named in 1938)

Before long he was following the example of the men who had so generously given him of their help. From what I know of the practices of these members of Alcoholics Anonymous, I feel quite confident that Mr. X this very day is using virtually every hour of his spare time to assist other victims in getting on their feet.

As he said to me recently, "Only an alcoholic can help an alcoholic. If a victim of chronic alcoholism goes to a doctor, psychiatrist, or a minister, he feels the listener cannot possibly understand what it means to be afflicted with a compulsion psychosis. But when he talks with an ex-alcoholic, who has probably been in a worse fix than himself and has found the way out, he immediately gains a confidence in himself that he hasn't had in years. He says to himself in substance, 'If this fellow has been saved from disaster I can be too'."

The weekly meetings of the Alcoholics Anonymous operate on this same principal of mutual aid. The ex-victims bolster up each other's morale through comradeship. Like ship-wrecked sailors on a raft headed for the shore, the bond that holds them together is the same that they have escaped from a common peril. Upon each newcomer is impressed the necessity of helping other alcoholics obtain the freedom he has attained. They believe they gain strength from expenditure - not expenditure of money, of which most of them have but little, but of themselves. Said one of them to me, "What I have is no good unless I give it away." There are no dues, no fees, just the sheer pleasure and, in this case, moral profit, that comes from helping the other fellow. This mutual aid acts as a sort of endless chain. Mr. A, Mr. B, and Mr. C help Mr. X out of the frightful mess he is in; then Mr. X turns around and helps Mr. Y and Mr. Z. These in turn help other victims.

As "Bill" writes in ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS:

My wife and I abandoned ourselves with enthusiasm to the idea of helping other alcoholics to a solution of their problems. It was fortunate, for my old business associates remained skeptical for a year and a half, during which I found little work. I was not too well at the time, and was plagued by waves of self-pity and resentment. This sometimes nearly drove me back to drink. I soon found that when all other measures failed, work with another alcoholic would save the day. Many times I have gone to my old hospital in despair. On talking to a man there, I would be amazingly uplifted and set on my feet. It is a design for living that works in rough going.*

* Alcoholics Anonymous (New York, AAWS, Inc., 1976), p. 15

During the last half century many able psychologists have turned the searchlight of their investigations on "religious experience." It seems quite clear from these studies that religion consists not primarily in the intellectual acceptance of certain beliefs. It involves even more the transformation of human character. Such transformations have taken place not only in the lives of saints and religious leaders, but in the souls of multitudes of common folk as well. It is a scientific fact that through religious faith people are sometimes suddenly, and sometimes gradually aroused to a new set of interests, are raised from lower to higher levels of existence. Life and its duties take on new meaning, and selfishness (half-conscious often) is displaced by the conscious desire to help other people.

If any human being needs such a transformation, it is the chronic alcoholic. He may not be at the point where he is willing to admit that, but his family and friends are! Alcoholism is a sickness, to be sure, but it is unlike any other malady in certain fundamental aspects. Compare for example, the case of the alcoholic with that of a tubercular patient. Everybody is sorry for the "T.B." and wants to help. He is surrounded by friendliness and love. But in all likelihood, the alcoholic has made a perfect hell of his home and has destroyed his friendships one by one. He has drawn to himself not compassion and love, but misunderstanding, resentment, and hate.

There seems to be every evidence that the Alcoholics Anonymous group has been amazingly successful in bringing about religious transformation. Note how a doctor describes the effect of this technique on one of his patients:

He had lost everything worth while in his life and was only living, one might say, to drink. He frankly admitted and believed that for him there was no hope. Following the elimination of alcohol, there was found to be no permanent brain injury. He accepted the plan outlined in this book (ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS). One year later he called to see me, and I experienced a very strange sensation. I knew this man by name, and partly recognized his features, but there all resemblance ended. From a trembling, despairing, nervous wreck, had emerged a man brimming over with self-reliance and contentment. I talked with him for some time, but was not able to bring myself to feel that I had known him before. To me he was a stranger, and so he left me. More than three years have now passed with no return to alcohol.*

* Alcoholics Anonymous, "The Doctor's Opinion" (New York, AAWS, Inc., 1976),
p. xxix

Every member of this movement declares that since he has come to believe in a Power-greater-than-himself a revolutionary change has taken place in his life; even his acquaintances note a marked change. He has radically altered his attitudes and outlooks, his habits of thought. In the face of despair and impending collapse, he has gained a new sense of direction, new power.

I have seen these things with my own eyes. They are convincing, dramatic, moving.

One final word to the members of Alcoholics Anonymous. Go back to your synagogues and churches; they need you and you need them. Preserve your principle of Universality, your faith that all religion is one. Never allow yourselves to be absorbed by any single church or sect. Keep your movement what you call it now, a "layman's outfit." Avoid over-organization for religious organizations always tend to follow the letter rather than the spirit, finally crushing the spirit. Remember that early Christianity was promoted not by highly involved organization, but by the contagion of souls fired with enthusiasm for their cause. And keep your sense of humor! So far you do not seem afflicted with the curse of over-seriousness.

To doctors and psychiatrists I would say; Be skeptical, investigate this movement with an open mind. If you become convinced of their sincerity and the efficacy of their methods, give these men your approval and open support.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS ought to have a wide reading by the general public. For one thing the public ought to learn first hand that the chronic alcoholic is suffering not from a vice, but from a disease; that it is impossible for him to "drink like a gentleman." Moderation for him is out of the question. For him there is no such thing as the single drink. It is one taste, and then the deluge.

Certainly every victim of alcoholism and every friend of victims ought to buy or borrow and read this book, then seek to get in touch with some member of the movement. The writer of this article will be glad to furnish addresses of the Cleveland leaders. Or communicate with Alcoholics Anonymous, Box 658, Church Street Annex, New York City.

From the book "How It Worked - The Story of Clarence H. Snyder and the Early Days of Alcoholics Anonymous in Cleveland, Ohio" by Mitchell K.

II
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++++Message 227. Wilson House and Griffith House in East Dorset, Vermont.
From: NMOlson@aol.com 6/11/2002 4:23:00 PM

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Last June, through the kindness of one of the AA History Buffs, I had an opportunity to visit Wilson House and Griffith House in East Dorset, Vermont. East Dorset was celebrating Bill Wilson Day and the founding of A.A., as they

do each year, usually the first weekend in June so as not to conflict with Founders Day in Akron.

The small hotel where Bill was born -- in the room behind the bar -- opened in 1852 as the Barrows House. It had 28 rooms and 15 bedrooms. At the time of Bill's birth to Gilman Barrows Wilson and his wife, Emily Griffith Wilson, it was owned by his grandmother, Helen Barrows Wilson, whose

father had built it. The name was changed to Wilson House when she married Bill's grandfather.

During Prohibition, Wilson House became a stopping-off place for those traveling to Canada to drink, since it was halfway between New York and Montreal. The hotel was visited by such famous persons as Charles Lindbergh and Myrna Loy.

By 1987, when it was purchased by Ozzie L., it was near collapse. Ozzie formed a foundation to restore and preserve it, not as a museum, but as a living memorial to Bill. The foundation now also owns Griffith House.

Fortunately, Bill's memories of his childhood in East Dorset have been preserved on tapes he made in 1954. On the first tape he noted that he was born in the Green Mountains of Vermont, alongside of a towering peak called Mount Aeolus. One of his earliest memories was looking out of the window from his crib just as the sunset developed over the great mountain.

Bill said: "It is an impression which never left me. Somehow, today when I go there, there is no spot quite like this -- the spot where I first saw that mountain; that spot in which I can recall so many of the associations of my childhood; that spot whose ancestry and whose native ruggedness endowed me, I fancy, with both strength and weakness."

Bill described the place where he was born as a parsonage, though he added that his parents were not members of the clergy. Perhaps the small church across the street, between Wilson House and the Griffith home, used the hotel as a place to house its pastor, thus leading Bill to refer to it as a parsonage.

When we arrived in the early evening of June 1, we were warmly greeted by a woman volunteer. When I asked for the key to my room I was told there were no locks on the doors, "like family members, we trust one another."

I had all my meals at the hotel, and while the dress is very informal, the

meals were served by candlelight and cloth napkins were used at each meal. Wilson House is staffed by volunteers, and everyone seemed to go out of their way to assure that I was as comfortable as possible during my stay. Even one of the cats, Mrs. Barnyard, accommodated my needs by spending the night in my bed so I would not miss my cat back home.

There are no telephones, radios or television in the rooms. This is a place of retreat from the hustle bustle of modern life. The atmosphere is very conducive to prayer and meditation. Bibles, Big Books, and other AA literature and spiritual reading are in every room.

And the special needs of alcoholics are clearly considered. Coffee was constantly available, as well as bowls of candy, popcorn and a cookie jar filled with delicious cookies.

The large living room was, at the time of Bill's birth, two rooms. The bar was in the front room, just off the entrance. Behind it was a family bedroom. It was in this room behind the bar that Bill was born. On the back wall, where the bed must have stood, is now an antique sofa, next to which is a small table holding a beautiful Victorian lamp. The lamp is kept lighted day and night in Bill's memory.

In the library, which was the library/living room of the hotel, an old guest register in the display case shows that Bill, Lois and his mother visited in 1925 when Bill and Lois were on their famous motorcycle trip. The only television set was here, but it was used only to show a video tape of the

history of the house. Lois wrote a diary during that trip in which she describes staying in North Dorset at the summer bungalow owned by her parents. From there she wrote on July 13, 1925: Bill and I are having great adventures with the East Dorset Water Works which Bill's grandfather had owned. When he died, maps of connections and shutoffs from the main pipes running down the town's two streets could not be found. So Bill with Charley's help has dug and dug until every shutoff is located, repaired or its good condition verified.

At Wilson House today there is a large meeting room where several AA and Al-Anon meetings are held each week. This is located in the original barn,

which around 1920 was enlarged and attached to the House. A large stone

fireplace was added in the 1940s when a structural beam cracked. When Bill first saw Stepping Stones, he immediately felt at home since the stone

fireplace at Stepping Stones reminded him of the one at Wilson House.

The Wilson House still operates as a hotel, with 14 rooms which can house a maximum of 28 guests. One of the guest rooms is actually a small apartment with a loft bedroom which used to be a chicken coop.

A large front porch running the length of the building, with rocking chairs,

faces the main street. I was told that Bill sat there as a boy entertaining

the guests by playing his violin.

Bill reported that his grandfather always tried to stimulate him. On the

tapes he made in 1954 he told how his grandfather had told him what a

wonderful musician his Uncle Clarence had been, and how he could play the fiddle right away, as soon as he took it up. So Bill dug the old fiddle out of the trunk and learned to play it.

Bill lived at the Wilson House until he was about two years old and then the

family moved to another house and later moved to Rutland. Bill's parents were divorced when Bill was 11 years old. His father left for Canada and his mother went to Boston to train at a medical school. Bill and his sister, Dorothy, were sent to live with their maternal grandparents. Dorothy later went to live with her mother, but Bill remained with his grandparents.

Bill's father had literally married the girl next door. Across the churchyard from the Wilson House is the small house which was owned by his grandfather, Gardner Griffith. It was here that Bill lived after his parent's separation until he entered the Armed Services during World War I. It was here that Bill weathering the trauma of his parents' divorce and the death of his first love when he was a senior at Burr and Burton Academy in Manchester.

Naturally, I was eager to visit the house where Bill had lived with his

grandparents. A staff member graciously used his break from his many duties getting ready for the crowd expected on Sunday, to take us over and show us through.

There is a sitting room downstairs and upstairs there are two bedrooms. From

his little bedroom Bill could look down across the churchyard and see the Wilson House. The furniture is not what was in the house when Bill lived there, but I could imagine the young boy in that little room, studying at the small desk, eyeing the headboard of his bed, planning to saw it up to make his famous boomerang. The Griffith House now houses a large library of AA memorabilia. I donated a few items later, including Bill's testimony before the U.S. Senate.

Bill and Lois are buried in the East Dorset Cemetery, south of East Dorset, just over a mile from the Wilson house. Their graves are marked by simple

headstones. When we visited on Saturday, June 2, there was no one else

there. But we found that several people had left AA medallions, etc., at the

grave. One of my companions, who is Jewish, and I, knowing the Jewish custom of leaving stones on the graves they visit left stones on Bill's tombstone. A friend later sent me pictures he had taken the next day which show the stones still there. I also left a desire chip at Bill's grave. I continue to carry a desire chip as well as my other chip to remind myself that we work our program, as Bill taught, just one day at a time. And today I desire not to drink.

As I whispered a thank you to Bill, I could almost hear him say again, what

he had told me years ago when I tried to thank him: "Pass It On."

Sunday was the big day: Bill Wilson Day in East Dorset. On Sunday morning I found several policemen when I walked out onto the porch.

I joked with them about being here to try to control all these alcoholics in

case we all got drunk and rowdy. They laughed heartily.

More than 300 persons were expected, so portable toilets were being put up at the corner, and traffic control officers were on hand. Obviously, Bill

Wilson Day is a very big day for little East Dorset.

In the morning there was a memorial service at the gravesite. Despite

pouring rain, more than 200 people attended. The meeting following the memorial service at the graves had to be held on the lawn of the church by the side of Griffith House since there was no way to fit more than 300 people in the meeting room. It rained and thundered constantly until almost time for the meeting. Then the sky miraculously cleared and we were able to have the meeting outside.

The speaker for the day was John (Scotty) M. One must have known Bill to be the speaker on Bill Wilson Day. Scotty had first met Bill about 1962 when he was a patient at High Watch. Ebby Thatcher had been his roommate there, and Bill had come to visit Ebby.

A few years before Bill died, when he was suffering severely from emphysema, Scotty was asked to be Bill's escort and get him safely to an AA conference. He had also been given the assignment of making sure Bill got plenty of rest.

I knew what a difficult job that must have been. I remembered when Bill came to Washington, DC, to testify before the US Senate Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in July of 1969, how frail he was and how worried we were that he might exhaust himself. But Bill was determined to testify and testify he did, with great spirit and enthusiasm.

It was a joy for me to talk to Scotty and his first wife, Glendora, who also

was there. They had both been members of the group in New York City where I attended my first meeting in November of 1965. And they both attended the same meetings I did on the East side of Manhattan. Although we didn't remember one another, we knew many of the same people from those days in New York, and it was fun for me to reminisce.

During Scotty's talk, I occasionally glanced up at the window of Bill's

bedroom at Griffith House. What would that young boy have thought could he have known what would be happening here in his memory this day?

I urge anyone who can, to make a visit to Wilson House and Griffith House in East Dorset, and to visit the graves.

Nancy

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+++Message 229. Grapevine Articles by Dr. Bob
From: Fiona 6/9/2002 2:24:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

ON CULTIVATING TOLERANCE

By Dr. Bob Smith

July 1944, AA Grapevine

During nine years in AA, I have observed that those who follow the Alcoholics Anonymous program with the greatest earnestness and zeal not only maintain sobriety but often acquire finer characteristics and attitudes as well. One of these is tolerance. Tolerance expresses itself in a variety of ways: in kindness and consideration toward the man or woman who is just beginning the march along the spiritual path; in the understanding of those who perhaps have been less fortunate in education advantages; and in sympathy toward those whose religious ideas may seem to be at great variance with our own.

I am reminded in this connection of the picture of a hub with its radiating spokes. We all start at the outer circumference and approach our destination by one of many routes. To say that one spoke is much better than all the other spokes is true only in the sense of its being best suited to you as an individual. Human nature is such that without some degree of tolerance, each one of us might be inclined to believe that we have found the best or perhaps the shortest spoke. Without some tolerance, we might tend to become a bit smug or superior - which, of course, is not helpful to the person we are trying to help and may be quite painful or obnoxious to others. No one of us wishes to do anything that might act as a deterrent to the advancement of another - and a patronizing attitude can readily slow up this process.

Tolerance furnishes, as a by-product, a greater freedom from the tendency to cling to preconceived ideas and stubbornly adhered-to opinions. In other words, it often promotes an open-mindedness that is vastly important - is, in fact, a prerequisite to the successful termination of any line of search, whether it be scientific or spiritual.

These, then, are a few of the reasons why an attempt to acquire tolerance should be made by each one of us.

THE FUNDAMENTALS - IN RETROSPECT

By Dr. Bob Smith

September 1948, AA Grapevine

It is gratifying to feel that one belongs to and has a definite personal part in the work of a growing and spiritually prospering organization for the release of the alcoholics of mankind from a deadly enslavement. For me, there is double gratification in the realization that, more than thirteen years ago, an all-wise Providence, whose ways must always be mysterious to our limited understandings, brought me to "see my duty clear" and to contribute in decent humility, as have so many others, my part in guiding the first trembling steps of the then-infant organization, Alcoholics Anonymous. [AA began June 10, 1935, with the start of Dr. Bob's lasting sobriety. He died November 16,

1950.]

It is fitting at this time to indulge in some retrospect regarding certain fundamentals. Much has been written; much has been said about the Twelve Steps of AA. These tenets of our faith and practice were not worked out overnight and then presented to our members as an opportunist creed. Born of our early trials and many tribulations, they were and are the result of humble and sincere desire, sought in personal prayer, for divine guidance.

As finally expressed and offered, they are simple in language, plain in meaning. They are also workable by any person having a sincere desire to obtain and keep sobriety. The results are the proof. Their simplicity and workability are such that no special interpretations, and certainly no reservations, have ever been necessary. And it has become increasingly clear that the degree of harmonious living that we achieve is in direct ratio to our earnest attempt to follow them literally under divine guidance to the best of our ability.

Yet there are no shibboleths (which means "long-standing formula, doctrine, or phrase, etc., held to be true by a group) in AA. We are not bound by theological doctrines. None of us may be excommunicated and cast into outer darkness. For we are many minds in our organization, and an AA Decalogue (which means "Ten Commandments") in the language of "Thou shalt not" would gall (which means "irritate") us indeed.

Look at our Twelve Traditions. No random expressions, these, based on just casual observation. On the contrary, they represent the sum of our experiences as individuals, as groups within AA, and similarly with our fellows and other organizations in the great fellowship of humanity under God throughout the world. They are all suggestions, yet the spirit in which they have been conceived merits their serious, prayerful consideration as the guidepost of AA policy for the individual, the group, and our various committees, local and national.

We have found it wise policy, too, to hold to no glorification of the individual. Obviously that is sound. Most of us will concede that when it came to the personal showdown of admitting our failures and deciding to surrender our will and our lives to Almighty God, as we understood him, we still had some sneaking ideas of personal justification and excuse. We had to discard them, but the ego of the alcoholic dies a hard death. Many of us, because of activity, have received praise, not only from our fellow AAs, but also from the world at large. We would be ungrateful indeed to be boorish when that happens; still, it is so easy for us to become, privately perhaps, just a little vain about it all. Yet fitting and wearing halos are not for us.

We've all seen the new member who stays sober for a time, largely through sponsor-worship. Then maybe the sponsor gets drunk, and you know what usually happens. Left without a human prop, the new member gets drunk, too. He has

been glorifying an individual, instead of following the program.

Certainly, we need leaders, but we must regard them as the human agents of the Higher Power and not with undue adulation as individuals. The Fourth and Tenth Steps cannot be too strongly emphasized here - "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves...Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it." There is your perfect antidote for halo poisoning.

So with the question of anonymity. If we have a banner, that word, speaking of the surrender of the individual - the ego - is emblazoned on it. Let us dwell thoughtfully on its full meaning and learn thereby to remain humble, modest, and ever conscious that we are eternally under divine direction.

Alcoholics Anonymous was nurtured in its early days around a kitchen table. Many of our pioneer groups and some of our most resultful meetings and best programs have their origin around that modest piece of furniture, with the coffeepot handy on the stove. True, we have progressed materially to better furniture and more comfortable surroundings. Yet the kitchen table must ever be appropriate for us. It is the perfect symbol of simplicity. In AA we have no VIPs, nor have we need of any. Our organization needs neither titleholders nor grandiose buildings. That is by design. Experience has taught us that simplicity is basic in preservation of our personal sobriety and helping those in need.

Far better it is for us to fully understand the meaning and practice of "thou good and faithful servant" than to listen to "When 60,000 members [in 1948] you should have a sixty-stories-high administration headquarters in New York with an assortment of trained 'ists' to direct your affairs." We need nothing of the sort. God grant that AA may ever stay simple.

Over the years, we have tested and developed suitable techniques for our purpose. They are entirely flexible. We have all known and seen miracles - the healing of broken individuals, the rebuilding of broken homes. And always, it has been the constructive, personal Twelfth Step work based on an ever-upward-looking faith that has done the job.

In as large an organization as ours, we naturally have had our share of those who fail to measure up to certain obvious standards of conduct. They have included schemers for personal gain, petty swindlers and confidence men, crooks of various kinds, and other human fallibles. Relatively, their number has been small, much smaller than in many religious and social-uplift organizations. Yet they have been a problem and not an easy one. They have caused many an AA to stop thinking and working constructively for a time.

We cannot condone their actions, yet we must concede that when we have used normal caution and precaution in dealing with such cases, we may safely leave them to the Higher Power. Let me reiterate that we AAs are many men and women

that we are of many minds. It will be well for us to concentrate on the goal of personal sobriety and active work. We humans and alcoholics, on strict moral stocktaking, must confess to at least a slight degree of larcenous (which means "characterized by the wrongful taking of the personal goods of another") instinct. We can hardly arrogate (which means "to assume to ourself without right") the roles of judges and executioners.

Thirteen grand years! To have been a part of it all from the beginning has been reward indeed.

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+++Message 230. The 12 Steps as Ego Deflating Devices
by Dr. Harry M. Tiebout, M.D
From: Fiona 6/9/2002 2:48:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

The 12 Steps as Ego Deflating Devices

What does Surrender Mean?

For reasons still obscure, the program and the fellowship of AA could cause a surrender, which in turn would lead to a period of no drinking. It became ever more apparent that in everyone's psyche there existed an unconquerable ego which bitterly opposed any thought of defeat. Until that ego was somehow reduced or rendered ineffective, no likelihood of surrender could be anticipated.

AA, still very much in its infancy, was celebrating a third or fourth anniversary of one of the groups. The speaker immediately preceding me told in detail of the efforts of his local group--which consisted of two men--to get him to dry up and become its third member. After several months of vain efforts on their part and repeated nose dives on his, the speaker went on to say: "Finally, I got cut down to size and have been sober ever since," a matter of some two or three years. When my turn came to speak, I used his phrase "cut down to size" as a text around which to weave my remarks. Before long, out of the corner of my eye, I became conscious of a disconcerting stare. It was coming from the previous speaker.

It was perfectly clear: He was utterly amazed that he had said anything which made sense to a psychiatrist. The incident showed that two people, one approaching the matter clinically and the other relying on his own intuitive report of what had happened to him, both came up with exactly the same

observation: the need for ego reduction. It is common knowledge that a return of the full-fledged ego can happen at any time. Years of sobriety are no insurance against its resurgence. No AA's, regardless of their veteran status, can ever relax their guard against a reviving ego.

The function of surrender in AA is now clear. It produces that stopping by causing the individual to say, "I quit. I give up on my headstrong ways. I've learned my lesson." Very often for the first time in that individual's adult career, he has encountered the necessary discipline that halts him in his headlong pace. Actually, he is lucky to have within him the capacity to surrender. It is that which differentiates him from the wild animals. And this happens because we can surrender and truly feel, "Thy will, not mine, be done."

Unfortunately, that ego will return unless the individual learns to accept a disciplined way of life, which means the tendency toward ego comeback, is permanently checked.

This is not news to AA members. They have learned that a single surrender is not enough. Under the wise leadership of the AA "founding fathers" the need for continued endeavor to maintain that miracle has been steadily stressed. The Twelve Steps urge repeated inventories, not just one, and the Twelfth Step is in itself a routine reminder that one must work at preserving sobriety. Moreover, it is referred to as Twelfth Step work--which is exactly what it is. By that time, the miracle is for the other person.

-Dr. Harry M. Tiebout, M.D.

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+++Message 231. Periodical literature - Dr.. Bob
From: Fiona 6/9/2002 2:36:00 PM

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From: Jim Blair

This is a magazine article which appeared in The American Weekly on Dr. Bob.

The American Weekly
March 11, 1951

Dr. Bob

His Only Monument Is a Plaque, but the Thousands He Helped Rescue From

Alcoholism Will Never Forget Him.

By Booton Herndon

The kindly faced man lying in the white hospital bed raised his hand to the light, studied it calmly and then remarked to the nurse standing by his bed: "I think this is it."

Thus Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith recently passed from the world. So, finally, the story of "Dr. Bob, beloved by 120,000 members of Alcoholics Anonymous whom he had helped to find the way back to respectability and happiness, can be told. At the death of his wife, Anne, a year before, Dr. Smith's identity had been revealed, but the story of the co-founder of A.A. remained a secret.

Dr. Bob was a boy in New England, 72 years ago, and his mother sent him to bed at 5 o'clock every evening. Just as regularly did he secretly arise, dress, and slip out the back way to continue the game with his boyhood pals. He learned early to revolt against authority.

When he went away to college he became a steady drinker.

He had always wanted to be a doctor but his strong willed mother had always opposed it, and it was three years after he graduated from Dartmouth before he got up the courage to go to medical school. He drank so continuously he just did manage to get his degree. Once he went off on such a protracted binge that his fraternity brothers had to send for his father to straighten him out.

All this time Bob was corresponding with Anne, his high school sweetheart. That was as far as their courtship went. With the exception of two hard working years as an intern, he was seldom sober. Still, Anne, waiting for a miracle, married no one else.

The miracle happened, apparently, after a year-long period of heavy drinking left him terrified and on the wagon. In 1915 when he was 35 years old and some 17 years after he had first met her, he married Anne and brought her to Akron with him as his bride. They were happy for several years - until the Eighteenth Amendment was passed.

The Grapevine, the official magazine of Alcoholics Anonymous, explains in the weird logic of the alcoholic what happened then. Dr. Bob figured that since he'd soon be unable to get any more alcohol, he might as well drink up what there was. Despite prohibition, he never found it difficult to get more. From then on, he had a regular pattern. He began drinking every afternoon at four. Every morning he'd quiet his tortured nerves with sedatives and, trembling, go to work to make enough money to buy alcohol for four o'clock.

That went on for 15 years.

In the meantime, a New York broker who had drunk himself out of prominence discovered that when he was trying to talk drunks into going on the wagon, he had less craving for liquor. This broker, known to A.A.'s as Bill W., went to Akron on a business deal in 1935. The deal fell through and Bill found himself once more a failure, with only 2\$ in his pocket. He knew right

away that he had his choice: find a drunk to talk to, or get drunk himself. Fortunately, he found a drunk, Dr. Bob. Bill moved in with Dr. Bob and straightened him out. When he and Dr. Bob wanted a drink, they'd go out and find a drunk to talk to. They sobered up a number of habitual drinkers in Akron that way and then their fame began reaching out to other cities. Slowly, gradually, the idea spread. Almost before Dr. Bob and Bill, the co-founders, were aware of it, Alcoholics Anonymous was a going concern. The book, Alcoholics Anonymous, was written. It is now in its 13th printing. People began to write in from all over the world. Some were alcoholics themselves, some were mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, husbands, wives or friends of alcoholics. They all got an answer. Dr. Bob, who had devoted half his life to drinking, still found himself a slave to alcohol - only now it was on the other fellow's breath. He personally visited some 5,000 in Akron hospitals, encouraging them. As his period of sobriety increased, more and more patients came to him, and it looked as though one part of his ambition, to own a convertible, might not be impossible after all. Finally he made it. Last year he got a new yellow convertible. The Grapevine pictures him, at the age of 71, speeding through the streets of Akron in it. "the long slim lines made even more rakish with the top down. No hat, his face to the sun, into the driveway he sped. Pebbles, flying, tires screeching, he'd swoosh to a stop. And, just then, before he put 150 miles on the gleaming yellow convertible, Dr. Bob's malignant disease took a turn for the worse and he had to give up driving. He died a few months later. Bill W. explained why there will be no imposing monument to this man who saved so many people from alcoholism. When it was once suggested, last year, Dr. Bob said: "Anne and I plan to be buried just like other folks." And so only a simple plaque in the alcoholic ward of St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, where Dr. Bob did so much of his work, commemorates his work as co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous.

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+++Message 232. Lois Wilson's 1967 Grapevine Article
From: Fiona 6/9/2002 2:55:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

In AA's First Five Years

Lois Wilson, wife of AA's co-founder, Bill Wilson, recalls the time in AA when there were few members and no Big Book. From the January 1967 AA Grapevine.

In the early days of AA things were really different. For five years there was no Big Book. The only way to communicate with other people was to go and tell them, so that's what we did. Of course, all of the meetings were held in people's homes, the homes of those who were lucky enough to have them. Anybody who had one made it wide open to whomever the boys brought in. Our houses, Dr. Bob's in Akron and ours in Brooklyn, were just filled with drunks, either drinking, or stopped temporarily, or well on the way to real sobriety.

Yes, AA was quite different in those days for many reasons. One was that there were no people in AA except those who had gone to the very bottom. Only these would listen to the story that one drunk was telling another. When AA first started, before there was a book, it was more anonymous than it is now, because even the Fellowship was without a name. AA didn't have a name until the book was written. Before that it was just a bunch of drunks trying to help each other, a bunch of nameless drunks. They had to be worked with over and over; families and everybody did what they could to help.

There were many, many sad things that happened, many very humorous things, and inspirational things, too.

Several are coming to mind right now. Bill, as you know, came from Vermont and someone sent him some maple syrup from there. It came in a whiskey bottle. One of the boys saw this attractive container in the kitchen and he was so drunk at the time that he gulped the whole bottle of syrup, thinking it was whiskey.

We had a rule that no one could come into the house when he was drinking. One night one of the boys came home drunk. We wouldn't let him in so he pried open the coal chute and slid into the cellar. Since he was very fat it was surprising that he could slide down it, yet somehow he made it. But this same fat man did get stuck one night in the washtubs. He lived in the basement apartment. Old city houses used to have stationary tubs in the kitchen. He thought he'd try to take a bath in one. But after getting in he couldn't get out so one of us (and I think it was I) had to pull him out.

There were many other things...a man committed suicide in our house after having pawned our dress clothes, left over from more prosperous days. These included Bill's dress suit and my precious evening cape. We have never owned such articles again.

AA was always thrilling. The families were included in all of the meetings; wives and parents (there weren't many alcoholic women then), and the children came too. The children were vitally interested in everything that went on. They would inquire about all the members and want to know how they were. They'd learn the Twelve Steps and really try to live by them. I don't think youngsters can be too young to be thrilled by the AA program and be helped by it.

One of the first women who came in was the ex-wife of a friend of Bill's. She had been in Bellevue and had come from there to our house. At that time there was a wonderful man - I think he was the fourth or fifth AA - who was trying to start a group in Washington, D.C. This woman went down to help him and she stayed sober for quite a long time. Then she married a man they were trying to bring onto the program. He really didn't go along with the idea himself and used to say to her every once in a while, "Florence, you look so thirsty." And so she did something about that, Florence disappeared. Everybody looked for her everywhere and couldn't find her. After a couple of weeks they found her in the morgue.

At that time each group used to visit every other group. New York members would go to New Jersey or Greenwich, Philadelphia or Washington or even Cleveland or Akron. Those were the groups I recall were in existence in the first five years.

If anybody had a car a bunch of us would pile in and we'd go wherever we knew there was a meeting. Families were just as much a part of AA as the alcoholics and we did feel we belonged.

But after a while the AA's thought that they should have an occasional meeting - at least one every week - of just alcoholics so that they could really get down to business. When this occurred the wives thought they'd meet together, too, at the same time. At first these little gatherings of wives didn't have any particular purpose. Sometimes we'd play bridge and sometimes we'd gossip about our husbands.

Then a few of us began to see that we really needed the AA program just as much as the alcoholics. The famous case of my throwing a shoe at Bill started me wondering about myself and realizing that I needed to live by the Twelve Steps just as much as he did. He was getting way ahead of me. I always thought of myself as being the moral mentor in the house, but Bill, who never was a mentor, was certainly growing spiritually while I was standing still. Or perhaps there is no standing still - if I wasn't going ahead, I must be going backwards.

I decided I'd better live by the Twelve Steps. Annie S. and a number of other people had come to the same conclusion. So, whenever we visited another group, we would tell the wives and families how we found that we, too, needed to live by the Twelve Steps of AA. Little groups of wives and families all over the country began to feel the same need for something to help overcome their frustrations and help them become integrated human beings again.

That's the way Al-Anon started. We followed the AA program in every principle. I want to thank AA's so very much for showing us the way. Without your leading us we would still be the unhappy folks we were.

In our meetings we tell our own experiences just as AA's do. We tell how we

came to find that we needed Al-Anon and what Al-Anon has done for us. And we seek to help other families that were, or are, having the same sort of experience.

In 1950 Bill traveled all over Canada and the United States to see how AA's would react to the idea of a general conference for Alcoholics Anonymous, and in doing so he discovered quite a few types of groups of the family of alcoholics. He thought that they should have a Central Office here in New York, just as AA did, so that they could be unified in their use of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions - a place where inquiries could be received, literature prepared and the public informed so that those in need would know where to turn.

A good friend and I started a small office in Bedford Hills. By then AA had had eighty-seven inquiries from wives or groups who wished to register. As AA was not equipped to handle the families of alcoholics it handed over this list to us and we wrote to them. Fifty groups responded and were registered with us. That was in '51. Today (1967) there are over 3,000 Al-Anon groups.

The numerical potential of Al-Anon is greater than AA's because it is composed not only of mates of alcoholics, but children, parents and other relatives and friends. It is estimated that five people are seriously affected by one alcoholic.

Though we have barely scratched the surface, the future is bright, thanks to you AA's for your wonderful example and inspiration

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+++Message 233. Dr. Bob's Last Major Talk, Dec. 1948
From: Fiona 6/9/2002 3:04:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

This is Dr. Bob's last major talk given in Detroit, Michigan in December 1948, transcribed from tape.

Although a good many of you have heard or have read about the inception of A.A., probably there are some who haven't. From that brief story, there are things to be learned. So, even at the risk of repetition, I would like to relate exactly what did happen in those early days.

You recall the story about Bill having had a spiritual experience and having been sold on the idea of attempting to be helpful to other drunks. Time went

by, and he had not created a single convert, not one. As we express it, no one had jelled. He worked tirelessly, with no thought of saving his own strength or time, but nothing seemed to register.

When he came out to Akron on a business mission, which (perhaps for the good of all of us) turned out to be quite a flop, he was tempted to drink. He paced up and down the lobby of the Mayflower Hotel, wondering whether he had better buy two fifths of gin and be "king for a night," as he expressed it, or whether he had better not. His teachings led him to believe that he possibly might avoid difficulties if he found another alcoholic on whom to work.

Spying the name of our good friend the Reverend Walter Tunks on the bulletin board in the lobby of the Mayflower, Bill called him up and asked him for the name of some local member of the Oxford Group, people with whom he had affiliated and through whose instrumentality he had acquired sobriety. Dr. Tunks said he wasn't one himself, but he knew quite a number and gave Bill a little list of about nine or ten.

Bill started to call them up, without very much success. They had either just left town or were leaving town or having a party or had a sore toe or something. Anyway, Bill came down very near to the end, and his eyes happened to light on the name of Mrs. Seiberling - our good friend Henrietta. He called Henry and told her what he wanted, and she said, "Come right out and have lunch with me." At lunch, he went into his story in considerable detail, and she said, "I have just the man for you.

She rushed to the phone and called Anne and told her that she had just the fellow to be helpful to me, and that we should come right over. Anne said, "Well, I guess we better not go over today."

But Henry is very persistent, a very determined individual. She said, "Oh yes, come on over. I know he'll be helpful to Bob." Anne still didn't think it very wise that we go over that day. Finally, Henry bore in to such an extent that Anne had to tell her I was very bagged and had passed all capability of listening to any conversation, and the visit would just have to be postponed. So Henry started in about the next day being Sunday and Mother's Day, and Anne said we would be over then.

I don't remember ever feeling much worse, but I was very fond of Henry, and Anne had said we would go over. So we started over. On the way, I extracted a solemn promise from Anne that 15 minutes of this stuff would be tops. I didn't want to talk to this mug or anybody else, and we'd really make it snappy, I said. Now these are the actual facts: We got there at five o'clock, and it was 11:15 when we left.

Possibly, your memories are good enough to carry you back to certain times when you haven't felt too good. You wouldn't have listened to anybody unless he really had something to tell you. I recognized the fact that Bill did have

something, sol listened those many hours, and I stopped drinking immediately.

Very shortly after that, there was a medical meeting in Atlantic City, and I developed a terrific thirst for knowledge. I had to have knowledge, I said, so I would go to Atlantic City and absorb lots of knowledge. I had incidentally acquired a thirst for Scotch, but I didn't mention that. I went to Atlantic City and really hung one on. When I came to, I was in the home of a friend of ours in Cuyahoga Falls, one of the suburbs of Akron. Bill came over and got me home and gave me a hooker or two of Scotch that night and a bottle of beer the next morning, and that was on the 10th of June, 1935, and I have had no alcohol, in any form that I know of, since.

Now the interesting part of all this is not the sordid details, but the situation that we two fellows were in. We had both been associated with the Oxford Group, Bill in New York, for five months, and I in Akron, for two and a half years. Bill had acquired their idea of service. I had not, but I had done an immense amount of reading they had recommended. I had refreshed my memory of the Good Book, and I had had excellent training in that as a youngster. They told me I should go to their meetings regularly, and I did, every week. They said that I should affiliate myself with some church, and we did that. They also said I should cultivate the habit of prayer, and I did that - at least, to a considerable extent for me. But I got tight every night, and I mean that. It wasn't once in a while - it was practically every night.

I couldn't understand what was wrong. I had done all the things that those good people told me to do. I had done them, I thought, very faithfully and sincerely. And I still continued to overindulge. But the one thing that they hadn't told me was the one thing that Bill did that Sunday - attempt to be helpful to somebody else.

We immediately started to look around for prospects, and it wasn't long before one appeared, in the form of a man whom a great many of you know - Bill D., our good friend from Akron. Now I knew that this Bill was a Sunday-school superintendent, and I thought that he probably forgot more about the Good Book every night than I ever knew. Who was I to try to tell him about it? It made me feel somewhat hypocritical. Anyway, we did talk, and I'm glad to say the conversation fell on fertile ground.

Then we had three prospects dumped in our laps almost simultaneously. In my mind, the spirit of service was of prime importance, but I found that it had to be backed up with some knowledge on our subject. I used to go to the hospital and stand there and talk. I talked many a time to a chap in the bed for five or six hours. I don't know how he ever stood me for five or six hours, but he did. We must have hidden his clothes. Anyway, it came to me that I probably didn't know too much about what I was saying. We are stewards of what we have, and that includes our time. I was not giving a good account of my stewardship of time when it took me six hours to say something to this man that I could have said in an hour - if I had known what I was talking about. I

certainly was not a very efficient individual.

I'm somewhat allergic to work, but I felt that I should continue to increase my familiarity with the Good Book and also should read a good deal of standard literature, possibly of a scientific nature. So I did cultivate the habit of reading. I think I'm not exaggerating when I say I have probably averaged an hour a day for the last 15 years. (I'm not trying to sell you on the idea that you've got to read an hour a day. There are plenty of people, fine A.A.s, who don't read very much.)

You see, back in those days we were groping in the dark. We knew practically nothing of alcoholism. I, a physician, knew nothing about it to speak of. Oh, I read about it, but there wasn't anything worth reading in any of the text-books. Usually the information consisted of some queer treatment for D.T.s, if a patient had gone that far. If he hadn't, you prescribed a few bromides and gave the fellow a good lecture.

In early A.A. days, we became quite convinced that the spiritual program was fine if we could help the Lord out a little with some supplementary diet. Bill D., having a lot of stomach trouble, had stumbled across the fact that he began feeling much better on sauerkraut and cold tomatoes. We thought Bill should share that experience. Of course, we discovered later that dietary restrictions had very little to do with maintaining sobriety.

At that point, our stories didn't amount to anything to speak of. When we started in on Bill D., we had no Twelve Steps, either; we had no Traditions.

But we were convinced that the answer to our problems was in the Good Book. To some of us older ones, the parts that we found absolutely essential were the Sermon on the Mount, the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and the Book of James.

We used to have daily meetings at a friend's house. All this happened at a time when everybody was broke, awfully broke. It was probably much easier for us to be successful when broke than it would have been if we'd had a checking account apiece. We were, every one of us, so painfully broke that. . . well, it isn't a pleasant thought. Nothing could be done about it. But I think now that it was providentially arranged.

Until 1940, or maybe early in 1941, we held the Akron meetings at the residence of that good friend, who allowed us to bang up the plaster and the doorjamb, carting chairs up-and downstairs. And he had a very beautiful home. Then we outgrew that, so we rented the auditorium in King School, and the group I attend personally has been there ever since. We attempt to have good meetings, and I think we're usually successful.

It wasn't until 1938 that the teachings and efforts and studies that had been going on were crystallized in the form of the Twelve Steps. I didn't write the

Twelve Steps. I had nothing to do with the writing of them. But I think I probably had something to do with them indirectly. After my June 10th episode, Bill came to live at our house and stayed for about three months. There was hardly a night that we didn't sit up until two or three o'clock, talking. It would be hard for me to conceive that, during these nightly discussions around our kitchen table, nothing was said that influenced the writing of the Twelve Steps. We already had the basic ideas, though not in terse and tangible form. We got them, as I said, as a result of our study of the Good Book. We must have had them. Since then, we have learned from experience that they are very important in maintaining sobriety. We were maintaining sobriety - therefore, we must have had them.

Well, that was the way things got started in Akron. As we grew, we began to get offshoots, one in Cleveland, then another one in Akron, and all have been continuing ever since. It is a great source of satisfaction to me to feel that I may have kicked in my two bits' worth toward getting this thing started. Maybe I'm taking too much for granted. I don't know. But I feel that I was simply used as God's agent. I feel that I'm no different from any of you fellows or girls, except that I was a little more fortunate. I got this message thirteen and a half years ago, while some of you had to wait till later.

I used to get a little peeved at our Heavenly Father, because He had been a little slow on the trigger in my own case. I thought I would have been ready to receive the message quite a while before He got around to presenting it. And that used to irritate me no end. After all, maybe He knows better than I. But I felt sure that I would have been glad to have anything presented to produce the sobriety that I thought I wanted so badly. I even used to doubt that at times. I would go to my good friend Henry and say, "Henry, do you think I want to stop drinking liquor?"

She, being a very charitable soul, would say, "Yes, Bob, I'm sure you want to stop."

I would say, "Well, I can't conceive of any living human who really wanted to do something as badly as I think I do, who could be such a total failure.

Henry, I think I'm just one of those want-to-want-to guys."

And she'd say, "No, Bob, I think you want to. You just haven't found a way to work it yet."

The fact that my sobriety has been maintained continuously for 13½ years doesn't allow me to think that I am necessarily any further away from my next drink than any of you people. I'm still very human, and I still think a double Scotch would taste awfully good. If it wouldn't produce disastrous results, I might try it. I don't know. I have no reason to think that it would taste any different - but I have no legitimate reason to believe that the results would be any different, either. They were always the same. I always wound up back of the dear old eight ball. I just don't want to pay the bill, because that's a big bill. It always was, and I think it would be even larger today because of

what has gone on in the past 13 years. Being a bit out of practice, I don't believe I'd last very long. I'm having an awfully nice time, and I don't want to bump myself off, even with the "pleasures" of the alcohol route. No, I'm not going to do it, and I'm never going to as long as I do the things I'm supposed to, and I know what these things are. So, if I should ever get tight, I certainly would have no one but myself to blame for it.

Perhaps it would not be done with malice aforethought, but it would certainly be done as a result of extreme carelessness and indifference.

I said I was quite human, and I get to thinking every once in a while that this guy Bob is rather a smart individual. He's got this liquor situation right by the tail - proved it and demonstrated it - hasn't had a drink for over 13 years. Probably could knock off a couple, and no one would be the wiser. I tell you, I'm not trying to be funny. Those thoughts actually do enter my mind. And the minute they do, I know exactly what has happened.

You see, in Akron we have the extreme good fortune to have a very nice setup at St. Thomas Hospital. The ward theoretically accommodates seven alcoholics, but the good Sister Ignatia sees that it's stretched a little bit. She usually has two or more others parked around somewhere. Just as soon as that idea that I could probably polish off a couple enters my mind, I think "Oh-oh. How about the boys in the ward? You've been giving them the semi-brush-off for the last few days. You'd better get back on the job, big boy, before you get into trouble." And I patter right back and am much more attentive than I had been before I got the funny idea. But I do get it every once ma while, and I'll probably go on getting it whenever I get careless about seeing the boys in the ward.

Any time I neglected them, I was thinking more of Bob than I was of the ward. I wasn't being especially loving. Those fellows had come there indicating their desire for help, and I was just a little too busy to give them much of my time, as if they had been panhandling on the street. Don't want to be bothered with the fellow? Ten cents to get rid of him - why, that's easy! He could even stand two bits - not because you love the fellow, but just to be relieved of the nuisance of his hanging on your coat sleeve. No unselfishness, no love at all indicated in that transaction.

I think the kind of service that really counts is giving of yourself, and that almost invariably requires effort and time. It isn't a matter of just putting a little quiet money in the dish. That's needed, but it isn't giving much for the average individual in days like these, when most people get along fairly well. I don't believe that type of giving would ever keep anyone sober. But giving of our own effort and strength and time is quite a different matter. And I think that is what Bill learned in New York and I didn't learn in Akron until we met.

The four absolutes, as we called them, were the only yardsticks we had in the

early days, before the Steps. I think the absolutes still hold good and can be extremely helpful. I have found at times that a question arises, and I want to do the right thing, but the answer is not obvious. Almost always, if I measure my decision care-fully by the yardsticks of absolute honesty, absolute unselfishness, absolute purity, and absolute love, and it checks up pretty well with those four, then my answer can't be very far out of the way. If, however, I do that and I'm still not too satisfied with the answer, I usually consult with some friend whose judgment, in this particular case, would be very much better than mine. But usually the absolutes can help you to reach your own personal decision without bothering your friends.

Suppose we have trouble taking the First Step; we can't get quite honest enough to admit that John Barleycorn really has bested us. The lack of absolute purity is involved here - purity of ideas, purity of motives. Absolute unselfishness includes the kind of service I have been taking about - not the dime or two bits to the bum, but actually giving of yourself.

As you well know, absolute love incorporates all else. It's very difficult to have absolute love. I don't think any of us will ever get it, but that doesn't mean we can't try to get it. It was extremely difficult for me to love my fellowman. I didn't dislike him, but I didn't love him, either. Unless there was some special reason for caring, I was just indifferent to him. I would be willing to give him a little bit :fit didn't require much effort. I never would injure him at all. But love him? For a long time, I just couldn't do it.

I think I overcame this problem to some extent when I was forced to do it, because I had to either love this fellow or attempt to be helpful to him, or I would probably get drunk again. Well, you could say that was just a manifestation of selfishness, and you'd be quite correct. I was selfish to the extent of not wanting Bob hurt; so, to keep from getting Bob hurt, I would go through the motions of trying to be helpful to the other fellow. Debate it any way you want to, but the fact remains that the average individual can never acquire absolute love. I suspect there are a few people who do; I think maybe I know some who come pretty close to it. But I could count them on the fingers of one hand. I don't say that in any disparaging manner; I have some wonderful friends. But I'm talking about the final aspects of absolute love, particularly as it applies to A.A.

I don't think we can do anything very well in this world unless we practice it. And I don't believe we do A.A. too well unless we practice it. The fellows who win great world awards in athletic events are people who practice, have been practicing for years, and still have to practice. To do a good job in A.A., there are a number of things we should practice. We should practice, as I've said, acquiring the spirit of service. We should attempt to acquire some faith, which isn't easily done, especially for the person who has always been very materialistic, following the standards of society today. But I think faith can be acquired; it can be acquired slowly; it has to be cultivated. That was not easy for me, and I assume that it is difficult for everyone else.

Another thing that was difficult for me (and I probably don't do it too well yet) was the matter of tolerance. We are all inclined to have closed minds, pretty tightly closed. That's one reason why some people find our spiritual teaching difficult. They don't want to find out too much about it, for various personal reasons, like the fear of being considered effeminate. But it's quite important that we do acquire tolerance toward the other fellow's ideas. I think I have more of it than I did have, although

not enough yet. If somebody crosses me, I'm apt to make a rather caustic remark. I've done that many times, much to my regret. And then, later on, I find that the man knew much more about it than I did. I'd have been infinitely better off if I'd just kept my big mouth shut.

Another thing with which most of us are not too blessed is the feeling of humility. I don't mean the fake humility of Dickens' Uriah Heep. I don't mean the doormat variety; we are not called upon to be shoved around and stepped on by anyone; we have a right to stand up for our rights. I'm talking about the attitude of each and every one of us toward our Heavenly Father. Christ said, "Of Myself, I am nothing - My strength cometh from My Father in heaven." If He had to say that, how about you and me? Did you say it? Did I say it? No. That's exactly what we didn't say. We were inclined to say instead, "Look me over, boys. Pretty good, huh?" We had no humility, no sense of having received anything through the grace of our Heavenly Father.

I don't believe I have any right to get cocky about getting sober. It's only through God's grace that I did it. I can feel very thankful that I was privileged to do it. I may have contributed some activity to help, but basically, it was only through His kindness. If my strength does come from Him, who am I to get cocky about it? I should have a very, very humble attitude toward the source of my strength; I should never cease to be grateful for whatever blessings come my way. And I have been blessed in very large measure.

You know, as far as everybody's ultimate aim is concerned, it doesn't make much difference whether we're drinking or whether we're sober. Either way, we're all after the same thing, and that's happiness. We want peace of mind. The trouble with us alcoholics was this: We demanded that the world give us happiness and peace of mind in just the particular way we wanted to get it - by the alcohol route. And we weren't successful. But when we take time to find out some of the spiritual laws, and familiarize ourselves with them, and put them into practice, then we do get happiness and peace of mind. I feel extremely fortunate and thankful that our Heavenly Father has let me enjoy them. Anyone can get them who wishes to. There seem to be some rules that we have to follow, but happiness and peace of mind are always here, open and free to anyone. And that is the message we can give to our fellow alcoholics.

We know what A.A. has done in the past 13 years, but where do we go from here?

Our membership at present is, I believe, conservatively estimated at 70,000. *
Will it increase from here on? Well, that will depend on every member of A.A.
It is possible for us to grow or not to grow, as we elect. If we fight shy of
entangling alliances, if we avoid getting messed up with controversial issues
(religious or political or wet-dry), if we maintain unity through our central
offices, if we preserve the simplicity of our program, if we remember that our
job is to get sober and to stay sober and to help our less fortunate brother
to do the same thing, then we shall continue to grow and thrive and prosper.

AA Grapevine, June 1973

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++++Message 234. The Akron Manual - 1940
From: Fiona 6/9/2002 3:21:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

My gratitude to Glenn C. for permission too post this material.

A Manual for Alcoholics Anonymous

THE AKRON MANUAL

1940

Edit. This present text, available for printout at www.iusb.edu/~gchesnut, was formatted for web by Glenn C. (South Bend IN) in January 2002; the editorial notes are his. His text was drawn from one prepared by Barefoot Bob, who scanned the text of an original copy of the pamphlet and reformatted it for web on May 15, 1997; see www.barefootworld.net/aamanual.html. The original printed version of the manual is no longer published in Akron.

Bob says that this little booklet was written and being distributed within one year of the publication of the Big Book, which would date it to 1940. On the basis of a number of statements made within the text, it certainly could not have been produced much later than that. This pamphlet assumes hospitalization at St. Thomas Hospital under the care of Sister Ignatia and the overall supervision of Dr. Bob as the normal first step in recovery, and gives recommended readings (e.g. the Upper Room for your morning meditation) which dropped out of A.A. practice fairly soon thereafter, but parts of its advice are still very relevant, and it makes very fascinating reading even today. We must assume that Dr. Bob himself (and probably Sister Ignatia too) gave their approval to the statements made in this little booklet.

This is the first half of the manual, containing the most important introductory material. (The second half, which is available at this site as a separate printout, contains a series of assorted thoughts on learning to live the program and a long section on meetings.)

Foreword

This booklet is intended to be a practical guide for new members and sponsors of new members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

TO THE NEWCOMER: The booklet is designed to give you a practical explanation of what to do and what not to do in your search for sobriety. The editors, too, were pretty bewildered by the program at first. They realize that very likely you are groping for answers and offer this pamphlet in order that it may make a little straighter and less confusing the highway you are about to travel.

TO THE SPONSOR: If you have never before brought anyone into A.A. the booklet attempts to tell you what your duties are by your "baby," how you should conduct yourself while visiting patients, and other odd bits of information, some of which may be new to you.

The booklet should be read in conjunction with the large book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Bible, the daily lesson, any other pamphlets that are published by the group, and other constructive literature. A list of suggestions will be found in the back pages of this pamphlet. It is desirable that members of A.A. furnish their prospective "babies" with this Manual as early as possible, particularly in the case of hospitalization.

The experience behind the writing and editing of this pamphlet adds up to hundreds of years of drinking, plus scores of years of recent sobriety. Every suggestion, every word, is backed up by hard experience.

The editors do not pretend any explanation of the spiritual or religious aspects of A.A. It is assumed that this phase of the work will be explained by sponsors. The booklet therefore deals solely with the physical aspects of getting sober and remaining sober.

A.A. in Akron is fortunate in having facilities for hospitalizing its patients. In many communities, however, hospitalization is not available. Although the pamphlet mentions hospitalization throughout, the methods described are effective if the patient is confined to his home, if he is in prison or a mental institution, or if he is attempting to learn A.A. principles and carry on his workaday job at the same time.

If your community has a hospital, either private or general, that has not

accepted alcoholic patients in the past, it might be profitable to call on the officials of the institution and explain Alcoholics Anonymous to them. Explain that we are not in the business of sobering up drunks merely to have them go on another bender. Explain that our aim is total and permanent sobriety. Hospital authorities should know, and if they do not, should be told, that an alcoholic is a sick man, just as sick as a diabetic or a consumptive. Perhaps his affliction will not bring death as quickly as diabetes or tuberculosis, but it will bring death or insanity eventually.

Alcoholism has had a vast amount of nationwide publicity in recent years. It has been discussed in medical journals, national magazines and newspapers. It is possible that a little sales talk will convince the hospital authorities in your community that they should make beds available for patients sponsored by Alcoholics Anonymous.

If the way is finally opened, it is urged that you guard your hospital privileges carefully. Be as certain as you possibly can that your patient sincerely wants A.A.

Above all, carefully observe all hospital rules.

It has been our experience that a succession of unruly patients or unruly visitors can bring a speedy termination of hospital privileges. And they will want no part of you or your patient in the future.

Once he starts to sober up, the average alcoholic makes a model hospital patient. He needs little or no nursing or medical care, and he is grateful for his opportunity.

Definition of an Alcoholic Anonymous: An Alcoholic Anonymous is an alcoholic who through application of and adherence to rules laid down by the organization, has completely foresworn the use of any and all alcoholic beverages. The moment he wittingly drinks so much as a drop of beer, wine, spirits, or any other alcoholic drink he automatically loses all status as a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.

A.A. is not interested in sobering up drunks who are not sincere in their desire to remain completely sober for all time. A.A. is not interested in alcoholics who want to sober up merely to go on another bender, sober up because of fear for their jobs, their wives, their social standing, or to clear up some trouble either real or imaginary. In other words, if a person is genuinely sincere in his desire for continued sobriety for his own good, is convinced in his heart that alcohol holds him in its power, and is willing to admit that he is an alcoholic, members of Alcoholics Anonymous will do all in their power, spend days of their time to guide him to a new, a happy, and a contented way of life.

It is utterly essential for the newcomer to say to himself sincerely and without any reservation, "I am doing this for myself and myself alone." Experience has proved in hundreds of cases that unless an alcoholic is sobering up for a purely personal and selfish motive, he will not remain sober for any great length of time. He may remain sober for a few weeks or a few months, but the moment the motivating element, usually fear of some sort, disappears, so disappears sobriety.

TO THE NEWCOMER: It is your life. It is your choice. If you are not completely convinced to your own satisfaction that you are an alcoholic, that your life has become unmanageable; if you are not ready to part with alcohol forever, it would be better for all concerned if you discontinue reading this and give up the idea of becoming a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.

For if you are not convinced, it is not only wasting your own time, but the time of scores of men and women who are genuinely interested in helping you.

II

TO THE LADIES: If we seem to slight you in this booklet it is not intentional. We merely use the masculine pronouns "he" and "him" for convenience. We fully realize that alcohol shows no partiality. It does not respect age, sex, nor estate. The millionaire drunk on the best Scotch and the poor man drunk on the cheapest rotgut look like twin brothers when they are in a hospital bed or the gutter. The only difference between a female and a male drunk is that the former is likely to be treated with a little more consideration and courtesy -- although generally she does not deserve it. Every word in this pamphlet applies to women as well as men. -- THE EDITORS

III

A WORD TO THE SPONSOR who is putting his first newcomer into a hospital or otherwise introducing him to this new way of life: You must assume full responsibility for this man. He trusts you, otherwise he would not submit to hospitalization. You must fulfill all pledges you make to him, either tangible or intangible. If you cannot fulfill a promise, do not make it. It is easy enough to promise a man that he will get his job back if he sobers up. But unless you are certain that it can be fulfilled, don't make that promise. Don't promise financial aid unless you are ready to fulfill your part of the bargain. If you don't know how he is going to pay his hospital bill, don't put him in the hospital unless you are willing to assume financial responsibility.

It is definitely your job to see that he has visitors, and you must visit him

frequently yourself. If you hospitalize a man and then neglect him, he will naturally lose confidence in you, assume a "nobody loves me" attitude, and your half-hearted labors will be lost.

This is a very critical time in his life. He looks to you for courage, hope, comfort and guidance. He fears the past. He is uncertain of the future. And he is in a frame of mind that the least neglect on your part will fill him with resentment and self-pity. You have in your hands the most valuable property in the world -- the future of a fellow man. Treat his life as carefully as you would your own. You are literally responsible for his life.

Above all, don't coerce him into a hospital. Don't get him drunk and then throw him in while he is semi-conscious. Chances are he will waken wondering where he is, how he got there. And he won't last.

You should be able to judge if a man is sincere in his desire to quit drinking. Use this judgment. Otherwise you will find yourself needlessly bumping your head into a stone wall and wondering why your "babies" don't stay sober. Remember your own experience. You can remember many times when you would have done anything to get over that awful alcoholic sickness, although you had no desire in the world to give up drinking for good. It doesn't take much good health to inspire an alcoholic to go back and repeat the acts that made him sick. Men who have had pneumonia don't often wittingly expose themselves a second time. But an alcoholic will deliberately get sick over and over again with brief interludes of good health.

You should make it a point to supply your patient with the proper literature -- the big Alcoholics Anonymous book, this pamphlet, other available pamphlets, a Bible, and anything else that has helped you. Impress upon him the wisdom and necessity of reading and re-reading this literature. The more he learns about A.A. the easier the road to recovery.

Study the newcomer and decide who among your A.A. friends might have the best story and exert the best influence on him. There are all types in A.A. and regardless of whom you hospitalize, there are dozens who can help him. An hour on the telephone will produce callers. Don't depend on chance. Stray visitors may drop in, but twenty or thirty phone calls will clinch matters and remove uncertainty. It is your responsibility to conjure up callers.

Impress upon your patient that his visitors are not making purely social calls. Their conversation is similar to medicine. Urge him to listen carefully to all that is said, and then meditate upon it after his visitor leaves.

When your patient is out of the hospital your work has not ended. It is now your duty not only to him but to yourself to see that he starts out on the right foot.

Accompany him to his first meeting. Take him along with you when you call on

the next patient. Telephone him when there are other patients. Drop in at his home occasionally. Telephone him as often as possible. Urge him to look up the new friends he has made. Counsel and advise him. There was a certain amount of glamour connected with being a patient in the hospital. He had many visitors. His time was occupied. But now that he has been discharged, the glamour has worn off. He probably will be lonely. He may be too timid to seek the companionship of his new friends.

Experience has proved this to be a very critical period. So your labors have not ended. Give him as much attention as you did when you first called on him -- until he can find the road by himself.

Remember, you depend on the newcomer to keep you sober as much as he depends on you. So never lose touch with your responsibility, which never ends.

Remember the old adage, "Two is company and three is a crowd." If you find a patient has one or more visitors don't go into the room. An alcoholic goes to the hospital for two reasons only -- to get sober and to learn how to keep sober. The former is easy. Cut off the alcohol and a person is bound to get sober. So the really important thing is to learn how to keep sober. Experience has taught that when more than three gather in a room, patient included, the talk turns to the World Series, politics, funny drunken incidents, and "I could drink more than you."

Such discussion is a waste of the patient's time and money. It is assumed that he wants to know how you are managing to keep sober, and you won't hold his attention if there is a crowd in the room.

If you must enter the room when there is another visitor, do it quietly and unobtrusively. Sit down in a corner and be silent until the other visitor has concluded. If he wants any comments from you he will ask for them.

One more word. It is desirable that the patient's visitors be confined to members of Alcoholics Anonymous. Have a quiet talk with his wife or his family before he goes to the hospital. Explain that he will be in good hands and that it is only through kindness to him that his family and friends are asked to stay away. New members are likely to be a little shy. If they find a woman in the patient's room they are not inclined to "let down their hair." The older hands don't mind it, but a new member might unwittingly be kept from delivering a valuable message.

IV

TO THE NEWCOMER: Now you are in the hospital. Or perhaps you are learning to be an Alcoholic Anonymous the "hard way" by continuing at your job while undertaking sobriety.

You will have many callers. They will come singly and in pairs. They may arrive at all hours, from early morning to late night. Some you will like; some you will resent, some will seem stupid; others will strike you as silly, fanatic or slightly insane; some will tell you a story that will be "right down your alley." But remember this -- never for one minute forget it:

Every single one of them is a former drunk and every single one is trying to help you! Your visitor has had the very problems that you are facing now. In comparison with some, your problems are trifles. You have one thing in common with every visitor -- an alcoholic problem. Your caller may have been sober for a week or for half a decade. He still has an alcoholic problem, and if he for one moment forgets to follow any single rule for sober living, he may be occupying your hospital bed tomorrow.

Alcoholics Anonymous is one hundred percent effective for those who faithfully follow the rules. **IT IS THOSE WHO TRY TO CUT CORNERS WHO FIND THEMSELVES BACK IN THEIR OLD DRUNKEN STATE.**

Your visitor is going out of his way, taking up his time, perhaps missing a pleasant evening at home or at the theater by calling on you. His motives are twofold: He is selfish in that by calling on you he is taking out a little more "sobriety insurance" for himself; and secondly, he is genuinely anxious to pass along the peace and happiness a new way of life has brought him. He is also paying off a debt -- paying the people who led him to the path of sobriety by helping someone else. In a very short time you too will find yourself paying off your debt, by carrying the word to another.

Always bear in mind that your caller not so many days or months ago occupied the same bed you are in today.

And here we might, despite our promise earlier in the booklet, give you a hint on the spiritual phase of Alcoholics Anonymous. You will be told to have faith in a Higher Power. First have faith in your visitor. He is sincere. He is not lying to you. He is not attempting to sell you a bill of goods. A.A. is given away, not sold. Believe him when he tells you what you must do to attain sobriety.

His very presence and appearance should be proof to you that the A.A. program really works. He is extending a helping hand and for himself asks nothing in return. Regardless of who he is or what he has to say, listen to him carefully and courteously. Your alcohol-befuddled mind may not absorb all he says in an hour's conversation, but you will find that when he leaves certain things he has said will come back to you. Ponder these things carefully. They may bring you salvation. It has been the history of A.A. that one never knows where lightning will strike. You may pick up the germ of an idea from the most unexpected source. That single idea may shape the course of your entire life, may be the start of an entirely new philosophy. So no matter who your caller

is, or what he says, listen attentively.

Your problem has always seemed to be shared by no one else in this world. You cannot conceive of anyone else in your predicament.

Forget it! Your problem dates back to the very beginning of history. Some long-forgotten hero discovered that the juice of the grape made a pleasant drink that brought pleasant results. That same hero probably drank copiously until he suddenly discovered that he could not control his appetite for the juice of the grape. And then he found himself in the same predicament you are in now -- sick, worried, crazed with fear, and extremely thirsty.

Your caller once felt that he alone in the world had a drinking problem, and was amazed into sobriety when he discovered that countless thousands were sharing his troubles.

He also found out that when he brought his troubles out of their dark and secret hiding place and exposed them to the cleansing light of day, they were half conquered. And so it will be for you. Bring your problems out in the open and you will be amazed how they disappear.

It cannot be repeated too often: Listen carefully and think over at great length.

V

NOW YOU ARE ALONE. When you go to the hospital with typhoid fever your one thought is to be cured. When you go to the hospital as a chronic alcoholic your only thought should be to conquer a disease that is just as deadly if not so quick to kill. And rest assured that the disease is deadly. The mental hospitals are filled with chronic alcoholics. The vital statistics files in every community are filled with deaths due to acute alcoholism.

This is the most serious moment in your life. You can leave the hospital and resume an alcoholic road to an untimely grave or padded cell, or you can start upward to a life that is happy beyond any expectation.

It is your choice and your choice alone. Your newly found friends cannot police you to keep you sober. They have neither the time nor the inclination. They will go to unbelievable lengths to help you but there is a limit to all things.

Shortly after you leave the hospital you will be on your own. The Bible tells us to put "first things first." Alcohol is obviously the first thing in your life. So concentrate on conquering it.

You could have gone through the mechanics of sobering up at home. Your new friends could have called on you in your own living room. But at home there would have been a hundred and one things to distract your attention -- the radio, the furnace, a broken screen door, a walk to the drug store, your own family affairs. Every one of these things would make you forget the most important thing in your life, the thing upon which depends life or death -- complete and endless sobriety. That is why you are in the hospital. You have time to think; you have time to read; you will have time to examine your life, past and present, and to reflect upon what it can be in the future. And don't be in a hurry to leave. Your sponsor knows best. Stay in the hospital until you have at least a rudimentary understanding of the program.

There is the Bible that you haven't opened for years. Get acquainted with it. Read it with an open mind. You will find things that will amaze you. You will be convinced that certain passages were written with you in mind. Read the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew V, VI, and VII). Read St. Paul's inspired essay on love (I Corinthians XIII). Read the Book of James. Read the Twenty-third and Ninety-first Psalms. These readings are brief but so important.

Read Alcoholics Anonymous and then read it again. You may find that it contains your own story. It will become your second Bible. Ask your callers to suggest other readings.

If you are puzzled, ask questions. One of your callers will know the answers. Get your sponsor to explain to you the Twelve Steps. If he is not too certain about them -- he may be new in this work -- ask someone else. The Twelve Steps are listed in the back of this booklet.

There is no standing still in A.A. You either forge ahead or slip backwards. Even the oldest members, the founders, learn something new almost every day.

You can never learn too much in the search for sobriety.

VI

NOW YOU ARE OUT OF THE HOSPITAL By this time you should know if you want to go along with A.A., or if you want to slip back into that old headache that you called life. You are physically sober and well -- a bit shaky, perhaps, but that will wear off in a short time. Reflect that you didn't get into this condition over night, and that you cannot expect to get out of it in a couple of hours or days.

You feel good enough to go on another bender, or good enough to try a different scheme of things -- sobriety.

You have decided to go along with Alcoholics Anonymous? Very well, you will

never regret it.

First off, your day will have a new pattern. You will open the day with a quiet period. This will be explained by your sponsor. You will read the Upper Room, or whatever you think best for yourself. You will say a little prayer asking for help during the day. You will go about your daily work, and your associates will be surprised at you clear-eyed, the disappearance of that haunted look and your willingness to make up for the past. Your sponsor may drop in to see you, or call you on the telephone. There may be a meeting of an A.A. group. Attend it without question. You have no valid excuse except sickness or being out of town, for not attending. You may call on a new patient. Don't wait until tomorrow to do this. You will find the work fascinating. You will find a kindred soul. And you will be giving yourself a new boost along the road to sobriety. Finally, at the end of the day you will say another little prayer of thanks and gratitude for a day of sobriety. You will have lived a full day -- a full, constructive day. And you will be grateful.

You feel that you have nothing to say to a new patient? No story to tell? Nonsense! You have been sober for a day, or for a week. Obviously, you must have done something to stay sober, even for that short length of time. That is your story. And believe it or not, the patient won't realize that you are nearly as much of a tyro as he is. Definitely you have something to say. And with each succeeding visit you will find that your story comes easier, that you have more confidence in your ability to be of help. The harder you work at sobriety the easier it is to remain sober.

Your sponsor will take you to your first meeting. You will find it new, but inspiration. You will find an atmosphere of peace and contentment that you didn't know existed.

After you have attended several meetings it will be your duty to get up on your feet and say something. You will have something to say, even if it is only to express gratitude to the group for having helped you. Before many months have passed you will be asked to lead a meeting. Don't try to put it off with excuses. It is part of the program. Even if you don't think highly of yourself as a public speaker, remember you are among friends, and that your friends also are ex-drunks.

Get in contact with your new friends. Call them up. Drop in at their homes or offices. The door is always open to a fellow-alcoholic.

Before long you will have a new thrill -- the thrill of helping someone else. There is no greater satisfaction in the world than watching the progress of a new Alcoholic Anonymous. When you first see him in his hospital bed he may be unshaved, bleary-eyed, dirty, incoherent. Perhaps the next day he has shaved and cleaned up. A day later his eyes are brighter, new color has come into his face. He talks more intelligently. He leaves the hospital, goes to work, and

buys some new clothes. And in a month you will hardly recognize him as the derelict you first met in the hospital. No whisky in the world can give you this thrill.

Above all, remember this: keep the rules in mind. As long as you follow them you are on firm ground. But the least deviation -- and you are vulnerable.

AS A NEW MEMBER, remember that you are one of the most important cogs in the machinery of A.A. Without the work of the new member, A.A. could not have grown as it has. You will bring into this work a fresh enthusiasm, the zeal of a crusader. You will want everyone to share with you the blessings of this new life. You will be tireless in your efforts to help others. And it is a splendid enthusiasm! Cherish it as long as you can.

It is not likely that your fresh enthusiasm will last forever. You will find, however, that as initial enthusiasm wanes, it is replaced with a greater understanding, deeper sympathy, and more complete knowledge. You will eventually become an "elder statesman" of A.A. and you will be able to use your knowledge to help not only brand new members, but those who have been members for a year or more, but who still have perplexing problems. And as a new member, do not hesitate to bring your problems to these "elder statesmen." They may be able to solve your headaches and make easier your pain.

And now you are ready to go back and read Part III of this booklet. For you are ready to sponsor some other poor alcoholic who is desperately in need of help, both human and Divine.

So God bless you and keep you.

Yardstick for Alcoholics

THE PROSPECTIVE MEMBER of A.A. may have some doubts if he is actually an alcoholic. A.A. in Akron has found a yardstick prepared by psychiatrists of Johns Hopkins University to be very valuable in helping the alcoholic decide for himself.

Have your prospect answer the following questions, being as honest as possible with himself in deciding the answers. If he answers YES to one of the questions, there is a definite warning that he MAY be an alcoholic. If he answers YES to any two, the chances are that he IS an alcoholic. If he answers YES to any three or more, he IS DEFINITELY an alcoholic and in need of help. The questions:

Do you lose time from work due to drinking?

Is drinking making your home life unhappy?

Do you drink because you are shy with other people?

Is drinking affecting your reputation?

Have you gotten into financial difficulties as a result of drinking?

Have you ever stolen, pawned property, or "borrowed" to get money for alcoholic beverages?
Do you turn to lower companions and an inferior environment when drinking?
Does your drinking make you careless of your family's welfare?
Has your ambition decreased since drinking?
Do you crave a drink at a definite time daily?
Do you want a drink the next morning?
Does drinking cause you to have difficulty in sleeping?
Has your efficiency decreased since drinking?
Is drinking jeopardizing your job or business?
Do you drink to escape from worries or troubles?
Do you drink alone?
Have you ever had a complete loss of memory as a result of drinking?
Has your physician ever treated you for drinking?
Do you drink to build up your self-confidence?
Have you ever been to a hospital or institution on account of drinking?

Random Thoughts

NOW THAT YOU ARE SOBER, you naturally feel that you want to make restitution in every possible way for the trouble you have caused your family, your friends, others. You want to get back on the job -- if you still have a job -- earn money, pay your immediate debts and obligations of long standing and almost forgotten. Money -- you must have money, you think. And you also want to make restitution in action in many ways not financial. If you could wave a magic wand and do all these things you would do it, wouldn't you?

Well, don't be in a hurry. You can't do all these things overnight. But you can do them -- gradually, step by step. You may safely leave these matters to a Higher Power as you perhaps ponder them in your morning period of contemplation. If you are sincerely resolved to do your part, they will all be adjusted.

"Be still and know that I am God."

SOBRIETY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN YOUR LIFE, without exception. You may believe your job, or your home life, or one of many other things comes first. But consider, if you do not get sober and stay sober, chances are you won't have a job, a family, or even sanity or life. If you are convinced that everything in life depends on your sobriety, you have just so much more chance of getting sober and staying sober. If you put other things first you are only hurting your chances.

YOU AREN'T very important in this world. If you lose your job someone better will replace you. If you die your wife will mourn briefly, and then remarry. Your children will grow up and you will be but a memory. In the last analysis, you are the only one who benefits by your sobriety. Seek to cultivate humility. Remember that cockiness leads to a speedy fall.

IF YOU THINK you can cheat -- sneak a drink or two without anyone else knowing -- remember, you are only cheating yourself. You are the one who will be hurt by conscience. You are the one who will suffer a hangover. And you are the one who will return to a hospital bed.

Bear constantly in mind that you are only one drink away from trouble. Whether you have been sober a day, a month, a year or a decade, one single drink is a certain way to go off on a binge or a series of binges. It is the first drink -- not the second, fifth or twentieth -- that causes the trouble.

And remember, the more A.A. work you do, the harder you train, the less likely it is that you will take that first drink.

It is something like two boxers. If they are of the same weight, the same strength and the same ability, and only one trains faithfully while the other spends his time in night clubs and bars, it is pretty sure that the man who trains will be the winner. So let attendance at meetings be your road work; helping newcomers your sparring and shadow boxing; your reading, meditation and clear thinking your gymnasium work; and you won't have to fear a knockout at the hands of John Barleycorn.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. -- Matthew VI, 34.

These words are taken from the Sermon on the Mount. Simply, they mean live in today only. Forget yesterday. Do not anticipate tomorrow. You can only live one day at a time, and if you do a good job of that, you will have little trouble. One of the easiest, most practical ways of keeping sober ever devised is the day by day plan, the 24-hour plan.

You know that it is possible to stay sober for 24 hours. You have done it many times. All right. Stay sober for one day at a time. When you get up in the morning make up your mind that you will not take a drink for the entire day. Ask the Greater Power for a little help in this. If anyone asks you to have a drink, take a rain check. Say you will have it tomorrow. Then when you go to bed at night, finding yourself sober, say a little word of thanks to the Greater Power for having helped you.

Repeat the performance the next day. And the next. Before you realize it you will have been sober a week, a month, a year. And yet you will have only been sober a day at a time.

If you set a time limit on your sobriety you will be looking forward to that day, and each day will be a burden to you. You will burn with impatience. But with no goal the whole thing clears itself, almost miraculously.

Try the day by day plan.

Medical men will tell you that alcoholics are all alike in at least one respect: they are emotionally immature.

In other words, alcoholics have not learned to think like adults.

The child, lying in bed at night, becomes frightened by a shadow on the wall, and hides his head under the covers.

The adult, seeing the same shadow, knows there is a logical reason for it. He sees the streetlight, then the bedpost, and he knows what causes the shadow. He has simply done what the child is incapable of doing -- THOUGHT. And through thinking he has avoided fear.

Learn to think things out. Take a thought and follow it through to its conclusion.

If you are tempted to take a drink, reason out for yourself what will happen. Because if you give serious consideration to the consequences you will have the battle won.

SO YOU'RE DIFFERENT! So you think you are not an alcoholic!

As many Alcoholics Anonymous have gone off the deep end for that kind of thinking as almost all the other reasons combined.

If you have all the symptoms your sponsor will tell you about and that you hear about at meetings, rest assured you are an alcoholic and no different from the rest of the breed.

But don't make the mistake of finding it out the hard way -- by experimenting with liquor. You will find it a painful experience and will only learn that you are NOT different.

AT MEETINGS don't criticize the leader. He has his own problems and is doing his best to solve them. Help him along by standing up and saying a few words. He will appreciate your kindness and thoughtfulness.

DON'T criticize the methods of others. Strangely enough, you may change your own ideas as you become older in sobriety. Remember there are a dozen roads from New York to Chicago, but they all land in Chicago.

WHAT'S YOUR HURRY? Perhaps you don't feel you are getting the hang of this program as rapidly as you should. Forget it. It probably took you years to get in this condition. You certainly cannot expect a complete cure overnight. You are not expected to grasp the entire program in one day. No one else has ever done that, so it certainly is not expected of you. Even the earliest members are learning something new about sober living nearly every day. There is an old saying, "Easy does it." It is a motto that any alcoholic could well ponder. A child learns to add and subtract in the lower grades. He is not expected to do problems in algebra until he is in high school. Sobriety is a thing that must be learned step by step. If anything puzzles you, ask your new friends about it, or forget it for the time being. The time is not so far away when you will have a good understanding of the entire program. Meantime, EASY DOES IT!

THE A.A. PROGRAM is not a "cure," in the accepted sense of the word. There is no known "cure" for alcoholism except complete abstinence. It has been definitely proved that an alcoholic can never again be a normal drinker. The disease, however, can be arrested. How soon you will be cured of a desire to drink is another matter. That depends entirely upon how quickly you can succeed in changing your fundamental outlook on life. For as your outlook changes for the better, desire will become less pronounced, until it disappears almost entirely. It may be weeks or it may be months. Your sincerity and your capacity for working with others on the A.A. program will determine the length of time.

Earlier in this pamphlet it was advised to keep relatives away from the hospital. The reason was explained. But after the patient leaves the hospital, it would be [useful] to bring the wife, husband, or other close relative to [an A.A.] meeting. It will give them a clearer understanding of the program and enable them to cooperate more intelligently and more closely in the period of readjustment.

DIET AND REST play an important part in the rehabilitation of an alcoholic. For many, we bludgeoned ourselves physically, eating improper foods, sleeping with the aid of alcohol. In our drinking days we ate a bowl of chili or a

hamburg sandwich because they were filling and cheap. We sacrificed good food so we would have more money for whiskey. We were the living counterparts of the old joke: "What, buying bread? And not a drop of whiskey in the house!" Our rest was the same. We slept when we passed out. We were the ones who turned out the streetlights and rolled up the sidewalks.

We now find that it is wise to eat balanced meals at regular hours, and get the proper amount of sleep without the unhealthy aid of liquor and sleeping pills. Vitamin B1 (thiamin hydrochloride) or B complex will help steady our nerves and build up a vitamin deficiency. Fresh vegetables and fruits will help.

In fact, it is a wise move to consult a physician, possibly have a complete physical examination. Your doctor will then recommend a course in vitamins, a balanced diet, and advise you as to rest.

The reason for this advice is simple. If we are undernourished and lack rest we become irritable and nervous. In this condition our tempers get out of control, our feelings are easily wounded, and we get back to the old and dangerous thought processes -- "Oh, to hell with it. I'll get drunk and show 'em."

MANY MEMBERS OF A.A. find it helpful, even after a long period of sobriety, to add an extra ration of carbohydrates to their diet. Alcohol turns to sugar in the body, and when we deprive ourselves of alcohol our bodies cry for sugar. This often manifests itself in a form of nervousness.

Carry candy in your pocket. Keep it in your home. Eat desserts. Try an occasional ice cream soda or malted milk. You may find that it solves a problem by calming your nerves.

Meetings

IT HAS BEEN found advisable to hold meetings at least once a week at a specified time and place. Meetings provide a means for an exchange of ideas, the renewing of friendships, opportunity to review the work being carried on, a sense of security, and an additional reminder that we are alcoholics and must be continuously on the alert against the temptation to slip backward into the old drunken way of life.

In larger communities where there are several groups it is recommended that the new member attend as many meetings as possible. He will find that the more he is exposed to A.A. the sooner he will absorb its principles, the easier it will become to remain sober, and the sooner problems will shrink and tend to disappear.

As a newcomer you will be somewhat bewildered by your first meeting. It is even possible that it will not make sense to you. Many have this experience. But if you don't find yourself enjoying your first meeting, pause to remember that you probably didn't care for the taste of your first drink of whiskey -- particularly if it was in bootleg days.

Again, you may feel like a "country cousin" at your first meeting. Your sponsor should see to it that this is not the case. But even if he neglects his duty, don't feel too badly. Don't be afraid to "horn in." If you are being neglected it is just an oversight, and you are entirely welcome. It is possible that you may not even be recognized because your appearance has changed for the better. In a week or two you will find yourself in the middle of things -- and very likely neglecting other newcomers.

So attend your first meeting with an open mind. Even if you aren't impressed try it again. Before long you will genuinely enjoy attending and a little later you will feel that the week has been incomplete if you have not attended at least one A.A. meeting. Remember that attendance at meetings is one of the most important requisites of remaining sober.

A.A. OF AKRON gets many inquiries about how to conduct a meeting. Methods differ in many parts of the country. There are discussion groups, study groups, meetings where a leader takes up the entire time himself, etc.

Here, briefly, is how meetings are conducted in the dozen or more Akron groups, a method that has been used since the founding of A.A.:

The speaker can be selected from the local group, someone from another group or another city, or on occasion, a guest from the ranks of clergymen, doctors, the judiciary, or anyone who may be of help. In the case of such an outsider, he is generally introduced by the secretary or some other member.

The leader opens the meeting with a prayer, or asks someone else to pray. The prayer can be original, or it can be taken from a prayer book, or from some publication such as *The Upper Room*.

The topic is entirely up to the leader. He can tell of his drinking experiences, or what he has done to keep sober, or he can advance his own theories on A.A. His talk lasts from 20 to 40 minutes, at which time he asks for comment or testimony from the floor.

Just before the meeting closes -- one hour in Akron -- the leader asks for announcements or reports (such as next week's leader, social affairs, new members to be called on, etc.). In closing the entire group stands and repeats the Lord's Prayer. It is courteous to give the speaker enough advance notice so that he may prepare his talk if he so desires.

The physical set-up of groups varies in many cities. Those who are about to start new groups may be interested in the method used by Akron Group No. 1. It is merely a suggestion, however.

When there are but very few members it is customary to hold the meetings in private homes of the members, on the same night of each week. When the group becomes larger, however, it is desirable to hold the meeting in a regular place. A school room, a room in a Y.M.C.A. or lodge, or hotel will do.

It has been the experience throughout the country that the more fluid the structure of the group the more successful the operation.

Akron Group No. 1 has a very simple set-up. There is a permanent secretary, who makes announcements, keeps a list of the membership, and takes care of correspondence. There is also a permanent treasurer, who takes care of the money and pays bills. Then there is a rotating committee of three members to take care of current affairs. Each member serves for three months, but a new one is added and one dropped every month. This committee takes care of providing leaders, supplying refreshments, arranging parties, greeting newcomers, etc.

As the group grows older certain qualifications, in terms of length of sobriety, can be made. Akron Group No. 1 requires a full year of continuous sobriety as qualification to hold an office or serve.

There are no dues. There is a free-will offering at each meeting to take care of expenses.

There is probably an older group in some community within easy traveling distance of yours. Someone from that group will doubtless be happy to help you get started.

The Twelve Steps

Alcoholics Anonymous is based on a set of laws known as the Twelve Steps. Years of experience have definitely proved that those who live up to these rules remain sober. Those who gloss over or ignore any one rule are in constant danger of returning to a life of drunkenness. Thousands of words could be written on each rule. Lack of space prevents, so they are merely listed here. It is suggested that they be explained by the sponsor. If he cannot explain them he should provide someone who can.

THE TWELVE STEPS

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol -- that our lives had become

unmanageable.

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. The

Twelve Steps are more fully explained in another pamphlet published in Akron and available through writing to Post Office Box 932. It is called A Guide to the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. The price is 12 cents per copy, 9 cents in lots of 25 to 499, and 7 1/2 cents in lots of 500 or more. Checks or money orders can be made out to A.A. of Akron.

[Edit. This guide is no longer being published by Akron A.A., but we are trying to obtain a copy of it to make available for printout at this website.]

SUGGESTED READING

The following literature has helped many members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Alcoholics Anonymous (Works Publishing Company).

The Holy Bible.

The Greatest Thing in the World, Henry Drummond.

The Unchanging Friend, a series (Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee).

As a Man Thinketh, James Allen.

The Sermon on the Mount, Emmet Fox (Harper Bros.).

The Self You Have to Live With, Winfred Rhoades.

Psychology of Christian Personality, Ernest M. Ligon (Macmillan Co.).

Abundant Living, E. Stanley Jones.

The Man Nobody Knows, Bruce Barron.

Edit. Akron A.A. in 1940 was obtaining a 75% success rate in teaching alcoholics to get sober and stay sober. The techniques, strategies, and principles set out in this manual must be taken very seriously by modern A.A.'s, particularly if your own success rate with newcomers is nowhere near that high.

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+++Message 235. A LETTER FROM BILL ON DEPRESSION
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 6:24:00 AM

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From:NM Olson

The following excerpts from a letter of Bill Wilson's was quoted in the memoirs of Tom Pike, and early California AA member. Tom did not use the name of the person addressed -- perhaps because he was still living.

Tom said:

Here in part is what Bill Wilson wrote in 1958 to a close friend who shared his problem with depression, describing how Bill himself used St. Francis's prayer as a steppingstone toward recovery:

Dear ...

I think that many oldsters who have put our AA "booze cure" to severe but successful tests still find they often lack emotional sobriety. Perhaps they will be the spearhead for the next major development in AA ... the development of much more real maturity and balance (which is to say, humility) in our relations with ourselves, with our fellows, and with God.

How to translate a right mental conviction into a right emotional result and so into easy, happy, and good living ... well, that's not only the neurotic's problem, it's the problem of life itself for all of us who have got to the point of real willingness to hew to right principles in all our affairs.

Even then, as we hew away, peace and joy may still elude us. That's the place so many of us AA oldsters have come to. And it's a hell of a spot, literally.

Last autumn, depression, having no really rational cause at all, almost took me to the cleaners. I began to be scared that I was in for another long chronic spell. Considering the grief I've had with depressions, it wasn't a

bright prospect.

I kept asking myself, "Why can't the Twelve Steps work to release depression?" By the hour, I stared at the St. Francis prayer ... "It is better to comfort than to be comforted." Here was the formula, all right, but why didn't it work?

Suddenly I realized what the matter was ... My basic flaw had always been dependence, almost absolute dependence on people or circumstances to supply me with prestige, security, and the like. Failing to get these things according to my perfectionist dreams and specifications, I had fought for them. And when defeat came so did my depression.

There wasn't a chance of making the outgoing love of St. Francis a workable and joyous way of life until these fatal and almost absolute dependencies were cut away.

Reinforced by what grace I could secure in prayer, I found I had to exert every ounce of will and action to cut off these faulty emotional dependencies upon people, upon AA, indeed upon any set of circumstances whatsoever.

Then only could I be free to love as Francis had. Emotional and institutional satisfactions, I saw, were really the extra dividends of having love, offering love, and expressing a love appropriate to each relation of life.

Plainly, I could not avail myself of God's love until I was able to offer it back to Him by loving others as He would have me. And I couldn't possibly do that as long as I was victimized by false dependencies.

For my dependency meant demand ... a demand for the possession and control of the people and the conditions surrounding me.

This seems to be the primary healing circuit, an outgoing love of God's creation and His people, by means of which we avail ourselves of His love for us. It is most clear that the real current can't flow until our paralyzing dependencies are broken, and broken at depth. Only then can we possibly have a glimmer of what adult love really is.

If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependency and its consequent demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling demands. Then we can be set free to live and love; we may then be able to gain emotional sobriety.

Of course, I haven't offered you a really new idea ... only a gimmick that has started to unhook several of my own "hexes" at depth. Nowadays my brain no longer races compulsively in either elation, grandiosity or depression. I have been given a quiet place in bright sunshine.

Tom said "Bill's word's of wisdom helped and inspired me and many others. To those who have never been there, it is hard to describe the gratitude that overflows in men and women who are delivered from the black depths of depression into the light. As with delivery from the bondage to alcohol, it is a hosanna of the heart that never ends."

Nancy

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++++Message 236. Young Peoples Groups
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 6:45:00 AM

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From: Jim Blair

This is a brief history of Young People in A.A. Young People

When A.A. was young, most of the members were not. The majority of those whose alcoholism had brought them to their knees were middle-aged. On the other hand, there has always been a sprinkling of younger alcoholics, who were regarded almost as curiosities; in fact, many of today's long-time members came in at a relatively youthful age -- or they wouldn't still be around! There were enough Young People in A.A. by 1950 that the First International Convention that year in Cleveland included a session for them! Then, as A.A. grew older in the `50's and `60's, more alcoholics began showing up in their early thirties, their twenties and even their teens.

There were several reasons for this trend. Awareness of alcoholism was much higher, so those with a problem sought help earlier. The stigma was steadily reduced. Drugs, as they became more available and more commonly used by young people, hastened their progression and ultimate desperation. Later on, treatment centers turned out large numbers of younger graduates. And here, as always in A.A., the principle that "like attracts like" applied. When a youthful alcoholic hesitantly approached a group for the first time and saw another youth, he or she was more likely to stay. And when a kid -_ rejecting his family (or rejected by them) and running with a street crowd -- found acceptance, a new way of life and evident joy in A.A., his young alcoholic peers were sometimes attracted to see what had happened to him.

In 1985, one of the better known examples of A.A. `s ability to turn a young

person's life around was the story of June G., who came to Alcoholics Anonymous in Venice, California, in 1972 at the age of 13. The product of delinquent, violent, alcoholic parents June was pathologically suicidal as a child, and had been turned out onto the street before she had reached her teens because she had physically abused her mother as a result of her own drinking and drugging. Beaten up in a gang fight, the waif attempted suicide once more, and ended up in the hospital. From there, she was induced to go to an A.A. meeting. And she kept showing up, as she had nowhere else to go. "I hated the people there, and they avoided me," she says. Her appearance and dress, her language and her attitude were unacceptable. "It was a year before I put on shoes," June admits. But she kept coming, and gradually some of the adult members -- and particularly a caring sponsor -- took her under their wing. They virtually adopted her -- gave her a place to sleep, slowly changed the way she dressed, persuaded her to attend school, made her get some kind of work. June G. went on to high school, then the university, then law school -- and today practices as a public defender in the court system of the City of Los Angeles. A charming, lovely looking, smartly attired young lady of 26 (in 1985), June has 13 years of solid sobriety -- thanks to her only "family": Alcoholics Anonymous.

Typically, the path of most young people coming to A.A. was not without obstacles. Many in the '60's told how they were ignored or scorned by older members at regular A.A. groups. "You're too young to be an alcoholic," they were told. "Go out and do some more drinking." One speaker at a young people's A.A. convention said, "As I was leaving one of my first meetings, I overheard an older member remark, 'I've spilled more booze than that. young punk has drunk' He probably had, but it was the alcohol I had drunk --- not what he spilled -- that made my life unmanageable.

And even when a regular group made them feel welcome, the young people sometimes felt different for the same reasons that nonalcoholic youngsters feel different from adults; they dressed differently, talked differently, and had different fears and hang--ups.

Some helpful insights into young people in A.A. were gained from a strictly unofficial study done in 1976 by Darlene L., a college student and A.A. member in Southern California, assisted by Jerry F., the then Delegate. The project consisted of distributing questionnaires addressed to "under 30" A.A.'s in that area. Darlene got 79 replies from which she drew her conclusions. The first discovery was that three out of four had a parent or other close relative who was an alcoholic (a much more startling fact in 1976 than today!). Many respondents had attended their first A.A. meeting as a child; in the company of a parent, so they knew where to come when they got into trouble themselves. The second discovery was that the young persons' progression into serious alcoholism was very fast; within three years of beginning to drink regularly, they knew they had a problem. Similarly, the study revealed they realized their powerlessness over alcoholism very early, enabling them to overcome their denial syndrome. Most of the young

alcoholics had also been drug users, greatly speeding up their reaching a bottom. And finally, when they came to A. A., most identified with the alcoholism of the older members but had problems arising out of their identity as young people.

So the younger members in various parts of the country began banding together in their own groups. The first known group "for men and women under 35" was formed in January 1946 in Philadelphia. Within a year, it had about 30 members and an admirable record of sobriety. The same year, in October, a similar group was started in San Diego, California, but for young men only. It was followed within months by a young women's group. In 1947, a "35 and under" group began in New York City "with a mere handful." But three years later, it had 75 to 100 alcoholics.

A September 1961 Grapevine article on these "Youth Groups" states, "In some places, naturally enough, (they) were started with high hopes and flood-tide energy, but little stable or wise leadership. Groups turned into social clubs, or other Traditions were broken, and groups died." But in the long run, most of the groups survived and became viable, because they filled a need. "One girl admitted, 'I guess we just rebel more at our age, even in A.A. groups. And here, I don't have to try to compare my drinking with that of fellows who reminisce about bathtub gin or speakeasies.' And another fellow said, 'My young people's group helps me with current problems. Because I'm young, I have lots of domestic, professional and other personal problems. Getting started in a career or starting a family are not problems most older members are now facing, so we younger ones can face them together and help one another. That's in addition to helping each other stay sober --- which always comes first.'"

Young people's groups were often regarded with suspicion by older groups. Not uncommonly, they were not included in the local service structure because they were "not A.A." But the youngsters continued doing their thing and gradually came to be not only accepted but admired. In the 1961 article, the Milwaukee A.A. Central Office secretary is quoted as saying, "These young people's groups are the lifesavers of A.A. in our area. The service workers under 35 are where we get most of our best volunteers who keep our Central Office functioning. They're the ones we can count on most to take on Twelfth Step jobs, institutional work and public information tasks."

The young people's groups -- along with young people from regular A.A. groups --- banded together in 1958 to form the International Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous, or ICYPAA (pronounced "Icky-Pa") for short. They held their first convention at Niagara Falls, New York, April 26-27, 1958. Less than a hundred people attended. The event has been held annually ever since in different cities from coast to coast, and the attendance now runs 3,000 or more, and are eagerly bid for by young A.A. 's in the host regions and eagerly sought by the convention bureaus of host cities.

Predictably, the large conventions and the existence of ICYPAA caused more controversy within conventional A.A. than the individual young people's groups. It was immediately accused of being some kind of non-affiliated splinter group. Older A.A.'s felt vaguely threatened. ICYPAA leaders kept insisting, "We're not a separate movement or a breaking-away from Alcoholics Anonymous. The Ninth Tradition says 'we may create service committees directly responsible to those they serve.' Our primary purpose is to carry the message to younger alcoholics."

The resistance from regular AA. groups has now generally disappeared. Trustees from the General Service Board (including its Chairman) now routinely and delightedly attend the annual ICYPAA conventions -- and sometimes the regional ones, too. Past members of young people's groups have become trusted servants, Delegates and even Trustees. (George D., past Pacific Regional Trustee, was a former member of the first young people's group in Los Angeles.) The Conventions are very large supporters of G.S.O. At the invitation of the General Service Board, ICYPAA leaders have attended a Board sharing session, and they gave extremely valuable assistance in arranging subjects to be interviewed and filmed for A.A.'s documentary film targeting young people. These are the future of A.A.

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+++Message 237. BILL WILSON'S TALK AT GUEST HOUSE
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 6:26:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

(Transcribers note: The following address was delivered by Bill W. at Guest House, a treatment center for alcoholic priests in Lake Orion, Michigan, a few years before his death, possibly in 1968 or 1969. Where words are unintelligible, best guesses appear in brackets)

.
Well, I like the informal discussion type of approach. It seemed to me that on an occasion like this questions have something of infinitely more value than a lecture or a story. But Ripp* suggested that I make some remarks here tonight, and I'm only too glad to do that.

(*Transcriber's note: probably refers to Austin Ripley, who founded Guest House in 1956.)

And coming down on the plane, I got speculating with myself about the early days of AA and about the meaning of them in terms of the grace of God. I read

somewhere that if a grain of wheat which has been stored for centuries in a dry place is exposed to the right soil and the right climate and to enough light from above it will manifest life and it will unfold and it will grow. But this presupposes the right soil, the right climate and, above all, enough light.

Well, I think it's that way with AA. I remember, years back, when we first began to get publicity, and the first very large occasion was a feature piece done in the Saturday Evening Post which all at once produced us about six thousand members. This was in '41, and by then a number of medics had become close friends, some of them psychiatrists. And these fellows allowed their names to be used (a rather audacious step in those days, I assure you) their names were used in the Post article.

I make this point because, when later asked to testify on another occasion, they refused to do it, and these were the circumstances: the first gal that got sober in AA is one known to many of you as Marty, still very much a going concern in the educational field. Marty was a most difficult case. God knows we're all complex, but Marty was really a champ. And she had been under the care of a Dr. Foster Kennedy, a man of very wide repute in that time, worldwide renown, a neurologist. And he watched Marty as she was planted in the new soil. He watched her receive this light.

Well, he was tremendously impressed. He came to some meetings and soon he said to me, "Bill, would it be possible to have two or three of the psychiatrists in institutions who have seen recoveries of very grim cases, people that you say are friends of yours and who have testified for you in the Post piece, couldn't we get a group of this sort to come to the Academy of Medicine and explain what they have seen?" Well, we thought this was just great, because in those days there were few friends, indeed. So shoring by these people, by reason of Dr. Kennedy, well, what could be better? So, one by one, we went to them, and we said "would they come to the Academy" and we supposed they would. After all, some of the Kennedy glory could brush off, and, you know, they were friends anyhow, and they'd proved it, so why not? And not a one would do it!

And, when pressed for their reasons for not doing it, each one of them separately said the same thing. In effect, each said, "Look, Bill. You folks have added up in one column more of the resources which have been separately applied to alcoholics than anyone else. For example: you have this kinship in suffering; you have possibilities of communication that others don't have; you have a crude form of self-examination or analysis and of catharsis; you have a great new outgoing interest; you reduce guilt by restitution and you have this great compelling interest

in helping others.

"And then there is the religious factor. And then there is this factor of the hopelessness, so far as the resources of the individual are concerned, of this malady. Now this is a formidable list of forces, but we still can't come to the Academy."

"Well, why not?"

"Well," said they, "we see in AA, sometimes in weeks, in a few months, shifts in motivation that even the sums of these forces couldn't begin to account for, because we all too well understand the difficulties of this subtle compulsion. And the sum of them won't add up to the speed of these transformations in these very grim cases. So, for us, there is an unknown factor at work in AA. And, among ourselves, being scientists we call it the "X" factor. We believe you people call it the grace of God. And who shall go to the Academy to explain the grace of God to that body? No one can. And we simply won't."

So, I think it is just as futile as ever for any of us to presume to explain this matter of grace around which our entire galaxy of principles and activities gathers and clusters. We can't do that, but we can examine this matter of the soil and this matter of climate and this matter of illumination [for] which, for some reason or other, we have made ourselves ready. Clearly, God's grace is in and through all.

So, it might be said, "Why haven't alcoholics sobered many times more often through grace than they have? It's available. Why hasn't religion been more successful, numerically at least? Why hasn't medicine been more successful? How is it that laymen seem to be doing this thing?" So I would like to tell a story depicting, at least as it seems to me, what the soil is and what the climate is and what the light is, these things of which we have been placed in such treasured possession.

There is no doubt that in an ordinary sense of time AA began in the office of a psychiatrist, and we might be mindful of this when we criticize people in this profession. Of course, for most of us, the origin is two thousand years old, for some of us perhaps older. But I am speaking of the situation in an immediate sense: how was it precipitated? This too is a matter of conjecture, but here's how it seems to me.

There was a certain business man of great attainment. He's cut down by the grog, he runs the gamut of treatments in this country, and this would be in the year about 1932 when he was just about at the end of his tether. So, he went abroad and became a patient of Dr. Carl Jung.

And, as all of you know, Jung was one of the founding fathers of the "art" (I prefer that instead of "science") of psychiatry. And Jung, Adler, Freud were

the three founding fathers, but, of these, only Jung seemed to think that man is something more than two dollar's worth of chemicals, a bundle of instincts and an uncertain intellect. Jung thought that man had something beyond this, that man has soul.

So our traveler had found a truly great human being, great, indeed, as events [spell or fell] out. He placed himself under that dear man's tutelage for a whole year, becoming more and more confident that the hidden springs of this baleful compulsion to drink were being understood and removed and cast away. He began to feel more free. There was no drinking while he was under treatment. At the end of a year, he left Carl Jung and in one month he was tight. And the bender was terrific.

So, in infinite despair, he came back to Carl Jung and said, "Is there anything now for me? You were my court of last resort." And this great man said, "Roland, I thought for a time after you first came that you might be one of those rare cases in which my art has been helpful. Otherwise I should not have encouraged you to stay. But, alas, I am obliged to conclude that you are not, and that there is nothing that I have to offer you. My art has failed you."

I need not say that, coming from a man of his eminence, this was a statement of beautiful humility. And the whole destiny of AA, you and me and all of us, has since hung on that sentence.

So then Hazard found that agony was added to despair, and he cried out, "But is there nothing else?" And this was the answer he got: "Roland, time out of mind, alcoholics have recovered here and there, now and then, through religious experiences, spiritual experiences let us say, or very truly through conversion (a naughty word for us AAs; we don't use it for obvious reasons).

"But," said the doctor," this benign lighting seldom strikes, and no one can say where or when it will, or for the resuscitation of whom. So I simply would advise you to place yourself in a religious atmosphere, remembering the hopelessness of your doing anything about it on your own remaining resources alone, and cooperating with your associates and casting yourself upon whatever God there may be."

So Roland aligned himself with the Oxford groups of that time, a rather evangelical movement, rather aggressive (very easy it is to criticize). It was nondenominational, however, and it used simple common denominators of religions, simple moral principles. It called upon its members to admit that they could not solve the life problem on their own. It called upon them for self-examination. It called upon them for restitution. It called upon them for a kind of giving in the Franciscan manner, the kind of giving that demands no return in

money, power, prestige and the like, the losing of one's self in the lives of others. Such was the nature of the crowd with which he became associated.

Unaccountably, to him, the obsession to drink left. And for some years he had no more trouble. At the time in the groups there were a few alcoholics sober. There is one now at Ann Arbor that goes back to that time, an old friend who never became an AA. Sobered up in the Oxford Groups.

So Roland returned to America. And the groups here in those days were headed by an Episcopal clergyman called Sam Shoemaker. And in his congregation and among the groups were two or three other alcoholics that, for the nonce, were staying dry.

And Hazard had a summer place near Bennington, Vermont. And these friends, one of them son of a local judge and himself an alcoholic, described the plight of a boy who was a school-time chum of mine, Ebby Thatcher. And Ebby had been deteriorating horribly. There were summer folks in the town above Manchester. Ebby had run his car into the side of the farmer's house, pushed the wall of the kitchen in, the door could still be opened to the car, Ebby stuck his head out and, to the poor woman cowering in the corner who hadn't been hit, he said, "Hey, what about a cup of coffee?"

Well, the town fathers had had it. They were going to commit Ebby for alcoholic insanity, so the judge's son and Hazard picked up the man who was to become my sponsor.

Meanwhile, I had gone the route with which you're all familiar. I had sobered up the summer before, scared to death by the verdict of my doctor, Dr. Silkworth, the one we have since named "the little doctor who loved drunks," and must have then because in his lifetime he dealt with some forty thousand of them as a hack doctor in a drying out place.

And he had an idea that this thing was an illness having several components: a spiritual illness, a moral illness and also a physical illness. And, perhaps oversimplifying, he was apt to describe an alcoholic as a person condemned by a compulsion to drink against his own interests, to drink in spite of his perfect willingness to stop, and that this drinking was coupled to an increasing sensitivity of the body which, if the drinking went on, guaranteed his insanity and, one day, his death. So this sort of a sentence had been spoken to Lois at long last by my doctor, Dr. Silkworth. So you see the soil was under preparation. We were beginning to learn a little more about climate. Ebby and my other friend Roland had received a considerable amount of light.

Well, I got drunk in about two months, even in spite of this sentence that I would have to be locked up or go nuts, maybe within a year. And then my friend Ebby, who had been brought to New York from Vermont, who had

unaccountably sobered up for the time being in the Oxford Groups, came to visit me for I too was in great despair.

Despair is the primary ingredient, indeed, of this soil. In the medical jargon we might call it "deflation at depth." Some deflation, huh? So, Ebby came to see me. And he pitched at me this list of moral (you might say) cliches. Nothing so new about that. I was in favor of honesty. I was in favor of helping other people.

I was in favor of practically everything he had to say except one thing: I was not in favor of God, for I had received one of these magnificent modeled modern schillings, scientific schooling, that assured that by a series of stages, picking up increments from somewhere as they went along, I could be traced back to a single piece of ooze in prehistoric seas. And this was my faith. And science was my god.

So along comes Ebby, and along comes Jung, for whom I had respect, and here was my doctor: Science can't do it; medicine can't do it; psychology can't do it.

Religion? Sometimes. That was his story. But how could I buy religion? So I felt trapped. In other words, I was gripped in the trap which we every day construct for the drunk who approaches us saying, "Well, I think the group life must be great. Helping other people? I'm for it. But I couldn't get the spiritual angle (as our jargon has it)."

Now, as you know, this gentleman is the newcomer, like me, is being caught in this trap. When you and I talk to another alcoholic, and we identify ourselves as having been denizens of this strange world, and, having emerged, and we describe this malady in the terms of our god, Science, and THAT god pronounces the sentence of hopelessness upon us, the sentence, we are deflated at depth. And then we learn that now we have accepted our personal hopelessness, there still isn't any hope because we cannot go for the God business.

And this was the awful dilemma into which I was cast by my friend Ebby, bringing, on the one side, all of this bad news, but on the other side, the spectacle of his own release, and that was the word to use. He didn't say he was on the water-wagon; the obsession had just left him as soon as he became willing to try on the basis of these principles, and, indeed, as he became willing to appeal to whatever God there might be. And this was reducing the theological requirements an awful lot.

Well, I went on drinking about three weeks, and in no waking hour would I forget the face of my friend, a spectacle of release as I looked out through a haze of gin into his face, as he pitched this "synthesis" at me. So I thought, "well, I better go up to the hospital and get sobered up. A

conversion experience is not for me: I'm an obstinate Vermonter.

Besides, I can't buy it. People say to me, 'Have faith.' And I believe I'd have faith if I could have it but I can't. But anyhow, I'll go and get dried up.

So I went to the hospital. I must have had a little optimism, because I came in with a bag of beer (I had tried to share it on the subway up). I was waving a bottle.

Dear little Dr. Silkworth came out and I yelled at him, "This time, Doc, I got it!"

He said, "I'm afraid you have, Bill. You better get upstairs and go to bed." And he looked very sad, for he loved me. So I went upstairs, and went to bed. I was there while I entered the D.T.s.

So, in about three days, I was all in the clear. But, the more sober I got, the more awful the despair, the depression. So, I think it was the morning of the third or the fourth day that my friend Ebby showed up in the doorway, and my feeling was ambivalent at once.

So I said, "Well, this is the time he's going to pour on the evangelism." And on the other hand I was saying, "Well, he should be looking for a job. Why is he up here at eleven o'clock in the morning to see me? He does practice what he preaches."

So, Ebby knew my prejudices, and so he waited for me to ask him again for that neat little formula through which he had achieved release. And dutifully he went through it: you got honest with yourself, with another person in confidence; you made restitution; you helped others; and you prayed to God as you understood Him (I think he might have even used that phrase).

And without much more ado, he was gone. No pressure. And again I couldn't have truck with the God business. And again the despair deepened until the last of this prideful obstinacy momentarily was apparently crushed out. And then, like a child crying out in the dark, I said, "If there is a Father, if there is a God, will he show himself?"

And the place lit up in a great glare, a wondrous white light. Then I began to have images, in the mind's eyes, so to speak, and one came in which I seemed to see myself standing on a mountain and a great clean wind was blowing, and this blowing at first went around and then it seemed to go through me. And then the ecstasy redoubled and I found myself exclaiming, "I am a free man! So THIS is the God of the preachers!"

And little by little the ecstasy subsided and I found myself in a new world of consciousness. And one of the early reflections in this world of great peace which stole over me was that all is well with God. I am a part of His cosmos at last. Even evil in His hands can be transmuted into good.

So I had been deflated at depth by a fellow sufferer who used the scientific verdict to deflate me, who used his ability to communicate to me through our kinship of common suffering, and who made the example of a person who practiced what he preached. So, then, for me, here indeed was the soil, here was the climate, and, God knows, the light was great.

Now, I venture this assertion [that every member] of AA has a spiritual awakening or experience of exactly this character. Certainly it is not for me to dicker with theologians, but let me say I prefer to think that there is no essential difference between what happened to me and what happens to each sound AA, excepting the time element.

Going back to those psychiatrists who said, "We can't understand this tremendous shift in motivation despite all your resources." Well, in my case the shifts ...[tape paused]. but the fruits have been the same. And one of the most terrible compulsions and obsessions known has been expelled from us almost wholesale. It's true, this happy synthesis of medicine, religion and our own experience in suffering, in recovery and sharing the grace of this, one with the next. So, fellas, there's my speech.

Q: Bill, is that light relative in the sense of illumination? It must be. Not every one of us has gone through the experience of ecstasy or any light shining or ...

OK. Maybe... You know, this is a curbstome opinion, but here's how I look at it. You go to AA meetings and somebody gets up, and this happens time after time, and he says, "Now, folks, I ain't got the spiritual angle. Yet. I'm making the group my Higher Power. They're sober and I wasn't. So I got a Higher Power, I ain't got the spiritual angle the way you fellas did. And as for Bill's thing, well, he looks sane in other respects, but, you know.."

Now, this guy will get up there and tell a story of losing this compulsion and of its being cleared out of him and his being re-motivated in many other ways, just like those psychiatrists said, in a matter of months, or of six months or a year.

Now just take one of those fellows and try to imagine all of those shifts in motivation taking place within six months, or within six minutes instead of six months. I think, had this happened to that fellow, he too could have had ecstasy.

So I think it's a time element, and I personally see no great advantage in

these tremendous experiences, save in my case only one. It did give me an instant conviction of the presence of God which has never left me from that moment, in spite of the worst I can do (and it's often been damned bad), and no matter what the pressure. And I feel that that extra dividend may have made the difference whether I would have persisted with AA in the early years or not.

Actually, it has some liabilities, and I've seen it in others who have had these experiences in AA, and there are quite a lot. And this is the penance, and I think you theologians give us some excuse for it too, of beginning to think that, because we have these tremendous illuminations, that WE are something special.

So, you begin to develop a kind of a paranoia alongside of a perfectly valid experience. And this is just what happened to me. I damned near botched up the whole works by coming out of this working furiously with drunks and, before anybody had been sobered up, I got so far off base as to loudly declare one time to an audience by no means spellbound that I was going to sober up all the god damned drunks in the world! Now THAT is pure paranoia if you ever...

So, don't long for the illumination. I think you're apt to have the experience that's appropriate

Q: Well, I'm not longing for it. I...

Well, some people do. You know: "Oh, my God! If I could only have one like Bill's!" Now, actually, this may be said very sincerely because this may be a guy who's slipping around, but he may be slipping around on account of the fact that he's a little schizy and needs some of them vitamin B3s, so now we'll put on Hawkins.

Moderator: Well, you got it from the horse's mouth, fellas. Very inspiring and illuminating, the things that Bill [tells] of how this all began. Now you've gone with him you know what the purpose of their meeting is here: is on niacin. And tomorrow we'll have Dr. Hoffer and Dr. Osborn and a couple of other people. But one of the most active in the field with some startling developments is Dr. Dave Hawkins in New York, and I'll read you a little bit of his background: both his Bachelor of Science degree and medical degree were received from Marquette University. He interned in Columbia Hospital in Milwaukee. He then graduated from
[end of tape]

Transcriber's note: According to "Pass It On," Dr. Humphry Osmond (not Osborn) and Abram Hoffer were English psychiatrists working in a mental hospital in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, principally with alcoholics and schizophrenics.

It was they who introduced Bill to LSD. Later, they gained some success in

treating alcoholics by administering vitamin B3, also known as niacin. Bill felt strongly that this was the key to the "allergy of the body" that Dr. Silkworth had suspected, and spent the remaining years of his life actively promoting niacin therapy (much to the consternation of the AA fellowship).

II
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+++Message 238. A.A. in Cyberspace
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 6:57:00 AM

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From: "Rudy890"

A.A. in Cyberspace - The Future

NOTE: The following is an excerpt from a talk given by Dennis M. at the A.A. International Convention in Minneapolis during a general session called "A.A. In Cyberspace -- The Future." It is published here with permission.

A.A. in Cyberspace - The Future I see cyberspace continuing to evolve as an increasingly robust and user-friendly multi-media environment. It's here to stay and we will continue to learn to use this colossus of communications to help alcoholics.

We will learn that there aren't two forms of AA - face to face and online. There is one Alcoholics Anonymous and we will become united in our efforts to help alcoholics. This will not happen without pain and frustration. For example, I believe we need to protect our literature copyrights and make certain that, in so doing, we maintain the integrity of the AA message throughout our fellowship.

Most geographically-based service structures - will use cyberspace - just like my home area Southeastern New York (Area 49) is beginning to with its new web page - in order to provide area service and improve communications within the area community.

Facilitate Contact In the arena of providing meeting information online, we will see both technology and determination cooperate to make meeting information available anywhere anytime; and to facilitate contact with another alcoholic anytime, anywhere.

For example, a trembling drunk - today we might call him "the man on the web" instead of "the man on the bed" - reaches out for help in cyberspace. How he

does that - who cares! He does it. It's happening today. It will continue to occur with greater frequency as more and more people have access to cyberspace.

His drinking is out of control - again. His life is miserable; his job is on the line. He wants help but he's afraid to walk into a meeting.

Well, this drunk finds the Online Intergroup and then he finds a group like Lamplighters. We have a 12th step committee and we share with him. We share experience, strength and hope and we encourage him. And he becomes willing to talk to someone close to home. We might even have a member who lives there or we might arrange a 12th step call from his local AA Intergroup by communicating via cyberspace.

Reaching Out In other words, it needn't be "either cyberspace" or "face to face only." I believe there is a tremendous opportunity for cooperation between cyberspace and the face to face world in practicing our 12th step.

I'd like to digress a moment to share a personal experience with the 12th step in cyberspace.

A young man living in New York reached out to Lamplighters in the winter of 1998. I was the 12th step contact since I live in New York. He was from Sweden and in New York as a post-doctoral student in Computer science. His drinking had escalated out of control and he had gotten into some trouble and was very, very sick.

His name was Kristofer (not his real name) and he wanted help. He was already computer literate and reaching out in cyberspace for him was easier than making a telephone call. He said he wouldn't go to a regular meeting because of his language difficulty. It was really fear. The truth is that he felt more anonymous on the internet.

This was Thursday. I emailed a friend in Lamplighters who I knew was flying into New York to visit GSO on Friday and asked if he could pick up some Swedish literature. I told him I'd meet him in front of an AA group in lower Manhattan where we sometimes would meet when he came into town.

The Hand of A.A. I then offered to meet with the young Swede at that location and promised that I would have some AA literature in Swedish. Kristofer wrote back that he was too scared to meet me and couldn't commit.

I wrote and told him I'd be there anyway and described myself and said I'd wait and if he didn't show up, then he could give me a mailing address and I'd mail him the literature.

Well, my Lamplighters friend, Jim, arrived and apologized for only being able to obtain a Swedish Big Book at GSO. Five minutes later Kristofer walked up to

me and we shook hands and I handed him the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous in his mother tongue.

I invited him into the meeting for a cup of coffee. It was a cold night and he ventured into his first AA meeting. He remarked that we all looked pretty "normal." Kristofer stayed for that meeting and a couple of days later had read the Big Book and wanted to meet again and talk about it. He had read the book thoroughly!

Kristofer decided he was only a potential alcoholic and could probably drink a while longer and maybe even control it. I said "Go right ahead!" He was surprised I didn't lecture him nor criticize his decision. I told him alcohol would be our best advocate and, besides, maybe he would be one of the lucky ones and learn to drink safely.

A year or so later Kristofer emailed me to say that his drinking had gone out of control again after he got a good job and moved back to Sweden. He said that he'd dug out "that book you gave me" and he and another drinking buddy were staying sober reading it together. He thanked me for helping him to understand.

To me, this is a wonderful example of how cyberspace and the face to face world of AA can combine to do 12th step work. I see great potential in the use of cyberspace to more effectively see that "whenever anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, the hand of Alcoholics Anonymous will be there."

Meeting Special Needs Now, a little something should be said about what may become a very special focus of AA in cyberspace in the not-to-distant future. It is the area we call Special Needs.

For some people with special needs like the deaf, the visually impaired and blind (yes, there's even special software - increasingly useful - for the sightless), the disabled, the homebound and for geographically isolated alcoholics, cyberspace offers all of these the chance of forming new AA meeting communities or for just melding with existing AA.

Cyberspace will be increasingly available to those who have difficulty reading - using special software - and there is tremendous promise in the use of translation software, which will lessen the difficulty of carrying the AA message across language barriers and will allow full participation for any member regardless of any and all speech difficulties.

And how we might ask will all of these cyber-groups be able to participate in the collective conscience of AA? What is this all about?

Service Structure Most A.A.'s know we have 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts that guide our groups and general service structures. Well, we have AA groups meeting online practicing these same principles. But most online groups -

which have members from all over the world - don't fit into any of the present service structures because they're organized within geographical boundaries.

Online groups are not able to effectively participate in any Conference process today. They effectively lack a voice in AA as a whole. I believe this will change in the coming years.

Increasingly, the OIAA, the Online Intergroup, is finding itself as the service arm for groups meeting in cyberspace. It is exciting to me to see the OIAA - in many respects still in its infancy - assuming a key service role in cyberspace. Its member groups include members with energy and creativity in utilizing the full power of this medium and applying their talents to helping drunks. I believe this will be the place where online AA groups will have a chance to voice their conscience on matter affecting AA as a whole.

I believe the day will come when we will see participation of the OIAA or something like it carrying the conscience of the online AA groups into the World Service Meeting - the biennial get-together of GSO's from all around the world to discuss matters of unity and mutual concern.

Give it Time This will not happen overnight but I believe it will evolve if we attend to our AA spiritual business - carrying the message to the sick and suffering alcoholic whenever and wherever we may be of use in the new reality of cyberspace. If we focus our energies on doing the service, the rest will take care of itself. We need to give time, time as we tell newcomers.

As the cyber-groups of AA learn how to apply the principles we so cherish as a society - unity through reliance on a Higher Power, inclusivity without losing sight of our singleness of purpose, self-support and non-affiliation, avoidance of outside controversy and, most essentially - how to protect and preserve the anonymity of our individual members - we want to add our collective voice to those in the world around us. In other words, we want a way to relate to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.

What is likely to happen, in my opinion, is that a service structure will continue to evolve from what we have today. The OIAA is the present "hub" of AA service for the online fellowship and is well positioned to undertake new and growing services on behalf of the online groups.

Additional services will grow around Special Needs, Public Information to Professional Communities which meet in cyberspace; and the coordination between Treatment Centers and even Correctional Facilities using cyber-links to the online community to ease the transition back into one's home community are increasingly likely.

Distant Reaches We might ask: "Is this really going to happen?" I believe the answer is, as usual, right before us in our literature.

In an article in the November 1960 Grapevine entitled "Freedom under God - the Choice is Ours" Bill W. said:

"We now entrust you of AA's distant reaches - you who so well symbolize the unique and loving communication that is ours in this universal Fellowship - to carry this message to fellow members everywhere; and most especially to all those others who still know not, and who, God willing, may soon issue out of their darkness into light."

And in our Big Book - there is a chapter entitled "A Vision For You." As usual Bill said it best when answering the question of whether and how we will have contact with each other:

"We cannot be sure. God will determine that, so you must remember that your real reliance is upon Him. He will show you how to create the fellowship you crave. May God bless you and keep you - until then."

Thank you.

Dennis M.

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+++Message 241. Chips, Medallions and Birthdays
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 7:13:00 AM

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From: Jim Blair

THis is collection of info on Chips, Medallions and Birthdays. Much of it came from The A.A. Grapevine.

Chips, Medallions and Birthdays

The traditions of chips, medallions and birthdays vary in different parts of the country and I thought it would be interesting to look up some of the history on them.

Sister Ignatia, the nun who helped Dr. Bob get the hospitalization program started

at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron was the first person to use medallions in Alcoholics

Anonymous. She gave the drunks who were leaving St. Thomas after a five day dry out a Sacred Heart Medallion and instructed them that the acceptance of

the medallion signified a commitment to God, to A.A. and to recovery and that if they were going to drink, they had a responsibility to return the medallion to her before drinking.

The sacred heart badges had been used prior to A.A. by the Father Matthew Temperance Movement of the 1840s and the Pioneers an Irish Temperance Movement of the 1890s.

The practice of sobriety chips in A.A. started with a Group in Elmira, N.Y. in 1947 and has grown from there.

The celebration of birthdays came from the Oxford Group where they celebrated the anniversary of their spiritual rebirth. As we have a problem with honesty, A.A. chose the anniversary of the date of our last drink.

Early celebrations of birthdays resulted in people getting drunk and Dr. Harry Tiebout was asked to look at the problem and he commented on this phenomenon in an article titled "When the Big "I" Becomes Nobody", (AAGV, Sept. 65)

"Early on in A.A., I was consulted about a serious problem plaguing the local group. The practice of celebrating a year's sobriety with a birthday cake had resulted in a certain number of the members getting drunk within a short period after the celebration. It seemed apparent that some could not stand prosperity. I was asked to settle between birthday cakes or no birthday cakes. Characteristically, I begged off, not from shyness but from ignorance. Some three or four years later, A.A. furnished me the answer. The group no longer had such a problem because, as one member said, "We celebrate still, but a year's sobriety is now a dime a dozen. No one gets much of a kick out of that anymore."

The AAGV carried many articles on chips and cakes and the following is a brief summary of some.

Feb. 1948, Why All the Congratulations? "When we start taking bows (even on anniversaries) we bow ourselves right into the cuspidor."

July, 1948. Group To Give Oscar for Anniversaries.

The Larchmont Group of Larchmont, N.Y. gives a cast bronze camel mounted on a mahogany base to celebrate 1st., 5th and 10th anniversaries.

"The camel is wholly emblematic of the purposes of most sincere A.A.s, i.e., to live for 24 hours without a drink."

August 1948. The Artesta, N.Mex. Group awards marbles to all members. If you are caught without your marbles, you are fined 25 cents. This money goes into the Foundation Fund.

June 1953, We operate a poker chip club in the Portland Group (Maine). We

have poker chips of nine colors of which the white represents the probation period of one month. If he keeps his white chip for one month he is presented with a red chip for one month's sobriety.

The chips continue with blue for two months, black for three, green for four, transparent blue for five, amber for six, transparent purple for nine months and a transparent clear chip for one year. We have our chips stamped with gold A.A. letters.

Also at the end of the year and each year thereafter, we present them with a group birthday card signed by all members present at the meeting.

January 1955, Charlotte, N.C. "When a man takes "The Long Walk" at the end of a meeting, to pick up a white chip, he is admitting to his fellow men that he has finally accepted the precepts of A.A. and is beginning his sobriety. At the end of three months he exchanges his white chip for a red one. Later, a handsome, translucent chip of amber indicates that this new member has enjoyed six months of a new way of life. The nine month chip is a clear seagreen and a blue chip is given for the first year of sobriety. In some groups a sponsor will present his friend with an engraved silver chip, at the end of five years clear thinking and clean living.

March 1956, The One Ton Poker Chip. Alton, Illinois. Author gave friend a chip on his first day eight years ago (1948) and told him to accept it in the spirit of group membership and that if he wanted to drink to throw the chip away before starting drinking.

October 1956, Bangor Washington. Article about a woman who sits in a bar to drink the bartender sees her white chips and asks what it is. She tells him. He throws her out as he does not want an alcoholic in his bar. She calls friend.

April 1957, Cape Cod, Mass. Group recognizes 1st, 5th and 15th anniversaries. Person celebrating leads meeting. Person is presented with a set of wooden carved plaques with the slogans.

July 1957, New Brunswick, Canada. Birthday Board. Member contributes one dollar for each year of sobriety

July 1957, Oregon. Person is asked to speak and is introduced by his or her sponsor. The wife, mother, sister or other relative brings up a cake. The Group sings Happy Birthday. The wife gives a two or three minute talk.

April 1959, Patterson, N.J. People are asked to give "three month pin talks."

And that's a little bit of info on chips, cakes and medallions.

++++Message 242. Carl Jung Letters
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 7:42:00 AM

II
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From: NM Olson

From the January 1963 Grapevine: The Bill W. - Carl Jung Letters

The Grapevine used only last initials of AA members in its article, but I believe that Bill used the full name of the person Dr. Jung had treated and others in his letter to Jung.

This extraordinary exchange of letters revealed for the first time not only the direct historical ancestry of AA, but the bizarre situation where-in Jung, deeply involved with scientists and with a scientific reputation at stake, felt he had to be cautious about revealing his profound and lasting belief that the ultimate sources of recovery are spiritual sources. Permission to publish Dr. Jung's letter was granted by the Jung estate.

January 23, 1961

Professor, Dr. C. G. Jung
Kusnacht-Zurich
Seestrasse 228
Switzerland

My 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 doubt if you are aware that a certain conversation you once had with one of your patients, a Mr. Roland H., back in the early 1930s, did play a critical role in the founding of our Fellowship.

Though Roland H. has long since passed away, the recollection of his remarkable experience while under treatment by you has definitely become part of AA history. Our remembrance of Roland H.'s statements about his experience with you is as follows:

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

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 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 humble statement of yours was beyond a doubt the first foundation stone upon which our Society has since been built.

Coming from you, one he so trusted and admired, the impact upon him was immense.

When he 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 -- in short, a genuine conversion. You pointed out how such an experience, if brought about, might remotivate him when nothing else could. But you did caution, though, that while such experiences had sometimes brought recovery to alcoholics, they were, nonetheless, 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 evangelical 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 surroundings, Roland H. did find a conversion experience that released him for the time being from his compulsion to drink.

Returning to New York, he became very active with the "O.G." here, then led by an Episcopal clergyman, Dr. Samuel Shoemaker. Dr. Shoemaker had been one of the founders of that movement, and his was a powerful personality that carried immense sincerity and conviction.

At this time (1932-34), the Oxford Group had already sobered a number of alcoholics, and Roland, feeling that he could especially identify with these sufferers, addressed himself to the help of still others. One of these chanced to be an old schoolmate of mine, named Edwin T. [Ebby]. He had been threatened with commitment to an institution, but Mr. H. and another ex-alcoholic "O.G." member procured his parole, and helped to bring about his sobriety.

Meanwhile, I had run the course of alcoholism and was threatened with commitment myself. Fortunately, I had fallen under the care of a physician -- a Dr. William D. Silkworth -- who was wonderfully capable of understanding alcoholics. But just as you had given up on Roland, so had he given me up. It

was his theory that alcoholism had two components -- an obsession that compelled the sufferer to drink against his will and interest, and some sort of metabolism difficulty which he then called an allergy. The alcoholic's compulsion guaranteed that the alcoholic's drinking would go on, and the allergy made sure that the sufferer would finally deteriorate, go insane, or die. Though I had been one of the few he had thought it possible to help, he was finally obliged to tell me of my hopelessness; I, too, would have to be locked up. To me, this was a shattering blow. Just as Roland had been made ready for his conversion experience by you, so had my wonderful friend Dr. Silkworth prepared me.

Hearing of my plight, my friend Edwin T. came to see me at my home, where I was drinking. By then, it was November 1934. I had long marked my friend Edwin for a hopeless case. Yet here he was in a very evident state of "release," which could by no means be accounted for by his mere association for a very short time with the Oxford Group. Yet this obvious state of release, as distinguished from the usual depression, was tremendously convincing. Because he was a kindred sufferer, he could unquestionably communicate with me at great depth. I knew at once I must find an experience like his, or die.

Again I returned to Dr. Silkworth's care, where I could be once more sobered and so gain a clearer view of my friend's experience of release, and of Roland H.'s approach to him.

Clear once more of alcohol, I found myself terribly depressed. This seemed to be caused by my inability to gain the slightest faith. Edwin T. again visited me and repeated the simple Oxford Group formulas. Soon after he left me, I became even more depressed. In utter despair, I cried out, "If there be a God, will he show himself." There immediately came to me an illumination of enormous impact and dimension, something which I have since tried to describe in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and also in *AA Comes of Age*, basic texts which I am sending to you.

My release from the alcohol obsession was immediate. At once, I knew I was a free man.

Shortly following my experience, my friend Edwin came to the hospital, bringing me a copy of William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*. This book gave me the realization that most conversion experiences, whatever their variety, do have a common denominator of ego collapse at depth. The individual faces an impossible dilemma. In my case, the dilemma had been created by my compulsive drinking, and the deep feeling of hopelessness had been vastly deepened still more by my alcoholic friend when he acquainted me with your verdict of hopelessness respecting Roland H.

In the wake of my spiritual experience, there came a vision of a society of alcoholics, each identifying with and transmitting his experience to the next -- chain-style. If each sufferer were to carry the news of scientific

hopelessness of alcoholism to each new prospect, he might be able to lay every newcomer wide open to a transforming spiritual experience. This concept proved to be the foundation of such success as Alcoholics Anonymous has since achieved. This has made conversion experience -- nearly every variety reported by James -- available on an almost wholesale basis. Our sustained recoveries over the last quarter-century number about 300,000. In America and through the world, there are today 8,000 AA groups. [In 1994, worldwide membership is estimated to be over 2,000,000; number of groups, over 87,300.]

So to you, to Dr. Shoemaker of the Oxford Group, to William James, and to my own physician, Dr. Silkworth, we of AA owe this tremendous benefaction. As you will now clearly see, this astonishing chain of events actually started long ago in your consulting room, and it was directly founded upon your own humility and deep perception.

Very many thoughtful AAs are students of your writings. Because of your conviction that man is something more than intellect, emotion, and two dollars' worth of chemicals, you have especially endeared yourself to us.

How our Society grew, developed its Traditions for unity, and structured its functioning, will be seen in the texts and pamphlet material that I am sending you.

You will also be interested to learn that, in addition to the "spiritual experience," many AAs report a great variety of psychic phenomena, the cumulative weight of which is very considerable. Other members have -- following their recovery in AA -- been much helped by your practitioners. A few have been intrigued by the I Ching and your remarkable introduction to that work.

Please be certain that your place in the affection, and in the history, of our Fellowship is like no other.

Gratefully yours,

William G. W--.

January 30, 1961
Kusnacht-Zurich
Seestrasse 228

Mr. William G. W--.
Alcoholics Anonymous
Box 459 Grand Central Station
New York 17, New York

Dear Mr. W.:

Your letter has been very welcome indeed.

I had no news from Roland H. any more and often wondered what has been his fate. Our conversation which he has adequately reported to you had an aspect of which he did not know. The reason that I could not tell him everything was that those days I had to be exceedingly careful of what I said. I had found out that I was misunderstood in every possible way. Thus I was very careful when I talked to Roland H. But what I really thought about was the result of many experiences with men of his kind.

His craving for alcohol was the equivalent, on a low level, of the spiritual thirst of our being for wholeness, expressed in medieval language: the union with God.* [2]

How could one formulate such an insight in a language that is not misunderstood in our days?

The only right and legitimate way to such an experience is that it happens to you in reality, and it can only happen to you when you walk on a path which leads you to higher understanding. You might be led to that goal by an act of grace or through a personal and honest contact with friends, or through a higher education of the mind beyond the confines of mere rationalism. I see from your letter that Roland H. has chosen the second way, which was, under the circumstances, obviously the best one.

I am strongly convinced that the evil principle prevailing in this world leads the unrecognized spiritual need into perdition if it is not counteracted either by real religious insight or by the protective wall of human community. An ordinary man, not protected by an action from above and isolated in society, cannot resist the power of evil, which is called very aptly the Devil. But the use of such words arouses so many mistakes that one can only keep aloof from them as much as possible.

These are the reasons why I could not give a full and sufficient explanation to Roland H., but I am risking it with you because I conclude from your very decent and honest letter that you have acquired a point of view above the misleading platitudes one usually hears about alcoholism.

You see, alcohol in Latin is "spiritus," and you use the same word for the highest religious experience as well as for the most depraving poison. The helpful formula therefore is: spiritus contra spiritum.

Thanking you again for your kind letter.

I remain

yours sincerely

C. G. Jung

*"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." (Psalm 42.1)

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+++Message 243. An AA Prayer From The 1940's
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 7:50:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

In the late 1940's, a business card was given to a woman who had recently gone to her first AA meeting. On one side it had the Four Absolutes and on the other it said the following:

Thank you God for another day,
The chance to live in a decent way,
To feel again the joy of living,
And happiness that comes from giving.
Thank you for friends that can understand,
And peace that flows from Your loving hand.
Help me to wake with the morning sun,
with the prayer today - "Thy Will be done,"
For with Your help I will find the way,
Thank you again dear God for AA.

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+++Message 244. The Springfield Seven
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 7:51:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

The Springfield Seven

This "AA moment to remember" was the police raid on the Springfield, Missouri AA Clubhouse on August 24, 1948. Here are some of the sordid details of this dastardly deed:

The Springfield Police Department got an anonymous tip about "commercialized vice" at the AA Club, so Police staged an early morning raid complete with seven officers and four patrol cars. The next day's newspaper headline stated "Details of the Great Clubhouse Raid: How Six Policemen Boldly Captured Seven Ex-Anonymous Poker Players" (they were ex-anonymous AA's after the police got through with them). They netted approximately \$28 in cash and chips from a 10-cent limit poker game. The game was played with chips, and the only money on the table was several dollars in change that had just been given to players who had purchased chips. The remainder of the money was in a basket beside the playing table.

One AA gave this eyewitness account of the raid:

"Three officers entered the room first - one of them shouted `Don't touch that money! Don't touch anything!' The AA's froze. `Playing poker,' one officer exclaimed. `That,' said a player, `is obvious.' `A big game - LOOK AT ALL THOSE CHIPS!'"

One of the AA's tried to explain that they were 10-cent chips, but the officers weren't listening. Then three additional officers charged into the room, and the six policemen escorted the seven men out. Four police cars waited outside the Club. One or two AA's were put in each car and driven to the police station where they were booked. They were released only after posting a \$350 cash bond. Later they were tried and convicted of "betting on games."

The incident was described as "a ludicrous display of authority." It was in the newspaper for days - on the Front page, the editorial page, the "Talk of the Town" page, and the Letters to the Editor page.

One newspaper reporter provided this Editorial comment:

"Speaking frankly, we think that the AA raid was a horrible mistake on the part of the arresting officers. We think that they did not know where they were going in the first place; that when they arrived there, they did not know the meaning of `AA;' that when they walked into the game, they did not recognize the players or conclude from their surroundings or their dress that they were persons of importance. Therefore, they were not disposed to listen to the efforts of the players to explain..."

Another reporter was even more emphatic in his denunciation of the police action:

"I can't think of any pinch which causes less embarrassment to the pinchees and more embarrassment to the pinchers than this dazzling episode in the history of Springfield law enforcement. As a blunder it was brilliantly conceived and beautifully executed. Sheer genius working in reverse with incredible skill."

The full names, ages, addresses, and occupations of the AA "criminals" were published in the paper. The "Springfield Seven" were:

Ray D. - 38, 671 South Delusion, Golf Driving Range Operator

William L. - 38, 1027 West High, Member of an Abstract Co.

Orion S. - 43, 1419 E. Cairn, Restaurant Operator

James H. - 31, 1411 ½ N. Broadway, Salesman

Harold P. - 37, Route 9, Meat Cutter

Harold B. - 34, 4206 North Grant, Septic Tank Cleaner

Charles C. - 46, 507 W. Webster, Musician

Among others, James H. and Ray and Ann D. wrote letters to the Editor. This was what James had to say:

"Since I am one of the notorious gamblers captured in the daring raid, and considering the widespread interest shown in the case, I have decided that my eyewitness account of the story may be of some interest to you. As I try to reconstruct the scene, I think I had just called a 10-cent bet made by one of the more reckless players, when a voice about two feet behind me snarled "Don't touch a thing." I whirled around to see a cop with a flashlight in hand aimed directly at us. It looked like an eight-cell job. He held the seven of us at bay with this deadly weapon until two more Officers moved into position (and) had us completely surrounded...Since paying my fine, I have given the matter considerable thought, and I have drawn my own conclusions. The raid, although a masterpiece of police efficiency, was not only an utter waste of time, but outright stupid."

Ray and Ann D. wrote in and the newspaper quoted the following:

"Speaking for ourselves and believing we express the sentiment of many other Springfield members of Alcoholics Anonymous, we'd like to say `thanks' to personal friends of AA for a most kindly and good-natured understanding of our brief and unfortunate tangle with the city police -

YES, we know where there is a poker game tonight, and -

NO, we're not going to file suit against the city to get back our poker chips, and -

YES, we think the whole thing is silly and stupid and utterly ridiculous, but

-

NO, we don't think any of the fellows and girls are so disturbed that they're likely to take to the bottle, and -

NO, we don't think the reputation of the Club has been damaged, and -

NO - most emphatically NO - we do not think that we personally have been embarrassed by the occurrence...You see, AA to us is the way we live - or rather the way we try to live, since we are hardly likely to attain all of the goals of AA in one lifetime. AA is sobriety - but AA also is self-respect and respect for and understanding of others. AA is the restoration of old friendships and the formation of new ones. AA is the reconstruction of old ideals with a new hope for their eventual reality. AA is a purpose to be worked toward, with the assurance that there will be friendly and adequate help along the way.

If you understand in some small measure what AA has meant to us, you will see

that we would be extremely ungrateful if we did not welcome every opportunity to identify ourselves with the organization - to those who may need its help, to any who are interested in it from any standpoint whatsoever, and to the general public when the occasion indicates it. In the present case, our anonymity has been eliminated by the city police, but that is certainly a minor matter."

You can see that the police raid provided the early Springfield AA's with the opportunity to demonstrate that "Love and tolerance of others is our code."

Source: "But, For The Grace of God...How Intergroups & Central Offices Carried the Message of A.A. in the 1940s" by Wally P.

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+++Message 245. Medallions
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 7:14:00 AM

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From: "wil antheunis"

From the book: (50 Years -) "The History of a.A. in Ontario" (published June 1993 - Timberland Press)

As the fifties came to a close, Alcoholics Anonymous had grown to touch almost every feasible community In the province. In the greater metropolitan Toronto area alone, A.A. had more than sixty groups, which Included three women's groups and three groups for young people. Our custom of receiving medallions for certain periods of sobriety was now well entrenched, In fact hundreds of men and women carried theirs as a positive reminder of their sobriety. The medallion as we know It today was thought of and designed by Tom G. the acting manager of our A.A. Toronto Office In April 1946. Little could he have known that his simple Idea would come to mean so much to so many In such a short time.

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+++Message 246. The Gabriel Heatter Interview
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 7:40:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

The first national exposure for Alcoholics Anonymous came with the April 25, 1939, "We The People" broadcast. Gabriel Heatter's radio program was a tremendously popular program that was tuned in by millions of people.

Morgan R., the AA member who spoke on the program, was expected to launch sales of the newly published book, "Alcoholics Anonymous." How Morgan was prepared for his three-minute talk, and the resulting book sales are described in the A.A.W.S. publication "Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age" on pages 174-175, and also in Post 225 on the AA History Buffs site.

This is a transcript of the interview:

HEATTER:

The man beside me now has had one of the most gripping and dramatic experiences I've ever heard. I'm not going to tell you his name. And when you hear what he has to say I think you'll understand why. But after checking the facts the Listeners Committee of "We The People" decided to grant him time because they feel that if one person is helped by hearing his story, then WE THE PEOPLE will have done a real service. All right, sir.

ANONYMOUS GUEST:

Six months ago I got out of an insane asylum. I'd been sent there because I was drinking myself to death. But the doctors said they could do nothing for me. And only four years ago I was making 20,000 dollars a year. I was married to a swell girl and had a young son. But I worked hard and like lots of my friends - I used to drink to relax. Only they knew when to stop. I didn't. And pretty soon, I drank myself out of my job. I promised my wife I'd straighten out. But I couldn't. Finally she took the baby and left me.

The next year was like a nightmare. I was penniless. I went out on the streets, panhandled money for liquor. Every time I sobered up, I swore not to touch another drop. But if I went a few hours without a drink, I'd begin to cry like a baby, and tremble all over.

One day after I left the asylum I met a friend of mine. He took me to the home of one of his friends. A bunch of men were sitting around, smoking cigars, telling jokes, having a great time. But I noticed they weren't drinking. When Tom told me they'd all been in the same boat as I was, I couldn't believe him. But he said, "See that fellow? He's a doctor. Drank himself out of his practice. Then he straightened out. Now he's head of a big hospital." Another big strapping fellow was a grocery clerk. Another the vice president of a big corporation. They got together five years ago. Called themselves Alcoholics Anonymous. And they'd worked out a method of recovery. One of their most important secrets was helping the other fellow. Once they began to follow it the method proved successful and helped others get on their feet. They found

they could stay away from liquor.

Gradually, those men helped me back to life. I stopped drinking. Found courage to face life once again. Today I've got a job, and I'm going to climb back to success. Recently we wrote a book called "Alcoholics Anonymous." It tells precisely how we all came back from a living death. Working on that book made me realize how much other people had suffered, how they'd gone through the same thing I did. That's why I wanted to come on this program. I wanted to tell people who are going through that torment, if they sincerely want to they can come back. Take their place in society once again!

(APPLAUSE)

(MUSIC)

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+++Message 247. The Wilmington AA Preamble
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 8:00:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

THE HISTORY OF THE WILMINGTON PREAMBLE

The Wilmington Preamble has long been surrounded by controversy and discussion of such has sparked many a debate almost from its inception in the early years of Alcoholics Anonymous. The history of our fellowship has mostly been passed from member to member over the expanse of many years; member whose very disease has a tendency to distort one's memory. Inaccuracies may prevail. The following is in no way an attempt to dispel those controversies, but an effort to establish an accurate history of the birth of the Wilmington Preamble and to keep it's true history alive for the enlightenment of future generations. Documentable corrections are welcomed.

The Wilmington Preamble's birth ties in with one of Wilmington's earliest members, Shoes L. Shoes joined the Wilmington Group and got sober in May of 1944. The following month in June, Shoes was Chairman of the group and in charge of getting speakers for their meetings. There was at this time a sportswriter in town covering the horseraces at Delaware Park. His name was Mickey M. and Shoes asked him to speak at the group's meeting. Mickey replied that he wasn't much of a speaker but that he would write something appropriate. He reportedly went back to his room at the Hotel Dupont and wrote the Wilmington Preamble as we know it and it was read the following Friday night.

Being a sportswriter, Mickey M. covered events in other towns, and while in

Baltimore covering the races at Pimlico gave the same preamble to the Baltimore Group which they also adopted as their own. Where it was actually read first is the subject of many debates but one fact remains clear, that this "Preamble" was widely accepted in Maryland and Delaware long before World Service sanctioned the shorter A.A. Preamble that is more universally accepted today.

THE WILMINGTON AA PREAMBLE

We of Alcoholics Anonymous are a group of persons for whom alcohol has become a major problem. We have banded together in a sincere effort to help ourselves and other problem drinkers recover health and maintain sobriety.

Definitions of alcoholics are many and varied. For brevity we think of an alcoholic as one whose life has become unmanageable to any degree due to the use of alcohol.

We believe that the alcoholic is suffering from a disease for which no cure has yet been found. We profess no curative powers but have formulated a plan to arrest alcoholism.

From the vast experience of our many members we have learned that successful membership demands total abstinence. Attempts at controlled drinking by the alcoholic inevitably fail.

Membership requirements demand only a sincere desire on the part of the applicant to maintain total abstinence.

There are no dues or fees in A.A.; no salaried officers. Money necessary for operating expenses is secured by voluntary contributions.

Alcoholics Anonymous does not perform miracles, believing that such powers rests only in God.

We adhere to no particular creed or religion. We do believe, however, that an appeal for help to one's own interpretation of a higher power, or God, is indispensable to a satisfactory adjustment to life's problems.

Alcoholics Anonymous is not a prohibition or temperance movement in any sense of the word. We have no criticism of the controlled drinker. We are concerned only with the alcoholic.

We attempt to follow a program of recovery which has for its chief objectives: Sobriety for ourselves; help for other alcoholics who desire it; amends for past wrongs; humility; honesty; tolerance; and spiritual growth.

We welcome and appreciate the cooperation of the medical profession and the help of the clergy.

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+++Message 248. AA and the Disease Concept of Alcoholism by Ernest Kurtz, Ph.D.
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 8:08:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

Ernie Kurtz, the author of "Not God," a must read for anyone interested in AA history, has recently written a paper entitled "Alcoholics Anonymous and the Disease Concept of Alcoholism." It will eventually be published in the Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly, however, he has generously agreed to let me bring it to the attention of the AA History Buffs list.

<http://www.doctordeluca.com/Library/SelfHelp/AA&DiseaseConcept-Kurtz.pdf>

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+++Message 249. 12 Qualities of Sponsorship
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 7:55:00 AM

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From: ny-aa@a... [3]

Does anyone know the origin of the "Twelve Qualities of Sponsorshop" article? I first saw it on the bulletin board of a group in Moorstown, New Jersey, about twelve years ago. It was a fuzzy copy of a copy of a copy of a copy with dark sploches in what used to be the white areas. Nothing on the page indicated its source.

I stayed after the meeting and wrote it on the back of an old envelope. Literally. The coffee guy helped by reading it to me so he could go home. I edited it some and have given out thousands of them. But where did it come from to begin with?

=====

Twelve Qualities of Sponsorship

1. I will not help you to stay and wallow in limbo.

2. I will help you to grow, to become more productive, by your definition.
3. I will help you become more autonomous, more loving of yourself, more excited, less sensitive, more free to become the authority for your own living.
4. I can not give you dreams or "fix you up" simply because I can not.
5. I can not give you growth, or grow for you. You must grow for yourself by facing reality, grim as it may be at times.
6. I can not take away your loneliness or your pain.
7. I can not sense your world for you, evaluate your goals for you, tell you what is best for your world; because you have your own world in which you must live.
8. I can not convince you of the necessity to make the vital decision of choosing the frightening uncertainty of growing over the safe misery of remaining static.
9. I want to be with you and know you as a rich and growing friend; yet I can not get close to you when you choose not to grow.
10. When I begin to care for you out of pity or when I begin to lose faith in you, then I am inhibiting both for you and for me.
11. You must know and understand my help is conditional. I will be with you and "hang in there" with you so long as I continue to get even the slightest hint that you are still trying to grow.
12. If you can accept this, then perhaps we can help each other to become what God meant us to be, mature adults, leaving childishness forever to the little children of the world.

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+++Message 250. Samaritan Treatment
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 12:36:00 PM

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From: "Bob McK."

Jim D., the Michigan archivist, asked me to find out the name of the detox facility at 7609 Euclid Avenue on 11/21/37 because it related to a document he had. The 1937 "Cleveland City Directory" listed it as vacant but the 1938 issue listed it as:

SAMARITAN TREATMENT THE. Harold Green-
baum MD Medical Director. John W Gruver
Business Manager. 48 Hour Institutional
Treatment for Alcoholism 7609 Euclid av. Tel
Henderson 4415

I don't know how long the survived but the Encyclopedia of Cleveland History(online as <http://ech.cwru.edu>) shows Dunbar Life insurance company relocated to that address on Aug. 1945.

I discussed this research as an aside when talking with Judit Santon, GSO Archivist. She was very interested in it and in turn sent me a couple items on Samaritan Treatment from their archives. After giving some thought as to whether there is any reason these documents should not have wider distribution, I've OCR'd them and am enclosing them here--GSO has the originals. I'd gladly xerox my copies to anyone expressing a need for them.

The first is an undated, unnamed old-timer's recollection of their experience in the Cincinnati, Ohio Samaritan Treatment [neither spelling nor grammar were edited]:

SAMARITAN INSTITUTE--- TREATMENT PROGRAM FOR ALCOHOLICS

I believe the name of the Samaritan Treatment Program you asked about is the Samaritan Institute. To the best of my knowledge there were two or three such facilities during the 1930's and 1940's. One was in Cincinnati, Ohio another I think in Florida and one somewhere in the East-- perhaps in New Jersey.

Though I lived in Montclair, New Jersey during the late 20's and early 30's--I don't remember hearing of this facility at that time.

In 1938 I attended the Samaritan Treatment Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio--which in it's day was quite popular as a 'drying out' resource. It was regularly used by those who needed occasionally to regain temporary sanity and health between bouts of drinking. They offered the aversion form of treatment-- or as it was often called 'the upchuck' method.

Patients received a physical examination on entry, and a detoxication procedure was initiated. Most alcoholic patients were in pretty rough shape.

As early as possible, patients were tapered off and injected with a drug which caused them to throw up. Patients were given their favourite beverage alcohol at regular intervals throughout the day and in between injections of the aversion drug. The throwing up process became routine-- arduous and Very disturbing to say the least.

So much so that after a while as the nurse would come down the hall with the shot glass of the favourite drink on the saucer-- the very rattling of the glass against the saucer-- could start the throwing up process-- in other words, one became conditioned against the use and almost totally against the sight of the drink.

With some, this aversion would last quite some time and with a few even permanently. However with all too many, sooner or later the alcoholic would take and try a drink. If it `stayed down,' one felt one was cured-- which was my experience after seven months.

The Schick/Shadel Institute in Seattle is essentially the same procedure. I believe the Medical Director there is Dr. Arthur Smith.

While most such programs allegedly cooperate with the Fellowship of A.A. this varies from place to place dependent upon the attitude of the current management. Some such Centres also attempt to provide counselling services to the patient and family.

Originally however, they were all known as `Drying Out' resources. Many patients would in fact make advance reservations when they planned or went on an extended drunk. The length of stay naturally depended on the condition of the patient. Though most people went through withdrawal and then the treatment within ten days to two weeks. Mind you, all these tactics are of course changing and being updated as new drugs and new methods make their appearance.

Legitimate Treatment Centres offer counselling-- referral and follow up with A.A., and point to permanent sobriety as against the temporary `drying out' or short term procedure.

In my own case, while there, I was told by the nurse, that I need no longer be `that way' any more. That something new was available-- which the nurse's brother had found in Akron, Ohio-- and it was called A.A. So that was my first contact with the Fellowship-- through the nurses brother. So at least the seed was sown and following three relapses, I found personal recovery and sobriety as of November 11, 1944.

Should you wish to get more details about this form of treatment, I suggested you write Ms. Gail Milgram, Professor/Director at Rutgers. Her address is: [none given]

The second was a copy of an early pamphlet from their national headquarters in Chicago:

LETTERHEAD

I FIRST PHASE -- HOSPITALIZATION

II SECOND PHASE -- SUPPORTIVE

III THIRD PHASE -- NON-ALCOHOLIC READJUSTMENT

IV INSPIRATIONAL SUPPORT

SAMARITAN UNITS

BALTIMORE, MD. DALLAS, TEXAS OAKLAND, CALIF.

1304 St. Paul. St. 2600 Maple Ave. 1222 Lake Shore Blvd.

Tel. Vernon 2617 Tel. 2--6266 On Lake Merritt

Tel. Hlghgate 6622

CINCINNATI, OHIO HOUSTON, TEXAS

622 Oak St. 3402 Fannin St. PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Tel. Woodburn 1972 Tel. Jackson 2--5159 Ardmore

220 E. Lancaster Ave.

CLEVELAND, OHIO LOUISVILLE, KY Tel. Ardmore 5860

7609 Euclid Ave. 402 West Ormsby Ave.

Tel. HEnderson 4415 Tel. Magno1ia 6240 PITTSBURGH; PA.

227 N. Negley Ave.

CHARLESTON, W. Va. LONG BEACH, CALIF. Tel. HI--land 7756

312 Broad St. 4201 E. 10th St.

Tel. 36--211 Tel. 85941 RICHMOND, VA.

Broad Street Road, W.

CHATTANOOGA, TENN LOS ANGELES, CALIF. Tel. 6--1556

1305 Bailey Ave. 3350 Wilshire Blvd.

Tel. 2--5453 Tel. DRexel 1242 KANSAS CITY, MO.

SUGGESTIONS TO CONVALESCENT PATIENTS

First Phase---Hospitalization

In the first phase of our treatment, it is our object to see that the patient acquires an aversion to alcohol in the average period of 48 hours, and at the same time, medications are given which we believe to be the best and most scientific yet discovered for the elimination of alcohol toxins from the system. In establishing an aversion to alcohol and eliminating the

toxins, the necessity for liquor no longer exists and the patient is able immediately to carry on his regular work on a non-alcoholic basis.

Second Phase--Supportive

The second phase of our treatment consists of 3 treatment appointments per week for the first month at our institution and one treatment appointment per week for the second month. This is called the supportive phase of the treatment. It is designed to correct glandular imbalance and to eliminate nervousness and, at the same time, psycho-therapy is resorted to in an endeavor to correct real or imaginary mental disturbances. We desire to emphatically impress upon all our patients the importance and lasting benefit to be derived from this supportive phase of our treatment.

Our experience has been that within a short time after the first phase of the treatment, the patients experience such an exhilaration by return of a hearty appetite, sound sleep, and all normal bodily functions, free and unobstructed by a craving for alcohol, that many of them feel that in their individual case the supportive treatment is not necessary. However, the bodily impairment, especially vitamin B deficiency, brought about by the ravages of alcohol still remain even though camouflaged by a return of better health and happiness than the patient has experienced for years. Every phase of our supportive treatment is carefully and scientifically worked out and is subject to variation to suit each patient's own particular needs as our physician may decide. You have paid for this supportive treatment, you will be benefited by it, and you might as well avail yourself of it to the fullest even though at the expense of some inconvenience to you.

In short, we want to render you the fullest service possible in correcting the physical disturbance and impairment brought about by an excessive and continued use of alcohol. And in this connection we feel that it is proper to warn you that neither this treatment, nor any other treatment known to medical science, can restore your system so that you can ever drink alcohol again, even in moderation. Alcohol first attacks the cortex or covering of the nervous system, including the brain. When this cortex or covering of the nerves becomes impaired, it is non-resistant to alcohol and allows alcohol to make a direct attack on the

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nervous system. Originally your nerves were protected by a fatty substance called the lipid. When this has been dissolved through the continued use of alcohol, your nerve endings lack that protection that once nature provided for you. Once weakened or impaired by the excessive use of alcohol, this protective covering of the nerve cells can never be restored to its normal functions. Even after years of abstinence, our patients, like all other alcoholics, find that any attempt to drink socially or in a normal manner results in dire consequences. You can leave it alone altogether, but you

will never be able to drink in a controlled manner.

Furthermore, the aversion to alcohol which you have acquired by reason of the first phase of our treatment will tend to wear off in time, depending upon the individual--possibly a few months in some instances and years in others. And you must be prepared to be on your guard and in fact take definite steps to overcome that mental, emotional, or nervous phase of your nature which tends to induce one to again take up drink, even though there is no physical craving for it and notwithstanding the knowledge that the protective covering of your nervous system is gone and that alcohol will react as a deadly poison to you.

Third Phase--Non-alcoholic Readjustment

This brings up the third phase of your treatment--the readjustment of your life on a non-alcoholic basis. Of necessity this is a phase over which this institution has no control except to give you the benefit of a few helpful suggestions derived from our years of experience in treating alcoholics,

For a long time, many years perhaps, depending upon the individual case, alcoholic indulgence with all its attendant frustration and handicap to your social and business affairs, has been the most important thing in your life. You now have reached a stage where you have no physical craving for drink and if you are honest with yourself and sincerely desire a complete recovery you will come to the conclusion that you are nevertheless a potential alcoholic and that you can never again touch alcohol in any form, even in moderation. However, to abruptly change your accustomed method and manner of life from an "alcoholic" to a completely "non-alcoholic" basis is not an easy task. To be successful you must of necessity find new interests and purposes in life to occupy your mind and idle time to such an extent that the old "alcoholic" order of things is completely crowded out.

Whereas in the past, through the medium of alcoholic indulgence, you have found release and escape from the realities of life, you must now subject yourself to rigid self-analysis and attempt to discover and correct the weakness in your mental, spiritual, or emotional armor which in the past caused you to

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seek solace and escape in drink. You will probably be able to trace the roots of this tendency toward alcohol back to some un-fortunate experience or faulty training in your early environment, either as a child or in early adult life before your nervous system and emotions became stabilized. Perhaps as a child your parents were too harsh or too lenient; perhaps for any number of reasons you have developed an inferiority complex; perhaps you have suffered severe frustration in school or in social or economic life. Whatever the cause, you no doubt are in sane manner emotionally immature or one-sided, so that there is a tendency and urge upon you when the going gets

rough, or life seems dull, to want to escape; and in the past you have found that escape, temporarily at least, in alcoholic indulgence. Try to discover and put your finger on that "escape" tendency of your makeup so that you can either overcome it or at least find a better and more satisfactory means of gratifying it than that which alcohol in the past has supplied.

Many of our patients are making splendid progress in readjusting their lives on a non-alcoholic basis through association with a group of ex-alcoholics known as "Alcoholics Anonymous". They stress the spiritual values of life and offer to each other a fellowship of sympathetic understanding and helpfulness which we believe to be sound and worthy of the highest praise. While Samaritan Treatment is not connected in any way with "Alcoholics Anonymous" except through our interest in the welfare of many of our patients who have joined the group, we will be glad to put you in touch with some of the members of the local group if you are interested.

One of our patients in particular who was a heavy drinker for twenty years and finally found himself upon the brink of des-truction is now accomplishing a wonderful "come-back" to a normal, happy and successful life through his association with "Alcoholics Anonymous". He has taken up an early hobby, long neglected through alcoholic indulgence, of collecting a scrap book of inspirational gems of literature. He has submitted a partial result of his work which we feel contains such potential help and inspiration to all our patients that we reprint it herewith and trust that it will be helpful or at least interesting to you during your hours of convalescence.

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+++Message 251. Why we were chosen
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 12:42:00 PM

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From: "Jim Blair"

A few weeks back a question was posted regarding the authorship of a piece of A.A. literature titled "Why we were Chosen." Don B., an Illinois historian sent me the full text transcript of the talk from which the literature is an excerpt.
Jim B.

Address by Judge John T.
4th Anniversary of the Chicago Group
October 5, 1943

Tonight marks the fourth anniversary of the founding of the Chicago Group. In some respects the word "anniversary" is not a satisfactory term to describe this occasion for it carries the implication that a goal, a congratulatory period, a resting point on a journey has been reached. The program which we have entered upon really has no terminus, for it involves a continuous striving for improvement. Congratulatory periods tend to smugness, resting periods to retrogression. This program is not to be measured in years. It is timeless in every sense except day to day, or even more precisely, now!

The history of alcoholic addiction is marked by an unwillingness or inability to live in the present. For it the morbid past has an unholy attraction and the uncertain future is filled with vague forebodings. The hope of the Alcoholic, the real tangible hope of the Alcoholic is in the present, now is the acceptable time, the past is beyond recall -- the future is as uncertain as life itself. Only the now is ours.

As I look about me tonight I see many new faces. Some are here present for the first time, some who have been here before, and having failed in their quest of sobriety have returned. To such of you the knowledge that some of us have been dry since the beginning of this group four years ago may incline to feelings of strangeness or timidity, and you should feel neither strange nor timid with us who share a common infirmity. To you bit a few days or a few weeks removed from the misery and remorse of a recent spree, four years of sobriety may seem an eternity bit there is no such thing as seniority in a timeless program. We, who thru the Grace of God have stayed dry, are at the most, but twenty-four hours in the vanguard.

True, we have the advantage of a better understanding of our problem. Day upon day, day after day, our sobriety has resulted in the formation of new habits which makes the matter of staying so a less fearsome ordeal than it was in the beginning. We have had the advantage of association with other Alcoholics which has taken us from our old haunts and tended to remove, in a measure, the occasions of alcoholic suggestion. We older ones in our daily attempts to live according to the twelve steps of our program have made start, at least, toward eradicating disconcerting personality defects. But, important as all these considerations are, the great step, toward our regeneration was accomplished in that moment when we admitted we were powerless over alcohol and made a decision to turn our will, and lives over to God, as we understood Him. That act of resignation was an act of the then present moment, and that Source is as available to you now as it was to us then.

The days pass quickly by and time seems unimportant. A little while ago there was Earl, then there were two and now there are hundreds. This group is not a result of mass production, this pro-gram cannot be sold. It can be lived a practiced and it is in the power of example that its first attraction lies. Each of us presents the unselfish act, or series of acts,

of some other one or ones. We were reached individually by other men like ourselves, who maybe for the first time in their lives had performed an unselfish act.

Into our regeneration went no thought of individual profit on the part of our sponsors, or greed or gain. We are the products of the most refined charity that men can bestow upon one another. The recognition on the part of others of our true dignity as men and their willingness to do unto us as they would have themselves done unto.

The thing that has happened in the short life of this group is difficult of comprehension. Jack Alexander, the brilliant author of the Saturday Evening Post article, says that only through the medium of fiction can it be adequately depicted. Let us try to appraise it by an imaginary meeting. Let us assume that four years ago tonight a group of the most learned medical men in the city of Chicago were gathered together to discuss each of our alcoholic case histories. As they reviewed them carefully, one by one, all followed an identical pattern. There were those who for years drank as much as two quarts of whiskey a day. There were others who drank daily for years to the point of intoxication, and others who would go months without so much as a glass of beer. There were those who had voluntarily subjected themselves repeatedly to numerous so-called "cures"; some who voluntarily had themselves committed to psychopathic institutions and insane asylums; others who had experienced no more severe distress than an agonizing case of jitters. But all were the same in this respect: that, having started to drink, we had no self-control that would indicate a stopping point.

The records before this imaginary group of eminent scientists proved we were alcoholics, many chronic, some acute! They showed long and unsuccessful hospitalizations, psychopathic commitments and psychiatric investigations all without a single successful result. The pronouncement of that august Tribunal of physicians was that most of the cases were beyond the reach of science, and that the remainder soon would be. After they had made this solemn pronouncement, let us assume that a shadowy figure appeared and in an unearthly voice said: "Notwithstanding the findings of this distinguished group, in four short years these hundreds of cases that you have pronounced incurable shall, with the help of God, be made whole." Around that room would be exchanged scornful and doubtful glances and these unbelieving medical men would say as did Thomas of old: "When we see we shall believe." Yet each of us here present tonight is living proof that the prophecy of the imaginary voice has been fulfilled; without the drama of the miracle but just as certainly and just as attributable to the God of whom the imaginary voice spoke.

The thing which has happened in the Chicago group, which is happening all over the country, has come about so gradually and through such material mediums as to pass unrecognized; even by us, for the moral miracle it really is. Instead of suspending the natural law by direct intervention, God in His

wisdom has selected a group of men to be the purveyors of His goodness. In selecting them through whom to bring about this phenomenon He went not to the proud, the mighty, the famous or the brilliant. He went to the humble, to the sick, to the unfortunate - he went to the drunkard, the so-called weakling of the world. Well might He have said to us: Into your weak and feeble hands I have entrusted a Power beyond estimate. To you has been given that which has been denied the most learned of your fellows. Not to scientists or statesmen, not to wives or mothers, not even to my priests and ministers have I given this gift of healing other alcoholics, which I entrust to you. It must be used unselfishly. It carries with it grave responsibility. No day can be too long, no demands upon your time can be too urgent, no case too pitiable, no task too hard, no effort too great. It must be used with Tolerance for I have restricted its application to no race, no creed and no denomination. Personal criticism you must expect, lack of appreciation will be common, ridicule will be your lot, your motives will be misjudged. Success will not always attend your efforts in your work with other alcoholics. You must be prepared for adversity, for what men call adversity is the ladder you must use to ascend the rungs toward Spiritual perfection, and remember in the exercise of this power I shall not exact of you beyond your capabilities.

You are not selected because of exceptional talents and be careful always if success attends your efforts, not to ascribe to personal superiority, that to which you can lay claim only by virtue of My gift. If I had wanted learned men to accomplish this mission the power would have been entrusted to the physician and scientist. If I had wanted eloquent men there would have been many anxious for the assignment, for talk is the easiest used of all talents with which I have endowed mankind. If I had wanted scholarly men the world is filled with better qualified than you who would have been available. You were selected because you have been the outcasts of the world and your long experience as a drunkard has made, or should make you humbly alert to the cries of distress that comes from the lonely hearts of alcoholics everywhere. Keep ever in mind the admission that you made on the day of your profession into A.A., namely that you are powerless and that it was only with your willingness to turn your life and will into My keeping, that relief came to you.

Think not, that because that you have been dry for one year or two years, or ten years, that it is the result of your unaided efforts. The help which has kept you normal will keep you so just as long as you live this program, which I have mapped out for you. Beware of the pride which comes from growth, the power of numbers and of invidious comparisons between yourselves; or of your organization with other organizations whose success depends upon members power, money and position. These material things are no part of your creed. The success of material organizations arises out of the strength of their individual members; the success of yours from a common helplessness. The power of material organizations comes from the pooling of joint assets; yours from the union of mutual liabilities. Appeal for

membership in material organizations is based upon a boastful recital of their accomplishments; yours upon the humble admission of weakness; the motto of the successful commercial enterprise is: "He profits most who serves best"; yours: "He serves best who seeks no profit." The wealth of material organizations when they take their inventory is measured by what they have left; yours when you take moral inventory by what you have given.

If these things had been said to us there are those upon whom the injunctions might lie heavy. They might seem austere and difficult commands but this would only be because we have not realized or have forgotten the critical nature of our infirmities. Physical disease requires drastic measures for its cure, in many cases delicate and dangerous surgery. Our conditions when we came into this group was even more serious than that of one who goes to a hospital with a gangrenous limb. For, after all, the limit of his risk is his life while we risked life and in addition things more precious, sanity, honor, self-respect. We cannot expect to reach a problem so deep-seated, that science deemed it unsolvable, with as little effort as is required for the removal of a decayed tooth. It requires the doing of difficult things including self-discipline and above all unswerving obedience to a conscience. It is part of God's therapy that man cooperate; a cooperation requiring high moral courage in the performance of difficult tasks.

The aphorism "Man does not live by bread alone", is more than poetry. It is the utterance of a great philosophical truth. There is a part of man that is animal. That part requires that he have bread, and that in quest thereof he be fitted to take his place in a highly competitive society. He must work, he must play and he must laugh. But there is another part of man which is Spiritual and that part can only be properly developed by the exercises and restraints which conscience dictates. Unless man's Spiritual yearnings are developed as well as his physical and mental abilities, he is unbalanced and incomplete and a prey to those capital enemies of all alcoholics: fear, loneliness, discouragement and futility.

And so as I draw to the end of these remarks, you must think I have forgotten Earl and his anniversary. These things I have said to you have been discussed many times with Earl. Often have I heard him emphasize that no individual is responsible for this group. Earl was the leaven selected by wise and benevolent Providence to germinate this group into being. He used the material entrusted to him with patience, tolerance and understanding but never for one moment has he felt that this group is his personal accomplishment, or that he was more important to its well-being than the most recently arrived alcoholic. The most that he would care to hear me say about him is that he has tried to be a worthy instrumentality to carry out a Divine mandate.

The wise, kindly man may steer us clear of many mistakes but even he makes some. But in spite of mistakes, in spite of errors, even in the absence of

leadership such as that with which we have been blessed, this work will continue as long as the alcoholic recognizes his helplessness and decides to confide his destiny to God. In conclusion I would like to read a letter which I received this evening from one of the early members of this group who says about the group and about Earl that which I think, deep in our hearts, all of us feel:

"Dear John:

As I told you the other day before I left, the discussion I listened to briefly in Staley's last Friday infused me with the desire to add my two cents' worth (in this case sixteen cents, air mail, special delivery) to the meeting at which the fourth anniversary of the Chicago group will be observed.

There is a strong temptation in all of us, I think , to rhapsodize over the individual net gains in our lives, which we attribute to the blessings that flow from the application of A.A. principles. These individual net gains, measured in the recovery of jobs, in the restoration of happy family life, in the rediscovery of self-respect, are fine in themselves, including as they do some literal miracles, but I rather think that the Chicago group, of which it was my happy privilege to be an early member, represents more than the sum total of all these individual net gains.

As the focal point of the innumerable and necessarily unknown processes of individual spiritual development by the members, the group itself has been the graceful means for many to catch a fleeting but convincing glimpse of the Infinite. That in itself makes the group a profound thing.

This, I'm afraid, is a little vague. But the fact that the group has been what it is is not attributable to Providence divorced from the individual, but to sound, tolerant, and loving minds taking care of the details for Providence. I think the application to Earl is too obvious to need further elaboration. If, to save Earl embarrassment, not a word should be uttered about him Tuesday night, the feeling that I have at a Chicago meeting, a feeling I know is widely shared, that Christ is in approving attendance there, - that feeling is eulogy enough."

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+++Message 253. Sam Shoemaker on A.A.
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 8:04:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

I don't remember who originally sent this to me. I have it for about two years. Like many others who tell of early AA history there are a few minor items which I believe to be incorrect, but they are insignificant.

Nancy

WHAT THE CHURCH HAS TO LEARN FROM ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Sam Shoemaker -- c. 1955. Exact date and source unknown.

"God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong." I Corinthians 1:26

During the weekend of the Fourth of July last, I attended one of the most remarkable conventions I ever expect to attend. It was a gathering in St. Louis of about five thousand members of the movement called Alcoholics Anonymous. The occasion was the celebration of their twentieth anniversary, and the turning over freely and voluntarily of the management and destiny of that great movement by the founders and 'old-timers' to a board which represents the fellowship as a whole.

As I lived and moved among these men and women for three days, I was moved as I have seldom been moved in my life. It happens that I have watched the unfolding of this movement with more than usual interest, for its real founder and guiding spirit, Bill W., found his initial spiritual answer at Calvary Church in New York, when I was rector there, in 1935. Having met two men, unmistakable alcoholics, who had found release from their difficulty, he was moved to seek out the same answer for himself. But he went further. Being of a foraging and inquiring mind, he began to think there was some general law operating here, which could be made to work, not in two men's lives only, but in two thousand or two million. He set to work to find out what it was. He consulted psychiatrists, doctors, clergy and recovered alcoholics to discover what it was.

The first actual group was not in New York, but in Akron, Ohio. Bill was spending a weekend there in a hotel. The crowd was moving towards the bar. He was lonely and felt danger assailing him. He consulted the church-directory in the hotel lobby, and found the name of a local clergyman and his church. He called him on the telephone and said, "I am an alcoholic down here at the hotel. The going is a little hard just now. Have you anybody you think I might meet and talk to?" He gave him the name of a woman who belonged to one of the great tire-manufacturing families. He called her, she invited him out at once and said she had a man she wanted to have meet him. While he was on his way, she called Dr. Bob S. and his wife, Anne. Dr. Bob said he'd give her five minutes. He stayed five hours and told Bill, "You're the only man I've ever seen with the answer to alcoholism." They invited Bill over from the hotel to stay at their house. And there was begun, twenty years ago, the first actual

Alcoholics Anonymous group.

The number of them now is beyond count. Some say there are 160,000 to 200,000 recovered alcoholics, but nobody knows how many extend beyond this into the fringes of the unknown. They say that each alcoholic holds within the orbit of his problem an average of fourteen persons who are affected by it. This means that conservatively two and a half million people's lives are different because of the existence of Alcoholics Anonymous. There is hardly a city or town or even hamlet now where you cannot find a group, strong and well-knit, or struggling in its infancy. Prof. Austin McCormick, of Berkeley, California, former Commissioner of Correction in the city of New York, who was also with us at the St. Louis Convention, said once in my hearing that AA may "prove to be one of the greatest movements of all time." That was years ago. Subsequently facts support his prophecy.

On the Sunday morning of the convention, I was asked to talk to them, together with Fr. Edward Dowling S. J., a wonderful Roman Catholic priest who has done notable service for AA in interpreting it to his people, and Dr. Jim S., a most remarkable colored physician of Washington, on the spiritual aspects of the AA program. They are very generous to non-alcoholics, but I should have preferred that it be a bona fide alcoholic that did the speaking.

In the course of what I said to them, I remarked that I thought it had been wise for AA to confine its activity to alcoholics. But, I added, "I think we may see an effect of AA on medicine, on psychiatry, on correction, on the ever-present problem of human nature; and not least on the Church. AA indirectly derived much of its inspiration from the Church.

Now perhaps the time has come for the Church to be reawakened and revitalized by those insights and practices found in AA."

I think some of you may be a little horrified at this suggestion. I fear you will be saying to yourself, "What have we, who have always been decent people, to learn from a lot of reconstructed drunks?" And perhaps you may thereby reveal to yourself how very far you are from the spirit of Christ and the Gospel, and how very much in need of precisely the kind of checkup that may come to us from AA. If I need a text for what I say to you, there is one ready to hand in: 1 Corinthians 1:26, "... God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong." I need not remind you that there is a good deal of sarcasm in that verse; because it must be evident that anything God can use is neither foolish nor weak, and that if we consider ourselves wise and strong, we may need to go to school to those we have called foolish and weak.

The first thing I think the Church needs to learn from AA is that nobody gets anywhere till he recognizes a clearly defined need. These people do not come to AA to get made a little better. They do not come because the best people are doing it. They come because they are desperate. They are not ladies and

gentlemen looking for a religion, they are utterly desperate men and women in search of redemption. Without what AA gives, death stares them in the face. With what AA gives them, there is life and hope. There are not a dozen ways, there are not two ways, there is one way; and they find it, or perish. AA's each and all have a definite, desperate need. They have the need, and they are ready to tell somebody what it is if they see the least chance that it can be met.

Is there anything as definite for you or me, who may happen not to be alcoholics? If there is, I am sure that it lies in the realm of our conscious withholding of the truth about ourselves from God and from one another, by pretending that we are already good Christians. Let me here quote a member of AA who has written a most amazing book: his name is Jerome Ellison, and the book is "Report to the Creator." In this (p. 210) he says, "The relief of being accepted can never be known by one who never thought himself unaccepted. I hear of 'good Christian men and women' belonging to 'fine old church families.' There were no good Christians in the first church, only sinners. Peter never let himself or his hearers forget his betrayal in the hour the cock crow. James, stung by the memory of his years of stubborn resistance, warned the church members: 'Confess your faults to one another.' That was before there were fine old church families. Today the last place where one can be candid about one's faults is in church. In a bar, yes, in a church, no. I know; I've tried both places."

Let that sting you and me just as it should, and make us miserable with our church Pharisaim till we see it is just as definite and just as hideous as anybody's drunkenness can ever be, and a great deal more really dangerous.

The second thing the Church needs to learn from AA is that men are redeemed in a life-changing fellowship. AA does not expect to let anybody who comes in stay as he is.

They know he is in need and must have help. They live for nothing else but to extend and keep extending that help. Like the Church, they did not begin in glorious Gothic structures, but in houses or caves in the earth -- wherever they could get a foot-hold, meet people, and gather. It never occurs to an AA that it is enough for him to sit down and polish his spiritual nails all by himself, or dust off his soul all by himself, or spend a couple of minutes praying each day all by himself. His soul gets kept in order by trying to help other people get their souls in order, with the help of God. At once a new person takes his place in this redeeming, life-changing fellowship. He may be changed today, and out working tomorrow -- no long, senseless delays about giving away what he has got.

He's ready to give the little he has the moment it comes to him. The fellowship that redeemed him will wither and die unless he and others like him get in and keep that fellowship moving and growing by reaching others.

Recently I heard an AA say that he could stay away from his Veteran's meeting, his Legion, or his Church, and nobody would notice it. But if he stayed away

from his AA meeting, his telephone would begin to ring the next day!

A "life-changing fellowship" sounds like a description of the Church. It is of the ideal Church. But the actual? Not one in a hundred is like this. The layman say this is the minister's job, and the ministers say it is the evangelist's job, and everybody finds a rationalized excuse for not doing what every Christian ought to be doing, i.e., bringing other people into the redeeming, life-changing fellowship.

The third thing the Church needs to learn from AA is the necessity for definite personal dealing with people. A.A.'s know all the stock excuses -- they've used them themselves and heard them a hundred times. All the blame put on someone else: "my temperament; is different; I've tried it and it doesn't work for me; I'm not really so bad, I just slip a little sometimes." They've heard them all, and know them for the rationalized pack of lies they are. They constitute, taken together, the Gospel of Hell and Failure. I've heard them laboring with one another, now patient as a mother, now savage as a prize-fighter, now careful in explanation, now pounding a heavy personal challenge, but always knowing the desperate need and the sure answer.

Are we in the Church like that? Have you ever been drastically dealt with by anybody? Have you ever dared to be drastic with anybody? We are so official, so polite, so ready to accept ourselves and each other at face value. I went for years before ever I met a man that dared get at my real needs, create a situation in which I could be honest with him, and hold me to a specific Christian commitment and decision. One can find kindness and even good advice in the Church. That is not all men need. They need to be helped to face themselves as they really are. The AA people see themselves just as they are.

I think many of us in the Church see ourselves as we should like to appear to others, not as we are before God. We need drastic personal dealing and challenge. Who is ready and trained to give it to us? How many of us have ever taken a "fearless moral inventory" of ourselves, and dared make the depth of our need known to any other human being?

This gets at the pride which is the hindrance and sticking-point for so many of us, and which, for most of us in the Church, has never even been recognized, let alone faced or dealt with.

The fourth thing the Church needs to learn from A. A. is the necessity for a real change of heart, a true conversion. As we come Sunday after Sunday, year after year, we are supposed to be in a process of transformation. Are we? The AA's are. At each meeting there are people seeking and in conscious need. Everybody is pulling for the people who speak, and looking for more insight and help. They are pushed by their need. They are pulled by the inspiration of others who are growing. They are a society of the "before and after" with a clear line between the old life and the new. This is not the difference between sinfulness and perfection, it is the difference between accepted

wrong-doing
and the genuine beginning of a new way of life.

How about us? Again I quote Jerome Ellison, in his report to God (page 205)
:"I began to see that many of the parishioners did not really want to find
You, because finding You would change them from their habitual ways, and they
did not endure the pain of change."

For our churchman-like crimes of bland, impenetrable pose, I offer shame..." I
suppose that the sheer visibility of the alcoholic problem creates a kind of
enforced, honesty; but surely if we are exposed again and again to God, to
Christ, to the Cross, there should be a breaking down of our pride and
unwillingness to change. We should know by now that this unwillingness
multiplied by thousands and tens of thousands, is what is the matter with the
Church, and what keeps it from being what God means it to be on earth. The
change must begin somewhere. We know it ought to begin in us.

One of the greatest things the Church should learn from AA is the need people
have for an exposure to living Christian experience. In thousands of places,
alcoholics (and others) can go and hear recovered alcoholics speak about their
experiences and watch the process of new life and take place before their
eyes. There you have it, the need and the answer to the need, right before
your eyes. They say that their public relations are based, not on promotion,
but on attraction. This attraction begins when you see people with problems
like your own, hear them speaking freely of the answers they are finding, and
realize that such honesty and such change is exactly what you need yourself.

No ordinary service of worship in the Church can possibly do this. We need to
supplement what we do now by the establishment of informal companies where
people who are spiritually seeking can see how faith takes hold in other
lives, how the characteristically Christian experience comes to them. Some
churches are doing this, but not nearly enough of them. One I know where on
Sunday evenings laymen and women speak simply about what has happened to them
spiritually: it is drawing many more by attraction. This needs to be
multiplied by the tens of thousands, and the Church itself awakened.

As I looked out over that crowd of five thousand in Kiel Auditorium in St.
Louis, I said to myself, "Would that the Church were like this -- ordinary men
and women with great need who have found a great Answer, and do not hesitate
to make it known wherever they can -- a trained army of enthusiastic, humble,
human workers whose efforts make life a different thing for other people!"

Let us ask God to forgive our blindness and laziness and complacency, and
through these re-made people to learn our need for honesty, for conversion,
for fellowship and for honest witness!

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+++Message 254. Contribution by Silkworth
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 12:56:00 PM

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From: "Jim Blair"

I put together the following doc to show how a contribution by Dr. W.D. Silkworth was incorporated into our basic text.
Jim Blair

"MADE A DECISION"

Step Three - Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

The following bit of information may provide insight into the true meaning of the term "made a decision."

Dr. William D. Silkworth in an article titled "Reclamation of the Alcoholic," which was published in the Medical Record, April 21, 1937, stated the following -

"Our approach is somewhat as follows: We endeavor to impress upon the patient that his condition is physical and not mental as regards the drug, that the reasons he gives for drinking (social and financial problems, escape from a feeling of inferiority, etc.) are but alibis. He has a medical problem to face, that a law of nature is working inexorably in his case as in a diabetic. We define allergy and interpret its characteristics, until we are sure he has grasped the fundamental nature of the case. He can appreciate that only by entirely avoiding the toxic factor, alcohol, can he avoid an "attack" of alcoholism.

If we can bring our detoxicated and cell normalized patient who has lost his craving for alcohol, to this viewpoint, he will be in a position to make a decision to forego its use. Without quibbling over words, we wish to differentiate between a decision and a resolution, or declaration, of which the alcoholic has probably made many. A resolution is an expression of a momentary emotional desire to reform. Its influence lasts only until he has an impulse to take a drink. A decision on the other hand, is the expression of a mental conviction, based on an intelligent conception of his condition. After a resolution is made the individual must fight constantly with himself; the old environmental forces are still arrayed against him, and he finally succumbs to his old means of escape. However, if he has made a decision, through understanding of facts appealing to his intelligence, he has changed his entire attitude. He can go back to his former environment, mix with his drinking friends (without concern, because his craving has been

counteracted), and meet his worries and disappointments as a normal person: he is free from all the emotional restrictions that formerly activated him to drink. No will power is needed because he is not tempted. We have seen this reasoning operate successfully in many cases, even as we have seen many failures following what we term resolutions or declarations.

MORAL PSYCHOLOGY

We believe that this decision is in the nature of an inspiration. The patient knows he has reached a lasting conclusion, and experiences a sense of great relief. These individuals, introverts for the most part, whose interests center entirely in themselves, once they have made their decision, frequently ask how they can help others."

The question to be answered is how did Bill W. incorporate this concept of "making a decision" into the book Alcoholics Anonymous.

The answer is clearly stated on page 60 of the book "Alcoholics Anonymous" and reads as follows:

"Our description of the alcoholic, the chapter to the agnostic, and our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:

- (a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.
- (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.
- (c) That God could and would if He were sought.

Being convinced, we were at Step Three, which is that we decided to turn our will and our lives over to God as we understood Him.

I believe that Dr. Silkworth's contribution to this act of surrender can be seen clearly.

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+++Message 255. 1940s northwest Illinois A.A.
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 1:09:00 PM

II
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From:NM Olson

The following was received from Rick T, the Area 20 Archivist. He has given me permission to post it.

Nancy

A.A. in Illinois, northwest and west of Chicago, grew in the early 1940s due to the efforts of members who would be called "Loners" today. In one town located on the Rock River in Whiteside County (about 60 miles east of the Mississippi River), Ken S. of Sterling, Illinois, began an A.A. group in the winter of 1943 that first met in his home with three local members. Ken had gotten sober in Chicago in 1940 and soon moved to Sterling, employed as a foreman with a steel wire manufacturer. For three years he regularly made Chicago meetings and brought local "prospects" to Chicago's "Big Meeting" on Tuesday nights. The traveling, either by car or train, was probably an all-day affair for the long trip across the state.

Ken S. is considered the earliest member, within the current Northern Illinois Area 20 boundaries, to carry the A.A. message in Illinois west of Chicago. His name was listed with Alcoholic Foundation directories from 1943 on, and he also kept up his correspondence with the Chicago Central Office (currently the Chicago Area Service Office, which has the distinction of being the first "Intergroup-type" office of early 1941 and today serves as the Area 19 office).

As groups grew in early A.A., the Sterling Group moved out of Ken's home within a short time, and is credited with branching out and starting groups in a half dozen towns in northwestern Illinois and eastern Iowa. It appears that keeping the linkage with the rest of A.A. was key to the group's success. Ken, as Secretary for the Sterling Group, was the contact for correspondence and twelfth step work.

The group still meets on Tuesday nights.

The following piece was written by Ken S. in 1943 as the last page of a six-page observation on his A.A. recovery. It was placed in the Area 20 Archives in 1995 as a result of research for the Area's history project.

"An Alcoholics Anonymous History in Northern Illinois Area 20" is published and copyrighted 1996 by NIA, Ltd. and the piece is used with permission.

Ken S.' writing reflects the style of 1940's Alcoholics Anonymous members, and it's shared with "aahistorybuffs" from the Appendix of the 100-page booklet.

Please respect the copyright and list the source if any group member chooses to print it elsewhere, "used with permission."

The history will be placed on the Area's web site before the end of the year, but before then, feel free to link to the site: <http://www.aa-nia.org>.

Right now the booklet is considered as "out of print," and a reason to place

it on the web site, to pass it on.

My belief is that Ken S.' observations are as valid today as fifty-seven years ago!

Yours in the Fellowship,
Rick T., Area 20 Archivist

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April 24, 1943...

What have we learned as we passed through the various stages of A.A. absorption?

What are the things that make today so worthwhile?

What has been given us for future guidance?

FIRST, that through God's guidance and Grace, it is possible to live in perfect sobriety, enjoying a greater than normal share of happiness and understanding.

SECOND, that in God we have an ever available haven when troubled or goaded by fear or despair -- an ever ready guidance, if we but seek a willingness to follow.

THIRD, that the spirit of God is an ever-present force, understanding, forgiving, loving, and guiding those who seek direction and try to live in accordance with his teachings -- teachings upon which is founded our A.A. program of Faith, Tolerance, Humility, and Service.

FOURTH, we have learned, too, that the program so simply stated provides a straight and undeviating pathway to our goal. We need no further guides, guards, bosses, or directors. The way is open, it's up to us.

FIFTH, that the program goes beyond meetings -- beyond our own little alcoholic world and our homes, when practiced in all our affairs.

SIXTH, we are awakened to a realization that we have and must assume obligations and responsibilities -- that we owe so much and can repay so little.

SEVENTH, we find that work is the motivating power of our lives. It vitalizes Faith, produces accomplishment. Dryness without work is hunger partially satisfied -- Faith without work spells failure.

EIGHTH, we acknowledge that the rights of others must be considered first.

There is little danger that we shall forget to look to our own.

NINTH, we also find that the "I and We" judge and jury attitude has no place in a program of humility.

TENTH, that resentments include more than well nursed grudges of long standing. The word has many synonyms including: anger, animosity, irascibility, and wrathful indignation.

ELEVENTH, we have found that one of the hardest tasks is to be unselfishly truthful to ourselves, and we have seen truth reborn in the statements and actions of fellow members.

TWELFTH, and most important, we have discovered a capacity for true thankfulness, for the innumerable things large and small that are our daily lot.

So, with meditation on past and present, we move on through life, secure in the admonition to look up to where there is an intelligence from which comes all intellect -- recognize the source which sustains us and gives us courage and self-reliance.

II
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+++Message 257. The "God concept" in A.A.
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 12:45:00 PM

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From: "Jim Blair"

The following article by George Little may be of interest to some as it deals with the God concept in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Jim Blair

THE GOD CONCEPT IN
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
By Rev. George A. Little, D.D.

About the Author

In January 1940, Rev. George A. Little, D.D., then a fifty-six year old Minister of The United Church of Canada in Toronto, Ontario, happened to read a review of the book Alcoholics Anonymous written by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick.
Dr. Little ordered a copy of the Big Book and then six more copies. He

attended the Yale School of Alcohol Studies in 1941. As it was difficult to import books into Canada, Dr. Little was granted the distribution rights to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous in Canada*.

On January 13, 1943, Rev. Little and a friend, Rev. Price gathered six alcoholics at the Little Denmark Restaurant on Bay Street in Toronto and held a meeting. It was successful and a second meeting was held the following week. On January 28, 1943 the group moved into the Metropolitan United Church and meetings have continued at this site on and off up to the present.

This is how A.A. came to Canada and how a non-alcoholic assisted in the starting of the fellowship.

Religion in Life, Vol. 18(1):25-33, 1948

Alcoholics Anonymous, which now has 1,700 groups with 70,000 members and influence far beyond its membership, is a spiritual movement, a faith cure for alcoholism. Men and women find that they have been trying to live without God, and then they discover how to live with God. That gives a different set to the sails. Or, as one expressed it, the roots of his mind reached down and grasped a new soil. It is a leap of faith to be able to believe that there is a God personal to oneself.

The distinctive novelty is that each alcoholic is allowed to choose his own concept of God. There is full liberty of belief and no end to the varieties of belief. Therein Alcoholics Anonymous differs from the churches which require belief in certain sets of dogma. An alcoholic refuses to accept these ready-made: he wants to make his own. In A.A. he is encouraged to do so, with this rider, that he obey the Higher Power as he understands it. That is intriguing. That places the responsibility on the alcoholic. He is on trial, not an organization, a book, a creed, or a sacrament. Can he act according to his own faith?

Every person has some belief, more or less vague, in a creative, life-giving force, a universal mind or oversoul. Alcoholics Anonymous begins by thinking of this as a Power rather than a Person. It works unseen as electricity, may be thought of as gravitation, evolution, or growth. Thought is a power, good will is a power, trust is a power. Trying to visualize the Higher Power is a hinderance rather than a help. Formulas are of little value. Like the wind, the spirit can be felt but not seen. Instead of expecting ecstasies, visions, trances, one finds God in what is; contact may be made through gratitude.

Surrender to the Higher Power is not difficult for alcoholics, because for years they have surrendered to a lower power. It gives a lift, euphoria, escape, release, cessation from fear and worry, a lightening of reality, forgetfulness, stupor, and sleep. In time, however, there are craving and compulsion, memory blanks, shakes, sweats, headaches, and hangovers. One man after a bout felt as though he had seven skulls. In devotion to this autocratic tyrant alcoholics will surrender thought, time, money, health, friends, and vocation. To surrender to the Higher Power involves no more

exacting a demand than the surrender they have made to alcohol, perhaps over a drinking period of twenty years.

Experienced A.A. practitioners, while admitting that they are only amateur psychologists, are wise enough not to begin by demanding beliefs. They work on thoughts, desires, attitudes, relationships, purposes, and habits. They are agreed that the root trouble is in the thinking, not the drinking. At one meeting of a rather intellectual group the drink problem was not directly mentioned. Half a dozen speakers rang the changes on freedom from fears, surrender of resentments, cultivation of good will, positive help to others, building up a sense of dependence upon the Higher Power. When the inner life is brought under discipline the outer conduct is largely self-regulated.

The program of recovery is absorbed rather than learned, caught rather than taught. Listening to the speakers, private conversations with alcoholics who are now happily and contentedly sober, reading the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and pamphlet literature, and picking up fragments of truth will produce a transforming change. This may be sudden or gradual, and there is little concern as to which. Often the slow recoveries prove to be very sure, but the ladder of rehabilitation has these rungs, not necessarily in this order: honesty, humility, tolerance, concern for others, inner contentment, radiant happiness, a new standard of values, faith. Religious people would describe this as conversion: A.A. 's are content to speak of a personality change. No one is more surprised at the transformation than the alcoholic himself. Like the lady in the fairy tale he is inclined to say "This is none of I." An army man, a heavy drinker for thirty-five years, had the temperament of a sergeant-major even after he became a colonel. Now he is mellow, tender, as sacrificial as once severe. Before a group of medical men he said, "I have had a personality change." A psychiatrist checked him by saying, "My dear fellow, you can't have a personality change." "Well, at least I'm under new management," replied the A.A.

Spiritual power is frequently found on the lower levels of mysticism. The inner voice is really a mentor. An inebriate who had panhandled all over North America had an obsession against religion, fearing that it meant letters of fire in the sky, voices from the clouds, or a dramatic emotional upheaval. It was suggested to him that he spend five minutes each morning planning his day with his conscience, how he would use his time and spend his money, the mood in which he would meet his family, the sense of responsibility he would have in his work. He discovered that as soon as he listened, the inner voice spoke. He found he could be spiritual in a very practical way without seeing visions or dreaming dreams.

A high-strung man with perplexing business cares took liquor to get to sleep at night. In time he would go to sleep with a full jug of wine at his bedside:

later he would waken with an empty wine jug in bed with him. One morning he passed out. A friend said, "One tenth of the attention that you give to gin,

if given to God could make you happy." The experiment was tried. Each day he lists the commonplace things for which he is thankful, the mistakes of yesterday he wishes to avoid today, the people whose friendship he ought to keep in repair, the duties which are "musts" for that day. With a gleeful grin he tells others "give God the first ten minutes of every day and he will give you back the whole twenty-four all different." This simple plan has freed hundreds.

At 2:30 A.M. a wise A.A. member was roused out of his sleep. A taxi driver had deposited a chronic at his door. The moment he came into the house the chronic shouted out: "I don't believe in God, or Bible, or church, or prayer. I am a free thinker." The reply was "O.K., nobody wants you to believe anything if you don't want to. That's your business." The two went to the kitchen drank coffee and talked. The A.A. said: "There is no use in discussing prayer. The only thing about prayer that is any good is praying. I am going to pray for you." Which he did, humbly, trustingly, and in colloquial terms. Then, the drunk was told he could pray, too, if he felt like it. His first petition was, "O God, help me have faith in this guy." He is still sober, back home again living with his wife.

It is this experimental, demonstration offer that is the key to A.A. Controversy, argument, and dogmatism are avoided. Everything is on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. "It worked for me, it might work for you." The goal is far greater than to merely stop drinking. In itself that may not be of very much help. To be conscious of not drinking and still wanting to drink is just about as distracting a state of mind as being under the influence of alcohol. The big positive goal is happy and contented sobriety, a rewarding and satisfying way of living. It is a distinct privilege to be an alcoholic if it leads to twenty-four hours at a time without fear and in good will toward people and in humble dependence upon God. Restoration to sanity is abundant proof of the working of a Higher Power.

Prayer becomes a reality, usually in everyday forms of speech. Rhetorical demands, purple-patch phrases, snatches of liturgies are replaced by simple but earnest desires. One man says each evening, "Thank you, God, for a sober day." Next morning he prays, "Please God, another day like yesterday." Even a spot of prayer like that is an anchor by which to hold. An A.A. sober for six months went into a sudden panic. He found himself entering his favourite bar. Involuntarily he ejaculated, "O God, save me." In five seconds he was walking down the street cool and collected, every butterfly gone from his stomach. Another man hearing his stepdaughter in hysterics cried for help as to what to do. He was given the right words to say and soon the child was out skating. His verdict is that "the Higher Power works fast." To hear the A.A.'s recite the Lord's Prayer is an experience in worship. "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil." That is a life and death matter. Our desires are our real prayers, not what we say with our lips.

One helpful approach is to think of God as the truth-making Power. The

typical alcoholic insists on making his own interpretation of the universe and he anticipates the Day of Judgement by pronouncing condemnation on all and sundry. His dislikes are stronger than his likes. Criticism is his mental habit rather than appreciation. It is an initial step in humility to admit that truth is ordained of God. Mathematicians did not decree the multiplication table, nor musicians the octave, astronomers the calendar, orators the alphabet, mariners the magnetic compass. When truth is accepted as from God, intellectual conceit begins to vanish. The alcoholic learns to work with the laws of God instead of against them. Curiously enough the mind starts to discover new truth and to act upon it until every day becomes a voyage of discovery into the many-sided truths of God. Mind and mortality thus have a constant interplay.

In simple, even primitive fashion, members of Alcoholics Anonymous come to think of the Higher Power as the Hero of Eternity. Long before we were born the Higher Power was governing and ordaining: long after we are gone that same Power will be ruling and overruling. Do not be fussed, little man. Today is all you need to think about. The rhythm of the day and night becomes a contact with God. Living one day at a time can be an act of faith, a response of trust. One man returning from a five-thousand mile selling trip states: "To travel without fear is a new experience. I cannot become accustomed to it. I never will become accustomed to it." On a long, cold bus trip over an icy road, the one other passenger produced a bottle and offered a drink which was refused. The ability to refuse a drink offered in kindness and in the desire to help, to refuse graciously but finally, was the high light of the whole trip. To him it was the grace of God. It is in such experiences of protection and deliverance that A.A.'s become aware of the Living God.

The thought of the Higher Power is usually quite individual and may be decidedly unconventional. One man took his idea from a picture of flowers and birds. Just as the sun sends light and warmth, so he conceives of the Higher Power sending truth and love to him. One man, cursing himself as he shaved, heard a little bird singing outside his window. The bird was adjusted to his environment, but he, a university graduate was not. Now he is. Another learned faith by seeing an engineer take five hundred passengers out of a railway station on one green light. There would be more signals as he went along. Another saw a bay freeze over. At first the ice was paper thin, by midwinter it was three feet thick, making ice from underneath. Could his soul grow imperceptibly like that? Another was told that big doors swing on little hinges. A.A. is the little hinge on which his future sobriety now swings.

The personality change can be sudden, unexpected, and involuntary. A well-seasoned drinker, after two months of sobriety, was asked to speak at a meeting. He answered that as yet he had nothing to say. "Then just say that you have nothing to say," he was told. When called to speak he announced that for the sake of politeness he could not refuse but "actually I have

nothing to say, for nothing has happened to me." Then he paused. After a somewhat painful silence he said quietly, "Something has happened to me," and sat down. Two months later an old friend asked what had happened. He replied: "As I was saying I had nothing to say, suddenly I knew that at long last I had surrendered to goodness. All my life I had been debating and holding back. I have been different ever since and I have not the slightest desire for a drink." Without conscious effort his personality has been unified.

Rehabilitation may follow a Christian pattern. One man after thirty years of hard drinking made an inventory of what hard drink had cost him. He became convinced he was a fool, and he did not like being a fool. In his own words this is his story: "I decided to investigate religion. I read what the apostles had to say about Jesus Christ. Christ came into my life and liquor stayed out. Nothing goes out until something else comes in."

The spiritual aspect of the program is by no means camouflaged but it is not made too obvious at first. The Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, sometimes described as the A.A. bible, has three hundred references to the Higher Power. One member spent a Christmas Day counting them. Six of the Twelve Steps refer to God. The official magazine, The Grapevine, unhesitatingly refers to the Higher Power as God. With increasing frequency at group meetings older members say quite openly that they are staying sober only with the help of God. Surprising coincidences happen and the explanation naively offered is "Somebody Upstairs." The intimacy does not come from irreverence but from trust. However slight and vague the faith at first, progress is steadily made toward a more mature and adult thought of God.

In social life an alcoholic is regarded as a misfit. Medicine looks upon him as a non-cooperative patient, very often poor paying. The law deals with him as a criminal and sends him to jail. Psychiatry diagnoses him as a mental case and confines him in an institution. The church tells him that he is a sinner and must repent. His family has convinced him that he is hopeless. Against this background of despair, Alcoholics Anonymous comes along telling him that GOD is in him, that God can be in him as much as God can be anywhere, that if God is not in him then GOD is not everywhere and so cannot be God. By the witness of another alcoholic, now sober, the life is breathed into his soul. Without soul and spirit the body is only an empty shell. A few even go so far as to say that God himself may draw upon vital strength and increase of being from their fidelity. If so, they, each one of them, may be important in the whole scheme of things. A surrendered life, they hold, can be of use to God.

Strangely enough, no attempt is made to induce conviction of sin, awaken a sense of guilt, or lead to a period of remorse. It is quite unnecessary anyway. An alcoholic's conscience has told him all this a thousand times. Remorse weakens and is seldom redemptive. The better way is to live today. Yesterday is past, you cannot do much about it. You cannot undo what you have done. Waste no time on regret. Tomorrow is not here yet. Have no fears. The Higher Power has dealt with far harder cases than yours. A miracle might

happen, if you will just take it easy. Live one day at a time. When you came into the world there was air for your lungs: has the Higher Power ceased to care for you? Restraint from condemning increases the chance of cure.

Usually alcoholics are gun shy of religion. They may have tried it over and over and it has not worked, so they are more responsive to psychology. Fortunately there is enough psychology in the A.A. program for beginners to go on with. Some find that the psychology is sufficient to enable them to achieve sobriety; others keep seeking more than the laws of the mind, and by the practice of meditation advance to the laws of the spirit. It is a mistake to force growth. One man who has been instrumental in over three hundred recoveries says, "I have learned not to look for results too soon: I know they will come later." He himself is not content until he leads his proteges to definite faith, but he knows that time must be given for a seed of truth to germinate. If out of the Twelve Steps in the program the prospect is only ready for one or two, he is urged to work on these. The others will follow later.

Will power is discounted in A.A. "Use your will power" has been useless advice to them. They have the will but not the power. They do not have the won't power, let alone will power. Promises, pledges, prayers have not availed. Then they are told how to replace their puny wills by the will of God. The unit actually begins to lean on the strength of the All. It is found that the imagination governs the will. As one holds the picture of himself as a capable, controlled citizen, thoughts are focused in that direction, desires become conscious, emotions become strong, and the whole personality goes into action. Instead of trying to whip up a weak will into doing what it is unable to do, one finds will power restored by the use of thought, desire, emotion, creative imagination. In six months the will can become stronger to say "No" than formerly as routine it said "Yes." Such restorations of the will power are frequent in A.A.

The changed attitude to life is indicated by new reading habits. Murder mysteries and sex novels are often replaced by worth-while magazines, thoughtful books, and devotional manuals. So eager is the mind for truth that serious reading is done. There is a special interest in psychology and psychiatry. Religious classics have a new vogue. Pamphlet literature is kept in circulation. The leader of a group of two hundred men and women said to a visitor, "They are a tough-looking bunch, but you would be surprised to know the amount of bible reading and prayer going on." Another evidence of spiritual experience is the number of newspaper articles and booklets being produced by members.

Men and women who have repeatedly had medical care, been sent to mental hospitals and sanitariums, been given conditioned reflex treatment, gone to alcoholic farms, or taken Reeley Cured, ask why these so often fail and Alcoholics Anonymous is having increasing success. One answer is that these treatments (for which we are thankful; they are much better than none) were

only body cures; and in some degree fear was the motive for reform. They were also very expensive. Alcoholics Anonymous is cheap: there are no membership dues or entrance fees. Instead of a receding memory, A.A. is a growing experience of fact, fellowship and faith. It is enlarged opportunity and cumulative happiness. The old has gone, the new has come and keeps coming. The unhappy past is forgotten in happiness and hope. "Re who rises quickly and continues his race is as if he has never fallen." There are great days ahead.

The movement is strictly nondenominational. Catholics, Protestants, and Jews work together as brothers, though very few Jews are alcoholics. No effort is made to win others to any particular faith. The organization seeks to be inclusive rather than exclusive. No one is barred by age, sex, race, or creed. The one condition is the sincere desire to stop drinking. Nearly every club has one or two evangelical atheists, usually born of Christian parents, who strangely have conserved a Christian spirit. After a few months they usually agree that they never were atheists and anyway it did not make much difference. They stood on the same earth, breathed the same air, and talked the same language as others. Atheism had never been much help in keeping sober. Atheism, in fine, requires too much credulity: it is rather difficult to believe that nothing made everything and is going nowhere.

How is it that denominational differences can be so completely submerged? One reason is that no one is asked to give up anything but is urged to use what he already has. In time it is found that the A.A. program of recovery is founded upon universal spiritual experiences. Jesuits affirm that it is similar to the principles of Ignatius of Loyola. Quakers say that it makes use of meditation and the group conscience. Moral Rearmament people detect the four absolutes. Salvation Army officers are reminded of their knee drill. Methodists say it resembles John Wesley's discipline. Christian Science says it is closely akin. Unity, New Thought, Mysticism all think their programs have been adopted and adapted. A.A. is a synthetic product with a pragmatic test. What does not work is discarded: what does work is retained.

Do A.A.'s go back to church? Some do and some don't. Much depends upon early training. Some have a childhood belief to which they return with a deeper understanding. As a rule Roman Catholics resume their religious duties and observances - to them religion means their church. Some Protestants become active church workers, others go a time or two and report that "my minister doesn't know about God." Quite a few accept A.A. as their church. It gives faith and fellowship even though lacking much formal worship. Church relationships, like so much else in A.A., are left to individual preference and choice, without any overhead rulings. Those who attend church find new meaning in Scripture and sermon, hymns and prayers. A.A.'s become spiritually sensitive and morally responsive.

The church will be wise not to try to control or guide this movement but to learn from it. Sympathetic co-operation is being shown by providing church

halls as meeting places and by directing problem parishioners to A.A. The churches may learn something from the flexibility of A.A. organization, the power of fellowship, the possibility of lay evangelism, the transforming power of truth, the influence of common interest groups and the originality of nontechnical language and nondogmatic theology. This movement is of the people, by the people, for the people. But the new wine cannot be put into old bottles. It must find its own carriers.

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+++Message 258. Bill W's address to the American
Psychiatric Association, 1949.
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 4:44:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

The following is a talk Bill gave to the American Psychiatric Association in 1949.

Because of a quirk in my system, which replaces quotation marks with strange symbols, I have eliminated quotations marks that were in the original.

Nancy

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHIATRY Vol. 106, 1949.
THE SOCIETY OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
WILLIAM W., CO-FOUNDER

Alcoholics Anonymous is grateful for this invitation to appear before The American Psychiatric Association. It is a most happy circumstance. Being laymen we have naught but a story to tell, hence the quite personal and unscientific character of this narrative. Whatever their deeper implications the attitudes and events leading to the formation of Alcoholics Anonymous are easy to portray.

Two alcoholics talk across a kitchen table. One is drinking, the other is not. Severe chronics, the threat of commitment hangs over both. The time is November 1934. The active drinker became, years later, the writer of this paper.

My sober visitor was an old friend and schoolmate, long catalogued by physicians and family as hopeless. I enjoyed the same rating and well knew it. My friend had arrived to tell me how he had been released from alcohol.

In truth, the quality of his sobriety seemed different. Having made contact with the Oxford Group, a nondenominational, evangelical movement, my friend had been specially impressed by an alcoholic he had met, a former patient of C. G. Jung.

Unsuccessfully treating this individual for a year, Dr. Jung had finally advised him to try religious conversion as his last chance. While disagreeing with many tenets of the Oxford Group, my former schoolmate did, however, ascribe his new sobriety to certain ideas that this alcoholic and other Oxford people had given him. The particular practices my friend had selected for himself were simple:

1. He admitted he was powerless to solve his own problem.
2. He got honest with himself as never before; made an examination of conscience.
3. He made a rigorous confession of his personal defects.
4. He surveyed his distorted relations with people, visiting them to make restitution.
5. He resolved to devote himself to helping others in need, without the usual demand for personal prestige or material gain.
6. By meditation he sought God's direction for his life and help to practice these principles at all times.

This sounded pretty naive to me. Nevertheless my friend stuck to the plain tale of what had happened -- no evangelizing. He related how practicing these precepts, his drinking had unaccountably stopped. Fear and isolation left and he had received considerable peace of mind. With no hard disciplines nor any great resolves, these attributes began to appear the moment he conformed. His release was a byproduct. Though sober but months, he felt he had a basic answer. Wisely avoiding any argument, he then took leave. The spark that was to become Alcoholics Anonymous had been struck.

What then did happen at the kitchen table? Perhaps this speculation were better left to medicine and religion. I confess I do not know. Possibly conversion will never be fully understood.

Looking outward from such an experience, I can only say with fidelity what seemed to happen. Yet something did happen that instantly changed the current of my life. I haven't had a drink for over fourteen years. All else will be mere personal opinion -- or just fancy.

My friend's story had generated mixed emotions; I was drawn and revolted by turns. My solitary drinking went on, but I could not forget his visit. Several themes coursed in my mind: First, that his evident state of release was strangely and immensely convincing. Second, that he had been pronounced hopeless by competent medicos. Third, that those age-old precepts, when transmitted by him, had struck me with great power. Fourth, that I could not, and would not, go along with any God concept. No conversion nonsense for

me. Thus did I ponder. Trying to divert my thoughts, I found it no use. By cords of understanding, suffering, and simple verity, another alcoholic had bound me to him. I shall not break away.

One morning after my gin a realization welled up. Who are you, I asked, to choose how you are going to get well? Beggars are not choosers. Suppose medicine said carcinoma was your trouble. You would not turn to Pond's extract. In abject haste you would beg a doctor to kill those hellish cancer cells. If he didn't stop them, and you thought conversion could, your pride would fly away. You would soon stand in public squares crying Amen along with other victims.

What difference then, I reflected, between you and the cancer victim? His sick body crumbles. Likewise your personality crumbles, your obsession consigns you to madness or the undertaker. Are you going to try your friends formula -- or not?

Of course I did try. In December, 1934, I appeared at Towns Hospital, New York.

My old friend, Dr. W.D. Silkworth, shook his head. Soon free of sedation and alcohol, I felt horribly depressed. My alcoholic friend turned up. Though glad to see him, I shrank a little. I feared evangelism. Nothing of the sort happened. After small talk, I again asked him about the Oxford Groups. Quietly, sanely enough, he told me, and then departed.

Lying there in conflict, I dropped into a black depression. Momentarily my prideful obstinacy was crushed. I cried out: Now I'm ready to do anything -- anything to receive what my good friend has. Expecting naught, I made this frantic appeal: If there be a God, will he show himself!

The result was instant, electric, beyond description. The place lit up, blinding white. I knew only ecstasy and seemed on a mountain. A great wind blew, enveloping and permeating me. It was not of air, but of Spirit. Blazing, came the tremendous thought, You are a free man! Then ecstasy subsided. Still on the bed I was now in another world of consciousness which was suffused by a Presence. One with the Universe, a great peace stole over me and I thought, So this is the God of the preachers; this is the Great Reality. But reason returned, my modern education took over.

Obviously I had gone crazy. I became terribly frightened.

Dr. Silkworth came in to hear my trembling account of the phenomenon. He assured me I was not mad; that I had perhaps undergone an experience which might solve my problems. Skeptical man of science he then was; this was most kind and astute. If he had said hallucination I might now be dead. To him I shall be eternally grateful.

Good fortune pursued me. Somebody brought a book entitled Varieties of Religious Experience and I devoured it. Written by James, the psychologist, it suggests that conversion can have objective reality. Conversion does alter motivation, and does semi-automatically enable a person to be and do the formerly impossible. Significant it was, that marked conversion experiences come mostly to individuals who know complete defeat in a controlling area. The book certainly showed variety. But bright or dim, cataclysmic or gradual, theological or intellectual in bearing, such conversions did have common denominators, they did change utterly defeated people. And so declared William James. The shoe fitted. I have tried to wear it ever since. For drunks, the obvious answer was deflation at depth and more of it. That seemed plain as a pikestaff. I had been trained as an engineer, so the views of this authoritative psychologist meant everything to me.

Armored now by utter conviction and fortified by my characteristic power drive, I took off to cure alcoholics wholesale. It was twin jet propulsion; difficulties meant nothing. The vast conceit of my project never occurred to me. I pressed my assault for six months; my home was filled with alcoholics. Harangues with scores produced not the slightest result. None of them got it. Disappointingly, my friend of the kitchen table, who was sicker than I realized, took little interest in these other alcoholics. This fact may have caused his endless backslides later on. For I had found that working with alcoholics had a huge bearing on my own sobriety. But why wouldn't any of my new prospects sober up?

Slowly the bugs came to light. Like a religious crank, I was obsessed with the idea that everybody must have a spiritual experience just like mine. I'd forgotten that there were many varieties. So my brother alcoholics just stared incredulously or kidded me about my hot flash. This had spoiled the potent identification so easy to get with them. I had turned evangelist. Clearly the deal had to be streamlined. What came to me in six minutes might require six months in others.

It was to be learned that words are things, that one must be prudent. It was also certain that something ailed the deflationary technique. It definitely lacked wallop.

Reasoning that the alcoholic's hex, or compulsion, must issue from some deep level, it followed that ego deflation must also go deep or else there couldn't be any fundamental release. Apparently religious practice would not touch the alcoholic until his underlying situation was made ready. Fortunately all the tools were right at hand. You doctors supplied them.

The emphasis was straightway shifted from sin to sickness -- the fatal malady, alcoholism. We quoted doctors that alcoholism was more lethal than cancer; that it consisted of an obsession of the mind coupled to increasing body sensitivity. These were our Twin Ogres of Madness and Death. We leaned heavily on Dr. Jung's statement how hopeless the condition could be and then

poured that devastating dose into every drunk within range. To modern man science is omnipotent; it is a god. Hence if science would pass a death sentence on the drunk, and we placed that verdict on our alcoholic transmission belt, it might shatter him completely. Perhaps he would then turn to the God of the theologian, there being no place else to go. Whatever the truth in this device, it certainly had practical merit. Immediately our whole atmosphere changed. Things began to look up.

Bankrupt at the time, I stumbled into a business venture. It took me to Akron, Ohio, where the deal quickly collapsed leaving me dispirited. Alone, I panicked in fear of getting drunk. This was something new for I realized that I hadn't thought of drinking since the December 1934 experience. I could now see my peril clearly and thus brush off the usual rationalizations. With relief, I perceived that my new spiritual conditioning really meant something now that the heat was on. But that didn't stop the compulsive up rush of drinking desire. I needed to talk to another alcoholic, and quickly.

Shortly I was introduced to Dr. Robert S., a surgeon. He was an alcoholic in a bad way. This time there was no preaching from me. I told him my experience and what I thought I knew about alcoholism. Needing him as much as he did me, there was a genuine mutuality for the first time and, as we now say in A.A., he soon clicked never to drink again. That was June 1935. We began to spend long hours on drunks at a local hospital. One of them is sober yet, no relapse. Though nameless, the first A.A. Group had actually started. Dr. S. has since hospitalized some 4,000 cases at Akron. The bulk have recovered. All this too without a cent of monetary return to him. Thus he became co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. As I left Akron in September 1935 three alcoholics were staying sober.

Arrived at New York, I set to work and another A.A. group took shape. But nothing was very sure; we still flew blind.

It was soon necessary to retire from the Oxford Group. The good people there had disapproved of us. For our purpose, the Oxford Group atmosphere wasn't entirely right. Their demands for absolute moral rectitude encouraged guilt and rebellion. Either will get alcoholics drunk, and did. As nonalcoholic evangelists, they couldn't understand that. Good friends these, we owed them much. From them we had learned what, and what not, to do.

Then commenced a 3 year season of trial and error eventuating in our textbook, Alcoholics Anonymous, published in 1939. That book, now backbone of our A.A. society, opens with a typical story of drinking and recovery. Next comes a chapter of hope, entitled There Is A Solution. In A.A. vernacular two chapters describe alcoholism and the alcoholic, their object being of course to first identify and then deflate. A chapter is devoted to softening up the agnostic.

This leads to the Twelve Steps of present-day Alcoholics Anonymous. The heart of our therapy, and a practical way of life, these Steps are little but an amplified and streamlined version of the principles enumerated by my friend of the kitchen table.

The balance of the text is mostly devoted to practical application of these Twelve Steps, and to reducing the inner resistance of the reader. Working with other alcoholics is very heavily emphasized. Chapters are devoted to wives, family relations, and employers. The final chapter pictures the new society and begs the recovered alcoholic to form a group himself. This ideology is then shored up by 30 case histories, or rather stories, written by A.A. members. These complete the identification and stir hope. The 400 pages of Alcoholics Anonymous contain no theory; they narrate experience only.

When the book appeared in April 1939, we had about 100 members. One-third of these had impressive sobriety records. The movement had spread to Cleveland and drifted toward Chicago and Detroit. In the East it inclined to Philadelphia and Washington. There was an extraordinary event at Cleveland. The Plain Dealer published strong pieces about us backed by editorials. A barrage of telephone calls descended on 20 A.A. members, mostly new people. A.A. book in hand, they took on all comers. New members worked with the still newer. Two years later, Cleveland had garnered by this chain reaction hundreds of new members.

The batting average was excellent. It was our first evidence that we might digest huge numbers rapidly.

Then came great national publicity. The Saturday Evening Post piece (March 1941) shot thousands of frantic inquiries into our tiny New York office. This gave us lists of alcoholics in hundreds of cities. Business men traveling out of established A.A. centers used these names to start new groups. By sending literature and writing often, A.A. groups sprung up by mail. With no personal contact whatever, this was astounding. Clergy and medical men began to give their approval. I wish to say that Dr. Harry Tiebout, chairman of our discussion today, was the first psychiatrist ever to observe and befriend us. Alcoholics Anonymous mushroomed. The pioneering had ended. We were on the U.S. map.

As of 1949 our quantity results are these. The 14-year-old society of Alcoholics Anonymous has 80,000 members in about 3,000 groups. We have entered into 30 foreign countries and U.S. possessions; translations are going forward. By occupation we are an accurate cross section of America. By religious affiliation we are about 40% Catholic; nominal and active Protestants, also many former agnostics, and a sprinkling of Jews comprise the remainder. Ten to 15% are women. Some Negroes are recovering without undue difficulty. Top medical and religious endorsements are almost universal. A.A. membership is pyramiding, chain style, at the rate of about 30% a year. During 1949, we expect 20,000 permanent recoveries, at least. Half of these will be

medium or mild cases (average age about 36) a fairly recent development.

Of alcoholics who stay with us and really try, 50% get sober at once and stay that way, 25% do so after some relapses and the remainder usually show improvement. But many problem drinkers do quit A.A. after a brief contact, maybe three or four out of five. Some are too psychopathic or damaged. But the majority have powerful rationalizations yet to be broken down. Eventually this does happen providing they get what A.A. calls a good exposure, on first contact. Alcohol then builds such a hot fire that they are finally driven back to us, often years later.

They tell us that they had to return; it was A.A., or else. They had learned about alcoholism from alcoholics; they were hit harder than they had known. Such cases leave us the agreeable impression that half our original exposures will eventually return, most of them to recover. So we just indoctrinate the newcomer.

We never evangelize; Barleycorn will look after that. The clergy declare we have capitalized the Devil. These claims are considerable but we think them conservative. The ultimate recovery rate will certainly be larger than once supposed.

Such is a glimpse of our origin, central therapeutic idea, and quantity result.

The qualitative result is assuredly too large a subject for this paper.

Alcoholics Anonymous is not a religious organization; there is no dogma. The one theological proposition is a Power greater than one*s self. Even this concept is forced on no one. The newcomer merely immerses himself in our society and tries the program as best he can. Left alone, he will surely report the gradual onset of a transforming experience, call it what he may. Observers once thought A.A. could appeal only to the religiously susceptible. Yet our membership includes a former member of the American Atheist Society and about 20,000 others almost as tough. The dying can become remarkably open minded. Of course we speak little of conversion nowadays because so many people really dread being God-bitten. But conversion, as broadly described by James, does seem to be our basic process; all other devices are but the foundation. When one alcoholic works with another, he but consolidates and sustains that essential experience.

The forces of anarchy, democracy, and dictatorship play impressive roles in the structure and containment of our society; Barleycorn the Tyrant Dictator is quite impersonal. But Hitler never did have a Gestapo half so effective. When the anarchy of the alcoholic faces his tyrant, that alcoholic must become a social animal or perish. Perforce, our society has settled for the purest kind of democracy.

Naturally, the explosive potential of our rather neurotic fellowship is enormous. As elsewhere, it gathers closely around those eternal provocateurs: power, money and sex. Throughout A.A. these subterranean volcanos erupt at least a thousand times daily; explosions we now view with some humor, considerable magnanimity, and little fear at all. We think them valuable object lessons for development. Our deep kinship, the urgency of our mission, the need to abate our neurosis for contented survival; all these, together with love for God and man, have contained us in surprising unity. There seems safety in numbers.

Enough sand bags muffle any amount of dynamite. We think we are a pretty secure, happy family. Drop by any A.A. meeting for a look.

But, there isn't the slightest evidence that violent neurosis, drunkenness, or lunacy is to be the destiny of Alcoholics Anonymous. Such dark forecasts have not materialized.

Many an alcoholic is now sent to A.A. by his own psychiatrist. Relieved of his drinking, he returns to the doctor a far easier subject. Practically every alcoholic's wife has become, to a degree, his possessive mother. Most alcoholic women, if they still have a husband, live with a baffled father. This sometimes spells trouble aplenty. We A.A.'s certainly ought to know!

So, gentlemen, here is a big problem right up your alley.

Now to conclude: We of A.A. try to be aware that we may never touch but a segment of the total alcohol problem. We try to remember that our growing success may prove a heady wine; that our own resources will always be limited.

So then, will you men and women of medicine be our partners; physicians wielding well your invisible scalpels; workers all, in our common cause? We like to think Alcoholics Anonymous a middle ground between medicine and religion, the missing catalyst of a new synthesis. This to the end that the millions who still suffer may presently issue from their darkness into the light of day!

I am sure that none, attending this great Hall of Medicine will feel it untoward if I leave the last word to our silent partner, Religion:

God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can, and wisdom to know the difference.

Read at the 105th Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, Montreal, Quebec, May 23-27, 1949.

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++++Message 260. Let"s Ask Bill" No. 45
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:01:00 PM

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From: "Jim Blair"

Here is installment No.45 in the series

Q - What purposes do the Twelve Concepts for World Services serve?

A -"The Concepts to be discussed in the following pages are primarily an interpretation of AA's world service structure. They spell out the traditional practices and the Conference charter principles that relate the component parts of our world structure into a working whole. Our Third Legacy manual is largely a document of procedure. Up to now the Manual tells us how to operate our service structure. But there is considerable lack of detailed information, which would tell us why the structure has developed as it has and why its working parts are related together in the fashion that our Conference and General Service Board charters provide.

"These Twelve Concepts therefore represent an attempt to put on paper the why of our service structure in such a fashion that the highly valuable experience of the past and the conclusions that we have drawn from it cannot be lost.

"These Concepts are no attempt to freeze our operation against needed change. They only describe the present situation, the forces and principles that have molded it. It is to be remembered that in most respects the Conference charter can be readily amended. This interpretation of the past and present can, however, have a high value for the future. Every oncoming generation of service workers will be eager to change and improve our structure and operations. This is good. No doubt change will be needed. Perhaps unforeseen flaws will emerge. These will have to be remedied.

But along with this very constructive outlook, there will be bound to be still another, a destructive one. We shall always be tempted to throw out the baby with the bathwater. We shall suffer the illusion that change, any plausible change, will necessarily represent progress. When so animated, we may carelessly cast aside the hard won lessons of early experience and so fall back into many of the great errors of the past.

Hence, a prime purpose of these Twelve Concepts is to hold the experience and lessons of the early days constantly before us. This should reduce the chance of hasty and unnecessary change. And if alterations are made that happen to work out badly, then it is hoped that these Twelve Concepts will

make a point of safe return." (GSC, 1960)

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++++Message 261. Let's Ask Bill" No. 46
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:02:00 PM

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From: "Jim Blair"

Here is the 46th installment in the series.

Q - What purpose does the right of appeal serve?

A - There came to this country some hundred years ago a French Baron whose family and himself had been wracked by the French revolution, De Toqueville and he was a worshipful admirer of democracy. And in those day's democracy seemed to be mostly expressed in people's minds by votes of simple majorities. And he was a worshipful admirer of the spirit of democracy as expressed by the power of a majority to govern. But, said de Toqueville, a majority can be ignorant, it can be brutal, it can be tyrannous - and we have seen it. Therefore, unless you most carefully protect a minority, large or small, make sure that minority opinions are voiced, make sure that minorities have unusual rights, you're democracy is never going to work and its spirit will die. This was de Toqueville's prediction and, considering today's times, is it strange that he is not widely read now?

So that is why in this Conference we try to get a unanimous consent while we can; this is why we say the Conference can mandate the Board of Trustees on a two - thirds vote. But we have said more here. We have said that any Delegate, any Trustee, any staff member, any service director - any board, committee or whatever - that wherever there is a minority, it shall always be the right of this minority to file a minority report so that their views are held up clearly. And if in the opinion of any such minority, even a minority of one, if the majority is about to hastily or angrily do something which could be to the detriment of Alcoholics Anonymous, the serious detriment, it is not only their right to file a minority appeal, it is their duty.

So, like de Toqueville, neither you nor I want either the tyranny or the majority, nor the tyranny of the small minority. And steps have been taken here to balance up these relations.
(GSC, 1960)

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+++Message 262. Passionately Anonymous
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:14:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

The following story appeared in TIME on July 11, 1960.

Nancy

PASSIONATELY ANONYMOUS

The 15,000 men and women who thronged California's Long Beach Memorial Stadium last week differed from most conventioners in one major respect, there was no danger that any of them would get together in a hotel room to kill a bottle For this was Alcoholics Anonymous, mustering its recovered, sworn-off drinkers, their relatives and well-wishers to celebrate its 25th anniversary.

Uncrowned but undisputed head of A.A. is Bill W., a tall Vermonter in his early 60s who drank himself out of a lucrative career as a high-risk stock operator. "In 1934," he recalls, "My doctor told my wife that if I didn't stop I'd have to be locked up because I'd either go mad or die." Bill W. didn't stop until he drank himself into a hospital and realized that he must stop or die. He had to find another drunk in the same predicament so that by helping each other they would ensure their own survival. In Akron, in June of 1935, he found his friend, Dr. Bob (who died of cancer in 1950). Together they founded A.A. and laid out the basis for its famous twelve tenets.

NEITHER CHASE NOR CHASTISE.

Last week, in his unofficial presidential address, Co-Founder Bill W. noted that the organization today counts 300,000 members in more than 8,000 groups in about 80 countries. Yet A.A. did not congratulate itself for any wholesale success. "In the U.S. alone there are still at least 5,000,000 active alcoholics, and perhaps 25 million worldwide. It is an awesome number that A.A. would be glad to help, said Bill W. We are not going to chase them, chastise them, or campaign for them. All we can hope is that they will come to us for help when help is what they want."

A.A.'s wait-and-accept philosophy is the key to its success to date. About 50% to 75% of all alcoholics will respond to A.A., many of the toughest cases simply never enroll.

THE THOUGHT OF POWER.

The passion for public anonymity is readily understandable at the individual level. Every alcoholic needs pals on whom he can lean for help, and whom he can help to bolster his own ego. At the organizational level the anonymity is more complex. Bill W., a forceful speaker with a cutting wit explains: "Identification leads to power drives. The thought of power is one reason we were drunks in the first place. A.A. takes no denominational, political, or economic stands. It stays out of controversy. We do not claim that anonymity is a virtue. Rather it is a protection." In proof of his own passion for anonymity, Bill W. has refused an honorary doctorate from Yale. "A degree for what?" he asks "For being the world's leading drunk?"

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+++Message 263. Some Predecessors of AA
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:32:00 PM

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From: "Robert Stonebraker"

I would assume that "Nell and Frank," below, would be Nell Wing and Frank M."

Bob Stonebraker

A little bit of info gathered a few years back from a presentation by Nell and Frank (previous Archivists in GSO).

Some Predecessors of AA

Washingtonians:

Basic purpose: to solve people's problems.

Operated for a period of approximately 25 years

Sharing by personal experience

held public meetings

gathered members by personal contact

had a desire to help others

had more than a million signatures

were strongest about 1841-1842

began dying out about 1846-1847

had basic principles of love, sympathy, kindness, charity

Decline: because

they had no adequate organization

had no guidelines (such as traditions, etc.)

had no real direction

work with alcoholics not required (although they did work with alcoholics to a certain extent)

had no anonymity function

Emmanuel Movement:

took part of the ideas of Washingtonians

added the religious content

started about 1908-1909

treated people with alcohol problems and nervous disorders

used Christian principles (religious)

used physical medicine

strongly psychological

stressed total abstinence

had strong group support

existed through to about 1929

Decline: perhaps a little slower than with Washingtonians but basically from drifting from their basic ideas.

Along the way other people got into the act with some of the same basic ideas and some good principles but fell apart for a variety of reasons-generally from getting away from their basic principles.

Edward Worster-somewhere about 1910

Another man by the name of Baylor at approximately same time.

Richard Peabody, Peabody Movement-1930's

wrote a book called "Common Sense Of Drinking"

stressed physical condition (medical)

surrender, deflation at depth

removal of doubts and anxieties

control of thoughts

control of will power

self-expression

Jacoby Club-1909

tried to help alcoholics

stressed being honest

regular meetings

members contribute regularly

work on rehabilitation

self help

much of problem to be blamed on spouse

spiritual and psychological help

still operated in Boston in 1940's

much work of the club performed by salaried people

after 1940's concentrated on helping people with other than alcohol problems.

William James (Varieties of Religious Experience)

gained much of his knowledge and experience from his students

aware of the religious conversion experience in many people

added the importance of psychology

stressed personal contact with God

talked about fears, moral ideals, remorse

Oxford Groups-1921-Frank Buchman, ordained Lutheran minister

Buchman, 1908:

bible study

1200 students

world changing by personal soul changing

1928 in South Africa:

first-century Christian Fellowship began to be known as Oxford Group

500,000 copies of Oxford Book printed

1930: Sam Schumacher became involved with Oxford Groups

1931 Roland Hazard got sober, began working with Sam Schumacher at Calvary Mission, subsequently carried the message to Ebby Thatcher, who carried the message to Bill Wilson

The rest is AA history.

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+++Message 264. Some Predecessors of AA - 2
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:32:00 PM

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From: Billwhite@A... [4]

Bob provided a nice summary of the Washingtonians, the Emmanuel Movement, and the Oxford Group in his post. I've been trying to catalogue all of the pre-AA alcoholic mutual aid societies in America for an article

that I am working on and have been surprised at their sheer number. Here are some others that I have found:

- * Native American sobriety circles (c. 1750-1830)
- * Recovery-focused Fraternal Temperance Societies (Many evolving out of the collapsing Washingtonian groups)
- * Recovery groups associated with Inebriate Homes (e.g., the Appleton Temperance Society) (1860-1900)
- * Recovery groups associated with Inebriate Asylums (e.g., the Ollapod Club) (1860-1900)
- * Recovery groups associated with private, Addiction Cure Institutes (e.g., the Keeley Leagues) (1860-1900)
- * Ribbon Reform Clubs (Purple, Blue, Red) (1870-1900)
- * Moderation Societies (e.g., The Businessmen's Moderation Society) (1870-1900)
- * Mission Recovery Groups (Boozers' Brigade, United Order of Ex-Boozers) (1870-1915)
- * The Drunkard's Club (1870s)
- * The Harlem Club of Former Alcoholic Degenerates (1898-?) (Probably fictional)

I would be very interested in hearing from any of you who have run across a reference to any other pre-AA alcoholic mutual aid societies not noted above.

Many thanks,
Bill White

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+++Message 265. Clubs in New York
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:37:00 PM

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From: "Dennis M."

Joanna Whitney posted:

<<

I would like to write a piece for our newsletter on AA clubs, Alano, or whichever. I am interested that there are NONE in New York, and curious as to why. (I am in NY). Does anyone know the first, where and how it/they started?

<<

Of course, the 24th Street Clubhouse was probably the first and certainly

the most notable around New York City.

Most fell apart form what I've heard due to squabbling about money and an inability to tolerate the large numbers of homeless that tend to congregate anywhere where there is shelter and free coffee.

The Mustard Seed, 79th Street Workshop and Al-Anon House groups in Manhattan in New York City, do not stay open any longer between meetings I'm told for this very reason. I know that at the 79th Street Workshop they stopped making coffee for many years just to eliminate that incentive for the many non-alcoholic homeless who tended to be attracted for the coffee only. They recently started up coffee again.

The typical club operation arranges for a variety of social functions for its paying membership. All too often in New York people have squabbled that since it's basically an AA operation there should be no dues or fees and therefore try to impose themselves without paying their membership dues.

At least that is what I learned about the brief history of the Davidson Avenue AA Clubhouse in the Bronx back in the 1950's. It lived a very short life just like most around New York City.

Dennis M.

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+++Message 266. Analysis & Comparison of 3 Treatment Measures for Alcoholism
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:42:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

British Journal of Addiction, Vol. 50, 1953:

ANALYSIS AND COMPARISON OF THREE TREATMENT MEASURES FOR ALCOHOLISM:

ANTABUSE, THE ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS APPROACH, AND PSYCHOTHERAPY*

By FRANCIS T. CHAMBERS, Jr.

of the Philadelphia Hospital Institute

In 1935 I joined the staff of the Institute of the Pennsylvania Hospital, and with the generous support of the senior staff members endeavored to work out a

treatment plan to be available for those seeking help for acute problems. This plan had the then unique characteristic of being a positive, rather than a negative approach. By and large, at this period, most treatment consisted of the facilities offered by rest homes and "cures", where the whole emphasis was placed on sobering a man up. Temporary sobriety having been achieved, he was then discharged with little or no understanding of himself or his problem.

Dr. Edward A. Strecker, who held the Chair of Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, collaborated with me in writing *ALCOHOL: One Man's Meat*, published in 1938. This book, because it presented a positive treatment plan, had the effect of stimulating a more optimistic approach toward the problem, and we were deluged by requests for help. We did not have the necessary staff, facilities, nor the economic support that would have made help available for all. Fortunately, the Alcoholics Anonymous movement became active at about this time, and has contributed a great deal of help for many alcoholic addicts who could not have received it in any other way.

* Read before the Society for the Study of Addiction at the rooms of the Medical Society of London, 11 Chandos Street, W.1., on Tuesday, 26 August, 1952, the President, Dr. G. W. Smith, being in the Chair.

In 1949, Antabuse was introduced in our country for controlled study, and in 1951 it was released to the medical profession. This release was introduced in part by the following paragraph:

"Antabuse, the drug that builds a 'chemical fence' around the alcoholic, is now available for general prescription use in the fight against the Nation's number one emotional disease."

In sequence, then, we see three positive approaches, each of which was met by great optimism on the part of the public. This optimism has been tempered by the sobering fact that each one of these approaches had, along with successes, many failures, and did not live up to the hope engendered by wishful thinking. This does not mean that Antabuse should be discarded as a treatment measure because there are failures, and sometimes fatal failures; nor does it mean that those who fail to respond to the Alcoholics Anonymous group movement indicate that the A.A. is not a helpful measure; nor again does it mean that psychotherapy should be discarded because it, too, has failures. There is in the United States a number of treatments other than those we are discussing. Dr. Abraham Myerson points out: "The treatment of the individual case has at this time some twenty varieties, ranging from Alcoholics Anonymous and frank religious exhortation to spinal fluid drainage, benzedrine sulfate and the conditioned reflex, not forgetting psychoanalysis, psychotherapeutics, and shock therapy." Add to this the many advertised cures in sanitariums and health farms, and one sees how bewildering the burden of choice can be to the patient or his family seeking help.

Let us first analyze Antabuse as a treatment measure. Bear in mind that it was

introduced as "the drug that builds 'chemical fence' around the alcoholic." We must first ask ourselves: what about the individuals who do not wish a fence built around them, and is it always wise to do so? In reference to the first group, who do not wish to be protected, there is in the United States not a legal statute to enforce this means toward total abstinence.

In connection with this point whether or not it is always wise to build a chemical fence around the alcoholic, my associates, Dr. Edward A. Strecker and Dr. Vincent T. Lathbury, have discussed two patients in whom the experimental use of Antabuse was followed by a psychotic reaction. A like reaction was discussed by Dr. O. Martensen-Larsen, and more serious effects by Dr. Erik Jacobsen of Denmark.

Dr. Jacobsen says, in part, that the "effective deprivation of alcohol without adequate psychotherapy can be just as dangerous as the untoward effects of disulfiram." In the same article, Dr. Jacobsen reports that there were 17 fatal cases following treatment with Antabuse among 10,000 patients. Of this total, he cites five cases of death were due to sudden, unexplained causes. Deaths following the administration of Antabuse are cited by R. O. Jones, M. C. Becker and G. Sugarman, and D. M. Spain, V.A. Bradess and A.A. Eggston. I am quoting only in part from the available literature dealing with such unfavorable reactions.

Briefly, then, we have three contraindications to the use of Antabuse. First, there are those who refuse this treatment; second, those who may develop a psychotic reaction following the treatment; and third, those to whom the treatment may be fatal. Let me add a fourth risk, perhaps the most important; namely that the indiscriminate use of Antabuse on a group of patients most apt to respond to psychotherapy might interfere with or even block their potential accessibility to psychotherapy. Experience with patients who have had previous treatment with Antabuse shows that they have often resented this treatment and discontinued it. As one of them expressed his attitude to me, "I found that my reaction to alcohol after the Antabuse treatment was terrifying. Therefore I was pretty sure to take no more Antabuse." Several patients have told me that while taking Antabuse they found that a very little alcohol plus the Antabuse reaction gave them a desirable result of intoxication.

On the other hand, medical literature is full of successful results obtained by the administration of Antabuse. One patient of mine, a woman of 65, asked for the Antabuse treatment two years ago. My associates, Dr. Kenneth Appel and Dr. Alexander Vujan, after careful tests, administered Antabuse, and this woman has since then made a much better adjustment. We recommended follow-up psychotherapy, which was not accepted. Without such follow-up therapy, we can only guess as to why the Antabuse worked. This woman was highly intelligent, with a strong indication of psychoneurotic nucleus. She came from a protected walk of life. Later on she encountered more than her share of tragedy. The death of two husbands during her young womanhood probably augmented an already established unconscious feeling of rejection. The insidious sway of her

addiction held fast through middle life. Now her grown children were repeating the pattern of rejection because of her addiction problem. At this psychologically important moment we supplied, via the Antabuse treatment, a way to make alcohol actually reject her even more severely than did reality from her neurotic viewpoint.

In 1939, the Alcoholics Anonymous group movement published their book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. It received a tremendous amount of publicity because of the enthusiasm of its members, plus the fact that it had a very understandable popular appeal. In the forward of this book the writers remark that they wish to show other alcoholics "precisely how we have recovered," and they state. "We are not an organization in the conventional sense of the word. There are no fees nor dues whatsoever. The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. We are not allied with any particular faith, sect, or denomination, nor do we oppose anyone. We simply wish to be helpful to those who are afflicted."

Since this book was written, groups of Alcoholics Anonymous have formed in all the large cities of the United States, and in many of the smaller towns. As a movement it has a strong similarity to religious conversion. They state in their book;

"The great fact is just this, and nothing less: that we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences, which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows, and toward God's universe. The central fact of our lives to-day is the absolute certainty that our Creator has entered into our hearts and lives in a way which is indeed miraculous. He has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do by ourselves."

I have gathered from talks with many of the group that the spiritual experience does not always take place, but that even without this experience some are successful in refraining from drinking. With or without the religious experience, members have a very deep sense of Cause, and each becomes an Apostle for this Cause. They insist that members attend weekly or bi-weekly meetings, at which meeting novices hear ex-alcoholics recount the misery of their drinking history, and how they had hurt all their loved ones, but how, now, with the help of the Alcoholics Anonymous group they are no longer hurting those they love, and are happy and successful without alcohol. They recommend twelve steps in their program to recovery:

"1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as

we understood Him.

4. Made a searching and fearless inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a 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 conscious contact with God as we understood Him 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 these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

I understand that you have similar groups in Great Britain. I believe that they work with the same principles as Alcoholics Anonymous in the U.S.A. In the States some of its appeal is because of the go-getter attitude contained in its emotional approach. It savors of the credo of the American success story, and it is colored by the aggressive streamlined glamorization so woven into American custom. My experience with members of this group has been that the successful men and women are those who have made A.A. the most important thing in their lives. They devote a tremendous amount of time to discussion of Alcoholics Anonymous work, they attend meetings regularly, and are willing, at great inconvenience to themselves, to be called out to administer to one of their group who has fallen, or to call on some drunkard in order to persuade him to seek their help. Let me briefly try to analyze some of the aspects of what they have to offer.

Most of those who become members have gone downhill quite far. In fact, many A.A. members say you have to "hit bottom" before you are accessible to their movement. These men and women, due to their abnormal drinking lives, have by and large lost their normal friends and their contact with society. They are lonely, isolated by their addiction problem. To be welcomed again in an uncritical group, where their past alcoholic history can be worn as a badge of

honor, provided they recover, must give them a tremendous emotional lift in re-establishing contact with other human beings.

All of us who are interested in the vast problem of mental hygiene owe a debt of deep gratitude to the circumstances that presented this movement at this time. The group is keeping many men and women sober, who otherwise would be cluttering up our jails and our mental hospitals. They are relieving psychiatrists of an already intolerable load, and most important, this approach is keeping many men and women from destroying themselves and crippling their families irretrievably.

With all due credit for A.A.'s valuable work, some of the more fanatical members bring to mind a sketch written by the American humorist, James Thurber, entitled, *The Bear Who Let It Alone*.

"In the woods of the Far West there once lived a brown bear who could take it or leave it alone. He would go into a bar where they sold mead, a fermented drink made of honey, and he would have just two drinks. Then he would put some money on the bar and say, 'See what the bears in the back room will have,' and he would go home. But finally he took to drinking by himself most of the day. He would reel home at night, kick over the umbrella stand, knock down the bridge lamps, and ram his elbows through the windows. Then he would collapse on the floor and lie there until he went to sleep. His wife was greatly distressed and his children were very frightened.

"At length the bear saw the error of his ways and began to reform. In the end he became a famous teetotaler and a persistent temperance lecturer. He would tell everybody who came to his house about the awful effects of drink, and he would boast about how strong and well he had become since he gave up touching the stuff. To demonstrate this, he would stand on his head and on his hands and he would turn cartwheels in the house, kicking over the umbrella stand, knocking down the bridge lamps, and ramming his elbows through the windows. Then he would lie down on the floor, tired by his healthful exercise, and go to sleep. His wife was greatly distressed and his children were very frightened."

About ten years ago, I was asked to read a short paper, "Emotional Immaturity in Alcoholics," at the Philadelphia General Hospital. This was followed by a talk given by one of the key men in Alcoholics Anonymous. He began his talk by saying that he agreed with me that all alcoholics were emotionally immature; hence they needed Alcoholics Anonymous to compensate for the deficiency of emotional maturity. This pointed out to me the outstanding difference between their approach and a psychotherapeutic approach; namely, that they accept the emotional immaturity, and supplied a crutch for it, where psychotherapy attempts to supply insight into the emotional immaturity, and helps the patient toward emotional growth and maturity as a necessary adjunct to abstinence.

One of the earliest papers on the subject of alcoholism that I have come upon was by Dr. Benjamin Rush, written in the early eighteenth century. He cites religious conversion as the only effective means of bringing about abstinence among his alcoholic patients. This phenomenon, I think, is explained in part by the extraordinary egocentricity we find in alcoholics, and this in turn leads us to uncover the omnipotent infant hidden behind the iron curtain of the unconscious, who is still dictating the personality, policy, and behavior of the patient. We see that these patients are in a way playing God. This highly disguised phenomenon was beautifully revealed in the William Saroyan play, *The Time of Your Life*. In religious conversion, one admits to an all-powerful God. Therefore the convert is forced to abdicate the throne, but in turn becomes God's lieutenant. This is an emotional growth step not always possible, not always wise, but where it works effectively and suffices to give a fractional degree of stability to the addicted personality, we should thank God for its occurrence wherever we encounter it.

Psychotherapy may include a great many different approaches and various disciplines and techniques. Alcoholics Anonymous might be described as a simple form of psychotherapy. Freudian psychoanalysis is considered by some as the only thorough approach to a non-addicted readjustment. This could be described as a very complicated and time-consuming psychotherapy. Because of the variant concepts of psychotherapy, I would like to outline briefly the type that we have found practical and effective with a certain group of patients.

"The first and often neglected step in the treatment of pathological drinking is a personality diagnosis. This diagnosis should be avoided during the intoxication symptoms and withdrawal symptoms. Even after a state of sobriety has been reached, the physician should delay opinion as to the best method of treatment until he has had ample opportunity to study the personality of his patient.

"The following classification can be employed advantageously in the clinic devoted to abnormal drinking if it is used in the spirit that Thompson suggests when he says: 'We have revised this classification to some extent, but we have altered still more extensively our application of it. Many individuals who are examined in this clinic we now regard as normal or average individuals with an exaggeration of some particular personality characteristic, rather than as psychopathic personalities or deviates.' Even a glance at this classification makes clear how wide is the range of alcoholism. The classification is as follows:

- A. Psychosis.
- B. Borderline psychosis.
- C. Mental deficiency.

D. Psychopathic personalities.

E. Neurosis.

F. Normal individuals with predominant personality characteristics:

Aggressive type.

Unstable type.

Swindler (hysterical type)

Unethical, sly, wily type professional gambler or `con

man'; professional criminal of the planning, careful type. I think you have a slang word "Spiv" that describes the type.

Shrewd type.

Adolescent type.

(a) Adolescent immature type,

(b) Adolescent adventurous type.

Adult immature type.

Egocentric and selfish type.

Shiftless, lazy, uninhibited, pleasure-loving type.

Suggestible type.

Adynamic, dull type.

Nomadic type.

Primitive type.

Adjusted to lower economic level.

Personality adjusted to ordinary, average life."

We have found that the germ of alcoholism reaches far back into childhood and that most patients are suffering from unconscious feeling of guilt and rejection coming, usually, from these childhood experiences. We are beginning to see more clearly that drinking alcohol in itself did not create their problem. Rather it was their neurotic insecurity which created their

addiction. We see in the paranoid patient a tendency to project his personality discomfort outward, in the psycho-neurotic a tendency to project personality discomfort inward, and in the alcoholic a tendency to reach for a drug to anesthetize his personality discomfort.

We have found in the study of the personalities of those who consulted us that emotional immaturity manifests itself prior to drinking, and certainly we have found that emotional immaturity is ever-present in the emotional life of the abnormal drinker. "Man is but a child-born," and I doubt that in our civilization emotional maturity is a completely obtainable goal. When we talk of maturity, we talk of degree. In the abnormal drinker, emotional immaturity plus the addiction problem precludes emotional growth. We see a like reaction in the psychoneurotic, and we see, perhaps, in the psychotic a terrifying regression to the infantile level. Maturity, if we must attempt to analyze it, could be described as an individual's ability to deal with, compromise with, and sublimate the primitive infantile tendencies that exist in all of us. The alcoholic, when intoxicated, is on an infantile level. When sober, he is a very uncomfortable child in an adult body in an adult world.

I think we often see in the abnormal drinker an actor living a role of pretence that is fooling him far more than the audience. This actor has a complete misconception of the reality of himself. All he knows is that this reality is painful. He does not see that reality is painful because of his maladjustment to it. Having found that alcohol will induce a brief pleasurable fantasy of self, the abnormal drinker seeks more and more the escape mechanism of alcohol. Because such a patient appears to be normal to his family and the public when he is not drinking, the degree of his emotional maladjustment is not recognized by society, nor is it recognized by the patient. In the mind of the public and the patient the problem seems simple, i.e., if alcohol is destroying this man or woman's potentiality to live a normal, constructive life, then the answer is to give up alcohol. I think we can say that the majority of non-deteriorated and non-psychotic alcoholics want to get well. Despite the contradiction of oft repeated drunken behavior, there is little doubt that somewhere within the mental recesses of the abnormal drinker there lies the desire to rid himself of his addiction. He wants to be normal, but he does not know how to start. To bridge the gap of understanding between the patient and those who want to help him we must first recognize and understand his conception of what constitutes normality. What does he mean when he says; "I want to get well?"

Mental exploration uncovers an apparent contradiction of sane thinking; i.e., normality is synonymous in the mind of the alcoholic with only one thing - drinking normally. He really believes he wants to drink in a normal way. Most patients give a history of repeated determination to drink in moderation, which attempt eventually ends in acute alcoholic episodes. This self deception on the patient's part, of wanting to be temperate in the use of alcohol, should be discarded with the insight gained in psychotherapy. It is not easy for the patient to see that the one or two cocktails he thinks would suffice

actually would be as unsatisfactory to him as one or two aspirin tablets would be to the morphinist awaiting his customary dose of morphine.

Therefore, in dealing with patients, we must realize that a mental condition exists which renders a normal response impossible. We do not tell our patients that they are normal and that all that is wrong with them is that they drink too much. If this were only true, everything would be so beautifully simple. We would only have to say, "Please stop drinking, and everything will be all right." Obviously if they stop drinking they will be more acceptable to society, but otherwise nothing has been accomplished toward curing the state of mind that originally sought escape from their personality discomfort by blunting this discomfort with alcohol. When the stream of alcohol is dammed but nothing else is done then there is merely produced a condition of suppressed alcoholism that could be rightly described as an alcoholic complex, or a partially repressed but imperative urge, that becomes endowed with a super-emotional content. In all probability this is the condition of many successful non-drinking alcoholics, wherein hate and fear have supplanted the love of and depending on alcohol. The partially repressed but imperative urge becomes endowed with a superemotional redirection. The truth is that abstinence frequently means the discarding of an all important crutch by a sick personality. This may be the right moment for psychotherapy to be substituted for the crutch, not as something to lean on, but as a means of gaining insight into the little boy or girl who never grew up emotionally.

It is obvious to anyone who ever studied the problem of addiction that the abnormal drinker is playing a very passive role no matter how well he may disguise it by over-compensating action. The very role of drinking is passive. Without being conscious of it, he is asking a drug to change his ways of thinking and being and feeling. The addict carries the passive role to its extreme in deep intoxication. He is helpless.

With this hidden passivity in mind I endeavor to lead a patient into an active role toward treatment. I ask him to read and analyze the book, *Alcohol: One Man's Meat*, underscoring any passages that he thinks might give us insight into his own problem. By the very act of doing this he is taking an active rather than a passive role toward his recovery.

I inform the patient at the first contact that he and he alone will effect his recovery, that I can only help him to gain understanding of himself and his problem. If a good rapport is established I find it is helpful to anticipate with the patient the emotional growing pains that he will encounter during the beginning of his non-alcoholic readjustment. The patient puts much emphasis on the immediate withdrawal symptoms from alcohol. He has experienced these and knows how dreadful they are. He has no understanding of or preparation for the secondary emotional withdrawal symptoms that he will encounter during the first year or two of abstinence. These secondary withdrawal symptoms seem to take place in insidiously disguised protests against reality and in bombardments of rationalization urging him to return to alcohol. The late

Richard Peabody contributed great insight into this phase of readjustment. In his book, *The Common Sense of Drinking*, he supplies this insight to the patient, as well as forearming him against the extraordinary rationalizing technique that he will uncover from time to time during his struggle to make readjustment without alcohol.

We encounter in alcoholism an age-old phenomenon of politics; the political psychology of the dictator. Dictator ideology survives only by creating and then enlarging the enemy without, in order to take the focus off the real enemy within -i.e., the dictator. With this technique whole populations are seduced into relinquishing their freedom. They become willing slaves to their State, hypnotized through propaganda by the imagined enemy without. In the addicted personality, alcohol is the dictator and here, too, the enemy without is created and becomes part of the rationalizing process of alcoholism. The typical alcoholic drinks because his wife nags him, or because he does not get the promotion he thinks he deserves, or because his friends let him down or shun him. In effect each aspect of reality soon becomes the threatening enemy without and the patient relinquishes his freedom to the alcoholic dictator in order to save himself from his own misconception of a hostile reality. There is always a paranoid-like rationalizing system in alcoholism. Understanding the abnormal psychology of addiction, one sees that rationalization is a necessary support to the alcoholic disease that has taken over the personality. Outside of delirium tremens, alcoholic psychosis and the occasional psychotic reactions following the administration of Antabuse, it does not reveal itself overtly, but it is there nonetheless, and it is very important that the patient gain insight into its abnormal mechanisms.

During therapy the patient will under our guidance gain insight into his unconscious feelings of rejection and guilt. If he is successful he learns to deal with these feelings instead of running away from them, and if acquired his insight into their source may help to allay a great deal of his personality discomfort.

I hope it will be seen from my very brief description of a treatment approach that I attempt to deal with a patient's personality problem as well as his alcoholic problem. Personality problems presented by patients vary enormously, as do the underlying causes for their addiction. They have, however, an extraordinarily similar system of irrational thoughts about drinking which will apply to all of them. Just as the understanding of the warped thought process in the paranoid schizophrenic will help to make the diagnosis and indicate the type of treatment, so also will the understanding of the warped thought process in the alcoholic help us to treat him.

A criticism of this type of psychotherapy is that it is limited to a group who can afford the expense involved in such a treatment. Many of our patients are out-patients, and do well on an out-patient status. In this way, the expense can be kept down so that it is within the reach of nearly everyone. However many of our patients need psychotherapy and would not respond to it without an

initial and sometimes prolonged hospital stay, and this is, of course, expensive.

In order to make a treatment plan available to a greater number of people it has been suggested that group therapy might be instigated. Unhappily group treatment precludes the rapport which has been shown to be so necessary. It has been tried by some of my associates, but the results have not been favorable.

In my attempt to analyze and compare three treatment measures, I have clarified for myself, and I hope for you, the fallacy of finding the treatment for alcoholics. Far better, and much more rewarding in results, is to find the form of treatment best suited to each type of personality afflicted with alcoholism.

Note: Francis T. Chambers, Jr. was a lay-therapist and was trained by Richard R. Peabody.

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+++Message 268. Principles
From: ceceacher@juno.com 6/20/2002 4:39:00 PM

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Good Day!

As I understand the list of principles match the Steps!

The Steps are the principles and with each Step we practice a virtue to help us stay sober.

My list is a little different

STEP PRINCIPLE

1. Honesty
2. Hope
3. Faith
4. Courage
5. Integrity
6. Willingness
7. Humility
8. Brotherly Love
9. Justice
10. Perserverance
11. Spiritual Awareness

12. Service

Thanks for reading,

Cecilia

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+++Message 269. Source of "Why We Were Chosen"
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:25:00 PM

II
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From: frank.disalle@v... [5]

A few years back I was given a reprinted piece of prose (like a long Bookmark) entitled "Why We Were Chosen". I looked for it on the 'Net and found it in several places, one annotated "circa 1974". Can anybody tell me more about it? It is reprinted below

Why We Were Chosen

GOD in His wisdom selected this group of men and women to be purveyors of His goodness. In selecting them through whom to bring about this phenomenon, He went not to the proud, the mighty, the famous or the brilliant. He went instead to the humble, to the sick, to the unfortunate. He went right to the drunkard, the so-called weakling of the world. Well might He have said to us:-

Unto your weak and feeble hands I have entrusted a power beyond estimate. To you has been given that which has been denied the most learned of your fellows. Not to scientists or statesmen, not to wives or mothers, not even to my priests or ministers have I given this gift of healing other alcoholics which I entrust to you.

It must be used unselfishly; it carries with it grave responsibility. No day can be too long; no demands upon your time can be too urgent; no case be too pitiful; no task too hard; no effort too great. It must be used with tolerance for I have restricted its application to no race, no creed, and no denomination. Personal criticism you must expect; lack of appreciation will be common; ridicule will be your lot; your motives will be misjudged. You must be prepared for adversity, for what men call adversity is the ladder you must use to ascend the rungs toward spiritual perfection, and remember, in the exercise of this power I shall not exact from you beyond your capabilities.

You are not selected because of exceptional talents, and be

Careful always, if success attends your efforts not to ascribe to personal superiority that to which you can lay claim only by virtue of my gift. If I had wanted learned men to accomplish this mission, the power would have been entrusted to the physician and scientist. If I had wanted eloquent men, there would have been many anxious for the assignment, for talk is the easiest used of all talents with which I have endowed mankind. If I had wanted scholarly men, the world is filled with better-qualified men than you who would be available. You were selected because you have been the outcasts of the world and your long experience as drunkards has made or should make you humbly alert to the cries of distress that come from the lonely hearts of alcoholics everywhere.

Keep ever in mind the admission you made on the day of your profession in AA- namely that you are powerless and that it was only with your willingness to turn your life and will unto my keeping that relief came to you.

Anonymous

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+++Message 270. "Higher Power"
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:39:00 PM

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From: Billwhite@A... [4]

I have been trying to locate references to the phrase "Higher Power" used specifically in reference to alcoholism recovery that predate AA. I have found a couple of references that I thought might be of interest. The first is in *The Ribbon Workers* by James M. Hiatt, a book published in 1878 that describes the spread of Ribbon Reform Clubs in the 1870s. These clubs were among the many post-Washingtonian alcoholic mutual aid societies. Hiatt describes how it is "no uncommon thing for one (the alcoholic) to be ashamed of having exhibited a sense of dependence upon the Higher Power, when in a strait, even though no creature but himself may know any thing of the fact." p. 51

The second reference comes from Colonel Henry Hadley's 1902 book, *The Blue Badge of Courage*. Hadley's alcoholism unfolded during the Civil War and progressed unchecked until his conversion at the Water Street Mission under the ministrations of Jerry McAuley, who had also suffered from alcoholism. Hadley went on to organize Blue Ribbon Brigades and Blue Ribbon Clubs who sponsored regular "Blue Button Temperance and Rescue Meetings." Hadley's book contains the following: "I have endeavored to show in *The Blue Badge of*

Courage what young men, without money or education, whose lives are blasted by drink and kindred sins, may do, or rather what a Higher Power can do with and for them." p. xi

I would appreciate hearing about any other early "Higher Power" references that anyone has run across.

Bill White

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+++Message 271..... Dallas Preamble
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:45:00 PM

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From: Margie Keith

Texas Preamble:

A few months after the Grapevine published the Preamble in June, 1947, Ollie L., Dick F., and Searcy W. decided to beef it up for the drunks in Texas. "We worked on it, passed it around, and agreed on this version," says Searcy W. "It's now read by groups throughout the state." It works for Searcy. He's been sober 54 years. - February, 2001 Grapevine

For all who would be interested in it:

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

We are gathered here because we are faced with the fact that we are powerless over alcohol, and are unable to do anything about it without the help of a Power greater than ourselves.

We feel each person's religious convictions, if any, are his own affair, and the simple purpose of the program of AA is to show what may be done to enlist the aid of a Power greater than ourselves, regardless of what our individual conception of that Power may be.

In order to form a habit of depending upon and referring all we do to that Power, we must first apply ourselves with some diligence, but repetition confirms and strengthens this habit, then faith comes naturally.

We have all come to know that as alcoholics we are suffering from a serious disease for which medicine has no cure. Our condition may be

the result of an allergic reaction to alcohol which makes it impossible for us to drink in moderation. This condition has never, by any treatment with which we are familiar, been permanently cured. The only relief we have to offer is absolute abstinence - a second meaning of AA.

There are no dues or fees. The only requirement is an honest desire to stop drinking. Each member is a person with an acknowledged alcoholic problem who has found the key to abstinence from day to day by adhering to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. The moment he resumes drinking he loses all status as a member of AA. His reinstatement is automatic, however, when he again fulfills the sole requirement for membership - an honest desire to quit drinking.

Not being reformers we offer our experience only to those who want it. AA is not interested in sobering up drunks who are seeking only temporary sobriety. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree and in which we join in harmonious action. Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are those who will not or cannot lend themselves to this simple program-- usually men and women who are incapable of being honest with themselves. You may like this Program or you may not, but the fact remains that it works.. and we believe it is our only chance to recover.

There is a vast amount of fun included in the AA fellowship. Some people may be shocked at our apparent worldliness and levity, but just underneath there is a deadly earnestness and a full realization that we must put first things first. With each of us the first thing is our alcoholic problem. Faith must work twenty-four hours a day in and through us, or we perish.

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++++Message 272. CHARMING IS THE WORD FOR ALCOHOLICS
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:47:00 PM

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From: WEEZENBOB@a... [6]

CHARMING IS THE WORD FOR ALCOHOLICS
BY
FULTON OUSLER

Down at the very bottom of the social scale of AA society are the pariahs, the untouchables, and the outcasts, all known by one excoriating epithet-relatives.

I am a relative I know my place. I am not complaining. But I hope no one minds if I venture the plaintive confession that there are times, oh, many, many, times when I wish I had been an alcoholic. By that I mean that I wish I were an AA. The reason is that I consider the AA people the most charming in the world.

Such is my considered opinion. As a journalist it has been my fortune to meet many of the people who are considered charming. I number among my friends stars, and lesser lights of stage and cinema; writers are my daily diet. I know the ladies and gentleman of both political parties; I have been entertained in the White House. I have broken bread with kings and ministers and ambassadors and I say after that catalog, which could be extended, that I would prefer an evening with my AA friends to any person or group of persons I have indicated.

I ask myself why I consider so charming these alcoholic caterpillars who have found their butterfly wings in Alcoholics Anonymous. There are more reasons than one, but I can name a few.

They are imaginative, and that helps to make them alcoholics. Some of them drank to flog their ambition on to greater efforts. Others guzzled only to black out unendurable demons that rose in their imagination. But when they have found their restoration, their imagination is responsive to new incantations, and their talk abounds with color and light, and that makes them charming companions too.

The AA people are what they are, and they were what they were, because they are sensitive, imaginative, possessed of a sense of humor and awareness of universal truth. They are sensitive, which means they are hurt easily, and that helped them to become alcoholics. But when they have found their restoration, they are still as sensitive as ever; responsive to beauty and to truth and eager about the intangible glories of this life. That makes them charming companions.

They are possessed with a sense of humor. Even in their cups they have been known to say damnable funny things. Often it was being forced to take seriously the little and mean things of life that make them seek escape in a bottle. But when they have found restoration, their sense of humor finds a blessed freedom, and they are able to reach a godlike state where they can laugh at themselves, the very height of self conquest. Go to the meetings and listen to the laughter. At what are they laughing? At ghoulish memories over which weaker souls would cringe in useless remorse. And that makes them wonderful people to be with by candlelight.

And they are possessed of a sense of universal truth. That is often a new thing in their hearts. The fact that this at-one-meant with God's universe had never been awakened in them is sometimes the reason

why they drank. The fact that it was at last awakened is almost always the reason why they were restored to the good and simple ways of life. Stand with them when the meeting is over, and listen while they say the "Our Father." They have found a power greater than themselves which they diligently serve. And that gives them a charm that never was elsewhere on land or sea. It makes you know that God, Himself, is really charming, because the AA people reflect His mercy and His forgiveness.

Liberty Magazine - 1940

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++++Message 273. Lois Burnham Wilson: Bill Wilson's
Wife
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:51:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

"I believe that people are good if you give them half a chance and that good is more powerful than evil. The world seems to me excruciatingly, almost painfully beautiful at times, and the goodness and kindness of people often exceed that which even I expect."

Lois Burnham Wilson

Lois Burnham, the co-founder of The Al-Anon Family Groups, was born on March 4, 1891 at 182 Clinton Street, Brooklyn Heights, New York. Brooklyn Heights at that time was in character much the same that it is today, one of the most lovely areas in the Greater New York area and a desirable place to live.

Her father, Clark Burnham, was a gynecologist and surgeon, and Matilda Spellman, her mother, a young woman of refinement. Dr. Burnham brought his bride to the fashionable brick-front row house upon their marriage in 1888. Dr. Burnham had been renting part of the house as offices but leased the entire five-floor house upon his marriage.

Lois was the first of the Burnham's children. A daughter, Matilda, would die in infancy leaving three girls -- Lois, Barbara and Katherine -- and two boys, Rogers and Lyman. In her memoir, *Lois Remembers*, published by Al-Anon, Lois recalls her childhood as "idyllic", and it seems that this is an accurate assessment.

Lois' parents were different from parents in the Victoria era in that they

were affectionately demonstrative with each other in front of the children. These open displays of affection were rare in those days and attest to the deep love the two had for each other and that it was regarded as natural and good. Indeed, in many photos of the two, even into old age, the couple seem engaged with each other and truly enjoying each other's company.

The Burnham household seems to have embodied so many wonderful elements. The children were respected and deeply loved by their parents and were brought up to be loving and thoughtful towards others. They were given excellent educations and all sent to college. Lois was a graduate of The Packer Collegiate Institute in Brooklyn. All the children went to Pratt Institute in Brooklyn which was one of the first schools to have a new type of preschool started in Germany called "kindergarten". Later, they were enrolled in the Quaker's Friends School.

Lois' primary interests were mostly artistic. She would later become interested in interior decoration, but also showed interest in fine art. After graduating from Packer Institute, she took drawing classes at the New York School of Fine and Applied Art.

Lois' memories of childhood are a rich pastiche of the best of the turn-of-the-century family life and infused with stories of warm gatherings with her relatives, admiration for her intelligent and artistic mother and her energetic and confident father. Most of all, she remembers how loving and warm her parents were and how much she wanted to one day have a home like the one from which she came.

The Burnhams taught their children to be thoughtful and caring of others and to be of use in the world. The impressions of her home life are ones of excitement and lots of fun. Lois was particularly adventuresome and cared little for how she looked and was often referred to as a "tomboy."

This aspect of her personality was given its fullest expression during the Burnhams long sojourns in southern Vermont. Each year, the family spent half a year in the Manchester, Vermont area where Dr. Burnham's New York patients also spent long periods. Her parents were fully part of the upper-class social life there and were friends with many well-known people of the day, including Abraham Lincoln's son whose children were among the younger Burnham's playmates.

One of the children the Burnham's played with, especially Rogers, was a boy who came each summer with his prominent family from Albany, New York. His name was Edwin or "Ebby" Thacher who would also become a close friend of Lois' future husband, Bill Wilson, and be instrumental in Bill's getting sober.

Rogers also found a pal in Bill Wilson, and in 1913 introduced him to his sister. Lois was over four years older than Bill, and being 22 at the time, did not regard him as anything other than her brother's friend. But as the

summers went on, she and Bill more and more found many common interests and gradually fell in love. They were both intelligent, athletic and fun-loving. Lois encouraged Bill at his studies and thought him to be a most remarkable young man. Her family shared this assessment. And so, in 1915, the couple became secretly engaged and married on January 24, 1918, just days before young officer Wilson shipped off to Europe in the First World War.

When Lois married Bill, she wed an upstanding young man of good character filled with exciting ideas about his future. What Lois did not marry was a drinker. On the contrary, Bill has a disdain for liquor partly because he believed it had played a part in his parents separation and divorce. It was a great shock to Lois some months later when, visiting her husband at his New Bedford, Massachusetts station, his soldier friends told her about Bill getting so drunk one night they had to carry him back to barracks. Lois could not believe they were speaking of her husband.

Bill shipped off to England, and Lois found work as an occupational therapist. As an educated woman, Lois believed in being independent and making her own living. She worked at the YWCA and was promoted several times within the organization leaving in 1917 to assist in a school her aunt had established in Short Hills, New Jersey. She left that position to marry Bill.

When Bill returned from the war, Lois hoped to start the family she always wanted. However, a series of miscarriages made childbearing impossible. This was a devastation for her. All Lois wanted out of life was a family and a home. Now she would not have the family. She and Bill tried to adopt, but they were unsuccessful. She later found out why -- agencies performing routine background checks would eventually be told about Bill. Stories about his drinking would surface and be enough to make adoption impossible as well.

Bill's drinking alarmed Lois very much. At first, she tried not to be concerned, but his drinking progressed during the early years of marriage to the point where he would see all his ambitions dashed and his wonderful opportunities for employment and advancement shattered. He became a broken man who eventually had to seek refuge with his wife in the house of his in-laws.

Lois employed many tactics over the years to help Bill get sober. She really thought she would be able to help him stop drinking. She would realize later how futile this was. Bill did stop in 1934, but it was not due to the efforts of his wife.

In 1939, Bill and Lois were forced to leave the Burnham's house. Her father and mother had died, and the Wilsons could not afford to go anywhere except to the homes of various friends which they did for the following two years. Over the years, Lois had been the breadwinner bringing in a modest income from her work in department stores as a decorator and also from her consultations with private clients. While working at Macy's she wrote an article on veneered furniture that was published by the popular House and Garden magazine.

Living as Lois once wrote "from pillar to post" was difficult for Lois. Not having children was a deep loss, and now, not to have a home was quite painful. She did her best and maintained her dignity throughout the ordeal but sometimes despaired that they might be homeless for a very long time.

But in 1941 an extraordinary thing happened. A generous offer was made by an acquaintance for the Wilsons to purchase a home in Westchester County. Due to this magnanimous gesture, the Wilsons moved into their first and only real home -- Stepping Stones in Bedford Hills, New York. It took them 23 years, but they finally had a home of their own.

In 1951, Lois followed the suggestion made by her husband who had crafted the 12 steps of recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous to create a similar 12-step program for the family and friends of alcoholics. In truth, there had been several family groups around the country that Bill had become aware of and Anne Smith, wife of AA co-founder Dr. Bob, had been involved in working with wives and families from the very first.

Bill thought the groups could be consolidated and that Lois be the one to take it on. (Anne Smith had died in 1949.) Lois was reluctant, not because she did not recognize the need, but because she was 60 and wanted to enjoy life at Stepping Stones tending her garden and involving herself in artistic projects. Lois' strong sense of service prevailed, and at the end of the 1951 AA General Service Conference, she gathered the delegates' wives and local family groups members at Stepping Stones to discuss going forward with a formal organization.

Working from Lois' upstairs desk at Stepping Stones, Lois and Anne B., a nearby friend whose husband was in AA, wrote to 87 non-alcoholics who had written to AA asking for information about alcoholism. The letters had come from the U.S., Canada, Ireland, Australia and South Africa. Forty-eight people wrote back and eventually the organization known as the Al-Anon Family Groups was formed. It now has over 29,000 groups worldwide and a membership of over 387,000.

Lois Wilson died on October 6, 1988 at 97 years old. She was present and energetic throughout her latter years and enjoyed good health for most of them. She wanted to live to be 100 and almost did.

Lois was one of the 20th century's most important women. Her life has been somewhat overshadowed by that of her husband, but, in recent years, she has emerged more visible than before for her unique contribution to humanity. It is through her tireless efforts and vision that Al-Anon is the strong organization it is today and why it continues to attract members through its message of hope and renewal.

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+++Message 274. Preface to the Australian Commemorative
Edition of the Big Book
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 5:49:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

This special Australian commemorative edition of the Big Book is dedicated to the pioneer men and women who followed up on the initial inquiries made by Dr. M. and Archie Mckinnon to A.A. in America, and indeed to all the men and women who have walked through the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous in the last fifty years and who have played their part in keeping our Fellowship united and viable. Also to the devoted non-alcoholics who, through their love and friendship, helped to stabilize the Fellowship. We cannot forget our gratitude and sincere thanks to the early members in America, for without them we would not now be celebrating fifty years of Alcoholics Anonymous in Australia. Australia was the first country outside of North America to accept Alcoholics Anonymous as a means of recovery from the disease of alcoholism. The first contact was made in 1942 by Dr. Sylvester M., the medical superintendent of a psychiatric hospital at Rydalmere in Sydney. His interest was captured by an article in the American Journal of Psychiatry on the workings of A.A. in America. Dr. M. wrote to the journal and his letter was forwarded to A.A. Headquarters in New York (now know as the General Service Office). Some months later, he received a letter, together with the first Big Book sent to Australia. The letter was from Margaret (Bobbie) B., the secretary of the Alcoholic Foundation in New York (which became the General Service Board of A.A. in 1954).

Archie McKinnon, a psychiatric nurse working at the Darlinghurst Reception House, who had been interested in trying to help the alcoholics in his care, had also made contact and received a letter and a Big Book from New York. However, it was 1945 before A.A. began functioning in Australia on a group basis.

The early members felt that the character of Australians was different and that what had worked for American alcoholics would not necessarily work for Australians. Dr. M. was in agreement with this and said so in one of his letters. However, he either did not realize or want to admit that he was an alcoholic himself. He later revealed this in one of his letters to Bobbie B. He also apologized for his audacity and admitted the Aussie alkies were wrong. The Traditions had not been written at that time, so there was a lot of confusion. A house was provided for "down and out" alcoholics at Loftus, an outer Sydney suburb, through the help of Father Tom D., who was known nationally for his charitable work. It was called Christmas House because it

opened at that time of the year. Clothing, food, and even a ration of alcohol were handed out - to keep them off the cheap "plonk" and "metho" - and the place was used as a holiday house away from the city and away from the police and the Inebriate Act. There was no incentive to live according to the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous. There were lots of disturbances, so the police finally shut the place down.

The first member of Alcoholics Anonymous in Australia to remain sober for a considerable time was Rex A. There may have been other members who stopped drinking before him but most of these dropped out of sight and started drinking again. Some of the others who came along during the early days were followed not long after by Russ and his wife Dorothy. Fred and Eileen also were part of those early meetings. Clive and Lorna had what was virtually the first "Central Office" in their home for over a year. The wives mentioned here were non-alcoholics. Archie McKinnon and his wife Dulcie were also heavily involved in the A.A. meetings. In those days the non-alcoholics became the secretaries, treasurers, etc.

There was even a breakaway group of A.A. which was the "Commonsense Group". This came about because one of the members had difficulty in accepting the spirituality of the program. He was able to persuade quite a few of the members to join him. He deleted all reference to God and emasculated the Steps, but the group only lasted for a month. They all returned except this unfortunate man (who later died from an overdose of paraldehyde while trying to recover from a long bout of active alcoholism).

A.A. is a fellowship of men and women and the members realized this when our first woman joined the group in 1946. Betty was a pretty red-haired housewife who was no stranger to A.A. She had assisted Father Tom eighteen months earlier at Loftus. She attracted other women, and since then thousands have joined the Fellowship over the years.

Frank Sturge Harty was approached to spread the word about the Fellowship. He was a radio broadcaster whose program, "Let's Talk it Over" discussed problems sent in by the listeners. Many of the problems involved alcoholism. He spoke regularly of Alcoholics Anonymous and the Twelve Steps and became a lifelong friend of the Fellowship.

The program of Alcoholics Anonymous is a spiritual one but this was not so apparent to the early members. Father Richard Murphy, a Jesuit priest, interpreted the Twelve Steps and together with "Sturge" was able to spread the message of Alcoholics Anonymous assisted by Dr. M. Father Tom, Doctor M. and Archie McKinnon had diverse ideas on how Alcoholics Anonymous should be "run", but all of them helped to keep A.A. going in the early days, with the support of Father Richard Murphy. Dr. Bill Spence was the first official non-alcoholic Trustee but, surely, KcKinnon, Father Murphy and "Sturge"; Harty were the early, unofficial non-alcoholic Trustees of A.A.

In the beginning, it was difficult to progress because of the shortage of books. Archie and Rex got together a pamphlet called, "The Basic Principles of A.A.". It contained an article on alcoholism by Dr. M. and Rex wrote his own story. It also included articles by Dr. Foster Kennedy, Dr. Kirby Collier and Dr. Harry Tiebout. These men were very well known in America and well respected for their ideas on medicine and psychiatry. It was a very instructive little booklet, which turned out to be most valuable.

Alcoholics Anonymous has continued to grow and today we have about two thousand groups nationwide. We have delegates and a National Conference as well as our General Service Board and General Service Office and we are represented at the World Service Meeting.

We also have 18 Central Service Offices around the country, which co-operate with the General Service structure. They work together as "partners in service", to carry the message to still suffering alcoholics.

From the early days, literature has been published in Australia. A.A. Publishing was established in 1967 and since 1986 the Big Book has been printed in Australia. Most of the books, booklets and pamphlets are now printed locally.

To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Alcoholics Anonymous in Australia, we print this special edition containing forty personal stories by women and men in the Australian Fellowship of A.A. The basic text (the first 164 pages) remains intact, but - with the exception of "Dr. Bob's Nightmare" which has been retained - the Australian segment of stories replaces the personal stories in the standard (Third) edition.

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+++Message 275. Bill Wilson and Law School
From: Fiona Dodd 6/11/2002 5:14:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

Bill Wilson and Law School

Bill writes in the Big Book (page 2): "I took a night law course...I studied economics and business as well as law...Potential alcoholic that I was, I nearly failed my law course. At one of the finals I was too drunk to think or write...By the time I had completed the law, I knew the law was not for me."

Dan Demarest, a former Stepping Stones board member (Stepping Stones is where

Bill & Lois lived the last half of their life) and a lawyer himself, was curious about Bill's almost-law career and contacted Brooklyn Law School for more information. He writes:

"I spoke on the telephone yesterday with Dean Traeger of Brooklyn Law School, who had before him the School's file on Bill Wilson's academic career as a law student in the early 1920's.

"He stated that, in Bill's first year at law school, his grades varied sharply from brilliant (90 in Contracts, 89 in Torts) to mediocre (77 in Agency and in Partnerships). In his second year, his grades were ever more up and down, including some high marks and also a 67 and a 68 which were flunking grades. Both of these failed courses Bill took again and passed.

"In February of 1923, Bill flunked a course on Equity and left the Law School. His file shows that he returned in September, when all his courses were third year courses except for Equity, which he repeated and passed. "He was scheduled to graduate in June of 1924, except that he failed a course called "Executors and Administrators" (relating to wills, estates and trusts).

"He again returned in the fall and began repeating the Executors and Administrators course, but left the Law School finally on November 20, 1924 without, according to Dean Traeger's records, again taking the exam for the Executors and Administrator's course.

"My surmise is that in later years Bill remembered that he had more than once made up for and successfully passed a test previously failed but that he did not recall that he had not gotten around to retaking this last examination."

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+++Message 276. Moral psychology
From: Fiona Dodd 6/11/2002 5:19:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

Moral psychology

The dude that is referenced in the story on the bottom of page xxix in the Big Book that is mentioned is Fitz Mayo. He is probably N.Y.'s AA #3 (Bill Wilson, Hank Parkhurst, then Fitz) and his story is on page 497 of the Big Book called "Our Southern Friend". AA History Buffs post #79 has a little bio on him. Now here's the tricky part: near the middle of page xxv when Silky mentions "some form of moral psychology" he is referring to some kind of "spiritual

experience" or "spiritual awakening" (Silky calls it on page xxvii, "an ENTIRE psychic change", and Dr. Carl Jung describes it in the middle of page 27), which doctors of that day had NO idea of how to bring about such a change or awakening in a real alcoholic. But, on page xxix when he mentions "moral psychology" he is talking about the psychological approaches that were used in those days. That is why he says, "we doubted if even that would have any effect". By the way, below is Silky's full length article that is the actual article that Bill Wilson took some paragraphs from in the second part of "The Doctor's Opinion". Enjoy!

Just Love,

Bill

(This is the expanded letter from Silky, parts of which can be found in the Big Book pages xxv to xxx called "The Doctor's Opinion".)

Psychological Rehabilitation of Alcoholics

By William D. Silkworth, M.D. from "The Medical Record", July 19, 1939

In a study of carefully recorded histories of alcoholics in our hospital, two important facts appear to be outstanding. Expressed briefly, they are:

1) A majority of our patients do not wish to have an alcoholic problem. They lead busy lives & would like to enjoy the fruits of their efforts, but they cannot stop the use of alcohol.

2) These patients cannot use alcohol in moderation.

The allergic nature of true alcoholism was postulated in a previous paper. We then endeavored to show that alcohol does not become a problem to every person who uses it, & that the use of alcohol in itself does not produce a chronic alcoholic.

The phenomenon of craving must be present as a manifestation of an allergy. Once established in an individual, one drink creates a desire for more. It sets this person aside as a separate entity. It creates a conflict that ends in a form of neurosis.

Looking further at the record of these unfortunates, we find that the majority could not drink in moderation from the very beginning. Whether 20, 30, or 50 years of age, they soon become a problem to themselves & to their friends.

Now in analyzing these alcoholic-minded persons, there is no one physical or psychical fact that is sufficiently constant to justify its use as the basis of an accepted theory. Such phrases as "escape from reality" & "inferiority complex" hold true for some, but not all, while heredity, only son, & implied spoiling in childhood, account for a few more. They all lead to confusion & have no answer.

Eliminate the constitutional psychopaths, the moral & mental defectives, & there remains a large class, neurotic in type, for whom something is worth doing. Remember we are discussing the chronic alcoholic, not the man who drinks more than is good for him but has no resulting problem.

Apparently all these people - good, bad & indifferent - have one thing in common: they cannot drink in moderation. We believe they show manifestations of an allergy to alcohol. They may abstain from use of alcohol for a month or a year, but on taking it again in any form, they at once establish the phenomenon of craving. This fact is well known to all alcoholics & creates their major problems in the early stages of their drinking habits. They complain about it, too.

Why, we naturally ask, in the early years of drinking, while they still have the ability to choose, do these people not solve this problem by the complete discontinuance of alcohol? Some do, but many are like the rest of us who do things we know we should not, but like to do them anyway. Many really believe they can drink as they see others doing, & enjoy themselves. For many reasons, most of which are social or even physical, the idea of drinking is developed gradually. As this idea advances, daily life becomes more secure, but these men are unwilling to accept the facts as presented to them. The act of drinking (in the end damaging) is followed by certain comfortable emotional states that make it a pleasure. They prove to themselves that they can stop drinking by going on the wagon for varying periods, but even as life becomes more complicated, they still persist in that old, original idea. Up to this time, in what one might call the first period of alcoholism there are methods employed to help these persons return to a normal life & accept the fact that their old idea of drinking must be discarded forever. We ourselves have treated some of them with permanent results, but the majority continues along the primrose path. The history of these people & their families present from now on, one of the real tragedies of human life & is too well known to comment on further here.

This begins the second stage. Understood by no one & not understanding themselves, they enter an ever-widening circle, remorse, penance, new transgressions, new penance, until they lose all capacity for spontaneous action. They sacrifice themselves for a perversive idea & defying the law of nature (allergy) operating in their case, pay the penalty. They have lost all pleasure in normal life. Based on their underlying neurotic nature, they develop a compulsion type of thinking, and, although not a true compulsion neurosis, it is surely a borderline type. The patient now acts under what has been called by Wechsler a psychic imperative, the dreaded terminal state of paralysis of the will. The predisposing factor in bringing about this definite state of insecurity is the conflict brought about by alcoholism.

It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss the complications of the obsessional neurosis, which are, in fact, the most elastic of all the

neuroses, but in this particular type it seems to permit a retreat from the ever-increasing anxieties induced by the advancing chronic alcoholism.

This compulsive thinking is apparently a purely intellectual process occurring more frequently among persons of relatively higher intellectual attainment, from which class, by the way, comes the average chronic alcoholic.

Characteristic of all compulsion types of thinking is the relatively good insight that accompanies them. The victim knows his impulse to drink is wrong but he is helpless before it. Wives may plead, friends argue, & employers threaten, but he is no longer amenable to impression. He is unable to resolve between opposing impulses. He cries out in agony, "I must stop, I cannot be like this; but I cannot stop; someone must help me."

If he has sufficient means, he has by now been treated by psychiatrists, good men, who fully realize the unfavorable prognosis, but who, often without remuneration, give freely of their time to help the victim. I have often seen psychoanalysis of an alcoholic, instead of breaking up the compulsive thinking; start the person further theorizing on his own illness.

We know that, as a rule, the only relief from psychoanalysis is in making the so-called transfer, & experience has taught us that this is gratifyingly successful if accomplished. If successful, it must be based on respect & confidence on the part of the patient. It can seldom be accomplished in this class of patients, except by one who has suffered in the same manner & has recovered. In other words, to accomplish the transfer of this compulsive idea by the plan we have seen developed, an ex-alcoholic who has recovered by the same means be the medium employed. Such a medium can explain convincingly, not only that the transfer of the compulsive thinking can be made, but also he can prove how he did it himself successfully.

We physicians have realized for a long time that some form of moral psychology was of urgent importance to alcoholics, but its application presented difficulties beyond our conception. What with our ultramodern standards, our scientific approach to everything, we are perhaps not well equipped to apply the powers of good lying outside our synthetic knowledge.

About four years ago, we hospitalized a young man for severe chronic alcoholism, &, while under our care he developed a plan that seemed to me to be a combination of psychology & religion. He never drank any form of alcohol again.

Later he requested the privilege of being allowed to tell his story to other patients &, perhaps with some misgiving, we consented. The cases we have followed through have been most interesting: in fact many of them are amazing. The unselfishness of these men as we have come to know them, the entire absence of profit motive & their community spirit, are indeed inspiring to one who has labored long & wearily in the field of alcoholism. They believe in

themselves, & still more in the Power which pulls chronic alcoholics back from the gates of death.

Of course, prior to & in preparation for the application of this plan, it is, in my opinion, essential to detoxicate the alcoholics by hospitalization. You then have a subject whose brain is clear & whose mind is receptive & temporarily free from his craving. I hesitate here to attempt even an outline of the plan as employed by these men. Sufficient to say, perhaps, that following many failures, they gradually devised a plan or procedure that led them to make this so-called transfer to one greater than themselves, to God.

The whole story is admirably told in a book written by them entitled "Alcoholics Anonymous". It would seem to me that they have wrung from the Eternal a new application of an old truth that is sufficient equipment to restore the patient in his fight for sobriety. The results seem to flow naturally from a follow-up of honest effort.

To make any such plan practical they have also projected this transfer beyond the individual to the group. The information of these men into groups, each one with the hand of fellowship passing on his experiences to others, helping those who have newly joined to adjust themselves, actively engaged in gathering in new members, seems to me the most practical application of their moral psychology, to assure their "transfer" of being permanent. (Although I have met some 30 or more of these ex-alcoholics. I relate my experience with two of them.)

About one year prior to this experience a man was brought in to be treated for chronic alcoholism. He had but partially recovered from a gastric hemorrhage & seemed to be a case of pathological mental deterioration. He had lost everything worthwhile in life, & was only living, one might say, to drink. He frankly admitted & believed that for him there was no hope. Following the elimination of alcohol there was found to be no permanent brain injury. He accepted the plan outlined in the book. One year later he called to see me, & I experienced a very strange sensation. I knew the man by name & partly recognized his features, but there all resemblance ended. From a trembling, despairing, nervous wreck, had emerged a man brimming over with self-reliance & contentment. I talked with him for some time, but was not able to bring myself to feel that I had known him before. To me he was a stranger, & so he left me. More than three years have now passed with no return to alcohol.

When I need a mental uplift, I often think of another case brought in by a physician, prominent in New York City. The patient made his own diagnosis, & deciding that his condition was hopeless, had hidden in a deserted barn, determined to die. He was rescued by a searching party, & in desperate condition brought to me. Following his physical rehabilitation, he had a talk with me in which he frankly stated he thought the treatment a waste of time & effort, unless I could assure him, which no one ever had, that in the future he could have the will power to resist the impulse to drink. His alcoholic

problem was so complex, & his depression so great, that we felt his only hope would be through what we then called "moral psychology," & we doubted if even that would have any effect. However, he did adopt the ideas contained in this book. He has not had a drink for more than three years. I see him now & then, & he is as fine a specimen as one could wish to meet.

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+++Message 277. A Fragment of History
From: Fiona Dodd 6/11/2002 5:27:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

A Fragment of History

By Bill Wilson

AA Grapevine, July 1953

AA's are always asking: "Where did the Twelve Steps come from?" In the last analysis, perhaps nobody knows. Yet some of the events which led to their formulation are as clear to me as though they took place yesterday.

So far as people were concerned, the main channels of inspiration for our Steps were three in number -- the Oxford Groups, Dr. William D. Silkworth of Townes Hospital and the famed psychologist, William James, called by some the father of modern psychology. The story of how these streams of influence were brought together and how they led to the writing of our Twelve Steps is exciting and in spots downright incredible.

Many of us will remember the Oxford Groups as a modern evangelical movement which flourished in the 1920's and early 30's, led by a one-time Lutheran minister, Dr. Frank Buchman. The Oxford Groups of that day threw heavy emphasis on personal work, one member with another. AA's Twelfth Step had its origin in that vital practice. The moral backbone of the "O.G." was absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness and absolute love. They also practiced a type of confession, which they called "sharing"; the making of amends for harms done they called "restitution." They believed deeply in their "quiet time," a meditation practiced by groups and individuals alike, in which the guidance of God was sought for every detail of living, great or small.

These basic ideas were not new; they could have been found elsewhere. But the saving thing for us first alcoholics who contacted the Oxford Groupers was that they laid great stress on these particular principles. And fortunate for

us was the fact that the Groupers took special pains not to interfere with one's personal religious views. Their society, like ours later on, saw the need to be strictly non-denominational.

In the late summer of 1934, my well-loved alcoholic friend and schoolmate "Ebby" had fallen in with these good folks and had promptly sobered up. Being an alcoholic, and rather on the obstinate side, he hadn't been able to "buy" all the Oxford Group ideas and attitudes. Nevertheless, he was moved by their deep sincerity and felt mighty grateful for the fact that their ministrations had, for the time being, lifted his obsession to drink.

When he arrived in New York in the late fall of 1934, Ebby thought at once of me. On a bleak November day he rang up. Soon he was looking at me across our kitchen table at 182 Clinton Street, Brooklyn, New York. As I remember that conversation, he constantly used phrases like these: "I found I couldn't run my own life;" "I had to get honest with myself and somebody else;" "I had to make restitution for the damage I had done;" "I had to pray to God for guidance and strength, even though I wasn't sure there was any God;" "And after I'd tried hard to do these things I found that my craving for alcohol left." Then over and over Ebby would say something like this: "Bill, it isn't a bit like being on the water wagon. You don't fight the desire to drink -- you get released from it. I never had such a feeling before."

Such was the sum of what Ebby had extracted from his Oxford Group friends and had transmitted to me that day. While these simple ideas were not new, they certainly hit me like tons of brick. Today we understand just why that was...one alcoholic was talking to another as no one else can.

Two or three weeks later, December 11th to be exact, I staggered into the Charles B. Townes Hospital, that famous drying-out emporium on Central Park West, New York City. I'd been there before, so I knew and already loved the doctor in charge -- Dr. Silkworth. It was he who was soon to contribute a very great idea without which AA could never have succeeded. For years he had been proclaiming alcoholism an illness, an obsession of the mind coupled with an allergy of the body. By now I knew this meant me. I also understood what a fatal combination these twin ogres could be. Of course, I'd once hoped to be among the small percentage of victims who now and then escape their vengeance. But this outside hope was now gone. I was about to hit bottom. That verdict of science -- the obsession that condemned me to drink and the allergy that condemned me to die -- was about to do the trick. That's where the medical science, personified by this benign little doctor, began to fit it in. Held in the hands of one alcoholic talking to the next, this double-edged truth was a sledgehammer which could shatter the tough alcoholic's ego at depth and lay him wide open to the grace of God.

In my case it was of course Dr. Silkworth who swung the sledge while my friend Ebby carried to me the spiritual principles and the grace which brought on my sudden spiritual awakening at the hospital three days later. I immediately

knew that I was a free man. And with this astonishing experience came a feeling of wonderful certainty that great numbers of alcoholics might one day enjoy the priceless gift which had been bestowed upon me.

Third Influence

At this point a third stream of influence entered my life through the pages of William James' book, "Varieties of Religious Experience." Somebody had brought it to my hospital room. Following my sudden experience, Dr. Silkworth had taken great pains to convince me that I was not hallucinated. But William James did even more. Not only, he said, could spiritual experiences make people saner, they could transform men and women so that they could do, feel and believe what had hitherto been impossible to them. It mattered little whether these awakenings were sudden or gradual, their variety could be almost infinite. But the biggest payoff of that noted book was this: in most of the cases described, those who had been transformed were hopeless people. In some controlling area of their lives they had met absolute defeat. Well, that was me all right. In complete defeat, with no hope or faith whatever, I had made an appeal to a higher Power. I had taken Step One of today's AA program -- "admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable." I'd also take Step Three -- "made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to God as we understood him." Thus was I set free. It was just as simple, yet just as mysterious, as that.

These realizations were so exciting that I instantly joined up with the Oxford Groups. But to their consternation I insisted on devoting myself exclusively to drunks. This was disturbing to the O.G.'s on two counts. Firstly, they wanted to help save the whole world. Secondly, their luck with drunks had been poor. Just as I joined they had been working over a batch of alcoholics who had proved disappointing indeed. One of them, it was rumored, had flippantly cast his shoe through a valuable stained glass window of an Episcopal church across the alley from O.G. headquarters. Neither did they take kindly to my repeated declaration that it shouldn't take long to sober up all the drunks in the world. They rightly declared that my conceit was still immense.

Something Missing

After some six months of violent exertion with scores of alcoholics which I found at a nearby mission and Townes Hospital, it began to look like the Groupers were right. I hadn't sobered up anybody. In Brooklyn we always had a houseful of drinkers living with us, sometimes as many as five. My valiant wife, Lois, once arrived home from work to find three of them fairly tight. They were whaling each other with two-by-fours. Though events like these slowed me down somewhat, the persistent conviction that a way to sobriety could be found never seemed to leave me. There was, though, one bright spot. My sponsor, Ebby, still clung precariously to his new-found sobriety.

What was the reason for all these fiascoes? If Ebby and I could achieve

sobriety, why couldn't all the rest find it too? Some of those we'd worked on certainly wanted to get well. We speculated day and night why nothing much had happened to them. Maybe they couldn't stand the spiritual pace of the Oxford Group's four absolutes of honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love. In fact some of the alcoholics declared that this was the trouble. The aggressive pressure upon them to get good overnight would make them fly high as geese for a few weeks and then flop dismally. They complained, too, about another form of coercion -- something the Oxford Groupers called "guidance for others." A "team" composed of non-alcoholic Groupers would sit down with an alcoholic and after a "quiet time" would come up with precise instructions as to how the alcoholic should run his own life. As grateful as we were to our O.G. friends, this was sometimes tough to take. It obviously had something to do with the wholesale skidding that went on.

But this wasn't the entire reason for failure. After months I saw the trouble was mainly in me. I had become very aggressive, very cocksure. I talked a lot about my sudden spiritual experience, as though it was something very special. I had been playing the double role of teacher and preacher. In my exhortations I'd forgotten all about the medical side of our malady, and that need for deflation at depth so emphasized by William James had been neglected. We weren't using that medical sledgehammer that Dr. Silkworth had so providentially given us.

Finally, one day, Dr. Silkworth took me back down to my right size. Said he, "Bill, why don't you quit talking so much about that bright light experience of yours, it sounds too crazy. Though I'm convince that nothing but better morals will make alcoholics really well, I do think you have got the cart before the horse. The point is that alcoholics won't buy all this moral exhortation until they convince themselves that they must. If I were you I'd go after them on the medical basis first. While it is never done any good for me to tell them how fatal their malady is, it might be a very different story if you, a formerly hopeless alcoholic, gave them the bad news. Bemuse of this identification you naturally have with alcoholics, you might be able to penetrate where I can't. Give them the medical business first, and give it to them hard. This might soften them up so they will accept the principles that will really get them well."

Then Came Akron

Shortly after this history-making conversation, I found myself in Akron, Ohio, on a business venture which promptly collapsed. Alone in the town, I was scared to death of getting drunk. I was no longer a teacher or a preacher, I was an alcoholic who knew that he needed another alcoholic as much as that one could possibly need me. Driven by that urge, I was soon face to face with Dr. Bob. It was at once evident that Dr. Bob knew more of the spiritual things than I did. He also had been in touch with the Oxford Groupers at Akron. But somehow he simply couldn't get sober. Following Dr. Silkworth's advice, I used the medical sledgehammer. I told him what alcoholism was and just how fatal it

could be. Apparently this did something to Dr. Bob. On June 10, 1935, he sobered up, never to drink again. When, in 1939, Dr. Bob's story first appeared in the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, he put one paragraph of it in italics. Speaking of me, he said: "Of far more importance was the fact that he was the first living human with whom I had ever talked, who knew what he was talking about in regard to alcoholism from actual experience."

The Missing Link

Dr. Silkworth had indeed supplied us the missing link without which the chain of principles now forged into our Twelve Steps could never have been complete. Then and there, the spark that was to become *Alcoholics Anonymous* had been struck.

During the next three years after Dr. Bob's recovery our growing groups at Akron, New York and Cleveland evolved the so-called word-of-mouth program of our pioneering time. As we commenced to form a society separate from the Oxford Group, we began to state our principles something like this:

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

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 O.G. absolutes of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, this was the gist of our message to incoming alcoholics up to 1939, when our present Twelve Steps were put to paper.

I well remember the evening on which the Twelve Steps was written. I was lying in bed quite dejected and suffering from one of my imaginary ulcer attacks. Four chapters of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, had been roughed out and read in meetings at Akron and New York. We quickly found that everybody wanted to be an author. The hassles as to what should go into our new book were terrific. For example, some wanted a purely psychological book which would draw in alcoholics without scaring them. We could tell them about the "God business" afterwards. A few, led by our wonderful southern friend, Fitz M., wanted a fairly religious book infused with some of the dogma we had picked up from the churches and missions which had tried to help us. The louder the arguments, the more I felt in the middle. It appeared that I wasn't going to be the author at all. I was only going to be an umpire who would decide the contents of the book. This didn't mean, though, that there wasn't terrific enthusiasm for the undertaking. Every one of us was wildly excited at the possibility of getting our message before all those countless alcoholics who still didn't know.

Having arrived at Chapter Five, it seemed high time to state what our program really was. I remember running over in my mind the word-of-mouth phrases then in current use. Jotting these down, they added up to the six named above. Then came the idea that our program ought to be more accurately and clearly stated. Distant readers would have to have a precise set of principles. Knowing the alcoholic's ability to rationalize, something airtight would have to be written. We couldn't let the reader wiggle out anywhere. Besides, a more complete statement would help in the chapters to come where we would need to show exactly how the recovery program ought to be worked.

12 Steps in 30 Minutes

At length I began to write on a cheap yellow tablet. I split the word-of-mouth program up into smaller pieces, meanwhile enlarging its scope considerably. Uninspired as I felt, I was surprised that in a short time, perhaps half an hour, I had set down certain principles which, on being counted, turned out to be twelve in number. And for some unaccountable reason, I had moved the idea of God into the Second Step, right up front. Besides, I had named God very liberally throughout the other steps. In one of the steps I had even suggested that the newcomer get down on his knees.

When this document was shown to our New York meeting the protests were many and loud. Our agnostic friends didn't go at all for the idea of kneeling. Others said we were talking altogether too much about God. And anyhow, why should there be twelve steps when we had done fine on six? Let's keep it simple, they said.

This sort of heated discussion went on for days and nights. But out of it all there came a ten-strike for Alcoholics Anonymous. Our agnostic contingent, spearheaded by Hank P. and Jim B., finally convinced us that we must make it easier for people like themselves by using such terms as "a Higher Power" or "God as we understand Him!" Those expressions, as we so well know today, have proved lifesavers for many an alcoholic. They have enabled thousands of us to make a beginning where none could have been made had we left the steps just as I originally wrote them. Happily for us there were no other changes in the original draft and the number of steps stood at twelve. Little did we then guess that our Twelve Steps would soon be widely approved by clergymen of all denominations and even by our latter-day friends, the psychiatrists.

This little fragment of history ought to convince the most skeptical that nobody invented Alcoholics Anonymous.
It just grew...by the grace of God.

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+++Message 278. A Declaration Of Unity
From: Fiona Dodd 6/11/2002 5:30:00 PM

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From: charles

A Declaration Of Unity

I have an unpublished manuscript on the history of AA from 1957 to 1985. I found this a little bit about the Unity Pledge in this book. The Declaration of Unity was recited at the 1970 International Convention in Miami Florida. Five years before AA received the Responsibility Declaration at the 1965 International Convention in Toronto Canada. 10,000 members joined hands and led by Bill, accepted the Responsibility Declaration. It was very emotional from what I have read.

They wanted to emulate the Toronto experience with the Declaration of Unity at the Big Meeting in Convention Hall in Miami. Bill was very ill and was not able to led the members as he had in Toronto. The pledge did not have neither the impact nor the enduring quality of the "I Am Responsible" Declaration. Most members that attended the convention in Miami remembers more the brief and last appearance by Bill W. on Sunday morning than anything else.
Thanks for letting me share
Charles from California

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+++Message 279. AA GRAPEVINE ANNIVERSARY MONTH
From: Fiona Dodd 6/11/2002 5:32:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

June is the anniversary month of the AA Grapevine, as well as Alcoholics Anonymous.

In June of 1944 the first issue of The Grapevine was published. It cost 15

cents. A yearly subscription was \$1.50.

It was begun by six AA members whom Bill promptly dubbed the six ink stained wretches. The six included Marty Mann (Women Suffer Too), Priscilla Peck, Lois K, Abbott, Maeve, and Kay. Bill Wilson also mentions a Grace O. and her husband as among the moving spirits.

After a few months they had to change the name to AA Grapevine, because some former FBI agents had a newsletter called the Grapevine and threatened to sue if the paper didn't change its name.

The first issue was a large format bulletin containing eight pages. It cost \$187.10 to design, print, and mail. It had only 165 subscribers, but many of the 1200 copies printed were sent free to AAs in the U.S. and Canadian Armed Forces. Copies were also sent to all AA groups registered with the Central Office. Over 100 requests for subscriptions were received from Philadelphia, San Diego, Kansas City, Washington, DC, Madison, Alexandria, Akron, and Cleveland. A year later, there were 2,000 subscribers, and four months after that, 3,500.

On the front page of the first issue, the lead article concerned the Yale Plan Clinics, and was written by two non-alcoholics: Howard W. Haggard and E.M. Jellinek. For the first 13 months the lead article in every issue was written by a nonalcoholic friend of AA.

Other non-members who contributed to early issues included: Dr. William Duncan Silkworth, Dr. Jack Norris, Dr. Harry Tiebout, journalist Fulton Oursler, novelist Charles Jackson (The Lost Weekend), novelist and essayist Philip Wylie, Sister Ignatia, Bernard Smith. Lois Wilson, the Rev. Samuel M. Shoemaker, Paul de Kruif, Jack Alexander, and humorist S. J. Perlman. (I remember my first sponsor, Lila, telling me in 1965 that she had told Charles Jackson that she was convinced he was an alcoholic. How else could he know all those things about where to hide bottles. Philip Wylie's brother, Max Wylie, told me that Philip was indeed an alcoholic, but not a member of AA.)

The first issue also contained an editorial by Bill, an article on seamen in AA who were interested in forming their own group, an exchange of letters concerning the founding of AA in Hawaii, and an article about the many AA's in the Armed Forces including excerpts from some of their letters.

Other articles suggested ways to fill time previously used for drinking. These included taking adult education courses, doing volunteer work, taking up hobbies, going to concerts, and reading books.

Suggestions of books to read included: The Consolation of Philosophy; The Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis; Good Night, Sweet Prince, a biography of John Barrymore; The New Testament; and The Screwtape Letters and Christian Behavior, both by C.S. Lewis.

Features such as hobby columns and book reviews appeared in nearly every issue. Obviously, AAs had a lot of time on their hands without the nightly meetings typical of today's AA.

News of local groups was also included in the first issue, as well as letters. One of the letters in the first issue was written by Marty's close friend and sponsee, Felicia Gizycka (Stars Don't Fall). A talented writer, Felicia wrote many articles for early Grapevines, as did Marty.

The Grapevine was at first intended to be a local newsletter, similar to those previously begun in Cleveland, Los Angeles. But it soon became obvious that the Grapevine could be a means of keeping AAs throughout the world in communication with each other.

Early issues dealt with problems which some will find amusing today. The September 1944 issue, for example, contained a letter stating: Week after week of closed meetings where we devote the entire time to discussing the problems of first-timers, or second-timers or third-timers ... doesn't give older members (say for the sake of argument, members who have been dry one or two months) much chance to discuss their own problems; and believe me, older members' problems can be mighty important, too!

Other issues dealt the place of women in AA (written by Marty I'd guess), and returning veterans. One article concerned whether or not to applaud a speaker.

Cross-addiction was also addressed early. The third issue carried a letter suggesting a section dealing with alcoholics also recovering from narcotics addiction. The October 1945 issue published an article called Evidence on the Sleeping Pill Menace, containing information on the properties and dangers of different pills. Another article appeared on what to do about pill problems when twelfth-stepping. In November 1945 Bill's article called Those Goof Balls appeared.

In the first year an article told of the founding of a national health organization on alcoholism. This became the National Council on Alcoholism founded by Marty Mann. The traditions had not yet been put in place when Marty was interviewed for the October 1944 issue. In the interview she stated what she considered her good reasons for breaking anonymity in connection with starting the National Council on Alcoholism. Later, following the example of Bill Wilson, one of the earliest anonymity breakers, she's stopped breaking her anonymity.

Humor appeared in almost every issue from the beginning. The first cartoon appeared in the third issue, and a humor feature -- called Barleycorn -- began in the second year. Ham on Wry was instituted in 1985, and is edited by a volunteer.

The Victor E. cartoon first appeared in July 1962, drawn by Jack M., a Grapevine editor. While poor Victor apparently never got over his desire to enter bars for a drink, his Higher Power always manages to rescue him, with one of those coincidences we see so many of in AA. He hasn't picked up a drink in all these years. That's how he earned his name: Victory.

Bill saw the Grapevine as a way to communicate effectively and rapidly with AA members. He published more than 150 articles in the Grapevine. The April 1946 issue published his Twelve Suggested Points for AA Tradition. In subsequent articles he examined each tradition in detail. In the same 1950 issue that announced Dr. Bob's death, Bill and Dr. Bob suggested that the AA membership as a whole should take over the movement-wide service jobs and suggested what became the General Service Conference.

In order to explain to non-members what AA was all about, the AA Preamble was written by the Grapevine's first editor, using portions of the forward to the first edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. It first appeared in the Grapevine in the June 1947 issue.

The oil painting, the Man on the Bed, was originally called *Came to Believe*. When the book *Came to Believe* was published in 1973, the Grapevine editors changed the name of the reproduction to avoid confusion. It was painted by Robert M. a volunteer illustrator for the Grapevine, and was first reproduced in the Grapevine as a center spread in the December 1955 issue. In the same issue was Bill Wilson's Christmas message of gratitude for the gift of sobriety. The painting proved so popular that reproductions were made available.

Robert M. presented the painting to Bill in May 1956. Bill wrote him: Dear Robert: Beautifully framed, your representation of the Man on the Bed hangs in my studio at Bedford Hills. It is a wonderful thing to have; I don't see how it could have been better done. The whole heart and essence of AA can be seen just by looking at it. ... Please know that to my great thanks, Lois adds hers. Ever yours, Bill W.

In the 1990s the Grapevine Corporate Board and the Grapevine Conference Committee recommended that the Grapevine publish a Spanish-language edition to serve the growing community of Spanish-speaking AAs located around the country. A pilot edition was issued in time to be circulated at the International Convention in San Diego in 1995. *La Vina*, the Spanish-language edition of the Grapevine, is now published bimonthly. It contains articles translated from the English-language Grapevine, as well as articles submitted in Spanish.

The current issue of the Grapevine reprints a letter Bill wrote to the law firm handling the incorporation of the Grapevine in 1946. In it, Bill envisioned the AA Grapevine as the voice of the Alcoholics Anonymous

movement, written by AAs and friends of AA. He added that the Grapevine would try to carry the AA message to alcoholics and practice the AA principles in all its affairs.

Today the AA Grapevine remains just that, the voice of the Alcoholics Anonymous movement.

Sources:

The AA Grapevine Workbook

A facsimile of the first issue of The Grapevine.

AA Grapevine History, The story of AA's international monthly journal.

Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age

A Biography of Mrs. Marty Mann, the First Lady of AA, by Sally & David Brown

AA Grapevine, June 2001

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++++Message 280. High Watch Farm
From: Fiona Dodd 6/11/2002 5:37:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

High Watch Farm

A sign saying HIGH WATCH points up a steep hill four miles north of Kent, a small New England village on Connecticut's western edge. Driving up the steep hill, one comes to a plain eighteenth century farm house, painted white. There is a scattering of clapboard outbuildings, one used as a dining room and a place for AA meetings.

This is High Watch Farm, so beloved by AA members since 1939. I had an opportunity to visit it very briefing on June 3.

Nona Wyman, the first woman Marty Mann was able to help after her own recovery (see post #567), told Marty, Bill Wilson, and others, about a place where she and her husband Walter had been finding spiritual help for the last three or four years. It was a farm in Kent, Conn. called Joy Farm.

A rustic retreat center, it was owned by a saintly old women woman named Mrs. Ethelred Helling. She was a devoted follower of Emma Curtis Hopkins, whose teachings were similar to those of Mary Backer Eddy's Christian Science.

Trying to emulate her favorite saint, St. Francis of Assisi, Mrs. Helling

renounced her name and her wealth. She called herself Sister Francis and began giving what she had to the poor. She ran Joy Farm as a shelter for homeless men, of whom there were many during those days of the Great Depression. She placed a lantern every night to guide travelers to the door.

For some reason neither Nona nor Walter had any desire to drink when they were with Sister Francis at Joy Farm.

Nona and Walter urged their new AA friends to visit Joy Farm. On a brilliant fall day in October of 1939, Bill and Lois Wilson, Marty, and two additional AA couples drove to Joy Farm. They were immediately impressed. The place had a special kind of spiritual atmosphere that they felt the moment they arrived. Bill turned to Marty and expressed what the others were thinking: "My God, you could cut it with a knife!"

Remembering this visit years later, Marty said: "The atmosphere, the feeling. There was something there, something that was really palpable that you could feel, and every one of us felt it. To say that we fell in love with it is not to use the right terminology at all. We were engulfed. ... What is at the farm was already at the farm before we ever found it. It found us, in my opinion."

Sister Francis and the AA members recognized at once that they were soul sisters and brothers. They were pleased that she accepted at once the notion that alcoholism is a disease.

Sitting around a roaring fire at the end of the weekend, Sister Francis looked at her guests and stunned them by offering to give the farm to them, lock, stock, and barrel.

Bill explained that they could not accept the gift because AA could not own any property. But eventually they worked out an arrangement whereby Sister Francis retained title, but AA ran the farm.

A few interested AA members formed a corporation in April 1940, and an AA member was hired as manager to run the farm, now renamed High Watch.

This was the first of a great number of rehabilitation institutions for alcoholics based on AAs spiritual principles. From the beginning High Watch was essentially an AA retreat center. Many new members of AA, and some who relapsed, were brought there to begin their recovery. In the early days they called the furthestmost shack the Lepper Colony. It was here they brought those suffering from DT's, carrying them in a wheelbarrow.

No country club for alcoholics, one was expected to work. Everybody worked. The hooked rugs needed to be vacuumed, the tables set and cleared, the dishes washed, the chairs stacked. In the winter snow had to be shoveled.

One was expected to attend chapel in one of the cozy low-beamed rooms. The service was spiritual but not religious. AA meetings were held daily and residents required to attend. These were the only rules.

Marty, herself, when she had her third slip, in December of 1940, called a friend and asked to be taken to High Watch. It was New Year's Eve day 1940, and Marty said the snow was six feet deep and they had to hike in the last mile and a half. The conditions were very primitive then, with no central heating. But Marty found at High Watch the spiritual sustenance she needed to recover.

Marty returned frequently for spiritual retreats and to bring women she was trying to help. It is reported that she was there so often that a cabin was designated as hers, until it burned down.

For many years, Marty served on the farm's board of directors and was instrumental in establishing and developing High Watch's policies.

In the late 1940s, Marty's mother, Lill Mann, served as the manager of High Watch Farm.

Bill also returned often. The speaker at Bill Wilson Day in East Dorset, Vermont, this June 3, told us that Ebby Thatcher was his roommate at High Watch in the early 1960s, and he met Bill when he came to visit Ebby.

Returning from Bill Wilson Day in East Dorset last weekend, David T. made a wrong turn in the road, and we found ourselves on the road that runs past High Watch. So we drove in to see the grounds. Because of the late hour we could not enter any of the buildings, But in the short drive around the farm and on the drive from there back to New York, I could sense the presence of Bill and Marty. It was obvious that the special kind of spiritual atmosphere that you could "cut with a knife," still engulfs the place.

I am so grateful to have had a chance to make this brief visit to High Watch. I hope that they still allow AA members to come for retreats, and if they do, I plan to make such a retreat soon.

Nancy

SOURCES:

Getting Better Inside Alcoholics Anonymous, by Nan Robertson.

Bill W., by Francis Hartigan

Mrs. Marty Mann, The First Lady of Alcoholics Anonymous, by Sally and David Brown.

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+++Message 282. Stepping Stones
From: Fiona Dodd 6/11/2002 5:40:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

Stepping Stones

On June 1, on my way to Wilson House in Vermont (where Bill was born in the room behind the bar), I had an opportunity to visit Stepping Stones in Bedford Hills, NY.

Bill Wilson and his wife, Lois, moved to this house on April 11, 1941,

Since Lois's father's death in 1936, Lois and Bill had been paying the mortgage company a small rental to stay on in the house on Clinton Street in Brooklyn. During the Great Depression, people were rarely forced from their homes, but in 1939, as the Depression eased, more money became available, and the mortgage company was able to sell the house.

On Wednesday, April 26, 1939, Lois and Bill had to leave the house that had been the Burnham family home for half a century. It was necessary not only to pack up their own belongings, but also those accumulated by her parents from 1888 on. They gave carloads of items to the Salvation Army and Goodwill Industries, and put some of their furniture into storage, including Lois's fine Mason and Hamlin grand piano which Bill had bought for \$1,600 when they had lived in a luxurious apartment at 38 Livingston Street in Brooklyn.

What a sad day it must have been. They now had no home and no income. Lois's diary entry for that day says only: Left 182 for good. Went to Parkhursts.

For the next two years they lived like vagabonds in about 50 different places, most of them homes of AA members. Someone once asked Bill how they had got through the next two years. Bill explained, probably with an ironic grin, that they were invited out to dinner a lot. When they finally found their new home they were living in a small room in the 24th Street Clubhouse.

In January of 1941 they were staying with friends in Chappaqua, New York. Lois wrote in her diary on January 4 that they had driven to Bedford Hills to see the house. They broke in through an unlocked window. They drove up again the next day to have another look.

This house was owned by a Mrs. Griffith (no relation to Bill), a rich philanthropist whose husband had died an active alcoholic, and whose best friend had found sobriety in an AA group in New Jersey. She clearly wanted the Wilsons to have this house and offered it to them for only \$6,500, no money down, with mortgage payments of \$40 a month. Since they would save the \$20 a month storage bill, it became possible for them to get this house.

The Wilsons originally named their new home Bil-Los's Break, but because they had to use a shortcut of rugged stone steps down the steep hill to get to their garage, they changed the name to Stepping Stones. This also implied a connection with the Twelve Steps.

The house is a small, seven room, Dutch Colonial structure of dark brown shingles with gables sunk into a steep gambrel roof.

Bill and Lois both had to put a lot of work into it to make it comfortable. Ceilings had to be painted, floors had to be scraped and stained. But they were up to the challenge. Lois had many domestic talents. She used a few remnants and seconds she had picked up at sales to make valances and decorative shades for the windows, and taught herself to reupholster furniture.

Built as a summer house, Bill had to find a way to heat it. H found a coal furnace on the sidewalk in front of a local saloon. The owner was throwing it out, but when bill expressed interest in it, it suddenly was for sale. Bill paid \$20 for it, but it never worked well. Eventually they acquired storm windows and insulation, and an oil burner to replace the coal furnace.

The ground floor consists of a large living room with a cavernous stone fireplace, which reminded Bill of the one at Wilson House, the small hotel where he was born. (See post #601.) There are also three small bedrooms and a kitchen on this floor.

One of these bedrooms soon became the Spook Room. Bill had a strong interest in the paranormal. In this room they held séances and practiced with a ouija board. Sometimes Bill himself would lie on the couch in the living room, and act as a medium receiving messages, which Anne B., a neighbor and part of the spook circle would write on a pad.

Another of the bedroom was used by Nell Wing, Bill's long-time secretary who became like a daughter to Bill and Lois.

Dr. Bob and Anne Smith, visited every year. While at Stepping Stones, they participated in the séances.

Father Ed Dowling visited them for their first New Year's celebration in the house. He wrote them on January 6, 1941, thanking them for making that New Year's Day one of the happiest he ever spent. Later he wrote saying he often

recalled the New Year he spent with them shortly after Pearl Harbor.

Others who stayed with them for short or long visits were: Gladys S. from Madras, India, in her sari; Bill's half-sister Helen; and, of course, Ebby Thatcher. Toward the end of her life Bill persuaded his mother to come live with them.

Marty Mann remained a close friend and visited often. It was here she came to explain to Bill her plan to start what became the National Council on Alcoholism.

On the second floor is the master bedroom and a long, broad gallery lined with books, photographs and much AA memorabilia. I noticed pictures of many early AAs and AA friends on the wall: Dr. Bob and Ann Smith, Marty Mann, Bobbie Burger, Dr. Jack Norris, Dr. Silkworth, etc. There was even a picture of Richard Nixon, with Dr. Norris presenting him with the one-millionth copy of the Big Book. This presentation was arranged by my friend Tom Pike, a close friend of Nixon's. After Bill's death Lois had numbers placed on all the pictures and there is a list identifying the persons in each picture.

Apparently either Lois or Bill had an interest in dinosaurs, as there is a collection of them in this room.

The famous letter to Bill from Jung's letter dated January 30, 1961, is framed and on the wall

In this upstairs library there is also the desk where Lois and her close friend, Anne B., the wife of an alcoholic and a Westchester neighbor, sent letters in May 1951 to eighty-seven AA Auxiliaries and Family Groups, suggesting the formation of a national organization of the families of alcoholics. Forty-eight groups responded. Anne and Lois wrote Purposes and Suggestions for All-Anon Family Groups here. On the desk is a three tiered file box, decorated with the mottos: First things First; Easy Does It; and Live and Let Live.

Anne, who is considered Al-Anon's co-founder, died in 1984 at the age of eighty-four.

Today the house also contains a small elevator. It was explained to me that they did not want to go to nursing homes, so Lois arranged for the elevator to make it easier to remain at home as they grew older.

Up a hill in the woods is a small cement-block building which Bill and a friend built for him to use as a study. Bill named it Wits End.

Here he installed the desk, studio couch, and chairs he had purchased from Hank Parkhurst. They had been in the office at Honor Dealers in New Jersey where Bill worked with Hank, and where he dictated the first draft of the Big

Book. Bill did much of his writing at Wits End.

Wits End had no plumbing and no telephone, but a chemical toilet was later installed, and an army field telephone allowed him to communicate with the main house. Wits End also had a fireplace, a kerosene stove, and a lot of windows.

Normally you have to call to arrange to see Stepping Stones, but my companion on the trip is a volunteer tour guide there. He had the keys and took me in.

I was delighted with this private tour and took the opportunity to use Bill's toilet (dang, no picture!), sit at Lois's dressing table, and on Bill's bed, and even play Lois's piano. What a thrill.

But the greatest thrill was to sit at the table in the kitchen, which is the same table at which Bill and Ebby sat during Ebby's visit to Bill in 1935.

Bill Died in January of 1971, and Lois died in October 1988.

Even Lois, because she was not an AA member, could not leave her money to AA, so she channeled some of its to the Stepping Stones Foundation. The foundation's Mission Statement reads: To contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the disease of alcoholism and its effect on family and society and to preserve Stepping Stones, the home of Lois and Bill Wilson, and its historic archives for Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon members and those interested in alcoholism education and research.

I urge all Buffs who are able to visit Stepping Stones.

The Stepping Stones Foundation, The Wilson House, home of Bill Wilson and

Lois Wilson, Alcoholics Anonymous, Alanon [7]

SOURCES:

Getting Better Inside Alcoholics Anonymous, by Nan Robertson

Lois Remembers, by Lois Wilson

Pass It On.

Bill W. by Francis Hartigan

The Soul of Sponsorship, the Friendship of Fr. Ed Dowling, S.J., and Bill Wilson in Letters, by Robert Fitzgerald, S.J.

+++Message 292. Re: Moral psychology
From: kyyank@aol.com 6/23/2002 6:26:00 PM

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Friends,
Re: Recent WDS "moral psychology" posting: Silky frequently challenged both clergy and psychologists to assist in the public education of the moral deficiencies found within the alcoholic population as a means to recognize early warning signs. The difference between the use of "psychology" (Jung), "spiritual awakening" (WDS), and "spiritual experience" (James) are in most cases interchangeable, but explained in detail in the new book: "SILKWORTH-The Little Doctor Who Loved Drunks", Hazelden Education and Information Services. All of the WDS speeches and private writings are also included within this book.

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+++Message 307. 1944 AA Sponsorship Pamphlet (by Clarence Snyder)
From: Fiona 6/9/2002 3:17:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

1944 A.A. Sponsorship Pamphlet
by Clarence Snyder

This is the first pamphlet ever written concerning sponsorship. It was written by Clarence H. Snyder in early 1944. Its original title was to be "A.A. Sponsorship...Its Obligations and Its Responsibilities." It was printed by the Cleveland Central Committee under the title: "A.A. Sponsorship... Its Opportunities and Its Responsibilities."

PREFACE

Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is a potential sponsor of a new member and should clearly recognize the obligations and duties of such responsibility.

The acceptance of an opportunity to take the A.A. plan to a sufferer of alcoholism entails very real and critically important responsibilities. Each member, undertaking the sponsorship of a fellow alcoholic, must remember that

he is offering what is frequently the last chance of rehabilitation, sanity or maybe life itself.

Happiness, Health, Security, Sanity and Life of human beings are the things we hold in balance when we sponsor an alcoholic.

No member among us is wise enough to develop a sponsorship program that can be successfully applied in every case. In the following pages, however, we have outlined a suggested procedure, which supplemented by the member's own experience, has proven successful.

PERSONAL GAINS OF BEING A SPONSOR

No one reaps full benefit from any fellowship he is connected with unless he whole-heartedly engages in its important activities. The expansion of Alcoholics Anonymous to wider fields of greater benefit to more people results directly from the addition of new, worth-while members or associates.

Any A.A. who has not experienced the joys and satisfaction of helping another alcoholic regain his place in life has not yet fully realized the complete benefits of this fellowship. On the other hand, it must be clearly kept in mind that the only possible reason for bringing an alcoholic into A.A. is for that person's gain. Sponsorship should never be undertaken to -

1. Increase the size of the group
2. For personal satisfaction and glory
3. Because the sponsor feels it his duty to re-make the world

Until an individual has assumed the responsibility of setting a shaking, helpless human being back on the path toward becoming a healthy useful, happy member of society, he has not enjoyed the complete thrill of being an A.A.

SOURCE OF NAMES

Most people have among their own friends and acquaintances someone who would benefit from our teachings. Others have names given to them by their church, by their doctor, by their employer, or by some other member, who cannot make a direct contact.

Because of the wide range of the A.A. activities, the names often come from unusual and unexpected places.

These cases should be contacted as soon as all facts such as: marital status, domestic relations, financial status, drink habits, employment status and others readily obtainable are at hand.

IS THE PROSPECT A CANDIDATE?

Much time and effort can be saved by learning as soon as possible if -

1. The man* really has a drinking problem?
2. Does he know he has a problem?

3. Does he want to do something about his drinking?
4. Does he want help?

*The masculine form is used throughout for simplicity, although it is intended to include women as well.

Sometimes the answers to these questions cannot be made until the prospect has had some A.A. instruction, and an opportunity to think. Often we are given names, which upon investigation, show the prospect is in no sense an alcoholic, or is satisfied with his present plan of living. We should not hesitate to drop these names from our lists. Be sure, however, to let the man know where he can reach us at a later date.

WHO SHOULD BECOME MEMBERS?

A.A. is a fellowship of men and women bound together by their inability to use alcohol in any form sensibly, or with profit or pleasure. Obviously, any new members introduced should be the same kind of people, suffering from the same disease.

Most people can drink reasonably, but we are only interested in those who cannot. Party drinkers, social drinkers, celebrators, and others who continue to have more pleasure than pain from their drinking, are of no interest to us.

In some instances an individual might believe himself to be a social drinker when he definitely is an alcoholic. In many such cases more time must pass before that person is ready to accept our program. Rushing such a man before he is ready might ruin his chances of ever becoming a successful A.A.. Do not ever deny future help by pushing too hard in the beginning.

Some people, although definitely alcoholic, have no desire or ambition to better their way of living, and until they do..... A.A. has nothing to offer them.

Experience has shown that age, intelligence, education, background, or the amount of liquor drunk, has little, if any, bearing on whether or not the person is an alcoholic.

PRESENTING THE PLAN

In many cases a man's physical condition is such that he should be placed in a hospital, if at all possible. Many A.A. members believe hospitalization, with ample time for the prospect to think and plan his future, free from domestic and business worries, offers distinct advantage. In many cases the hospitalization period marks the beginning of a new life. Other members are equally confident that any man who desires to learn the A.A. plan for living can do it in his own home or while engaged in normal occupation. Thousands of cases are treated in each manner and have proved satisfactory.

SUGGESTED STEPS*

The following paragraphs outline a suggested procedure for presenting the A.A. plan to the prospect, at home or in the hospital.

QUALIFY AS AN ALCOHOLIC*

1. In calling upon a new prospect, it has been found best to qualify oneself as an ordinary person who has found happiness, contentment, and peace of mind through A.A. Immediately make it clear to the prospect that you are a person engaged in the routine business of earning a living. Tell him your only reason for believing yourself able to help him is because you yourself are an alcoholic and have had experiences and problems that might be similar to his.

TELL YOUR STORY*

2. Many members have found it desirable to launch immediately into their personal drinking story, as a means of getting the confidence and whole-hearted co-operation of the prospect.

It is important in telling the story of your drinking life to tell it in a manner that will describe an alcoholic, rather than a series of humorous drunken parties. This will enable the man to get a clear picture of an alcoholic which should help him to more definitely decide whether he is an alcoholic.

INSPIRE CONFIDENCE IN A.A.*

3. In many instances the prospect will have tried various means of controlling his drinking, including hobbies, church, changes of residence, change of associations, and various control plans. These will, of course, have been unsuccessful. Point out your series of unsuccessful efforts to control drinking...their absolute fruitless results and yet that you were able to stop drinking through application of A.A. principles. This will encourage the prospect to look forward with confidence to sobriety in A.A. in spite of the many past failures he might have had with other plans.

TALK ABOUT "PLUS" VALUES*

4. Tell the prospect frankly that he can not quickly understand all the benefits that are coming to him through A.A.. Tell him of the happiness, peace of mind, health, and in many cases, material benefits which are possible through understanding and application of the A.A. way of life.

SHOW IMPORTANCE OF READING BOOK*

5. Explain the necessity of reading and re-reading the A.A. book. Point out

that this book gives a detailed description of the A.A. tools and the suggested methods of application of these tools to build a foundation of rehabilitation for living. This is a good time to emphasize the importance of the twelve steps and the four absolutes.

QUALITIES REQUIRED FOR SUCCESS IN A.A.*

6. Convey to the prospect that the objectives of A.A. are to provide the ways and means for an alcoholic to regain his normal place in life. Desire, patience, faith, study and application are most important in determining each individual's plan of action in gaining full benefits of A.A.

INTRODUCE FAITH*

7. Since the belief of a Power greater than oneself is the heart of the A.A. plan, and since this idea is very often difficult for a new man, the sponsor should attempt to introduce the beginnings of an understanding of this all-important feature.

Frequently this can be done by the sponsor relating his own difficulty in grasping a spiritual understanding and the methods he used to overcome his difficulties.

LISTEN TO HIS STORY*

8. While talking to the newcomer, take time to listen and study his reactions in order that you can present your information in a more effective manner. Let him talk too. Remember...Easy Does It.

TAKE TO SEVERAL MEETINGS*

9. To give the new member a broad and complete picture of A.A., the sponsor should take him to various meetings within convenient distance of his home. Attending several meetings gives a new man a chance to select a group in which he will be most happy and comfortable, and it is extremely important to let the prospect make his own decision as to which group he will join. Impress upon him that he is always welcome at any meeting and can change his home group if he so wishes.

EXPLAIN A.A. TO PROSPECT'S FAMILY*

10. A successful sponsor takes pains and makes any required effort to make certain that those people closest and with the greatest interest in their prospect (mother, father, wife, etc.) are fully informed of A.A., its principles and its objectives. The sponsor sees that these people are invited to meetings, and keeps them in touch with the current situation regarding the prospect at all times.

HELP PROSPECT ANTICIPATE HOSPITAL EXPERIENCE*

11. A prospect will gain more benefit from a hospitalization period if the sponsor describes the experience and helps him anticipate it, paving the way for those members who will call on him.

CONSULT OLDER MEMBERS IN A.A.*

These suggestions for sponsoring a new man in A.A. teachings are by no means complete. They are intended only for a framework and general guide. Each individual case is different and should be treated as such. Additional information for sponsoring a new man can be obtained from the experience of older men in the work. A co-sponsor, with an experienced and newer member working on a prospect, has proven very satisfactory. Before undertaking the responsibility of sponsoring, a member should make certain that he is able and prepared to give the time, effort, and thought such an obligation entails. It might be that he will want to select a co-sponsor to share the responsibility, or he might feel it necessary to ask another to assume the responsibility for the man he has located.

IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE A SPONSOR...BE A GOOD ONE!

(* These headings were not in the original draft for this pamphlet. They were added for the first, and subsequent printings.)

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+++Message 308. The Chip System
From: Fiona 6/10/2002 7:16:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

The following article is from the January 1955 Grapevine.

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+++Message 313. Correction to MM article
From: Fiona Dodd 6/13/2002 1:20:00 AM

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From: "Sally Brown"

Correction to MM article

Rev. Sally Brown 1470 Sand Hill Rd., 309
United Church of Christ Palo Alto, CA 94304
Board Certified Clinical Chaplain, Ret Phone: (650) 325-5258
FAX: same

Hi, Nancy - Could the following be posted?

The article about Marty Mann which appeared on AAHistoryLovers, 6/11/02, originally written by Sally and David Brown, requires a correction and a little elaboration.

This article appeared in the Nov 1998 issue of Paradigm magazine. It was submitted several months before at the invitation of the editors, who had learned that the Browns were preparing a biography of Marty Mann. At the time, the authors were in the middle of their research and writing. Both they and the publisher of their first book, Islewest Publishing, hoped and believed that Islewest would also publish the Marty Mann biography.

When the article was written, the Browns had not yet confirmed Marty's late relapse, which occurred around 1960. So the Paradigm article repeated what the authors accepted as common knowledge - that Marty's sobriety was continuous from 1940 until her death in 1980. Subsequently, the authors were able to document the later relapse, which is reported in the book as it was finally published by Hazelden, A Biography of Mrs. Marty Mann (2001).

Thus, the accurate statement is that Marty was the first woman to achieve long-term sobriety. Numbers of other women, including her partner, Priscilla Peck, and her dear friend, Felicia Magruder, eventually exceeded her length of sobriety. None, however, exceeded, or even approached, Marty's record in educating our country about alcoholism, or in opening the doors of recovery to women and also men.

Another comment about the Paradigm article can be made. The editors chose to delete a brief paragraph noting Marty's lesbianism and her lifelong partnership with Priscilla Peck (40 years).

Sally Brown

Rev. Sally Brown 1470 Sand Hill Rd., 309
United Church of Christ Palo Alto, CA 94304
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+++Message 322. Re: 1944 AA Sponsorship Pamphlet (by
Clarence Snyder)
From: quietapplause@aol.com 6/27/2002 1:17:00 PM

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In a message dated 6/26/02 4:49:28 PM Eastern Daylight Time,
fionadodd@eircom.net writes:

This is the first pamphlet ever written concerning sponsorship. It was
written by Clarence H. Snyder in early 1944.

Please correct me, but it seems to me, that the Akron Pamphlet 1940 preceeded
the above.

donna w

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+++Message 333. Bill Wilson"s Obituary in the
Washington Post
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 11:43:00 AM

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From:NM Olson

Bill Wilson's Obituary in the Washington Post

This is the obituary which appeared in the Washington Post when Bill Wilson
died.

Donald Graham, who wrote the story is now the publisher of the paper. When
heinterviewed me in 1971 he just introduced himself as a reporter for the
paper, with no mention that he was the son of the owner, learning the family
business from the ground up. (Nice modest young man, that.)

He asked if he could quote me by full name, and I told him he could quote me
by full name if he did not mention I was a member of AA, or he could quote me
as "Nancy O., a member of AA." He choose to do the latter. He said he felt bad

that he could name people like Gus Hewlett, but not the AA members, but he understood and accepted my conditions.

He had come to the office trying to get an interview with Senator Hughes, but the Senator was unavailable, so his secretary sent him to the Subcommittee office to talk to me.

I believe that Bill AA's mention of the Washington group coming to the aid of New York during a financial crisis, refers to the time Fitz Mayo's sister, Agnes, came to AA's rescue when the printer refused to release the book he was holding -- the first printing of Alcoholics Anonymous. Agnes loaned AA \$1,000, the equivalent of nearly \$12,000 in today's dollars.

His piece follows:

Wednesday, Jan. 27, 1971, THE WASHINGTON POST

Known to Thousands as Bill W.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS FOUNDER DIES

By Donald E. Graham
Washington Post Staff Writer

Scores of thousands of people learned for the first time the name of the man who helped them recover from alcoholism when William Griffith Wilson died of pneumonia in a Miami Hospital Sunday night.

The New York headquarters of Alcoholics Anonymous announced that Mr. Wilson, a retired securities analyst, was the man known as Bill W., who co-founded the AA in 1935.

Mr. Wilson lived in Bedford Hills, N.Y. He was 75.

Thirty-six years ago, Mr. Wilson took his last drink, ending a career of alcoholism that dated back to his days as an officer in the First World War.

Mr. Wilson went into a New York City hospital and was detoxified -- but fell into a severe depression:

"Finally it seemed to me as though I were at the very bottom of the pit," he later wrote "All at once I found myself crying out, "If there is a God, let him show himself! I am ready to do anything, anything!"

"Suddenly the room lit up with a great white light. It seemed to me, in the mind's eye, that I was on a mountain and that a wind, not of air, but of spirit was blowing. And then it burst upon me that I was a free man."

I thought to myself, "So this is the God of the preachers"

Bill W. did not wait long before sharing his experience with a friend, AA's other co-founder, Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith of Akron, Ohio. Once Smith stopped drinking, the two men felt they knew that alcoholics could help each other recover.

They went to an Akron hospital and met a patient who had come in suffering from delirium tremens. He too got off and stayed off, and helping fellow alcoholics recover became the A.A. tradition.

"They started a chain reaction, one drunk helping another," Nancy O., a congressional assistant, said yesterday. "The hand that reached out to me when I appealed for help was a link in the chain going back to Bill W. and Dr. Bob.

Bill A., an Arlington businessman, recalled that in December, 1939, when Alcoholics Anonymous was a small, little-known group, he went to New York to meet Mr. Wilson

The next month Mr. Wilson helped start an A.A. chapter here, the fourth in the country.

"He came here many times to help us with our problems," Bill A. said, and later, when the national A.A. organization faced a financial crisis, the Washington chapter came up with the funds to rescue it.

Alcoholics Anonymous now has half a million members worldwide. "It's by far the most successful resource of help in terms of the number of people they've treated," said Augustus Hewlett, executive secretary of the North American Association of Alcoholism Programs.

Mr. Wilson retired as director of the organization in 1962.

His first book "Alcoholics Anonymous," written when the group had only 100 members, has sold more than 800,000 copies since it was first printed in 1939. His other books were "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions," "Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age," and "The A.A. Way of Life."

Mr. Wilson went to great lengths to preserve his anonymity. When he testified in 1969 before a congressional committee investigating alcoholism, television cameras were barred and photographs were permitted only from behind.

He turned down honorary degrees and refused to have his picture on the cover of Time magazine in order to preserve his group's tradition of avoiding publicity as individuals.

Mr. Wilson never gave up his efforts at helping alcoholics recover. One

desperate alcoholic once committed suicide in Mr. Wilson's home. Thousands of others stopped drinking and resumed the lives that alcoholism had interrupted.

Mr. Wilson was not boastful about his successes. "When you consider the enormous ramifications of this disease, we have just made a scratch on the surface," he told a Senate committee in 1969.

He was pleased by the increased government attention to alcoholism that followed the election of Harold Hughes, a recovered alcoholic, as senator from Iowa. "This is splashdown day for Apollo," he said when Hughes first held hearings on alcoholism. "The impossible is happening."

One Washington member of AA said yesterday, "I don't think there's a person in AA, from Harold Hughes to the man on the Bowery, who doesn't know that if it wasn't for Bill W. and what he started, we'd all be dead."

Mr. Wilson is survived by his wife Lois, who remained with him during his period of drunkenness and helped start the "Al-Anon" program for families of alcoholics.

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+++Message 334. Herbert Spencer quote, page 570 of Big Book
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 11:48:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

Herbert Spencer quote, page 570 of Big Book

Bob S., tells me that he spent some time in the archives during the convention looking at copies of the various editions of the Big Book. He came up with this interesting bit of information.

The Big Book quote by Herbert Spencer which is now on page 570 was at first included in a story by Ray C. (Campbell?) entitled: "An Artist's Concept." It was on page 380 of all 16 printings of the First Edition with that story. Ray's story was not included in the Second Edition of the Big Book but the quote was saved in the back of our book in the Appendix: "Spiritual Experience."

Bob also shared with me these memories of the convention:

"Another highpoint of the convention was when it was announced at the end of

the old-timers meeting that we were going to close with the usual "Lord's Prayer." You probably recall that much joyous applause followed.

"Speaking of old-timers; it was my great pleasure and honor to drive Tom R. and his wife, Thelma (from Greenville, Ohio) to the convention. He is 48 years sober and she has been in Al-Anon since before it officially began. They sat with the 202 old-timers but, alas, his name was not pulled from the hat. He said he was not disappointed -- I would have been - Ha!"

Thanks Bob, for sharing this with us.

Nancy

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+++Message 335. Bill at a Memorial Service for Dr. Bob
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 12:21:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

Bill at a Memorial Service for Dr. Bob

Memorial Service for Dr. Bob
24th Street Clubhouse, New York City, N.Y.
November 15, 1952

A meeting was held at the 24th Street Club House in memory of Dr. Bob. A recording of Dr. Bob's last talk was played and a portrait of Dr. Bob was unveiled.

Bill W. then addressed the meeting.

Dr. Bob's recorded voice has come down to us across the air since he died in 1950. Some may say that his actual voice is stilled forever, but you and I know that is not so and that his spirit will be with us so long as this well loved society of ours endures.

Now, I happen to be one who believes that people never die, that on beyond death there is another life and it could be that Dr. Bob is looking down upon us now, seeing us, hearing what we say and feel and think and have done in this meeting. I know his heart will be glad.

Dr Bob was a chap who was modestly and singularly against taking any personal acclaim or honor but surely now that he is no longer with us he can't mind, I don't believe and for him I wish to thank everyone here who has made this occasion possible and the unveiling possible, with all the work and love that that has entailed.

Again, I wish to thank each and everyone.

In A.A. we always deal in personalities, really, this thing is transmitted from one to another and it isn't so much what we read about it that counts, it's what we uniquely know about of ourselves and those just around us who have us and who we would help.

Therefore, I take it that you folks would like it better than anything else if I just spun a few yarns about Dr. Bob and that very early part of A.A. which we so often call the period of flying blind.

Of course you'll remember my little story about how a friend comes to me with the idea of getting more honest, more tolerant, making amends, helping others without demand for reward, praying as best I knew how and that was my friend Ebby.

As you heard Dr. Bob say, he had heard those things too from the same source, namely the Oxford Groups which have since as such, passed off the scene and have left us with a rich heritage of both what and what not to do. Anyway, a friend comes to me and I go to other alcoholics and try to make them my friends and some did become my friends but as you heard Dr. Bob say, not a darn one got sober.

Then came that little man that we who live in this area saw so much, him with kind of blue eyes and the white hair, Doc Silkworth. You'll remember that Doc said to me, *look Bill, you're preaching at these people too much. You've got the cart before the horse. This white flash experience of yours scares these drunks to death. Why don't you put the fear of God into them first. You're always talking about James and the Varieties of Religious Experience and how you have to deflate people before they can know God, how they must have humility. So, why don't you use the tools that we've really got here, why don't you use the tool of the medical hopelessness of alcoholism for practically all those involved. Why don't you talk to the drunk about that allergy they've got and that obsession that makes them keep on drinking and guarantees that they will die. Maybe when you punch it into them hard it will deflate them enough so that they will find what you found.*

So, another indispensable ingredient was added to what is now this successful synthesis and that was just about the time I set out for Akron on a business trip. It had been suggested by the family that it was about time that I went back to work.

I went out there on this venture which as Dr. Bob said, "fortunately fell through."

You heard him tell about the story in the hotel after I had taken a good beating and I was tempted to drink and needed to look up another alcoholic, not this time to save him but to save myself, for I had found that working with others had a vast bearing on my own sobriety.

Then, how we were brought together by a girl who was the last person on a long list of people I'd been referred to. The only one who had time enough and who cared enough and that was a girl in Akron, herself no alcoholic, her name was Henrietta Seiberling.

She invited me out there and she became interested at once. She called the Smiths and we learned Smithy had just come home with a potted plant for dear old Annie and he put it on the dining room table but as Annie said that just then he was on the floor and they couldn't come over at that minute.

You'll remember the next day how he put in an appearance. Haggard, worn, not wishing to stay and how then we talked for hours. Now I have often heard Dr. Bob say and I thought he said it on the recording that "it was not so much my spirituality that affected him," he was a student of those things and I certainly know that he was never affected by any superior morality on my part. So, what did affect him? Well, it was this ammunition that dear old Doc Silkworth had given me, the allergy plus the obsession. The God of science declaring that the malady for most of us is hopeless so far as our personal power is concerned.

As Dr. Bob put it in his story in the book "here came the first man into my life who seemed to know what this thing alcoholism was all about."

Well, if it wasn't the dose of spirituality I poured into Dr. Bob, it was that dose of indispensable medicine to this movement, the dose of hopelessness so far as one doing this alone is concerned.

The bottle of medicine that Dr. Silkworth had given me that I poured down the old grizzly bear's throat. That's what I used to call him.

Well, he gagged on it a little, got drunk once more and that was the end. Then he and I set out looking for drunks, we had to look some up. There is a little remembered part of the story. The story usually goes that we

immediately called up the local city hospital and asked the nurse for a case but that isn't quite true.

There was a preacher who lived down the street and he was beset at the time by a drunk and his name was Eddie and we talked to Eddie and it turned out that Eddie was not only a drunk but something which in that high faluting language we now call a manic depressive, not very manic either, mostly depressed. Eddie was married with two or three kids, worked down at Goodrich Company and his depression caused him to drink and the only thing that would stop the depression was apparently baking soda.

When he got a sour stomach, he got depressed so he was not only drinking alcohol but we estimated that in the past few years he had taken a ton of baking soda. Well, we tried for a while, of course, we thought we had to be good Samaritans so we got up some dough to try to keep the family going, we got Eddie back on the job but Eddie kept right on with alcohol and baking soda both.

Finally, Dr. Bob and Annie took Eddie along with me into their house, a pattern which my dear Lois followed out to the nth degree later and we tried to treat Eddie and my mind goes back so vividly to that evening when Eddie really blew his top. I don't know whether it was the manic side or on the depressive side but boy did he blow it and Annie and I were sitting out at the kitchen table and Eddie seized the butcher knife and was about to do us in when Annie said very quietly "well Eddie, I don't think your going to do this." And he didn't.

Thereafter, Eddie was in a State asylum for a period I should think of going on a dozen or more years but believe it or not he showed up at the funeral of Dr. Bob in the fall of 1950 as sober as a judge and he had been that way for three years. So even that obscure little talk about Eddie made the grade.

So then Dr. Bob and I talked to the man on the bed, Bill Dotson, who some of you have heard, A.A. number three. Here was another man who said he couldn't get well, his case was too tough, much tougher than ours besides he knew all about religion.

Well, here it was, one drunk talking with another, in fact, two drunks talking to one. The very next day the man on the bed got out of his bed and he picked it up and walked and he has stayed up ever since. A.A. number three, the man on the bed.

So the spark that was to become Alcoholics Anonymous was struck. I came back to New York after having taken away a great deal from Akron. I never can forget those mornings and those nights at the Smiths. I can never forget Annie reading to us and the two or three drunks who were hanging on, out of

the bible.

I couldn't possibly say how many times we read Corinthians on love, how many times we read the entire book of James with loving emphasis on that line "Faith without works is dead." It did make a very deep impression on me, so from the very beginning there was reciprocity, everybody was teacher and everybody was pupil and nobody need look up or down to the other because as Jack Alexander put it years later "we are all brothers and sisters under the skin."

A group started in New York, but let's turn back to Akron. Smithy, unlike me and the man on the bed was bothered very badly by a temptation to drink. Smithy was one of these continuous drinkers. He wasn't what you would call one of these panty waist periodics.

He guzzled all the time and apparently by the time he got to be sixty odd which was when he got A.A., he was so soaked in rum that he just had a terrible physical urge to drink.

Long after he told me that he had that urge for something like six or seven years and that it was constant and that his basic release from it was in doing what we now call the twelfth step.

So Smithy, greatly out of love and partly by being driven began to frantically work on those cases, first in City Hospital in Akron and then as they got tired of drunks in the place, finally over at St. Thomas where there is now a plaque which bears an inscription dedicated to all those who labored there in our pioneering time and describing St. Thomas in Akron as the first religious institution ever to open it's doors to Alcoholics Anonymous.

Ah, how much of drama, how much of struggle, how much of misery, how much of joy lies in the era before the plaque was put there. No one can say. There was a sister in the hospital, a veritable saint if you ever saw one. Our beloved Sister Ignatia. Dr. Bob mentioned her. He told how she would deny beds to people with broken legs in order to stick drunks in them. She loved drunks. She was a sort of female Silkworth, if you know what I mean.

So finally a ward was provided and you remember that Dr. Bob was an M.D. and a mighty good one. Now you know that quite within the A.A. Tradition Dr. Bob might have charged all those drunks who went through that place for his medical services. He treated 5,000 drunks medically and never charged a dime, even in that long period when he was very poor. For unlike most of us to whom it is a credit to belong to Alcoholics Anonymous, it was no credit to a surgeon at that time. "It was lovely that the old boy got sober" his patients said, "but how the hell do I know he'll be sober when he cuts me up at nine o'clock in the morning."

And so that frantic effort went on out there and it went on here and we got

back and forth a little bit between Akron and New York. You haven't any conception these days of how much failure we had. How you had to cull over hundreds of these drunks to get a handful to take the bait. Yes, the discouragement's were very great but some did stay sober and some very tough ones at that.

The next great memory I have is that of a day I shared with him in his living room in the fall of 1937. I, you remember had sobered up in late 1934 and Bob in June 1935. Well, we began to count noses, we asked ourselves "How many were dry and for how long," Not how many failures, how many successes were there in Akron, New York and the trickle to Cleveland and in the other little trickles to Philadelphia and Washington. How much time elapsed on how many cases?

We added up the score and I guess we had maybe forty folks sober and with real time elapsed. For the first time Dr. Bob and I knew that God had made a great gift to us children of the night and that the long procession coming down through the ages need no longer all go over into the left hand path and plunge over the cliff.

We knew that something great had come into the world. Then it was a question of how we would spread this and that was answered by the publication of the book and the opening of the office here.

It was spread by our great friends who rallied about us. There were friends in medicine, friends in religion, friends in the press and just plain but great friends. They all came to our aid and spread the good news.

Meanwhile drunks from all over Ohio, all over the Middle West flocked into the Akron hospital where Dr. Smith and Sister Ignatia ministered to them. And I have no doubt that two out of three of those drunks are sober, well and happy today.

So that achievement certainly entitles Dr. Bob to be named as the prince of all twelve steppers.

That was the end of the flying blind period, next we needed to discover whether we could hold together as groups. We had learned that we might survive as individuals but could this movement hold together and grow. On a thousand anvils and after a million heartbreaks the tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous was also forged out of our experience and what had been a tiny chip, launched in the flying blind time on the sea of alcoholism now became a mighty armada spreading over the world, touching foreign beach heads.

Of all that, this meeting here in this historic place in commemoration of Dr. Bob is a great and moving symbol. I know that he looks down upon us. I know that he smiles and we know that he is glad.

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+++Message 336. National Clergy Conference on
Alcoholism, 1960 - Part 1
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 12:32:00 PM

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From:NM Olson

National Clergy Conference on Alcoholism, 1960 - Part 1

The following is an interesting talk by Bill to the National Clergy
Conference On Alcoholism. Although Bill acknowledges here that *Our
spiritual origins are Christian,* I personally will always be indebted to his
wisdom in making it easier to people like me -- who was an agnostic when I
found AA, to enter, by using the phrase *God as we understand him.*

Nancy.

National Clergy Conference on Alcoholism
The Blue Book Vol.12, 179-210, 1960
Alcoholics Anonymous
Bill W.
Co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous
Reverend Raymond J.H. Kennedy, S.J., Chairman

FATHER KENNEDY: Your Excellency, Right Reverend and Very Reverend Fathers,
Members and Guests of the Conference: We come now to what, for most of us, is
undoubtedly the high point of this Conference.

Some six or seven years ago I attended the Yale School of Alcohol Studies
and, when we were leaving, our class was urged, as is every class, that, when
we returned to our home cities, we should try to do something practical with
the knowledge and training we had received at Yale. So I devised the idea of
conducting in Syracuse a lecture series for the general public on Problems of
Alcohol in general and on alcoholism in particular. I was fortunate enough to
be able to bring to our city a number of lecturers of national renown
including Doctor Bacon of Yale, Father Ford, and Mrs. Marty Mann. But from the
very outset I had one great hope, namely, that I would be able to have the one
surviving Co-Founder of Alcoholics Anonymous as the final lecturer of our
series. Our local A.A. people were, of course, thrilled with the idea. They
warned me that it would be practically impossible because they happened to know
that, at that time, the gentleman who I am about to introduce to you, had been
quite unwell and that also that he had very recently the great sorrow of
burying his father.

I was, of course, dismayed to hear this but I wrote to him anyway and asked if

it would be possible for him to come. In reply I had a very delightful phone call in which he assured me he would be very happy to give the lecture. The result was startling.

Our local A.A. people spread the word and what a response we had! Whereas the other lectures had addressed groups of fifty to seventy-five people, seven hundred appeared for the closing lecture. They came by the busload: they came from Albany, from Rochester, from Buffalo. They even came from Ottawa and Toronto. On that memorable evening and throughout the following day, when he remained as my guest in our city, I personally became very much attached to this man and, since then, he has favored me with his personal friendship in many ways and on many occasions.

We of this conference have tried two or three times in the past to have him come to address us but each time that we invited him something seemed to come up to prevent him from appearing on the program. Each time, I sincerely believed him, because I never forgot that when he was free to accept an invitation he did come, in spite of illness and even of personal sorrow in his own family. I consider it a deep personal honor and privilege to be permitted to present to this Conference Bill W.

Bill W.

Excellencies and Friends: My thanks to Father Ray for his introduction. He has us off to an appropriate start. This hour with you is most meaningful to me and I trust it will be to you and to A.A. as a whole. Every thoughtful A.A. realizes that the divine grace which has always flowed through the Church is the ultimate foundation on which A.A. rests. Our spiritual origins are Christian. Therefore the transforming grace that expels our alcohol obsession has come down across the centuries through you. In this connection I would like to tell you the story of my long connection with Father Edward Dowling, whose funeral I have just attended.

Never shall I have a finer friend, a wiser adviser, nor in all probability such a channel of grace as he personally afforded me over the years.

Father Ed, as we affectionately call him, was the first clergyman of the Catholic faith ever to take notice of us AAs. It happened in this way. Our textbook, *Alcoholics Anonymous* was published in the spring of 1939. A few months later Father Ed read the book and very evidently liked what he saw there.

In *The Queen's Work*, the magazine of the Sodality, he wrote a piece about us which in effect said to all people of the Catholic faith, Folks, AA is good; come and get it. Because we could have had no idea of how the AA book would be received by the clergy, this forthright recommendation brought us great excitement, rejoicing, and gratitude.

Shortly thereafter my wife Lois and I had moved to AA's first clubhouse on

24th Street here in New York. Our own house had been lost and the future for our society was uncertain indeed.

Though a formula for recovery from alcoholism was in sight, we were just beginning the great test to see whether we rather erratic people could live and work together. The problems of that club and its people were terrific; only God knew if we could survive.

Enter Father Ed.

My first unforgettable contact with Father Ed came about in this way.

It was early in 1940, though late in the winter. Save for old Tom, the fireman we had lately rescued from Rockland Asylum, the club was empty. My wife Lois was out somewhere. It had been a hectic day, full of disappointments. I lay upstairs in our room, consumed with self-pity. This had brought on one of my characteristic imaginary ulcer attacks. It was a bitter night, frightfully windy. Hail and sleet beat on the tin roof over my head.

Then the front doorbell rang and I heard old Tom toddle off to answer it. A minute later he looked into the doorway of my room, obviously much annoyed. Then he said, "Bill, there is some old damn bum down there from St. Louis, and he wants to see you." Great heavens, I thought, this cannot be still another one!

Wearily, and even resentfully, I said to Tom, "Oh well, bring him up, bring him up." Then a strange figure appeared in my bedroom door. He wore a shapeless black hat that somehow reminded me of a cabbage leaf. His coat collar was drawn around his neck, and he leaned heavily on a cane. He was plastered with sleet. Thinking him to be just another drunk, I did not even get off the bed. Then he unbuttoned his coat and I saw that he was a clergyman.

A moment later I realized with great joy that he was the clergyman who had put that wonderful plug for AA into The Queen's Work. My weariness and annoyance instantly evaporated.

We talked of many things, not always about serious matters either. Then I began to be aware of one of the most remarkable pair of eyes I had ever seen. And, as we talked on, the room increasingly filled with what seemed to me to be the presence of God which flowed through my new friend. It was one of the most extraordinary experiences that I have ever had. Such was his rare ability to transmit grace. Nor was my experience at all unique. Hundreds of AA's have reported having exactly this experience when in his presence.

This was the beginning of our of the deepest and most inspiring friendships that I shall ever know. This was the first meaningful contact that I had

ever had with the clergymen of your faith.

Some months later I visited St. Louis and Father Ed met me at the air field. By contrast this was a blistering day, and Father Ed had come to bring me to the Sodality Headquarters in St. Louis. I was struck by the delightful informality. Of course I had never been in such a place before. I had been raised in a small Vermont village, Yankee-style. Happily there was no bigotry in my grandfather who raised me. But neither was there much religious contact or understanding.

So here I was in some kind of a monastery. Even then, believe it or not, I still toyed with the notion that Catholicism was somehow a superstition of the Irish!

Then Father Ed and his Jesuit partners commenced to ask me questions. They wanted to know about the recently published AA book and especially about AA Twelve Steps. To my surprise they had supposed that I must have had a Catholic education. They seemed doubly surprised when I informed them that at the age of eleven I had quit the Congregational Sunday school because my teacher had asked me to sign a temperance pledge. This had been the extent of my religious education.

More questions were asked about AA*s Twelve Steps. I explained how a few years earlier some of us had been associated with the Oxford Groups; that we had picked up from these good people the ideas of self-survey, confession, restitution, helpfulness to others and prayer, ideas that we might have got in many other quarters as well.

After our withdrawal from the Oxford Groups, these principles and attitudes had been formed into a word-of-mouth program, to which we had added a step of our own to the effect "that we were powerless over alcohol." Our Twelve Steps were the result of my effort to define more sharply and elaborate upon these word-of-mouth principles so that alcoholic readers would have a more specific program: that there could be no escape from what we deemed to be essential principles and attitudes. This had been my sole idea in their composition. This enlarged version of our program had been set down rather quickly -- perhaps in twenty or thirty minutes -- on a night when I had been very badly out of sorts. Why the Steps were written down in the order in which they appear today and just why they were worded as they are, I had no idea whatever.

Following this explanation of mine my new Jesuit friends pointed to a chart that hung on the wall. They explained that this was a comparison between the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius and the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, that, in principle, this correspondence was amazingly exact. I believe they also made the somewhat startling statement that spiritual principles set forth in our Twelve Steps appeared in the identical order that they do in the Ignatian Exercises.

In my abysmal ignorance, I actually inquired, "Please tell me - who is this fellow Ignatius?"

While of course the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous contain nothing new, there seems no doubt that this singular and exact identification with the Ignatian Exercises has done much to make the close and fruitful relation that we now enjoy with the Church.

Early Origins of A.A.

It now occurs to me that it may be profitable if we were to review the origins of AA; to take a look at some of its underlying mechanisms -- an interior look as it were. Of course I am here reflecting my own views, and some of these are bound to be speculative. At any rate, here they are.

Though AA roots are in the centuries-old Christian community, there seems little doubt that in an immediate sense our fellowship began in the office of the much respected Dr. Carl Jung of Zurich.

As you know, Dr. Jung is one of the pioneers of the psychiatric art who believes that man has a conscience and a soul. In 1930 he had under treatment a prominent American business man who had exhausted all other sources of recovery. He remained with Carl Jung a whole year. And when he left that great doctor he felt very confident that he had made a complete comeback. He felt that the inner springs of his motivations to drink had been revealed; that through this immensely improved understanding he could now manage his own life.

Yet, quite unaccountably, he was soon seized with the old malignant compulsion; he was drunk again. In utter despair, he returned to Dr. Jung. In effect, this is what he had to say. "Doctor, you have been my court of last resort. Tell me frankly, is this the end of the line? You know how badly I want to stop. Is there no hope?"

To this plea, Dr. Jung made a rejoinder of great candor, humility and perception, a statement that laid the foundation for Step One of the AA program.

He said to his patient, "I thought that you might be one of the few who might be reeducated. But I am obliged to conclude that you are like nearly all the rest of the alcoholics I have treated. There is nothing whatever in my art that can do anything for you."

"But," persisted the patient, "is there no other way, is there no other chance?"

"Yes," said Dr. Jung, "there is a chance - a very small one. Your bare chance is that somehow, somewhere you will find a transforming spiritual experience

that will expel your obsession."

"But," remonstrated his client, "I am a man of faith. In fact I used to be an Episcopal vestryman. I still have a faith of sorts. But perhaps God has not much faith in me?"

Then Dr. Jung further explained as follows: "Faith is indispensable, but in cases such as yours, it is not enough. I am talking of a transforming experience, a conversion, if you like. I am talking about conversion at depth, something that will expel your obsession, render you sane,remotivate you. Allthrough the centuries this sort of thing has happened, but only occasionally; sometimes under religious auspices, sometimes quite spontaneously, and always inexplicably. I can only suggest that you expose yourself to some sort of religious influence and hope for the best, admitting that you can do nothing of your own resources."

The Oxford Groups

Shortly thereafter Dr. Jung's patient -- one I shall call Roland - joined up with the Oxford Groups, a society which in more recent years has been called Moral Re-Armament. As we shall see, AA owes this fellowship a great deal on two counts. From them we learned what, and what not to do. At any rate, our friend Roland did there find a truly transforming experience, an experience that kept him in sobriety for a number of years.

As one of those unusual Oxford Groupers interested in alcoholism, Roland went out of his way to help a former school mate of mine. A serious alcoholic, my old school chum, Ebby, was about to be committed for alcoholic insanity just as Roland reached him.

continues in Part 2.

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+++Message 337. National Clergy Conference on
Alcoholism, 1960 - Part 2
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 1:07:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

National Clergy Conference on Alcoholism, 1960 - Part 2

Part 2

Now when Roland contacted my friend Ebby, another element was cast into the

synthesis that was to become AA. Here was one alcoholic talking to another.

Roland could not only identify with Ebby as an alcoholic, he could also bring Ebby Dr. Jung's verdict of the medical hopelessness of the malady. Just as importantly, he could bring Ebby hope of release through a spiritual experience.

He could also tell Ebby what conditions needed to be met in order to become worthy of such a gift of grace -- namely, self-survey, an examination of conscience (as you would call it), restitution for harms done, helpfulness to others without demands of prestige or money reward, prayer to God as we understand Him.

These were the essential attitudes and principles that Roland transmitted to Ebby, who was to become my own sponsor.

The moment Ebby accepted these principles and conditions, he was released from his desire to drink, and this release lasted for a couple of years, during which he contacted me.

Bill Meets John Barleycorn

Perhaps at this point I should acquaint you with my own experience as an alcoholic. There have been, of course, childhood maladjustments. As a kid, I was over-sized, but not strong. I couldn't win in fights and contests. My mother and father were divorced. This resulted in great inferiority and much depression. To compensate for this condition, I developed a fierce desire to excel -- the well-known power drive. By the time I reached boarding school, I was possessed by a consuming desire to be first in everything.

This was more than legitimate ambition -- this was a veritable obsession.

My first drink came during World War I, just before going to service abroad. It was a tremendous experience, under alcohol all my remaining inferiority's disappeared. I could draw near to people and they seemed to draw near to me. I was part of life at last. And alcohol was my elixir. Alcohol could not only banish shyness and inferiority, it could kill depression. Even better, it could elate me beyond description. I could dream vast dreams of power and accomplishment.

Therefore alcohol meant far more to me than to the average person - I had begun to use it as a cure for my neurotic difficulties.

Following the World War, this habit of finding surcease in the bottle became truly obsessive, and uncontrollable. But it was a long time before my wife and I realized how grim that alcohol obsession could be. I entered Wall Street and became successful for a time, making more money than was good for some so young. In this period there were no depressions, only the mad and elated

pursuit of fame and money.

By 1929 the hangovers were terrific. But I had a good constitution, and I always dreamed of controlling my drinking the next time I tried it.

Then came the 1929 crash. I was wiped out and plunged into debt. Times were very bad and my drinking was well known. Therefore there was no financial comeback. Again I began to drink to cover up frustration and depression.

Presently I began the weary round of hospitals.

Finally, Dr. William D. Silkworth of Towns Hospital at New York, a medical saint if there ever was one, took an interest in my case. Knowing my desperate desire to stop, he thought I might be one of the rare ones who could recover. But in the end he had to give up. Gently, but very definitely, he had to tell my wife: "Your husband has an obsession that condemns him to drink; nothing that I know, no treatment at all can put an end to it. He also has some sort of physical defect -- maybe an allergy -- that guarantees he will damage his brain if he keeps on. Indeed, there is a little damage already."

Such was the verdict of a doctor in whom Lois and I had every confidence. Strangely this verdict of medical hopelessness, this exact and awful statement of the nature of the alcohol malady, was to become a vital part of the AA program a little later on. By then it was the summer of 1934. It looked as though I would have to be locked up for good, or else go mad and die.

Nevertheless I left the hospital, still in freedom, and by dint of great vigilance and discipline, I kept away from liquor until Armistice Day of 1934. Then the strange obsession was upon me, and I was drunk again.

Ebby Visits Bill

One day, while on that bout, the telephone rang as I sat drinking alone -- my wife was working in a department store, supporting me -- and here was my old friend Ebby. I had heard that he was about to be committed for alcoholic insanity; indeed, I had never seen him sober in New York before. I could instantly sense something about him -- something different. It was a sort of a psychic hunch. He sat down at my kitchen table. I pushed a crock of gin towards him. But he said, no thanks. So I inquired, "Well Ebby, are you on the water wagon?"

"No," he replied, "I wouldn't say I'm on the water wagon. I'm just not drinking now."

Of course I was mystified. What was all this about? I had looked forward to a drinking bout with my friend. We would talk about the good old days. That would be a relief because the present was intolerable and I knew there was to be no future for either of us. But he would have none of my gin. What on earth

had got into him?

When I put this question, he replied, simply and smilingly, "I've got religion."

This was a poser, indeed it was a shocker. At college I had had a scientific training from which I'd inferred that man was the spearhead of evolution, was just about all the God there was. However, I felt I ought to be polite. So I said, "So you've got religion, Ebby? Well, tell me what brand it is."

He replied that it wasn't exactly a brand -- he wouldn't exactly call it a religion. Then he explained how he had run into those Oxford Groups. He also added that they were pretty evangelical for him. Nevertheless he had met a drunk or two there, notably one Roland, who had been a patient of Dr. Jung's. And then he outlined the simple program that I have just described.

He told me just how it worked for him, how quite unaccountably he had been released the moment that he became willing to accept it; indeed he had been released before he had done much about applying those principles and attitudes. He emphasized the fact that he had been released. I could deeply sense that this was true.

Ebby's sobriety was certainly much more than the water wagon variety.

Ebby then dwelt on Roland's experience with Dr. Jung, how hopeless this man of science said alcoholism was. Of course this corresponded exactly with what Dr. Silkworth had already told Lois and me. Though his new belief in God jarred me not a little, I nevertheless listened with rapt attention. In a way he was telling me nothing new at all, yet what he had to say carried an immense impact. Here was one alcoholic talking to another -- at very great depth, no question.

My deflation which had begun with Dr. Silkworth's grim verdict was nearing completion. I was powerless on my own resources. Yet here was hope. In Ebby's person, in his very evident state of release, Ebby carried immense conviction.

Though I went on drinking for a while longer, in no waking moment could I forget his face and words as he sat and talked to me across the kitchen table. He had bound me to him with cords of verity and understanding -- and a common suffering. From these benign ties I was not to escape.

But it must be confessed that I still gagged on a belief in God. I could and would try anything else -- but not this. But I always had to come back to the thought that Ebby was released. He was sober, and I was hopelessly drunk. Who was I to say there is no God? Maybe I had better go to the hospital and get Dr. Silkworth to sober me up. Of course there mustn't be any emotional conversion -- that wouldn't do for a Vermont Yankee! Anyway,

I'd have a good clear look.

So I started for the hospital, very drunk. Dr. Silkworth shook his head. I brandished a bottle and shouted, "I've got something new, Doc." He could only reply, "Maybe you had better go to bed." And this I did. But I wasn't in too awful shape. In three days time, I was perfectly sober. One morning my friend Ebby appeared in the doorway and he found me in a terrible depression. I was still in rebellion -- against God.

But my old friend didn't try to evangelize me. Instead he put me in the position of asking, "Ebby, what is that neat little formula of yours for getting sober?"

He quickly repeated it. I reflected, too, that he was definitely practicing what he preached. Why was he at my hospital so early in the morning, when he himself should have been looking for a job? He had simply retold his own story. There was no evangelizing. Presently he was gone and I was left to think.

Then I fell into a prodigious depression, one of the most frightful experiences I have ever known. Momentarily, I suppose, this completely deflated me; at great depth the conviction was carried to me that by myself I was nothing at all. I was helpless and hopeless. Since this inner collapse was so sweeping, so complete, I suppose this may explain the tremendous experience that immediately followed.

Bill's Spiritual Experience

Out of my black depression I found myself crying, just like a child in the dark, "If there is a God, will He show Himself? Now I am ready, ready to do anything, even to believe." Then came the great experience.

The room filled with a blinding white light. I was caught into an ecstasy for which there is no description. In my mind's eye I seemed to be on a mountain top; a great wind was blowing. Then I thought, "This is not air, this is spirit. This is the God of the preachers." How long this state lasted I have no idea. But at length I found myself still, of course, on the bed. Now however I seemed to be in a new dimension. All around and through me I felt a sense of Presence.

A great peace settled over me. With this came the mighty assurance that no matter how wrong things were with the world, all things were right with God. I had a tremendous sense of belonging. Here was purpose and destiny. Here was God.

Such, in substance, was my transforming experience. I later found that my obsession to drink was snapped off instantly -- never to return again in any dangerous form.

Almost immediately a vision of a chain reaction among alcoholics, one carrying the good news to the other, began to possess me. It might be well to here observe that every AA does have a transforming spiritual experience, though it seldom has the suddenness or dramatic content that mine did. What happened to me in perhaps six minutes, may in most cases require six months or even a year or more. But the fruits are the same. There must always be that same ego collapse at depth, at least, so far as alcohol is concerned.

There must also be a turning to a higher Power for God*s gift of grace, without which the obsession can practically never be expelled. Though my sudden experience did give me a wonderful rebirth and an enormous stimulation to work with alcoholics, it did nevertheless have its liabilities. For a time I really thought I had been appointed by God to fix up all the drunks in the world! Along with the positive experience, some of my old paranoia had returned.

Anyhow, the main outlines of today's AA program were already in sight, save only a lacking element or so.

Continued in Part 3

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+++Message 338. National Clergy Conference on
Alcoholism, 1960 - Part 3
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 1:25:00 PM

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From:NM Olson

National Clergy Conference on Alcoholism, 1960 - Part 3

Sickness Concept Versus Responsibility

Early in A.A.'s history, very natural questions arose among theologians. There was a Mr. Link who had written a popular treatise called "The Return to Religion."

One day I received a call from him. He strongly objected to the A.A. position that alcoholism was an illness. This concept, he felt, removed moral responsibility from alcoholics. He had been voicing this complaint about psychiatrists in the American Mercury. And now, he said, he was going to lambaste A.A. too.

Of course I made haste to point out that we AAs did not use the concept of sickness to absolve our members from moral responsibility. On the contrary, we used the fact of fatal illness to clamp the heaviest kind of moral responsibility on to the sufferer.

The further point was made that in his early days of drinking the alcoholic often was no doubt guilty of irresponsibility and gluttony. But once the time of compulsive drinking, veritable lunacy, had arrived, he could not very well be held accountable for his conduct. He then had a lunacy which condemned him to drink in spite of all he could do; he had developed a bodily sensitivity to alcohol that guaranteed his final madness and death.

When this state of affairs was pointed out to him, he was placed immediately under the heaviest kind of pressure to accept AA's moral and spiritual program of regeneration -- namely, our Twelve Steps.

Fortunately, Mr. Link was satisfied with this view of the use that we were making of the alcoholic's illness. I am glad to report that nearly all theologians who have since thought about this matter have also agreed with that early position.

While it is most obvious that free choice in the matter of alcohol has virtually disappeared in most cases, we AAs do point out that plenty of free will is left in other areas. It certainly takes a large amount of willingness, and a great exertion of the will to accept and practice the AA program. It is by this very exertion of the will that the alcoholic corresponds with the grace by which his drinking obsession can be expelled.

Now what about the alcoholic who says that he cannot possibly believe in God? A great many of these come to AA and they complain that they are trapped. By this they mean that we have convinced them that they are fatally ill, yet they cannot accept a belief in God and His grace as a means of recovery. Happily this does not prove to be an impossible dilemma at all. We simply suggest that the newcomer take an easy stance and an open mind; that he proceed to practice those parts of the Twelve Steps which anyone's common sense would readily recommend. He can certainly admit that he is an alcoholic; that he ought to make a moral inventory; that he ought to discuss his defects with another person; that he should make restitution for harms done; and that he can be helpful to other alcoholics.

We emphasize the "open mind," that at least he should admit that there might be a Higher Power. He can certainly admit that he is not God, nor is mankind in general. If he wishes he can for a time place his dependence upon his own AA group. That group is certainly a Higher Power, so far as recovery from alcoholism is concerned. If these reasonable conditions are met, he then finds himself released from the compulsion to drink; he discovers that his motivations have been changed far out of proportion to anything that could have been achieved by a simple association with us or by

the practice of a little more honesty, humility, tolerance, and helpfulness. Little by little he becomes aware that a higher Power is indeed at work. In a matter of months, or at least in a year or two, he is talking freely about God as he understands Him. He has received the gift of God's grace -- and he knows it.

The Lunacy of Alcoholism

Perhaps a little more should be said about the obsessional character of alcoholism. When our fellowship was about three years old some of us called on Dr. Lawrence Kolb, then assistant surgeon general of the United States. He said that our report of progress had given him his first hope for alcoholics in general.

Not long before, the U.S. Public Health Department had thought of trying to do something about the alcoholic situation. But after a careful survey of the obsessional character of our malady, this had been given up. Indeed, Dr. Kolb felt that dope addicts had a better chance. Accordingly the government had built a hospital for their treatment at Lexington, Kentucky. But for alcoholics -- well, there simply wasn't any use at all, so he thought.

Nevertheless, many people still go on insisting that the alcoholic is not a sick man -- he is simply weak or willful, and sinful. Even today we often hear the remark "That drunk could get well if he wanted to."

There is no doubt, too, that the deeply obsessional character of the alcoholic's drinking is obscured by the fact that drinking is a socially acceptable custom. By contrast, stealing, or let us say shop-lifting, is not.

Practically everybody has heard of that form of lunacy known as kleptomania. Oftentimes kleptomaniacs are splendid people in all other respects. Yet they are under an absolute compulsion to steal -- just for the kick. A kleptomaniac enters a store and pockets a piece of merchandise. He is arrested and lands in the police station. The judge gives him a jail term. He is stigmatized and humiliated. Just like the alcoholic, he swears that never, never will he do this again. But on his release from the jail, he wanders down the street past a department store. Unaccountably he is drawn inside. He sees, for example, a red tin fire engine, a child's toy. He instantly forgets all about his misery in the jail. He begins to rationalize. He says, "Well, this little tin fire engine is of no real value. The store wouldn't miss it." So he pockets the toy, the store detective collars him, and he is right back in the clink. Everybody recognizes this type of stealing as sheer lunacy.

Now let's compare this behavior with that of an alcoholic. He, too, has landed in jail. He has already lost family and friends. He suffers heavy stigma and guilt. He has been physically tortured by his hangover. Like the

kleptomaniac he swears that he will never get into this fix again. Perhaps he actually knows that he is an alcoholic. He may understand just what that means. He may be fully aware of what the fearful risk of that first drink is. But on his release the alcoholic behaves just like the kleptomaniac. He passes a bar. At the first temptation he may say, "No I mustn't go in there; liquor is not for me." But when he arrives at the next drinking place, he is gripped by a rationalization. Perhaps he says, "Well, one beer won't hurt me. After all, beer isn't liquor."

Completely unmindful of his recent miseries, he steps inside. He takes that fatal first drink. The following day, the police have him again. Yet his fellow citizens continue to say he is only weak or willful. Actually, his is just as crazy as the kleptomaniac ever was. At this stage, his free will in regard to alcoholism has evaporated. He cannot very well be held accountable for his behavior.

Now a final thought. Many a non-alcoholic clergyman asks these questions about Alcoholics Anonymous: "Why do clergymen so often fail with alcoholics, when AA so often succeeds? Is it possible that the grace of AA is superior to that of the Church? Is Alcoholics Anonymous a new religion, a competitor of the Church?"

If these misgivings had real substance, they would be serious indeed. But, as I have already indicated, Alcoholics Anonymous cannot in the least be regarded as a new religion. Our Twelve Steps have no theological content except that which speaks of "God as we understand Him." This means that each individual AA member may define God according to whatever faith or creed he may have.

Therefore there isn't the slightest interference with the religious views of any of our membership. The rest of the Twelve Steps define moral attitudes and helpful practices, all of the precisely Christian in character. Therefore, as far as they go, the Steps are good Christianity, indeed they are good Catholicism, something which Catholic writers have affirmed more than once.

Neither does AA exert the slightest religious authority over its members: No one is compelled to believe anything. No one is compelled to meet membership conditions. No one is obliged to pay anything. Therefore we have no system of authority, spiritual or temporal, that is comparable to or in the least competitive with the Church.

At the center of our society we have a Board of Trustees. This body is accountable yearly to a Conference of elected Delegates. These Delegates represent the conscience and desire of AA as regards functional or service matters. Our Tradition contains an emphatic injunction that these Trustees may never constitute themselves as a government -- they are to merely provide certain services that enable AA as a whole to function. The same principles apply at our group and area level.

Dr. Bob, my co-partner, had his own religious views. For whatever they may be worth, I have my own. But both of us have gone heavily on record to the effect that these personal views and preferences can never under any conditions be injected into the AA program as a working part of it.

AA is a sort of spiritual kindergarten, but that is all. Never could it be called a religion.

Nor should any clergyman, because he does not happen to be a channel of grace to alcoholics, feel that he or his Church is lacking in grace. No real question of grace is involved at all -- it is just a question of who can best transmit God's abundance. It so happens that we who have suffered alcoholism, we who can identify so deeply with other sufferers, are the ones usually best suited for this particular work. Certainly no clergyman ought to feel any inferiority just because he himself is not an alcoholic!

Then, as I have already emphasized, AA has actually derived all of its principles, directly or indirectly, from the Church. Ours, gentlemen, is a debt of gratitude far beyond any ability of mine to express.

On behalf of AA members everywhere, I give you our deepest thanks for the warm understanding and the wonderful co-operation that you have everywhere afforded us. Please also have my gratitude for the privilege of being with you this morning. This is an hour that I shall remember always.

The Question and Answer period follows in Part 4.

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+++Message 339. National Clergy Conference - Q&A, Part
1
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 1:31:00 PM

II
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From:NM Olson

National Clergy Conference - Q&A, Part 1

Question Period: A Synopsis

FATHER N.: I*d like to ask this question. After a prolonged period of drinking, I think the nerves of the body are deadened, that is, the optical nerve. As the alcohol wears off there is sometimes an impression of blinding light. I merely want to know what you think about that.

Bill W.: Actually that was never my own experience. At the time of my sudden spiritual awakening I was perfectly sober. Perhaps you raise the question of hallucination versus the Divine imagery of a genuine spiritual experience. Perhaps nobody has ever defined what an hallucination truly is. But we who have been the fortunate recipients of great spiritual experiences are able to declare for their reality. We think that the best evidence of the reality of religious experiences are in their subsequent fruits. Those who receive these genuine gifts of grace are much altered people, almost invariably for the better. This can scarcely be said of those who hallucinate -- Witness Hitler!

Perhaps it is presumptuous of me to say whether my own spiritual experience was real or unreal. But whether God made use of an alcoholic haze before my eyes, or whether I actually glimpsed His face, I can surely report that in my own life and in the lives of many others there has been a very considerable pay-off. Which ever way it may have happened, I am unutterably grateful for His unbelievable gift to me.

FATHER W.: Bill, could you explain what you mean by "mental obsession?" What is this?

Bill W.: Well, as I understand it, we are all born with a freedom of choice. The degree of this varies from person to person, and from area to area in our lives. In the case of neurotic people, our instincts take on certain patterns and directions, sometimes so compulsive they cannot be broken by any ordinary effort of the will.

The alcoholic's compulsion to drink is like that. As a smoker, for example, I have a deeply ingrained habit -- I'm almost an addict. But I do not think this habit is an actual obsession. Doubtless it could be broken by an act of my own will. If badly enough hurt, I could in all probability give up tobacco. Should smoking repeatedly land me in Bellevue Hospital, I doubt if I would make the trip many times before quitting.

But with my alcoholism well that was something else again. No amount of desire to stop, no amount of punishment, could enable me to quit. What was once a habit of drinking became an obsession of drinking -- a genuine lunacy.

Father X.: Bill, I noticed that in your talk you did not use the word "disease." Did you intend to make any kind of distinction between disease and sickness?

Bill W.: We AAs have never called alcoholism a disease because, technically speaking, it is not a disease entity. For example, there is no such thing as heart disease. Instead there are many separate heart ailments or combinations of them. It is something like that with alcoholism. Therefore we did not wish to get in wrong with the medical profession by pronouncing alcoholism a disease entity. Hence we have always called it an illness or a malady -- a far safer term for us to use.

Father Y.: Bill, you are, as it were, co-author of the Twelve Steps. We all realize that these steps are suggestions. Would you think it possible for any alcoholic to neglect any one of these Twelve Steps and still hope to maintain his sobriety.

Bill W.: Well, where the break-even or safety is varies a great deal. But it is hardly prudent for any of us to take many chances with this sort of neglect. Nevertheless, it is truly amazing on what little practice of the Steps of AA some people stay sober. On the contrary, it is astonishing how difficult for certain others to remain dry even though they work diligently at the steps.

In this connection, there is an observation to be made about the several motivations we have respecting the practice of AA's Twelve Steps. At first we try the Steps, or at least some of them, because we absolutely must. It is a question of do or die. Then we observe AA principles because we begin to feel they ought to be observed because this is the right thing to do. We may still rebel, but we do try. Then there is a higher plateau which we sometimes touch. In a state of no resistance at all we practice AA's principles because we like to practice them, because we actually want to live by them all.

Of course, there is some virtue in following the AA program because we must. There is a lot more when, though in rebellion, we practice spiritual principles because they are right. When we are finally released from rebellion and when we live by AA principles because we actually and continuously want to live that way, then I think we are the recipients of a great amount of grace indeed.

Father E.: I'd like to ask about Recovery Inc., that society which deals with mental and emotional ailments. To what extent might Recovery Inc. help along the person who just has a problem of drinking before it gets too bad. And also, after one is a member of AA might not Recovery Inc. help him? Would this interfere with one's loyalty to Alcoholics Anonymous? Are you acquainted with how Recovery Inc. operates?

Bill W.: I have always looked with great sympathy upon Recovery Inc. The founder of that movement was a psychiatrist. In actuality, Recovery Inc. is very much of a heresy to AA. But it's the kind of heresy that often seems to work.

Those good people operate on the basis that through a program of discipline and constant exertion of the will, their several compulsions and hexes can be directly attacked and eliminated. When this is tried in a group such as theirs, they also get the benefit of group inter-communication and power. In many cases their results have been extraordinary.

Perhaps some of you know that Father Edward Dowling took a great interest in this enterprise. Some time ago he told me that one of his Jesuit friends had

benefited immensely from this group and had contributed much to it.

I believe that Recovery Inc. is undergoing considerable modification nowadays, since the death of its founder. They are broadening their scope. Altogether I have the highest opinion of that outfit.

Father W.: I'd like to make Bill feel more comfortable. He has brought out something that has impressed me very much when he said "I'm called the author of the Twelve Steps. In them we have tried not to offend the medical profession or the clergy. I've just been trying to help drunks get sober and stay sober."

He takes the stance that he is just the oldest living member of AA, an originator, only in that sense. He doesn't want to pontificate. Does that state your position correctly, Bill?

Bill W.: You are entirely right. Being such an early member and having been prominent in the production of our literature and the management of our service affairs, it is natural that my part in the founding of AA gets much overstated. As you know we have a history book called AA Comes of Age. This volume clearly reveals that grace flowed through a great many people to bring into being what is AA today. It took a whole lot of forces and influences, way beyond my own comprehension to bring our fellowship into being. At one time I felt pretty important to the AA venture. But the more I reflect on the past, the more I find nowadays that my own part diminishes in significance.

End of Part 1

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+++Message 340. Clergy Conference Q & A - Part 2
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 1:47:00 PM

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From:NM Olson

Clergy Conference Q & A - Part 2

Q&A continued:- Part 2

Father A.J.: Bill, I would like to tell you an experience I had a few years ago, and have your comment. In Cleveland, on this occasion, I met one of the first fifty members of AA. I forget what his name was. We were talking about the similarity of the Twelve Steps and the Spiritual Exercises of St.

Ignatius. This old time AA made remarks which ran as follows: I don't know if everybody realizes it, but the Twelve Steps were not concurrent with the beginning of AA. They came into existence three or four years later. There were two men who were trying to be sober, but they couldn't. Some AA members at that time insisted that you and Dr. Bob write down the method by which they obtained sobriety.

Either Dr. Bob or you said to a certain young man: "You heard us talk, you had an education. Now why don't you write down something in black and white, so that we can give it to everybody."

Then this nameless young fellow wrote down five or six paragraphs, which were the sum total of the philosophy of AA at that time. The story is that you and Dr. Bob developed the Twelve Steps from these writings.

So I would like you to say, Bill, whether this is fiction. Also I wish you would tell us more about Sister Ignatia -- who she is, and what part she played.

Bill W.: The story of the writing of the Twelve Steps and what preceded this event has been told in our history book, *AA Comes of Age*. This account reflects not only my own recollection of the matter; it has been carefully checked with other AAs who were living at the time. I believe it to be substantially true. This account shows that AA's First Step was derived largely from my own physician, Dr. Silkworth, and my sponsor Ebby and his friend, from Dr. Jung of Zurich. I refer to the medical hopelessness of alcoholism -- our "powerlessness" over alcohol.

The rest of the Twelve Steps stem directly from those Oxford Group teachings that applied specifically to us. Of course these teachings were nothing new; we might have obtained them from your own Church. They were in effect an examination of conscience, confession, restitution, helpfulness to others, and prayer.

Before the Twelve Steps were written, these ideas were circulated in some six "word of mouth" steps. I don't remember that anybody in particular formulated these. If this formulation was the work of some one person, he merely stated in our language what we had already learned from the Oxford Groups. When the Twelve Steps were written, it was thought wise to further define and amplify these basic ideas. That is the substance of it, as well as I can recollect. I have no recollection of the person you have described.

In passing, I should express our great debt to the Oxford Group people. It was fortunate that they laid particular emphasis on spiritual principles that we needed. But in fairness it should also be said that many of their attitudes and practices did not work well at all for us alcoholics. These were rejected one by one and they our later withdrawal from this society to a fellowship of our own -- today's Alcoholics Anonymous.

Sister Ignatia was the marvelous associate of my partner, Dr. Bob, in AA's early time. Though not a Catholic, Dr. Bob was admitted to the Staff of St. Thomas Hospital in Akron. Sometime prior to this, he had hospitalized alcoholics there and Sister Ignatia ministered to both their physical and spiritual needs. Dr. Bob as a physician tended them medically at no cost whatever. From about 1940 until Dr. Bob's death in 1950, these two great people gave hospital care and took the AA message to some 5,000 sick alcoholics. Since that time, at St. Vincent's Charity Hospital in Cleveland, Sister Ignatia has been provided with a special ward, largely through the aid of local AAs who helped to construct it. And there she has since treated and ministered to some 7,000 cases more. What all these thousands of alcoholics owe to her, what A.A. as a whole owes to this dear lady, is a total which only God Himself could reckon.

Before leaving the subject of the Oxford Groups, perhaps I should specifically outline why we felt it necessary to part company with them. To begin with, the climate of their undertaking was not well suited to us alcoholics. They were aggressively evangelical, they sought to re-vitalize the Christian message in such a way as to "change the world."

Most of us alcoholics had been subjected to pressure of evangelism and we had never liked it. The object of saving the world -- when it was still much in doubt if we could save ourselves -- seemed better left to other people.

By reason of some of its terminology and by the exertion of huge pressure, the Oxford Group set a moral stride that was too fast, particularly for our newer alcoholics. They constantly talked of Absolute Purity, Absolute Unselfishness, Absolute Honesty, and Absolute Love. While sound theology must always have its absolute values, the Oxford Groups created the feeling that one should arrive at these destinations in short order, maybe by next Thursday!

Perhaps they didn't mean to create such an impression but that was the effect. Sometimes their public "witnessing" was of such a character as to cause us to be shy. They also believe that by "converting" prominent people to their beliefs, they would hasten the salvation of the many who were less prominent.

This attitude could scarcely appeal to the average drunk since he was anything but distinguished.

The Oxford Group also had attitudes and practices which added up to a highly coercive authority. This was exercised by "teams" of older members. They would gather in meditation and receive specific guidance for the life conduct of newcomers. This guidance could cover all possible situations from the most trivial to the most serious. If the directions so obtained were not followed the enforcement machinery began to operate. It consisted of a sort of coldness and aloofness which made recalcitrants feel they weren't wanted.

At one time, for example, a team got guidance for me to the effect that I was no longer to work with alcoholics. This I couldn't accept.

Another example: When I first contacted the Oxford Groups, Catholics were permitted to attend their meetings because they were strictly non-denominational.

But after a time the Catholic Church forbade its members to attend and the reason for this seemed a good one. Through the Oxford Group teams Catholic Church members were actually receiving very specific guidance for their lives; they were often infused with the idea that their own Church had become rather horse-and-buggy, and needed to be changed.

Guidance was frequently given that contributions should be made to the Oxford Groups. In a way this amounted to putting Catholics under a separate ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

At this time there were few Catholics in our own alcoholic groups. Obviously we could not approach any more Catholics under Oxford Group auspices. Therefore this was another and the basic reason for the withdrawal of our alcoholic crowd from the Oxford Groups notwithstanding our great indebtedness to them.

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+++Message 341. Clergy Conference Q&A, Part 3
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 1:55:00 PM

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From:NM Olson

Clergy Conference Q&A, Part 3

Writing Down The Twelve Steps

Perhaps you would be interested in a further account of the writing down of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

In the spring of 1938 we had commenced to prepare a book showing the methods of our then nameless fellowship. We thought there should be .a text for this which could be supported by stories, or case histories, written by some of our recovered people.

The work proceeded very slowly until some four chapters were done. The content of these chapters had been the subject of endless discussion and even hot argument.

The preliminary chapters consisted of my own story, a rationalization of AA for the benefit of the agnostic, plus descriptions of the alcoholic illness. Even over this much material the haggling had been so great that I had begun to feel much more like an umpire than an author.

Arrived then at what is now Chapter Five, it was realized that a specific program for recovery had to be laid down as a basis for any further progress. By then I felt pretty frazzled and discouraged.

One night, in a bad mood I must confess, I lay in bed at home considering our next move. After a time, the idea hit me that we might take our "word of mouth" program, the one I have already described, and amplify it into several more steps.

This would make our program perfectly explicit. The necessary ground could be covered so thoroughly that no rationalizing alcoholic could misunderstand or wiggle away by that familiar process. We might also be able to hit readers at a distance, people to whom we could offer no personal help at the moment.

Therefore a more thorough job of codification had to be done. With only this in mind I began to sketch the new steps on a yellow pad. To my astonishment they seemed to come very easily, and with incredible rapidity.

Perhaps the writing required no more than twenty or thirty minutes. Seemingly I had to think little at all. It was only when I came to the end of the writing that I re-read and counted them. Curiously enough, they numbered twelve and required almost no editing. They looked surprisingly good -- at least to me. Of course I felt vastly encouraged.

In the course of this writing, I had considerably changed the order of the presentation. In our word-of-mouth program, we had reversed mention of God to the very end. For some reason, unknown to me, I had transposed this to almost the very beginning.

In my original draft of the Twelve Steps, God was mentioned several times and only as God. It never occurred to me to qualify this to "God as we understand Him" as we did later on. Otherwise the Twelve Steps stand today almost exactly as they were first written.

When these Steps were shown to my friends, their reactions were quite mixed indeed. Some argued that six steps had worked fine, so why twelve? From our agnostic contingent there were loud cries of too much God. Others objected to an expression which I had included which suggested getting on one's knees while in prayer. I heavily resisted these objections for months. But finally did take out my statement about a suitable prayerful posture and I finally went along with that now tremendously important

expression, "God as we understand Him" -- this expression having been coined, I think, by one of our former atheist members.

This was indeed a ten-strike. That one has since enabled thousands to join AA who would have otherwise gone away. It enabled people of fine religious training and those of none at all to associate freely and to work together. It made one's religion the business of the A.A. member himself and not that of his society.

That AA's Twelve Steps have since been in such high esteem by the Church, that members of the Jesuit Order have repeatedly drawn attention to the similarity between them and the Ignatian Exercises, is a matter for our great wonder and gratitude indeed.

Father Z.: You mentioned Dr. Shoemaker, the Episcopal Rector and one time Oxford Grouper, who helped you so much. Somewhere I have seen him quoted to the effect that three men started it all. So do you mind telling us what happened to your own sponsor, your friend Ebby?

Bill W.: I think I have already traced the connection between Dr. Jung, his alcoholic patient Roland and my friend Ebby. They were of course associated in the Oxford Groups when Ebby came to me that November day in 1934 at my home in Brooklyn. It was Ebby who brought me the message that saved my life and uncounted thousands of others.

Because of gratitude and old friendship, my wife Lois and I invited Ebby to live at our home shortly after I sobered up. The son of a well-to-do family in Albany, he had never learned any profession so he was broke and had to begin all over.

These were difficult circumstances, naturally. Ebby stayed with us something like a year and a half. Being intent on getting reestablished in life, he took little interest in helping other alcoholics. Little by little, he commenced the rationalization we have seen so often. He began to say that if only he had the right romance and the right job then things would be okay. At length, he fell by the wayside. He would not mind if I tell this -- it is a part of his story today.

For many years, my friend Ebby was on the wagon and then off. Sometimes he could stay sober for a year or more. He tried living with Lois and me for another considerable period. But apparently this was of no help. Maybe we actually hindered him. As AA began to grow his position became difficult. For a long time things went from bad to worse.

About six years ago the groups down in Texas decided to try their hand. Ebby was shipped non-stop to Dallas and placed in an AA drying out place. In these new surroundings in Texas, far from his old failures, he has made a splendid recovery.

Excepting for one slip which occurred about a year after his arrival down

there he has been bone dry ever since. This is one of the deepest satisfactions that has ever come to me since A.A. started and many another A.A. can say the same.

Father Ab: Bill, you have undoubtedly through the years had much experience with people who slip. Doubtless you know how difficult it is for some priests to make the program. Have you anything to say about this?

Bill W.: Well, I must confess that in recent years I have been greatly pre-occupied with our World Service structure, and all that sort of thing. Nevertheless some of my closest friends are priests who have recovered through AA.

From time to time I hear about their specially difficult situation.

Though priests enjoy very special advantages, they are, at the same time, severely handicapped. Like medical men, they are experts in treating people -the MD treats the body, the priest, under God's grace, treats the soul.

The priest, especially, must feel a huge burden of guilt.

On the other side of the coin marked "guilt" is often inscribed the words "false pride." As a professional teacher it is pretty hard for a priest to take AA lessons from plumbers and bankers, many of whom never had any religious training or instruction whatever. It's the same way with the doctors, particularly with the psychiatrists.

Therefore we are extremely glad that the Church through the agency of this Conference, is taking great notice and a new understanding of the plight of these clergymen who are in alcohol difficulties.

I know that many experiments of a special nature are being tried for their rehabilitation. These range all the way from straight attendance at AA meetings to private groups and to specially constructed institutional care.

I am sure that all of these resources will find applications according to the several necessities of those needing such care, understanding, and treatment.

Father Ab: What about slips in general? You must have witnessed a lot of them.

Bill W. : The subject of slips is a very large one. It takes on a lot of territory. Slips can often be charged to rebellion and some of us surely are more rebellious than others. Slips can be charged to carelessness, to complacency. Many of us fail to ride out such periods sober.

Slips are due to the illusion that one can be cured of alcoholism. Things go fine for two or three years then the member is seen nomore. He gets busy putting two cars in the garage and again returns to keeping up with the Jones's. That almost surely spells trouble.

Some of us suffer extreme guilt because of vices or practices that we can't or

won't let go of. Too much guilt, too little exertion, too little prayer

-- well, this combination certainly adds up to slips.

Then some of us are far more alcohol-damaged than others. Still others encounter a series of calamities and cannot seem to find the spiritual resources with which to meet them, or else in frustration they simply won't try as hard as they can.

There are those who are physically ill. Others are subject to more or less continuous exhaustion, anxiety, and depression. These conditions often play a part in slips. Sometimes they seem utterly controlling.

Then there is the sort of acute physical tension which greatly aggravates our emotional reactions. There seems little doubt that the glandular system in many alcoholics is much out of whack, that this condition is responsible for a high degree of physical tension. This tension and its emotional consequences finally become so terrific that some of us are literally driven back into alcohol, or worse still, into sleeping pill addiction.

Therefore we sometimes slip because there is a limit to their endurance. While sleeping pills are an addictive menace, a relief we cannot use at all, it may be that the actual physical causes of these tensions will one day be located. If this happens, it may be that these defects can be medically corrected without resort to addictive materials. Let us prayerfully hope so.

This condition of physical tensions explains the behavior of many people who try ever so hard to get the AA program, the ones who mystify us because they cannot make the grade. They may well be the subject of unbearable emotional pain. Of course this does not absolve them from all responsibility. It was their former behavior that doubtless deranged them physically as well as emotionally.

But as I have said, this matter of slips is a very big subject. We can know ourselves only a little, and other people not much at all. Therefore these observations of mine are largely speculations, speculations in which I trust there is at least a degree of truth.

Father Kennedy: Bill, I want to tell you in the name of this entire Conference that we are deeply grateful to you for coming down here.

Bill W.: With all the earnestness and feeling that I can command, I wish to thank you for this hour and for what each and all of you have contributed to it. Most gratefully I acknowledge what the Church has meant to me, and to so very many of us.

The meeting and the Clergy Conference concluded with prayer.

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++++Message 342. Religion & AA -- The JACS Journal,
Vol:3, No-1, 1992.
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 5:07:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

Religion & AA -- The JACS Journal, Vol:3, No-1, 1992.

THE JACS JOURNAL Vol:3, No-1, 1992.

THE TWELVE STEPS AND JEWISH TRADITION

By Rabbi Susan Berman

Separating, Judaism and Jewishness

For the moment we need to set Judaism and Jewishness apart.

Judaism is more than simply a religion. We often hear it called a way of life. That part of it, which is cultural, culinary, linguistic, and attitudinal is "Jewishness." Jewishness is expressed in bagels and lox, Yiddish and ladino, Jewish Family Service Associations, and Jewish orphanages. A person can do Jewish things without ever participating religiously.

This is important for discussing the barricade of denial, the belief that no Jew could be alcoholic, that's prevalent in the Jewish community.

The Stigma of the Chemically Dependent Jew

Many of us grew up hearing that Shikker is a Goy - a drunk is a non-Jew. To be chemically dependent implied that one's Jewish status was questionable. Just as we believed that Jewish men did not beat their wives or that there was no such thing as a Jewish homosexual or lesbian, our communities (through their assumptions) taught us that to be a Jew seemingly granted a person immunity to alcoholism or other drug addiction.

The feeling among Jewish alcoholics and addicts was one of intense shame. To be chemically dependent meant to be less than a full Jew.

No Jewish teaching equates abuse of alcohol and other drugs with sin. Alcoholism and drug addiction is an illness. We've all heard that. But maybe it hasn't really sunk in yet. If someone should get diabetes we are sorry to hear it, but we don't blame the person. It is not his or her fault. Addiction is the same thing. True, people can't be addicts if they never use, but drinking and using other drugs are not sins.

Our Spirituality

To find Jewish spirituality we must find a way to reach beyond ourselves in a Jewish context. For some of us, that will be available in existing temples, shuls, synagogues, buildings, and programs. For others, we have to go out and create the community we crave. What I have attempted to present here are the possibilities. Prayer can play a part. So can history, peoplehood, and God. All are there for reclamation. There is a national organization called JACS (Jewish Alcoholics, Chemical Dependent Persons and Significant Others Foundation, Inc., 197 East Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003; (212) 473-4747). It teaches, informs, enhances, and provides spiritual outlets for recovering Jews and their loved ones. Truly, there is much where once there was nothing.

Through our days and years of alcohol and other drug abuse, we estranged ourselves from the world, our friends, our families, and ultimately ourselves. For most of us, our Judaism also became alien to us. And even if we were involved, the feelings and joy were gone.

Now that we are recovering, the option of rejoining the people is a real one. This is the goal of sobriety itself - the living of a sane and useful life as a part of, not apart from, the human race.

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+++Message 343. Religion & AA -- AMERICA, July 10, 1965.
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 5:06:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

Religion & AA -- AMERICA, July 10, 1965.

Jim B. of Canada has made available to me 108 articles on Religion and Alcoholics Anonymous. Gradually, over a period of several months, I will try to post all of them to the site. This is the first of the series.

Nancy

AMERICA, JULY 10, 1965.

WILLIAM JAMES and ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Fr. Robert J. Roth, S.J.

On June 10, Alcoholics Anonymous celebrated the 30th. Anniversary of its founding. In order to mark the occasion, an international convention was held at Toronto, July 2-4, when delegates met to represent some 350,000 members from 12,000 groups in 90 countries throughout the world. The celebration attracted considerable attention, for the story of the origin and growth of A.A. has been told many times. The two best books on the subject are *Alcoholics Anonymous* and *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age* (A.A. World Services. 1955, 1957).

The Toronto convention included meetings pertaining to the clergy, the medical profession, hospitals, educators, public information, the courts, industry, alcoholic agencies and A.A. itself.

But probably the most important session was a panel discussion on the question "God as We Understand Him." This should not surprise those familiar with the Twelve Steps of the A.A. program. The first three steps read as follows:

- 1 . We admitted we were powerless over alcohol -- that our lives had become unmanageable.
- 2 . Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- 3 . Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

The central place of God in Alcoholics Anonymous is, of course, widely known. I was quite surprised and intrigued, however, to learn recently that the emphasis given to God is due in large measure to the direct influence of William James, the father of American psychology and one of our most important philosophers.

It seems that when Bill W., a co-founder of A.A. was trying to fight his way back to sobriety, he happened upon a copy of James' *Varieties of Religious Experiences*. He read the book from cover to cover and was deeply impressed by James' "great wisdom." It helped Bill to reach the turning point in his career, and initially to completely arrest his progressive illness of alcoholism. In subsequent years, the influence of James came to be felt also in the formulation of A.A.'s basic ideas.

One could well wonder what this "great wisdom" was that has been so influential in the development of Alcoholics Anonymous, especially in its fundamental dependence on God. It was James, we know, who made pragmatism a byword in American life and thought -- something for which he has been praised and dammed, depending on the point of view. In its worst sense, pragmatism has created the stereotype of the typical American as a time-server who wishes to get a job done by the most efficient means possible, whose norm of truth is what works, whose rule of value is what furthers his own aims. In the minds of many, pragmatism is scarcely distinguishable from naturalism or irreligion, and both have become synonyms for "Americanism."

To deal adequately with all the misconceptions in this picture would require an extended study. What is of primary concern here is that William James proposed pragmatism precisely as a means of enabling contemporary man to find God. *Varieties of Religious Experience*, published in 1902, was actually intended as a preliminary step in this direction. In it, James undertook to examine various types of religious experience in order to see if they could give evidence for a belief in the existence of God. So absorbed did he become in describing and cataloguing experiences that the psychologist in him completely overshadowed the religious philosopher and the work became a long -- though rich -- source book for all kinds of religious experience. It was only in a hurried chapter or two at the end that he got around to asking what conclusions could be drawn regarding God's existence.

In his *Pragmatism*, published in 1907, James returned to the investigation of theism. This work, to be properly understood, must be read as the biography of a scientific man in search of God. In the late 19th century, America had reached a critical period in its intellectual development. The new scientific age had burst upon Americans with startling suddenness, and those with vision could see that they stood on the threshold of the greatest period of progress the world had ever known.

Cheering though these prospects were, there were some thinkers who feared that the coming of the scientific age would mean the end of religion and belief in God.

Of these, William James was one. He pondered deeply the question how one could be a man of science and still remain a religious man. It was in attempting to answer this question that he developed his philosophy, which has since become known as pragmatism. In the spirit of the scientific age, he proposed pragmatism as an empirical method of arriving at truth but in his own mind he was convinced that if it was properly used it would lead to a belief in the existence of God. This was a preoccupation with James for many years -- briefly expressed in *Varieties of Religious Experience*, and sharply delineated in *Pragmatism*.

For James, the most convincing evidence of God's existence "lies primarily in inner personal experience," and its starting point is the sense of emptiness and frustration. As a young man, he had experienced very poor health for about five or six years, and this caused him frequent periods of depression and discouragement. About the same time, he seems to have gone through a spiritual crisis, which manifested itself in a lack of motivation and purpose. Slowly he began to realize that he needed a unifying philosophy of life.

All this was brought to a focus in the sense of incompleteness that James found in the depths of his being as he looked at the world around him. In his scientific work, he was in search of a solution to the mysteries of nature. As

a man of science, he was convinced that the answers were there; otherwise the world would be irrational. In the light of this conviction, he could not believe that man was to be frustrated when it was a question of the deep anguish and longing he experienced in his search for a final completion to all his hopes and aspirations.

Here we find a far different James from the one presented by critics of pragmatism. He was an American who, even while he upheld the integrity of the scientist in weighing and judging every last bit of evidence, was religious to the very core of his being. Though remaining a scientist, this man could stand before the world as one who knew human suffering and anguish, as one whose 'spirit was open to the call from the divine. James believed in a God who was "cosmic and tragic" a God in contact with the needs and the deeply human problems of mankind. With his flair for the dramatic, he pictured God as walking through the world, suffering with those in pain and weeping with those who were reduced to tears. It is small wonder, then, that an alcoholic, face to face with despair, found kinship with James as he read in *Varieties of Religious Experience* the account of human suffering. Sorrow, disappointment, failure, physical pain, all led James to the conclusion that "natural goods perish; riches take wings; fame is a breath; love is a cheat; youth and health and pleasure vanish."

For James, human existence, even at its best, is left with an "irremediable sense of precariousness"; it is a "bell with a crack."

Perhaps more than most others, Bill W. felt the frustration and anguish consequent upon human weakness and misery. Hence he took seriously James' observation that truly transforming spiritual experiences are nearly always founded on calamity and collapse. Following through on this lesson learned from *Varieties of Religious Experience*, Bill W. writes:

"Complete hopelessness and deflation at depth were almost always required to make the recipient of spiritual experiences ready. The significance of all this burst upon me. Deflation at depth, yes, that was it. Exactly that had happened to me."

For Bill W. and others like him, alcoholism was the starting point on the way to God and to sobriety. Their affliction was not so much the cause of their turn to God as its occasion. For the possibility that the divine existed had occurred to them before, but now they felt they could no longer postpone or evade the question. Bill states: "We had to fearlessly face the proposition that either God is everything or else He is nothing. God either is, or He isn't. What was our choice to be?"

Faced with this issue, alcoholics such as these come to the conviction that the world is not a cipher, aimlessly rushing nowhere, that human existence at its roots is not meaningless or absurd. They echo James' statement that sadness lies at the heart of every philosophy that tries to exclude God. If

human life is

to have any meaning at all, they can only conceive it as completed by a God who has in His hands the direction of the universe and the final destiny of mankind.

For an alcoholic, the move toward God is not an escape from responsibility, a concession to weakness, an excuse for laziness.

According to Bill: "We can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. And men of faith have courage. They trust their God. We never apologize for God. Instead we let Him demonstrate, through us, what He can do."

The moment the alcoholic turns to God, he engages in the life-and-death struggle back to sobriety, which will mean daily sacrifice and self-denial. It will bring a change not only in his whole way of thinking but also in many aspects of his daily life.

He will have to take up again his personal and family obligations. More than that, it will mean assuming a special responsibility for his fellow man, for an important part of the A.A. program is Step Twelve, which is "to carry this message to alcoholics." Each member becomes an apostle in the original meaning of the word: one sent to others on a mission of salvation.

In this sense, the acceptance of God is, for an alcoholic, only the beginning. And yet it is everything, for it is God who integrates every aspect of his life -- his joys and sorrows, hopes and ambitions -- and gives them meaning and direction. And this is authentically Jamesian. In the words of Ralph Barton Perry, James' faith is both a "comforting faith" and a "fighting faith."

The first rises out of weakness and gives refuge and security.

The second springs from strength and enables the religious man to fight on with courage, hope and joy even in the face of danger and uncertainty.

This is the way such an alcoholic seeks to solve the burden of misery and sorrow that his addiction brings. He proposes it not as the way, but as a way to God. In fact, A.A. does not even require its members to accept theism if they do not wish to do so. This point had to be carefully hammered out in the early stages of the A.A. program. There were some who objected to making the acceptance of a personal God an essential condition for membership. It was finally agreed that the members could choose a "power greater than ourselves," even if A.A. itself was this "higher power."

Most alcoholics, however, come to believe in and depend on a Higher Power,

which they call God, even though each one is free to decide for himself what God will mean to him. In almost every case, full recovery from alcoholism has depended on this all-important faith. God "as we understood Him" has become the cornerstone of the whole movement. Usually the alcoholic comes to believe in a personal God who is deeply concerned with the needs and the aspirations of men.

At the 30th anniversary celebration in Toronto this July, a panel discussed the question of "God as We Understand Him," to show once again that belief in a Higher Power is essential to the program. Represented in the audience were a variety of experiences, many of which were probably never envisioned and certainly not discussed by William James in his account of religious experience.

Yet James would have felt at home there, for he would have understood and appreciated those experiences as well as the problems they raised. He would certainly have recognized as his own the solution of the problems, for it finds expression in his belief that "where God is, tragedy is only provisional and partial, and shipwreck and dissolution are not the absolutely final things."

Both William James and Alcoholics Anonymous are convinced that this fact is due not to God alone, but also to what God can do through us.

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+++Message 344. Religion & AA -- THE IRISH
ECCLESIASTICAL RECORD, March 1950
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 5:15:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

THE IRISH ECCLESIASTICAL RECORD, Vol. 73: 258-259, March 1950

Alcoholics Anonymous

By J. McCarthy

Rev. Dear Sir, -- What is to be thought of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, whose avowed purpose is 'to help the sick alcoholic if he wishes to recover?'

VICTOR

Our correspondent has kindly sent us a number of leaflets and booklets in which are set out and explained the constitution, the aims and the methods of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. We have examined this literature carefully and have also read some independent descriptions of the work and history of the Fellowship -- which was founded in America in 1935, and now has a membership of over 100,000 scattered over thirty countries. We have been very favourably blessed by what we have read on this subject.

The Fellowship is a voluntary, non-sectarian, non-political society of alcoholics who have an honest and earnest desire to recover (and to stay recovered) from their unfortunate state. It is emphasized that this state is truly a disease in the case of the real alcoholic -- a disease which is partly a physical allergy but mainly a form of mental obsession. The aim of the society of Alcoholics Anonymous is to rehabilitate those so afflicted and diseased. The means are social therapy and a programme of recovery which is summarized in twelve steps. The psychological approach seems to be very sound and well-considered. We shall only mention a few points here.

The alcoholic finds great human sympathy, understanding and strength in the company of those who have been afflicted as he is, and who are winning through. This fellow-feeling is very helpful. The alcoholic is asked simply to concentrate on keeping off one drink, the first, for one day at a time. He is not asked to take a pledge for life. Thus he is not from the outset frightened and depressed by the magnitude of the problem of his recovery. This problem has been reduced to and set out for him in manageable proportions.

He is exhorted to realize his dependence upon God -- Whose help must be earnestly asked. As a final step, the twelfth, the alcoholic has set before him the motive of bringing help and hope to others similarly afflicted. This is a vital and most valuable part of the programme. The alcoholic is made to realize that he can help others. This realization serves to lessen and to destroy his sense of failure and uselessness and to restore his self-respect. It becomes also a powerful incentive to the alcoholic to persevere in sobriety. The Fellowship has made no extravagant claims for the success of the treatment provided. It does not claim final cures -- but rather the effective arresting of the disease. And there is abundant evidence to show that, by means of it and with due cooperation, very many so-called hopeless alcoholics have been rehabilitated.

Anyone who has experience of the great problem and heartbreak of trying to help and restore to normality and decency chronic alcoholics, will be grateful for the help which this Fellowship proffers. The emphasis of the programme is mainly upon the natural virtues of humility, sincerity, honesty with oneself, and then the need for the help of God. We see nothing in the programme which need conflict in any way with Catholic principles. There is, indeed, evidence that Catholics have, through Alcoholics Anonymous, returned, not merely to sobriety, but to the regular practice of their religion. This is as might be expected. Restoration of a sense of responsibility and self-respect should

naturally lead to a conscientious realisation of religious duties.

There are just a few suggestions we would make. Firstly, we should like to see it admitted that, while alcoholism may easily enough reach the state of being a serious disease in particular cases, this is generally reached as the result of earlier and culpable excesses. This admission will have no deleterious effects. It would rather serve as a greater incentive to strive for recovery. Secondly, for the sake of Catholics, we should like to see a reference to the necessity and incalculable value of supernatural helps for the alcoholic in his struggle towards sobriety. These helps can be abundantly obtained by frequent reception of the sacraments. The difficulty about inserting such a reference into the general programme of recovery is that it is desired to keep this programme on non-sectarian lines. But, perhaps, priests who come into contact with members of Alcoholics Anonymous might make for those concerned the point to which we have referred. We are assured that suggestions and cooperation would be welcomed. Needless to say the use of the available supernatural means would serve to consolidate successes won along natural lines. The supernatural elevates, it does not destroy the natural.

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+++Message 345. Religion & AA -- THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY,
October 22, 1941
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 5:18:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY, October 22, 1941

ALCOHOLICS HOLD CLEVELAND DINNER

CLEVELAND, October 7 -- Perhaps the strangest testimonial dinner ever held in this city took place Sunday evening. Nine hundred persons, all of them formerly addicted to drink, paid tribute to a former New York broker and an Akron physician who together started the movement known as "Alcoholics Anonymous." Also honored were the woman who introduced them and the first convert to the movement. So carefully guarded were the names of the participants that none appeared in news accounts. It was revealed that 16 northern Ohio groups were represented, that there are now approximately 6,000 members throughout the country, and that Greater Cleveland alone has 1,400 members who meet weekly in 18 units.

The leaders claim neither religious sanctions nor reform motives. Their success is based upon anonymity and upon the idea that every confirmed

alcoholic wants to quit drinking and feels a strong bond with other victims of the liquor habit. Each reformed drinker helps himself by locating and assisting another alcoholic to abstain completely.

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++++Message 346. Religion & AA -- N.C.C.A. "BLUE BOOK"
AN ANTHOLOGY
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 5:33:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

N.C.C.A. "BLUE BOOK" AN ANTHOLOGY

Catholic Asceticism and the Twelve Steps

Reverend Edward Dowling, S.J.
The Queen's Work, St. Louis, Missouri
Brooklyn, 1953

I think that if our positions were reversed, you would feel as I do -- grateful to be the focus of good will. I think that is true of anybody who speaks at an A.A. gathering, or about A.A.

I am sensible, as you are, of God's closeness to human humility. I am sensible, also, of how close human humility can come to humiliation, and I know how close that can come to an alcoholic. I think that in addition to my confidence in the closeness of God to one suffering from alcoholism, I would like to invoke our Lord's promise that where two or three gather together in His Name, there He will be in their midst.

First of all, asceticism comes from the Greek word meaning the same as exercise, or better, to practice gymnastics. The concept of exercise is to loosen up the muscles to prepare them for vigorous activity. Applied to spiritual matters, it means to loosen up the faculties of the mind or soul, to prepare them for better activity. Physical exercise is gymnastics, setting-up exercises, preparing me to take steps. In the same way, asceticism is preliminary, a preparation for me to use the powers of my soul.

Christian asceticism is contained, of course, in the Gospel. All the teachings of Our Lord boil down to the cardinal ideas; one negative, the denial of self; the other positive, the imitation of and union with Christ.

One of the many different systematized forms of Christian exercises is the

Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. There are many others, and all are efforts to apply to one's life those two principal ideas of denial of self and an affirmation of Christ. "Spiritual Exercises" indicate, of course, that the thing to be exercised is the spirit. The word "exercise" indicates a releasing of the faculties or powers of the soul.

St. Ignatius starts with a presumption that our power of faculties are bound by sinful tendencies and addictions to the wrong things. The Spiritual Exercises, therefore, work on the soul in both a negative and positive way. The first section, the consideration of my sins and of their effects in hell, is the negative part. It aims by self-denial to release our wills from our binding addictions, to enable the will to desire and to choose rationally.

The second part of the Spiritual Exercises, start in with a consideration of the Incarnation and going through the Passion and Resurrection, is an effort to see how Christ would handle various situations.

A priest alcoholic, who has written with discernment on the Spiritual Exercises, first pointed out to me the similarity between them and the twelve steps of A.A. Bill, the founder of A.A. recognized that those twelve steps are pretty much the releasing of myself from the things that prevent my will's choosing God as I understand Him.

Twelve Steps and the Spiritual Exercises

The first seven or eight steps of A.A. are quite specific as to what should be done in order to release the will from addiction to evil. On the positive side, the twelve steps are very general. Bill once stated: "It is a firm principal with us that, so far as A.A. goes, each member has the absolute right to seek God as he will." On another occasion he declared that A.A. was not concerned about the particular way a man works out his dependence on God. That depends on him and on God, mostly on God. The alcoholic's business, as expressed in the eleventh step, is to find out what God wants and to ask for strength to carry that out.

Like the Spiritual Exercises, like Christian asceticism in general, the twelve steps are not speculative ideas. They are practical steps. May I suggest some of the parallels between the Spiritual Exercises and the twelve steps.

The Foundation

The first three of the twelve steps correspond roughly with the foundation of the Spiritual Exercises. In the foundation we see man as creature. It recognizes the dependence of man on God because of the rather abstract, relatively unknown fact, creation. A.A. bases dependence on a rather concrete specific type of experience, drunkenness. The Ignatian foundation indicates that everything else shall be chosen or rejected in the light of the purpose that grows out of this dependence, i.e., sharing Him for all eternity by doing

His will on earth.

The A.A. third step directs that one's life and one's will be directed by the influence of God. In it the alcoholic determines to turn his life and his will over to the care of God as he understands Him. This emphasis on the will indicates that the alcoholic should direct himself by his will rather than by the feelings that have enmeshed him. The focal importance of the will is a characteristic of the Spiritual Exercises.

Moral Inventory - Confession

In the Spiritual Exercises, the next thing is the contemplation of sin; sin in the angels, in our first parents, in others, in myself, and sin in its effects. And of course, right along the line there you have the fourth step of A.A., a fearless, thorough moral inventory of one's sins. The parallelism is rather striking.

To a priest who asked Bill how long it took him to write those twelve steps he said that it took twenty minutes. If it were twenty weeks, you could suspect improvisation. Twenty minutes sounds reasonable under the theory of divine help.

After a moral inventory of one's life, all spiritual exercises, Catholic anyway, demand the confession of sins. It is specifically required in the Spiritual Exercises. In the A.A. fifth step, you have that general confession admitting my sins to myself, to God, and to another human being.

Reatus Culpaee and Reatus Poenae

There are two liabilities when we commit a sin: one, reatus culpaee, the guilt of the sin; the other reatus poenae, the obligation of restitution. The A.A. sixth and seventh steps cover the guilt of the sin, and the eighth and ninth steps the obligation of restitution.

I think the sixth step is the one which divides the men from the boys in A.A. It is love of the cross. The sixth step says that one is not almost, but entirely ready, not merely willing, but ready. The difference is between wanting and willing to have God remove all these defects of character. You have here, if you look into it, not the willingness of Simon Cyrene to suffer, but the great desire or love, similar to what Chesterton calls "Christ's love affair with the cross."

The seventh step implements that desire by humbly asking God to remove these defects. The alcoholic sees one defect go as a bottle of beer is taken away. And so, that continuing detachment which goes along in any ascetical life holds true in A.A. As one grows in A.A., the problems seem to get bigger, the strength bigger, and the dividends greater.

Then comes the reatus poenae, the obligation of restitution or penance. God's forgiveness is sought in the sixth and seventh steps. In the eighth and ninth steps one makes restitution. In the eighth step the alcoholic makes a list of those people he has offended and whose bills he hasn't paid. In the ninth step he pays off these obligations, if he can do so without hurting people more.

The Positive Side

The eleventh and twelfth steps give a rather limited parallel to the positive asceticism of Christianity. The eleventh step bids one by prayer and meditation to study to improve his conscious grasp of God, asking Him only for two things, knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out. Now, that is a true and accurate description of the positive aspects of Christian asceticism as well as of the second, third, and fourth weeks of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.

Then, the twelfth step. Having had a spiritual exercise or awakening as a result of these steps, we carry this message to other alcoholics and practice these principles in all our other affairs. In our apostolic work we should be an instrument in God's hands. The A.A. steps before this twelfth step are to improve by instrumental contact with God this dependence of work for others on my growth toward Christ-like sanity and sanctity has significance to an alcoholic priest. Often such a one will say, "If I could only get a little work, I feel that I could stay sober." Gradually he finds out that if he approaches sobriety through work, the work isn't going to come and the sobriety may not come either. But, as soon as he says, "Once I become sober, work will come," the hope of success is much greater.

No Humility Without Humiliation

A.A. has helped me as a person and as a priest. A.A. has made my optimism greater. My hopelessness starts much later. Like anyone who has watched A.A. achieve its goals, I have seen dreams walk. You and I know that in the depths of humiliation we are in a natural area, and, rightly handled, especially is the inner spirit of that sixth step, I think we can almost expect the automatic fulfillment of God's promise to assist the humble. Where there is good will, there is almost an iron connection between humiliation and humility and God's help.

A.A. helps the priest in other matters than alcoholism, as the twelfth step indicates. I had a little exercise which will illustrate this point. It is a very small thing in itself, but I feel that it is a clear example of how A.A. work can help personally even a non-alcoholic priest.

Learning Not To Think About It

To obtain a greatly needed help which prayer alone didn't seem to bring, I thought of giving up smoking. I had failed to give it up, even though in

retreat after retreat I had tried various plans to break off the habit. None of them seemed to work for long.

Then, thinking of A.A., I realized that I had seen men in that same boat who couldn't give up drinking. I realized that A.A. does not directly cause a man to quit drinking, but rather it causes him to quit thinking about drinking. Well, it seemed easier to give up thinking about smoking; but I didn't think I could do even that. I thought of A.A. novices saying, "I can't do it all my life. I can't do it all day. I can do it for maybe ten minutes." Inspired by the humble example of A.A. men, I said at that point to myself, "I won't try to quit smoking but I will, with God's help, postpone the thought of smoking for three minutes." That is a humiliating admission for a priest who tells others to give up much harder things.

From A.A. I learned to respect the little suffering of denying self the thought of a smoke and to pool that suffering with the sufferings of Christ, in the spirit of the sixth step. At that moment, like a breath of fresh air, came the thought of the widow and her mite and the importance which love can give to unimportant things. With humiliation came humility, and with humility came God's promised help. It is three or four years since I thought of myself smoking, and I have learned that you can't smoke if you don't think about smoking.

That is a little instance from among hundreds of the applications of A.A. principles. I have watched the most difficult personal situations which a priest faces yield to the A.A. twelve steps approach, even though no alcoholism was involved. Of course, Christ and His Passion came in encouragingly through the third and eleventh steps.

Priest Membership in A.A.

Now, the part which I would like to submit for your discussion, should a priest go into A.A.? Should a Catholic join A.A.? There are two questions to be answered before one can decide whether or not a priest should enter A.A. First, what will be the effect on the Church? Secondly, what will be the effect on the priest?

Frankly, I don't think the Church needs saving nearly as much as the man. God's cause is often hurt by people who are trying to save God. There is an apostolic opportunity that you can find in dealing with A.A., which has therapeutic value to the individual and which offers great opportunity for the Church. The scandal that a drinking priest might give is not so serious in A.A. as it would be of a Catholic organization meeting, because the understanding is different.

The twelfth step demands an apostolic outlook, that is, it demands that we not only apply what we have learned to our own life, but also that we carry the good news to other people, and specifically to alcoholics.

The Moral Side of Psychiatric Problems

Errors of Psychotherapy, by Sebastian de Grazia, is a humble confession of the failure of most psychiatric efforts. Psychoanalysis, which is the dominant psychotherapy today, is impractical for most people because of the expense and because of the unavailability of psychoanalysts. Its record of cures is not much better than the rate of neglected and spontaneous cures in state mental hospitals.

De Grazia's book is replete with devastating quotations from psychiatrists on the failure and inadequacy of current therapy, though he recognizes that all therapies have a certain percentage of cures. After surveying all therapies through history and throughout the world, de Grazia says, "Moral authority, an idea widely spurned by modern healers of the soul, is the crux of psychotherapy. The crystals that remain after the distilling of the multiplicity of therapies are not many. A bewildering array of brilliants dwindles down to a few precious few: neurosis is a moral disorder; the psychotherapeutic relationship is one of authority; the therapist gives moral direction."

Religious Outlook Essential

Jung, one of Freud's first followers, wrote, "Among all my patients in the second half of life -- that is to say, over thirty-five -- there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers. None of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook."

The theory that moral and religious treatment is the type needed for today's epidemic of psychoses and neuroses is being most effectively urged by Dr. Frank R. Barts, director of the department of psychiatry at Creighton University in Omaha. In his book, "The Moral Theory of Behavior" he writes: "All extent theories of mental illness have been refuted by able critics." He feels that the virtues of charity and humility would go a great distance in many neurotic and psychotic situations.

Recovery, Inc.

The Saturday Evening Post, December 6, 1952, wrote up Recovery Inc., and showed how it approached neuroses and psychoses in much of the amateur group way that A.A. approaches the alcoholic neurosis. Its founder, Doctor Abraham A. Low, rejects psychoanalysis as philosophically false and practically ineffective. He writes: "Life is not driven by instincts but is guided by the will."

Sanity, rather than sobriety, is the aim of the A.A. second step. Psychiatric literature echoes A.A.'s statement that alcoholism is a form of insanity. Yet, in treating this insanity, we know the success of the approach which is amateur and group, moral and spiritual. We remember the last speech of Dr. Bob, co-founder of A.A. Dying of cancer, he left his mental legacy: "Don't louse it up with psychiatry."

Priests of A.A. have two indelible marks: once an alcoholic always an alcoholic; once a priest, always a priest. Two invisible, indelible marks, both of tremendous significance to others. As alcoholics they know insanity from the inside. As members of A.A. they know the techniques and they know the wonders that can come from amateur group psychotherapy based on the human will aided by God's help.

Significance of Clergy Conference

In this room we may be seeing the confirmation of B.B. Cattell's statement, in his Meaning of Clinical Psychology: "The possibility that the clergyman, rather than the psychologist or mental practitioner, is the ultimate specialist in human adjustment has been most unscientifically ignored."

The experience in this room makes it easier to see de Grazia's statement: "Were a system of psychotherapy to be built by having all secular therapies agree to harmonize their divergent criteria of cures, it would emerge as a religious enterprise, an Imitation Cristi."

Here are not only members of A.A., but priests trained by and adept in the use of Christian asceticism, priests who speak with authority because they are experienced. I cannot help feeling that there are trends and forces, human and divine, that keep rendezvous here tonight, and that the happiness and sanctity can be richer if we meet the challenge of this rendezvous.

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+++Message 347. The Catholic Contribution to the 12
Step Movement
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 5:40:00 PM

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The Catholic Contribution to the 12-Step Movement

By W. Robert Afill

At first, there were no Catholic members in AA, but their participation was made possible by the final separation of AA from the Oxford Group.

In New York, the first Catholic member was Morgan R., who acted as AA's first unofficial liaison with the Catholic Church. Morgan submitted the manuscript of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* ("the Big Book") to the New York Archdiocesan Committee on Publications and received a favorable response. The Committee, Morgan reported, "had nothing but the best to say of our efforts. From their point of view the book was perfectly all right as far as it went." A few editorial suggestions were readily and gratefully incorporated, especially in the section treating of prayer and meditation.

Only one change was requested. In Wilson's story, he had "made a rhetorical flourish to the effect that 'we have found Heaven right here on this good old earth.' " It was suggested he change "Heaven" to "Utopia." "After all, we Catholics are promising folks something much better later on!"

A Catholic non-alcoholic who profoundly influenced AA in its early days was Fr. Edward Dowling of the Society of Jesus. Although his involvement with AA was only one of many apostolic and charitable works, his influence on AA was considerable. His work is valuable as a pattern for Catholics who wish to relate constructively to AA and other recovery groups.

Dowling was a Jesuit from St. Louis and was the editor of a Catholic publication called *The Queen's Work*. Upon reading the Big Book, he was favorably impressed and saw parallels between the 12 steps and aspects of Ignatian spirituality--perhaps especially the Ignatian admonition to pray as if everything depends on God and to work as if everything depends on oneself.

Dowling made Wilson's acquaintance on a cold, rainy night in 1940. Wilson grudgingly admitted the visitor, thinking his unexpected guest was yet another drunk demanding help and attention. Soon, as they talked, the Jesuit began to share an understanding of the spiritual life which was to influence Wilson from that day forward.

This is all the more remarkable because Wilson had never known any Catholics intimately and felt a lingering prejudice against members of the clergy, of whatever denomination.

Wilson viewed his meeting with Dowling as "a second conversion experience." The crippled Jesuit, he said, "radiated a grace that filled the room with a sense of Presence" (interestingly enough, Wilson used the same expression, "sense of Presence," to describe his impression of Winchester Cathedral in England, which had obvious Catholic associations and where he had first experienced a desire for God many years before). Wilson was feeling depressed and angry at God because, at the moment, he seemed to be a failure:

As Wilson's biographer tells it, "When Bill asked if there was never to be any satisfaction, the old man snapped back, 'Never. Never any.' There was only a kind of divine dissatisfaction that would keep him going, reaching out

always."

The priest went on: Having surrendered to God and received back his sobriety, Wilson could not retract his surrender by demanding an accounting from God when life did not unfold according to preconceived expectations. Even the sense of dissatisfaction could be an occasion of spiritual growth.

Dowling then hobbled to the door and declared, as a parting shot, "that if ever Bill grew impatient, or angry at God's way of doing things, if ever he forgot to be grateful for being alive right here and now, he, Father Ed Dowling, would make the trip all the way from St. Louis to wallop him over the head with his good Irish stick." And so began a twenty-year friendship between Wilson and Dowling, who remained Wilson's spiritual advisor.

Wilson was deeply attracted to the Catholic Church and even received instruction from Fulton Sheen in 1947. Wilson's wife Lois, looking back on it all, was sure that he was never really close to conversion; but a close friend thought otherwise: "I had the impression that at the last minute, he didn't go through with his conversion because he felt it would not be right for AA."

The simplest explanation is that Wilson remained profoundly ambivalent about organized religion and its doctrines. Just as he had shied away from the "Absolutes" of the Oxford Group, so he could not see his way to accepting Catholicism's own absolutism--in particular, papal infallibility and the efficacy of sacraments: "Though no disbeliever in all miracles, I still can't picture God working like that."

Concerning infallibility, Wilson wrote to Dowling: "It is ever so hard to believe that any human beings, no matter who, are able to be infallible about anything." In a 1947 letter to Dowling he said, "I'm more affected than ever by that sweet and powerful aura of the Church; that marvelous spiritual essence flowing down by the centuries touches me as no other emanation does, but when I look at the authoritative layout, despite all the arguments in its favor, I still can't warm up. No affirmative conviction comes . . . P. S. Oh, if only the Church had a fellow-traveler department, a cozy spot where one could warm his hands at the fire and bite off only as much as he could swallow. Maybe I'm just one more shopper looking for a bargain on that virtue-- obedience!"

To Sheen Wilson wrote: "Your sense of humor will, I know, rise to the occasion when I tell you that, with each passing day, I feel more like a Catholic and reason more like a Protestant!"

This is precisely the challenge faced by Catholic apologists in witnessing to those in recovery groups: bringing the head and the heart together.

Wilson's difficulties with Catholic faith tell us that--without dilution--we must make our faith and its graces more accessible by connecting faith with

experience. This does not mean we can neglect reasoned apologetics--far from it. We must respect people's intelligence. But, as Sheen noted, in some cases, our reasoning "leaves the modern soul cold, not because its arguments are unconvincing, but because the modern soul is too confused to grasp them."

If we offer a plausible account of the religious implications of 12-step recovery, we can perhaps get a receptive hearing for a fuller evangelization and catechesis.

At the convention marking AA's twentieth anniversary (the society's "coming of age"), Dowling said, "We know AA's 12 steps of man toward God. May I suggest God's 12 steps toward man as Christianity has taught them to me." He then went on to draw out the parallels between AA's steps of recovery and God's redemption of the human race in Christ, who is both the Incarnate God and the New Adam of redeemed humanity.

Dowling concluded with Francis Thompson's poem *The Hound of Heaven*, suggesting that the poem was "[t]he perfect picture of the AA's quest for God, but especially God's loving chase for the AA."

Another important, though somewhat later, Catholic influence on AA was Fr. John C. Ford, S.J., one of Catholicism's most eminent moral theologians. In the early forties, Ford himself recovered from alcoholism with AA's help. He became one of the earliest Catholic proponents of addressing alcoholism as a problem having spiritual, physiological, and psychological, dimensions.

Ford said that alcohol addiction is a pathology which is not consciously chosen, but he rejected the deterministic idea that alcoholism is solely a disease without any moral component: "[I]t obviously has moral dimensions, and that is one reason why the clergyman is thought to have a special role to play.

"To answer the question: Is alcoholism a moral problem or is it a sickness, I think the answer is that it is both. I don't think it is true to say that alcoholism is just a sickness, in the sense that cancer or tuberculosis are sicknesses. I think there are too many rather obvious differences between the two to classify alcoholism as a sickness in that sense. On the other hand, I don't think it is true either to say that alcoholism is just a moral problem. There are still a good many people who look at an alcoholic as a good-for-nothing with a weak will or one who doesn't use his willpower . . .

"They keep saying, 'Don't do it again,' over and over. I don't believe he does it just because he wants to do it or because he is willful. When you look at the agony that the alcoholic inflicts upon himself over the course of the years, it seems to me to be very difficult to say he wants to be that way or he does it on purpose. . . . I think it is fair to speak of alcoholism as a triple sickness--a sickness of the body, a sickness of the mind, and also a sickness of the soul."

Wilson, impressed by Ford's insight, asked him to edit *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (with the *Big Book*, this is the basic text of 12-step recovery) and *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*. In part, Wilson's concern in these books was to present the AA program in a way acceptable to Catholic sensibilities.

Ford's contribution to AA was therefore twofold: He drew on both religion and psychology to show alcoholism as a synthetic problem requiring a synthetic remedy, and he took seriously the quasicompulsive nature of addiction while rejecting both absolute determinism and the attendant pitfalls of a purely therapeutic approach. He drew on psychological insights, but ultimately shared the sentiments of Dr. Bob, who used to say, "Don't louse it up with psychiatry."

In so many ways, Ford's approach to addiction and recovery remains a model of spiritual discernment for our own time.

II
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+++Message 348. The Catholicity of 12-Step Programs
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 5:41:00 PM

II
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The Catholicity of 12-Step Programs

By W. Robert Auffer

ALCOHOLICS Anonymous, as well as the dozens of 12-step self-help programs modeled on it, owes its origins to a twentieth-century Evangelical movement known as the Oxford Group (not to be confused with the Oxford Movement of a century earlier).

Founded on a belief in the necessity of personal conversion, a transforming spiritual experience, confession, and restitution, the Oxford Group flourished in the 1920s and 1930s.

The alcoholics who later became AA first achieved sobriety through this movement, which sought to practice "original Christianity." After only a few years, AA broke away to become a more narrowly focused organization whose primary purpose is to help alcoholics recover.

Those earliest AAs, including co-founders Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith ("Bill W." and "Dr. Bob" to AA members), retained much of the initial vision gained in the Oxford Group, and, as we shall see, were also deeply influenced by Catholic theology. AA's emphasis remained on personal conversion, a "spiritual

experience" sought through working the 12 steps of recovery--the first of which is to admit that one is powerless to save oneself from alcoholism.

Writing in 1962, looking at the disorder and fear among nations, Wilson commented: "I am sure we AAs will comprehend this scene. In microcosm, we have experienced this identical state of terrifying uncertainty, each in his own life." [1] Smith also noted that the alcoholic who "hits bottom" is simply experiencing in a more intense way the spiritual crisis all around him: "AA is simply a way of capitalizing on this inherent situation. In the world around us, however, the bottom is being hit all right, but this is always someone else's fault." [2] New Age therapist Tav Sparks is on target when he writes in the neo-gnostic journal *Revision*: "Chemical dependency, as an acute, life-threatening form of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual emergency, is in fact a vivid microcosmic archetype of the universal human dilemma." [3]

The task for a Catholic apologist is to connect the AA's microcosmic experience with the true religious macrocosm of Catholicism. We need to show that 12-step recovery makes most sense--historically, logically, and spiritually--within a Catholic understanding of the Fall and the Redemption.

Alcoholism and original sin

There are three principal points of contact between AA and Catholic doctrine which make this rapport clear: (1) the analogy between AA's understanding of alcoholism and the Catholic doctrine of original sin; (2) the emphasis in both AA and Catholicism on understanding man as a unity of body, mind, and soul; (3) the consequent need for a redemption or remedy embracing both body and soul and effected by God himself since only he can do it.

The book *Alcoholics Anonymous* (known as the "Big Book") defines alcoholism as "an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer." AAs maintain that their addiction is not consciously chosen and therefore should not be termed "sin" in the proper sense. They make a distinction similar to that Catholics make between original and actual sin. The new Catechism of the Catholic Church explains this as follows: "By yielding to the tempter, Adam and Eve committed a personal sin, but this also affected the human nature that they would transmit to their offspring in a fallen state. That is why original sin is called 'sin' only in an analogical sense: it is a sin 'contracted' and not 'committed'--a state and not an act" (CCC 404)

Although it is proper to each individual, original sin does not have the character of a personal fault in any of Adam's descendants. It is a deprivation of original holiness and justice, but human nature has not been totally corrupted. It is wounded in the natural powers proper to it, subject to ignorance, suffering, and the dominion of death, and inclined to sin--an inclination to evil that is called "concupiscence" (CCC 405).

The common opinion that there is--or may be--a genetic predisposition to

alcoholism is therefore no problem for Catholics, who already believe human beings inherit a flawed human nature. Social and psychological factors in the development of alcoholism also can be acknowledged by us because original sin has influenced both human society and the human psyche. If God made all things good in the beginning, then the chain reaction of sin and infirmity must have had a start--an original "fall" at some point. The doctrine of original sin therefore locates the origin of evil in the abuse of freedom by created beings rather than in God himself. The doctrine acknowledges that men and women, whether alcoholic or not, are in a state of bondage they did not personally choose and from which only God can save them.

At this point, it is necessary to recall that, according to Fr. John C. Ford, alcoholism is more than simply the concupiscence and self-will which afflict all the descendants of Adam and Eve. According to Ford, alcoholism is the pathological concentration of this self-will in a physico-spiritual bondage to alcohol--with the consequent loss of control and the inability to stop without outside help.

The Catholic apologist should therefore remember that he is upholding an analogy--not an identity--between alcoholism and original sin. Ford's approach is useful because he identifies alcoholism as a distinct problem existing also within a larger human and spiritual context. Ford agreed that the therapeutic and medical approach to alcoholism treatment is sometimes exaggerated.[4]

He summed up his ideas and experience as follows: "I do not believe in telling an alcoholic, 'You are a sick man--you're not guilty of anything' because he is guilty of many things . . . But from a common-sense point of view we are often able to point out to an alcoholic . . . that his moral responsibility was considerably diminished. I believe in telling an alcoholic, 'Yes, you are a sinner, but your sins can be forgiven by the grace of Christ.'"[5]

Unchosen bondage

It is therefore possible to use the Genesis account of original sin as the backdrop for a Christian interpretation of 12-step recovery. Ernest Kurtz perceptively writes: "The admission of the first step marked acceptance that 'bottom' had been hit. It also echoed a deeper admission, the irony of 'original sin' as described by the Book of Genesis.

"In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had sinned by reaching for more than had been given. They ate of the forbidden fruit because the serpent promised that eating it would make them 'as gods.' Their punishment was loss of the garden they had been given. The alcoholic, in drinking, had sought inappropriate control over reality more than was granted to human finitude.

"The promise of alcohol was likewise one of Godlike control: Alcoholic drinking sought to control how outside reality impinged upon the alcoholic as well as his own moods, feelings, and emotions . . .

"The penalty for such abuse was the loss of any ability to use properly, reaching for more than had been given resulted in a loss of even that which had been given. To this understanding, the alcoholic surrendered by the very admission I am an alcoholic"[6]

Thus the alcoholic finds himself in a state of unchosen bondage from which he cannot free himself. His situation is a living parable of the human condition itself, apart from and without Christ.

The original unity of Adam and Eve was meant to be a source of blessing for their descendants. After the Fall, this mysterious human solidarity became also the means of transmitting a flawed human nature. This seems, at first glance, unjust--but not implausible, given the contemporary genetic and social factors which many believe contribute, for example, to the development of alcoholism.

The same human solidarity which made it possible for us to fall representatively in our first parents also makes it possible for us to be redeemed representatively in Christ, the Second Adam (Rom. 5). So we should not complain about our lot. Unlike the angels who are pure spirits and whose decision for or against God is irrevocable, our fallen nature is redeemable. That is why the Church sings at the Easter Vigil, that Adam's fall was a *felix culpa*, a happy fault, which brought us a Savior we had no right to expect or demand. The Catholic apologist should again reason by analogy with what the sober alcoholic already accepts.

The whole man: body, mind, and soul

An important convergence between AA and Catholic faith is the understanding of man as a unity of body, mind, and soul. Writing to Dr. Albert L. in 1959, Wilson wondered: "How long will it be before the world becomes willing to look at the whole man? In the world today we seem to be confronted by myriads of specialists who would relate all learning and human experience into their several fields. Never, it appears, was there such a tremendous need for a sane synthesis out of which new and better values could arise."[7]

The Catholic apologist should put forward Catholicism as this synthesis, at least in its essentials. The "embodiedness" of the Catholic ethos--sacraments, sacramentals, icons, statues, rosaries, incense--join spirituality with material creation. As man is fallen in both body and soul, so must the remedy encompass both body and soul.

Thomas Howard puts it this way: "In the harmony of Eden, everything that we did constituted an unceasing oblation of praise to the Most High . . . This was all torn apart at the Fall. We wrecked Creation by making a grab and saying, 'This much of it shall be our own.' The fabric ripped. Now, instead of the sacred seamlessness in which every fiber of Creation was knit together in

a pattern that blazoned the glory of God, we had a torn garment . . .

"In this sense, we may be said to have introduced hell into our world at the Fall. For here we introduced the lie that we may have something of our own. Whatever the fruit that we snatched at may have been, it was not for us. We decided, however, that it should be ours nonetheless. This was a lie, and the result was division . . .

"The Incarnation reverses all this. Our salvation from that abyss and division comes to us in the figure of God-made-man. Spirit and flesh are knit once more into perfect integrity. The heresies have tried to make the Incarnation an illusion--God's merely 'coming upon' the man or tenanting there briefly. False religions perpetuate the great divide between flesh and spirit, rather than between good and evil where Christianity says it lies." [8]

Far from being an obstacle to faith and conversion, the "embodiedness" of Catholicism is a source of credibility. It "fits" human nature the way the right key fits a lock.

So far, we have established a certain analogy between alcoholism and original sin and consequently the need for a remedy which heals and restores both body and soul. To complete the analogy, we must now draw out the correlation between recovery and the Catholic vision of redemption.

The word "redemption" originally meant the buying back or ransoming of a slave. It is used in the New Testament to express what God in Christ has done for his people. Having entered the human story through the Incarnation, at the cross he has delivered us from slavery to sin and death by effecting the expiation and reconciliation with the Father which the human will--even with the knowledge of God's law--cannot bring about by its own strength. That is why we need a savior and not just another teacher, philosopher, or lawgiver. The world's religions and civilizations have never lacked moralists, and most of Christ's moral injunctions have close parallels in earlier Judaism as well as in other religions, though he did express these truths with singular sublimity and boldness. But hearing and knowing these truths is not the same as living them.

AA's Big Book puts it this way: "Many of us had moral and philosophical convictions galore, but we could not live up to them even though we would have liked to. Neither could we reduce our self-centeredness much by wishing or trying on our own power. We had to have God's help." [9] Paul said the same thing. "I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do" (Rom. 7:18-19). Deliverance from this state must come from outside the self and not from within. The central Christian belief is that Christ in his own Person is the Deliverer. The Church, as his body, is that part of mankind that, by self-surrendering faith, has entered into the redemption and manifests and applies it in the world until the coming of God's Kingdom in glory.

It is therefore evident that 12-step spirituality fits in much more easily with Christianity than with other religions and belief systems. I will briefly examine two of these non-Christian alternatives: atheism (agnostic humanism) and the New Age.

12-step recovery and the non-believer

Though tolerant toward the non-believer, AA itself is fundamentally theistic. The atheist or agnostic humanist who has attained sobriety by placing provisional faith in the AA group as his "Higher Power" usually comes to acknowledge that no merely finite human strength can achieve sobriety. But AA is evidently human and finite, both in its individual members and as a group; therefore, AA itself cannot really be the ultimate Higher Power operative in recovery from alcoholism.[10] For now-sober alcoholics who still have difficulties with traditional theism, it may suffice for the Catholic apologist to point to the alcoholic's own experience as proof that no merely naturalistic or materialist explanation is plausible.

With most 12-step people, this is as philosophical as they want to get. Their own experience is that their best thinking only got them drunk again. All the same, the Catholic apologist should refer those who want intellectual arguments to C. S. Lewis and to Thomas Aquinas's five proofs of God's existence, as well as to John Henry Newman and Blaise Pascal on the "reasons of the heart" which lead us to God.

If the sticking point is the sins of the "institutional Church" or of organized religion in general, one need not defend everything the objector dislikes. The apologist may simply remind the objector of the Big Book's chapter "We Agnostics" and of its warning that self-righteous hostility to religion is simply a blind prejudice. Note that the faults and human limitations of AA members do not preclude God or a Higher Power working through them to help others. Might not the same be true of the Church? We Catholics are well aware of our sins; that is why we pray at every Mass, "Look not on our sins but on the faith of your Church." The humanist objector might as well complain about sick people in hospitals or alcoholics at AA meetings (see Jesus' words in Matthew 9:12).

Twelve-step recovery and the New Age

New Age beliefs likewise do not logically cohere with AA spirituality because New Age religion hinges on the self-liberation of the "god within" through one's own efforts and esoteric knowledge. For New Agers, the basic human problem is not sin (whether original or actual) but ignorance of one's true divinity. Salvation comes from the self. Swami Vivekananda once declared, "The Hindu refuses to call you sinners. Ye are the children of God, the sharers of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Ye divinities on earth, sinners? It is a sin to call a man a sinner. It is a standing libel on human nature." [11]

Certainly, this is flattering to human nature, but is it realistic, given what the sober alcoholic knows about his own human finitude? AA's Big Book states frankly that the alcoholic had to "quit playing God" because "it didn't work." [12] Despite his strong belief in AA's religious pluralism, Wilson himself wrote that "it seems absolutely necessary for most of us to get over the idea that man is God." [13]

With regard to spiritual growth, Wilson always spoke in biblical terms of "growing in the image and likeness of God." [14] He never spoke of becoming God. On this crucial point, there is a profound divergence between AA and the New Age.

The incongruity is even more manifest when we examine the New Age belief in salvation through the working out of one's own karma over many lifetimes. Madame Helena Blavatsky expressed this belief rather well: "It is owing to this law of spiritual development that mankind will become freed from its false gods and find itself finally SELF-REDEEMED." [15] For Blavatsky, reincarnation "is the destiny of every Ego, which thus becomes its own Savior in each world and incarnation." [16] This does not tally with AA's first step. For a finite being estranged from God, self-salvation is impossible, no matter how many opportunities are given. Further, reincarnation does not explain the origin of evil. If there was no origin, evil is an eternal, fatalistic necessity built into the very nature of things and even into the nature of God, if "God" is an impersonal All. [17]

Swami Vivekananda draws the logical conclusion from such philosophical monism. "Who can say that God does not manifest himself as Evil as well as Good? But only the

Hindu dares to worship him in the evil. . . How few have dared to worship death, or Kali! Let us worship death!" [18]

Beyond good and evil

The New Age rejects the God of the Bible, thinking an impersonal deity is more plausible and less morally problematic. But is it really? Such a God would be beyond good and evil altogether. AA speaks of a loving God, but love is necessarily a personal attribute. An impersonal deity could no more "love" than could a gas or a calculator. Only the doctrine of the Trinity--one God in three Persons--forgives a basis for saying of him, "God is love" (1 John 4:8). [19]

C. S. Lewis noted that good and evil increase at compound interest. [20] Even Madame Blavatsky agreed. "Hurt a man by doing him bodily harm; you think that his pain and suffering cannot spread by any means to his neighbors, least of all to other nations. We affirm that it will, in good time." [21] There is no reason to assume that good karma increases faster than bad karma. A finite

being, estranged from God and powerless to save himself, would run up an ever-increasing debt of bad karma, unless the debt of justice could be satisfied by another. That is Christ did on Calvary.

In *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, Wilson acknowledged that "in some cases we cannot make restitution at all." [22] Certainly, we must make amends, for our own sake and for that of others, but it remains true that no mere human amends can wholly right the wrong done. Only God in human form can make perfect amends and reconcile in his own body both justice and merciful love.

A final drawback to the New Age worldview is that it sees the human body as a mere garment to be cast off for successive bodies, until the cycle of death and rebirth is ended through union with the impersonal Absolute. This contradicts AA's emphasis on conceiving of man as composed of body and soul. Belief in the resurrection more nearly corresponds to a genuinely "holistic" understanding of human nature than does the doctrine of reincarnation. Here also the New Age is not logically compatible with the implications of 12-step spirituality. Only Catholic Christianity properly acknowledges God's love and holiness as well as man's fallen but still redeemable nature.

Eastern religions not sufficient

Other religions fall short in this regard. Eastern religions do not clearly distinguish between the creature and the Creator and hence cannot logically accommodate any idea of salvation "from outside." Popular Hinduism and Buddhism have a doctrine of salvation by the grace of the bodhisattvas and avatars, who are worshiped and invoked as successive divine manifestations, but, in the absence of a distinction between man and God, these are seen to be merely reincarnated men who have saved themselves by their own efforts and teach others to do the same. [23]

Dominican Edmond Robillard cites the following incident as an illustration of the difference between Eastern and Christian worldviews: "I know a young French Canadian girl who accompanied the famous Maharishi Mahesh Yogi on a trip in the Himalayas. She witnessed a scene where a mother approached the great seer and pleaded with him to employ his powers to cure her sick child. Maharishi told her that he neither could nor would do anything for her child, since these sufferings resulted from the child's karma, and Maharishi did not want to take this karma upon himself. It is hardly necessary to add how such a doctrine affects our idea of charity and mutual help among men." [24]

In any case, the cult of the avatars and bodhisattvas is regarded by the Eastern sages as a concession to popular mythology. In the East, mythology and philosophy coexist on two different levels. For the Christian, on the contrary, "Myth has become Fact; in Christ, the wall of partition has come down," as C. S. Lewis wrote. [25] With great insight, the Hindu scholar Ananda K. Coomaraswamy explained as follows why he could not become a Catholic: "A fundamental reason why I could not possibly do so is the Catholic claim to

exclusive possession of the truth. Other religions, or rather metaphysical traditions, claim to teach the truth but do not claim exclusive possession of it.

"Christianity has other weaknesses, notably the reliance upon the historicity of Christ. I could say, I know that my Redeemer liveth,' but could not say, I know that he was actually born in Bethlehem.' It is only Christ's 'eternal birth' that really interests me." [26]

This complaint against Christian exclusivity is quite common in both AA and in the larger society. Three observations must be made in reply. First, Coomaraswamy's purported inclusivity is not as all-embracing as it seems. It implicitly excludes those who believe in a definitive revelation of God in history.

Second, Christian "exclusivity" is not an expression of cultural arrogance but of the recognition of what kind of salvation the human condition calls for. Eastern religions are religions of cosmic law and of self-salvation through asceticism and knowledge. Considered in themselves, they are blind alleys because self-redemption is impossible. As religions, they bear the imprint of what AA's Big Book calls "self-will" and of the desire to "play God." They cannot be ways of salvation in their own right for the same reason that mere willpower cannot give sobriety to the alcoholic. This is not intolerance but realism: "Half measures availed us nothing," the Big Book says. [27]

Third, Christianity, too, is universal, but on God's terms, not on ours. "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3.27-28).

AA's fulfillment in Catholicism

Many AA members would be surprised to learn that in the very earliest days of AA, the 12 steps had not yet been written down. Bob Smith described the situation in 1935 in this way: "We already had the basic ideas, though not in terse and tangible form. We got them . . . as a result of our study of the Good Book." [28] One early AA member recalls that Smith used to stand up at the meeting with the Bible under his arm, saying that "the answers were there if you looked for them because people back in the Old Testament were just like people of this century and had the same problems." [29]

The Bible served as AA's earliest meditation book. [30] Smith and his wife Anne were especially fond of the Epistle of James, with its emphasis on faith that works through

charity: "For faith without works is dead," as Anne would often conclude the morning devotion. [31] Early AA was so impressed with the necessity of following James in putting their faith to work that they often thought of

calling their new fellowship the James Club.[32] They also often meditated on the meaning of the Sermon on the Mount and on Paul's words about true charity in I Corinthians 13.[33] The Bible was the only reading material allowed to hospitalized alcoholics, and Smith regularly described AA as a Christian fellowship when inquirers came to him.[34] At meetings, he cited his favorite Scriptures and used stories in much the same way that parables are used in the Bible.[35]

In memory of his contribution to AA, Smith' Bible is still displayed to this day on the podium of the King School Group in Akron, Ohio, with the following dedication inscribed by Smith himself: "It is the hope of the King School group--whose recovery this is--that this Book may never cease to be a source of wisdom, gratitude, humility and guidance, as when fulfilled in the life of the Master." [36]

AA's Christian and Biblical derivation is here made obvious. No less striking is the almost Catholic emphasis that true saving faith is faith which works through charity (i.e., surrenders unreservedly to God and cooperates with his grace by persevering in charity and in working the steps of recovery). God's grace does not negate human freedom, but restores and empowers it. On the experiential level, AA members come very close to Catholic doctrine, often without realizing it.

Catholic apologists must know how make clear this spiritual kinship, especially to alienated and unevangelized Catholics who may have encountered God's grace in a recovery group. Evangelization is not arrogance on our part, but a practical recognition that we all need an external revelation to guide us--experience alone cannot provide spiritual discernment. Without revealed religion, focusing on oneself can become self-worship or a self-preoccupation bordering on it, and that would be the opposite of recovery and of Catholic faith alike.

W. Robert Aufill graduated from Princeton with a degree in comparative literature (his senior thesis was on Georges Bernanos and Miguel de Unamuno). He lives in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

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+++Message 349. AA & Religion, THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY,
Feburary 22, 1950
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 5:12:00 PM

II
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From: NM Olson

THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY, February 22, 1950.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SPURN A TRAP

How many churchmen noticed an inconspicuous item in the press the other day which reported that Alcoholic Anonymous of New York had turned down a bequest? A "grateful woman member," according to the story in the New York Times, had bequeathed the organization \$10,000. A spokesman for A.A., in explaining why it refused the money, said that "members have discovered they cannot mix money and its management with the spiritual nature of the work they are trying to do." The newspaper added that "acquisition of property or money other than that raised by passing the hat at their own meetings" is feared by A.A. because it "tends to divert members from their primary task of helping

drunkards."

This will probably sound quixotic to many a hard-pressed parson or finance committee chairman. Yet there is something involved in this A.A. decision which churches and church organizations can wisely ponder. Endowments always look good at the start, but the late Julius Rosenwald knew their stultifying long-range effects when he provided that his great Rosenwald Fund must be liquidated, principal and income, in less than a generation. Nothing can take the crusading zeal out of a congregation or an organization faster than knowing that all the bills have been paid in advance and will continue to be paid whether or not anyone lifts a finger. Endowments can do as much damage to the vitality of churches and reform bodies as doting parents generally do the sons and daughters of the rich.

Alcoholics Anonymous undoubtedly could have made good use of that \$10,000. But we have far more confidence in its future now that it has showed wisdom enough to turn it down.

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+++Message 351. Religion & AA -- AMERICA, November 9,
1957
From: Fiona Dodd 6/17/2002 5:35:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

AMERICA, November 9, 1957

COPING WITH THE PROBLEM OF THE DRINKER

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS COMES OF AGE

A BRIEF HISTORY OF A.A.

John C. Ford

After the first four years of its existence the membership of Alcoholics Anonymous totaled only one hundred persons. Today the membership is over 200,000 in 7,000 groups in 70 countries and U.S. possessions. The present volume, most of which has been written (anonymously, of course) by the surviving co-founder of A.A., is the fascinating story of the beginnings and the development of this unique organization. No other movement or method has been so successful in the large-scale recovery of alcoholics.

The author, Bill W., begins with an account of the Twentieth Anniversary Convention of A.A. at St. Louis, and uses the proceedings there as a starting point for a series of flashbacks which reveal the principal events in the early days of the movement. A.A. originally had a close connection with the Oxford Groups and was influenced in some of its terminology, ideas and methods by that movement. Fortunately for Catholics, however, it completely divorced itself from that movement at an early date in its history, and never incorporated into its program any of those theological ideas or practices which made the Oxford Group movement unacceptable to Catholics.

The first part of the book ends with an account of how the old-timers in A.A., on July 3, 1955, turned over the affairs of the organization to the fellowship itself, as represented by its General Service conference. "There our fellowship declared itself come to the age of full responsibility, and there it received from its founders and old-timers permanent keeping of its three great legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service.

The Legacy of Recovery is embodied in the Twelve Steps, the heart of "the program." The Legacy of Unity is embodied in the Twelve Traditions, which are the fruit of A.A. experience in the days of its mushroom growth. These traditions are meant to safeguard the unity of the fellowship with a minimum of organization and an absolute minimum of anything like formal authority or government. The Third Legacy, of Service, is essentially derived from the Steps and Traditions, especially the Twelfth Step; "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs" but the Third Legacy is administered, as it were, by the elected representatives who constitute the General Service Conference. This is not a governing body -- there is none in A.A. It exists merely to provide the services which are obviously required if the message of Recovery is to be spread around the world.

A.A.'s renunciation of formal authority over its members goes so far that it does not even claim the right to determine who are or who are not members. There are sanctions, of course. First, the most powerful one of John Barleycorn himself, who may well condemn to death those who do not live by the Steps and Traditions and who thus relapse. There is also the sanction of public opinion within the fellowship, which may bear heavily on those who do not conform to some important traditions, e.g., that of anonymity at the public level. It remains to be seen whether in the course of time such vague and indeterminate sanctions will continue to be both effective in maintaining some basic unity in the organization, and just to the individual members, who are frequently assured, on being received into the groups, that 'there are no rules and no musts in A.A."

Bill, the co-founder, explains the three legacies in three talks which in substance were delivered by him at the St. Louis convention; they continue the narration of A.A.'s history and growth. This method of grouping past events

around the ideas of Recovery, Unity and Service, though it forsakes chronological order, is a very effective method of imparting instruction and maintaining interest at the same time. It would be confusing were it not for an excellent chronological table provided at the beginning of the book. In the last pages there are included some of the talks given by friends of A.A. at the St. Louis convention. One chapter is entitled 'Medicine Looks at A.A.,"and another "Religion Looks at A.A."

A.A. emphatically repudiates the idea that it is a religious sect or movement, or that it advocates any system of theological doctrine. Except for the simple idea that the alcoholic should acknowledge a Higher Power, "God, as we understood Him," and should ask for God's help, A.A. steers clear of any further theological involvement. An important declaration is made on p. 232 by Bill W. "Speaking for Dr. Bob (the other co-founder) and myself I would like to say that there has never been the slightest intent, on his part or mine, of trying to found a new religious denomination. Dr. Bob held certain religious convictions, and so do I. This is, of course, the personal privilege of every A.A. member. Nothing, however, would be so unfortunate for A.A.'s future as an attempt to incorporate any of our personal theological views into A.A.'s teaching, practice or traditions. Were Dr. Bob still with us, I am positive he would agree that we could never be too emphatic about this matter."

Catholics will find in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions nothing contrary to Catholic ascetical and theological teaching. In fact the vast majority of Catholics who sober up in A.A. become better Catholics in the process.

Not only the members of A.A. will enjoy this well-written and absorbing account. Anyone who is interested in seeing what can happen when men and women with a common problem love and help one another should read it. The paradox of victory through defeat comes to life here.

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+++Message 352. Religion & AA -- THE JACS JOURNAL Vol:
3, No-1, 1993 .
From: Fiona Dodd 6/18/2002 1:12:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

Religion & AA -- THE JACS JOURNAL Vol: 3, No-1, 1993 .

Abraham Twerski is an Orthodox Jewish Rabbi and psychiatrist, who started a treatment program back in the early 1970s in Pittsburgh, PA.

Nancy

THE JACS JOURNAL Vol: 3, No-1, 1993

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SPIRITUALITY, PRAYER, THE TWELVE STEPS AND JUDAISM

By Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski, M.D.

The fellowships of Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and Al-Anon are of inestimable value in the recovery from alcoholism and chemical dependency. Not infrequently, there is a resistance on the part of Jews to participate on the grounds that these programs have a religious orientation that is non-Jewish.

Let us first dispense with some extraneous objections.

"A.A. is Christian because meetings are held in church basements," say some. While it is true that the majority of A.A. meetings are in churches, it should also be mentioned that few Jewish facilities have welcomed A.A. The myth that Jews do not become alcoholic has resulted in an alienation of alcoholism treatment programs from the Jewish community.

Just as there is a lack of alcoholism expertise in Jewish health agencies, so is there a dearth of synagogues and Jewish community centers that have opened their doors to A.A. Several years ago there were virtually no synagogue -- based A.A. meetings.

Today there are communities that have one or more. If more rabbis and community leaders would overcome their resistance and denial, there is no question that more meetings will be held in Jewish institutions.

"A.A. meetings involve Christian liturgy," say others. While A.A. meetings generally close with the Lord's Prayer, there is no rule in A.A. that precludes substituting a Jewish prayer. While others are reciting the Lord's Prayer, one may say the 23rd Psalm or any other Jewish prayer.

"All the available literature on spirituality in recovery has Christian origins," is another common complaint. Like the first objection, this is not inherent in A.A., but a default by Jewish theologians. Again, the prevailing lack of awareness about alcoholism among Jews is responsible for the absence of literature on spirituality.

Hopefully, this will be corrected with the increasing interest in the problem. In some communities, knowledgeable rabbis have begun to provide sessions on spirituality for recovering Jews.

These objections are similar to the various forms of denial and resistance inherent to the disease of alcoholism and the awareness that help must be

sought. Even after a person accepts the presence of a problem and the need for treatment, there is often resistance to Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon. Permit me to list the most typical forms of resistance:

- 1) A.A.'s insistence on total abstinence. The alcoholic much prefers a treatment which would allow him (or her) to cut back on his alcohol consumption, or teach him 'to control his drinking. He is therefore more likely to accept some treatment approach that would not demand total abstinence indefinitely.
- 2) Reluctance to be stigmatized as "alcoholic." The pejorative nature of this term, and its association in many people's minds with skid-row derelicts often results in preference for the euphemism "problem drinker."
- 3) Concern that one will meet social or business acquaintances at meetings, and that one's alcoholism will be "exposed."

While there are various reasons for resistance to A.A., the rationalization that it is alien to Jewishness is a comfortable one and frequently exploited. Strangely, one can hear this objection from people who have broken all identity with Judaism. It is a rationalization that is also enjoyed by those who have no reservations about intermarriage. Clearly, objections of this sort are a resistance maneuver and should be recognized as such.

The essence of Alcoholics Anonymous is contained in the Twelve Steps, the adoption of which is a sine qua non for participation in the fellowship. Much confusion can be eliminated if we look at the compatibility of the steps with Jewish theology.

Step One: We admitted we were powerless over alcohol -- that our lives had become unmanageable. This step is the foundation of recovery since it identifies the problem. Unless one accepts that a problem exists, efforts to do something about the problem will be futile. Clearly, this Step has no religious connotations.

The First Step is without a doubt the most difficult. Typically the alcoholic will deny the problem even when the evidence is blatant and irrefutable. The loss of control over alcohol, whether it is dependency or the inability to stop, is usually recognized by everyone except the drinker. The physical, emotional, social or occupational deterioration of life may be quite evident to family, friends, employer or physician, but the drinker often has the delusion that things are just fine, or that his difficulties are due to the actions of others.

To the active alcoholic Step One is terrifying because it implies that the use of alcohol must be totally abandoned. It is also formidable because the person may perceive admission of powerlessness as a shortcoming or weakness. Considering that alcoholics are invariably lacking in self-esteem, this

admission is extremely threatening to the ego. Anything which can help bolster the fragile ego of the alcoholic will make acceptance of powerlessness and the recognition that one has lost control much easier. For the same reason, punitive behavior toward the alcoholic will only depress his self-esteem and make acceptance more difficult. Spiritual guidance, directed at improving one's sense of worth, is thus helpful in facilitating the first step and initiating recovery.

Step Two: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

The Talmud states "A person's temptation becomes more intense each day, and were it not that God helps him, it would be impossible for him to resist (Sukkah, 52b).

This statement is universal, applying to all people, great or small, wealthy or poor, learned or unlearned. The Talmud tells us that even though giving in to destructive impulses may be recognized to be foolish and detrimental, no one would be able to resist these urges without the help of God. One's own resources, regardless of how great they may seem, are simply inadequate. Step Two is thus a statement of fundamental Jewish belief.

Step Three: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

The phrase "God as we understand Him" is a recurring one in A.A. literature. The wording was intended to avoid identification with any particular denomination.

Step Three is a logical consequence of One and Two. If I've lost control of my life, and there's a greater power that can restore my sanity, then it follows that I must be ready to turn my life over to that higher power. But, for many, this step is almost as difficult to accept as the first. In part, this is due to the contradiction between the verbal acknowledgment of the loss of control and the obstinate efforts in early recovery to maintain control.

Yet turning one's life and will over to the care of God does not mean that one can relinquish responsibility. Although the quoted principle of the Talmud indicates that unaided man is helpless. It clearly does not imply that an individual should make no effort and place total responsibility on God. The Talmud states that God's "Assistance" implies that one is taking some action, but needs help. A person must do everything within his power to make his life constructive and productive. Divine help, if sought, will be forthcoming only when one does his share of the work.

Step Four: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Step Five: Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact

nature of our wrongs.

All the works of Jewish moralists and ethicists are replete with need for cheshbon hanefesh. This is a detailed personal accounting taken daily, as well as a more general overview of the direction, accomplishment and shortcomings of one's life taken periodically, with special emphasis in the period beginning with Rosh Hashanah and concluding with Yom Kippur.

The great Chassidic master, Rabbi Elimelech of Lizensk, states in his "Brief List for Proper Living" that "one must repeatedly confide in another person, whether spiritual counselor or trusted friend, all improper thoughts and impulses which come to one's heart and mind, whether these occur during meditation, while lying idle awaiting onset of sleep, or at any time during the day, and one should not withhold anything because of the shame of embarrassment."

Anyone familiar with the siddur knows that confession before God is not restricted to Yom Kippur. A detailed confession is required twice daily.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty here is admitting to oneself, and one must stand in admiration of the wisdom of this requirement. Many individuals make verbal confessions from which they are completely detached. Confessions that are not accompanied by a sincere regret for the wrong deed and commitment to change are worse than worthless.

A sincere admission of a mistake to God or to another person elicits forgiveness, and so should this admission elicit forgiveness to oneself. Yet many people seem unable to forgive themselves even when the misdeed is acknowledged and sincerely regretted. These individuals carry a heavy load of guilt, and this remains a hindrance to all. For the alcoholic, this unalleviated guilt is a frequent cause of relapse.

Step Six: Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. Step Seven: Humbly asked Him to remove all these defects of character.

These Steps reflect an understanding of human behavior, which is well-recognized in Jewish ethics. In Judaism, man is defined not as homo sapiens, a hominoid with intelligence, but as homo spiritus, a hominoid with a divine spirit. According to Genesis "God blew into his nostrils a spirit of life, and man became a living being"(II.7). Man's distinction from lower forms of life lies in his spirit, not his intellect.

Man is thus essentially a biological animal with all of the lusts, cravings, impulses and drives that are natural to all animals. In contrast, however, man has a spirit, which enables him to master these innate urges. But all that unaided man can do is master these forces. He cannot eradicate them any more than he can change the color of his eyes.

While man alone can't relinquish undesirable internal drives, God can, if his help is sought. A prerequisite for divine intervention, however, is that man first must do all that is within his power to subdue undesirable traits. A person who prays for divine intervention to rid himself of undesirable lust impulses while, at the same time, indulging in sexually provocative literature, can hardly expect divine assistance.

Whether it be lust, anger, hate, envy or greed, maximum efforts on one's own part must fully be exhausted before a divine response can be expected. This is the "readiness" required in Step Six and the justification for Step Seven.

Step Eight: Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

Step Nine: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

The Shulchan Aruch, or Code of Jewish Law, states that all the atonement possible is ineffective if an individual has harmed another, unless forgiveness from the victim has been sought. If the wrong action resulted in financial loss, then adequate restitution is required. If the offended party refuses to grant forgiveness, he is to be approached three times. If he remains obstinate in refusing forgiveness, and the offender sincerely regrets his behavior, Divine forgiveness is assured. If the victim has died, the Shulchan Aruch requires that one take a minyan (a quorum of ten people) and visit the burial place to publicly ask forgiveness.

Step Ten: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

Taking a personal inventory on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is not sufficient. This must be an ongoing process. The need for recognizing a wrong and promptly admitting it is stressed by the Talmud. The longer one delays in admitting a sin, the more apt he is to explain away and justify his behavior, until the sin may even appear as the right course of action.

Step Eleven: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for the knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

One of the first prayers upon rising asks for Divine guidance and the strength to do God's will. In Ethics of the Fathers, the Talmud states, "Make His will your will, and negate your will before His" (11,4).

Step Twelve: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Everywhere in Jewish ethics there is a great emphasis on mutual responsibility for one another's actions. "No man is an island." Just as some diseases are contagious, so is moral and spiritual deterioration. Those who are fortunate enough to achieve a measure of spirituality to not have the right to keep this enlightenment to themselves. The Yiddish phrase, "He is a zaddik in pelz" refers to the pious one who keeps warm by wrapping himself in furs. In other words, he maintains a selfish piety.

Warmth should be obtained by building a fire so that others can benefit from the heat as well.

A.A. has set an example for reaching out a helping hand. It is not unusual for a person to be awakened in the early hours of the morning in subzero weather and be asked to respond to a call for help from a total stranger. The call is heeded even though the helper realizes that the stranger may change his mind or has fallen into a drunken stupor. Yet recovering alcoholics respond because their disease has taught them in very practical terms that "we either make it together, or we don't make it at all."

Alcoholics Anonymous is not a religion and cannot take the place of religion. Religion deals with ultimates, especially with the ultimate purpose of Man's presence on earth. All Jews need to learn more about their faith and learn from the unlimited resources of Jewish knowledge. The recovering alcoholic has a particular need for positive direction and sense of purpose in his life. A.A. does not provide this. It has been said that new ideas often have a three-stage course. At first, the idea is thought to be anti-Jewish. Then it is decided it may be compatible with Jewishness after all.

Finally, it is declared that Jews thought of it first. This theory notwithstanding, it is difficult to see how anyone can point to any conflict between A.A. philosophy and Judaism.

It is important for Jews as a whole, but especially for Jewish spiritual and communal leaders, to learn more about alcoholism and chemical dependency. In addition to the methods that have been found effective in promoting recovery, the treasury of Jewish tradition and learning has much to offer. A.A. can be an invaluable ally in the comprehensive spiritual growth for recovering Jews everywhere.

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+++Message 353. The American Weekly March 11, 1951- Dr.
Bob
From: Fiona Dodd 6/18/2002 4:59:00 PM

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From: Jim Blair

This is a magazine article which appeared in The American Weekly on Dr. Bob.

The American Weekly March 11, 1951-Dr. Bob

His Only Monument Is a Plaque, but the Thousands He Helped Rescue From Alcoholism Will Never Forget Him.

By Booton Herndon

The kindly faced man lying in the white hospital bed raised his hand to the light, studied it calmly and then remarked to the nurse standing by his bed: "I think this is it."

Thus Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith recently passed from the world. So, finally, the story of "Dr. Bob, beloved by 120,000 members of Alcoholics Anonymous whom he had helped to find the way back to respectability and happiness, can be told. At the death of his wife, Anne, a year before, Dr. Smith's identity had been revealed, but the story of the co-founder of A.A. remained a secret.

Dr. Bob was a boy in New England, 72 years ago, and his mother sent him to bed at 5 o'clock every evening. Just as regularly did he secretly arise, dress, and slip out the back way to continue the game with his boyhood pals. He learned early to revolt against authority.

When he went away to college he became a steady drinker.

He had always wanted to be a doctor but his strong willed mother had always opposed it, and it was three years after he graduated from Dartmouth before he got up the courage to go to medical school. He drank so continuously he just did manage to get his degree. Once he went off on such a protracted binge that his fraternity brothers had to send for his father to straighten him out.

All this time Bob was corresponding with Anne, his high school sweetheart. That was as far as their courtship went. With the exception of two hard working years as an intern, he was seldom sober. Still, Anne, waiting for a miracle, married no one else.

The miracle happened, apparently, after a year-long period of heavy drinking left him terrified and on the wagon. In 1915 when he was 35 years old and some 17 years after he had first met her, he married Anne and brought her to Akron with him as his bride. They were happy for several years - until the Eighteenth Amendment was passed.

The Grapevine, the official magazine of Alcoholics Anonymous, explains in the weird logic of the alcoholic what happened then. Dr. Bob figured that since he'd soon be unable to get any more alcohol, he might as well drink up what there was. Despite prohibition, he never found it difficult to get

more. From then on, he had a regular pattern. He began drinking every afternoon at four. Every morning he'd quite his tortured nerves with sedatives and, trembling, go to work to make enough money to buy alcohol for four o'clock.

That went on for 15 years.

In the meantime, a New York broker who had drunk himself out of prominence discovered that when he was trying to talk drunks into going on the wagon, he had less craving for liquor. This broker, known to A.A.'s as Bill W., went to Akron on a business deal in 1935. The deal fell through and Bill found himself once more a failure, with only 2\$ in his pocket. He knew right away that he had his choice: find a drunk to talk to, or get drunk himself.

Fortunately, he found a drunk, Dr. Bob.

Bill moved in with Dr. Bob and straightened him out. When he and Dr. Bob wanted a drink, they'd go out and find a drunk to talk to. They sobered up a number of habitual drinkers in Akron that way and then their fame began reaching out to other cities. Slowly, gradually, the idea spread.

Almost before Dr. Bob and Bill, the co-founders, were aware of it, Alcoholics Anonymous was a going concern.

The book, Alcoholics Anonymous, was written. It is now in its 13th printing. People began to write in from all over the world. Some were alcoholics themselves, some were mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, husbands, wives or friends of alcoholics. They all got an answer.

Dr. Bob, who had devoted half his life to drinking, still found himself a slave to alcohol - only now it was on the other fellow's breath. He personally visited some 5,000 in Akron hospitals, encouraging them. As his period of sobriety increased, more and more patients came to him, and it looked as though one part of his ambition, to own a convertible, might not be impossible after all.

Finally he made it. Last year he got a new yellow convertible. The Grapevine pictures him, at the age of 71, speeding through the streets of Akron in it. "the long slim lines made even more rakish with the top down. No hat, his face to the sun, into the driveway he sped. Pebbles, flying, tires screeching, he'd swoosh to a stop.

And, just then, before he put 150 miles on the gleaming yellow convertible, Dr. Bob's malignant disease took a turn for the worse and he had to give up driving. He died a few months later.

Bill W. explained why there will be no imposing monument to this man who saved so many people from alcoholism. When it was once suggested, last year, Dr. Bob said: "Anne and I plan to be buried just like other folks."

And so only a simple plaque in the alcoholic ward of St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, where Dr. Bob did so much of his work, commemorates his work as co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous.

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+++Message 354. The A.A. Grapevine, September 1944 -
Philip Wylie Jabs A Little Needle Into Complacency

From: Fiona Dodd 6/19/2002 1:19:00 AM

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From: Jim Blair

The early issues of the GV carried a substantial number of articles written by non AAs. Of the earliest was this article by Philip Wylie which caused a "bit of a stir" and Bill W. responded with an article which can be found in "Language of the Heart."

The A.A. Grapevine, September 1944

Philip Wylie Jabs A Little Needle
Into Complacency

An editor of The Grapevine called on me and asked me for a piece. He asked because I recently reviewed a book about a drunk - Charles Jackson's The Lost Weekend. He thought that what I'd said in the review showed I had an interest in alcoholism. I have. The editor didn't know that I am one. I quit solo - by which I mean that no organized group like AA was around to assist or advise. But I had plenty of assistance and expert advice, much of which curiously parallels what I know now about AA. To reach a point where I can say that I am not drinking and have not been drinking for a long time, took years. It took an unconscionable amount of energy. It left me with a few ideas that I'd like to pass along. It left me with a couple of hunches that I'd like to ask about.

The things I did are, maybe, the things that others are doing. I was psychoanalyzed twice. I studied psychology after that - Jungian, Freudian, Alderian, behavioristic. Then I read all the basic religious books. Then I read the philosophies. Then I went to insane asylums and looked at them. Here are some of the ideas that came my way:

One of the "reasons" I had given myself for drinking was that I was then able to do easily a great many things other men could do sober and I could not. So I did them sober. I did everything without a drink that I had done when drunk, excepting for the destructive trouble making ones. Everything. That was useful to me.

I had jitters that there is not the literary skill to describe - though Charles Jackson has come as close as any writer ever did. Every fear, phobia and compulsion entered my head - and not so always just when I was hung over. So I got into the habit - a suggestion of a psychiatrist - of writing down in detail the nature and formidability of these mental distresses. Maybe the fact that I am a writer gave that system special merit. But I found I couldn't endlessly retail the awfulness of my obsessions - sitting perfectly comfortably in a quiet room. On paper - they weren't gigantic and overwhelming. They grew silly. They made me laugh at myself and do deflated themselves.

Dr. Jung himself suggested that I look at a few asylums. I don't know why until I made the visit. Then it became evident to me that the inmates were not like me at all. Thus I got to know that my alcoholism was not the onslaught of insanity - and I got to know I had been subconsciously afraid of precisely that.

The Jungians, incidentally, give a different name to the "religious experience" which you discuss in AA. They arrive at that "experience" by different methods - methods which conform to their scientific psychological technique. They call the spiritual quantum which gives rise to the experience a "transcendent symbol." Naturally, I haven't room to describe the method here: it would take more than this magazine - a book perhaps. But, whether you call it a religious experience or a transcendent symbol does not matter - and it may be of interest to alcoholics who are semi-knowingly engaged in protesting formal, churchly "religions" to learn that there are thoroughly abstract, non-religious routes to the same, universal, human contact with inner integrity, truth, and the "nature of nature itself."

Of course, I read everything about alcoholism I could find. And I became interested in the care and condition of alcoholic friends. Among them I noticed two who still make me wonder about the possible relationship of epilepsy to alcoholism in some cases. These two friends of mine had had fits. They both had the epileptic "picture" on the electroencephalogram. The new drugs that avert or postpone epileptic attacks seemed to aid these two men in stopping their alcohol addiction. I know that if I were a doctor - and an alcoholic - I'd investigate this special aspect of the puzzle thoroughly. The possible future values of chemistry should not be overlooked by any of us in the presence of the proved value of psychological and philosophical regeneration.

I also have a hunch that insanities, neuroses, and all other aberrations vary largely with the passing of centuries. Alcoholism too. I do not believe people in the main were exactly the same sort alcoholics and for the same reason in 1700 as in 1944. That is to say, I believe such conditions of the soul are "as if" epidemic - and definitely of a social causation. That is what especially interests me about AA: it represents to me the first really effective effort to deal in kind and in scale and in the right category, with alcoholism.

Philip Wylie

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+++Message 355. The story of Alcoholics Anonymous in
Bristol and the West of England
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/2/2002 2:05:00 PM

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How the West Was Won

The story of Alcoholics Anonymous

in Bristol and the West of England

The earliest beginnings of Alcoholics Anonymous in the West Country go back to 1944 in Washington, DC, USA, when John M at the prompting of his wife Frieda joined the Welcome Group. He achieved sobriety in 1947 and came home to England with 'this message' in the same year, with his redundancy pay of £100.

The first known meetings in the West of England were at Mickleton, Gloucestershire, in 1948.

The Bristol group came into being in 1953 at the instigation of Dr. Jim H from Belfast, then stationed with the RAF at Pucklechurch. The first known meeting place was at the Full Moon public house in Stokes Croft!

Bath followed in 1955; Frieda also started a small Alanon group (for families of alcoholics) in the same year, the first in Britain.

A major landmark occurred in 1956 when the first English convention was held in the Bellevue Hotel, Cheltenham.

In 1957 Calne started its own AA and Alanon groups in a member's home. In Bristol, the first lady member joined-and stayed. She died sober in 1980.

An important development came in 1959 with the second English prison group being started at Dorchester with the help of Bristol members. Leyhill Open Prison followed in 1963, with groups at Horfield in 1964, Shepton Mallett in 1965 and Dartmoor prison in 1966. The Verne, Portland Bill, followed in 1967. A Prison Intergroup (PIG) started in 1965, with Bristol represented by Travers C who was closely involved in all the work.

From 1960 onwards there was a continuing dispute over monies raised for a General Service Office to serve the needs of the fellowship in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This was finally resolved in 1966/7 with the purchase of a lease in Redcliffe Gardens, London. They subsequently moved to Stonebow House, York, in 1986. The Western Service Office opened in 1974; present day service structures in Bristol date from this time.

1960 saw the beginning of hospital groups, with the founding of a group at Wells, Somerset. This was followed by a group at Barrow Hospital in 1967. The late Sixties also saw the start of the Tower Hill group.

Meantime, a second AA group started in Bristol and groups sprung up in Taunton, Plymouth, Bruton, Bournemouth, Salisbury and other places, leading to

the formation of the South West Intergroup (SWIG) in 1964.

The Bristol Sunday Club started at the Toc H premises in 1965 from 2pm to 9pm. Bristol members attended the first meeting of an Alcoholics Anonymous European Committee which met in Paris in 1967; this early initiative was not a success.

In April 1968, a Bristol Akron Group formed and published the first copy of Bristol Fashion, an independent AA journal for members, in June 1968. The journal highlighted the belief that the AA programme was a spiritual one. The launching of Bristol Fashion was greatly assisted by the editor of The Road Back, published from Dublin by Sackville, and he contributed regularly until his death in 1979.

The publication still comes out regularly. In 1982 it received a congratulatory letter from the General Service Board of AA Inc. in New York. The responsibility for its circulation was taken over by the Newcomers Group of Bristol in 1976.

In 1968 the 21st anniversary of AA in England and Wales was celebrated at the Grosvenor House Hotel, Park Lane, London on 29, 30 and 31 March. The weekend celebrations ended with an interdenominational service of thanksgiving at the Royal Parish Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields.

Meantime at home the work crept onwards. A group started at Westbury-on-Trym in November of that year, and Portishead started its own group in 1970. In 1971 a young people's group, later to become the Fellowship Group, started in Bristol. In 1971, the first European Convention of AA was held in Bristol. Sixteen countries from all over the world were represented and the guest of honour was the Apostolic Delegate, His Excellency Archbishop Enrici. This meant that the Bishop of Clifton was also involved, together with the Lord Mayor of Bristol and her husband and the Sheriff and Sheriff's lady: the Archbishop was afforded a full diplomatic welcome to the city.

A special production of Lady on the Rocks was presented at the Winston Theatre during the visit, playing to full houses. There were visits to prison groups, talks, social events and a reception at the Mansion House. The convention closed with a service at Bristol Cathedral, led by the Bishop of Bristol.

An unforeseen result of this visit was an invitation to Rome for a Dublin member and a Bristol member in 1972 to carry 'this message.' They were well received and were awarded the papal medal, the Order of the Good Shepherd. This was taken to New York in 1984 and is currently on display in the Archives. Dr. Jack Norris, Chairman of the GSB in New York, followed up the visit to Rome by making contact with Italian and Vatican doctors regarding medical aspects of alcoholism.

The Newcomers meeting started in 1972 and a Borstal Alcoholics Anonymous group started in Portland, Dorset.

The years continued with reunions, pre-Christmas dinners, visits and moves. In 1974, the Withywood group started and the Avon Intergroup Hospitals Committee held its first meeting.

Archives in the West of England, based in Bristol, began in 1980, following a trip by two Bristol members to the World Convention in New Orleans where they met Nell Wing, AA's first Archivist.

In 1983, the Bristol Reunions, which had been revived in 1981, began forming their own tradition: not only had an Archives display and an Archives Meeting become an integral part of the weekend, but so had the Marathon Meeting with its lighting of the candle by the oldest member present on the Friday night and the blowing out of the candle by the newest member present on the Sunday morning. This was the first time there was a comprehensive Literature Store at an AA convention.

The 50th anniversary year was celebrated in 1985 with a three-day convention for the Avon Intergroups at the Grand Hotel and a pilgrimage of a party of 12 to New York and to Montreal for the World Convention. Bristol Fashion was one of just three AA journals invited to make a presentation.

This brief summary will stop here. The years following brought the deaths of many of the founder members but the Beginning had by now been accomplished. From this point on, Alcoholics Anonymous was here to stay.

In the 25 years since 1975 the number of groups meeting on a weekly basis in the Bristol and Avon area grew from 16 to over 70.

For a fuller account of the triumphs and heartbreaks of the early years, see A History of the Birth and Growth of Alcoholics Anonymous in the West of England, available from the Archivist, Avon South Intergroup, PO Box 42, Bristol BS99 7JR

First printing February 2002

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Bristol & Avon Area Archives

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+++Message 356. The American Weekly March 11, 1951- Dr.
Bob
From: Fiona Dodd 6/19/2002 1:19:00 AM

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From: Jim Blair

This is a magazine article which appeared in The American Weekly on Dr. Bob.

The American Weekly March 11, 1951-Dr. Bob

His Only Monument Is a Plaque, but the Thousands He Helped Rescue From Alcoholism Will Never Forget Him.

By Booton Herndon

The kindly faced man lying in the white hospital bed raised his hand to the light, studied it calmly and then remarked to the nurse standing by his bed: "I think this is it."

Thus Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith recently passed from the world. So, finally, the story of "Dr. Bob, beloved by 120,000 members of Alcoholics Anonymous whom he had helped to find the way back to respectability and happiness, can be told. At the death of his wife, Anne, a year before, Dr. Smith's identity had been revealed, but the story of the co-founder of A.A. remained a secret.

Dr. Bob was a boy in New England, 72 years ago, and his mother sent him to bed at 5 o'clock every evening. Just as regularly did he secretly arise, dress, and slip out the back way to continue the game with his boyhood pals. He learned early to revolt against authority.

When he went away to college he became a steady drinker.

He had always wanted to be a doctor but his strong willed mother had always opposed it, and it was three years after he graduated from Dartmouth before he got up the courage to go to medical school. He drank so continuously he just did manage to get his degree. Once he went off on such a protracted binge that his fraternity brothers had to send for his father to straighten him out.

All this time Bob was corresponding with Anne, his high school sweetheart. That was as far as their courtship went. With the exception of two hard working years as an intern, he was seldom sober. Still, Anne, waiting for a miracle, married no one else.

The miracle happened, apparently, after a year-long period of heavy drinking left him terrified and on the wagon. In 1915 when he was 35 years old and some 17 years after he had first met her, he married Anne and brought her to Akron with him as his bride. They were happy for several years - until the Eighteenth Amendment was passed.

The Grapevine, the official magazine of Alcoholics Anonymous, explains in the weird logic of the alcoholic what happened then. Dr. Bob figured that since he'd soon be unable to get any more alcohol, he might as well drink up what there was. Despite prohibition, he never found it difficult to get

more. From then on, he had a regular pattern. He began drinking every afternoon at four. Every morning he'd quite his tortured nerves with sedatives and, trembling, go to work to make enough money to buy alcohol for four o'clock.

That went on for 15 years.

In the meantime, a New York broker who had drunk himself out of prominence discovered that when he was trying to talk drunks into going on the wagon, he had less craving for liquor. This broker, known to A.A.'s as Bill W., went to Akron on a business deal in 1935. The deal fell through and Bill found himself once more a failure, with only 2\$ in his pocket. He knew right away that he had his choice: find a drunk to talk to, or get drunk himself.

Fortunately, he found a drunk, Dr. Bob.

Bill moved in with Dr. Bob and straightened him out. When he and Dr. Bob wanted a drink, they'd go out and find a drunk to talk to. They sobered up a number of habitual drinkers in Akron that way and then their fame began reaching out to other cities. Slowly, gradually, the idea spread.

Almost before Dr. Bob and Bill, the co-founders, were aware of it, Alcoholics Anonymous was a going concern.

The book, Alcoholics Anonymous, was written. It is now in its 13th printing. People began to write in from all over the world. Some were alcoholics themselves, some were mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, husbands, wives or friends of alcoholics. They all got an answer.

Dr. Bob, who had devoted half his life to drinking, still found himself a slave to alcohol - only now it was on the other fellow's breath. He personally visited some 5,000 in Akron hospitals, encouraging them. As his period of sobriety increased, more and more patients came to him, and it looked as though one part of his ambition, to own a convertible, might not be impossible after all.

Finally he made it. Last year he got a new yellow convertible. The Grapevine pictures him, at the age of 71, speeding through the streets of Akron in it. "the long slim lines made even more rakish with the top down. No hat, his face to the sun, into the driveway he sped. Pebbles, flying, tires screeching, he'd swoosh to a stop.

And, just then, before he put 150 miles on the gleaming yellow convertible, Dr. Bob's malignant disease took a turn for the worse and he had to give up driving. He died a few months later.

Bill W. explained why there will be no imposing monument to this man who saved so many people from alcoholism. When it was once suggested, last year, Dr. Bob said: "Anne and I plan to be buried just like other folks."

And so only a simple plaque in the alcoholic ward of St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, where Dr. Bob did so much of his work, commemorates his work as co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous.

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+++Message 357. 75%-80%-93%-Early AA Recovery Rates
From: Fiona Dodd 6/24/2002 8:53:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

Early AA Recovery Rates

Of alcoholics who came to A.A. (from 1935 to 1955) and really tried, 50% got sober at once and remained that way, 25% sobered up after some relapses, and among the remainder, those who stayed on with A.A. showed improvement. (Big Book, page xx.)

Dr. G. Kirby Collier, psychiatrist: "I have felt that A.A. is a group unto themselves and their best results can be had under their own guidance, as a result of their philosophy. Any therapeutic or philosophic procedure which can prove a recovery rate of 50% to 60% must merit our consideration." (Third Edition Big Book, page 569.)

Records in Cleveland show that 93 percent of those who came to us (in the early days) never had a drink again. (Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers, page 261.)

It is probably fair to say that 3 out of 4 who came during that period, and who have since remained with the groups, have recovered from their alcoholism. (Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol, Vol. 6, No. 2. A talk given by Bill Wilson, September 1945.)

About two thousand recoveries now take place each month. Of those alcoholics who wish to get well and are emotionally capable of trying our method, 50 percent recover immediately, 25 percent after a few backslides. The remainder are improved if they continue active in A.A. Of the total who approach us, it is probable that only 25 per cent become A.A. members on the first contact. A list of seventy-five of our early failures today discloses that 70 returned to A.A. after one to ten years. We did not bring them back; they came of their own accord. (N.Y. State Journal of Medicine Vol. 50. A talk given by Bill Wilson, July 1950.)

This is from the August 1946 AA Grapevine: "MINNEAPOLIS RECORD INDICATED THAT 75% ARE SUCCESSFUL IN A.A." The Minneapolis Group, in March 1943, inaugurated a system for keeping a record of the sobriety of members from three months on up. As a result, the following exact percentages have been arrived at:

For the Year 1945 -

5 year members - 100% successful, 0% slipped

4 year members - 100% successful, 0% slipped

3 year members - 100% successful, 0% slipped

2 year members - 89% successful, 11% slipped

18 month members - 90% successful, 10% slipped

1 year members - 80% successful, 20% slipped

9 month members - 82% successful, 18% slipped

6 month members - 70% successful, 30% slipped

3 month members - 48% successful, 52% slipped

(Of those who slipped in 1945, only 16½ % have worked back to any degree of sobriety.)

Overall Percentages -

1943 - 78% successful, 22% slipped

1944 - 83% successful, 17% slipped

1945 - 77% successful, 23% slipped

We now have an active membership of one hundred and thirteen alcoholics, eighty-three of whom have not had a drink since their first A. A. meeting.

Five of these have been dry from two to four years, twenty-seven dry from one to two years, forty-one dry from six to twelve months and twenty-six dry three to six months. (From a letter dated 9/29/41 from Drs. A. Weise Hammer and C. Dudley Saul, who were Medical Directors at Philadelphia General Hospital. Philadelphia's first AA meeting was on 2/28/40.)

One-hundred-percent effectiveness with non-psychotic drinkers who sincerely want to quit is claimed by the workers of Alcoholics Anonymous. The program will not work, they add, with those who only "want to want to quit," or who want to quit because they are afraid of losing their families or their jobs. The effective desire, the state, must be based upon enlightened self-interest; the applicant must want to get away from liquor to head off incarceration or premature death. He must be fed up with the stark social loneliness, which engulfs the uncontrolled drinker, and he must want to put some order into his bungled life.

As it is impossible to disqualify all borderline applicants, the working percentage of recovery falls below the 100-percent mark. According to A.A. estimation, fifty percent of the alcoholics taken in hand recover immediately; twenty-five percent get well after suffering a relapse or two; and the rest remain doubtful. This rate of success is exceptionally high. (From the March 1941 Saturday Evening Post article by Jack Alexander.)

Concerning the original twenty nine case histories, it is a deep satisfaction to record, as of 1955, that twenty-two have apparently made full recovery from their alcoholism. Of these fifteen have remained completely sober for an average of seventeen years each, according to our best knowledge and belief. (From page 167 of the Second Edition of the Big Book.)

For the first time in 10 years he feels he has found a path to a decent life. It's too early to tell whether he'll stay on it, but AA's record of 75 per cent recovered is in his favor. (From the June 26, 1945 Look magazine article called "Case History of an Alcoholic".)

Complete abstinence appears the only way out, but except in rare cases that has been impossible of attainment. Religion, psychiatry, and medicine have been tried, but with only sporadic success. The members of Alcoholics Anonymous, however, appear to have found an answer, for they claim that at least fifty per cent of those they interest have stopped drinking completely. (From a sermon preached on November 26, 1939 by Rev. Dilworth Lupton at the First Unitarian Church [Universalist - Unitarian], Euclid at East 82nd Street, Cleveland, Ohio.

It was called "Mr. X and Alcoholics Anonymous" and Mr. X was Clarence Snyder. This sermon was turned into one of the first pamphlets concerning A.A.)

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++++Message 358. Chips/Medallions and the Circle and Triangle
From: Fiona Dodd 6/24/2002 8:54:00 AM

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From: "Neeron"

Chips/Medallions and the Circle and Triangle

From the 1958 GSC Report

Chips, Tokens & Emblems

For the first time in the history of the Conference, Delegates were asked to record the attitude of the movement as a whole toward the use of so-called A.A. "chips," "tokens." "lapel emblems" and similar devices.

Discussion from the floor indicated that items of this type are extremely popular in certain Areas while they are used little or not at all in other sections of the U.S. and Canada. In one Area, chips are awarded for three, five and twelve months of sobriety.

Several Delegates reported their dislike of the use of the World Directory by manufacturers who solicit the groups for business of this type.

The consensus was that this was a matter for local autonomy and not one on which the Conference should record a definite position on behalf of the movement.

This attitude was endorsed by the Literature Committee to whom the matter was referred for further study.

From The A.A. Grapevine

August 1992 - Conference Report

The Conference recommended that :

a feasibility study be undertaken by the General Service Board of all possible methods by which sobriety chips/medallions may be made available to the Fellowship, and that a report be made to an ad hoc committee of 1993 Conference delegates who would make a recommendation to the 1993 Conference.

August 1993 - Conference Report

The Conference recommended that -

in agreement with the consensus of the 1958 General Service Conference, the use of sobriety chips/medallions is a matter for local autonomy and not one on which the Conference should record a definite position in behalf of the movement.

it is not appropriate for AAWS, Inc., or The A.A. Grapevine, Inc., to produce or license the production of sobriety chips/medallions.

December 1993

Whatever Happened to the Circle and Triangle?

Have you noticed that the circle and triangle symbol no longer appears at the top of the Grapevine's Table of Contents? The decision to remove it has its root in the 1993 General Service Conference, and subsequent actions by the Board of Trustees and the directors of A.A. World Services.

Adopted at the 20th Anniversary International Convention in St. Louis, the circle and triangle symbol was registered as a official A.A. mark in 1955, and has been widely used by various A.A. entities. By the mid-1980s, however, it had also begun to be used by outside organizations, such as novelty manufactures, publishers, and occasionally treatment facilities. There was growing concern in the membership of A.A. about this situation. Some A.A. members were saying "we don't want our circle and triangle aligned with non-A.A. purposes." In keeping with the Sixth Tradition, that A.A. "...ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise...", the A.A. World Services board began in 1996 to contact outside entities that were using the circle and triangle in an unauthorized manner, and to take action to prevent such use of the symbol. AAWS implemented this policy with restraint, and did not resort to

legal remedies until all attempts at persuasion and conciliation had been unsuccessful. Of about 170 unauthorized users contacted, two suits were filed, and both were settled in the very early stages.

Denying the use of the symbol to outside entities raised other problems, however. By early 1990, it was clear that some A.A. members very much wanted to be able to obtain medallions with "our" circle and triangle. Both the AAWS and Grapevine Corporate boards began receiving requests to produce sobriety chips and medallions, and the matter was discussed at a joint meeting of the two boards in October 1990. Their consensus was that production of tokens and medallions was unrelated to our primary purpose of carrying the A.A. message, and they suggested that the matter be given a thorough airing at the General Service Conference in order to seek a group conscience from the Fellowship.

At the 1992 Conference, there were presentations on why we should or should not produce medallions, and on the responsibility of AAWS to protect our trademarks and copyrights. The result was a Conference Advisory Action asking the General Service Board of trustees to undertake a feasibility study on the possible methods by which sobriety chips and medallions might be made available to the Fellowship, and to report its findings to an ad hoc committee of Delegates.

The ad hoc committee met prior to the 1993 Conference, for several full days of discussion and deliberation, and in turn presented its report and recommendations on the Conference floor. After discussion, the Conference approved two of five recommendations: 1) that the use of sobriety chips/medallions is a matter of local autonomy and not one on which the Conference should record a definite position; and 2) that it is not appropriate for AA World Services or the Grapevine to produce or license the production of sobriety chips/medallions.

In substance, the ad hoc committee report said: "We began to see that the issue is 'What is best for A.A. as a whole' and not 'Does the Fellowship want A.A. sobriety chips/medallions?' The committee did not focus on the use of sobriety chips/medallions - groups and individuals are free to use them if they wish. The question is whether it is best for AA as a whole to have a sobriety chip/medallion with the AA name on it authorized and/or issued by an AA entity.

"Some of the comments made during the Traditions part of the discussion included:

"The First Tradition - At the heart of the matter is unity.....

"The Second Tradition - Therein lies our solution. Where is our ultimate authority and where is our center? Is it internal or external - principles arising from a power greater than people, or values of the world? We must

keep in mind that this is also the place where Bill W. points out the `....the good is sometimes the enemy of the best.'

"The Third Tradition - WE were reminded that we are a self-correcting Fellowship....We felt that it is time for the whole Fellowship to get back to the simplicity and basis of our message.

"The Fourth Tradition makes it clear that we must separate the spiritual from the material. Keeping in mind that any action that we take could affect AA as a whole.....

"The Fifth Tradition - The Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, A.A. Comes of Age, and `The Twelve Concepts for World Service' - are the basic message, the core message of A.A. Everything else is commentary on the basic message: all literature published, comments and sharing at meetings, even the Grapevine, is a sort of national commentary. Could chips/medallions be another form of commentary, another form of a pamphlet?

"The Sixth Tradition calls on us to `divide the spiritual from the material. ' Money is not a valid consideration in the question of whether or not litigation should be brought against misusers of our logo since A.A. is not in the business of making money. Similarly, the fear that others would be making money off our logo does not hurt the Fellowship on a fundamental level. How do we let go of the tiger we have by the tail?... We are at the tip of the iceberg of litigation right now....We went many, many years without lawsuits. To continue on this path threatens to keep our focus on money and property instead of allowing our view to widen spiritually.

"The Seventh Tradition reminds us "Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money and authority.'

"The Eleventh Tradition - explicitly warns against the sensationalism that follows litigation. It is essentially negative attention and puts the Fellowship risk.

"The Twelfth Tradition - Humility is the key, working from the internal to the external, from the smaller to the larger, from `I' to `We,' in a spirit of humility and trust. What course of action will keep us on the path of spirituality?...

"The committee spent a great deal of time in the discussion of the Warranties. Warranty Five states:

"Practically all societies and governments feel it necessary to inflict personal punishment upon individual members for violations of their beliefs, principles or laws. Because of its special situation, Alcoholics Anonymous

finds this practice unnecessary. When we of A.A. fail to follow sound spiritual principles, alcohol cuts us down. Therefore no humanly administered system of penalties is needed. This unique condition is an enormous advantage to us all, one on which we should never abandon by a resort to the methods of personal attack and punishment....

"In case the A.A. name should be misapplied...it would of course be the duty of our General Service Conference to press for the discontinuance of such a practice - always short, however of public quarreling about the matter.... It was recognized that a public lawsuit is a public controversy, something in which our Tradition says we may not engage.'

"The chips/medallions and trademark questions were dealt with as separately as possible. The committee felt that a distinction could be drawn between the two in terms of their respective significance to A.A. The trademark (logo) is the embodiment of the AA name. The significance of its shape is described in AA Comes of Age, page 139: 'The circle stands for the whole world of AA, and the triangle stands for AA's Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service....The priests and seers of antiquity regarded the circle enclosing the triangle as a means of warding off spirits of evil, and AA's circle and triangle of Recovery, Unity, and Service has certainly meant all of that to us and much more.'

"Medallions, on the other hand, are not universally considered an embodiment of the Fellowship as such. Many stories are told about the role that the coins play in an individual's continuing sobriety: the coins act as symbolic recognition of the length of sobriety. They are not the sobriety itself and any attempt to make medallions more than a symbol may lead perilously towards ego - inflation, self-glorification, rather than ego-deflation (see Tradition Twelve).

"The committee felt that the desire to protect the unique meaning of AA's symbol is at the foundation of litigation, as well as the fear of the trivialization of the mark. But despite the vehemence with which we feel 'ownership' of the symbol, we suspect that the belief that we (or anyone) can 'possess' the symbol is a fallacy.

"It actually works against the foundation of the Steps that lead us to sobriety. Ownership necessarily involves control and to argue over that control through litigation takes the focus away from the fact that we are ultimately powerless. We can own the meaning of the symbol, and if someone uses the graphic, our meaning will not be diminished, as long as we keep the principles it represents in sight.

"The committee finally questioned the goals of litigation, what would be gained from a lawsuit. We suspect that the harm done internally as a result of litigation would be far worse than the harm others could do to our 'property' from the outside. At the base of this approach is trust that AA

principles will work to protect our name, just as our trust in God is the foundation of our program and of our lives. Warranty Five says that we can `....confidently trust AA opinion, public opinion, and God Himself to take care of Alcoholics Anonymous....'

"Concept Seven states `[The Conference] Charter is not a legal document....it relies instead upon the force of tradition....for its final effectiveness.'

"To us, the fear is that the incorporation of the symbol by others outside the Fellowship would somehow detract from the significance of the symbol is really unfounded. No one outside the Fellowship can detract from A.A.'s strength if we stick to the Steps, Traditions and Concepts, which unite us.

"The registered trademarks, service marks and logos are symbols of our spiritual Fellowship, Alcoholics Anonymous, and should be treated as such.

"The General Service Conference is a living entity. From the group conscience will eventually emerge an expression of the will of a loving Power greater than ourselves proven to be firmly linked to the Traditions and Warranties, keeping us safe for as long as we are needed."

The ad hoc committee report was debated on Tuesday and Thursday of Conference week, and the subject of chips and medallions came up again during a final sharing session on Friday. The chairperson of the AAWS Board made the following statement at that time: "The AAWS Board will immediately begin a thorough review of its policies regarding our marks, will do everything possible to avoid initiating litigation, and will prepare a revised policy statement to be ready for next year's Conference."

Immediately after the Conference, the General Service Board accepted AAWS's recommendation to discontinue protecting the circle and triangle symbol as one of AA's registered marks. And by early June, the Trustees reached substantial unanimity in support of AAWS's statement that, to avoid the suggestion of association of affiliation with outside goods and services, A.A. World Services, Inc. would phase out the "official" or "legal" use of the circle and triangle.

If you're wondering how to identify Conference-approved literature in the future, it will carry the words "This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature." As pieces of literature are due for reprinting, the symbol will be deleted; and new materials will carry only the Conference-approved wording.

Like the Serenity Prayer and the slogans, which have never had official recognition, the circle and triangle will most likely continue to be used widely for many A.A. purposes. The difference from the earlier practice is that its official use to denote Alcoholics Anonymous materials will be phased out.

(This material is adapted from the August-September issue of the GSO newsletter Box 4-5-9; portions of the ad hoc committee report are taken from the Final Report of the 1993 General Service Conference.)

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+++Message 359. "The Care of Alcoholics" by Sister
Ignatia
From: Fiona Dodd 6/24/2002 9:10:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

THE CARE OF ALCOHOLICS

St. Thomas Hospital And A.A. Started A Movement Which Swept The Country

By Sister M. Ignatia, C.S.A. St. Thomas Hospital, Akron, Ohio

From the October 1951 issue of "Hospital Progress" (the official journal of the Catholic Hospital)

Nearly 12 years ago, one of the co-founders of Alcoholics Anonymous (Dr. Bob) was on our staff. He was a skilled proctologist, and was on our staff five years before we knew that he had a drinking problem. We would not have known it then had he not volunteered the information.

Dr. Bob often discussed the problem of alcoholism with us, with regard to auto accidents and other tragedies caused by excessive drinking. Many of these cases had to be admitted to the hospital even though they were intoxicated. After talking with members of the families of these compulsive drinkers and realizing the suffering brought into the homes of these afflicted people because of drink, we became deeply interested in the plan which Dr. Bob unfolded to use.

This was in 1939, just about the time we were trying to pull out of the depression. Hospital beds were at a premium, without any prospect of adding to our bed capacity. There was very little enthusiasm around the hospital about admitting who were imbibing too freely in those days.

However, prompted by the grace of God, we very cautiously admitted one patient, with the diagnosis of acute gastritis, under the care of Dr. Bob. The patient was placed in a two-bed room. The next morning Dr Bob came to the admitting office and very timidly requested that the patient be moved to a

spot where the men who came to visit him might talk with him privately. The only available space we could think of was a small room across the hall called the "flower room", where patients' flowers were changed and arranged. We pushed the alcoholic's bed into this room. It was there that he received his first A.A. visitors. The men who came to visit him were such respectable, dignified-appearing men that we could hardly believe they had ever been addicted to alcohol.

We then set aside a two-bed room, then a four and later a six-bed room ward. Today our A.A. ward has eight beds, adjoining a corridor which serves as a lounge. The corridor opens the gallery of our chapel.

Our alcoholic ward is not a great problem. It is simply a large room with accommodations in one end for eight beds. The other end of the room is a small lounge with comfortable chairs, a davenport, a "bar", a coffee urn, and an ice-box. To the rear of this ward-lounge is a room with a lavatory and shower into which the new man is brought for admission to the ward.

An important point is that he is helped out of his street clothes and into hospital attire BY OTHER PATIENTS IN THE WARD. The advantage for the new patient is that, from the first, he is in the care of understanding friends. The advantage for the older patients who perform this duty is that they are thus able to see themselves again as they were upon admission. Administratively, an economy is effected by thus eliminating the need for hard-to-get employees.

Directly across the hall from our ward-lounge is the choir-loft of our chapel, which permits A.A. patients to hear Mass every day if they wish and to make visits in hospital attire when they so desire - all in complete seclusion. Bearing in mind always that the alcoholic is a person who is sick spiritually as well as physically. The ready access he is thus given to the source of spiritual healing is a powerful factor in his recovery.

To return to the mechanical operation of the ward, it can be stated that it is almost wholly self-operating. A nurses' aide comes in to make beds and an A.A. employee does the heavier cleaning. The cleaning of ashtrays, the making of coffee - the coffee urn is in operation 24 hours each day - the washing of coffee cups, all of this is done by the patients themselves. Usually they welcome these small opportunities to busy themselves and thus keep their minds off their problems. Activity eliminates brooding, and the volume of such work is never great at any time.

The function of the lounge is to provide a place where the patient can chat with A.A. visitors and listen to informal talks. A secondary value, but a most important one to the former patient is that by visiting current A.A. patients the former patient helps to perpetuate his own sobriety. It is axiomatic that the alcoholic is never "cured"; his ailment is simply arrested but it is positively arrested if he perseveres in the program. The visitors' lounge

(which is supplemented by chairs in the hallway that divides the ward from the choir-loft) helps not only to aid the current patient to sobriety but also to preserve and perpetuate the sobriety of former patients.

The ice-box is kept stocked with food and particularly with milk and citrus juice, for the alcoholic is frequently an undernourished person. The patients are encouraged to eat at will. The coffee urn and bar are the A.A. equivalent for the brass rail and bottles of the drinking days.

The A.A. visitors perform a multitude of chores for the current patients. Sometimes they secure a job or effect a family reconciliation or pacify a creditor pressing for payment of a bill. These and other services are done by A.A.'s for the dual purpose of showing true Christian brotherhood and as a means of perpetuating and insuring their own sobriety.

HOSPITAL PROCEDURE

We begin where reality begins for the alcoholic. Reality for the alcoholic is drinking. It is most important that the approach be made through another alcoholic - a sponsor. The sponsor speaks the language of the alcoholic. He knows "all the tricks of the trade", because of personal experience.

Those of us who have anything to do with admitting these patients would do well to have the humility to rely upon the judgment of the sponsor. Let him decide when the patient is ready for the program. We do not accept repeaters! Sponsors know this, hence they are very careful to qualify the person before bringing him into the hospital. Above all, he must have a sincere desire to stop drinking. Wives, relatives, friends, and well-meaning employers may try to high-pressure the alcoholic into accepting the program. Someone may even persuade the family doctor to use his influence with the hospital, so that the prospect may be admitted into the alcoholic ward.

The role of the sponsor is not an easy one. He leaves nothing undone to clear away all the ill felling, indignation, and resentment that have accumulated in the path of his patient. The sponsor acts as a catalytic agent in combating all adverse forces. He tries to appease an exasperated wife, talks with the employer, landlord, creditors, and others. He explains the program, tells them that this is not simply another "sobering up process". This time he is being treated not only physically but morally and mentally as well. The sponsor assures them that with God's grace, their cooperation and the help of his fellow A.A.'s, his charge will be given a real opportunity to make a complete recovery.

THE PATIENT ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL

After registration the sponsor escorts his patient to the A.A. ward. The ward is virtually self-governing. Two or three of the senior patients in the ward take over and welcome the new patient. They check his clothes and prepare him

for bed. (Many of these patients are in such good condition that they sit in the lounge and join in the conversation). Nothing is left undone to make the new man feel at home. This reception inspires hope in his heart. It also gives the A.A. patients a splendid opportunity of doing twelfth-step work, namely, helping others.

The alcoholic is ill, in body, mind, and soul; hence we begin with the physical care.

SECOND DAY - THE DAY OF RECOGNITION

The physical condition of the patient is usually much improved on the second day. His mind is beginning to clear. He feels encouraged because everyone seems interested in him. Visitors call on him, telling him "This is how I made it". Some of the visitors may be men with whom he used to drink. The power of example is a great incentive to the patient. He begins to say to himself, "If he can do it - so can I. But how am I going to make it?" At this point he generally has a "heart to heart talk" with his sponsor. He acknowledges his utter powerlessness over alcohol. He honestly admits that he has tried innumerable times to drink normally and has always failed. He is finally ready, honestly and humbly, to admit defeat. His sponsor is delighted to know that his patient is really honest about his drinking. The sponsor says, "Good! We can help you since you are humble and honest".

This is the grace of God at work in the soul of the patient - to admit helplessness and to seek help outside of self. This may be the first time the patient has admitted the fact that he is powerless to help himself.

The next step is humbly to turn to God: "Ask and you shall receive." Patients have often said that is the first time they sincerely prayed. The "Our Father" takes on a new meaning at this point. They feel that they really belong.

THE DAY OF MORAL INVENTORY

The patient makes a searching and fearless moral inventory. He faces the past and honestly admits to God, to himself, and to another human being the exact nature of his wrongs. He is finished with alibis and reservations. "I am an alcoholic, what a joy to be honest! The truth will make me free." Now he is sincerely asking God's help and the help of his fellow man.

FOURTH DAY - THE DAY OF RESOLUTION

"Give us this day our daily bread." This is interpreted by the alcoholics to mean, "I surely can stay sober today." This is usually followed by an act of complete surrender to God. The past is finished. "I am heartily sorry." "I'll try to make amends." This means confession, repentance and firm purpose of amendment. Many Catholics return to the Sacraments after years of negligence.

Scripture says, "There is more joy in heaven over one sinner doing penance than 99 just who need not penance." He used to drink because he felt like it. He permitted his emotions to run away with him. Now, with God's help and the help of his fellow A.A.'s, with his clear thinking, he can control his feelings and emotions. Reason now governs his life. Strong convictions are given him as to why he cannot take that first drink. He has learned from his fellow alcoholics that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and that it is a privilege to help others. What a joy, too! He is kept so busy helping others that he does not have time to even think about a drink. What a transformation takes place in the lives of these men and women!

FIFTH DAY - PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

As he leaves the hospital he must now face his problems. The way has been paved by the sponsor. The future is in God's hands. He has learned to say, "O God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference." He is urged to guard against pride, self-pity, resentment, intolerance, and criticism; to attend meetings, to do twelfth-step work, and to visit the hospital. Before leaving the hospital the patient is given a FOLLOWING OF CHRIST by Thomas A. Kempis. During his stay in the hospital he learns the significance of the Little Sacred Heart Badge. He requests one, with a thorough understanding of conditions implied: that it must be returned before he takes the first drink.

PATIENTS FROM ALL OVER THE NATION

We have hospitalized well over 4,000 A.A. patients at St. Thomas Hospital. They have come to Akron from Alabama, South Carolina, Michigan, Maryland, Texas, and many other distant parts. They would not have had to travel so far if their local hospitals made it possible for them to receive the program nearer home.

Time and finances prohibit many from making such a long trip. Many may be forced to accept treatment under less favorable circumstances. Our Policy is not to accept alcoholics for re-hospitalization. We've learned from experience that in institutions where the majority of the inmates are repeaters the program is defeated for the new man, because it creates an atmosphere of pessimism and discouragement. The patient often gives up in despair. It might have been quite different had he been given the proper exposure to the program in a spiritual atmosphere as provided in a local Catholic hospital.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a tremendous movement. According to figures from the New York office, new members are registered at the rate of about 1,500 per month. At present there are about 112,000 active members and some 4,000 chapters scattered throughout the United States, Canada, Latin America, and 36 other countries.

A priest once told me that the AA program is the most fruitful source of

conversions. It is perhaps the best means by which the work of the hospital can be interpreted to the community. It gives the hospital a good name not only with the reformed drunkard, his family, friends and neighbors; but the whole community can point to something constructive which the hospital has done. These people are seeking truth, in other words, they are thirsting for God.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON ALCOHOLICS CARE IN ST. THOMAS HOSPITAL

QUESTION: Does admission of inebriated patients cause interference with hospital routine?

ANSWER: While patients are admitted under the influence of alcohol, they must be clear enough to acknowledge the fact that alcohol has become a problem in their lives which they cannot solve without help. Patients may be noisy for a short time but they usually respond to treatment and therapy; A.A. patients are frequently less disturbing than the average patient admitted to the hospital.

QUESTION: How is medical and nursing service provided for the patient?

ANSWER: Patients are taken care of by one of the staff men who formerly worked with Doctor Bob and took over during the doctor's illness. He continued the work after Doctor Bob died. The ward is so located that the general duty nurse on the floor takes care of patients and carries out the doctor's orders. The nurses' aide stays about an hour each morning making beds. A member of A.A. is employed in the ward eight hours a day, where his services are invaluable.

QUESTION: How is psychiatric care provided for these patients?

ANSWER: If a patient requires the services of a psychiatrist the family and sponsor are notified and are asked to call a psychiatrist of their own choice or one on the hospital staff. The patient is moved from the A.A. ward and placed according to the advice of the psychiatrist.

QUESTION: What are the charges to the patient for hospitalization?

ANSWER: The approximate charge for a period of five days is \$75. All hospital plans accept A.A.'s since we admit them but once for treatment.

QUESTION: What does the medical treatment consist of?

ANSWER: There is no absolute routine treatment. Each patient is evaluated according to his needs. An attempt is made to obtain from the family or sponsor a medical and personal history concerning the patient. Ideally, it is best for a patient to be admitted after abstinence from alcohol for several days so that he may be given five days of the A.A. program. Most of the time it is necessary to give some medical treatment so that the patient may regain

all his faculties and be responsive to the A.A. treatment.

The following methods, here briefly summarized, have been used and have been found successful, almost routinely:

1. Spirits of frumenti two ounces; Chloral Hydrate two drams - every four hours for 24 hours if necessary. A definite attempt is made to withdraw alcohol completely within 48 hours.
2. Fluids - intravenously.
3. Vitamin B complex - 2 cc daily.
4. Sedation: Sodium Luminol grains two may be given every six hours the first day and sometimes on the second day. It is given hypo-dermically so that the patient does not know that he is receiving a barbiturate. N.B. Barbiturates Are Dangerous to the Alcoholic.

A. HMC No. 1 - We have used HMC several times when the patient becomes quite unruly and craves alcohol constantly. Usually one administration is sufficient.

5. Tolserol: Tolserol is used mostly when there are severe nervous symptoms and the patient complains of inward tension following adequate fluid intake, abstinence from alcohol and adequate diet.

6. Adrenal Cortex: We have had some degree of success with adrenal cortex. We have used the lipotropic cortex - 1 cc every eight hours - first and second day; once daily thereafter during the hospital stay, Cortalex in tablet form may be used after leaving the hospital - two tablets three times daily. The patients state that they have a sense of well-being, following administration of the above, but the cost prohibits routine use when the patient responds to other forms of treatment.

II
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+++Message 360. The Akron Manual - 1940
From: Fiona Dodd 6/24/2002 9:14:00 AM

II
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From: NM Olson

My gratitude to Glenn C. for permission too post this material.

A Manual for Alcoholics Anonymous

THE AKRON MANUAL

1940

Edit. This present text, available for printout at www.iusb.edu/~gchesnut, was formatted for web by Glenn C. (South Bend IN) in January 2002; the editorial notes are his. His text was drawn from one prepared by Barefoot Bob, who scanned the text of an original copy of the pamphlet and reformatted it for web on May 15, 1997; see www.barefootsworld.net/aamannual.html. The original printed version of the manual is no longer published in Akron.

Bob says that this little booklet was written and being distributed within one year of the publication of the Big Book, which would date it to 1940. On the basis of a number of statements made within the text, it certainly could not have been produced much later than that. This pamphlet assumes hospitalization at St. Thomas Hospital under the care of Sister Ignatia and the overall supervision of Dr. Bob as the normal first step in recovery, and gives recommended readings (e.g. the Upper Room for your morning meditation) which dropped out of A.A. practice fairly soon thereafter, but parts of its advice are still very relevant, and it makes very fascinating reading even today. We must assume that Dr. Bob himself (and probably Sister Ignatia too) gave their approval to the statements made in this little booklet.

This is the first half of the manual, containing the most important introductory material. (The second half, which is available at this site as a separate printout, contains a series of assorted thoughts on learning to live the program and a long section on meetings.)

Foreword

This booklet is intended to be a practical guide for new members and sponsors of new members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

TO THE NEWCOMER: The booklet is designed to give you a practical explanation of what to do and what not to do in your search for sobriety. The editors, too, were pretty bewildered by the program at first. They realize that very likely you are groping for answers and offer this pamphlet in order that it may make a little straighter and less confusing the highway you are about to travel.

TO THE SPONSOR: If you have never before brought anyone into A.A. the booklet attempts to tell you what your duties are by your "baby," how you should conduct yourself while visiting patients, and other odd bits of information, some of which may be new to you.

The booklet should be read in conjunction with the large book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Bible, the daily lesson, any other pamphlets that are published

by the group, and other constructive literature. A list of suggestions will be found in the back pages of this pamphlet. It is desirable that members of A.A. furnish their prospective "babies" with this Manual as early as possible, particularly in the case of hospitalization.

The experience behind the writing and editing of this pamphlet adds up to hundreds of years of drinking, plus scores of years of recent sobriety. Every suggestion, every word, is backed up by hard experience.

The editors do not pretend any explanation of the spiritual or religious aspects of A.A. It is assumed that this phase of the work will be explained by sponsors. The booklet therefore deals solely with the physical aspects of getting sober and remaining sober.

A.A. in Akron is fortunate in having facilities for hospitalizing its patients. In many communities, however, hospitalization is not available. Although the pamphlet mentions hospitalization throughout, the methods described are effective if the patient is confined to his home, if he is in prison or a mental institution, or if he is attempting to learn A.A. principles and carry on his workaday job at the same time.

If your community has a hospital, either private or general, that has not accepted alcoholic patients in the past, it might be profitable to call on the officials of the institution and explain Alcoholics Anonymous to them. Explain that we are not in the business of sobering up drunks merely to have them go on another bender. Explain that our aim is total and permanent sobriety. Hospital authorities should know, and if they do not, should be told, that an alcoholic is a sick man, just as sick as a diabetic or a consumptive. Perhaps his affliction will not bring death as quickly as diabetes or tuberculosis, but it will bring death or insanity eventually.

Alcoholism has had a vast amount of nationwide publicity in recent years. It has been discussed in medical journals, national magazines and newspapers. It is possible that a little sales talk will convince the hospital authorities in your community that they should make beds available for patients sponsored by Alcoholics Anonymous.

If the way is finally opened, it is urged that you guard your hospital privileges carefully. Be as certain as you possibly can that your patient sincerely wants A.A.

Above all, carefully observe all hospital rules.

It has been our experience that a succession of unruly patients or unruly visitors can bring a speedy termination of hospital privileges. And they will want no part of you or your patient in the future.

Once he starts to sober up, the average alcoholic makes a model hospital patient. He needs little or no nursing or medical care, and he is grateful for his opportunity.

Definition of an Alcoholic Anonymous: An Alcoholic Anonymous is an alcoholic who through application of and adherence to rules laid down by the organization, has completely foresworn the use of any and all alcoholic beverages. The moment he wittingly drinks so much as a drop of beer, wine, spirits, or any other alcoholic drink he automatically loses all status as a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.

A.A. is not interested in sobering up drunks who are not sincere in their desire to remain completely sober for all time. A.A. is not interested in alcoholics who want to sober up merely to go on another bender, sober up because of fear for their jobs, their wives, their social standing, or to clear up some trouble either real or imaginary. In other words, if a person is genuinely sincere in his desire for continued sobriety for his own good, is convinced in his heart that alcohol holds him in its power, and is willing to admit that he is an alcoholic, members of Alcoholics Anonymous will do all in their power, spend days of their time to guide him to a new, a happy, and a contented way of life.

It is utterly essential for the newcomer to say to himself sincerely and without any reservation, "I am doing this for myself and myself alone." Experience has proved in hundreds of cases that unless an alcoholic is sobering up for a purely personal and selfish motive, he will not remain sober for any great length of time. He may remain sober for a few weeks or a few months, but the moment the motivating element, usually fear of some sort, disappears, so disappears sobriety.

TO THE NEWCOMER: It is your life. It is your choice. If you are not completely convinced to your own satisfaction that you are an alcoholic, that your life has become unmanageable; if you are not ready to part with alcohol forever, it would be better for all concerned if you discontinue reading this and give up the idea of becoming a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.

For if you are not convinced, it is not only wasting your own time, but the time of scores of men and women who are genuinely interested in helping you.

II

TO THE LADIES: If we seem to slight you in this booklet it is not intentional. We merely use the masculine pronouns "he" and "him" for convenience. We fully realize that alcohol shows no partiality. It does not respect age, sex, nor

estate. The millionaire drunk on the best Scotch and the poor man drunk on the cheapest rotgut look like twin brothers when they are in a hospital bed or the gutter. The only difference between a female and a male drunk is that the former is likely to be treated with a little more consideration and courtesy -- although generally she does not deserve it. Every word in this pamphlet applies to women as well as men. -- THE EDITORS

III

A WORD TO THE SPONSOR who is putting his first newcomer into a hospital or otherwise introducing him to this new way of life: You must assume full responsibility for this man. He trusts you, otherwise he would not submit to hospitalization. You must fulfill all pledges you make to him, either tangible or intangible. If you cannot fulfill a promise, do not make it. It is easy enough to promise a man that he will get his job back if he sobers up. But unless you are certain that it can be fulfilled, don't make that promise. Don't promise financial aid unless you are ready to fulfill your part of the bargain. If you don't know how he is going to pay his hospital bill, don't put him in the hospital unless you are willing to assume financial responsibility.

It is definitely your job to see that he has visitors, and you must visit him frequently yourself. If you hospitalize a man and then neglect him, he will naturally lose confidence in you, assume a "nobody loves me" attitude, and your half-hearted labors will be lost.

This is a very critical time in his life. He looks to you for courage, hope, comfort and guidance. He fears the past. He is uncertain of the future. And he is in a frame of mind that the least neglect on your part will fill him with resentment and self-pity. You have in your hands the most valuable property in the world -- the future of a fellow man. Treat his life as carefully as you would your own. You are literally responsible for his life.

Above all, don't coerce him into a hospital. Don't get him drunk and then throw him in while he is semi-conscious. Chances are he will waken wondering where he is, how he got there. And he won't last.

You should be able to judge if a man is sincere in his desire to quit drinking. Use this judgment. Otherwise you will find yourself needlessly bumping your head into a stone wall and wondering why your "babies" don't stay sober. Remember your own experience. You can remember many times when you would have done anything to get over that awful alcoholic sickness, although you had no desire in the world to give up drinking for good. It doesn't take much good health to inspire an alcoholic to go back and repeat the acts that made him sick. Men who have had pneumonia don't often wittingly expose themselves a second time. But an alcoholic will deliberately get sick over and over again with brief interludes of good health.

You should make it a point to supply your patient with the proper literature -- the big Alcoholics Anonymous book, this pamphlet, other available pamphlets, a Bible, and anything else that has helped you. Impress upon him the wisdom and necessity of reading and re-reading this literature. The more he learns about A.A. the easier the road to recovery.

Study the newcomer and decide who among your A.A. friends might have the best story and exert the best influence on him. There are all types in A.A. and regardless of whom you hospitalize, there are dozens who can help him. An hour on the telephone will produce callers. Don't depend on chance. Stray visitors may drop in, but twenty or thirty phone calls will clinch matters and remove uncertainty. It is your responsibility to conjure up callers.

Impress upon your patient that his visitors are not making purely social calls. Their conversation is similar to medicine. Urge him to listen carefully to all that is said, and then meditate upon it after his visitor leaves.

When your patient is out of the hospital your work has not ended. It is now your duty not only to him but to yourself to see that he starts out on the right foot.

Accompany him to his first meeting. Take him along with you when you call on the next patient. Telephone him when there are other patients. Drop in at his home occasionally. Telephone him as often as possible. Urge him to look up the new friends he has made. Counsel and advise him. There was a certain amount of glamour connected with being a patient in the hospital. He had many visitors. His time was occupied. But now that he has been discharged, the glamour has worn off. He probably will be lonely. He may be too timid to seek the companionship of his new friends.

Experience has proved this to be a very critical period. So your labors have not ended. Give him as much attention as you did when you first called on him -- until he can find the road by himself.

Remember, you depend on the newcomer to keep you sober as much as he depends on you. So never lose touch with your responsibility, which never ends.

Remember the old adage, "Two is company and three is a crowd." If you find a patient has one or more visitors don't go into the room. An alcoholic goes to the hospital for two reasons only -- to get sober and to learn how to keep sober. The former is easy. Cut off the alcohol and a person is bound to get sober. So the really important thing is to learn how to keep sober. Experience has taught that when more than three gather in a room, patient included, the talk turns to the World Series, politics, funny drunken incidents, and "I could drink more than you."

Such discussion is a waste of the patient's time and money. It is assumed that

he wants to know how you are managing to keep sober, and you won't hold his attention if there is a crowd in the room.

If you must enter the room when there is another visitor, do it quietly and unobtrusively. Sit down in a corner and be silent until the other visitor has concluded. If he wants any comments from you he will ask for them.

One more word. It is desirable that the patient's visitors be confined to members of Alcoholics Anonymous. Have a quiet talk with his wife or his family before he goes to the hospital. Explain that he will be in good hands and that it is only through kindness to him that his family and friends are asked to stay away. New members are likely to be a little shy. If they find a woman in the patient's room they are not inclined to "let down their hair." The older hands don't mind it, but a new member might unwittingly be kept from delivering a valuable message.

IV

TO THE NEWCOMER: Now you are in the hospital. Or perhaps you are learning to be an Alcoholic Anonymous the "hard way" by continuing at your job while undertaking sobriety.

You will have many callers. They will come singly and in pairs. They may arrive at all hours, from early morning to late night. Some you will like; some you will resent, some will seem stupid; others will strike you as silly, fanatic or slightly insane; some will tell you a story that will be "right down your alley." But remember this -- never for one minute forget it:

Every single one of them is a former drunk and every single one is trying to help you! Your visitor has had the very problems that you are facing now. In comparison with some, your problems are trifles. You have one thing in common with every visitor -- an alcoholic problem. Your caller may have been sober for a week or for half a decade. He still has an alcoholic problem, and if he for one moment forgets to follow any single rule for sober living, he may be occupying your hospital bed tomorrow.

Alcoholics Anonymous is one hundred percent effective for those who faithfully follow the rules. **IT IS THOSE WHO TRY TO CUT CORNERS WHO FIND THEMSELVES BACK IN THEIR OLD DRUNKEN STATE.**

Your visitor is going out of his way, taking up his time, perhaps missing a pleasant evening at home or at the theater by calling on you. His motives are twofold: He is selfish in that by calling on you he is taking out a little more "sobriety insurance" for himself; and secondly, he is genuinely anxious to pass along the peace and happiness a new way of life has brought him. He is also paying off a debt -- paying the people who led him to the path of

sobriety by helping someone else. In a very short time you too will find yourself paying off your debt, by carrying the word to another.

Always bear in mind that your caller not so many days or months ago occupied the same bed you are in today.

And here we might, despite our promise earlier in the booklet, give you a hint on the spiritual phase of Alcoholics Anonymous. You will be told to have faith in a Higher Power. First have faith in your visitor. He is sincere. He is not lying to you. He is not attempting to sell you a bill of goods. A.A. is given away, not sold. Believe him when he tells you what you must do to attain sobriety.

His very presence and appearance should be proof to you that the A.A. program really works. He is extending a helping hand and for himself asks nothing in return. Regardless of who he is or what he has to say, listen to him carefully and courteously. Your alcohol-befuddled mind may not absorb all he says in an hour's conversation, but you will find that when he leaves certain things he has said will come back to you. Ponder these things carefully. They may bring you salvation. It has been the history of A.A. that one never knows where lightning will strike. You may pick up the germ of an idea from the most unexpected source. That single idea may shape the course of your entire life, may be the start of an entirely new philosophy. So no matter who your caller is, or what he says, listen attentively.

Your problem has always seemed to be shared by no one else in this world. You cannot conceive of anyone else in your predicament.

Forget it! Your problem dates back to the very beginning of history. Some long-forgotten hero discovered that the juice of the grape made a pleasant drink that brought pleasant results. That same hero probably drank copiously until he suddenly discovered that he could not control his appetite for the juice of the grape. And then he found himself in the same predicament you are in now -- sick, worried, crazed with fear, and extremely thirsty.

Your caller once felt that he alone in the world had a drinking problem, and was amazed into sobriety when he discovered that countless thousands were sharing his troubles.

He also found out that when he brought his troubles out of their dark and secret hiding place and exposed them to the cleansing light of day, they were half conquered. And so it will be for you. Bring your problems out in the open and you will be amazed how they disappear.

It cannot be repeated too often: Listen carefully and think over at great length.

V

NOW YOU ARE ALONE. When you go to the hospital with typhoid fever your one thought is to be cured. When you go to the hospital as a chronic alcoholic your only thought should be to conquer a disease that is just as deadly if not so quick to kill. And rest assured that the disease is deadly. The mental hospitals are filled with chronic alcoholics. The vital statistics files in every community are filled with deaths due to acute alcoholism.

This is the most serious moment in your life. You can leave the hospital and resume an alcoholic road to an untimely grave or padded cell, or you can start upward to a life that is happy beyond any expectation.

It is your choice and your choice alone. Your newly found friends cannot police you to keep you sober. They have neither the time nor the inclination. They will go to unbelievable lengths to help you but there is a limit to all things.

Shortly after you leave the hospital you will be on your own. The Bible tells us to put "first things first." Alcohol is obviously the first thing in your life. So concentrate on conquering it.

You could have gone through the mechanics of sobering up at home. Your new friends could have called on you in your own living room. But at home there would have been a hundred and one things to distract your attention -- the radio, the furnace, a broken screen door, a walk to the drug store, your own family affairs. Every one of these things would make you forget the most important thing in your life, the thing upon which depends life or death -- complete and endless sobriety. That is why you are in the hospital. You have time to think; you have time to read; you will have time to examine your life, past and present, and to reflect upon what it can be in the future. And don't be in a hurry to leave. Your sponsor knows best. Stay in the hospital until you have at least a rudimentary understanding of the program.

There is the Bible that you haven't opened for years. Get acquainted with it. Read it with an open mind. You will find things that will amaze you. You will be convinced that certain passages were written with you in mind. Read the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew V, VI, and VII). Read St. Paul's inspired essay on love (I Corinthians XIII). Read the Book of James. Read the Twenty-third and Ninety-first Psalms. These readings are brief but so important.

Read Alcoholics Anonymous and then read it again. You may find that it contains your own story. It will become your second Bible. Ask your callers to suggest other readings.

If you are puzzled, ask questions. One of your callers will know the answers. Get your sponsor to explain to you the Twelve Steps. If he is not too certain

about them -- he may be new in this work -- ask someone else. The Twelve Steps are listed in the back of this booklet.

There is no standing still in A.A. You either forge ahead or slip backwards. Even the oldest members, the founders, learn something new almost every day.

You can never learn too much in the search for sobriety.

VI

NOW YOU ARE OUT OF THE HOSPITAL By this time you should know if you want to go along with A.A., or if you want to slip back into that old headache that you called life. You are physically sober and well -- a bit shaky, perhaps, but that will wear off in a short time. Reflect that you didn't get into this condition over night, and that you cannot expect to get out of it in a couple of hours or days.

You feel good enough to go on another bender, or good enough to try a different scheme of things -- sobriety.

You have decided to go along with Alcoholics Anonymous? Very well, you will never regret it.

First off, your day will have a new pattern. You will open the day with a quiet period. This will be explained by your sponsor. You will read the Upper Room, or whatever you think best for yourself. You will say a little prayer asking for help during the day. You will go about your daily work, and your associates will be surprised at you clear-eyed, the disappearance of that haunted look and your willingness to make up for the past. Your sponsor may drop in to see you, or call you on the telephone. There may be a meeting of an A.A. group. Attend it without question. You have no valid excuse except sickness or being out of town, for not attending. You may call on a new patient. Don't wait until tomorrow to do this. You will find the work fascinating. You will find a kindred soul. And you will be giving yourself a new boost along the road to sobriety. Finally, at the end of the day you will say another little prayer of thanks and gratitude for a day of sobriety. You will have lived a full day -- a full, constructive day. And you will be grateful.

You feel that you have nothing to say to a new patient? No story to tell? Nonsense! You have been sober for a day, or for a week. Obviously, you must have done something to stay sober, even for that short length of time. That is your story. And believe it or not, the patient won't realize that you are nearly as much of a tyro as he is. Definitely you have something to say. And with each succeeding visit you will find that your story comes easier, that you have more confidence in your ability to be of help. The harder you work at

sobriety the easier it is to remain sober.

Your sponsor will take you to your first meeting. You will find it new, but inspiration. You will find an atmosphere of peace and contentment that you didn't know existed.

After you have attended several meetings it will be your duty to get up on your feet and say something. You will have something to say, even if it is only to express gratitude to the group for having helped you. Before many months have passed you will be asked to lead a meeting. Don't try to put it off with excuses. It is part of the program. Even if you don't think highly of yourself as a public speaker, remember you are among friends, and that your friends also are ex-drunks.

Get in contact with your new friends. Call them up. Drop in at their homes or offices. The door is always open to a fellow-alcoholic.

Before long you will have a new thrill -- the thrill of helping someone else. There is no greater satisfaction in the world than watching the progress of a new Alcoholic Anonymous. When you first see him in his hospital bed he may be unshaved, bleary-eyed, dirty, incoherent. Perhaps the next day he has shaved and cleaned up. A day later his eyes are brighter, new color has come into his face. He talks more intelligently. He leaves the hospital, goes to work, and buys some new clothes. And in a month you will hardly recognize him as the derelict you first met in the hospital. No whisky in the world can give you this thrill.

Above all, remember this: keep the rules in mind. As long as you follow them you are on firm ground. But the least deviation -- and you are vulnerable.

AS A NEW MEMBER, remember that you are one of the most important cogs in the machinery of A.A. Without the work of the new member, A.A. could not have grown as it has. You will bring into this work a fresh enthusiasm, the zeal of a crusader. You will want everyone to share with you the blessings of this new life. You will be tireless in your efforts to help others. And it is a splendid enthusiasm! Cherish it as long as you can.

It is not likely that your fresh enthusiasm will last forever. You will find, however, that as initial enthusiasm wanes, it is replaced with a greater understanding, deeper sympathy, and more complete knowledge. You will eventually become an "elder statesman" of A.A. and you will be able to use your knowledge to help not only brand new members, but those who have been members for a year or more, but who still have perplexing problems. And as a new member, do not hesitate to bring your problems to these "elder statesmen." They may be able to solve your headaches and make easier your pain.

And now you are ready to go back and read Part III of this booklet. For you are ready to sponsor some other poor alcoholic who is desperately in need of

help, both human and Divine.

So God bless you and keep you.

Yardstick for Alcoholics

THE PROSPECTIVE MEMBER of A.A. may have some doubts if he is actually an alcoholic. A.A. in Akron has found a yardstick prepared by psychiatrists of Johns Hopkins University to be very valuable in helping the alcoholic decide for himself.

Have your prospect answer the following questions, being as honest as possible with himself in deciding the answers. If he answers YES to one of the questions, there is a definite warning that he MAY be an alcoholic. If he answers YES to any two, the chances are that he IS an alcoholic. If he answers YES to any three or more, he IS DEFINITELY an alcoholic and in need of help. The questions:

- Do you lose time from work due to drinking?
- Is drinking making your home life unhappy?
- Do you drink because you are shy with other people?
- Is drinking affecting your reputation?
- Have you gotten into financial difficulties as a result of drinking?
- Have you ever stolen, pawned property, or "borrowed" to get money for alcoholic beverages?
- Do you turn to lower companions and an inferior environment when drinking?
- Does your drinking make you careless of your family's welfare?
- Has your ambition decreased since drinking?
- Do you crave a drink at a definite time daily?
- Do you want a drink the next morning?
- Does drinking cause you to have difficulty in sleeping?
- Has your efficiency decreased since drinking?
- Is drinking jeopardizing your job or business?
- Do you drink to escape from worries or troubles?
- Do you drink alone?
- Have you ever had a complete loss of memory as a result of drinking?
- Has your physician ever treated you for drinking?
- Do you drink to build up your self-confidence?
- Have you ever been to a hospital or institution on account of drinking?

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+++Message 361. The Akron Manual - 1940. Part 2,
From: Fiona Dodd 6/24/2002 9:16:00 AM

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From:NM Olson

Random Thoughts

NOW THAT YOU ARE SOBER, you naturally feel that you want to make restitution in every possible way for the trouble you have caused your family, your friends, others. You want to get back on the job -- if you still have a job -- earn money, pay your immediate debts and obligations of long standing and almost forgotten. Money -- you must have money, you think. And you also want to make restitution in action in many ways not financial. If you could wave a magic wand and do all these things you would do it, wouldn't you?

Well, don't be in a hurry. You can't do all these things overnight. But you can do them -- gradually, step by step. You may safely leave these matters to a Higher Power as you perhaps ponder them in your morning period of contemplation. If you are sincerely resolved to do your part, they will all be adjusted.

"Be still and know that I am God."

SOBRIETY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN YOUR LIFE, without exception. You may believe your job, or your home life, or one of many other things comes first. But consider, if you do not get sober and stay sober, chances are you won't have a job, a family, or even sanity or life. If you are convinced that everything in life depends on your sobriety, you have just so much more chance of getting sober and staying sober. If you put other things first you are only hurting your chances.

YOU AREN'T very important in this world. If you lose your job someone better will replace you. If you die your wife will mourn briefly, and then remarry. Your children will grow up and you will be but a memory. In the last analysis, you are the only one who benefits by your sobriety. Seek to cultivate humility. Remember that cockiness leads to a speedy fall.

IF YOU THINK you can cheat -- sneak a drink or two without anyone else knowing -- remember, you are only cheating yourself. You are the one who will be hurt by conscience. You are the one who will suffer a hangover. And you are the one who will return to a hospital bed.

Bear constantly in mind that you are only one drink away from trouble. Whether you have been sober a day, a month, a year or a decade, one single drink is a certain way to go off on a binge or a series of binges. It is the first drink -- not the second, fifth or twentieth -- that causes the trouble.

And remember, the more A.A. work you do, the harder you train, the less likely

it is that you will take that first drink.

It is something like two boxers. If they are of the same weight, the same strength and the same ability, and only one trains faithfully while the other spends his time in night clubs and bars, it is pretty sure that the man who trains will be the winner. So let attendance at meetings be your road work; helping newcomers your sparring and shadow boxing; your reading, meditation and clear thinking your gymnasium work; and you won't have to fear a knockout at the hands of John Barleycorn.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. -- Matthew VI, 34.

These words are taken from the Sermon on the Mount. Simply, they mean live in today only. Forget yesterday. Do not anticipate tomorrow. You can only live one day at a time, and if you do a good job of that, you will have little trouble. One of the easiest, most practical ways of keeping sober ever devised is the day by day plan, the 24-hour plan.

You know that it is possible to stay sober for 24 hours. You have done it many times. All right. Stay sober for one day at a time. When you get up in the morning make up your mind that you will not take a drink for the entire day. Ask the Greater Power for a little help in this. If anyone asks you to have a drink, take a rain check. Say you will have it tomorrow. Then when you go to bed at night, finding yourself sober, say a little word of thanks to the Greater Power for having helped you.

Repeat the performance the next day. And the next. Before you realize it you will have been sober a week, a month, a year. And yet you will have only been sober a day at a time.

If you set a time limit on your sobriety you will be looking forward to that day, and each day will be a burden to you. You will burn with impatience. But with no goal the whole thing clears itself, almost miraculously.

Try the day by day plan.

Medical men will tell you that alcoholics are all alike in at least one respect: they are emotionally immature.

In other words, alcoholics have not learned to think like adults.

The child, lying in bed at night, becomes frightened by a shadow on the wall,

and hides his head under the covers.

The adult, seeing the same shadow, knows there is a logical reason for it. He sees the streetlight, then the bedpost, and he knows what causes the shadow. He has simply done what the child is incapable of doing -- THOUGHT. And through thinking he has avoided fear.

Learn to think things out. Take a thought and follow it through to its conclusion.

If you are tempted to take a drink, reason out for yourself what will happen. Because if you give serious consideration to the consequences you will have the battle won.

SO YOU'RE DIFFERENT! So you think you are not an alcoholic!

As many Alcoholics Anonymous have gone off the deep end for that kind of thinking as almost all the other reasons combined.

If you have all the symptoms your sponsor will tell you about and that you hear about at meetings, rest assured you are an alcoholic and no different from the rest of the breed.

But don't make the mistake of finding it out the hard way -- by experimenting with liquor. You will find it a painful experience and will only learn that you are NOT different.

AT MEETINGS don't criticize the leader. He has his own problems and is doing his best to solve them. Help him along by standing up and saying a few words. He will appreciate your kindness and thoughtfulness.

DON'T criticize the methods of others. Strangely enough, you may change your own ideas as you become older in sobriety. Remember there are a dozen roads from New York to Chicago, but they all land in Chicago.

WHAT'S YOUR HURRY? Perhaps you don't feel you are getting the hang of this program as rapidly as you should. Forget it. It probably took you years to get in this condition. You certainly cannot expect a complete cure overnight. You are not expected to grasp the entire program in one day. No one else has ever done that, so it certainly is not expected of you. Even the earliest members

are learning something new about sober living nearly every day. There is an old saying, "Easy does it." It is a motto that any alcoholic could well ponder. A child learns to add and subtract in the lower grades. He is not expected to do problems in algebra until he is in high school. Sobriety is a thing that must be learned step by step. If anything puzzles you, ask your new friends about it, or forget it for the time being. The time is not so far away when you will have a good understanding of the entire program. Meantime, EASY DOES IT!

THE A.A. PROGRAM is not a "cure," in the accepted sense of the word. There is no known "cure" for alcoholism except complete abstinence. It has been definitely proved that an alcoholic can never again be a normal drinker. The disease, however, can be arrested. How soon you will be cured of a desire to drink is another matter. That depends entirely upon how quickly you can succeed in changing your fundamental outlook on life. For as your outlook changes for the better, desire will become less pronounced, until it disappears almost entirely. It may be weeks or it may be months. Your sincerity and your capacity for working with others on the A.A. program will determine the length of time.

Earlier in this pamphlet it was advised to keep relatives away from the hospital. The reason was explained. But after the patient leaves the hospital, it would be [useful] to bring the wife, husband, or other close relative to [an A.A.] meeting. It will give them a clearer understanding of the program and enable them to cooperate more intelligently and more closely in the period of readjustment.

DIET AND REST play an important part in the rehabilitation of an alcoholic. For many, we bludgeoned ourselves physically, eating improper foods, sleeping with the aid of alcohol. In our drinking days we ate a bowl of chili or a hamburger sandwich because they were filling and cheap. We sacrificed good food so we would have more money for whiskey. We were the living counterparts of the old joke: "What, buying bread? And not a drop of whiskey in the house!" Our rest was the same. We slept when we passed out. We were the ones who turned out the streetlights and rolled up the sidewalks.

We now find that it is wise to eat balanced meals at regular hours, and get the proper amount of sleep without the unhealthy aid of liquor and sleeping pills. Vitamin B1 (thiamin hydrochloride) or B complex will help steady our nerves and build up a vitamin deficiency. Fresh vegetables and fruits will help.

In fact, it is a wise move to consult a physician, possibly have a complete physical examination. Your doctor will then recommend a course in vitamins, a

balanced diet, and advise you as to rest.

The reason for this advice is simple. If we are undernourished and lack rest we become irritable and nervous. In this condition our tempers get out of control, our feelings are easily wounded, and we get back to the old and dangerous thought processes -- "Oh, to hell with it. I'll get drunk and show 'em."

MANY MEMBERS OF A.A. find it helpful, even after a long period of sobriety, to add an extra ration of carbohydrates to their diet. Alcohol turns to sugar in the body, and when we deprive ourselves of alcohol our bodies cry for sugar. This often manifests itself in a form of nervousness.

Carry candy in your pocket. Keep it in your home. Eat desserts. Try an occasional ice cream soda or malted milk. You may find that it solves a problem by calming your nerves.

Meetings

IT HAS BEEN found advisable to hold meetings at least once a week at a specified time and place. Meetings provide a means for an exchange of ideas, the renewing of friendships, opportunity to review the work being carried on, a sense of security, and an additional reminder that we are alcoholics and must be continuously on the alert against the temptation to slip backward into the old drunken way of life.

In larger communities where there are several groups it is recommended that the new member attend as many meetings as possible. He will find that the more he is exposed to A.A. the sooner he will absorb its principles, the easier it will become to remain sober, and the sooner problems will shrink and tend to disappear.

As a newcomer you will be somewhat bewildered by your first meeting. It is even possible that it will not make sense to you. Many have this experience. But if you don't find yourself enjoying your first meeting, pause to remember that you probably didn't care for the taste of your first drink of whiskey -- particularly if it was in bootleg days.

Again, you may feel like a "country cousin" at your first meeting. Your sponsor should see to it that this is not the case. But even if he neglects his duty, don't feel too badly. Don't be afraid to "horn in." If you are being neglected it is just an oversight, and you are entirely welcome. It is possible that you may not even be recognized because your appearance has changed for the better. In a week or two you will find yourself in the middle of things -- and very likely neglecting other newcomers.

So attend your first meeting with an open mind. Even if you aren't impressed try it again. Before long you will genuinely enjoy attending and a little later you will feel that the week has been incomplete if you have not attended at least one A.A. meeting. Remember that attendance at meetings is one of the most important requisites of remaining sober.

A.A. OF AKRON gets many inquiries about how to conduct a meeting. Methods differ in many parts of the country. There are discussion groups, study groups, meetings where a leader takes up the entire time himself, etc.

Here, briefly, is how meetings are conducted in the dozen or more Akron groups, a method that has been used since the founding of A.A.:

The speaker can be selected from the local group, someone from another group or another city, or on occasion, a guest from the ranks of clergymen, doctors, the judiciary, or anyone who may be of help. In the case of such an outsider, he is generally introduced by the secretary or some other member.

The leader opens the meeting with a prayer, or asks someone else to pray. The prayer can be original, or it can be taken from a prayer book, or from some publication such as *The Upper Room*.

The topic is entirely up to the leader. He can tell of his drinking experiences, or what he has done to keep sober, or he can advance his own theories on A.A. His talk lasts from 20 to 40 minutes, at which time he asks for comment or testimony from the floor.

Just before the meeting closes -- one hour in Akron -- the leader asks for announcements or reports (such as next week's leader, social affairs, new members to be called on, etc.). In closing the entire group stands and repeats the Lord's Prayer. It is courteous to give the speaker enough advance notice so that he may prepare his talk if he so desires.

The physical set-up of groups varies in many cities. Those who are about to start new groups may be interested in the method used by Akron Group No. 1. It is merely a suggestion, however.

When there are but very few members it is customary to hold the meetings in private homes of the members, on the same night of each week. When the group becomes larger, however, it is desirable to hold the meeting in a regular place. A school room, a room in a Y.M.C.A. or lodge, or hotel will do.

It has been the experience throughout the country that the more fluid the structure of the group the more successful the operation.

Akron Group No. 1 has a very simple set-up. There is a permanent secretary, who makes announcements, keeps a list of the membership, and takes care of correspondence. There is also a permanent treasurer, who takes care of the money and pays bills. Then there is a rotating committee of three members to take care of current affairs. Each member serves for three months, but a new one is added and one dropped every month. This committee takes care of providing leaders, supplying refreshments, arranging parties, greeting newcomers, etc.

As the group grows older certain qualifications, in terms of length of sobriety, can be made. Akron Group No. 1 requires a full year of continuous sobriety as qualification to hold an office or serve.

There are no dues. There is a free-will offering at each meeting to take care of expenses.

There is probably an older group in some community within easy traveling distance of yours. Someone from that group will doubtless be happy to help you get started.

The Twelve Steps

Alcoholics Anonymous is based on a set of laws known as the Twelve Steps. Years of experience have definitely proved that those who live up to these rules remain sober. Those who gloss over or ignore any one rule are in constant danger of returning to a life of drunkenness. Thousands of words could be written on each rule. Lack of space prevents, so they are merely listed here. It is suggested that they be explained by the sponsor. If he cannot explain them he should provide someone who can.

THE TWELVE STEPS

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol -- that our lives had become unmanageable.

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. The

Twelve Steps are more fully explained in another pamphlet published in Akron and available through writing to Post Office Box 932. It is called A Guide to the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. The price is 12 cents per copy, 9 cents in lots of 25 to 499, and 7 1/2 cents in lots of 500 or more. Checks or money orders can be made out to A.A. of Akron.

[Edit. This guide is no longer being published by Akron A.A., but we are trying to obtain a copy of it to make available for printout at this website.]

SUGGESTED READING

The following literature has helped many members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Alcoholics Anonymous (Works Publishing Company).

The Holy Bible.

The Greatest Thing in the World, Henry Drummond.

The Unchanging Friend, a series (Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee).

As a Man Thinketh, James Allen.

The Sermon on the Mount, Emmet Fox (Harper Bros.).

The Self You Have to Live With, Winfred Rhoades.

Psychology of Christian Personality, Ernest M. Ligon (Macmillan Co.).

Abundant Living, E. Stanley Jones.

The Man Nobody Knows, Bruce Barron.

Edit. Akron A.A. in 1940 was obtaining a 75% success rate in teaching alcoholics to get sober and stay sober. The techniques, strategies, and principles set out in this manual must be taken very seriously by modern A.A.'s, particularly if your own success rate with newcomers is nowhere near that high.

II

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+++Message 362. The Little Red Book

From: Fiona Dodd 6/24/2002 9:18:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

The following was written by Glenn Chesnut, Ph.D., Indiana University South Bend

It is posted here with permission:

We know a lot about how *The Little Red Book* was put together. That well-known beginners introduction was put together by the Nicollet Group in Minneapolis, Minnesota, which was formed by Barry Collins, Ed Webster, and eleven others in December 1943. Newcomers and their spouses were asked to attend what they called Twelve Step Study Classes before the new people were allowed to become full members of the group. The lectures used for these classes were mimeographed at first. Ed Webster (who later wrote *Stools and Bottles and Our Devilish Alcoholic Personalities*) was probably the principal author.

Then in August 1946, after one of the final drafts was sent to Dr. Bob (who contributed some changes and comments), it was put out in the form of a little book printed by the Coll-Webb Company, and went through many printings during the years that followed. In 1976 Hazelden took over the task of printing and distributing it, so it is still in print today.

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++++Message 363. Talk by Richmond Walker, author of
"Twenty-Four Hours a Day."
From: Fiona Dodd 6/24/2002 9:21:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

Posted with permission of historian Glenn C.

Richmond Walker Speaking in Rutland, Vermont in 1958

The author of *Twenty-Four Hours a Day* tells the story of his own life.

Born Aug. 2, 1892; joined A.A. in May 1942; died Mar. 25, 1965

G.C. The oldtimers in Indiana say over and over again that they got sober on two books: the Big Book and the Twenty-Four Hour book. Phrases and topical advice from both books are sprinkled throughout everything they say when they talk about their own experience of the program, and when they give advice to

newcomers. You can get even more out of the Twenty-Four Hour book after you have read Rich's lead and begin to realize how often he was speaking, particularly in the large print section at the top of each page, about his own personal experiences, both during the years when he was destroying his life through drink, and afterwards in recovery. He joined A.A. in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1942 (only three years after the publication of the Big Book), and taught the early A.A. groups how you carried out the spirit of the eleventh step: "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

Rich finished putting the Twenty-Four Hour book together in 1948, after he had moved down to Daytona Beach, Florida, and at first printed and distributed it on his own. In 1953, he asked the New York A.A. office to take over this task, which had become totally overwhelming (around 10,000 copies a year were being ordered at some points), but Bill W. said they could not do it either. In 1954, Patrick Butler at Hazelden offered to take over this mammoth job to keep the book available.

Richmond Walker:

I was born in Brookline, Massachusetts, when my father and mother lived at 108 Upland Road (although I was not born in this house, but on Irving Street while the house was being built). My father was a lawyer by profession, although he did not practice law but went in for politics most of his active life.

My father's father, Grandfather Walker, lived in Worcester, Massachusetts, when he was first engaged in shoe manufacturing and later became United States congressman from Worcester. He served many years in the U.S. Congress in Washington, D.C., and was known as the Grey Eagle of Lake Quinsigamond, which was the name of a lake near Worcester. My grandfather sold out his business to the United Shoe Manufacturing Company and used this money to build buildings in Worcester, Boston, and Chicago.

My father became manager of the Walker Building in Boston and also spent a lot of time in politics, starting as school committeeman in Brookline, Massachusetts. He was later sent to the Massachusetts state legislature in Boston as a representative from Brookline, and later served as speaker of the house in 1905, 1906, and 1907. He ran for governor on the Republican ticket and later on the Bull Moose ticket, but was defeated both times--he was well-liked by members of the legislature, but he would not have anything to do with political bosses. He was a thoroughly honest politician, serving from a sense of duty and not for financial reward. He was a friend of Republican President William Howard Taft and of President Theodore Roosevelt, as well as many other prominent men.

My mother was born in Providence, Rhode Island, the daughter of a cotton manufacturer, and met my father when he was attending Brown University. They

were married in 1888, and came to live in Brookline, Massachusetts.

My older brother Joseph was the first born, and I was born a year and a half later on August 2, 1892. I always played second fiddle to my brother Joe, who was older, stronger, and better loved than I was. I was a lonesome kid who felt he was not loved enough or appreciated enough by my mother and father. They considered me a problem child, which I was. I showed very little affection for my family. My younger sister Dorothy was born, and died in infancy of diphtheria. Then my young brother George, and my two younger sisters Katharine and Evelyn.

My other brother Joe and I spent our early years in the summer on my Grandfather Walker's farm in New Hampton, New Hampshire. My brother Joe went to Volkman's School in Boston and later to Yale University, where he was graduated in 1913. I went to St. George's School in Newport, Rhode Island, and later to Williams College, where I was graduated in 1914. I finished my college work in three and a half years, and spent the last six months traveling abroad with Mason Garfield--we returned to Williamstown to receive our degrees on June 4, 1914. During the First World War, I served in the Medical Corps and later received a second lieutenant's commission in the Sanitary Corps as adjutant of Evacuation Hospital No. 54. I did not get overseas. My brother Joe served in the Marine Flying Corps. After the war I went into the wool business in Boston with my brother Joe, founding our own business, Walker Top Company, where I worked for thirty years.

When I was thirty years old, on May 8, 1922, I was married to Agnes Nelson of Boston, Massachusetts. We had four children: Hilda (who died), Caroline, John, and David. We lived in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, just outside of Boston, where we had a very nice house built for us by my brother Joe. In 1932 during the depression, we sold this home and moved to Cohasset, Massachusetts, where we bought a house on the water. Here the children were brought up, but I was drinking too much at the time.

After leaving college, and during the war and prohibition, I began to drink quite heavily. My disposition, perhaps due to a rather loveless youth, disposed me to become an alcoholic, but I drank for a long time during which my alcoholism remained dormant. After my marriage, and during the growing up of my children, I drank more than I should have. I consequently missed the companionship I should have had with my wife and children. After about nineteen years of marriage, at the age of [forty]-nine, I became separated from my wife and children. My alcoholism had become evident, and my wife rightly refused to put up with it any longer. (In 1939, I had joined the Oxford Group, and stopped drinking for two and a half years, but after two and a half years I began drinking again. This lasted for a year and a half, and during this time I landed in several hospitals, culminating with [the] separation from my wife and children.)

In 1942 when I was fifty years old--and after thirty years of drinking--I

finally joined Alcoholics Anonymous. I had been separated from my wife for about nine months, but upon my joining A.A., she decided to take me back. I have not had a drink of any kind of intoxicating beverage [since that time]. I have enjoyed a happy married life and the companionship of my children. Joining Alcoholics Anonymous was the best thing I had done in my life since I started drinking at the age of twenty.

The twenty years before I started drinking were good on the whole, except in my early childhood when I was a problem to my parents. But from the time I went away from home to school at St. George's in Newport, Rhode Island--and to college at Williams College--my life could have been considered quite successful. I was captain of the football team at St. George's; also played on the baseball and basketball teams; I was an honor student (next to highest in my class) and won a gold medal for the study of Greek. At Williams, I was also quite successful: I played four years on the football team, was president of my sophomore class, and also president of my graduated class; I was also president of my fraternity Alpha Delta Phi and was well regarded by my classmates. I was serious, and did some work for [the] YMCA at Williams; I thought that those who drank a lot were very foolish. I went through college in three and a half years, and received a magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa key. So my school and college life could be considered as quite successful.

Although well-respected, I did not make class friends. I was wrapped in a cloak of reserve; there was a wall between myself and other people. I did not go halfway to make friends, and there was no love in my life. In fact, true love has always been a mystery to me. As a child I was not loved, and as a result I have never learned to truly love others. I was poorly adjusted to life, being self-contained, egocentric, immature, easily hurt, and overly sensitive.

After I was graduated from college I got in with a drinking crowd, and from the first I found that drinking loosened me up and allowed me to enjoy the company of others--especially drinkers like myself. Soon alcohol became a crutch to me, which enable me to enjoy life: the companionship of girls, parties, football games, and all of my activities.

After the war, I went into the wool business with my brother Joe in Boston. We had a house on Beacon Hill, with a Japanese servant, and we did a lot of entertaining. Although I went to the office every day, I never was much of a businessman--it did not really interest me. But I enjoyed drinking parties and gay times.

After ten years of this gay drinking life, I got married at the age of thirty. Agnes Nelson and I had been on parties together and we were good companions. We eloped and were married at the Little Church Around the Corner in New York. We went to Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire on our honeymoon, then took an apartment in Brookline, Massachusetts. It was not before our first child Hilda was born that our marriage was finally announced to my family. It was part of

my nature to be secretive about most things, and this applied to my marriage. After it was announced however, we were well-received by my family.

My brother Joe, at the time, was building houses in addition to his wool business, and he built us a fine house in Chestnut Hill, Brookline. Here our first three children were brought up in their early youth. We became friends with a family who lived nearby, and together we went on several trips to the West Indies, Havana, and Canal Zone. I was drinking a lot on these journeys, and my alcoholism was becoming more evident as time passed. After we had been married for two years, I bought a summer cottage in Siasconset on Nantucket Island, where we spent our summers. Our friends there were a heavy drinking crowd, and my alcoholism developed rapidly.

In 1932, during the depression, we sold our home in Chestnut Hill and moved to Cohasset, twenty-five miles south of Boston, where we bought a smaller house on the harbor. Here our youngest child David was born, and the older children (Hilda, Carol, and John) were brought up. I continued to take the train to Boston and go to the office, but my heart was not in it.

Hilda died at the age of twelve from spinal meningitis, which she contracted at a summer camp on Cape Cod. My drinking increased measurably: I was arrested three times for drunken driving and landed in several hospitals. I was lying in a hospital when my wife sent a lawyer to tell me she did not want me around any longer. In this she was certainly justified--I was of no use as a husband or father to my children. After leaving the hospital, I went to Nantucket and stayed quite drunk most of the summer. In the fall, I got a room on Beacon Street in Boston where I lived alone. I still went to the office but I was not much use as a businessman. My brother Joe was very broad-minded to put up with me, because I spent much of my time away from the office. (After Hilda's death I had resigned as a partner in the firm; Agnes and I took a trip to Sweden, and upon our return I went back to the office, not as a partner, but as a clerk working on statistics.)

Before my separation from my wife and family, I spent a great deal of my time drinking, except for the two and a half years that I was a member of the Oxford Group (1939, 1941), during which time I did not drink or smoke. It was after I had begun drinking again that I was separated from my wife and family.

While I was drinking alone in the room on Beacon Street in Boston, I became disgusted with my life and suddenly decided I would do something about it. I talked with some members of the Oxford Group, and the next morning, in my lonely room, I prayed to God to show me how to live a better life. I went to Jim's home in Newtonville for two weeks until I had sobered up. (I had heard about Alcoholics Anonymous a year before this, but I had done nothing about it.) I met my wife at my father's funeral, and she took me back on the basis that I would never drink again--I fully believed I never would--but I had a slip, and after one week of drinking, I walked into the A.A. clubroom at 306 Newberry Street in Boston.

At this time I was fifty years old and had been drinking for thirty years. It was in May of 1942, and I have never had a drink of any kind of alcoholic beverage since that time. Since then my life has improved greatly. I get along better with people; I am accepted by my wife and children as a husband and father. I have learned how to live contentedly without liquor, which I no longer need, as the A.A. program has showed me a much better way of living.

I have learned how to go halfway to make a friend, and I enjoy the companionship of other people: other members of Alcoholics Anonymous. I have accepted the fact that I am an alcoholic and can never drink any kind of alcoholic beverage ever again as long as I live. I have recovered my faith in a power greater than myself, which I call God, who can give me the strength I need to face life, and all its ups and downs, without resorting to liquor. I have acquired more insight into my defects of character, and am trying to eliminate the blocks that keep me from a good life, such as fear, worry, resentment, jealousy, impatience, and selfishness. I have begun to understand a little of what love is, especially love for my fellow man, but I still have a long way to go in this respect. I have tried to make amends for the wrongs I have done to people in the past due to my drinking, and I carry no load of guilt for the past.

I am trying to forget the past and not worry about the future, which is in the hands of God. I realize that now--this present moment--is all that I have, and I am trying to live one day at a time, doing the best I can for this twenty-four hours only.

I am also trying to be of service to my fellow man: I have talked with hundreds of alcoholics and have tried to carry the message of the A.A. program. It has been good for me, and has helped me in this way of life. Whether or not I have helped others is in the hands of God--if so, I do not want any credit for the work I do with other alcoholics.

In 1948, I compiled a little book of daily reading for members of Alcoholics Anonymous called Twenty-Four Hours a Day, which has sold so far over 80,000 copies. I have also written and distributed two other pamphlets: For Drunks Only and The Seven Points of A.A., which have had a wide circulation among A.A. members.

I attend two or three A.A. meetings every week (except when I am traveling) and I find that I can never learn enough about the A.A. way of life. I have spoken at hundreds of A.A. meetings, telling my story of what alcohol did to me, and how I found a happy way to live without it. Each meeting I attend, each talk I make, each time I try to help another human being, I am strengthened in this A.A. way of life.

Above all, my faith in the Great Intelligence behind the universe, which can give me all the strength I need to face whatever life has to offer, is the

foundation of my present life. When I die, my body will return to dust. Heaven is not any particular place in the sky, but my intelligence or soul, if it is in the proper condition, will return to the Great Intelligence behind the universe and will blend with that Great Intelligence and be at home again whence it came. My problem, in what is left of my life, is to keep my mind or intelligence in the proper condition--by living with honesty, purity, unselfishness, love, and service--so that when my time comes to go, my passing to a greater sphere of mind will be gentle and easy.

G.C. Richmond Walker is still the second most popular A.A. author in total sales, exceeded only by Bill Wilson. The teaching of Rich's Twenty-Four Hours a Day book was based on the experiences of the A.A. oldtimers in the Boston area during the 1940's, together with the spirituality of the Oxford Group, particularly as represented in God Calling by Two Listeners. This latter book was a set of meditations, edited and published by the famous Oxford Group author A. J. Russell, which had been written by two women under the inspiration of the idea of divine guidance which Russell had talked about in For Sinners Only.

In the fine print section at the bottom of each page of his own book, Rich adapted these Oxford Group ideas for alcoholics and added many helpful suggestions of his own for the struggling alcoholic who was still trying to understand what a meaningful higher power could possibly be.

*NOTE: Foreword by Mel B. (Toledo, Ohio) to 40th Anniv. Edit. of Twenty-Four Hours a Day (1994) gives date and location for this lead.

Distributed as a handout at the Sixth National Archives Workshop at Louisville KY, Sept. 27-30, 2001.

Text taken from the Northern Indiana Archival Bulletin Vol. 4.1 (2001): 1-4, published in South Bend, Indiana under the auspices of the Area 22 Archives Committee (Northern Indiana). Please contact the Michiana Central Service Office, 814 E. Jefferson Ave., South Bend, IN 46617; phone (219) 234-7007, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Mon-Fri; e-mail michianasober@internet.net. Bulletin editor Glenn C., 219 233-7211, South Bend IN.

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+++Message 364. Two Millionth copy of Big Book presented to Joseph A. Califano - 1979.
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/5/2002 10:48:00 AM

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"I am asking all of our federally supported treatment programs to seek out A.A. organizations in the areas they serve, and to work with them so that

recovering alcoholics leaving our programs will be fully aware of the support A.A. stands ready to give. I am directing that in the guidelines for federal grants supporting treatment programs and in the review process that determines the award of these grants, the supporting role of Alcoholics Anonymous be recognized and specific cooperative arrangements be spelled out. (Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Joseph A. Califano, during June 6, 1979, visit to the A.A. General Service Board in New York, where he accepted the two-millionth copy of Alcoholics Anonymous, the A.A. "Big Book" which was presented by Lois Wilson, the widow of Bill Wilson, the cofounder of A.A.)

Source: The Alcoholism Report, June 8, 1979.

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+++Message 365. Early Philadelphia
From: Fiona Dodd 6/24/2002 9:23:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

I found this in the archives office but have no idea who wrote it. Also, it seems almost incomplete since it ends at the bottom of one page, but it's all I found. Take it easy & God bless! Just Love - Barefoot Bill

EARLY PHILADELPHIA

I was introduced to AA in late winter or early spring 1940 by C. Dudley Saul, M.D. Dr. Saul was our family physician and when my drinking reached the critical point in late 1938, my wife, Marie, called him in to see what he could do. It so happened that Dr. Saul had two sons who were alcoholics and had struggled without much success to straighten them out. He told me, "John you're an alcoholic." My reply was, "Yes?" "And," he added, "you are going to die or go crazy." "Is that all?" I asked. "That's all," he replied, "unless you make up your mind never to take a drink again."

I was in an emotional state where I was not inclined to quarrel with his diagnosis or his remedy but what was interesting to me as I looked back on that experience was that in 17 years of drinking Dr. Saul told me for the first time I had ever heard what was wrong with me.

Dr. Saul suggested going to a Turkish bath to get the alcohol out of my system - a mistaken program as we now know but it seemed to make sense. So I sweated at the bath for a couple of days and drank at the doctor's suggestion lots of liquids.

Then I did what we tell AA prospects to do: I called my father, a clergyman who had been sorely grieved by my drinking, and told him that I was going to quit. He was delighted; he said nothing like "it's about time" as might be expected; he came to see me and we had a good talk and cemented the bonds of love which held us together; I called my boss and told him what had happened and he, too, was pleased and told me to take whatever time I needed to get back in shape.

There was no AA in Philadelphia where my home was at the time, but Dr. Saul, in effect had his own group. His patients, and there were others like me, were invited to come by his office (thus reminding ourselves we were sick), say "hello" to him and report on how things were going, and chat with other patients in his waiting room. I've often wondered what Dr. Saul's non-alcoholic patients thought of what was going on.

And so I stayed dry, helping by the expression of confidence by the members of my church (of which father was the pastor) who elected me a Ruling Elder, the highest office a layman can hold in our Presbyterian system. After that there were many times I wanted a drink very badly but although I might have taken one as far as I was concerned or father, or Marie or Dr. Saul were concerned but I just couldn't let those people down who had trusted me.

Early in 1940 Jimmy Burwell came over to Philadelphia from New York and, in effect, brought AA to the city. He got in touch with Dr. Saul and with another physician, Dr. Wiese Hammer and told them about AA. The two doctors were on the staff of St. Luke's & Children's Medical Center and they invited the tiny new AA group to meet at the hospital. What this meant to AA was tremendous; it gave sponsorship and emphasized the AA message, that alcoholics are sick people. And Dr. Saul told me about the new group and advised me to go.

So I went. The first meeting was chaired by a man who had been a member of the Oxford Group, with which I had had unfortunate experiences in school and college. So the next day I told Dr. Saul I wanted none of it. "John," he said, "how many AA meetings have you been to?" I told him, "Only the one, of course." "Well," he replied, "don't be such a mental snob. You go back. You need AA and AA needs you." So I did go back and attend the weekly meetings faithfully.

That was where I met Bill Wilson. He came over to our meetings from New York rather frequently in those early days and helped make the Philadelphia group a success.

I continued in the Philadelphia group until early 1942 when I got a job in Washington and started attending meetings there. I don't recall ever seeing Bill at any of our meetings.

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+++Message 366. Happy Golden Anniv. Philly Area A.A.!
(1990)
From: Fiona Dodd 6/24/2002 9:26:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

Happy Golden Anniversary Philadelphia Area A.A.!

(From the February 1990 "Interviews" Newsletter, An Intergroup Publication
Serving The Counties of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia)

On February 28, 1940, seven ex-drunks met in a room at 22nd and Delancey Streets in Philadelphia. The primary purpose of the gathering was to support the resolve of each of those present not to drink alcohol and to discuss a way of helping others like them to find a way to stay sober. They decided to start an Alcoholics Anonymous group in Philadelphia...Thus begins a success story that - one day at a time - has been repeated for 18,262 days as sober alcoholics help themselves and others to recover from their fatal disease.

Alcoholics Anonymous celebrates fifty years of sobriety in the Philadelphia area in 1990 with a series of anniversary events honoring and continuing a tradition of service to all who suffer from the disease of alcoholism.

The AA group those seven men formed that February day would be the fourth in the country - only New York, Akron and Cleveland had formed earlier meetings. The book Alcoholics Anonymous had been published only a few months before this first Philadelphia organization meeting. Precious copies of the "Big Book" had been hand-carried that February from New York by Jim B., a traveling salesman who had "been dry in the original New York Group for about two years," according to his history of the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous in Philadelphia. Jim had come to this city on a new job two weeks previously and "knew he had to have other alcoholics to work and play with."

During the next fifty years, that one recovering alcoholic's desire to work and play with other recovering people would become an organization called the Philadelphia Intergroup Association of A.A. with over 672 local A.A. groups in the five-county area, and that first meeting would blossom into over 1,200 similar A.A. meetings a week. Along the way, hundreds of thousands of men and women in this area would be saved from lives condemned to end in institutions, prisons or premature death from alcoholism by practicing each day the suggested program for better living of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The Philadelphia A.A. spirit includes many firsts, including the first "complete" clubhouse - with a lunch counter (fall, 1940 at 2036 Sansom); the

first monthly business meeting of an A.A. group (December, 1940); the first Young People's Group (February, 1946); and the establishment of the first private Alcoholic Clinic (June, 1946) at St. Luke's Hospital through the efforts of two Philadelphia physicians who were the earliest medical advisors to endorse A.A. in a national publication (Jack Alexander's famous article in the Saturday Evening Post, 1941). Two traditions in service began within months of the start of A.A. activity in Philadelphia: the establishment of routine Saturday visits to the Philadelphia general Hospital psychiatric unit (then called the "Psychopathic Ward") in April, 1940, and the first visit to the House of Correction at Holmesburg in September, 1940. These commitments to institutions and prisons have been met continuously for the past fifty years and thanks to the efforts of the committees and members of the Philadelphia Area Intergroup Association, long past this Golden Anniversary year.

Philadelphia Intergroup celebrates this history as a legacy of experience, strength, and hope which can be passed on to other suffering and recovering alcoholics for many more years, one day at a time.

The following events will help local A.A.'s mark this important year:

- Share-a-Day - February 18, at St. Joseph's College
- Share-a-Day - February 18, at St. Joseph's University
- Open House - February 10, 311 S. Juniper Intergroup Office
- Round-Up - April 14, 15, 16 at Grand Hotel, Cape May, N.J.
- 55th Int'l. Convention - Seattle, WA.
- 50th Anniversary Meeting & Banquet - to be announced.

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+++Message 367. Philadelphia AA Open Meeting Invitation
Letter (1945)
From: Fiona Dodd 6/24/2002 9:29:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

Alcoholics Anonymous

219 South 36th Street

Philadelphia 4, PA.

BARing 9698

ALCOHOLICS ADJUSTED by ADJUSTED ALCOHOLICS

Open Meeting - September 5, 1945

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS - GERMANTOWN GROUP

Germantown Y.M.C.A. Building

Green St. above Chelton Ave.

8 o'clock P.M.

The purpose of this meeting is to bring to the people of the Germantown - Chestnut Hill districts the works and benefits and experiences of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, that informal society of more than 20,000 ex-alcoholics whose aim is to help other problem drinkers recover their health.

Our members are to be found in more than 525 communities in the United States and Canada, hundreds are in the armed services and thousands - formerly unemployed - in war industries. Large numbers hold responsible executive positions - own their own businesses.

Neither evangelists nor reformers, we regard alcoholism as a sickness. We help ourselves by helping each other. There is no charge for our services because our work is an avocation only. We are self-supporting and the solicitation of funds from outside agencies is strictly prohibited.

We are consulted daily by relatives, friends, doctors, and clergymen who must deal with the alcoholic illness. Many of the leading corporations of this country now refer such problems to us.

May we be of help? For further information you are invited to write ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS - GERMANTOWN GROUP c/o YMCA Building, Green Street above Chelton Avenue and

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND

THE OPEN MEETING

WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 5, 1945 - 8 P.M.

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+++Message 370. Bill Wilson 1949 Letter to Silky
From: Fiona Dodd 6/30/2002 12:27:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

W. G. W.

BOX 459 GRAND CENTRAL ANNEX

NEW YORK 17, N.Y.

December 25, 1949

Dear Doctor:

As no other time does, Christmas reminds us of our friends. None come more quickly to recollection than you and your good wife.

Surely great things have happened since that day fifteen years ago when you said "No, you're not hallucinating - you'd better hold onto what you have"! That saved my life and this is a letter of appreciation from Lois and me. What you have since meant to so many, no one can measure. You are among the first of those without whom A.A. could never have been.

Lois joins me in eternal gratitude.

Bill

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+++Message 371..... Dr. Silkworth on Slips-1
From: Fiona Dodd 6/30/2002 12:48:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

The following was published in the A.A. Grapevine, January 1947. I am grateful to Jim B, our friend in Canada, who has collected much of this material and is so generous in sharing it.

Nancy

SLIPS AND HUMAN NATURE

By William Duncan Silkworth, M.D.

The mystery of slips is not so deep as it may appear. While it does seem odd

that an alcoholic, who has restored himself to a dignified place among his fellowmen and continues dry for years, should suddenly throw all his happiness overboard and find himself again in mortal peril of drowning in liquor, often the reason is simple.

People are inclined to say, *there is something peculiar about alcoholics. They seem to be well, yet at any moment they may turn back to their old ways. You can never be sure.*

This is largely twaddle. The alcoholic is a sick person. Under the technique of Alcoholics Anonymous he gets well -- that is to say, his disease is arrested. There is nothing unpredictable about him any more than there is anything weird about a person who has arrested diabetes.

Let*s get it clear, once and for all, that alcoholics are human beings. Then we can safeguard ourselves intelligently against most slips.

In both professional and lay circles, there is a tendency to label everything that an alcoholic may do as *alcoholic behavior.* The truth is, it is simple human nature.

It is very wrong to consider any of the personality traits observed in liquor addicts as peculiar to the alcoholic. Emotional and mental quirks are classified as symptoms of alcoholism merely because alcoholics have them, yet those same quirks can be found among non-alcoholics too. Actually they are symptoms of mankind!

Of course, the alcoholic himself tends to think of himself as different, somebody special, with unique tendencies and reactions. Many psychiatrists, doctors, and therapists carry the same idea to extremes in their analyses and treatment of alcoholics.

Sometimes they make a complicated mystery of a condition which is found in all human beings, whether they drink whiskey or buttermilk.

To be sure, alcoholism, like every other disease, does manifest itself in some unique ways. It does have a number of baffling peculiarities which differ from those of all other diseases.

At the same time, any of the symptoms and much of the behavior of alcoholism are closely paralleled and even duplicated in other diseases.

The slip is a relapse! It is a relapse that occurs after the alcoholic has stopped drinking and started on the A.A. program of recovery. Slips usually occur in the early states of the alcoholic*s A.A. indoctrination, before he has had time to learn enough of the A.A. techniques and A.A. philosophy to give him a solid footing. But slips may also occur after an alcoholic has been a member of A.A. for many months or even several years, and it is in

this kind, above all, that often finds a marked similarity between the alcoholic*s behavior and that of *normal* victims of other diseases.

No one is startled by the fact that relapses are not uncommon among arrested tubercular patients. But here is a startling fact -- the cause is often the same as the cause which leads to slips for the alcoholic.

It happens this way: When a tubercular patient recovers sufficiently to be released from the sanitarium, the doctor gives him careful instructions for the way he is to live when he gets home. He must drink plenty of milk. He must refrain from smoking. He must obey other stringent rules.

For the first several months, perhaps for several years, the patient follows directions. But as his strength increases and he feels fully recovered, he becomes slack. There may come the night when he decides he can stay up until ten o'clock. When he does this, nothing untoward happens. Soon he is disregarding the directions given him when he left the sanitarium. Eventually he has a relapse.

The same tragedy can be found in cardiac cases. After the heart attack, the patient is put on a strict rests schedule. Frightened, he naturally follows directions obediently for a long time. He, too, goes to bed early, avoids exercise such as walking upstairs, quits smoking, and leads a Spartan life. Eventually, though there comes a day, after he has been feeling good for months or several years, when he feels he has regained his strength, and has also recovered from his fright. If the elevator is out of repair one day, he walks up the three flights of stairs. Or he decides to go to a party -- or do just a little smoking -- or take a cocktail or two. If no serious aftereffects follow the first departure from the rigorous schedule prescribed, he may try it again, until he suffers a relapse.

In both cardiac and tubercular cases, the acts which led to the relapses were preceded by wrong thinking. The patient in each case rationalized himself out of a sense of his own perilous reality. He deliberately turned away from his knowledge of the fact that he had been the victim of a serious disease. He grew overconfident. He decided he didn*t have to follow directions.

Now that is precisely what happens with the alcoholic -- the arrested alcoholic, or the alcoholic in A.A. who has a slip. Obviously, he decides to take a drink again some time before he actually takes it. He starts thinking wrong before he actually embarks on the course that leads to a slip.

There is no reason to charge the slip to alcoholic behavior or a second heart attack to cardiac behavior. The alcoholic slip is not a symptom of a psychotic condition. There*s nothing screwy about it at all. The patient simply didn*t follow directions.

For the alcoholic, A.A. offers the directions. A vital factor, or ingredient

of the preventive, especially for the alcoholic, is sustained emotion. The alcoholic who learns some of the techniques or the mechanics of A.A. but misses the philosophy or the spirit may get tired off following directions -- not because he is alcoholic, but because he is human. Rules and regulations irk almost anyone, because they are restraining, prohibitive, negative. The philosophy of A.A. however, is positive and provides ample sustained emotion -- a sustained desire to follow directions voluntarily.

In any event, the psychology of the alcoholic is not as different as some people try to make it. The disease has certain physical differences, yes, and the alcoholic has problems peculiar to him, perhaps, in that he has been put on the defensive and consequently has developed frustrations. But in many instances, there is no more reason to be talking about *the alcoholic mind* than there is to try to describe something called *the cardiac mind* or the *TB mind.*

I think we'll help the alcoholic more if we can first recognize that he is primarily a human being -- afflicted with human nature.

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+++Message 372. Dr. Silkworth on Slips
From: Fiona Dodd 6/30/2002 12:49:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

"SLIPS"
Do alcoholics suffer from "Alcoholic Behavior" or are they simply victims of human nature?

by the late William D. Silkworth, M.D.

The mystery of slips is not as deep as it may appear. While it does seem odd that an alcoholic who has restored himself to a dignified place among his fellow men, and continued dry for years, should suddenly throw all his happiness overboard and find himself in mortal peril of drowning in liquor - often the reason is very simple.

People are inclined to say, "There is something peculiar about alcoholics. They may seem to be well, yet at any moment they may turn back to their old ways. You can never be sure." This is largely twaddle. The alcoholic is a sick person. Under the technique of Alcoholics Anonymous he gets well, that is to say his disease is arrested. There is nothing unpredictable about him any more than there is anything weird about a person who has arrested

diabetes.

Let's get it clear, once and for all, that alcoholics are human beings just like other human beings - then we can safeguard ourselves intelligently against most of the slips. Both in professional and lay circles there is a tendency to label everything that an alcoholic may do as "alcoholic behavior." The truth is it is simply human nature. It is very wrong to consider many of the personality traits observed in liquor addicts as peculiar to the alcoholic. Emotional and mental quirks are classified as symptoms of alcoholism merely because alcoholics have them, yet these same quirks can be found among non-alcoholics also. Actually they are symptoms of mankind; ORDINARY PEOPLE. Of course, the alcoholic himself tends to think of himself as different, someone special, with unique tendencies and reactions. Many psychiatrists, doctors, and therapists carry the same idea to extremes in their analyses and treatment of alcoholics. Sometimes they make a complicated mystery of a condition which is found in all human beings, whether they drink whiskey or buttermilk.

To be sure, alcoholism, like every other disease, does manifest itself in some unique ways. It does have a number of baffling peculiarities which differ from all other diseases. At the same time, many of the symptoms and much of the behavior of alcoholism are closely paralleled and even duplicated in other diseases.

The alcoholic "slip," as it is known in Alcoholics Anonymous, furnishes a perfect example of how human nature can be mistaken for alcoholic behavior.

"SLIPS" IDENTIFIED

The "slip is a relapse! It is a relapse that occurs after the alcoholic has stopped drinking and started on the AA program of recovery. "Slips" usually occur in the early stages of the alcoholic's AA indoctrination, before he has had time to learn enough of the AA technique and AA philosophy to give him solid footing. But "slips" may also occur after the alcoholic has been a member of AA for many months, or even after several years, and it is in this kind, above all, that one finds a marked similarity between the alcoholic's behavior and "normal" victims of other diseases.

No one is startled by the fact that relapses are not uncommon among arrested tubercular patients. But there is a startling fact - the cause is often the same as the cause which leads to "slips" for the alcoholic. It happens this way: When a tubercular patient recovers sufficiently to be released from the sanitarium, the doctor gives him careful directions for the way he is to live when he gets home. He must be in bed every night by, say, eight o'clock. He must drink plenty of milk. He must refrain from smoking. He must obey other stringent rules. For the first several months, perhaps for several years, the patient follows directions. But as his strength increases and he feels fully recovered, he becomes slack. There may come the night

when he decides he can stay up until ten o'clock. When he does this, nothing untoward happens. The next day he still feels good. He does it again. Soon he is disregarding the directions given him when he left the sanitarium. Eventually he has a relapse.

IN CARDIAC CASES

The same tragedy can be found in cardiac cases. After the heart attack, the patient is put on a strict rest schedule. Frightened, he naturally follows directions obediently for a long time. He, too, goes to bed early, avoids exercise such as walking up stairs, quits smoking, and leads a Spartan life. Eventually, though, there comes a day after he had been feeling good for months, or several years, and has recovered from his fright. If the elevator is out of repair one day, he walks up three flights of stairs. Or he decides to go to a party - or do just a little smoking, or take a cocktail or two. If no serious after-effects follow the first departure from the rigorous schedule prescribed, he may try it again until he suffers a relapse.

In both cardiac and tubercular cases, the acts which led to the relapse were preceded by wrong thinking. The patient in each case rationalized himself out of a sense of his own perilous reality. He deliberately turned away from his own knowledge of the fact he had been the victim of a serious disease. He grew over-confident. He decided he didn't have to follow directions.

Now that is precisely what happens with the alcoholic - the arrested alcoholic, or the alcoholic in AA who has had a "slip." Obviously he decides again to take a drink some time before he actually takes it. He starts thinking wrong before he actually embarks on the course leading to a "slip."

NOT ALCOHOLIC BEHAVIOR

There is no more reason to charge the "slip" to alcoholic behavior than there is to lay a tubercular relapse to tubercular behavior or a second heart attack to cardiac behavior.

The alcoholic "slip" is not a symptom of a psychotic condition. There is nothing "screwy" about it at all. The patient didn't follow directions. And that's human nature! It's life! It's happening all the time, not merely among alcoholics, but among all kinds of people. The preventive is plain. The patient must have full knowledge of his condition, keep in mind the facts of his case and the nature of his disease, and follow orders.

For the alcoholic, AA offers some directions. A vital factor, or ingredient, of the preventive, especially for the alcoholic, is sustained emotion. The alcoholic who learns some of the technique or the mechanics of AA but misses the philosophy or the spirit, may get tired of following directions - not because he is alcoholic but because he is human. Rules and regulations irk almost anyone, because they are restraining, prohibitive, negative. The

philosophy of AA however, is positive and provides ample sustained emotion - a sustained desire to follow directions voluntarily.

PSYCHOLOGY NO DIFFERENT

In any event, the psychology of the alcoholic is not as different as some people try to make it. The alcoholic has problems peculiar to him perhaps, in that he has been put on the defensive and consequently has developed nervous frustrations. But in many instances there is no more reason to be talking about the "alcoholic mind" than there is to try to describe something called the "cardiac mind," or the "TB mind." I think we will help the alcoholic more if we can first recognize that he is primarily a human being - afflicted with human nature.

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+++Message 373. In Remembrance of "Ebby" by Bill
From: Fiona Dodd 6/30/2002 12:55:00 PM

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From:NM Olson

Bill's tribute to Ebby, his sponsor, was printed in the AA Grapevine on June 1966. Again, I hope to thank our friend Jim B. in Canada for this material

Nancy

IN REMEMBRANCE OF *EBBY*

By Bill

In his seventieth year, and on the twenty-first of March, my friend and sponsor "Ebby" passed beyond our sight and hearing.

On a chill 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 Grace 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 kid of rebirth that has since become the most precious possession of each and all of us.

As I looked upon him where he lay in perfect repose, I was stirred by poignant memories of all the years I had known and loved him.

There were recollections of those joyous days in a Vermont boarding school.

After the war years we were sometimes together, then drinking of course. Alcohol, we thought, was the solvent for all difficulties, a veritable elixir for good living.

Then there was that absurd episode of 1929. Ebby and I were on an all-night spree in Albany. Suddenly 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! Forthwith, Ebby routed a pilot friend out of bed, and for a stiff price we engaged him and his small craft. We sent the town fathers a wire announcing the time of our arrival. In midmorning, we took to the air, greatly elated -- and very tight.

Somehow our rather tipsy pilot set us down on the field. A large crowd, including the village band and a welcoming committee, lustily cheered his feat. The pilot then deplaned. But nothing else happened, nothing at all. The onlookers stood in puzzled silence. Where were Ebby and Bill? Then the horrible discovery was made -- we were both slumped in the rear cockpit of the plane, completely passed out! Kind friends lifted us down and stood us upon the ground. Whereupon we history-makers fell flat on our faces. Ignominiously, we had to be carted away. The fiasco could not have been more appalling. We spent the next day shakily writing apologies.

Over the following five years, I seldom saw Ebby. But of course our drinking went on and on. In late 1934 I got a terrific jolt when I learned that Ebby was about to be locked up, this time in a state mental hospital.

Following a serious of mad sprees, he had run his father's new Packard off the road and into the side of a dwelling, smashing right into its kitchen, and just missing a terrified housewife. Thinking to ease this rather awkward situation, Ebby summoned his brightest smile and said, "Well, my dear, how about a cup of coffee?"

Of course Ebby's lighthearted humor was quite lost on everyone concerned. Their patience worn thin, the town fathers yanked him into court. To all appearances, Ebby's final destination was the insane asylum. To me, this marked the end of the line for us both. Only a short time before, my physician, Dr. Silkworth, had felt obliged to tell Lois there was no hope of my recovery; that I, too would have to be confined, else risk insanity or death.

But providence would have it otherwise. It was presently learned that Ebby had been paroled into the custody of friends who (for the time being) had achieved their sobriety in the Oxford Groups. They brought Ebby to New York where he fell under the benign influence of AA's great friend-to-be, Dr. Sam Shoemaker, the rector of Calvary Episcopal Church. Much affected by Sam and the "O.G." Ebby promptly sobered up. Hearing of my serious condition, he had

straight-way come to our house in Brooklyn.

As I continued to recollect, the vision of Ebby looking at me across our kitchen table became wonderfully vivid. As most AAs know, he spoke to me of the release from hopelessness that had come to him (through the Oxford Groups) as the result of self-survey, restitution, outgoing helpfulness to others, and prayer. In short, he was proposing the attitudes and principles that I used later in developing AA's Twelve Steps to recovery.

It had happened. One alcoholic had effectively carried the message to another. Ebby had been enabled to bring me the gift of Grace because he could reach me at depth through the language of the heart. He had pushed ajar that great gate through which all in AA have since passed to find their freedom under God.

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+++Message 374. The A.A. Grapevine, September 1944-
Philip Wylie Jabs A Little Needle Into Complacency
From: Fiona Dodd 6/30/2002 1:00:00 PM

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From: Jim Blair

The early issues of the GV carried a substantial number of articles written by non AAs. Of the earliest was this article by Philip Wylie which caused a "bit of a stir" and Bill W. responded with an article which can be found in "Language of the Heart."

The A.A. Grapevine, September 1944

Philip Wylie Jabs A Little Needle
Into Complacency

An editor of The Grapevine called on me and asked me for a piece. He asked because I recently reviewed a book about a drunk - Charles Jackson's The Lost Weekend. He thought that what I'd said in the review showed I had an interest in alcoholism. I have. The editor didn't know that I am one. I quit solo - by which I mean that no organized group like AA was around to assist or advise. But I had plenty of assistance and expert advice, much of which curiously parallels what I know now about AA. To reach a point where I can say that I am not drinking and have not been drinking for a long time, took years. It took an unconscionable amount of energy. It left me with a few ideas that I'd like to pass along. It left me with a couple of hunches that I'd like to ask about.

The things I did are, maybe, the things that others are doing. I was psychoanalyzed twice. I studied psychology after that - Jungian, Freudian, Alderian, behavioristic. Then I read all the basic religious books. Then I read the philosophies. Then I went to insane asylums and looked at them. Here are some of the ideas that came my way:

One of the "reasons" I had given myself for drinking was that I was then able to do easily a great many things other men could do sober and I could not. So I did them sober. I did everything without a drink that I had done when drunk, excepting for the destructive trouble making ones. Everything. That was useful to me.

I had jitters that there is not the literary skill to describe - though Charles Jackson has come as close as any writer ever did. Every fear, phobia and compulsion entered my head - and not so always just when I was hung over. So I got into the habit - a suggestion of a psychiatrist - of writing down in detail the nature and formidability of these mental distresses. Maybe the fact that I am a writer gave that system special merit. But I found I couldn't endlessly retail the awfulness of my obsessions - sitting perfectly comfortably in a quiet room. On paper - they weren't gigantic and overwhelming. They grew silly. They made me laugh at myself and do deflated themselves.

Dr. Jung himself suggested that I look at a few asylums. I don't know why until I made the visit. Then it became evident to me that the inmates were not like me at all. Thus I got to know that my alcoholism was not the onslaught of insanity - and I got to know I had been subconsciously afraid of precisely that.

The Jungians, incidentally, give a different name to the "religious experience" which you discuss in AA. They arrive at that "experience" by different methods - methods which conform to their scientific psychological technique. They call the spiritual quantum which gives rise to the experience a "transcendent symbol." Naturally, I haven't room to describe the method here: it would take more than this magazine - a book perhaps. But, whether you call it a religious experience or a transcendent symbol does not matter - and it may be of interest to alcoholics who are semi-knowingly engaged in protesting formal, churchly "religions" to learn that there are thoroughly abstract, non-religious routes to the same, universal, human contact with inner integrity, truth, and the "nature of nature itself."

Of course, I read everything about alcoholism I could find. And I became interested in the care and condition of alcoholic friends. Among them I noticed two who still make me wonder about the possible relationship of epilepsy to alcoholism in some cases. These two friends of mine had had fits. They both had the epileptic "picture" on the electroencephalogram. The new drugs that avert or postpone epileptic attacks seemed to aid these two men in stopping their alcohol addiction. I know that if I were a doctor - and an alcoholic - I'd investigate this special aspect of the puzzle thoroughly. The possible future values of chemistry should not be overlooked by any of us in the presence of the proved value of psychological and philosophical regeneration.

I also have a hunch that insanities, neuroses, and all other aberrations vary largely with the passing of centuries. Alcoholism too. I do not believe people in the main were exactly the same sort alcoholics and for the same reason in 1700 as in 1944. That is to say, I believe such conditions of the soul are "as if" epidemic - and definitely of a social causation. That is what especially interests me about AA: it represents to me the first really effective effort to deal in kind and in scale and in the right category, with alcoholism.

Philip Wylie

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++++Message 375. 1940s northwest Illinois A.A.
From: Fiona Dodd 6/30/2002 1:08:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

The following was received from Rick T, the Area 20 Archivist. He has given me permission to post it.

Nancy

A.A. in Illinois, northwest and west of Chicago, grew in the early 1940s due to the efforts of members who would be called "Loners" today. In one town located on the Rock River in Whiteside County (about 60 miles east of the Mississippi River), Ken S. of Sterling, Illinois, began an A.A. group in the winter of 1943 that first met in his home with three local members. Ken had gotten sober in Chicago in 1940 and soon moved to Sterling, employed as a foreman with a steel wire manufacturer. For three years he regularly made Chicago meetings and brought local "prospects" to Chicago's "Big Meeting" on Tuesday nights. The traveling, either by car or train, was probably an all-day affair for the long trip across the state.

Ken S. is considered the earliest member, within the current Northern Illinois Area 20 boundaries, to carry the A.A. message in Illinois west of Chicago. His name was listed with Alcoholic Foundation directories from 1943 on, and he also kept up his correspondence with the Chicago Central Office (currently the Chicago Area Service Office, which has the distinction of being the first "Intergroup-type" office of early 1941 and today serves as the Area 19 office).

As groups grew in early A.A., the Sterling Group moved out of Ken's home within a short time, and is credited with branching out and starting groups in

a half dozen towns in northwestern Illinois and eastern Iowa. It appears that keeping the linkage with the rest of A.A. was key to the group's success. Ken, as Secretary for the Sterling Group, was the contact for correspondence and twelfth step work.

The group still meets on Tuesday nights.

The following piece was written by Ken S. in 1943 as the last page of a six-page observation on his A.A. recovery. It was placed in the Area 20 Archives in 1995 as a result of research for the Area's history project.

"An Alcoholics Anonymous History in Northern Illinois Area 20" is published and copyrighted 1996 by NIA, Ltd. and the piece is used with permission.

Ken S.' writing reflects the style of 1940's Alcoholics Anonymous members, and it's shared with "aahistorybuffs" from the Appendix of the 100-page booklet.

Please respect the copyright and list the source if any group member chooses to print it elsewhere, "used with permission."

The history will be placed on the Area's web site before the end of the year, but before then, feel free to link to the site: <http://www.aa-nia.org>.

Right now the booklet is considered as "out of print," and a reason to place it on the web site, to pass it on.

My belief is that Ken S.' observations are as valid today as fifty-seven years ago!

Yours in the Fellowship,
Rick T., Area 20 Archivist

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April 24, 1943...

What have we learned as we passed through the various stages of A.A. absorption?

What are the things that make today so worthwhile?

What has been given us for future guidance?

FIRST, that through God's guidance and Grace, it is possible to live in perfect sobriety, enjoying a greater than normal share of happiness and understanding.

SECOND, that in God we have an ever available haven when troubled or goaded by fear or despair -- an ever ready guidance, if we but seek a willingness to follow.

THIRD, that the spirit of God is an ever-present force, understanding, forgiving, loving, and guiding those who seek direction and try to live in accordance with his teachings -- teachings upon which is founded our A.A. program of Faith, Tolerance, Humility, and Service.

FOURTH, we have learned, too, that the program so simply stated provides a straight and undeviating pathway to our goal. We need no further guides, guards, bosses, or directors. The way is open, it's up to us.

FIFTH, that the program goes beyond meetings -- beyond our own little alcoholic world and our homes, when practiced in all our affairs.

SIXTH, we are awakened to a realization that we have and must assume obligations and responsibilities -- that we owe so much and can repay so little.

SEVENTH, we find that work is the motivating power of our lives. It vitalizes Faith, produces accomplishment. Dryness without work is hunger partially satisfied -- Faith without work spells failure.

EIGHTH, we acknowledge that the rights of others must be considered first. There is little danger that we shall forget to look to our own.

NINTH, we also find that the "I and We" judge and jury attitude has no place in a program of humility.

TENTH, that resentments include more than well nursed grudges of long standing. The word has many synonyms including: anger, animosity, irascibility, and wrathful indignation.

ELEVENTH, we have found that one of the hardest tasks is to be unselfishly truthful to ourselves, and we have seen truth reborn in the statements and actions of fellow members.

TWELFTH, and most important, we have discovered a capacity for true thankfulness, for the innumerable things large and small that are our daily lot.

So, with meditation on past and present, we move on through life, secure in the admonition to look up to where there is an intelligence from which comes all intellect -- recognize the source which sustains us and gives us courage and self-reliance.

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+++Message 376. Bill W. on Emotional Sobriety
From: Fiona Dodd 6/30/2002 1:17:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

The following is an article from the Grapevine, January 1958. The letter was probably written a few years before it appeared in the Grapevine.

Nancy

The Next Frontier
EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY

(This article is the substance of a letter Bill wrote to a close friend who also had troublesome depressions.)

I think that many of our oldsters who have put our A.A. booze cure to severe but successful tests still find they often lack emotional sobriety. Perhaps they will be the spearhead for the next major development in A.A. -- the development of much more real maturity and balance (which is to say, humility) in our relations with ourselves, with our fellows and with God.

Those adolescent urges that so many of us have for top approval, perfect security, and perfect romance -- urges quite appropriate to age seventeen -- prove to be an impossible way of life when we are at age forty-seven or fifty-seven.

Since A.A.began, I've take immense wallops in all these areas because of my failure to grow up, emotionally, and spiritually. My God, how painful it is to keep demanding the impossible, and how very painful to discover finally, that all along we have had the cart before the horse! Then comes the final agony of seeing how awfully wrong we have been, but still finding ourselves unable to get off the emotional merry-go-round.

How to translate a right mental conviction into a right emotional result, and so into easy, happy, and good living -- well, that's not only the neurotic's problem, it's the problem of life for all of us who have got to the point of real willingness to hew to right principles in all our affairs.

Even then, as we hew away, peace and joy, will still elude us. That's the place so many of us A.A. oldsters have come to. And, it's a hell of a spot, literally. How shall our unconscious -- from

which so many of our fears, compulsion and phony aspirations still stream -- be brought into line with what we actually believe, know, and want! How to convince our dumb, raging and hidden "Mr. Hyde" becomes our main task.

I've recently come to believe that this can be achieved, I believe so because I begin to see many benighted ones -- folks like you and me -- commencing to get results. Last autumn, depression, having no really rational cause at all, almost took me to the cleaners. I began to be scared that I was in for another long chronic spell. Considering the grief I've had with depressions, it wasn't a bright prospect.

I kept asking myself, "Why can't the Twelve Steps work to relieve depression?" By the hour, I stared at the St. Francis Prayer . . . "It's better to comfort than to be comforted." Here was the formula, all right. But why didn't it work?

Suddenly I realized what the matter was. My basic flaw had always been dependence -- almost absolute dependence -- on people or circumstances to supply me with prestige, security and the like. Failing to get these things according to my perfectionist dreams and specifications, I had fought for them. And when defeat came, so did my depression.

There wasn't a chance of making the outgoing love of St. Francis a workable and joyous way of life until these fatal and almost absolute dependencies were cut away.

Because I had over the years undergone a little spiritual development, the ABSOLUTE quality of these frightful dependencies had never before been so starkly revealed. Reinforced by what grace I could secure in prayer, I found I had to exert every ounce of will and action to cut off these faulty, emotional dependencies upon people, upon A.A., indeed, upon any set of circumstances whatsoever. Then only could I be free to love, as Francis had. Emotional and instinctual satisfaction, I saw, were really the extra dividends of having love, offering love, and expressing a love appropriate to each relationship of life.

Plainly, I could not avail myself of God's love until I was able to offer it back to Him by loving others as He would have me. And I couldn't possibly do that so long as I was victimized by false dependencies.

For my dependency meant demand -- a demand for the possession and control of the people and the conditions surrounding me.

While these words "absolute dependency" may look like a gimmick, they were the ones that helped me to trigger my release into my quietness of mind, qualities which I am now trying to consolidate by offering love to others regardless of the return to me.

This seems to be the primary healing circuit; an outgoing love of God's creation and His people, by means of which we avail ourselves of His love for us. It is most clear that the real current can't flow until our paralyzing dependencies are broken, and broken at depth. Only then can we possibly have a glimmer of what adult love really is.

Spiritual calculus, you say? Not a bit of it. Watch any A.A. of six months working with a new Twelfth Step case. If the case says, "To the devil with you," the Twelfth Stepper only smiles and turns to another case. He doesn't feel frustrated or rejected. If his next case responds, and in turn starts to give love and attention to other alcoholics, yet gives none back to him, the sponsor is happy about it anyway. He still doesn't feel rejected; instead he rejoices that his one time prospect is sober and happy. And if his next following case turns in later time to be his best friend (or romance) then the sponsor is most joyful. But he well knows that his happiness is a by-product -- the extra dividend of giving without any demand for a return.

The really stabilizing thing for him was having and offering love to that strange drunk on his doorstep. That was Francis at work, powerful and practical, minus dependency and minus demand.

In the first six months of my own sobriety, I worked hard with many alcoholics. Not a one responded. Yet this work kept me sober. It wasn't a question of those alcoholics giving me anything. My stability came out of trying to give, not out of demanding that I receive.

Thus I think it can work out with emotional sobriety. If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling demands. Then we can be set free to live and love; we may then be able to Twelfth Step ourselves -- and others into emotional sobriety.

Of course, I haven't offered you a really new idea -- only a gimmick that has started to unhook several of my own "hexes" at depth. Nowadays my brain no longer races compulsively in either elation, grandiosity, or depression. I have been given a quiet place in bright sunshine.

January 1958

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+++Message 377. Early Pamphlets
From: Fiona Dodd 6/30/2002 1:27:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

I received these texts of early pamphlets from a member of AA History Lovers.

Nancy

NIGHT PRAYER

God forgive me where I have been resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid today.

Help me to not keep anything to myself but to discuss it all openly with another

person - show me where I owe an apology and help me make it. Help me to be kind and loving to all people. Use me in the mainstream of life God. Remove worry, remorse or morbid (sick) reflections that I may be of usefulness to others.

AMEN (p. 86 BB)

MORNING PRAYER

God direct my thinking today so that it be divorced of self pity, dishonesty, self-will, self-seeking and fear. God inspire my thinking, decisions and intuitions. Help me to relax and take it easy. Free me from doubt and indecision.

Guide me through this day and show me my next step. God give me what I need to take care of any problems. I ask all these things that I may be of maximum service to you and my fellow man in the name of the Steps I pray. AMEN (p. 86 BB)

And here are a couple old pamphlets:

AA MORNINGS

On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially

asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives.

Under these conditions we can employ our mental faculties with assurance, for after all God gave us brains to use. Our thought-life will be placed on a much

higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives.

In thinking about our day we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while.

What used to be the hunch or the occasional inspiration gradually becomes a

working part of the mind. Being still inexperienced and having just made conscious contact with God, it is not probable that we are going to be inspired at all times. We might pay for this presumption in all sorts of absurd actions and ideas. Nevertheless, we find that our thinking will, as time passes, be more and more on the plane of inspiration. We come to rely upon it. We usually conclude the period of meditation with a prayer that we be shown all through the day what our next step is to be, that we be given whatever we need to take care of such problems. We ask especially for freedom from self-will, and are careful to make no request for ourselves only. We may ask for ourselves, however, if others will be helped. We are careful never to pray for our own selfish ends. Many of us have wasted a lot of time doing that and it doesn't work. You can easily see why. If circumstances warrant, we ask our wives or friends to join us in morning meditation. If we belong to a religious denomination which requires a definite morning devotion, we attend to that also. If not members of religious bodies, we sometimes select and memorize a few set prayers which emphasize the principles we have been discussing. There are many helpful books also. Suggestions about these may be obtained from one's priest, minister, or rabbi. Be quick to see where religious people are right. Make use of what they offer. As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done." We are then in much less danger of excitement, fear, anger, worry, self-pity, or foolish decisions. We become much more efficient. We do not tire so easily, for we are not burning up energy foolishly as we did when we were trying to arrange life to suit ourselves. It works - it really does. We alcoholics are undisciplined. So we let God discipline us in the simple way we have just outlined. But this is not all. There is action and more action. "Faith without works is dead."
(from "Alcoholics Anonymous pg. 86-88)

(A QUICK NOTE-- sometime between the 10th printing in 1971 and the 29th printing in 1985, the "12 & 12" was retypeset so the page numbers are no longer the same. My copy of this pamphlet has page numbers coinciding with the 10th printing. That kinda indicates how long it has been floating around the fellowship. I include both sets of page numbers here for the sake of accuracy (current version / older version).

AA NIGHTS

When we retire at night, we constructively review our day. Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid? Do we owe an apology? Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another person at once? Were we kind and loving toward all? What could we have done better? Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time? Or were we thinking of what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life? But we must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others. After making our review we ask God's forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken.

(from "Alcoholics Anonymous pg. 86)

EXCERPTS FROM 12 & 12

And when we turn away from meditation and prayer, we likewise deprive our minds, our emotions, and our intuitions of vitally needed support. (p. 97 in 29th printing/ p. 100 in 10th printing) One of its first fruits is emotional balance.

With it we can broaden and deepen the channel between ourselves and God as we understand Him. (p. 101-2 / 104) But its object is always the same: to improve our conscious contact with God, with His grace, wisdom, and love. (p. 101 / 104)

As the day goes on, we can pause where situations must be met and decisions made, and renew the simple request: "Thy will, not mine, be done." If at these points our emotional disturbance happens to be great, we will more surely keep our balance, provided we remember, and repeat to ourselves, a particular prayer or phrase that has appealed to us in our reading or meditation. Just saying it over

and over will often enable us to clear a channel choked up with anger, fear, frustration, or misunderstanding, and permit us to return to the surest help of all - our search for God's will, not our own, in the moment of stress. (p. 102-3 /

105) In A.A. we have found that the actual good results of prayer are beyond question. They are matters of knowledge and experience. All those who have persisted have found strength not ordinarily their own. They have found wisdom beyond their usual capability. And they have increasingly found a peace of mind

which can stand firm in the face of difficult circumstances . . . We discover

that
we do receive guidance for our lives to just about the extent that we stop
making
demands upon God to give it to us on order and on our terms. (p. 107 / p.
104) . .
. Any experienced A.A. will tell how his affairs have taken remarkable and
unexpected turns for the better as he tried to improve his conscious contact
with
God...new lessons for living were learned, new resources of courage were
uncovered, and that finally, inescapably, the conviction came that God does
"move in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." (p. 104-5 / 107)

SOUGHT THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION TO IMPROVE OUR CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH
GOD ... PRAYING ONLY FOR HIS WILL AND THE POWER TO CARRY THAT OUT.

HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING ... WE TRIED TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN
ALL
OUR AFFAIRS.

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+++Message 378. MATTHEW J. ROSE
From: Fiona Dodd 6/30/2002 1:29:00 PM

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From: NM Olson

Matt Rose is one of my heroes, one who, following his recovery from
alcoholism, made a significant contribution to the field of alcoholism.

He was born and raised in the Buffalo, New York, area, and graduated from the
University of Buffalo in 1933. In 1934, he went to work for the U.S.
Government in Washington, D.C. a career that would span the next forty years.

Matt arrived in D.C. in the early days of President Franklin Roosevelt's New
Deal. He first worked for the Committee on Economic Security, then for the
Works Program Administration (WPA). When World War II began Matt moved to
the War Production Board, and at the end of the war went to Japan for five
years working on economic aid to that country.

In the 1950's Matt's drinking caused him to lose his government job and he
started a business venture which failed because of his drinking.

Finally, in 1958, Matt entered AA and began his recovery from alcoholism. He
returned to government service with the Census Bureau. After several moves

to other government jobs, Matt began working for the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), part of President Johnson's War on Poverty.

This is where he was working when I first met him and his wife, Christine, in 1967. He immediately impressed me as a modest, gentle, humble person, one not eager for the spotlight, but content to work quietly and let others take the credit.

He had a shock of white hair, and a kind face which showed that he was one who had known suffering. When he spoke at AA meetings, which was rarely, he simply shared his experience, strength and hope, never mentioning his many contributions to the field of alcoholism.

Soon after Senator Harold Hughes entered the Senate in 1969, Matt visited him and told him that the OEO authorizing legislation would soon come up for renewal in the Senate, and said he thought it would be a good idea if Hughes tried to amend the bill -- which was in the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare on which Hughes served -- to earmark funds for alcoholism.

This was brave of Matt. It could have cost him his job. The Nixon Administration was adamant that no federal employees, except official lobbyists for the government, could visit Capitol Hill to try to influence legislation.

Hughes liked Matt's idea, and took it to Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, who chaired the Employment, Manpower and Poverty Subcommittee, on which Hughes also served, and which had jurisdiction over the OEO bill.

The Rose Amendment -- as I like to call it -- to the OEO bill was part of the package reported from the committee to the full Senate. During the October 14, 1969, debate on the bill, Chairman Yarborough described it like this:

Mr. President, another significant outcome of our study of the OEO program is the recommendation that a new national program of alcoholism counseling and recovery be undertaken in conjunction with the war on poverty. Small authorizations of \$10 million in 1970 and \$15 million in 1971 are included to get this effort underway. Such an addition is necessary if the assistance provided through the other programs is to have any effect on those families suffering the ravaging effects of alcoholism. It is clear that a worker, a housewife, a family cannot fully benefit from services provided by OEO or community agencies if each step forward is to be canceled out by debilitating effects of alcoholism or problem drinking.

This amendment passed the Senate during the brief period when I was still a volunteer on Hughes's staff and holding down another full-time job. But when I was appointed to the staff of the Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Narcotics a few weeks later, Matt came to my office and gave me a full briefing on the OEO legislation. When I later thanked him, and told him how helpful the

briefing had been, Matt smiled gently and replied: I believe in educating my friends.

Matt Rose had responsibility for the earmarked alcoholism funds at OEO and he put them to good use. When President Nixon abolished OEO, almost 200 grants serving residents of low income areas, American Indians, and Alaskan natives were transferred to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, which by that time had been created by the law introduced by Senator Hughes, the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970.

But the grants from OEO were the first federal grants for services to persons with alcohol problems and provided primarily outreach and linking services or outpatient care or both. The poverty grant program became the largest of NIAAA's special population categorical program areas. They were transferred because they were seen as the group least likely to continue to receive funding when categorical grants were discontinued, because their approach was not consistent with the treatment approach favored by state or third-party funders.

Many of the counselors who worked in these programs had no professional training. Most of them, however, had developed impressive skills in working with alcoholics and other addicted people as a result of their experience in Alcoholics Anonymous and other 12 Step programs. So Matt Rose also established five training regions in New Jersey, Louisiana, California, Utah and Illinois.

Matt retired from government service and, in 1973, he began talking with former colleagues in the OEO program and others throughout the country who were forming state counselors associations. In 1974 he formally chartered the National Association of Alcoholism Counselors and Trainers (NAACT), the forerunner of what is now the National Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (NAADAC).

For the next three years, Matt served as Executive Director of NAAC, operating from his home in Arlington, Virginia, on a shoestring budget and drawing no salary for his services.

When the Finger Panel began studying the issue of national credentialing for alcoholism counselors in 1975, Matt was named to that group.

He remained as NAAC's Executive Director until 1977. When he retired a dinner was held in his honor. Senator Hughes, who could not be there, sent a warm congratulatory message to Matt, acknowledging his many contributions to the field of alcoholism.

Matt was only one of many who worked humbly and quietly to enhance the lives of alcoholics. But he was one I knew and loved, and who today, sadly, is

remembered by few.

II
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++++Message 380. Judge Bars Statements Made in A.A.
From: Fiona Dodd 6/30/2002 1:33:00 PM

II
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From:NM Olson

The New York Times
Metro Section
B1

AUG 02, 2001
Judge Bars Statements Made in A.A.
By DANIEL J. WAKIN

A federal judge has ruled that conversations between members of Alcoholics Anonymous have the same sort of privilege as contacts between clerics and parishioners, and has overturned the conviction of a man who killed two people in Larchmont, N.Y., 13 years ago.

The judge, Charles Brieant of United States District Court in White Plains, cited previous cases in which courts had found that the authorities could not force prisoners or people on probation to attend A.A. meetings.

Those courts ruled that such a requirement would violate the separation of church and state.

Since courts have found that A.A. is a religion for the purpose of church-state separation, the judge wrote, they must also hold that "disclosures of wrongs to fellow members as ordained by the 12 steps" of the A.A. program qualify as "a privilege granted to other religions similarly situated."

He ordered the release, once appeals are exhausted, of Paul Cox, who is serving a 16 2/3-year sentence for the 1988 killings of Dr. Shanta Chervu and her husband, Dr. Lakshman Rao Chervu.

The couple lived in the house that Mr. Cox, now 33, grew up in. He contended that he committed the killings while suffering from an alcoholic blackout.

One expert on confidentiality and the law, Paul N. Samuels, director of the Legal Action Center in New York, said it was the first case he knew of that

extended confidential privileges to A.A. meetings, and a rare decision extending the religious privilege beyond a clergy member.

The case went unsolved for four years, until members of Mr. Cox's A.A. group - which he joined after the killings - came forward to say that he had told them he thought he might have committed the crimes. Several of those A.A. members testified at his trial.

The case, which received national attention, spoke to the fundamental tension that arises when the law crosses paths with private discussions. Although the rules of privilege vary from state to state, they generally apply to lawyer and client, cleric and penitent, husband and wife.

The rules have shifted somewhat. Some courts have extended privilege to parent and child under certain circumstances, and others have reduced it between spouses when one of them is guilty of a killing and someone else has been charged, said Jack Friedenthal, a law professor at George Washington University.

Judge Briant's decision, which was released Tuesday, "just seems so bizarre," the professor said, "because A.A., as far as I know, is not a religious organization. You're certainly not confiding in someone for religious advice, or for spiritual forgiveness."

Legal experts said that the ruling, if it stands on appeal, would probably have little effect outside New York State.

The children of the Chervus reacted with anger.

"We're just revisiting this stuff over and over again," said Dr. Arun Chervu, the couple's son. "That's the real frustration. I guess the other part of it is, we feel that in many ways he already got away with a much lighter sentence than he deserved for killing two people."

The Westchester County district attorney, Jeanine F. Pirro, said she would appeal the decision.

"This is the first time I've heard in 25 years in law enforcement and on the bench that A.A. meetings are equivalent to a priest-penitent meeting or a psychiatrist-patient discussion," she said, noting that the State Legislature has not established a privilege for an A.A.-type program.

Further, Ms. Pirro pointed out that the conversations took place privately, outside of a meeting.

But that does not matter, said Mr. Cox's lawyer, Robert N. Isseks of Middletown, N.Y.

"The salient fact is that the statements were made within a religious context with the understanding that the communication would remain confidential," he said.

Mr. Isseks represented the clients in the two cases that Judge Brieant used to support his ruling.

In one, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit found that the Probation Department in Orange County, N.Y., could not force a man convicted of driving while intoxicated to attend A.A. meetings, because of the "religious nature of the 12 steps" in the program, as Judge Brieant put it.

In the other case, the New York State Court of Appeals held that the prison system could not force an inmate to follow the 12 steps as a condition of winning a privilege. Judge Brieant said it ruled that "adherence to the A.A. fellowship entails engagement in religious activity and religious proselytization."

Judge Brieant also found that by admitting the A.A. members' statements at Mr. Cox's trial, the trial court was effectively giving the program a lower status than religions in which the privilege existed, and thus violating the Constitution's equal- protection clause, Mr. Isseks said.

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++++Message 381. Possibly the 1st AA Pamphlet
From: Fiona Dodd 6/30/2002 6:08:00 PM

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From William Lash

THE FIRST "A.A." PAMPHLET

AS DERIVED FROM THE SERIES

OF ARTICLES FROM THE

HOUSTON PRESS

BY

LARRY JEWELL*

(April 1940)

*Larry Jewell came to Houston from Cleveland with only a Big Book and a Spiritual Experience resulting from having taken the Steps while hospitalized. His Sponsors were Dr. Bob Smith & Clarence Snyder. He had not attended an A.A. meeting before coming to Houston.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS is an informal society of ex-alcoholics who aim to help fellow problem drinkers recover their health.

Rapidly growing, now numbering about 8000, our Fellowship is spreading throughout the country. The first member recovered seven years ago. Strong chapters, over one hundred alcoholic men and women each, are to be found in Cleveland, Ohio--Akron, Ohio--New York City. Vigorous beginnings have been made in Los Angeles. Baltimore, Milwaukee, Kansas City, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Washington D. C., St. Louis, and Houston, Texas.

We of A.A. believe that two-thirds of our number have already laid the foundation for permanent recovery. More than half of us have had no relapse at all despite the fact we have often been pronounced incurable.

This approach to alcoholism is squarely based on our own drinking experience, what we have learned from medicine and psychiatry, and upon certain spiritual principles common to all creeds. We think each man's religious views, if he has any, are his own affair. No member is obliged to conform to anything whatever except to admit that he has the alcoholic illness and that he honestly wishes to be rid of it.

While every shade of opinion is expressed among us we take no position as a group, upon controversial questions. We are only trying to aid the sick men and distracted families who want to be at peace. We have found that genuine tolerance of others, coupled with a friendly desire to be of service is most essential to our recovery. There are no dues or fees; our alcoholic work is an avocation.

The Alcoholic Foundation of New York is our national headquarters. Your inquiries will be answered if addressed to Post Office Box 658, Church Street Annex, New York City.

The Fellowship publishes a book called "Alcoholics Anonymous" setting forth our experience and methods at length. An excellent review of the volume by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick appears on page 27 of this booklet. Directions for obtaining the book and a detailed description of the Alcoholic Foundation will also be found there.

On page 32 physicians will find an excellent medical paper describing our approach. This paper appeared last year in The Journal Lancet

(Minneapolis) and was written by Dr. W. D. Silkworth, Chief Physician at the

Charles B. Towns Hospital, New York, where our work had its inception five years ago.

We can no better present the spirit and purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous than to invite reading of six articles which recently appeared in The Houston Press. These pieces were written by one of our newer members, a newspaperman who, scarcely two years ago, found himself in that shadowy No Man's Land which lies just between Here and Here-after. Due to grave alcoholism and pulmonary trouble, two institutions had refused to admit him--too nearly dead, they thought. Then he found the Cleveland A.A. Fellowship. Now he's on a Texas newspaper!

Let Mr. Anonymous of Houston and his editor tell you about it----

AN EDITORIAL

(As published by the Houston Press)

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Age-old, but still alive, is the question as to when the drinking of alcoholic beverages ceases to be a social lubricant, an aid to conviviality, a solace to the weary and distressed, a tonic to the body and spirit; and when it becomes a devourer of health, success and happiness.

People of independent spirit like to settle the question for themselves.

People inclined to reform their neighbors--and even many otherwise reticent people, because they are honestly and generously concerned over the welfare at least of those near to them--sometimes come to the front with suggestions for the control of drinking, or even for its abolition.

But neither of these attitudes is the concern of Alcoholics Anonymous, a group of several hundred ex-drinkers who have taken to the wagon by a technique of their own, and who are riding there today after most of them had been pronounced hopeless by friends, families, employers, physicians, ministers, psychiatrists, hospitals and sanitariums.

The call themselves true alcoholics--people in whom alcohol becomes a disease for which medical and psychiatric science has not yet found a specific cure.

They say their cure works. They show as witness hundreds of lives restored to health and usefulness, hundreds more among their families relieved of terror and despair, and restored to happiness through the alcoholics' changed lives.

The Press thinks their problem and their unusual success with it is so important that it begins today a series of six articles on Alcoholics Anonymous, written by "One of Them," now living in Houston.

The series should provoke thought among the friends and families of "alcoholics," among physicians and psychiatrists, ministers, social workers, employers, men's and women's clubs--and alcoholics.

The Press takes a liberal attitude on drinking. It stood for repeal of prohibition. But even the liquor industry, we believe, would wish success to a technique that promises much to the men and women who cannot handle their drinks.

Inquiry and comment are invited.

STORY OF A "WAY OUT" FOR HOPELESS DRINKERS

How an Idea Originated by Ex-Alcoholics Has Helped 2000 to Recover

This is a series of six articles about a group of ex-drinkers who have succeeded in a new method of going on the wagon and staying there. One of their first principles is to pass their experience along, to help others similarly afflicted. The Press will be glad to receive comments.---The Editor

By a Member of Alcoholics Anonymous

People who get around much need no telling that the problem of those who drink too much for the good of themselves, their work and their families is already serious and becoming worse.

And those who know most about it, either because they themselves are drinkers of this type or because they are close to one who is, realize it in all its lacerating, hopeless details.

It is an age-old problem. Prohibition undoubtedly intensified it. The depression has multiplied its victims.

Today many people are taking the attitude of the English officer in India, who hated his assignment. When reprovved for excessive drinking, he lifted his glass and said, "This is the swiftest road out of India."

Now it is true that this part of Texas has escaped the worst part of the depression; but not all of it. And trouble is always easy to find, so that many, like the Englishman, have been indulging in excessive elbow-bending to get away from their worries, their disappointments and their fears in the unstable, war-crazy unsure world of today.

Free to begin drinking, some of them find they are not free to stop.

This series of articles is about them, for them, and for those who are willing to help them.

It is the story of how hundreds of ex-alcoholics, by a method which they themselves devised and perfected, have found the way out of the squirrel cage.

Most of them, after all that medical and psychiatric science, and even formal religion, could do, had been pronounced hopeless.

But if you think they are out to take the glass from the hand of drinkers to whom the diagnosis "alcoholic" does not apply, you are wholly mistaken. As one of them put it, "If anyone who is showing inability to control his drinking can do the right about face and drink like a gentleman, our hats are off to him. Heaven knows, we have tried long enough and hard enough to drink like other people."

Thus the problem, as Alcoholics Anonymous sees it, is limited strictly to those who have become, or are on the road to becoming, drinkers headed straight for destruction, unless help beyond the usual is brought within their reach.

If this series sometimes turns autobiographical, it will be because it is difficult for a man who has been delivered of a ghastly fate to write with the soberness and restraint required by a strictly objective account.

Tried Many Cures

Jails, hospitals, attempts at suicide, psychopathic wards, sanitariums, all sorts of "spiritual" and "faith" cures, even hypnotism---these have all been mine without deliverance; some by choice, some because society's hand was raised against me.

Society did not know I was sick. I had made my bed and society insisted that I lie in it. But alcoholics are definitely sick, as this series will try to show.

Nor did tears, pleadings or threats alter my course for long; and in spite of my own utmost determination, I could never find the answer.

I have personally met at least one hundred "cured" alcoholics---"fellow rummies" as they jokingly call each other.

Their stories parallel my own. Most of them are even worse. One man had been in a sanitarium more than one hundred times.

Another came to see me while I was "taking a rest" in a sanitarium---being defogged so I could use again what brains I had. A livid scar around his neck stood out like the welt raised by a whip. His wrists bore similar witness to the realization of the utter helplessness that had driven him to try suicide as his "swiftest road" out of the India of his perplexities.

I have been in the homes of some ex-alcoholics, Skeptical by nature, an investigator by training, I took no one's unsupported word. But I saw for myself, not only the new bearing of confidence, even of joy, that exuded from the ex-drinker, but also the ordered life of his family and the new hope and happiness in their faces. I heard it in the tone of their voices.

Literally, these things are hard to believe unless you have had both the experience of being damned and then the surprise of being rescued out of "the jaws of hell," as the old-fashioned revivalists used to put it.

No Mystery

Some of the experiences of these "cured" alcoholics will enliven the serious business of these articles, which is to explain how the alcoholic gets that way; why he or she is different from other drinkers who are able to "hold their liquor" all their lives; how the fellowship called Alcoholics Anonymous came into being and spread from one man, who in desperation evolved the idea, to include now nearly five hundred men and women, with centers being established in one section of the country after another; in as much detail as space will permit, just what the technique is, how it works, how the alcoholic may avail himself of it; and how anyone interested may help.

Repeating what the advance notice of the series said: "No medicine. No treatments. No cost. No mystery. No terrible battle of the will. Ministers have preached about it. Physicians and psychiatrists have praised it."

No one has an axe to grind. Members of the fellowship give of their time---often their money---to help some victim. Why? The series will also explain that.

An Inevitable End

One can get an eye-witness picture of what happens when several score ex-alcoholics get together in a meeting. No more startling, unbelievable contrast could be imagined than a comparison with what they would have looked like had they assembled when each was at the end of his rope.

Physicians, perhaps more than any other group, know the alcoholic and his hitherto almost inevitable end. Here are the words of two of them:

"I personally know 30 of these cases who were the type with whom other methods had failed completely.

"Because of the possibilities of rapid growth inherent in this group, they may mark a new epoch in the annals of alcoholism. These men may well have a remedy for thousands of such situations.

"You may rely absolutely on anything they say about themselves.

"The subject seems to me to be of paramount importance to those afflicted with alcoholic addiction. I say this after many years experience as medical director of one of the oldest hospitals in the country treating alcoholic and drug addiction."

The second says:

"Will the movement spread? Will these recoveries be permanent? No one can say. Yet we at this hospital, from our observation of many cases, are willing to record our present opinion as a strong `yes' to both questions."

The head of a hospital and sanitarium in a nearby Texas city, who has many alcoholics come to him, now requires all of them to read about the methods of "Alcoholics Anonymous."

There must be fire where there is smoke.

I, for one, know this to be true.

SEEMINGLY ALLERGIC TO DRINK:

ALCOHOLIC'S BURDEN

Craving, Plus Inability to Heed Warning of Own Weakness,

Leads Inebriate to Succumb

(Second of Six Articles)

What is an "alcoholic"? How does he differ from other drinkers? An incident to illustrate:

Convinced that I had nothing to sell, puzzled that I did not come as a patient either, the nurse finally ushered me into the office of one of Houston's most eminent physicians. He is prominent also in other activities that often have put him in the spotlight. He is a "big name."

I had come, as an ex-alcoholic, to tell him about Alcoholics Anonymous and to have him introduce me to an alcoholic victim among his patients whom I might help; for I am a stranger in Houston.

One Needing Help

The good doctor, eyebrows bristling, welcomed me with gruff suspicion. No, he had never heard of Alcoholics Anonymous. But he listened. I felt he was showing more Texas courtesy than interest.

Half way through my recital he broke in: "Humph," he humphed, "I have no patience with these fellows you call `victims.'" His voice showed it. "Why, I can handle anything. So could they control their drinking if they wanted to."

But he gave me the name of an able man whose excessive indulgence in firewater was endangering the business he had built up, wrecking his health, rendering his family desperate.

"He's just out of a cure," said the doctor. "But he gave them the runaround some way. Hitting it up again. See what you can do with him. Tell him I sent you. His family is crazy. I can do nothing more."

There you have in one situation the two kinds of drinkers--the man who can "handle anything," and the drinker who steps right out of one of the usual "cures" and hoists a few before he even gets home.

But our experience tells us that everybody cannot "handle anything." The alcoholic cannot control his drinking. Sometimes the dividing line over which he has slid is hard to place.

Some people are alcoholics with their first drink. Most of them become such by degrees.

"Not an Alcoholic"

How can a drinker define his position on the scale? How can the condition known medically as alcoholism be recognized before the desperate stage?

To get drunk once in a while does not necessarily prove one is an alcoholic in the sense in which the word is used here. A man may drink steadily all his life with an occasional roaring bender, and not be thus classified.

Just before writing this article, I lunched by chance with a newspaperman of short acquaintance. This subject came up and I showed him a draft of yesterday's story in this series.

"Humm!" he said. "That hits me. I've been on the wagon for nine months now. I've never heard of Alcoholics Anonymous; but I know it isn't the tenth drink that will get me down, but the first one. But I'm not an alcoholic."

That's what they all say.

Nobody likes to admit that he is bodily and mentally different from his fellows, especially if he imagines (though wrongly) that doing so pegs him as somehow inferior in good taste, self-control, gentlemanliness, or what have you.

"O.K., then," I said. "You're not an alcoholic. However, here's a test I'll bet you're afraid to make.

"You can diagnose yourself, I'll get a bottle. Come to my room this evening and we'll sit around and gas, while you try some controlled drinking. Take several shots and see what happens.

The First Drink

"See if you can stop abruptly and forget about it. Try it several times. It will not take long to decide if you are honest with yourself, and it may be worth a bad case of jitters to learn the truth."

"Nothing doing," the gentleman of the press replied. He came back with it so quickly that you couldn't doubt he meant it. "Done that too many times already. It's the first drink that sends me `off to the races."

He's an alcoholic. Perhaps not for a long time will he touch another drop. Then some fine day when he isn't looking, one of the insanely absurd and inadequate reasons with which the alcoholic deludes himself when he wants a drink, will pop into his head, just when the drinks are handy.

The first glass down, it's the old story again; but this time he's older. The reasons for his former sobriety may be gone. The picture is different. He has shamed himself, damaged his pride and self-confidence. And perhaps he can't snap out of it by himself or with the ordinary kind of help.

With true alcoholics, it is never a question of control or moderation. Their only out is absolute abstinence.

Alcoholics Anonymous might well make the last two words of the preceding paragraph the second meaning of "A.A."

Why is this total aversion necessary for the drinkers and not for others?

Omar Khayyam, you remember, said of the juice of his well beloved grape: "'Tis a blessing; we should use it, should we not? And if a curse, why then, who put it there?"

The alcoholic can indulge in no such philosophical fancies, any more than a diabetic can gorge himself on sweets

His body and his mind become sick, with alcohol.

It is as though he is allergic to drink. The allergy theory is admitted by physicians who advance it to be only a theory. Nevertheless, it explains many things that otherwise do not make sense.

Three things especially characterize the alcoholic as a different breed of cattle.

The first is the phenomenon of craving. Not merely the thought that a drink would be agreeable, but a definite, undeniable craving.

The second is the appearance of the curious mental phenomenon that, parallel to the victim's sound reasoning which warns him of the folly and danger, there inevitably runs some insanely trivial excuse for taking the first drink.

Insanely trivial because, measured against the hell which from experience he knows he's in for, no one in the state of mind called normal and sane would act on it for a minute.

Sound reasoning fails to hold him in check. The insane idea wins out.

Unable to Stop

The third distinguishing characteristic is the fact that the alcoholic, actual or potential, is absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge.

This point has been smashed home on many members of Alcoholics Anonymous out of bitter experience.

How many are the dodges they have tried in vain! Here is a partial list: Drinking whiskey only with milk, drinking beer only, limiting the number of drinks, never drinking alone, drinking only at home, never having it in the home, never drinking during business hours, drinking only at parities, switching from Scotch to brandy or rum, drinking only natural wines, agreeing to resign if ever drunk on the job, taking a trip, swearing off forever (with and without a solemn oath), taking more physical exercise, reading inspirational books, going to health farms and sanitariums, accepting voluntary commitment to asylums--the list could go on ad infinitum.

I can add a favorite of my own. Believing that the evil of drink lies not in its use but in its abuse. I tried asking whatever you may choose to call the higher Power to teach me control.

Well, it seems God didn't build me that way. I'm glad I found out in time.

Alcoholism is an illness in a class by itself.

People feel sorry for the victim of cancer. No one gets angry about it. But look at the alcoholic's trail of misunderstanding, fierce resentments, financial insecurity, disgusted friends and employers, warped lives of blameless and trusting children, sad wives and parents--and more.

That is why Alcoholics Anonymous wants this message spread broadcast. If you

see no need for it now, who knows how soon you may have occasion to remember it? It may not be a bad idea to clip this series and save it against that day.

HOW IT STARTED AND GAINED SPEED

Idea to Help Serious Alcoholics Originated In East;

Launched by Man Who Was "Incurable"

(Third of Six Articles)

"I see he's back again." said the orderly to the nurse as Mr. X for the umpteenth time turned up in the alcoholic division of a hospital in a larger Eastern city.

He was a regular customer. But this time he came to grips with himself on an idea brought by a friend. More ideas came later. He examined and re-examined them. Already he had given himself up to the fate of an incurable alcoholic, in he had nothing to turn to more effective than he had found hitherto.

When hospital care had knocked the booze out of his brain and nerves, he immediately began to put his ideas into practice. They worked. He stayed sober.

"Later," said the head of the hospital, "he requested the privilege of being allowed to tell his story to other patients here, and with some misgiving we consented.

"The cases we have followed through have been most interesting; in fact, many are amazing.

"The unselfishness of these men as we have come to know them, the entire absence of profit motive, and their community spirit, is indeed inspiring to one who has labored long and wearily in this alcoholic field.

Five Years Old

Thus was Alcoholics Anonymous born about five years ago, out of one victim's desperation. Growing very slowly at first, actually from man to man, centers of information about it now are springing up in widely scattered areas throughout the country.

In the doctor's comment you have the principle reason for the idea's thus coming to nation-wide attention.

When a man makes a spectacular come-back--a right-about-face after having made an ass of himself for years--people ask questions. They may be skeptical at first, but secretly they are astonished, and curious.

Furthermore, the man thus set upon his feet cannot help being a kind of

missionary. But a missionary with what a difference! What missionary to the savage was ever a savage? But the messenger of Alcoholics Anonymous knows from his own checkered experience all the tricks, all the curves in the road, all the answers to the alcoholic's self delusions.

That's the thing that sold me, finally. These "rummies" knew their onions. They weren't mealy mouthed. They didn't lecture. When they talked to me, still unconvinced, their faces, their "lingo," their gestures, their whole bearing, bespoke the onetime experienced toper.

They were offering, not theory but fact. They acted as though they had a sure thing. They merely wanted me to know about it, what it had done for them.

Take It or Leave It

Go back now to four years ago. A man pacing the lobby of a hotel in a strange city, He is a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Something has gone wrong with his business trip. Not only has he failed, but he wonders how he is going to pay his hotel bill. The deal that fell through has stirred up a bitter feeling in him.

He has only been sober a few months. As he feels the temptation of the inviting bar at the end of the lobby, he realizes his predicament.

Should he join the gay crowd? Find release, scrape an acquaintance, avoid a lonesome week-end?

Here he runs square up against one of the basic rules of the fellowship. When tempted, it says, if possible work with another alcoholic.

With music and gay chatter in his ears, he turns and seeks the lobby church directory. At random he selects the name of a minister and telephones him. His talk leads him to a former able and respected resident who is on the rocks from excessive drinking.

How this man was reclaimed, how these two salvaged two others, how in 18 months the number grew to 10, and how one couple became so interested that they dedicated their home to the work, is an absorbing story related in the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous," published by the fellowship.

Of this, more later; for the book, and the "Alcoholic Foundation," have been other notable steps in making the message available to all.

The only requirement for membership is the honest willingness to do anything to quit drinking.

No Fees, No Dues

There are no fees, no dues. You need not buy the book if an alcoholic cured by, and experienced in, the technique of Alcoholics Anonymous will clearly give you an idea.

Buttressing the personal work of one alcoholic with another, informal meetings are arranged in each center as soon as a small group can be formed.

I never saw anything like them. Here centers the social life of the group. Happiness, gaiety, good fellowship abound. After the brief session devoted to the problems of alcoholics, and the words of advice and encouragement and the interchange of experiences, there may be a poker game, or several tables of bridge.

These birds don't turn sissy when they quit drinking. They get back their real vitality. And the majority are clever, able, once successful people. You see many business men, doctors, lawyers, star salesmen, contractors, insurance men, brokers, merchants, as well as the man whose field is more limited.

These gatherings present the vivid contrast of happy faces and the strained, hungry faces of "prospects" hearing about this for the first time.

The members take away with them a glow they never got out of the best bottle they ever tipped. And it's there in the morning--a hangover of relief, freedom, of strength to hit the new day's work and worry right on the button.

The prospects take away at least the first thrill of wonder and of hope. Is it strange that the group grows?

Ministers Approve

Ministers like Dr. Dilworth Lupton, widely known pastor of First Unitarian Church in Cleveland, O., have personally investigated and then devoted a whole sermon to the subject.

Newspapers like The Houston Press have offered space.

Physicians, nurses, psychiatrists, who have had personal experience with alcoholics made well by this method, give it to other patients.

And alcoholics grab off prospects wherever they spy them, sometimes right off the bar. Their telephones, when they ceased to be anonymous, may ring at any hour of the night telling of someone in desperate plight. They go. The movement spreads.

So far, in two weeks I have been in Houston, I have yet to find one person who heard me talk even most casually about this, who hasn't said, either, "Say, that sounds like something"; or, more often, "I know a man who needs it bad.

Here's his name."

Alcoholics Anonymous is the most infectious idea I ever caught. I am quite likely to give it to anyone I come in contact with, for I take no precautions.

My own experience well illustrates how the movement spreads.

Before I left Cleveland to come to Houston, for three weeks I had been trying to straighten out a friend who was soused to the gills, chiefly by drinking with him and trying to taper him off, and either walking him home so he wouldn't break his neck, or pouring him into a taxi.

He wound up in a liquor cure institution. I visited him. By that time, Alcoholics Anonymous had got hold of him.

He told me about them. By accident or design--I never knew which--I met two of them at his bedside one morning.

This friend took to this thing and went to town. It had me thinking, because he had been in terrible shape. He wasn't far out of the port of last call.

Problem of Control

It wasn't long afterwards when, "well in the bag," I received a visit at my hotel from an Alcoholics Anonymous. I had never even heard of him.

No soap. No dice. Like the good doctor mentioned at the beginning of this article, I wasn't interested.

My problem was merely one of control. I wasn't an alcoholic (so I thought). How did he get that way--telling me I was?

When the bottle in my room was empty, he suggested that we adjourn to the bar. We did. He drank coffee, bought whisky for me.

Next morning all I could clearly remember was that this perfect stranger spent time and money on me to get me to quit drinking, and I didn't know why. Nothing like this had ever happened to me before. So when he telephoned the next evening asking if he could come over, I said, "Yes."

By the time he got there, I was even further "overseas" than at the time of his first visit. He urged patiently that I should go to a hospital, rest up, eat again like a human being, and think the thing out.

The man had inhuman patience. He said he did this because he liked to and because it helped him to stay sober. This was in a cafe.

"Nuts," I said.

But through a zero blizzard that night I finally let him drive me 50 miles to a sanitarium approved by Alcoholics Anonymous, and at 4 a. m., as he left me, after having talked with me for eight hours without once doing the pleading act, he saw me take my last drink.

And I mean last.

For a week, sometimes as many as half a dozen members of Alcoholics Anonymous visited me in the sanitarium every day. I regained my poise. The fourth day I swallowed my pride and admitted that although I might in all other things have equal omnipotence with God Himself, in regard to drink I was licked before I started.

I began practicing the technique immediately. Then occurred the change, to me still amazing.

Now then, when I decided to live in Houston, how could I help spilling some of this stuff down here, where nobody seems to know about it?

Wouldn't I be a heel if I kept such a priceless thing to myself?

Did you ever hear "Freely ye have received, freely give?"

SPIRITUAL ASPECT MOST IMPORTANT

Foundation for New Life Comes With Reliance Upon

Power Greater Than Human Ken

(Forth in Six Articles)

As readers of these articles by now have doubtless suspected, the core of the technique by which Alcoholics Anonymous has worked what often seems like a miracle in the lives of men and women, is spiritual.

Not religious, but spiritual.

Not mental, not psychological---though it is all three of these also---but spiritual.

The majority of the hundreds of alcoholics already reclaimed probably could have been classed rightly only as unbelievers and agnostics. Does it seem strange that this attitude proved no bar to their laying hold on the central truth that is demonstrated by this group?

No stranger than the fact that the membership embraces Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, all creeds, denominations and faiths.

Universal Truth

There is no reason why Hindu, the Mohammedan, or the veriest unreclaimed Hottentot could not translate the central truth about this cure for alcoholism into his own faith, his own native customs.

It is universal because it depends on its effectiveness, and depends absolutely on the recognition of a Power higher than man--the Creative Spirit over all. The name is immaterial.

It will, however, simplify matters to use the familiar terminology employed in the Christian religion, calling this power "God."

How you picture Him, say Alcoholics Anonymous in all reverence, does not matter. To Smith He may be a patriarch up there somewhere, with a dazzling robe. To Jones, the agnostic, His form is still a question mark, if indeed He has any form understandable to man. And Brown may almost literally feel the reassuring pressure of His hand as they walk together through the tough spots of the day.

The Creative Spirit is in all things. It is not strange that people should differ in the ways in which they realize this.

But the Power Itself is one and the same thing.

How did these ex-alcoholics get hold of this Power? By a simple act of faith. It's really the way the Good Book tells about.

The alcoholic says in effect:

"I've beat this habit around the bush from hell to breakfast and back again, and I can't whip it. It has me down. I can't beat it alone. But there is a Power greater than I. I shall call on it now; and forever more, daily, hourly if necessary, to preserve me from this evil."

If this be said in absolute honesty, and adhered to, the foundation of a new life is laid, this time on rock. No more shifting sand.

Since "faith without works is dead," however, more has to be done. This is only the beginning. And it is in the sequence of other steps in the technique that the alcoholic soon realizes the unique and amazing practical value.

Habit-Changing

The reward seems to go hand in hand with the deed.

Psychologists and psychiatrists will tell you that, to change a person's

ingrained habits, one of two things is necessary: either a long and painful re-education of mind and body, by a supreme and often agonizing effort of the will, so that one set of habits finally is ousted and a new set learned by deliberate and diligent daily practice; or else a change, such as a person experiences in a complete surrender to spiritual principles.

This later is what is meant by a spiritual experience. It reaches the inner man. The old passes away and behold all things are indeed become new.

If it can be achieved, it is the simplest, the easiest, the quickest, the surest way, and the safest from relapse.

William James, the noted psychologist, in his book "Varieties of Religious Experiences," illustrates the myriad paths by which this inner change may be wrought. But surrender to the higher Power, and faith therein, are of the essence of all.

In non-religious terms, the experience is like the realization that sometimes comes to a person who has never appreciated good music or good books, and who all of a sudden "gets" the idea of the pleasure, the value to be found in them. Thenceforth he proceeds with delight to enjoy that in which he formerly had found no charm, no meaning.

Similarly, the alcoholic come to a realization that the Higher Power waits to help: that with God, truly "all things are possible."

As outlined in the book "Alcoholics Anonymous," the steps so far outlined in this article comprise the first three of twelve steps in the entire technique. In the experience of alcoholics who have taken all three, what has happened?

A New World

"I stood in the sunlight at last. Scales of pride and prejudice fell from my eyes. A new world came into view."

Again: "After making this final agreement (not just for another resolution) to let God be first in my life, the whole outlook and horizon brightened up in a manner which I am unable to describe except to say that it was `glorious.'

"There is no `cocky' feeling about this for me. I know I am an alcoholic; and while I used to call on God to help me, my conclusion is that I was simply asking God to help me drink alcohol without its hurting me, which is a far different thing than asking Him to help me not drink at all. So here I stand, and it is wonderful."

An artist: "A chart of my spiritual progress would look like the graph of a business that had been hit by everything but an earthquake; but there has been progress. It has cured me of a vicious habit.

"Where my life had been full of mental turmoil, there is now an ever increasing depth of calmness.

"Where there was a hit or miss attitude toward living, there is now new direction and force.

"To me it makes sense, opens up a fascinating field of endeavor, and is a challenge the acceptance of which can make of life the `Adventure Magnificent'."

We Have to Live It

I myself, coming down from Cleveland, Ohio, to Houston on the train, hardly out of my swaddling clothes on this thing, all of a sudden felt so overwhelmingly illuminated and relieved by the idea that I no longer had to think about "to drink or not to drink," that I dug out my notebook and wrote down, How much of my life this realization turned loose for things of real value!

As my oldest son wrote me yesterday: "Congratulations upon your discovery that you and alcohol do not agree. Now that you give full recognition to that fact, you cease to be on deceitful terms with yourself and all of you can go in the same direction--which is ahead!"

He hit the bullseye that time.

I'm free now because I'm all in one piece--no longer a "house divided against itself."

But this spiritual life is not a theory. We have to live it.

Alcoholics Anonymous do not think it is enough merely for a man to stay sober.

What of the swath of destruction the alcoholic has cut through the lives of others by his refusal, failure or inability to consider the needs of those who have trusted him and those who are dependent on him?

Remorse won't pay this off. There's some work to be done.

Now that the preliminaries of surrender and of faith are established, the period of practice comes.

Here is where the other nine of the 12 points of the Alcoholics Anonymous code comes into view.

TWELVE STAGES TO OVERCOME ALCOHOLISM

Stumbling Blocks Must Be Removed by Patient Effort and

Daily Application of System

(Fifth of Six Articles)

If wishes were horses, beggars would ride; and the alcoholics could come into his cure on the gallop.

True enough, the deliverance of the alcoholic already begun with the soul-deep wish to be free of this weight that rides him relentlessly and as odiously as the Old Man of the Sea rode Sindbad the Sailor in the "Arabian Nights."

Then, as explained in the preceding article, has come the recognition of human helplessness and complete reliance on the Supreme Power as the one way out.

But the steps have only turned on the lights of faith and set the stage for action. The leading man must now make his entrance, play his part.

The first word of the first act is "honesty." To be honest, says the dictionary, means to be straightforward in thought and conduct; free from any deception or fraud.

How It Works

The chapter of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous," entitled "How It Works," begins: "Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves.

"There are such unfortunates. They seem to have been born that way. They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. Their chances are less than average.

"There are those too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders; but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest."

You will note the cardinal emphasis on this business of being truthful.

If the alcoholic who seeks relief by this technique is too befogged, too jittery, to think honestly it is usually wise, on the advice of a physician, for him first to be given the care that will enable him to think straight, even if it means a period in hospital or sanitarium.

You need your brain to beat alcohol. When the bees are buzzing in it, and pink elephants are beginning to think you might soon have some peanuts for them, it is hard, if not indeed impossible, to think straight. Everybody is out of step

but you.

The alcoholic, then, has to be his real self, and have the help of God, to take the next steps on the road to freedom.

While Alcoholics Anonymous suggest a program numbering 12 stages, individuals vary as to the ones they emphasize. Lives are different, hence recoveries differ also.

Two General Units

The remaining nine steps therefore will be treated here as two general units: one, "cleaning house"; and two, "helping others." Let us examine them.

The alcoholic has been living an undisciplined, self-centered life. Whether he admits it or not, competent outside observers could demonstrate it in two minutes. The history of a leading physician in an eastern city, whose guest I have been, may be extreme in illustrating this, but it is typical.

After having been 35 years on the bottle, he has now been weaned for nearly five years. He is one of the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous. He told me this story:

"I had developed two dandy phobias that kept me in a spin. I feared that I should not be able to sleep at night unless I went to bed well oiled; and I feared that if I were under the influence during the day, I should not be able to earn enough money to buy enough liquor to get drunk enough to sleep at night so I could work the next day to get more money to buy more liquor so I could go to sleep..... and so on and so on, around the clock.

"So during the day I doped myself with heavy sedatives to hold down the jitters, and at night, having sneaked my liquor in, I drank myself to sleep.

"Where, in 35 years of such a squirrel-cage existence, was there a chance for this doctor to live the generous life---one guided by consideration for others? In the presence of his obsession with alcohol, nothing else counted heavily, no matter how many or how frequent were the isolated acts of kindness and generosity he performed.

He was living for his alcoholic self. All alcoholics, in varying degree, live that way. Hence they have cluttered their lives with wrongs to other people.

Part of the housecleaning process consists in acknowledging these wrongs; inventorying them; righting them insofar as possible without doing further harm to people; asking God to remove shortcomings; and continuing to take personal inventory day by day, admitting and undoing a committed wrong as soon as discovered.

These are the most difficult stumbling blocks for many. To get over them, not only is rigid honesty with self and others obviously a prerequisite, but also moral courage of the highest degree.

Yet, at this juncture, the alcoholic is reminded of the saying of the Man of Galilee: "Lo, I am with you always." He does not need to go alone.

One alcoholic, in fear and trembling, set out to square himself with some business acquaintances upon whom he depended for what was left of his livelihood. Like most alcoholics, he thought few people knew the extent of his former dependence on drink, and he feared that he would alienate them by telling them how he failed to measure up to business requirements.

But they knew. What's more, they understood and sympathized with his new position. Sincerity and clean purpose seem irresistible even to the congenital skeptic!

This man returned home elated. He's been going like a house afire ever since.

If you were convinced that such a man's real purpose was to fit himself to be of maximum service to the people about him, and there were no room for suspecting him of hypocrisy or self-deceit, what would be your attitude toward him, Alcoholics Anonymous ask.

Well, that's the way it works!

The Final Step

The final step of cleaning house is the morning preparation for each day.

Now, it is evident that any alcoholic, unless he be in the very throes of death from delirium tremens or some other complication, can live without a drink for 24 hours. Many have repeatedly done so--in jails, in psychopathic wards, in hospitals and sanitariums; or just on plain will power.

If the stake was high enough, they'd do it merely on a bet, sitting on a barrel of their favorite brand with the bung hole open. But without bolstering of some kind they could not add another 24 hours to another indefinitely.

They've tried. They've invariably failed. That's why they are alcoholics.

But when they exchange such enforced and material aids for the spiritual help of that Power-Higher-Than-Themselves, the way one dry 24 hours follows another is simplicity itself.

The alcoholic who is following the procedure here outlined begins his day by making conscious contact with this Power--with God. Some call it prayer. Some call it meditation. Some read the Bible. But all of them try honestly to

square off the day in the presence of God.

Twenty-four hours to go without a drink. Twenty-four hours to be honest. Twenty-four hours to live like a man. That's all. No worry about the next day, the next year, or the next five, or the next 15.

Shucks, can't he drink if he wants to? Certainly. But the next 24 hours belong to God. No drinks. And "sufficient unto the day are the evils thereof."

O.K., then. If he does the same every morning and comes through clean, even a fuzz-wit can see that the man will be sober the rest of his life.

And as the blessings of freedom, and growth toward the full rewards of living sanely, pile up, every day becomes easier. Life gains momentum, in the midst of peace.

The alcoholic just entering upon this new life is actually thrilled to discover that, he is to have not one but many true and generous human friends below--friends who have been through his special kind of hell and have conquered. They will understand.

That's a bracer with a wallop such as he was never able to get from alcohol.

The twelve steps complete will be found on page 30 of this booklet.

HIGH PERCENTAGE OF RECOVERY

Drinker Must Read About Procedure or Talk With One of

Those Freed From Alcoholism

(Last of Six Articles)

Cases already brought to light by these stories show homes breaking up, divorce or suicide a daily fear or threat, jobs jeopardized, health and sanity slipping, even the bare routine of living relentlessly corroded.

Unseeing, or brazenly ignoring facts; deluding himself, or helplessly letting things drift to the brink, the alcoholic has caused those who love him to grasp at any straw.

Immediately after the first article appeared, a mother wrote, pleading: "I shall appreciate haste in your reply, with a view that we may head off this coming week-end nightmare."

Another: "S O S. Please telephone me immediately."

"My husband is after liquor like a dope after dope. We are so worried and

don't know what to do. Please help me with him," writes another.

Illustrating the helplessness of the alcoholic: "I am very anxious to find some remedy for this sickness of my father, who really wants and tries to quit drinking."

A Ray of Hope

Gratitude: "Your articles in The Press have given a ray of hope to many mothers."

Desperation: "Oh, I pray you can help me, for the worry has almost got me. I am a nervous wreck myself. I will hope to hear from you as soon as possible. Please let me hear. It's my last straw."

Hopelessness: "What must I do? I am so sick, he worries me so much. I can hardly hold my head up. I don't know which way to go. I just can't stand it much longer."

The fear that drives the alcoholic's family to secrecy is shown by the envelope, addressed to Mr. Anonymous, Box 2771, Houston, which contained nothing but the address of a man.

Ministers and physicians have written, praising and offering help, and giving the names of alcoholics needing cure.

Besides being a vivid revelation of the prevalence of the malady in Houston, pleas such as the foregoing emphasize the need for careful understanding of just what the method of Alcoholics Anonymous is.

The six articles of this series give a fair outline. The details, of course, have had to be condensed. But those who are interested in putting some alcoholic on the road to recovery should not think that this is a magic formula that can be made to work overnight, or without the co-operation of the alcoholic.

Three Alternatives

The first step, therefore, is to get him interested enough to do one of three things: read this series, read the book or talk to Mr. Anonymous.

If he is too drunk or too jittery to do any of these, on the advice of a physician he may need to be hospitalized until he can talk and think and decide rationally.

Our experience as a group indicates that a brief hospitalization is most desirable in many cases, and really imperative at times. Besides enabling the patient to think clearly, he can be easily approached by our members under

favorable conditions. Whenever possible such is the practice in our established centers.

In Houston, there is as yet no group of alcoholics restored to health by this method. The next nearest individual ex-alcoholic is in Galveston, and the next nearest in Marlin. As soon as there are several, it will be possible to bring more of these personal contact and guidance to those seeking relief.

Meanwhile, Mr. Anonymous will do what one man can to supplement the explanations in these articles, and in the book.

Why is it so helpful to the drinker who has reached the condition treated of here, to talk with a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is because only another alcoholic understands him.

Lawyers, ministers, business partners and employers, parents and wives, often listen to confidences and fresh resolutions. But the clergy may say, "Your drinking is a sin." The partner or employer: "You'll have to quit this monkey business or get out." Wife or parent: "This drinking is breaking my heart." And everyone, "Why don't you exercise some will power and straighten up and be a man?"

"But," the alcoholic whispers in his heart, "no one but I can know that I must drink to kill the worry and suffering too great to stand."

Bunk----All Bunk!

He presents his excuses to the member of Alcoholics Anonymous who has come to talk. Can't sleep without liquor. Worry. Business troubles. Wife doesn't understand. Debt. Stomach trouble. Overwork. Nerves too high strung. Fatigue. In-law trouble. Loneliness. Grief. Deep, dark, phobic fears.

Then Mr. Anonymous begins to tell the sick one how many more alibis he himself knows.

"Bunk," he says in effect. "I've used them all myself."

And then he tells his own alcoholic history, certainly as bad, perhaps far worse. They match experiences. Before long the prospect has told his new friend things he never even admitted to himself.

A rough and ready psychology it is; but it works in more than half the cases. In the cases where the alcoholic really and honestly wants to get well, the percentage is near 100.

This series will close with a brief but clear digest of the principles and methods of Alcoholics Anonymous; seen through the eyes of eminent religious leaders. First, Dr. Dilworth Lupton, pastor of First Unitarian Church,

Cleveland, where there is a group of about 200 ex-alcoholics, said in a recent sermon: "I most humbly confess to having failed completely with alcoholics. Many of my friends in the fields of medicine and psychiatry confess the same feeling of futility.

He's Now Convinced

"Recently, however, my experience with a victim of alcoholism and later with the fellowship that calls itself Alcoholics Anonymous, first aroused my hopes, then my faith; and now I am convinced that these people have found a way out. I have seen it with my own eyes.

"Mr. X, the former alcoholic to whom I just refereed, is a young man with a family. For five years he was rarely sober. He and his wife were headed straight for the divorce court.

"Two years ago he consented to hospitalization. While under treatment he received 18 visits from ex-victims who were members of Alcoholics Anonymous, all of them laymen. Soon he was attending weekly meetings of the Cleveland group. He hasn't had a drink since.

"I have attended two meetings of this group. About 80 were present. They are what the world calls he-men. They come from all walks of life. Catholics, Protestants, Jews, near-agnostics and near-atheists are among their number.

"I found no excessive piety, no sensationalism, no fanaticism, no aggressive evangelism. They have no desire to make the country dry, or anybody else dry unless he happens to be like them, allergic to alcohol. They seem to have a good sense of humor, a quality sometimes rare in religious circles.

"From what I have read and heard and seen, I am convinced that the success of this movement is due to the practice of certain religious principles that are as tried and true as the Ten Commandments.

Spiritual Dependence

"First: The principle of spiritual dependence.

"My friend, Mr. X, was told by his ex-alcoholic visitors that they had not been able to save themselves, and that only as they reached out for a Power that was greater than themselves was their compulsive neurosis broken. That principle is the core of the movement, just as it is the core of all religion at its best.

"Second: The principle of universality.

"Alcoholics Anonymous is composed of men of various religious faiths, and they intend to keep it so. Indeed, there is no pressure toward joining any

religious organization. Furthermore--and this surprises me--each man can conceive of God in whatever concepts please him.

"Such an attitude displays nothing short of genius. These men recognize that behind all forms and expressions of religion itself--the impulse to live nobly and adore the highest.

"Third: The principle of mutual aid. As one of them said, 'What we have is of no good unless we give it away.' My friend Mr. X seems typical. He spends every available minute helping alcoholics get on their feet. And he is having a wonderful time. If that isn't Christianity, in Heaven's name, what is?

"Fourth: The principle of transformation.

"The ultimate test of religion is the change it makes in the character of the believer. Every man I have met who is connected with Alcoholics Anonymous declares that there has been an astonishing change in attitude and outlook, as well as habits. In the face of collapse and despair they have found a new sense of direction and power.

"It has been moving and convincing."

Our Book of Experience

Regarding the 400-page book, "Alcoholics Anonymous," obtainable c.o.d. for \$3.50 by writing to Works Publishing Co., Box 657, Church Street Post Office, New York City, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, internationally noted Baptist leader, said in a published review:

"This extraordinary book deserves the careful attention of anyone interested in the problem of alcoholism. Whether as victims, friends of victims, physicians, clergymen, psychiatrists or social workers there are many such, and this book will give them as no other treatise known to this reviewer will, an inside view of the problem which the alcoholic faces.

"This book represents the pooled experience of 100 men and women who have been victims of alcoholism--many of them declared hopeless by the experts--and who have won their freedom and recovered their sanity and self-control. Their stories are detailed and circumstantial, packed with human interest.

"The book is not in the least sensational. It is notable for its sober, careful, tolerant, sympathetic treatment of the alcoholic's problem and of the successful techniques by which its co-authors have won their freedom.

"The core of their whole procedure is religious--the expulsion of the alcoholic's obsession by a Power-greater-than-himself. Nowhere is the tolerance and open-mindedness of the book more evident than in its treatment of this central matter.

"They are not partisans of any particular form of organized religion, although they strongly recommended that some religious fellowship be found by their participants. By religion they mean an experience which they personally know and which has saved them from their slavery, when psychiatry and medicine failed.

"They agree that each man must have his own way of conceiving God, but of God Himself they are utterly sure, and their stories of victory in consequence are a notable addition to William James' 'Varieties of Religious Experience.'

"Throughout the book has the accent of reality and is written with unusual intelligence and skill, humor and modesty mitigating what could easily have been a strident and harrowing tale."

Our own Bishop of Texas, the Rt. Rev. Clinton S. Quin, heartily endorses Alcoholics Anonymous as follows:

"I do not know that I have had more than my share of alcoholics through my ministry, but I certainly have had a whole lot. I have said to everyone of them, 'You can be cured if you will do what I tell you to do,' and around the country and particularly in this state, I have the evidence.

"Of course, I was only the instrument--all I did was point the way. This new group of Alcoholics Anonymous are on the right track, and I want to express my appreciation to them for coming to Houston. The Houston Press has providentially done a real service to this city by publicizing this cure.

"Mind you, it doesn't cost anything in dollars and cents--there are no membership dues--no officers. It is all very interesting and very real. Like any other new or old idea, when you yourself have experimented with it and found it to be true, you are enthusiastic about it, and I want to register my deepest interest in what follows."

The Alcoholic Foundation

Alcoholics Anonymous has no formal organization. Correspondence is carried on by the Alcoholic Foundation, Box 658, Church Street Annex Post Office, New York City. The Alcoholic Foundation receives royalties and profits from the sale of the book and occasional gifts.

Of the Alcoholic Foundation and Works Publishing Company the book says in part:

"To receive these inquiries, to administer royalties from this book and such other funds as may come to hand, a Trust has been created known as the Alcoholic Foundation. Three Trustees are members of Alcoholics Anonymous, the other four are well-known business and professional men who have volunteered

their services. The Trust states that these four (who are not of Alcoholics Anonymous) or their successors, shall always constitute a majority of the Board of Trustees.

"We must frankly state, however, that under present conditions, we shall be unable to reply to all inquiries, as our members, in their spare time, may attend to most of the correspondence. Nevertheless we shall strenuously attempt to communicate with those men and women who are able to report that they are staying sober and working with other alcoholics. Once we have such an active nucleus, we can then perhaps refer to them those inquiries which originate in their respective localities. Starting with a small but active centers created in this fashion, we are hopeful that fellowships will spring up and grow very much as they have among us.

"The Alcoholic Foundation is our sole agency of its kind. We have agreed that all business engagements touching on our alcoholic work shall have the approval of its trustees. People who state they represent the Alcoholic Foundation should be asked for credentials and if unsatisfactory, these ought to be checked with the Foundation at once. We welcome inquiry by scientific, medical and religious societies.

"This volume is published by the Works Publishing Company, organized and financed mostly by small subscriptions by our members. This company donates royalty and a profit from each copy of 'Alcoholics Anonymous' to the Alcoholic Foundation."

In closing, three slogans from the book will be understood by those who have closely followed the series. They are: "First things first"; "Live and let live"; and "Easy does it." They are all old and seem tame; but when applied with this spiritual method of living, they pack dynamite.

And they bring happiness!

THE TWELVE STEPS

The Alcoholic Foundation is already in receipt of many letters from men who report that, though isolated from the various Fellowships, they have been able to recover by rigorously following the steps described in our book "Alcoholics Anonymous."

Even more surprising has been the fact that a number have reported recovery from reading magazine and newspaper articles briefly sketching our approach.

These results gave us the idea which lies behind this booklet. Realizing that some families might not at first buy "Alcoholics Anonymous," we became convinced that a booklet of this nature could set many alcoholics on the Broad Highway to health.

The fifth article of the foregoing series is entitled "12 Stages to Overcome Alcoholism" which, for lack of space, "Mr. Anonymous" was obliged to condense. Since many of us have found close adherence to the "12 Steps" desirable, we think the alcoholic reader would like to know just what these are.

Quoting now from the book-----

"Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a Program of Recovery:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol--that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
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 ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a 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 conscious contact with God as we understood Him praying only for the knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and practice these principles in all our affairs.

Many of us exclaimed, "What an order! I can't go through with it." Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are

guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection."

TO THE DOCTOR

Physicians who know our work first hand almost uniformly endorse it, but the doctor who is not acquainted with us would naturally like to have the opinion of a brother practitioner who has actually seen results.

Here follows a paper written by a physician who, specializing in alcoholism for many years, has watched our growth from the day it began.

A NEW APPROACH TO PSYCHOTHERAPY IN CHRONIC ALCOHOLISM

W. D. Silkworth, M.D.+

New York, New York

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The beginning and subsequent development of a new approach to the problem of permanent recovery for the chronic alcoholic has already produced remarkable results and promises much for the future. This statement is based on five years of close observation. As this development is one which has sprung up among alcoholic patients themselves and has been largely conceived and promoted by them, it is felt that this new treatment can be reported freely and objectively.

The central idea is that of a fellowship of ex-alcoholic men and women banded together for mutual help. Each member feels duty bound to assist alcoholic newcomers to get upon their feet. These in turn work with still others, in an endless chain. Hence there is a large growth possibility. In one locality, for example, the fellowship had but three members in September 1935; eighteen months later the three had succeeded with seven more. These ten have since expanded to over three hundred.*

It is much more than a sense of duty, however, which provides the requisite driving power and harmony so necessary for success. One powerful factor is that of self-preservation. These ex-alcoholics frequently find that unless they spend time in helping others to health, they cannot stay sober themselves. Strenuous, almost sacrificial work for other sufferers is often imperative in the early days of their recovery. This effort proceeds entirely on a good will basis. It is an avocation. There are no fees or dues of any kind, nor do these people organize in the ordinary sense of the word.

+ Physician in charge, Chas. B. Town's Hospital, 293 Central Park West, New York City.

* Dr. Silkworth's article was published July, 1939. We have taken the liberty of bringing his figures on our growth up to the present date. (April 1940).

These ex-alcoholic men and women number about five hundred. One group is scattered along the Atlantic seaboard with New York as a center. Another, and somewhat larger body, is located in the Middle West. Many walks of life are represented, though business and professional types predominate. The unselfishness, the extremes to which these men and women go to help each other, the spirit of democracy, tolerance and sanity which prevails, are astonishing to those who know something of the alcoholic personality. But these observations do not adequately explain why so many gravely involved people are able to remain sober and face life again.

The principal answer is: Each ex-alcoholic has had, and is able to maintain, a vital spiritual or "religious" experience. This so called "experience" is accompanied by marked changes in personality. There is always, in a successful case, a radical change in outlook, attitude and habits of thought, which sometimes occurs with amazing rapidity, and in nearly all cases these changes are evident within a few months often less.

That the chronic alcoholic has sometimes recovered by religious means is a fact centuries old. But these recoveries have been sporadic, insufficient in numbers or impressiveness to make headway with the alcoholic problem as a whole.

The conscious search of these ex-alcoholics for the right answer has enabled them to find an approach which has been effectual in something like half of all cases upon which it has been tried. This is a truly remarkable record when it is remembered that most of them were undoubtedly beyond the reach of other remedial measures.

The essential features of this new approach, without psychological embellishment are:

1. The ex-alcoholics capitalize upon a fact which they have so well demonstrated, namely: that one alcoholic can secure the confidence of another in a way and to a degree almost impossible at attainment by a non-alcoholic outsider.

2. After having fully identified themselves with their "prospect" by a recital of symptoms, behavior, anecdotes, etc., these men allow the patient to draw their own inference that if he is seriously alcoholic, there may be no hope for him save a spiritual experience. They cite their own cases and quote medical opinion to prove their point. If the patient insists he is not

alcoholic to that degree, they recommend he try to stay sober in his own way. Usually, however, the patient agrees at once. If he does not, a few more painful relapses often convince him.

3. Once the patient agrees that he is powerless, he finds himself in a serious dilemma. He sees clearly that he must have a spiritual experience or be destroyed by alcohol.

4. This dilemma brings about a crisis in the patient's life. He finds himself in a situation which, he believes, cannot be untangled by human means. He has been placed in this position by another alcoholic who has recovered through a spiritual experience. This particular ability, which an alcoholic who has recovered exercises upon one who has not recovered, is the main secret of the unprecedented success which these men and women are having. They can penetrate and carry conviction where the physician or clergyman cannot. Under these conditions, the patient turns to religion with an entire willingness and readily accepts, without reservation, a simple religious proposal. He is then able to acquire much more than a set of religious beliefs; he undergoes the profound mental and emotional change common to religious "experience." (See William James' Varieties of Religious Experience). Then, too, the patient's hope is renewed and his imagination is fired by the idea of membership in a group of ex-alcoholics where he will be enabled to save lives and homes of those who have suffered as he has suffered.

5. The fellowship is entirely indifferent concerning the individual manner of spiritual approach so long as the patient is willing to turn his life and his problems over to the care and direction of his Creator. The patient may picture the Deity in any way he likes. No effort what ever is made to convert him to some particular faith or creed. Many creeds are represented among the group and the greatest harmony prevails. It is emphasized that the fellowship is non-sectarian and that the patient is entirely free to follow his own inclination. Not a trace of aggressive evangelism is exhibited.

6. If the patient indicates a willingness to go on, a suggestion is made that he do certain things which are obviously good psychology, good morals and good religion, regardless of creed:

- a. That he make a moral appraisal of himself, confidentially discuss his findings with a competent person whom he trusts.
- b. That he try to adjust bad personal relationships, setting right, so far as possible, such wrongs as he may have done in the past.
- c. That he recommit himself daily, or hourly if need be, to God's care and direction, asking for strength.
- d. That, if possible, he attend weekly meetings of the fellowship and actively lend a hand with alcoholic newcomers.

This is the procedure in brief. The manner of presentation may vary considerably, depending upon the individual approached, but the essential ingredients of the process are always much the same. When presented by an ex-alcoholic, the power of this approach is remarkable. For a full appreciation one must have seen the work and must have known these patients before and after the change.

Considering the presence of the religious factor, one might expect to find unhealthy emotionalism and prejudice. This is not the case however; on the contrary, there is an instant readiness to discard old methods for new ones which produce better results. For instance, it was early found that usually the weakest approach to an alcoholic is directly through his family or friends, especially if the patient is drinking heavily at the time. The ex-alcoholic frequently insists, therefore, that a physician first take the patient in hand, placing him in a hospital whenever possible. If proper hospitalization and medical care is not carried out, the patient faces the danger of delirium tremens, "wet brain" or other complications. After a few days' stay, during which time the patient has been thoroughly detoxicated, the physician brings up the question of permanent sobriety and, if the patient is interested, tactfully introduces a member of the ex-alcoholic group. By this time the prospect has self-control, can think straight, and the approach to him is made casually, with no intervention by his family or friends. More than half of this fellowship have been so treated. The group is unanimous in its belief that hospitalization is desirable, even imperative, in most cases.

What has happened to these men and women? For years, physicians have pursued methods which bear some similarity to these outlined above. An effort is made to procure a frank discussion with the patient, leading to self-understanding. It is indicated that he must make the necessary re-adjustment to his environment. His co-operation and confidence must be secured. The objectives are to bring about extraversion and to provide someone to whom the alcoholic can transfer his dilemma.

In a large number of cases, this alcoholic group is now attaining these very objectives because their simple but powerful devices appear to cut deeper than do other methods of treatment for the following reasons:

1. Because of their alcoholic experiences and successful recoveries they secure a high degree of confidence from their prospects.
2. Because of this initial confidence, identical experience, and the fact that the discussion is pitched on moral and religious grounds, the patient tells his story and makes his self-appraisal with extreme thoroughness and honesty. He stops living alone and finds himself within reach of a fellowship with whom he can discuss his problems as they arise.
3. Because of the ex-alcoholic brotherhood, the patient, too, is able to save

other alcoholics from destruction. At one and the same time, the patient acquires an ideal, a hobby, a strenuous avocation, and a social life which he enjoys among other ex-alcoholics and their families. These factors make powerfully for his extraversion.

4. Because of objects aplenty in whom to vest his confidence, the patient can turn to individuals to whom he first gave his confidence, the ex-alcoholic group as a whole, or the Deity. It is paramount to note that the religious factor is all important even from the beginning. Newcomers have been unable to stay sober when they have tried the program minus the Deity.

The mental attitude of these people toward alcohol is interesting. Most of them report that they are seldom tempted to drink. If tempted, their defense against the first drink is emphatic and adequate. To quote from one of their number, once a serious case at this hospital, but who has had no relapse since his "experience" five and one-half years ago: "Soon after I had my experience, I realized I had the answer to my problem. For about three years prior to December 1934 I had been taking two and sometimes three bottles of gin a day. Even in my brief periods of sobriety, my mind was much on liquor, especially if my thoughts turned toward home, where I had bottles hidden on every floor of the house. Soon after leaving the hospital, I commenced to work with other alcoholics. With reference to them, I thought much about alcohol, even to the point of carrying a bottle in my pocket to help them through sever hangovers. But from the moment of my first experience, the thought of taking a drink myself hardly ever occurred. I had the feeling of being in a position of neutrality. I was not fighting to stay on the water wagon. The problem was removed; it simply ceased to exist for me. This new state of mind came about in my case at once and automatically. About six weeks after leaving the hospital my wife asked me to fetch a small utensil which stood on a shelf in our kitchen. As I fumbled for it, my hand grasped a bottle, still partly full. With a start of surprise and gratitude, it flashed upon me that not once during the past weeks had the thought of liquor being in my home occurred to me. Considering the extent to which alcohol had dominated my thinking, I call this no less than a miracle. During the past four years of sobriety I have seriously considered drinking only a few times. On each occasion, my reaction was one of fear, followed by the reassurance which came with my new found ability to think the matter through, to work with another alcoholic, or to enter upon a brief period of prayer and meditation. I now have a defense against alcoholism which is positive so long as I keep myself spiritually fit and active, which I am only too glad to do."

Another interesting example of reaction to temptation comes from a former patient, now sober four and one-half- years. Like most of these people, he was beyond the reach of psychiatric methods. He relates the following incident:

"Though sober now for several years, I am still bothered by periods of deep depression and resentment. I live on a farm, and weeks sometimes pass in which I have no contact with the ex-alcoholic group. During one of my spells I

became violently angry over a trifling domestic matter. I deliberately decided to get drunk, going so far as to stock my guest house with food, thinking to lock myself in when I had returned from town with a case of liquor. I got in my car and started down the drive, still furious. As I reached the gate I stopped the car, suddenly feeling unable to carry out my plan. I said to myself, 'At least I have to be honest with my wife.' I returned to the house and announced I was on my way to town to get drunk. She looked at me calmly, never saying a word. The absurdity of the whole thing burst upon me and I laughed. And so the matter passed. Yes, I now have a defense that works. Prior to my spiritual experience I would never have reacted that way."

The testimony of the membership as a whole sums up to this: For the most part, these men and women are now indifferent to alcohol, but even when the thought of taking a drink does come, they react sanely and vigorously.

The alcoholic fellowship hopes to extend its work to all parts of the country and to make its methods and answers known to every alcoholic who wishes to recover. As a first step, they have prepared a book called *Alcoholics Anonymous*. A large volume of 400 pages, it sets forth their methods and experience exhaustively, and with much clarity and force. The first half of the book is a text aimed to show an alcoholic the attitude he ought to take and precisely the steps he may follow to effect his own recovery. He then finds full directions for approaching and working with other alcoholics. Two chapters are devoted to family relations and one to employers for the guidance of those who surround the sick man. There is a powerful chapter addressed to the agnostic, as the majority of the present members were of that description. Of particular interest to the physician is the chapter on alcoholism dealing mostly with its mental phenomena, as these men see it.

By contacting personally those who are getting results from the book these ex-alcoholics expect to establish new centers. Experience has shown that as soon as any community contains three or four active members, growth is inevitable, for the good reason that each member feels he must work with other alcoholics or perhaps perish himself.

Will the movement spread? Will many of these recoveries be permanent? No one can say. Yet, we at this hospital, from our observation of many cases, are willing to record our present opinion as a strong "Yes" to both questions.

II
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+++Message 382. Dr. Silkworth, Psychological
Rehabilitation of Alcoholics.
From: Fiona Dodd 7/1/2002 1:11:00 PM

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From Lash William (Bill)

Psychological Rehabilitation of Alcoholics

By William D. Silkworth, M.D. from "The Medical Record", July 19, 1939

This is an expanded letter from Silky, parts of which can be found in the Big Book pages xxiii to xxx called "The Doctor's Opinion".

In a study of carefully recorded histories of alcoholics in our hospital, two important facts appear to be outstanding. Expressed briefly, they are:

- 1) A majority of our patients do not wish to have an alcoholic problem. They lead busy lives & would like to enjoy the fruits of their efforts, but they cannot stop the use of alcohol.
- 2) These patients cannot use alcohol in moderation.

The allergic nature of true alcoholism was postulated in a previous paper. We then endeavored to show that alcohol does not become a problem to every person who uses it, & that the use of alcohol in itself does not produce a chronic alcoholic.

The phenomenon of craving must be present as a manifestation of an allergy. Once established in an individual, one drink creates a desire for more. It sets this person aside as a separate entity. It creates a conflict that ends in a form of neurosis.

Looking further at the record of these unfortunates, we find that the majority could not drink in moderation from the very beginning. Whether 20, 30, or 50 years of age, they soon become a problem to themselves & to their friends.

Now in analyzing these alcoholic-minded persons, there is no one physical or psychical fact that is sufficiently constant to justify its use as the basis of an accepted theory. Such phrases as "escape from reality" & "inferiority complex" hold true for some, but not all, while heredity, only son, & implied spoiling in childhood, account for a few more. They all lead to confusion & have no answer.

Eliminate the constitutional psychopaths, the moral & mental defectives, & there remains a large class, neurotic in type, for whom something is worth doing. Remember we are discussing the chronic alcoholic, not the man who drinks more than is good for him but has no resulting problem.

Apparently all these people - good, bad & indifferent - have one thing in common: they cannot drink in moderation. We believe they show manifestations of an allergy to alcohol. They may abstain from use of alcohol for a month or a year, but on taking it again in any form, they at once establish the phenomenon of craving. This fact is well known to all alcoholics & creates their major problems in the early stages of their drinking habits. They

complain about it, too.

Why, we naturally ask, in the early years of drinking, while they still have the ability to choose, do these people not solve this problem by the complete discontinuance of alcohol? Some do, but many are like the rest of us who do things we know we should not, but like to do them anyway. Many really believe they can drink as they see others doing, & enjoy themselves. For many reasons, most of which are social or even physical, the idea of drinking is developed gradually. As this idea advances, daily life becomes more secure, but these men are unwilling to accept the facts as presented to them. The act of drinking (in the end damaging) is followed by certain comfortable emotional states that make it a pleasure. They prove to themselves that they can stop drinking by going on the wagon for varying periods, but even as life becomes more complicated, they still persist in that old, original idea. Up to this time, in what one might call the first period of alcoholism there are methods employed to help these persons return to a normal life & accept the fact that their old idea of drinking must be discarded forever. We ourselves have treated some of them with permanent results, but the majority continues along the primrose path. The history of these people & their families present from now on, one of the real tragedies of human life & is too well known to comment on further here.

This begins the second stage. Understood by no one & not understanding themselves, they enter an ever-widening circle, remorse, penance, new transgressions, new penance, until they lose all capacity for spontaneous action. They sacrifice themselves for a perversive idea & defying the law of nature (allergy) operating in their case, pay the penalty. They have lost all pleasure in normal life. Based on their underlying neurotic nature, they develop a compulsion type of thinking, and, although not a true compulsion neurosis, it is surely a borderline type. The patient now acts under what has been called by Wechsler a psychic imperative, the dreaded terminal state of paralysis of the will. The predisposing factor in bringing about this definite state of insecurity is the conflict brought about by alcoholism.

It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss the complications of the obsessional neurosis, which are, in fact, the most elastic of all the neuroses, but in this particular type it seems to permit a retreat from the ever-increasing anxieties induced by the advancing chronic alcoholism. This compulsive thinking is apparently a purely intellectual process occurring more frequently among persons of relatively higher intellectual attainment, from which class, by the way, comes the average chronic alcoholic.

Characteristic of all compulsion types of thinking is the relatively good insight that accompanies them. The victim knows his impulse to drink is wrong but he is helpless before it. Wives may plead, friends argue, & employers threaten, but he is no longer amenable to impression. He is unable to resolve between opposing impulses. He cries out in agony, "I must stop, I cannot be like this; but I cannot stop; someone must help me."

If he has sufficient means, he has by now been treated by psychiatrists, good men, who fully realize the unfavorable prognosis, but who, often without remuneration, give freely of their time to help the victim. I have often seen psychoanalysis of an alcoholic, instead of breaking up the compulsive thinking; start the person further theorizing on his own illness.

We know that, as a rule, the only relief from psychoanalysis is in making the so-called transfer, & experience has taught us that this is gratifyingly successful if accomplished. If successful, it must be based on respect & confidence on the part of the patient. It can seldom be accomplished in this class of patients, except by one who has suffered in the same manner & has recovered. In other words, to accomplish the transfer of this compulsive idea by the plan we have seen developed, an ex-alcoholic who has recovered by the same means be the medium employed. Such a medium can explain convincingly, not only that the transfer of the compulsive thinking can be made, but also he can prove how he did it himself successfully.

We physicians have realized for a long time that some form of moral psychology was of urgent importance to alcoholics, but its application presented difficulties beyond our conception. What with our ultramodern standards, our scientific approach to everything, we are perhaps not well equipped to apply the powers of good lying outside our synthetic knowledge.

About four years ago, we hospitalized a young man for severe chronic alcoholism, &, while under our care he developed a plan that seemed to me to be a combination of psychology & religion. He never drank any form of alcohol again.

Later he requested the privilege of being allowed to tell his story to other patients &, perhaps with some misgiving, we consented. The cases we have followed through have been most interesting: in fact many of them are amazing. The unselfishness of these men as we have come to know them, the entire absence of profit motive & their community spirit, are indeed inspiring to one who has labored long & wearily in the field of alcoholism. They believe in themselves, & still more in the Power which pulls chronic alcoholics back from the gates of death.

Of course, prior to & in preparation for the application of this plan, it is, in my opinion, essential to detoxicate the alcoholics by hospitalization. You then have a subject whose brain is clear & whose mind is receptive & temporarily free from his craving. I hesitate here to attempt even an outline of the plan as employed by these men. Sufficient to say, perhaps, that following many failures, they gradually devised a plan or procedure that led them to make this so-called transfer to one greater than themselves, to God.

The whole story is admirably told in a book written by them entitled

"Alcoholics Anonymous". It would seem to me that they have wrung from the Eternal a new application of an old truth that is sufficient equipment to restore the patient in his fight for sobriety. The results seem to flow naturally from a follow-up of honest effort.

To make any such plan practical they have also projected this transfer beyond the individual to the group. The information of these men into groups, each one with the hand of fellowship passing on his experiences to others, helping those who have newly joined to adjust themselves, actively engaged in gathering in new members, seems to me the most practical application of their moral psychology, to assure their "transfer" of being permanent. (Although I have met some 30 or more of these ex-alcoholics. I relate my experience with two of them.)

About one year prior to this experience a man was brought in to be treated for chronic alcoholism. He had but partially recovered from a gastric hemorrhage & seemed to be a case of pathological mental deterioration. He had lost everything worthwhile in life, & was only living, one might say, to drink. He frankly admitted & believed that for him there was no hope. Following the elimination of alcohol there was found to be no permanent brain injury. He accepted the plan outlined in the book. One year later he called to see me, & I experienced a very strange sensation. I knew the man by name & partly recognized his features, but there all resemblance ended. From a trembling, despairing, nervous wreck, had emerged a man brimming over with self-reliance & contentment. I talked with him for some time, but was not able to bring myself to feel that I had known him before. To me he was a stranger, & so he left me. More than three years have now passed with no return to alcohol.

When I need a mental uplift, I often think of another case brought in by a physician, prominent in New York City. The patient made his own diagnosis, & deciding that his condition was hopeless, had hidden in a deserted barn, determined to die. He was rescued by a searching party, & in desperate condition brought to me. Following his physical rehabilitation, he had a talk with me in which he frankly stated he thought the treatment a waste of time & effort, unless I could assure him, which no one ever had, that in the future he could have the will power to resist the impulse to drink. His alcoholic problem was so complex, & his depression so great, that we felt his only hope would be through what we then called "moral psychology," & we doubted if even that would have any effect. However, he did adopt the ideas contained in this book. He has not had a drink for more than three years. I see him now & then, & he is as fine a specimen as one could wish to meet.

II
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++++Message 383. Pre-Manuscript "Bill's Story"
From: Fiona Dodd 7/1/2002 1:14:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

This is the first printed draft of the Big Book, which was mailed to various individuals for their comments and also as a fund raising tool. It is unclear at what time during the writing of the Big Book "Bill's Story" became chapter one. The language in this draft is in many ways different than the final manuscript. This illustrates the process of having many individuals add their opinions to the contents.

[archivist's note: All pages are 8.5" by 14"; marked text (underlined) means more than one letter was typed over another, or text was crossed out with x though still readable; marked text in red accurately reflects typos in the manuscript or strange language, marked text in brown accurately reflects hard to read areas in the manuscript]

[handwriting: "Wilson's original story"]

Pag

Page 1.

1. When I was about ten years old my Father and mother
2. agreed to disagree and I went to live with my Grandfather,
3. and Grandmother. He was a retired farmer and lumberman. As I
4. see him in retrospect, he was a very remarkable man After he
5. returned from Civil War he settled in the small Vermont
6. town where I was later to grow up. His original capital con-
7. sisted of a small, unimproved hillside farm, as sweet and
8. willing helpmeet, and enormous determination to succeed in
9. whatever he attempted. He was a man of high native intelli-
10. gence, a voracious reader, though little educated in the
11. school sense of the word. There was plenty of financial
12. sense in his make-up and he was a man of real vision. Under
13. other conditions he might well have become master of an in-
14. dustry or railroad empire.
15. My Grandmother brought into the world three children,
16. one of whom was my Mother. I can still seem to hear her tell-
17. ing of the struggle of those early days. Such matters as
18. cooking for twenty woodchoppers, looking after the diary,
19. making most of the clothes for the family, long winter rides
20. at twenty below zero to fetch my Grandfather home over snow-
21. bound roads, seeing him of long before daylight that he and
22. the choppers might have their access thawed out so that work
23. might begin on the mountaintop at daylight- this is the thought
24. of tradition upon which they nourished me. They finally
25. achieved their competence and retired late in life to enjoy

26. a well earned rest and the respect and affection of their

Page 2.

27. neighbors. They were the sort of people, I see now, who

28. really made America.

29. But I had other ideas - much bigger and better ones

30. so I thought. I was to be of the war generation which dis-

31. ipated the homely virtues, the hard earned savings, the

32. pioneering tradition, and the incredible stamina of your parents
parents

33. Grandfather and mine.

34. I too was ambitious - very ambitious, but very un-

35. disciplined. In spite of everyone's effort to correct that con-

36. dition. I had a genius for evading, postponing or shirking

37. those things which I did not like to do, but when thoroughly

38. interested, everything I had was thrown into the pursuit of

39. my objective. My will to succeed at special undertakings on

40. which my heart were set was very great. There was a persis-

41. tence, a patience, and a dogged obstinacy, that drove me on.

42. My Grandfather used to love to argue with me with the object

43. of convincing me of the impossibility of some venture or

44. another in order to enjoy watching me 'tilt at the windmill'

45. he had erected. One day he said to me - I have just been

46. reading that no one in the world but an Australian can make

47. and throw a boomerang. This spark struck tinder and every-

48. thing and every activity was instantly laid aside until it

49. could be demonstrated that he was mistaken. The woodbox was

50. not filled, no school work was done, nor could I hardly be

51. persuaded to eat or to go to bed. After a month or more of

52. this thing a boomerang was constructed which I threw around

Page 3.

53. the church steeple. On its return trip it went into trans-

54. ports of joy because it all but decapitated my Grandfather

55. who stood near me.

56. I presently left the country school and fared forth

57. into the great world I had read about in books. My first

58. journey took me only five miles to an adjoining town where I

59. commenced to attend a seminary well known in our section of

60. the state. Here competition was much more severe and I was

61. challenged on all sides to do the seemingly impossible. There

62. was the matter of athletics and I was soon burning with the

63. ambition to become a great baseball player. This was pretty

64. discouraging to begin with, as I was tall for my age, quite

65. awkward, and not very fast on my feet, but I literally worked

66. at it while others slept or otherwise amused themselves and

67. in my second year became captain of the team, whereupon my

68. interest began to languish, for by that time someone had told

69. me I had no ear for music, which I have since discovered is
70. almost true. Despite obstacles I managed to appear in a few
71. song recitals whereupon my interest in singing disappeared
72. and I got terribly serious about learning to play the violin.
73. This grew into a real obsession and to the consternation of
74. my teachers, grew in the last year and everyone else it be-
75. came the immediate cause of my failing to graduate. This was
76. my first great catastrophe. By this time I had become Presi-
77. dent of the class which only made matters worse. As in every
78. thing else I had even very good in certain courses of study

Page 4.

79. which took my fancy, and with others just the opposite,
80. indolence and indifference, being the rule, So it was that
81. the legend of infallibility I had built up around myself
82. collapsed.
83. In the ensuing summer I was obliged for the first
84. time to really address myself to the distasteful task of re-
85. pairing my failure. Although my diploma was now in hand, it
86. was by no means clear to my grandparents and parents what
87. they had better next try to do with me. Because of my interest
88. in scientific matters and the liking I had to fussing with
89. gadgets and chemicals, it had been assumed that I was to be
90. an engineer, and my own learnings were towards the electrical
91. branch of the profession. So I went to Boston and took the
92. entrance examination to one of the leading technical schools
93. in this country. For obvious reasons I failed utterly. It
94. was a rather heartbreaking matter for those interested in me
95. and it gave my self-sufficiency another severe deflation.
96. Finally an entrance was effected at an excellent
97. military college where it was hoped I would really be disci-
98. plined. I attended the University for almost three years
99. and would have certainly failed to graduate or come anywhere
100. near qualifying as an engineer, because of my laziness and
101. weakness mathematics. Particularly Calculus, in this
102. subject a great number of formulas have to be learned and
103. the application practiced. I remembered that I absolutely
104. refused to learn any of them or do any of the work whatever

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105. until the general principles underlying the subject had
106. been made clear to me. The instructor was very patient,
107. but finally through up his hands in disgust as I began to
108. argue with him and to hint pretty strongly that perhaps he
109. didn't quite understand them himself. So I commenced an in-
110. vestigation of the principles underlying Calculus in the
111. school library and learned something of the conceptions of
112. the great minds of Leibnitz and Newton whose genius had

113. made possible this useful and novel mathematical device.
114. Thus armed I mastered the first problem in the textbook and
115. commenced a fresh controversy with my teacher, who angrily,
116. but quite properly, gave me a zero for the course. Fortunately-
117. ly for my future at the University, I soon enabled to
118. leave the place gracefully, even heroically, for the
119. United States of America had gone to war.
120. Being students of a military academy school
121. the student boy almost to a man bolted for the first
122. officers training camp at Plattsburgh. Though a bit under
123. age, I received a commission a second lieutenant and got
124. myself assigned to the heavy artillery. Of this I was
125. secretly ashamed, for when the excitement of the day had
126. subsided and I lay in my bunk, I had to confess I did not
127. want to be killed. This bothered me terribly this suspicion
128. that I might be coward after all. I could not reconcile
129. it with the truly exalted mood of patriotism and idealism
130. which possessed me when I hadn't time to think. It was

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131. very very damaging to my pride, though most of this damage
132. was repaired later on when I got under fire and discovered
133. I was just like other people, scared to death, but willing
134. to face the music.
135. After graduating from an army artillery school,
136. I was sent to a post which was situated near a famous old
137. town on the New England coast ones famous for its deepxsea
138. whaling, trading and Yankee seagoing tradition. Here I made
139. two decisions. The first one, and the best, to marry. Th
140. second decision was most emphatically the worst I ever mad took up with
took up with
141. I made the acquaintance of John Barleycorn and decided that
142. I liked it him.
143. My wife to be
144. Here I set out upon two paths and little did I realize
145. how much they were diverge. In short I got married
146. and at about the same time, took my first drink and decided
147. that I liked it. But for undying loyalty of my wife
148. and her faith through the years, I should not be alive today.
149. She was a city bred person and represented a background and
150. way of life for which I had secretly longed. Her family
151. spent long summers in our little town. All of them were
152. highly regarded by the natives. This was most complimentary
153. for among the countrymen there existed strong and often un-
154. reasonable prejudices against city folks. For the most
155. part, I felt differently. Most city people I knew had money,
156. assurance, and what then seemed to me great sophistication.

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157. and Most of them had family trees. There were servants,
 158. fine houses, gay dinners, and all of the other things with
 159. which I was wont to associate power and distinction. All
 160. of them, quite unconsciously I am sure, could make me feel
 161. very inadequate and ill at ease. I began to feel woefully
 162. lacking in the matter of poise and polish and worldly know-
 163. ledge. Though very proud of the traditions of my own people,
 164. I sometimes indulged in the envious wish that I had been
 165. born under other circumstances and with some of these advan-
 166. tages. Since then immemorial I suppose the country boyshav
 167. thought and felt as I did have thought and felt as I did.
 168. These feelings of inferiority are I suspect responsible for
 169. the enormous determination many of them have felt to go out
 170. to the cities in quest of what seemed to them like true
 171. success. Though seldom revealed, these were the sentiments
 172. that drove me on from this point.
 173. The war fever ran high in the city near my
 174. post and I soon discovered that young officers were in
 175. great demand at the dinner tables of the first citizens of
 176. the place. Social differences were layed aside and every-
 177. thing was done to make us feel comfortable, happy, and heroic.
 178. A great many things conspired to make me feel that I was im-
 179. portant. I discovered that I had a somewhat unusual power
 180. over men on the drill field and in the barracks. I was about
 181. to fight to save the world for democracy. People whose
 182. station In life I had envied were receiving me as an equal.

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183. My marriage with a girl who represented all of the best
 184. things the city had to offer, was close at hand, and last,
 185. but not least, I had discovered John Barleycorn, Love, ad-
 186. venture, war, applause of the crowd, moments sublime and
 187. hilarious with intervals hilarious - I was a part of life
 188. at last, and very happy.
 189. The warnings of my people, the contempt
 190. which I had felt for those who drank, were put aside with
 191. surprising alacrity as I discovered what the Bronx cocktail
 192. could really do for a fellow. My imagination soared - my
 193. tongue loosened at last - wonderful vistas opened on all
 194. sides, but best of all my self consciousness - my gaucheries
 195. and my ineptitudes disappeared into thin air. I seemed to
 196. the life of the party. To the dismay of my bride I used to
 197. get pretty drunk when I tried to compete with more ex-
 198. perienced drinkers, but I argued, what did it matter, for
 199. so did everyone else at sometime before daylight. Then
 200. came the day of parting, of a fond leave taking of my brave
 In

201. wife. Amid that strange atmosphere which was the mixture
202. of sadness, high purpose, the feeling of elation that pre-
203. cedes an adventure of the first magnitude. Thus many of us
204. sailed for 'over there' and none of us knew if we should re-
205. turn. For a time, loneliness possessed me, but my new
206. friend Barleycorn always took care of that. I had, I thought
207. discovered a missing link in the chain of things that make
208. life worth while.

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209. Then we were in dear old England, soon to cross
210. the channel to the great unknown. I stood in Winchester
211. Cathedral the day before crossing hand in hand with head
212. bowed, for something had touched me then I had never felt
213. before. I had been wondering, in a rare moment of sober
214. reflection, what sense there could be to killing and
215. carnage of which I was soon to become an enthusiastic part.
216. Where could the Deity be - could there be such a thing -
217. Where now was the God of the preachers, the thought of which
218. used to make me so uncomfortable when they talked about him.
219. Here I stood on the abyss edge of the abyss into which
220. thousands were falling that very day. A feeling of despair
221. settled down on me - where was He - why did he not come-
222. and suddenly in that moment of darkness, He was there. I
223. felt an all enveloping, comforting, powerful presence.
224. Tears stood in my eyes, and as I looked about, I saw on the
225. faces of others nearby, that they too had glimpsed the great
226. reality. Much moved, I walked out into the Cathedral yard,
227. where I read the following inscription on a tombstone. 'Here
228. lies a Hampshire Grenadier, Who caught his death drinking
229. small good beer - A good soldier is ne'er forgot, whether
A
230. he dieth by musket or by pot.' The squadron of bombers
231. swept overhead in the bright sunlight, and I cried to myself
232. 'Here's to adventure' and the feeling of being in the great
233. presence disappeared, never to return for many years.
234. --

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235. I was twenty two, and a grizzled veteran of foreign wars.
236. I felt a tremendous assurance about my future, for was not
237. I the only officer of my regiment save one, who had re-
238. ceived a token of appreciation from the men. This quality
239. of leadership, I fancied, would soon place me at the head
240. of some great commercial organization which I would manage
241. with the same constant skill that the pipe organist does
242. his stops and keys.

243. The triumphant home coming was short lived. The
 244. best that could be done was to secure a bookkeeping job in
 245. the insurance department of the one of the large railroads.
 246. I proved to be a wretched and rebellious bookkeeper and could
 247. not stand criticism, nor was I much reconciled to my salary,
 248. which was only half the pay I had received in the army. When
 249. I started to work the railroads were under control of the
 250. government. As soon as they were returned my road was re-
 251. turned to its stockholders, I was promptly let out because I
 252. could not compete with the other clerks in my office. I was
 253. so angry and humiliated at this reverse that I nearly became
 254. a socialist to register my defiance of the powers that be,
 255. which was going pretty far for a Vermonter.
 256. To my mortification, my wife went out and got a
 257. position which brought in much more than mine had. Being ab-
 258. surdly sensitive, I imagined that her relatives and my newly
 259. made city acquaintances were snickering a bit at my predica-
 260. ment.

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261. Unwillingly, I had to admit, that I was not
 262. really trained to hold even a mediocre position. Though
 263. I said little, the old driving, obstinate determination to
 264. show my mettle asserted itself. Somehow, I would show these
 265. scoffers. To complete my engineering seemed out of the ques-
 of
 266. tion, partly because/my distaste for mathematics, My only
 267. other assets were my war experiences and a huge amount of
 268. ill-assorted reading. The study of law suggested itself, and
 269. I commenced a three year night course with enthusiasm. Mean-
 270. while, employment showed up and I became a criminal investi-
 271. gator for a Surety Company, earning almost as much money as
 272. my wife, who spiritedly backed the new undertaking. My day-
 273. time employment took me about Wall Street and little by
 274. little, I became interested in what I saw going on there.
 275. I began to wonder why a few seemed to be rich and famous
 276. while the rank and file apparently lost money. I began to
 277. study economics and business.
 278. Somewhat to the dismay of our friends, we moved
 279. to very modest quarters where we could save money. When we
 280. had accumulated \$1,000.00, most of it was placed in utility
 281. stocks, which were then cheap and unpopular. In a small way,
 282. I began to be successful in speculation. I was intrigued by
 283. the romance of business, industrial and financial leaders be-
 284. came my heroes. I read every scrap of financial history I
 285. could lay hold of. Here I thought was the road to power.
 286. Like the boomerang episode, I could think of nothing else.

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287. How little did I see that I was fashioning a weapon that
 288. would one day return and cut me to ribbons.
 289. As so many of my heroes commenced as lawyers,
 290. I persisted in the course, thinking it would prove useful.
 291. I also read many success books and did a lot of things that
 292. Horatio Algers's boy heroes were supposed to have done.
 293. Characteristically enough I nearly failed my
 294. law course as I appeared at one of the final examinations
 295. too drunk to think or write. My drinking had not become
 296. continuous at this time, though occasional embarrassing in-
 297. cidents might have suggested that it was getting real hold.
 298. Neither my wife or I had much time for social engagements
 299. and in any event we soon became unpopular as I always got
 300. tight and boasted disagreeably of my plans and my future.
 301. She was becoming very much concerned and fre-
 302. quently we had long talks about the matter. I waived her ob-
 303. jections aside by pointing out that red blooded men almost
 304. always drank and that men of genius frequently conceived
 305. their vast projects while pleasantly intoxicated, adding for
 306. good measure, that the best and most majestic constructions of
 307. philosophical thought were probably so derived.
 308. By the time my law studies were finished,
 309. I was quite sure I did not want to become a lawyer. I know
 310. that somehow I was going to be a part of that then alluring
 311. maelstrom which people call Wall Street. How to get into
 312. business there was the question. When I proposed going out

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313. on the road to investigate properties, my broker friends
 314. laughed at me. They did not need such a service and pointed
 315. out that I had no experience. I reasoned that I was partly qualified
 316. /as an engineer and as a lawyer, and that practically speaking
 317. I had acquired very valuable experience as a criminal investi-
 318. gator. I felt certain that these assets could not be capita-
 319. lized. I was sure that people lost money in securities be-
 320. cause they did not know enough about managements, properties,
 321. markets, and ideas at work in a given situation.
 322. Since no one would hire me and remembering that
 323. we now had a few thousand dollars, my wife and I conceived
 324. the hare-brained scheme of going out and doing some of this
 325. work at our own expense, so we each gave up our employment
 326. and set off in a motorcycle and side car, which was loaded
 327. down with a tent, blankets, change of clothes and three
 328. huge volumes of a well known financial reference service.
 329. Some of our friends thought a lunacy commission should be ap-
 330. pointed and I sometimes think they were right. Our first ex-
 331. ploit was fantastic. Among other things, we owned two shares

332. of General Electric, then selling at about \$300.00 a share.
333. Everyone thought it was too high, but I stoutly maintained
334. that it would someday sell for five or ten times that figure.
335. So what could be more logical than to proceed to the main of-
336. fice of the company in New York and investigate it. Naive
337. wasn't it? The plan was to interview ohe officials and get
338. employment there if possible. We drew seventy five dollars

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339. from our savings as working capital, vowing never to draw
340. another cent. We arrived at Schenectady, I did talk with
341. some of the people of the to company and became wildly en-
342. thusiastic over GE. My attention was drawn to the radio end
343. of the business and by a strange piece of luck, I learned
344. much of what the company thought about its future. I was
345. then able to put a fairly intelligent projection of the
346. coming radio boom on paper, which I sent to one of my brokers
347. in town. To replenish our working capital, my wife and I
348. worked on a farm nearby for two months, she in the kitchen,
349. and I in the haystack. It was the last honest manual work
350. that I did for many years.
351. The cement industry then caught my fancy and we
352. soon found ourselves looking at a property in the Lehigh
353. district of Eastern Pennsylvania. An unusual speculative
354. situation existed which I went to New York and described to
355. one of my broker friend . This time I drew blood in the
356. shape of an option on hundred shares of stock which
357. promptly commenced to soar. Securing a few hundred dollars
358. advance on this deal, we were freed of the necessity of work,
359. and during the coming year following year, we travelled all
360. over the southeast part of the United States, taking in power
361. projects, an aluminum plant, the Florida boom, the Birmingham
362. steel district, Muscle Shoals, and what not. By this time
363. my friends in New York thought it would pay them to really
364. hire me. At last I had a job in Wall Street. Moreover, I

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365. had the use of twenty thousand dollars of their money.
366. For some years the fates tossed horseshoes and golden bricks
367. into my lap and I made much more money than was good for me.
368. It was too easy.
take
369. By this time drinking had gotten to be a very
370. important and exhilarating place in my life. What was a
371. few hundred dollars when you considered it in terms of ex-
372. citement and important talk in the gilded palaces of jazz up-
373. town. My natural conservativeness was swept away and I began
374. to play for heavy stakes. Another legend of infallability

375. commenced to grow up around me and I began to have what is
376. called in Wall Street a following which amounted to many
377. paper millions of dollars. I had arrived, so let the scoffers
378. scoff and be damned, but of course, they didn't, and I made
379. a host of fair weather friends. I began to reach for more
380. power attempting to force myself onto the directorates of
381. corporations in which I controlled blocks of stock.
382. By this time, my drinking had assumed
383. serious proportions. The remonstrances of my associates ter-
384. minated in a bitter row, and I became a lone wolf. Though I
385. managed to avoid serious scrapes and partly out of loyalty,
386. extreme drunkenness, I had not become involved with the fair
it
387. sex, there were many unhappy scenes in my apartment, which
388. was a large one, as I had hired two, and had gotten the real
389. estate people to knock out the walls between them.

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390. In the spring of 1929 caught the golf fever. This
391. illness was about the worst yet. I had thought golf was
392. pretty tepid sport, but I noticed some of my pretty
393. important friends thought it was a real game and it
394. presented an excuse for drinking by day as well as by
395. night. Moreover some one had casually said, they didn't think
396. I would ever play a good game. This was a spark in a
397. powder magazine, so my wife and I were instantly off to the
398. country she to watch while I caught up with Walter Hagen.
399. Then too it was a fine chance to flaunt my money around
400. the old home town. And to carom lightly around the exclusive
401. course, whose select city membership had inspired so much
402. awe in me as a boy. So Wall Street was lightly tossed
403. aside while I acquired drank vast quantities of gin and
404. acquired the impeccable coat of tan, one sees on the faces
405. of the well to do. The local banker watched me with an
406. amused skepticism as I whirled good fat checks in and out
407. of his bank.
408. IN October 1929 the whirling movement in my bank
409. account ceased abruptly, and I commenced to whirl myself.
410. Then I felt like Stephen Leacock's horseman, it seemed as rapidly
411. though I were galloping/in all directions at once, for the
412. great panic was on. First to Montreal, then to New York, to
413. rally my following in stocks sorely needing support. A few
414. bold spirits rushed into the breach, but it was of no use. I
415. shed my own wings as the moth who gets too near to the candle
416. flame. After one of those days of shrieking inferno on the
417. stock exchange floor with no information available, I lurched
from
418. drunkenly at the hotel bar to an adjoining brokerage office

419. there at about 8 o'clock in the evening I feverishly searched
420. a huge pile of ticker tape and tore off about an inch of it.
421. It bore the inscription P.F.K.32.. The stock had opened at
422. 52 that morning. I had controlled over one hundred thousand
423. shares of it, and had a sizable block myself. I knew that I
424. was finished, and so were a lot of my friends.
425. I went back into the bar and after a few
426. drinks, my composure returned. People were beginning to jump
427. from every story of that great Tower of Babel. That was high
428.

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429. that I was not so weak. I realized that I had been care-
430. less, especially with other people's money. I had not paid
431. attention to business and I deserved to be hurt. After a few
432. more whiskeys, my confidence returned again, and with it
433. an almost terrifying determination to somehow capitalize this
434. mess and pay everybody off. I reflected that it was just
435. another worthwhile lesson and that there were a lot of
436. reasons why people lost money in Wall Street that I had not
437. thought of before.
438. My wife took it all like the great person she is.
439. I think she rather welcomed the situation thinking it
440. might bring me to my senses. Next morning, I woke early,
441. shaking badly from excitement and a terrific hangover. A
442. half bottle of Gin quickly took care of that momentary weak-
443. ness and I soon as business places were open I called a
444. friend in Montreal and said - "Well Dick, they have nailed my
445. hide to the barn door" - said he "The hell they have, come
446. on up". That is all he said and up we went.
447. I shall never forget the kindness and generosity
448. of this friend. Moreover I must still have carried one
449. horseshoe with me, for by the spring of 1930, we were living
450. in our accustomed style and I had a very comfortable credit
451. balance on the very security in which I had taken the
452. heaviest licking, with plenty of champagne and sound
453. Canadian whiskey, I began to feel like Napoleon returning
454. from Melba. Infallible again. No St Helena for me. Accustomed
455. as they were to the ravages of fire water in Canada in those
456. days, I soon began to outdistance most of my countrymen both
457. as a serious and a frivolous drinker.
458. Then the depression bore down in earnest and
459. I, having become worse than useless, had to be reluctantly
459. Though I had become manager of one of the departments of my
460. friend's business, my drinking and nonchalant cocksureness,
461. had rendered me worse than useless, so he reluctantly let me

462. go. We were stony broke again, and even our furniture
463. looked like it was gone, for I could not even pay next months
464. rent on our swank apartment.
465. We wonder to this day how we ever got out of
466. Montreal. But we did, and then I had to eat humble pie. We

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467. went to live with my Father and Mother-in-law where we
468. happily found never failing help and sympathy. I got a
469. job at what seemed to be a mere pittance of one hundred
470. dollars a week, but a brawl with a taxi driver , who got
471. very badly hurt, put an end to that . Mercifully, no one
472. knew it, but I was not to have steady employment for five
473. years, nor was I to draw a sober breath if I could help it.
474. Great was my humiliation when my poor wife was
475. obliged to go to work in a department store, coming home ex-
476. hausted night after night to find me drunk again. I became
477. a hanger-on at brokerage shops, but was less and less wel-
478. come as my drinking increased. Even then opportunities to
479. make money pursued me, but I passed up the best of them by
480. getting drunk at exactly the wrong time. Liquor had ceased
481. to be a luxury; It had become a necessity. What few
482. dollars I did make were devoted to keeping my credit good at
483. the bars. To keep out of the hands of the police and for
484. reasons of economy, I began to buy bathtub gin, usually two
485. bottles a day, and sometimes three if I did a real workman-
486. like job. This went on endlessly and I presently began to
487. awake real early in the morning shaking violently. Nothing
488. would seem to stop it but a water tumbler full of raw liquor.
489. If I could steal out of the house and get five or six
490. glasses of beer, I could sometimes eat a little breakfast.
491. Curiously enough I still thought I could control the situation
the
492. and there were periods of sobriety which would revive a flag-
493. ging hope of my wife and her parents. But as time wore on
494. matters got worse. My mother-inlaw died and my wife's health
495. became poor, as did that of my Father-in-law. The house in
496. which we lived was taken over by the mortgage holder. Still
497. I persisted and still I fancied that fortune would again shine
498. upon me. As late 1932 I engaged the confidence of a man
499. who had friends with money. In the spring and summer of that
500. year we raised one hundred thousand dollars to buy securities
501. at what proved to be an all time low point in the New York
502. stock exchange. I was to participate generously in the
503. profits, and sensed that a great opportunity was at hand. So
504. ????

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505. prodigious bender a few days before the deal was to be
506. closed.
507. In a measure thsi did bring me to senses.
508. Many times before I had promised my wife that I had stopped
509. forever. I had written her sweet notes and had inscribed
510. the fly leaves of all the bibles in the house with to that
511. effect. Not that the bible meant so much, but after all
512. it was the book you put your hand on when you were sworn in
513. at court. I now see, however, that I had no sustained de-
514. sire to stop drinking until this last debacle. It was only
515. then that I realized it must stop and forever. I had come
516. to fully appreciate that once the first drink was taken,
517. there was no control Why then take this one? That was it-
518. never was alcohol to cross my lips again in any form. There
519. was, I thought, absolute finality in this decision. I had
520. been very wrong, I was utterly miserable and almost ruined.
521. This decision brought a great sense of relief, for I knew
522. that I really wanted to stop. It would not be easy, I was
523. sure of that, for I had begun to sense the power and cunning
524. of my master - John Barleycorn. The old fierce determination
525. to win out settled down on me - nothing, I still thought,
526. could overcome that aroused as it was. Again I dreamed
527. of my wife smiling happily, as I went out to slay the dragon.
528. I would resume my place in the business world and recapture
529. the lost regard of my fiends and associates. It would take
530. a long time, but I could be patient. The picture of myself
531. as a reformed drunkard rising to fresh heights of achive-
532. ment, quite carried me away with happy enthusiasm. My wife
533. caught the spirit for she saw at last that I really meant
534. business.
535. But in a short while I came in drunk. I could
536. give no real explanation for it. The thought of my new re-
537. solve had scarcely occurred to me as I began. There had
538. been no fight - someone had offered me a drink, and I had
539. taken it, casually, remarking to myself that one or two
540. would not harm a man of my capacity. What had become of my
541. giant determination? How about all of that self searching I
542. had done? Why had not the thought of my past failures and
543. my new ambitions come into my mind? What of the intense de-

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544. sire to make my wife happy? Why hadn't these things - these
545. powerful incentives arisen in my mind to stay my hand as I
546. reached out to take that first drink? Was I crazy? I hated
547. to think so, but I had to admit that a condition of mind re-
548. sulting in such an appalling lack of perspective came pretty
549. near to being just that.
550. Then things were better for a time. I was

551. constantly on guard. After two or three weeks of sobriety
 552. I began to think I was alright. Presently this quiet con-
 553. fidence was replaced by cocksureness. I would walk past my
 554. old haunts with a feeling of elation - I now fully realized
 555. the danger that lurked there. The tide had turned at last -
 556. and now I was really through. One afternoon on my way home
 557. I walked into a bar room to make a telephone call, suddenly
 558. I turned to the bartender and said "Four Irish whiskies -
 559. water on the side" - As he poured them out with a surprised
 560. look, I can only remember thinking to myself - "I shouldn't
 561. be doing this, but here's how to the last time". As I
 562. gulped down the fourth one, I beat on the bar with my fist
 563. and said for "God's sake, why have I done this again?" Where
 564. had been my realization of only this morning as I had
 565. passed this very place, that I was never going to drink again
 566. I could give no answer, mortification and the feeling of
 567. utter defeat swept over me. The thought that perhaps I
 568. could never stop crushed me. Then as the cheering warmth
 569. of these first drinks spread over me, I said - "Next time
 570. I shall manage better, but while I am about it, I may as
 571. well get good and drunk". And I did exactly that.
 572. I shall never forget the remorse, the horror
 573. the utter hopelessness of the next morning. The courage to
 574. rise and do battle was simply not there. Before daylight
 575. I had stolen out of the house, my brain raced uncontrollably.
 576. There was a terrible feeling of impending calamity.
 577. feared even to cross a street, lest I collapse and be run
 578. over by an early morning truck. Was there no bar open? Ah,
 579. yes, there was the all night place which sold beer - though
 580. it was before the legal opening hour, I persuaded the man be-
 581. hind the food counter that I must have a drink or perhaps die

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582. on the spot. Cold as the morning was, I must have drunk
 583. a dozen bottles of ale in rapid succession. My writhing
 584. nerves were stilled at last and I walked to the next corner
 585. and bought a paper. It told me that the stock market had
 586. gone to hell again - "What difference did it make anyway,
 587. the market would get better, it always did, but I'm in hell
 588. to stay - no more rising markets for me. Down for the count-
 589. what a blow to one so proud. I might kill myself, but no -
 590. not now," These were some of my thoughts - then I felt
 591. dazed - I groped in a mental fog - mere liquor would fix
 592. that - then two more bottles of cheap gin. Oblivion.
 593. The human mind and body is a marvelous
 594. mechanism, for mine withstood this sort of thing for yet
 595. another two years. There was little money, but I could al-
 596. ways drink. Sometimes I stole from my wife's slender purse

597. when the early morning terror of madness was upon me. There
 598. were terrible scenes and though not often violent, I would
 599. sometimes do such things as to throw a sewing machine, or
 600. kick the panels out of every door in the house. There were
 601. moments when I swayed weakly before an open window or the
 602. medicine chest in which there was poison - and cursed my-
 603. self for a weakling. There were flights from the city to
 604. the country when my wife could bear with me no longer at
 605. home Sometimes there would be several weeks and hope would
 606. return, especially for her, as I had not let her know how
 607. defeated I really was, but there was always the return to
 the
 608. conditions still worse. Then came a night I when the physi-
 609. cal and mental torture was so hellish that I feared I would
 610. take a flying leap through my bedroom window sash and all
 611. and somehow managed to drag my mattress down to the kitchen
 612. floor which was at the ground level. I had stopped drinking
 613. a few hours before and hung grimly to my determination that
 614. I could have no more that night if it killed me. That very
 615. nearly happened, but I was finally rescued by a doctor who
 616. prescribed chloral hydrate, a powerful sedative. This reliev-
 617. ed me so much that next day found me drinking apparently
 618. without the usual penalty, if I took some sedative occasion-
 619. ally. In the early spring of 1934 it became evident to

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620. everyone concerned that something had to be done and
 621. that very quickly. I was thirty pounds underweight, as I
 622. could eat nothing when drinking, which was most of the
 623. time. People had begun to fear for my sanity and I fre-
 624. quently had the feeling myself that I was becoming deranged.
 625. With the help of my brother-in-law, who is a
 626. physician I was placed in a well known institution for the
 627. bodily and mental rehabilitation of alcoholics. It was
 628. thought that if I were thoroughly cleared of alcohol and
 629. the brain irritation which accompanies it were reduced, I
 630. might have a chance. I went to the place desperately hoping
 631. and expecting to be cured. The so-called bella donna
 632. treatment given in that place helped a great deal. My mind
 633. cleared and my appetite returned. Alternate periods of
 634. hydro-therapy, mild exercise and relaxation did wonders for
 635. me. Best of all I found a great friend in the doctor who
 636. was head of the staff. He went far beyond his routine duty
 637. and I shall always be grateful for those long talks in which
 638. explained that when I drank I became physically ill and that
 639. this bodily condition was usually accompanied by a mental
 640. state such that the defense one should have against alcohol
 641. became greatly weakened, though in no way mitigating my

642. early foolishness and selfishness about drink, I was greatly
 643. relieved to discover that I had really been ill perhaps for
 644. several years. Moreover I felt that the understanding and
 645. fine physical start I was getting would assure my recovery,
 646. Though some of the inmates of the place who had been there
 647. many times seemed to smile at that idea. I noticed however
 648. that most of them had no intention of quitting; they merely
 649. came there to get reconditioned so that they could start in
 650. again. I, on the contrary, desperately wanted to stop and
 651. strange to say I still felt that I was a person of much more
 652. determination and substance than they, so I left there in
 653. high hope and for three or four months the goose hung high.
 654. In a small way I began to make some progress in business.
 655. Then came the terrible day when I drank again
 656. and could not explain why I started. The curve of my de-
 657. clining moral and bodily health fell of like a ski jump.
 658. After a hectic period of drinking, I found myself again in

[archivist's note: the typewritten manuscript text continues correctly with
 page 23, but line numbers 659 - 679 remain unknown]

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680. Everyone became resigned to the certainty that I
 681. would have to be confined somewhere ore else stumble
 682. along to a miserable end, but there was soon to be
 683. proof that indeed it is often darkest before dawn,
 684. for this proved to be my last drinking bout, and I am
 685. supremely confident that my present happy state is to be
 686. for all time.
 687. Late one afternoon near the end of that
 688. month of November I sat alone in the kitchen of my home.
 689. As usual, I was half drunk and enough so that the keen
 690. edge of my remorse was blunted. With a certain satis-
 691. faction I was thinking that there was enough gin se-
 692. creted about the house to keep me fairly comfortable
 693. that night and the next day. My wife was at work and I
 694. resolved not to be in too bad shape when she got home.
 695. My mind reverted to the hidden bottles and at I carefully
 696. considered where each one was hidden. These things must
 697. be firmly in my mind to escape the early morning tragedy
 698. of not being able to find at least a water tumbler full
 699. of liquor. Just as I was trying to decide whether to risk
 700. concealing one of the full ones within easy reach of my
 701. side of the bed, the phone rang.
 702. At the other end of the line Over the
 703. wire came the voice of an old school friend and drinking
 704. companion of boom times. By the time we had exchanged
 705. greetings, I sensed that he was sober. This seemed

706. strange, for it was years since anyone could remember his
707. coming to New York in that condition. I had come to think
708. of him as another hopeless devotee of Bacchus. Current
709. rumor had it that he had been committed to a state institu-
710. tion for alcoholic insanity. I wondered if perhaps he had
711. not just escaped. Of course he would come over right away
712. and take dinner with us. A fine idea that, for I then
713. would have an excuse to drink openly with him. Yes, we
714. would try to recapture the spirit of other days and per-
715. haps my wife could be persuaded to join in, which in self
716. defense she sometimes would. I did not even think of the
717. harm I might do him. There was to be a pleasant, and I

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718. hoped an exciting interlude in what had become a
round
719. dreary waste of loneliness. Another drink stirred my
720. fancy; this would be an oasis in the dreary waste. That
721. was it - an oasis. Drinkers are like that.
722. The door opened and there he stood, very
723. erect and glowing. His deep voice boomed out cheerily -
724. the cast of his features - his eyes - the freshness of
725. his complexion - this was my friend of schooldays. There
726. was a subtle something or other instantly apparent even to
727. my befuddled perception. Yes - there was certainly some-
728. thing more - he was inexplicably different - what had
729. happened to him?
730. We sat at the table and I pushed a
731. lusty glass of gin flavored with pineapple juice in his
732. direction. I thought if my wife came in, she would be re-
733. lieved to find that we were not taking it straight -
734. "Not now", he said. I was a little crest
735. fallen at this, though I was glad to know that someone
736. could refuse a drink at that moment - I knew I couldn't.
737. "On the wagon?" - I asked. He shook his head and looked
738. at me with an impish grin .
739. "Aren't you going to have anything?" -
740. I ventured presently.
741. "Just as much obliged, but not tonight"
742. I was disappointed, but curious. What had got into the
743. fellow - he wasn't himself.
744. "No, he's not himself - he's somebody
is
745. else - not just that either - he was his old self, plus
746. something more, and maybe minus something". I couldn't put
747. my finger on it - his whole bearing almost shouted that
748. something of great import had taken place.
749. "Come now, what's this all about", I

750. asked. Smilingly, yet seriously, he looked straight at me
751. and said "I've got religion".
752. So that was it. Last summer an alco
753. alcoholic crackpot - this fall, washed in the blood of the
754. Lamb. heavens, that might be even worse. I was thunder-
755. struck, and he, of all people. What on earth could one

Page 25.

756. say to the poor fellow.
757. So I finally blurted out "That's
758. fine", and sat back waiting for a sizzling blast on sal-
759. vation and the relation of the Cross, the Holy Ghost, and
760. the Devil thereto. Yes, he did have that starry edy
761. eyed look, the old boy was on fire all right. Well, bless
762. his heart, let him rant . It was nice that he was sober
763. after all. I could stand it anyway, for there was plenty
764. of gin and I took a little comfort that tomorrow's ration
765. wouldn't have to be used up right then.
766. Old memories of Sunday School - the profit
767. temperance pledge, which I never signed - the sound of the
768. preacher's voice which could be heard on still Sunday
769. mornings way over on the hillside beyond the railroad
770. tracks,- My grandfather's quite scorn of things some
771. church people did to him - his fair minded attitude that
772. I should make up my mind about these things myself - his
spheres
773. convictions that the fears really had their mooxx music -
774. but his denial of the right of preachers to tell him how
775. he should listen - his perfect lack of fear when he men-
776. tioned these things just before his death - these memories
777. surged up out of my childhood as I listened to my friend.
778. My own gorge rose for a moment to an all time high as my
779. anti-preacher - anti-church folk sentiment welled up in-
780. side me. These feelings soon gave way to respectful at-
781. tention as my former drinking companion rattled on.
782. Without knowing it, I stood at the great turning point of
783. my life - I was on the threshold of a fourth dimension
784. of existence that I had doubtfully heard some people des
785. describe and others pretend to have.
786. He went on to lay before me a simple
787. proposal. It was so simple and so little
788. complicated with the theology and dogma
789. I had associated with religion that by
790. degrees I became astonished and delighted.
791. I was astonished because a thing so simple
792. could accomplish the profound result I now
793. beheld in the person of my friend. To say that
794. I was delighted is putting it mildly , for I

795. relized that I could go for his program also.
 796. Like all but a few u human beings I had truele
 797. believed in the existence of a power greater
 798. than myself true athiests are really very scarce.
 799. It always seemed to me more difficult and illogical
 800. to be an athiest than to believe there is a
 801. certain amount of law and order and purpose
 802. underlying the universe. The faith of an athiest
 803. in his convictions is far more blind then that
 804. of the religionist for it leads inevitably to
 805. the absurd conclusion that the vast and ever
 806. changing cosmos originally grew out of a cipher,
 807. and now has arrived at its present state thru
 808. a series of haphazard accidents, one of which
 809. is man himself. My liking for things scientific
 810. had encouraged to look into such matters as
 811. a theory of evolutionthe nature of matter itself
 812. as seen thru the eyes of the great chemists
 813. physicists and astronomers and I had pondered
 814. much on the question of the meaning of life itself.
 815. The chemist had shown me that material matter
 816. is not all what it appears to be. His studies
 817. point to the conclusion that the eliments and there
 818. meriad combinations are but in the last last
 819. analysis nothing but different arrangements
 820. of that universal something which they are pleased
 821. to call the electron. The physist and the
 822. astronomer had shown me that our universe .
 823. moves and evolves according to many precise
 824. and well understood laws. They tell me to the
 825. last second when the sun will be next eclipsed
 826. at the place I am now standing, or the very day
 827. several decades from now When Hallyes comet
 828. will make its turn about the sun. Much to my
 829. x interest I learned from these men that great
 830. cosmic accidents occur bringing about conditions
 831. which are not exceptions to the law so much
 832. as they result in new and unexpected developements
 833. which arise logically enough once the so called
 834. accident has occured. It is highly probable for
 835. example-that our earth is the only planet in the
 836. solar system upon which man could evolve - and it
 837. is claimed by some astronomers that the chance
 838. that similar planets exist elsewhere in the universe
 839. is rather small. There would have to be a vast
 840. number of coincidences to bring about the exact
 841. conditions of light,warmth, food supply, etc.
 842. to support life as we know it here. But I used to

843. ask myself why regard the earth as an accident
844. in a system which evidences in so many respects the
845. greatest law and order' If all of this law
846. existed then could there be so much law and no
847. intelligence? And if there was an intelligence
848. great enough to materialize and keep a universe in
849. order it must necessarily have the power to create
850. accidents and make exceptions.
851. The evolutionist brought great logic to bear
852. on the proposition that life on this planet began
853. with the lowly omebia , which was a simple cell
854. residing in the oceans of Eons past. Thru countless
855. & strange combinations of logic and accident man
856. and all other kinds of life evolved but man possessed
857. a consciousness of self, a power to reason and to
858. choose , and a small still voice which told him the
859. difference between right and wrong and man became
860. increasingly able to fashion with his hands and
861. with his tools the creations of his own brain .
862. He could give direction and purpose to natural laws
apparently
863. and so he, created new things for himself and of
864. [line number skipped in the typewritten manuscript]
865. and do he apparently created new things for himself an
866. [line number skipped in the typewritten manuscript]
867. out of a tissue composed of his past experience
868. and his new ideas. Therefore man tho' resembling
869. other forms of life in many ways seems to me
870. very different. It was obvious that in a limited
871. fashion he could play at being a God himself .
872. Such was the picture I had of myself and the
873. world in which I lived, that there was a mighty
874. rythm, intelligence and purpose behind it all
875. despite inconsistencies. I had rather strongly
876. believed.
877. But this was as far as I had ever got toward
878. the realization of God and my personal relationship
879. to Him. My thoughts of God were academic and
880. speculative when I had them, which for some years
881. past had not been often. That God was an intelligence
882. power and love upon which I could absolutely rely
883. as an individual had not seriously occurred to me.
884. Of course I knew in a general way what theologians
885. claimed but I could not see that religious persons
886. as a class demonstrated any more power, love and
887. intelligence than those who claimed no special
888. dispensation from God tho' I grant de that
889. christianity ought to be a wonderful influence

890. I was annoyed,irked and confused by the attitudes
891. they took, the beliefs they held and the things
892. they had done in the name of Christ,. People like
893. myself had been burned and whole population put
894. to fire and sword on the pretext they did not
895. believe as christians did. History taught that
896. christians were not the only offenders in this
897. respect. It seemed to me that on the whole
898. it made little difference whether you were
899. Mohamadem, Catholic, Jew, Protesant or Hotentot.
900. You were supposed to look askance at the other
901. fellews approach to God. Nobody could be saved
902. unless they fell in with your ideas. I had a
903. great admiration for Christ as a man, He practised
904. what he preached and set a marvelous example.
905. It was not hard to agree in Principle with
906. His moral teachings bit like most people, I perfered
907. to live up to some moral standard but not to others.
908. At any rate I thought I understood as well as any
909. one what good morals were and with the exceptions
910. of my drinking I felt superior to most christians
911. I knew. I might be week in some respects but at
912. least I was not hypocritical, So my interest in
913. christianity other than its teaching of moral
914. principles and the good I hoped it did on
915. balance was slight.
916. Sometimes I wished that I had been religiously
917. trained from early childhood that I might have the
918. comfortable assurance about so many things I found
919. it impossible to have any definate convictions
920. upon. The question of the hereafter, the many
921. theological abstractions and seeming contradictions
922. - these things were puzzling and finally annoying
923. for religious people told me I must believe
924. a great many seemingly impossible things to be one
925. [line number skipped]
926. of them. This insistance on their part plus a
927. powerful desire to posess the things of this life
928. while there was yet time had crowded the idea of
929. the personal God more and more out of my mind as the
930. years went by. Neither were my convictions strengthea
931. by my own misfortunes. The great war and its
932. aftermath seemed to more certainly demonstrate the
933. omnipotence of the devil than the loving care of
934. an all powerful God
935. Nevertheless here I was sitting opposite a
936. man who talked about a personal God who told me
937. how hw had found Him, who described to me how I

938. might do the same thing and who convinced me
 939. utterly that something had come into his life
 940. which had accomplished a miracle. The man was
 941. trasformed ; there was no denying he had been re-
 942. born. He was radiant of something which soothed
 943. my troubled spirit as tho the fresh clean wind of
 944. mountain top blowing thru and thru me I saw and
 945. felt and in a great surge of joy I realized
 946. that the great presence which had made itself felt
 947. to me that war time day in Winchester Cathedral
 948. had again returned.
 949. As he continued I com menced to see myself as in
 950. as in an unearthly mirror. I saw how ridiculous and
 951. futile the whole basis of my life had been. Standing in
 952. the middle of the stage of my lifes setting I had been
 953. feverishly trying to arrange ideas and things and people
 954. and even God, to my own liking, to my own ends and to
 955. promote what I had thought to be true happiness. It was
 956. trully a sudden and breath taking illumination. Then the
 957. idea came - " The tragic thing about you is, that you
 958. have been playing God." That was it. Playing God. Then
 959. the humor of the situation burst upon me, here was I a
 960. tiny grain of sand of the infinite shores of Gods great
 961. universe and the little grain of sand, had been trying
 962. to play God. He really thought he could arrange all of
 963. the other little grains about him just to suit himself.
 964. And when his little hour was run out, people would
 965. weep and say in awed tones-' How wonderful'.
 966. So then came the question - If I were no
 967. longer to be God than was I to find and perfect
 968. the new relationship with my creator - with the Father
 969. of Lights who presides over all ? My friend laid down
 970. to me the terms and conditions which were simple but
 971. not easy, drastic yet broad and acceptable to honest
 972. men everywhere, of whatever faith or lack thereof. He did not
 973. tell me that these were the only t erms - he merely said that
 974. they were terms that had worked in his case. They were spiritual
 975. principles and rules of practice he thought common to all of the
 976. worthwhile religions and philosophies of mankind. He regarded them
 977. as stepping stones to a better understanding of our relation to the
 978. spirit of the universe and as a practical set of directions setting
 979. forth how the spirit could work in and through us that we might
 980. become spearheads and more effective agents for the promotion
 981. of Gods Will for our lives and for our fellows. The great thing
 982. about it all was its simplicity and scope, no really religious
 983. persons belief would be interferred with no matter what his training ,
 984. For the man on the street who just wondered about such things, it ws
 985. Was a providential approach, for with a small beginning of faith

986. and a very large dose of action along spiritual lines he could be
 987. sure to demonstrate the Power and Love of God as a practical
 988. workable twenty four hour a day design for living.
 989. This is what my friend suggested I do. One: Turn my face
 990. to God as I understand Him and say to Him with earnestness - complete
 991. honesty and abandon- that I henceforth place my life at His
 992. disposal and direction forever. TWO: that I do this in the presence
 993. of another person, who should be one in whom I have confidence and if
 994. I be a member of a religious organization, then with an appropriate
 995. member of that body. TWO: Having taken this first step, I should
 996. next prepare myself for Gods Company by taking a thorough and ruth-
 997. less inventory of my moral defects and derelictions. This I should
 998. do without any reference to other people and their real or fancied
 999. part in my shortcomings should be rigorously excluded-" Where have I
 1000. failed-is the prime question. I was to go over my life from the
 1001. beginning and ascertain in the light of my own present understanding
 1002. where I had failed as a completely moral person. Above all things in
 1003. making this appraisal I must be entirely honest with myself. As an
 1004. aid to thoroughness and as something to look at when I got through
 1005. I might use pencil and paper.First take the question of honesty.
 1006. Where, how and with whom had I ever been dishonest? With respect to
 1007. anything. What attitudes and actions did I still have which were not
 1008. completely honest with God with myself or with the other fellow. I ws
 1009. was warned that no one can say that he is a completely honest
 1010. person. That would be superhjman and peiple aren't that way.
 1011. Nor should I be misled by the thought of how honest I am in
 1012. some particulars. I was too ruthlessly tear out of the past all
 1013. of my dishonesty and list them in writing. Next I was to explore
 1014. another area somewhat related to the first and commonly a very
 1015. defective one in most people. I was to examine my sex conduct
 1016. since infancy and rigorously compare it with what I thought that
 1017. conduct should have been. My friend explained to me that peoples
 1018. ideas throughout the world on what constitutes perfect sex conduct
 1019. vary greatly Consequently, I was not to measure my defects in this
 1020. particular by adopting any standard of easy virtue as a measuring
 1021. stick, I was merely to ask God to show me the difference between
 1022. right and wrong in this regard and ask for help and strength and
 1023. honesty in cataloguing my defects according to the true dictates
 1024. of my own conscience. Then I might take up the related questions
 1025. of greed and selfishness and thoughtlessness. How far and in what
 1026. connection had I strayed and was I straying in these particulars?
 1027. I was assured I could make a good long list if I got honest enough
 1028. and vigorous enough. Then there was the question of real love for
 1029. all of my fellows including my family, my friends and my enemies
 1030. Had I been completely loving toward all of these at all times
 1031. and places. If not, down in the book it must go and of course
 1032. everyone could put plenty down along that line.

(Resntments, self pity,fear,pride.)

1033. my friend pointed out that resentment, self-pity, fear, in-
 1034. feriority, pride and egotism, were thingsx attitudes which
 1035. distorted ones perspective suc and usefulness to entertain such
 1036. sentiments and attitudes was to shut oneself off from God and
 1037. people about us. Therefor it would be necessary for me to
 1038. examine myself critically in this respect and write down my
 1039. conclusions.
 1040. Step number three required that I carefully go over my
 1041. personal inventory and definatly arrive at the conclusion that
 1042. I was now willing to rid myself of all these defects moreover
 1043. I was to understand that this would not be accomplished by
 1044. [line number skipped]
 1045. myself alone, therefore I was to humbly ask God that he take
 1046. these handicaps away. To make sure that I had become really
 1047. honest in this desire, I should sit down with whatever person
 1048. I chose and reveal to him without any reservations whatever
 1049. the result of my self appraisal. From this point out I was
 1050. to stop living alone in every particular. Thus was I to ridx keep
 1051. myself free in the future of those things which shut out
 1052. God's power, It was explained that I had been standing in my
 1053. own light, my spiritual interior had been like a room darkened
 1054. by very dirty windows and this was an undertaking to wipe them
 1055. off and keep them kleen. Thus was my housekeeping to be ac-
 1056. complished, it would be difficult to be really honest with my-
 1057. self and God and perhaps to be completely honest with another
 1058. person by telling an other the truth, I could however be ab-
 1059. solutely sure that my self searching had been honest and effective.
 1060. Moreover I would be taking my first spiritual step towards my
 1061. fellows for something I might say could be helpful in leading
 1062. the person to whom I talked a better understanding of himself.
 1063. In this fashion I would commence to break down the barriers
 1064. which my many forms of self will had erected. Warning was
 1065. given me that I should select a person who would be in ho way
 1066. injured or offended by what I had to say, for I could not expect
 1067. to commence my spiritual growth at the w expense of another.
 1068. My friend told me that this step was complete, I would surely
 1069. feel a tremendous sense of relieve accompaning by the absolute
 1070. conviction that I was on the right t road at last.
 1071.10 Step number four demanded that I frankly admit that my
 1072. deviations from right thought and action had injured other people
 1073. therefore I must set about undoing the damage to the best of my
 1074. ability. It would be advisable to make a list of all the
 1075. persons I had hurt or with whom I had bad relations. People I
 1076. disliked and those who had injured me should have perfered
 1077. attention, provided I had done them injury or still entertained
 1078. any feeling of resentment towards them . Under no sircumstances

1079. was I to consider their defects or wrong doing , then I was to
 1080. approach these people telling them I had commenced a way of life
 1081. which required that I be on friendly and helpful terms with every
 1082. body; that I recognized I had been at fault in this particular
 1083. that I was sorry for what I had done or said and had come to set
 1084. matters right insofar as I possibly could. Under no circumstances
 1085. was I to engage in argument or controversy. My own wrong doing
 1086. was to be admitted and set right and that was all. Assurance was
 1087. to be given that I was prepared to go to any length to do the
 1088. right thing. Again I was warned that obviously I could not
 1089. make amends at the expense of other people, that judgement and
 1090. discretion should be used lest others should be hurt. This sort
 1091. of situation could be postponed until such conditions became such
 1092. that the job could be done without harm to anyone. One could
 1093. be contented in the meanwhile by discussing such a matter frankly
 1094. with a third party who would not be involved and of course on a
 1095. strictly confidential basis. Great was to be taken that one
 1096. did not avoid situations difficult or dangerous to oneself on
 as possible
 1097. such a pretext . The willingness to go the limit as fast had
 1098. to be at all times present. This principle of making amends
 1099. was to be continued in the future for only by keeping myself free
 2100. of bad relationships with others could I expect to receive the
 1101. Power and direction so indispensable to my new and larger useful-
 1102. ness . This sort of discipline would help me to see others as
 1103. they really are; to recognize that every one is plagued by various
 1104. of self will; that every one is in a sense actually sick with
 1105. some form of self; that when men behave badly they are only dis-
 1106. playing symptoms of spiritual ill health .
 1107. one is not usually angry or critical of another when he
 1108. suffers from some grave bodily illness and I would
 how
 1109. presently see senseless and futile it is to be disturbed
 1110. by those burdened by their own wrong thinking . I was to
 1111. entertain towards everyone a quite new feeling of tolerance
 1112. patience and helpfulness I would recognize more and more
 1113. that when I became critical or resentful I must at all
 1114. costs realize that such things were very wrong in me
 1115. and that in some form or other I still had the very
 1116. defects of which I complained in others. Much emphasis
 1117. was placed on the development of this of mind toward others.
 1118. No stone should be left unturned to achieve this end.
 1119. The constant practice of this principle frequently ask-
 1120. ing God for His help in making it work under trying
 1121. circumstances was absolutely imperative . The drunkard
 1122. especially had to be most rigorous on this point for one
 1125. burst of anger or self pity might so shut him out from his
 1124. new found strength that he would drink again and with us

1125. that always means calamity and sometimes death.
1126. This was indeed a program, the thought of some of the
to
1127. things I would have admit about myself to other people
1128. was most distasteful - even appalling. It was only to o
1129. plain that I had been ruined by my own colosal egotism
1130. and selfishness, not only in respect to drinking but with
1131. regard to everything else. Drinking had been a simptom
1132. of these things. Alcohol had submerged my inferiorities
1135. and puffed up my self esteem, body had finally rebelled
1134. and I had some fatally affeated , my thinking and action
1135. was woefully distorted thru infection frim the mire of
1136. self pity, resentment, fear and remorse in which I now
1137. wallowed . The motive behing a certain amount of generosity,
1138. kindness and the meticulous honesty in some directions
1139. upon which I had prided myseld was not perhaps not so
1140. good after all. The motive had been to get personal
1141. satisfaction for myself, perhaps not entirely but on the
1142. whole this was true. I had sought the glow which comes
applause
1143. with thexflaws and Praise rendered me by others.
1144. I began to see how actions good in themselves might avail
1145. little because of wrong motive , I had been like the man
1146. who feels that all is well after he has condesendingly
1147. taken turkeys to the poor at Xmas time . How clear it
1148. suddenly became that all of my thought and action, both
1149. good and bad, had arisen out of a desire to make myself
1150. happy and satisfied. I had been self centered instead of
1151. God centered. It was now easy to understand why the taking
this
1152. of a simple childlike attitude toward God plus a drastic
1153. program of action which would place himx would bring
1154. results. How evident et became that mere faith in God
1155. was not enough. Faith had to be demonstrated by works
1156. and there could be no works or any worth while demonstrations
1157. until I had fitted myself for the undertaking and had be-
1158. come a suitable table agent thru which God might express Himself.
1159. There had to be a tremendous personal housecleaning, a
1160. sweeping away of the debris of past wilfullness , a restoring
1161. of broken relationships and a firm resolve to make God's
1162. will my will . I must stop forcing things , Imust stop
1163. trying to mold people and situations to my own liking.
1164. Nearly every one is taught that human willpower and ambition
1165. if good ends are sought are desirable attributes. I too
1166. had clung to that conception but I saw that it was not good
1167. enough,nor big enough , nor powerful enough . My own will had
1168. failed in many areas of my live. With respect to
1169. alcohol it had become absolutely inopperative . My ambitions,

1170. which had seemed worthy at some time,had been frustrated.
1171. Even had I been successful , the persuit of my desires
1172. would have perhaps harmed others add their relizationw
1173. would have added little or nothing to anyones peace,
1174. happiness or usefulness. I began to see that the clashing
1175. ambitions and designs of even those who sought what to them
1176. seemed worthy ends , have filled the world with discord and
1177. misery . Perhaps people of this sort created more havouqx
1178. havoc than those confessedly imoral and krucked crooked
1179. I saw even the most useful people die unhappy and defeated.
1180. All because some one else had behaved badly or they had

[archivist's note: the rest of this manuscript is currently missing]

II
IIIIIIIIII

+++Message 384. "There Is A Solution" & the 2nd Draft
of "Bill"s Story"
From: Fiona Dodd 7/1/2002 1:17:00 PM

II
IIIIIIIIII

From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

(This is another "pre-original manuscript" draft of chapters in the Big Book.
Please notice that the order of these first two chapters are reversed. Also,
part of the Rowland Hazzard/Dr. Carl Jung story is moved to the front of
"There Is A Solution", and the end of the same chapter mentions that they were
planning for the next few chapters to be personal narratives. God bless and
take it easy! - Barefoot Bill)

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
CHAPTER #1
THERE IS A SOLUTION

"I have never seen one single case in which alcohol-mindedness was established
in the sense you have it, that ever recovered." These fateful words were
spoken to a man we know, some seven years ago. The speaker was a noted doctor
and psychologist having world eminence in his specialty. The men to whom he
spoke, like many of us before and since, had searched the world for the
solution of his alcoholic problem. He was a man of ability, good sense, and
high character. For many years before his encounter with this noted doctor, he
had floundered from one sanitarium to another. He had consulted several of the
best know American psychologists. On their recommendations he had gone to
Europe and confined himself for a year in an institution. There he was under
the care of this celebrated physician.

Though many bitter experiences had given him ground for skepticism, he left the place with unusual confidence. He felt that his physical and mental condition was unusually good. Above all, he had acquired such a profound knowledge of the inner workings of his mind and its hidden springs, that relapse was unthinkable. Nevertheless, he was drunk in a few weeks. More baffling still, he could give no satisfactory explanation of why he became that way. So he went back to his doctor, whom he admired, and asked him point blank why he could not recover. Why was it that he who wished above all things to regain self control, who seemed quite rational and well balanced with respect to other problems, had proved to be non compos mentis with respect to alcohol? He begged the doctor to tell him the real truth, and he got it. In the doctor's judgment he was utterly hopeless; he could never regain his position in society and he would have to place himself permanently in an institution or hire a bodyguard if he expected to live long. That was a great physician's opinion.

But our friend lives, and is a free man. He does not need a bodyguard, nor is he confined. He can go anywhere on this earth without disaster, provided he remains willing to maintain a certain simple attitude.

We, of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, know one hundred men who were as hopeless as our friend. They are free men also. They have an answer for this terrific problem that really works. We are ordinary Americans. All sections of this broad land and many of its occupations are represented. Among us are to be found many political, economic, social and religious backgrounds. We are a crowd of people who normally would mix like oil and water. But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful. We are like the passengers of a great liner the moment after shipwreck has been averted. Comradery, celebration, joyousness and democracy pervade the ship from steerage to Captain's table. But unlike the feelings of a ship's passengers at such a time, our joy in escape from disaster does not abate as we go our several ways.

There are potent reasons why this is so. We have been through many shipwrecks and, at long last, there has been the final one at which it seemed we must certainly perish. We have been the victims of a common calamity. We collectively experienced almost every known variety of human misadventure and misery. We have inhabited sanitariums, insane asylums, and occasionally jails. We have felt the pangs of remorse as shadows deepened over our disintegrated lives and homes. We are sure hell promises no more exquisite mental and physical tortures than we have survived. Ask anyone who has flirted with delirium tremens. We have seen undertaking after undertaking, and ambition after ambition, wilted and snuffed out, usually, at the very point of success. Some of us have attempted self-destruction, and have felt sorry we failed in our attempts. In earlier years, most of us thought well of our abilities, our qualities and our futures. It has been hard to bear the dawning realization that there was no bearable future. Those successive smashing blows to our

pride and self-sufficiency have been intolerable. Consequently, an important ingredient of the powerful cement which binds us is the feeling we have been victims of a common disaster.

However universal these troubles have been, they of themselves would never have bound us together, as we are now joined. The tremendous fact for every one of us has been the discovery of a common solution. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in brotherly and harmonious action. This is the great news we are confident this book will bear to those who suffer as we have.

An illness of this sort - and we have come to believe it an illness - involves those about us in a way that no other human sickness can. If a person has cancer, all are sorry for him, and no one is angry or hurt. Presently he dies honorably enough. After the anguish of parting has worn away, people murmur, "Wasn't it too bad about Jim." But with the alcoholic illness, there goes a seeming never-ending annihilation of all the things worth while in life. It encompasses all who are near and dear to the sufferer, the misunderstanding, fierce resentment, and financial insecurity.

Therefore we are certain this volume should attempt to inform, instruct and comfort all of those who are, or may be affected. This is pretty much everyone. As a group, we have had four years of intensive and unique experience on which to draw. During this time we have intimately touched some two hundred cases of acute alcoholism. The approach to these situations has been unusual. It has always consisted of men who have found the answer for themselves. They carry the message to others as a part of their own cure. Hardly a day passes that we are not in contact with those who are trying to rid themselves of an appalling state of affairs. We have found great satisfaction in the knowledge that we may be so happily and peculiarly used. Where one alcoholic approaches another upon the basis we are about to discuss, things happen and results follow which were formerly impossible. Highly competent psychologists who have dealt with us - often fruitlessly we are afraid - complain it is almost impossible to persuade an alcoholic to discuss his or her situation without reserve. Strangely enough, wives, parents and intimate friends usually find us more unapproachable than do the psychologist and the doctor.

On the contrary, an ex-alcoholic who has found this solution, who is properly armed with certain medical and psychiatric information, can generally win the complete confidence of another in a few hours. Until that high degree of understanding is reached, little or nothing can be accomplished. The fact that the man who is making the approach has had the same difficulty, that he obviously knows what he is talking about, that his whole deportment shouts at the new prospect that here is a man with a real answer, that there are no fees to pay, no axes to grind, nor people to please, no lectures to be endured, no attitude of holier than thou, nor anything whatever except the sincere desire to be helpful; these are the conditions we have found necessary. After such an

approach many take up their beds and walk again.

None of us makes a sole vocation of this work, nor do we think it would increase its effectiveness if we did. We feel that elimination of the liquor problem is but a beginning. A much more important demonstration of the principles upon which we became well lies before us in our respective homes, occupations and affairs. Every one of us spends much of his spare time in the sort of effort which we are going to describe to you. A few are fortunate enough to be so situated that they can give nearly all of our time. If we keep on the way we are going there is little doubt that much good will result. But the problem would hardly be scratched. Those of us who live in large cities are overcome by the reflection that within gunshot of us hundreds are dropping into oblivion this very minute. Many could surely recover if they had the opportunity we have enjoyed. How then shall we present the thing which has been so freely given us?

More harm than good might be done should a description of our work get into the ordinary channels of publicity in such a way as to involve our personal identities. We might be besieged by numbers of people who only imagine they wish to give up drinking, whose families think they ought to stop, who are badly impaired mentally or whose alcoholism is complicated by other difficult states. Though we dealt only with those cases who really want to recover we could not begin to handle them on a personal basis. There are not enough of us, nor have we accumulated the experience that would be necessary. Yet, the desire to get this message to the thousands who can use it bears down with much weight upon us all.

We have concluded it might be helpful to publish an anonymous volume such as you are about to read, setting forth the problem as it appears to us. We shall bring to bear upon it our combined experience and knowledge, which ought to suggest a useful program of action and attitude for everyone concerned in a drinking situation. Of necessity there must be much discussion in these pages of matters medical, psychiatric, social, and religious. We are aware that these subjects, from their very nature, are controversial. Nothing would please us so much as to write a book which would contain no basis for contention or argument. We shall do our utmost to achieve that ideal. Certain activities and attitudes have proved vital to the successful solution of our drinking problem. These, we think, ought not conflict with the views of honest men the world over, whatever their race, creed or color. This is the spirit in which we shall try to proceed, remembering always that we may be mistaken here and there on matters concerning which there can be honest differences of opinion. We are most anxious not to appear in the role of those who would preach or reform. We deem such attitudes ill befit the kind of people we have been and, to some extent, still are.

For example, it is surprising that most of us have not developed a downright hatred for John Barleycorn and all his works; that we have not become intolerant and impatient with those who like to drink. Many people sincerely believe that they should not be deprived of an age-old privilege and pleasure just because a lot of people are softened and made sick by it. Perhaps they are right. Some of us may differ but we all respect their views. We are sure we have a way of life which, if adopted generally, would render excessive

drinking a stupid and impossible practice. Most of us sense strongly that real tolerance of other people's shortcomings and viewpoints, and a sincere respect for the opinions of mankind, are attitudes which enhance our usefulness to others. In the last analysis our very lives, as ex-alcoholics, depend upon the constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs.

If you have read this far, you have commenced to ask yourself why it is that all of us became so desperately ill from drinking. Doubtless you are still more curious to discover how and why, in the face of expert opinion to the contrary, we have recovered from an utterly hopeless condition of mind and body. If you are an alcoholic who wants to get over it, you are already beginning to say to yourself, "What do I have to do?"

The main purpose of this book is to answer such questions specifically. We shall tell you what we have done. Before going into a detailed discussion it may be well to summarize some points as we see them.

How many time people have said to us: "I can take it or leave it alone." - "Why don't you drink like a gentleman or quit?" - "That fellow can't handle his liquor." - "Why don't you try beer and wine?" - "Lay off the hard stuff." - "His will power must be weak." - "He could stop it if he wanted to." - "She's such a sweet girl, I should think he'd stop for her." - "The doctor told him that if he ever drank again it would kill him, but there he is all lit up again."

Now these are commonplace expressions with respect to drinkers which we hear all the time. Back of them is a world of ignorance and misunderstanding. We see that those expressions pertain to people who react very differently to alcohol. We observe in them the moderate drinker who has little trouble in abandoning liquor altogether, if any good reason appears why he should do so. Then we have a certain type of hard drinker. He may have only a bad habit which will gradually impair him physically and mentally. Perhaps it will cause him to die a few years before his time. If a sufficiently strong reason, such as ill health, falling in love, change of environment, the warning of a doctor becomes operative, this fellow can also stop. He may find it difficult and troublesome, and may discover it advantageous to get medical or psychiatric aid.

But what about the real alcoholic who may have started off as a moderate drinker, who may or may not become a continuous hard drinker, but who, at some stage of his

drinking career, begins to lose all control of his liquor consumption, once he starts to drink? Here is a fellow who has been puzzling you, especially in his lack of control. He does absurd, incredible, tragic things while drinking. He is so often Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. He is seldom pleasantly intoxicated. Almost always, he is more or less insanely drunk. His disposition while drinking does not square with the man you know when sober. When normal he may be one of the finest fellows in the world. Yet let him drink for a day, and he frequently becomes disgustingly, and even dangerously anti-social. He has a positive genius for getting tight at exactly the wrong moment, particularly when some important decision or engagement must be met. He is often perfectly sensible and well balanced concerning everything in the world, save liquor. With respect to that, he is incredibly dishonest and selfish. He often has

ahead of him a promising career. No matter what his station in life, or his educational or intellectual rank, he often possesses special abilities, skills, and aptitudes. How many times have we seen him use these gifts to build up a promising prospect for his family and himself, then pull the structure down on his head by a senseless series of sprees. He is the fellow who goes to bed so intoxicated he ought to sleep the clock around. Yet we find him feverishly searching early next morning for the bottle he misplaced the night before. If he can afford it, he may have liquor concealed all over his house to be absolutely sure no one gets his supply away from him to throw down the waste pipe.

Every business man's convention presents a like spectacle. Certain individuals are always found, going about from room to room in the early morning, shaking like the proverbial aspen leaf. They tell you they are dying for a drink, and can't wait until the bar opens. This is very annoying to their brother businessmen who may have been twice as indiscreet the night before. The average tired delegate wants to sleep. On awakening he has no more inconvenience than a headache and the foolish feeling he was much too skittish last evening. But not so with alcoholics, no matter how drunk when they get to bed.

As matters grow worse for our alcoholic friend, he begins to use a combination of high-powered sedative and liquor to quiet his nerves so he can go to work. Then comes those days when he simply cannot make it, and he gets drunk all over again. Finally he begins to appear at hospitals and sanitariums, or he gets in with his doctor who may give him a dose of morphine or some high voltage sedative to taper off with. This is by no means a comprehensive picture of the true alcoholic, as our behavior patterns vary considerably. Perhaps this description should identify him roughly in the reader's mind. But you are asking yourself, "Why does he behave like this? If hundreds of experiences have shown him that one drink means another debacle with all its attendant suffering and humiliation, how is it he takes that one drink? What has become of the common sense and will power that he sometimes displays with respect to other matters?" Perhaps there never will be a full answer to your questions. Psychiatrists and medical men vary considerably in their opinions as to why the alcoholic reacts differently than other people. No one is sure why, once a certain point is reached, all of the king's horses and all of the king's men can seem to do nothing about it whatever. We cannot answer that riddle. But we have, out of our experience and observations of each other, arrived at some pretty definite conclusions, which in the main, we think correct. While they may not entirely square with what others say, they do meet our needs, and they do make sense to us. We are positive that nine out of ten serious drinkers who honestly review their own histories will agree with us. To begin with, it is self evident that the reaction of our bodies and nervous systems to alcohol has become radically different, in fact abnormal as compared with the ordinary person; or with even many hearty drinkers. It may take ten or fifteen years of stiff drinking to bring about this condition in a body predisposed to alcoholism, though a very short period does the trick sometimes. Most of us now realize that our reaction to alcohol was somewhat abnormal from the very beginning; that we were actually "hooked" and sickened

by it long before grave symptoms, or incapacity to attend to business put in an appearance. The nature of these symptoms, and the bodily conditions we think lie back of them, we shall cover later on. It is enough now to say that we believe ourselves to have been sick, and not just foolish, when we have been drinking.

We know that while the alcoholic keeps away from drink as he may do for months or years, he does not suffer from a bodily malady. Equally positive are we, that once he takes any alcohol whatever into his system, something happens, both in the bodily and mental sense, which makes it virtually impossible for him to stop. We believe the experience of any alcoholic will abundantly confirm that.

These observations would be academic and pointless if our friend never took the first drink, thereby setting in motion the terrible cycle that everyone has seen so many times. Therefore, the real problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than in his body. If you ask him why he started on that last bender the chances are he will offer you any one of a hundred alibis, many of which we shall list further on. Sometimes these excuses have a certain plausibility, but none of them really makes sense in the light of the havoc an alcoholic's drinking bout creates. They sound to you like the philosophy of the man who, having a headache, beats himself on the head with a hammer so that he couldn't feel the ache. If you draw this fallacious reasoning to the attention of an alcoholic, he will laugh it off, or become irritated and refuse to talk. Once in a great while he may tell the truth. And the truth, strange to say, is usually that he has no more idea why he took that first drink than you have. It is true that numbers of drinkers have excuses with which they are satisfied some of the time. But in their hearts they really do not know why they do it. Once this malady has a real hold, they are a baffled lot. Nearly all of them have the obsession that somehow, some day, they will beat the game. But deep down in them, they often suspect they are down for the count.

How surely they have already gone with the wind, few of them realize. In a vague way their families and friends sense that these people are abnormal. But everybody hopefully waits the day when the sufferer will rouse himself from his lethargy and assert his power of will.

The tragic truth is that, if the man be a real alcoholic, the happy day will never arrive. In the early part of this chapter, we cited the case of a man who was frankly told of his utter hopelessness by a physician who is possibly the world's leading authority on the subject. At a certain point in the drinking of every alcoholic, he passes into a state where the most powerful desire to stop drinking is of absolutely no avail. Let us again emphasize that this unhappy situation has already arrived in virtually every case, long before it is suspected. The fact is that most alcoholics, for reasons yet obscure, have lost the power of choice with respect to drink. Our so-called will power with respect to that area of thinking and action becomes practically non-existent. We are unable at certain times, no matter how well we understand ourselves, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago. The almost certain consequences that follow taking a glass of beer do not crowd

into the mind and deter us. If these thoughts occur, they are hazy, and become readily supplanted with the old threadbare idea that this time we shall handle ourselves like other people. There is a complete failure of the kind of defense that would keep one from putting his hand on a hot stove. The alcoholic says to himself in the most casual way: "It won't burn me this time, so here's how." Or perhaps he doesn't think at all. How many times have some of us begun to drink in this nonchalant way, and then after the third or fourth, pounded on the bar and said to ourselves, "For God's sake, how did I ever get started again," only to have that thought supplanted by "Well, I'll stop with the sixth drink," or "What's the use anyhow?"

When this sort of thinking is fully established in an individual with alcoholic tendencies, he has become, in our opinion, just like our friend who consulted the great doctor. He has placed himself beyond all human aid, and unless locked up, is virtually certain to die, or go permanently insane. It is a grim business indeed. These stark and ugly facts which have been confirmed by legions of alcoholics throughout history. But for the grace of God, there would have been one hundred more convincing demonstrations among us. It is amazing how many want to stop, but cannot.

There is a solution, and how glorious to us was the knowledge of it. Almost none of us liked the self searching, the leveling of our pride, the confession of short comings which the process requires for its successful consummation. But we saw that it really worked in others, and we had come to believe in the hopelessness and futility of life as we had been living it. When, therefore, we were approached by those in whom the problem had been solved, there was nothing left for us but to pick up the simple kit of spiritual tools laid at our feet. We have found much of heaven right here on this good old earth, and have been rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence that none of us dreamed could be a fact.

And the great fact is just this, and no less; that we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences, which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows and toward God's universe. It works! The central fact of our lives today is the absolute certainty that the Creator has entered into our hearts and lives in a way which is to us a marvel. He has commenced to accomplish those things, which by no stretch of the imagination could we do by ourselves.

If by chance you are, or have begun to suspect that you are, an alcoholic, we think you have no middle-of-the-road solution. You are in a position where life is becoming impossible, and if you have passed into the region from which there is no return through human aid, you have but two alternatives. One is to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best you can. Or you can surely find what we have found, if you honestly want to, and are willing to make the effort. After years of living on a basis which now seems wholly false, we did not become rightly related to our Creator in a minute. None of us have found God in easy lessons, but He can be found by all who are willing to put the task ahead of all else.

Some of our alcoholic readers may think they can do without God. Let us complete the conversation our friend was having with the European man of medicine. As you will recall, the doctor was saying, "I have never seen one

single case in which alcohol mindedness was established in the sense you have it that ever recovered." Naturally our friend felt at that moment as though the gates of hell had closed on him with a clang. He said to the doctor, "Is there no exception?" The doctor answered, "Yes, there is just one. Exceptions to cases such as yours have been occurring now and then since early times. Sporadically, here and there, once in a while, alcoholics have had what are called vital religious experiences. To me these occurrences are phenomena. They appear to be in the nature of huge emotional displacements and rearrangements. Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them. In fact, I have been trying to produce some such emotional rearrangement within you. With many individuals the methods which I have been employing are successful, but they are never successful with an alcoholic of your type."

Upon hearing this, our friend was somewhat relieved, for he reflected that after all he was a good church member. His hope was promptly dashed by the doctor, who told him that his faith and his religious convictions were very good as far as they went, but that in his case they did not spell the vital experience so absolutely imperative to displace his insanity with respect to matters alcoholic.

Our friend found himself in a hideous dilemma. So have we, when it began to look to us as though we must have something to go off the deep end. Our friend finally had such an experience. We in our turn sought the same happy outcome, with all of the ardor of drowning men clutching at straws. But what seemed at first a flimsy reed has proved to be the loving and powerful hand of God. A new life has been given us. Or, if you prefer, a design for living that really works.

The distinguished American psychologist, William James, once wrote a book, "Varieties of Religious Experience", which indicates a multitude of ways in which men have found God. As a group, or as individuals, we have no desire to convince anyone that God can be discovered only in some particular way. Anyone who talked with us would soon be disabused of the idea. If what we have learned, and felt, and seen, means anything at all, it indicates that all of us, whatever our race, creed or color, are the children of a living Creator, with whom we may form a new relationship upon simple and understandable terms the moment any of us become willing enough and honest enough to do so. For those having religious affiliations there is nothing disturbing to their beliefs or ceremonies. All such testify to that effect. Hence there is no friction in our simple common denominator.

We have concluded that it is no concern of ours as a group with what religious bodies we shall identify ourselves as individuals. We feel that this should be an entirely one's own affair, which one is bound to decide for the best in the light of his past associations, or his present choice. Not all of us have joined religious bodies, but we are mostly agreed that by so joining, one would be taking a step toward new growth and availability for God's purpose. In the next few chapters are personal narratives. Each individual in these stories describes in his own language and from his own point of view the way in which he found or rediscovered the living God. We shall tell a number of

these, that the reader may get a fair cross section, and a clear cut idea of what has really happened. We hope no one will be disturbed that these accounts contain so much self revelation of the kind some people might feel in bad taste. Non-alcoholic readers should consider that many men and women desperately in need may see these pages. It is only by disclosing ourselves and our problems to complete view that any of them will be persuaded to say, "Yes, I am one of them; I must have this thing."

CHAPTER #2 BILL'S STORY

At the age of ten I went to live with my grandfather grandmother - their ancestors settled the section of Vermont in which I was to grow up. Grandfather was a retired farmer and lumberman; he nurtured me on a vigorous pioneering tradition. I see, now, that my grandfather was the kind of man who helped make America.

Little did anyone guess I was to be of the war generation, which would squander the savings, the pioneering traditions and the incredible stamina of your grandfather and mine. Ambitious but undisciplined - that I was. There was a genius for postponing, evading and shirking; but a certain dogged obstinacy persistence drove me to succeed at special undertakings upon which my heart was set.

Especially did I reveal in attacking the difficult or the impossible.

Grandfather , for instance, that no one but an Australian could make and throw the boomerang. No school work was done, no wood box filled and little sleep was there, until a boomerang had circled the church steeple, returning to almost decapitated him. Have accomplished this, my interest ceased.

So it was with my ambition to be a ball player, for I was finally elected captain of the team at the little Seminary I attended after leaving country school. Someone told me I could never sing, so I took up voice until I had appeared in a recital, then, as with the boomerang, my interest ended abruptly. I had commenced to fuss with the violin. This became such an obsession that athletics, school work, and all else went by the board much to everyone's consternation. I carried fiddling so far I failed to graduate. It was most embarrassing, for I was president of the Senior Class. So collapsed a certain legend of infallibility I had built around myself. Repairing this failure, I attempted to enter a leading technical school. Because of fierce enthusiasms I had displayed for matters chemical and electrical, it was assumed I was destined to become an engineer. At Boston, I failed the entrance examinations dismally. My people were heartbroken and my self sufficiency got another severe deflation.

Finally I commenced electrical engineering at an excellent military college, where it was fervently hoped I would get disciplined. No such thing happened. As usual I had good grades when interested but often failed when not. There was an illuminating instance concerning my calculus teacher. Not one formula would I learn, until all of the theory underlying the subject was made clear. At the library, I pored over the researches of Leibnitz and Newton, whose genius had made calculul possible. Loving controversy, I argued much with my instructor, who quite properly have me a zero, for I had solved only the first

problem of the course. At this juncture, and quite conveniently for me, the United States decided to go to war.

We students bolted, almost to a man, for the First Officers Training Camp at Plattsburgh. I was commission second lieutenant of artillery, electing that branch rather than aviation or infantry. For when I lay in my bunk at night, I had to confess I did not want to be killed. This suspicion of cowardice bothered me, for it couldn't be reconciled with the truly exalted patriotism which took possession when I hadn't time to think. Later, under fire abroad, I was relieved to learn I was like most men: scared enough, but willing to see it through. I was assigned to a post on the New England coast. The place is famous for its Yankee trading and whaling traditions.

Two far reaching events took place here. I married; had my first drink and liked it. My wife was city bred. She represented a way of life for which I secretly longed. To be her kind meant fine houses, servants, gay dinners, cultivated conversation and a much envied sophistication. I often felt a woeful lack of poise and polish. These inferiorities were later to drive me cityward in quest of success, as I suppose they have many a country boy. War fever ran high, and I was flattered that the first citizens of town took us to their homes and made me feel comfortable and heroic. So here was love, applause, adventure, war; moments sublime with intervals hilarious. I was part of life at last.

My gaucheries and ineptitudes magically disappeared, as I discovered the Siphon and the Bronx Cocktail. Strong warnings and the prejudices of my people concerning drink evaporated.

Then came parting, with its bizarre mixture of sadness, high purpose, the strange elation which goes with adventure having fatal possibilities. Many of us sailed for 'Over There'. Loneliness seized me, only to be whisked away by my charming companion, Prince Alcohol.

We were in England. I stood in Winchester Cathedral with head bowed, in the presence of something I had never felt before. Where now was the God of the preachers? Across the Channel thousands were perishing that day. Why did He not come? Suddenly in that moment of darkness - He was there! I felt an enveloping comforting Presence. Tears stood in my eyes. I had glimpsed the great reality.

Much moved, I wandered through the Cathedral yard. My attention was caught by a doggerel on an old tombstone.

"Here lies a Hampshire Grenadier
Who caught his death
Drinking cold small beer
A good soldier is ne'er forgot
Whether he dieth by musket
or by pot."

My mood changed. A squadron of fighters roared overhead. I cried to myself, "Here's to Adventure". The feeling of being in the great presence disappeared. Homecoming arrived at last. Twenty two and a veteran of foreign wars! I fancied myself a leader, for had not the men of my battery given me a special token of appreciation? Leadership, I imagined, would place me at the head of vast enterprises which I would manage with the assurance of a great pipe

organist at his stops and keys.

Soon enough, I was brought to earth. A position at half the army pay, from which I was presently discharged as a poor and rebellious bookkeeper, was the first salutation of unsentimental industry. My resentment was so great I nearly turned Socialist; which in Vermont is downright treason. Humiliation and more came when my wife got a much better job and commenced to pay the bills. I fancied my new city friends were snickering at my predicament. Unwillingly, I had to admit, that I was not trained for anything. What then to do?

Characteristically, I nearly failed my law course. At one of the finals I was too drunk to think or write. Though drinking was not continuous, it frequently disturbed my wife. We had long talks, when I would still her forebodings by saying men of genius conceived their vast projects when jingled; that the most majestic constructions of philosophic thought were so derived.

When the law course was done, I knew the profession was not for me. The inviting maelstrom of The Street had me in its grip. Business and financial leaders were my heroes. Reminiscent of the boomerang episode, I became wholly absorbed and fascinated. Out of this tissue of drink and speculation I commenced to forge the weapon that one day would turn in its flight, and all but cut me to ribbons.

Both at work, and living modestly, my wife and I saved \$1,000.00. It went into utility stocks then cheap and unpopular. I rightly imagined that they would some day have a great rise. Failing to persuade my broker friends to send me out looking over factories and managements, my wife and I decided to go anyhow. I had a theory people lost money in stocks by not knowing markets, managements and the ideas at work in a given situation. I was to discover lots more reasons later on.

We quit our positions and off we romped on a motorcycle and side car stuffed with a tent, blankets, change of clothes, and three huge volumes of a financial reference service. Our friends almost wanted a lunacy commission appointed. Perhaps they were right. There had been some success at speculation, so we had a little money though we onced worked on a farm for a month to avoid drawing on our capital. It was the last honest manual work for many a day. The whole Eastern United States was covered in a year. At the end of it, strangely enough, my reports sent back to Wall Street procured for me a position there, and the use of what seemed to me a large sum of money. The exercise of an option brought in more money and we had several thousand dollars profit.

For the next few years fortune threw money and applause my way. I had arrived. My judgment and ideas were followed by many to the tune of paper millions. The great boom of the late twenties was soothing and swelling. Drink was taking an important and exhilarating part in my life. Loud talk in the jazz places uptown - we all spent in thousands, and chattered in millions. Scoffers could scoff and be damned. Of course they didn't, and I made a host of fair weather friends.

My drinking had assumed more serious proportions, going on all day and nearly every night. Remonstrance of my cooler associates terminated in a row, and I became a lone wolf. There were many unhappy scenes in our apartment. This, by

the way, was large, for I had rented two, and had the wall between knocked out. There had been no great infidelity. Loyalty to my wife, and sometimes extreme drunkenness, kept me out of those scrapes.

In 1929 I contracted golf fever. That is a terrible illness. We went at once to the country, my wife to applaud while I overtook Walter Hagen. Golf permitted drinking both by day and night. It was fun to carom around the exclusive course which had inspired such awe in me as a lad. I acquired the impeccable coat of tan seen upon the well-to-do. With amused skepticism the local banker watched me whirl fat checks in and out of his till.

Abruptly in October, 1929, the whirling movement ceased. Hell had broken loose on the New York Stock Exchange. After one of those days of inferno I wobbled from a hotel bar to a brokerage office. It was eight o'clock - five hours after the market close. The ticker still clattered. I was staring at an inch of the tape. It bore the inscription PFK - 32. It had been 52 that morning. I was done and so were many friends. The papers said men were already jumping to death from those towers of Babel that were High Finance. That disgusted me. Going back to the bar I felt glad I would not jump. My friends had dropped several millions since ten o'clock - so what? Tomorrow was another day. As I drank, the old fierce determination to win came back.

Next morning I called a friend in Montreal. He had plenty of money left, so he thought I had better come up. By the following spring we were living in our accustomed style. It was like Napoleon returning from Elba. No St. Helena for me. But I soon excelled as a serious and frivolous drinker, and my generous friend had to let me go. This time we stayed broke.

We went to live with my parents-in-law. I found a job; then lost it through a brawl with a taxi driver. Mercifully no one knew I was to have no real employment for five years nor hardly draw a sober breath. My wife began to work in a department store, coming home exhausted to find me drunk. I became a hanger on at brokerage places, less and less desired because of my habits.

Liquor ceased to be a luxury; it became a necessity. "Bathtub" gin, two bottles a day, and often three, got to be routine. Sometimes a small deal would net a few hundred dollars, and I would pay the bars and delicatessen. Endlessly this went on, and I began to wake early, shaking violently. A tumbler full of gin followed by half a dozen bottles of beer would be required if I ate any breakfast. I still thought I could control the situation. There were periods of sobriety which would renew my wife's hope.

But things got worse. The house was taken over by the mortgage holder, my mother-in-law died, my wife became ill, as did my father-in-law.

Then I had a promising business opportunity. Stocks were at the low point of 1932, and I had somehow formed a group to buy. I was to share generously in the profits. I went on a prodigious bender, and that chance vanished.

I woke up. This had to be stopped. I saw I could not take even one drink. I was through forever. Before then, I had written lots of sweet promises, but my wife happily observed that this time I meant business. And so I did.

Shortly afterward I came home drunk. There had been no fight. Where had been my high resolve? I simply didn't know. It hadn't even come to mind. Someone pushed a drink my way, and I had taken it. Was I crazy? I began to wonder, for

such an appalling lack of perspective came near being just that.

Sticking to my resolve I tried again. Some time passed. Confidence began to be replaced by cocksureness. I could laugh at the bars. Now I had what it takes!

One day I walked into a place to telephone. In no time I was beating on the bar asking myself how it happened. As the whisky rose to my head I told myself I would manage better next time, but I might as well get good and drunk then. I did just that.

The remorse, horror and hopelessness of the next morning is unforgettable. The courage to do battle was not there. My brain raced uncontrollably. There was a terrible sense of impending calamity. I hardly dared cross the street, lest I collapse and be run down by an early morning truck, for it was scarcely daylight. An all night place supplied me with a dozen glasses of ale. My writhing nerves were stilled at last. A morning paper told me the market had gone to hell again. Well, so had I. The market would recover but I wouldn't. That was a hard thought. Should I kill myself? No, not now. Then a mental fog settled down. Gin would fix that. So two bottles, and - oblivion.

The mind and body is a marvelous mechanism, for mine endured this agony two years more. Sometimes I stole from my wife's slender purse when the morning terror and madness were on me. Again I swayed dizzily before an open window, or the medicine cabinet where there was poison, cursing myself for a weakling. There were flights from city to country and back, as my wife and I sought escape. Then came the night when the physical and mental torture was so hellish I feared I would burst thru my window, sash and all. Somehow I managed to drag my mattress to a lower floor, lest I suddenly leap. A doctor came with a heavy sedative. Next day found me drinking both gin and sedative without the usual penalty. This combination soon landed me on the rocks, and my wife saw something had to be done and quickly. People feared for my sanity, and so did I. When drinking, which was almost always, I could eat little or nothing. I was forty pounds under weight.

My brother-in-law is a physician. Through his kindness I was placed in a nationally known hospital for the mental and physical rehabilitation of alcoholics. Under the so-called bella donna treatment my brain cleared. Hydro therapy and mild exercise helped much. Best of all, I met a kind doctor who explained, that though selfish and foolish, I had also been seriously ill, bodily and mentally. It relieved me somewhat to learn that in alcoholism, the will is amazingly weakened concerning drink, though frequently remaining strong in other respects. My incredible behavior in the face of a desperate desire to stop was explained. Understanding myself now, I fared forth in high hope. For three or four months the goose hung high. I went to town regularly and made a little money. Surely this was the answer. Self-knowledge. But it was not, for the frightful day came when I drank once more. The curve of my declining moral and bodily health fell off like a ski jump. After a time I returned to the hospital. This was the finish, the curtain, so it seemed to me. My weary and despairing wife was informed that it would all end with heart failure during delirium tremens. Or I would develop a wet brain, perhaps within a year. She would soon give me over to the undertaker or the asylum. It was not necessary to tell me. I knew, and almost welcomed the idea. It was a devastating blow to my pride. I, who had thought

so well of myself and my abilities, of my capacity to surmount obstacles, was cornered at last. Now I was to plunge out into the dark, joining that endless procession of sots who had gone on before. I thought of my poor wife. There had been much happiness after all. What would I not give to make amends? That career I'd set my heart upon, that pleasant vista, was shut out forever. No words can tell of the loneliness and despair I found in that bitter morass of self pity. Quicksand underlay me in all directions. I had met my match. I had been overwhelmed. King Alcohol was master.

Trembling, I stepped from the place a broken man. Fear sobered me for a bit. Then came the insidious insanity of that first drink, and on Armistice Day, 1934, I was off again. Everyone became resigned to the certainty that I would have to be shut up somewhere, or stumble along to a miserable end. How dark it is before morning comes! In reality, this was the beginning of my last debauch. I was soon to be catapulted into what I like to call the fourth dimension of existence. I was to know happiness, peace and usefulness, in a way of life that is incredibly more wonderful as time passes. Near the end of that bleak November I sat drinking in my kitchen. With a certain satisfaction I reflected there was enough gin concealed about the house to carry me through that night and the next day. My wife was at work. I wondered whether I dared hide a full bottle near the head of our bed. I would need it before daylight.

My musing was interrupted by the telephone. The cheery voice of an old school friend asked if he might come over. He was sober. It was years since I could remember his coming to New York in that condition. I was amazed. He had been committed for alcoholic insanity. So rumor had it. I wondered how he had escaped. Of course he would have dinner. Then I could drink openly with him. Unmindful of his welfare, I thought only of recapturing the spirit of other days. There was that time we had chartered an airplane to complete a jag. Another glass stirred my fancy. His coming was an oasis in this dreary desert of futility. The very thing - an oasis! Drinkers are like that.

The door opened. He stood there, fresh skinned and glowing. There was something about his eyes. He was inexplicably different. What had happened? I pushed a drink across the table.

"Not now" he said.

Disappointed but curious, I wondered what had got into the fellow. He wasn't himself.

"Come, what's all this about", I queried.

He looked straight at me. Simply, but smilingly, he said, "I've got religion." I was aghast. So that was it - last summer an alcoholic crackpot; now I suspected a little cracked about religion - he had that starry-eyed look. The old boy was on fire alright. But bless his heart, let him rant! Besides, my gin would last longer.

But he did no ranting. In quite a matter of fact way, he related how two men had appeared in court, persuading the judge to suspend his commitment. They had told of a simple religious idea and a practical program of action. That was months ago and the result was self evident. It worked.

He had come to pass his experience along to me - if I cared to have it.

I was shocked but interested. Certainly I was interested. I had to be, for I

was hopeless.

He talked for hours. Childhood memories rose before me. The sound of the preacher's voice which one could hear on still Sundays, way over there on the hillside; the proffered temperance pledge I never signed; my grandfather's good natured contempt of some church fold and their doings; his insistence that the spheres really had their music; his denial of the preacher's right to tell him how he must listen; his fearlessness as he spoke of these things just before he died; such recollections welled up from the past. They made me swallow hard. That war-time day in old Winchester Cathedral came back again.

In a power greater than myself I had always believed. I had often pondered these things. I was not an atheist. Few people really are, for that means blind faith in an illogical proposition; that this universe originated in a cipher, and aimlessly rushes nowhere. My intellectual heroes, the chemists, the astronomers, even the evolutionist, suggested vast laws and forces at work. Despite contra indications, I had little doubt that a might purpose and rhythm underlay all. How could there be so much of precise and immutable law, and no intelligence? I simply had to believe in a Spirit of the Universe, which knew neither time nor limitation. But that was as far as I had gone. With preachers, and the world's religions, I parted right there. When they talked of a God personal to me, who was love, superhuman strength and direction, I became irritated and my mind snapped shut against such a theory.

Of Christ, I conceded the certainty of a great man, not too much followed by those who claimed Him. His moral teaching - most excellent. I had adopted those parts which seemed convenient and not too difficult. The rest I disregarded.

The wars which had been fought, the burnings and chicanery that religious dispute had facilitated, made me sick. I honestly doubted whether the religions of mankind had done any good. Judging from what I had seen in Europe and since, the power of God in human affairs was negligible; the Brotherhood of Man a grim jest. If there was a Devil, he seemed the Boss Universal, and he certainly had me.

But my friend sat before me, and he made the pointblank declaration that God had done for him what he could not do for himself. His human will had failed. Doctors had pronounced him incurable. Society was about to lock him up. Like myself he had admitted complete defeat. In effect he been raised from the dead; suddenly taken from the scrap-heap to a level of life better than the best he had ever known.

Had this power originated in him? Obviously it had not. There had been no more power in him than there was in me at that minute; and this was none at all. That floored me. It began to look as though religious people were right, after all. Here was something at work in a human heart which had done the impossible. My ideas about miracles were drastically revised right then. Never mind the musty past; here sat a miracle directly across the kitchen table, straight out of the here and now.

I saw that my friend was much more than inwardly reorganized. It went deeper than that. He was on a completely different footing. His roots grasped a new

soil.

Thus was I convinced that God is concerned with us humans, when we want Him enough. At long last I saw; I felt, I believed. Scales of pride and prejudice fell from my eyes. A new world came into view.

The real significance of my experience in the Cathedral burst upon me. For a brief moment, I had needed and wanted God. There was a humble willingness to have Him with me - and He came. But soon the sense of His presence had been blotted out by worldly clamors - mostly those within myself. And so it had been ever since. It was simple as that. How blind I had been.

At the hospital I was separated from King Alcohol for the last time. Treatment seemed wise then, for I showed signs of delirium when I stopped drinking.

There I humbly offered myself to God, as I then I understood Him, to do with me as He would. I placed myself unreservedly under His care and direction. I admitted for the first time, that of myself I was nothing; that without Him I was lost. I ruthlessly faced my sins of omission and commission, and became willing to have my new-found Friend

take them away, root and branch. My schoolmate visited me, and I fully acquainted him with my problems and deficiencies. We made a list of people I had hurt or toward whom I felt resentment. I expressed my entire willingness to approach these individuals, admitting my wrong. Never was I to be critical of them. I was to right all such matters to the utmost of my ability. I was to test my thinking by the new Godconsciousness within. Common sense would thus become uncommon sense. I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me. Never was I to pray for myself, except as my requests bore on my usefulness to others. Then only might I expect to receive. But that would be in great measure.

My friend promised when those things were done I would enter upon a new relationship with my Creator; that I would have the elements of a way of life which answered all my problems. Belief in the power of God, plus enough willingness, honesty and humility to establish and maintain the new order of things, were the essential requirements.

Simple but not easy; a price had to be paid. It really meant the obliteration of self. I had to quit playing God. I must turn in all things to the Father of Light who presides over us all.

These were revolutionary and drastic proposals, but the moment I fully accepted them the effect was electric. There was a sense of victory, followed by such a peace and serenity as I had never know. There was utter confidence. I felt lifted up, as though the great clean wind of a mountain top blew through and through. God comes to most men gradually, but His impact on me was sudden and profound.

For a moment I was alarmed, and called my friend the Doctor to ask if I were still sane. He listened in wonder as I talked.

He finally he shook his head, saying: "Something has happened to you I don't understand. But you had better hang on to it. Anything is better than the way you were." The good doctor now sees many men have such experiences. He knows that they are real.

While I lay in the hospital the thought came that there were thousands of

hopeless alcoholics who might be glad to have what had been so freely given me. Perhaps I could help some of them. They in turn might work with others. My friend had emphasized the absolute necessity of my demonstrating these principles in all my affairs. Particularly was it imperative to work with others, as he had worked with me. Faith without works was dead, he said. And how appallingly true for the alcoholic! For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead. If he did not work he would surely drink again, and if he drank he would surely die. Then faith would be dead indeed. With us it is just like that!

My wife and I abandoned ourselves with enthusiasm to the idea of helping other alcoholics to a solution of their problems. It was fortunate, for my old business associates remained skeptical for a year and a half, during which I found little work. I was not too well at the time, and was plagued by waves of self-pity and resentment. This sometimes nearly drove me back to drink. I soon found that when all other measureS failed, work with another alcoholic would save the day. Many times I have gone to my old hospital feeling terrible. On talking to a man there, I would be amazingly lifted up and set on my feet. It is a design for living that works in the tough spots.

We commenced to make many fast friends and a fellowship has grown up among us of which it is a wonderful thing to feel a part. The joy of living we really have, even under pressure and difficulty. I have seen one hundred families set their feet in the path that really goes somewhere; have seen the most impossible domestic situations righted; feuds and bitterness of all sorts wiped out. I have seen men come out of asylums, and resume a vital place in the lives of their families and communities. Business and professional people have regained their standing. There is scarcely any form of human misadventure and misery which has not been overcome among us. In a Western city and its environs, there are sixty of us and our families. We often meet informally at our houses, so that newcomers may find what they seek. Gatherings of twenty to sixty are common. We are growing in numbers and power.

An alcoholic in his cups is an unlovely creature. Our struggles with them are variously strenuous, comic and tragic. One poor chap committed suicide in my home. He could not, or would not see what we beheld.

There is, however, a vast amount of fun about it all. I suppose some would be shocked at our seeming worldliness and levity. But just underneath one finds a deadly earnestness. God has to work twenty four hours a day in and through us, or we perish.

Most of us feel we need look no further for Utopia, nor even for Heaven. We have it with us on this good old Earth, right here and now. Each day that simple talk in my kitchen multiplies itself in a widening circle of peace on earth and good will to men.

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+++Message 385. AA Comes to Philadelphia (revised)
From: Fiona Dodd 7/1/2002 1:19:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

Alcoholics Anonymous Comes to Philadelphia

By Jim Burwell

September 1st 1946

How it happened. The writer came to Philadelphia on a new job February 13th, 1940, having been dry in the original New York Group for about two years. Being in a new city, he knew he had to have other alcoholics to work and play with. On February 17th he contacted Charlie Bergner, whom he had met once, some two years before, at a New York AA meeting. This was the first contact. The same Charlie read over the new AA book, which had been published nine months before, and then and there we decided to start an AA group in Philadelphia. At this time there were only three other established AA Groups in the country - Akron, New York, and Cleveland.

Our next step was to see two of Charlie's potential Oxford Group prospects, Bayard Bowie and Edmund Posey. They were all for trying it out. In the meantime, the New York office sent us an inquiry from one George Sullivan, who also became enthusiastic. Then the writer, Jim Burwell, went to a Keswick meeting at 69th Street and hooked one of their converts, McCready Huston, who agreed to go along for the ride. This was our nucleus - each a completely different type of individual but all sincere.

Philadelphia Founders: Chas. Berger, Bayard Bowie, Jim Burwell, McCready Huston, Ed Posey, Fitz Mayo, Geo. Sullivan.

We had our first organization meeting at McCready Huston's room at 2209 Delancy Street, Thursday February 28th, 1940. Present were Charlie Bergner, Bayard Bowie, McCready Huston, Edmund Posey, George Sullivan, Jim Burwell, and a visiting AA member from the New York Group, Fritz Mayo. Of these seven, six have maintained their recovery from alcoholism.

At this February 28th meeting, we agreed to have our first Open Meeting at George Sullivan's home on the following Thursday night and to invite the families of those involved, as well as Bill Wilson, AA co-founder, from New York. Between these two meetings, an accidental encounter in a bookstore where the writer was trying to place copies of the new AA book, resulted in our introduction to Dr. A. Wiese Hammer who immediately caught fire and asked to become our Medical Advisor. Dr. Hammer and Dr. Saul, his associate, were the first medical men in the country to allow their names to be used publicly by AA. This was done in the article in the Saturday Evening Post, March 1st,

1941.

The first Open Meeting of the Philadelphia Group of Alcoholics Anonymous was held at George Sullivan's house on Thursday March 6, 1940, those present being Charlie Bergner, Mr. and Mrs. Bayard Bowie, Mr. and Mrs. Jim Burwell, Dr. and Mrs. A. Wiese Hammer, Mrs. Metzger, Mr. And Mrs. Edmund Posey, Mr. And Mrs. Gordon MacDougall and Mr. And Mrs. Herbert Debevoise of East Orange, N.J., Fitz Mayo and Mr. and Mrs. Bill Wilson from New York.

That night we talked AA informally, with Bill Wilson as the center of attraction. Coffee and doughnuts were served by Mrs. Sullivan. We passed the hat the first night, being determined to be on our own from the start, and collected \$17.50. We ended the meeting with the Lord's Prayer about 12:30 a.m. - everyone being very happy with this new fellowship.

The following Thursday evening, all of us AA's were invited to Dr. Hammer's home. There was one new prospect, George Bullock, as well as Jim Ashbrook, a non-alcoholic who immediately became a great friend and worker for A.A.

The third Thursday Open Meeting was held at Bayard Bowie's home, where Dr. Hammer first introduced us to Dr. C. Dudley Saul, who also asked to be allowed to act as Medical Adviser.

The fifth meeting, April 3rd 1940, was the first one really open to the City of Philadelphia, and was held at St. Luke's Hospital. This was arranged by Doctors Hammer and Saul. About thirty attended, including families. At this meeting we decided to have a committee of three, to be changed monthly, who would handle all AA activities of the Group. The first committee was composed of Bergner, Bowie and Burwell, (hence the three B's) with Burwell acting as Secretary and Treasurer. Philadelphia AA's first publicity came on April 1, 1940 in the Philadelphia Record.

In April 1940, we convinced Dr. Wm. Turnbull, Superintendent of Philadelphia General Hospital that we could help him with some of his alcoholic patients and at the same time he would be helping us.

Around April 10th we made our first Saturday afternoon visit to the Psychopathic Ward to visit the alcoholics. On this trip we lassoed two of our best AA workers, Art McMasters and Bud Monihan. At the same time, we convinced Dr. Stauffer, Chief Phychiatrist, that we had something we both could use. Since this date, AA has never missed a Saturday visit to Philadelphia General Hospital. We estimate that at least 150 of our present members, both men and women, first had contact with AA while confined at this hospital during one of our visits.

In September 1940 we made our first visit to the House of Correction at Holmesburg. Our first convert here was Jack Dornan, who came in a couple of weeks later and has remained dry and very active in AA ever since.

In the fall of 1940 we concluded that a clubhouse would greatly help our AA fellowship which now numbered about 75, including three girls; so in November 1940 we opened our first clubhouse at 2036 Sansom Street. This was a store property about 18 x 60 feet, with two floors, rent \$60.00 a month. Our first steward was Bill Wells, who had recently become a member. At that time there was only one other AA clubhouse in existence - in New York. However, we went a step further than they by adding a lunch counter service and staying open from 8:00 AM to 1:00 AM daily. This is why Philadelphia claims to have the first complete AA Clubhouse.

Our plan for financing all these activities was for each of us who had been dry two months to pledge a weekly contribution. These were placed in small plain envelopes with name and date written in, and put in the hat at the Open Meetings at St. Luke's. No contributions were to be over \$1.00 a week. This plan was worked out by our Treasurer, Johnny Lee. Most of our original furniture and equipment was donated by members and friends and was not in too good condition. Mmes. Bowie, Burwell, David, Hammer, Lewis, Sauland Kearns were those who did most of the work and saw that we got what we needed.

On December 28th, 1940 we had our first monthly business meeting (another first for Philadelphia) and at that this meeting it was decided to hold a closed weekly meeting for AA members and prospects. These were to be held each Monday night at the clubhouse and were to be supplemented by the regular open Thursday meetings at St. Luke's for families and friends. These Monday closed meetings have continued without a break since. It was also decided at this first business meeting that we would help Major Baggs at the Salvation Army Rehabilitation Center by having a group of AA's visit there and hold weekly meetings with their alcoholic prospects. Dick Gibbs was the first AA to come out of this Center.

AA left the clubhouse at Sansom Street in May 1941 for larger and more elaborate quarters at 1537 Pine Street. There we were flooded with AA prospects as a result of the Saturday Evening Post article. Our active membership at this time was about 125, with about five active girls, the most solid being Fanny Levy.

AA carried on at the Pine Street Clubhouse with about the same activities, continuing our open meetings at St. Luke's Hospital until November 1942 when we switched these to a more central spot at Crozier Hall, 1420 Chestnut Street. The open meetings were held there until July 1943.

July 15th 1943 we took over the Alpha Chi Rho Fraternity House at 219 s. 36th Street, adjoining the campus of the University of Pennsylvania. This arrangement was made at a monthly rental of \$175 with two months free rent though Jim Anderson, our then Secretary, who was also president of the fraternity. AA landed at 36th Street with an active membership of about 250 and exactly \$50.00 in the bank.

When we moved the club to 36th Street we found that in these new, well-furnished quarters our type of membership greatly improved, and we started to get many men and women who had not hit "bottom" as hard as some of us older members.

To continue with our real work, we decided when we moved into the new Clubhouse to form a House Management Committee who would handle the financial and administrative affairs of the club, but who were to leave all AA meetings and actual AA work to the Monthly Operating Committee which had been so effective. No member could serve on this Management Committee who had not been dry at least a year. This plan worked out very satisfactory. AA remained at 219 South 36th Street until April 1, 1946, when the fraternity cancelled our lease in order to return the building to the university students.

During the time we occupied the 36th Street Clubhouse, we held our closed Monday meetings at the club and our open meetings on Thursdays either at the club or across the street at the University of Pennsylvania Christian Association.

In April 1945 Bob Moorman and the writer made arrangements with Dr. Wilson, Superintendent of Episcopal Hospital, whereby they would give us four beds for the hospitalization of AA prospects for de-fogging. Treatment was to be administered by Dr. J. H. Arnett at a cost of \$10 a day including medical fees and no visitors were permitted to patients except A.A. members. A \$500 Hospital fund was created by voluntary subscription, as a revolving fund to assist the newly organized Hospital Committee headed by George Roberts. These funds were used to assist likely prospects that were unable to pay for hospitalization. The plan worked out very well and we estimate that about 50% of those hospitalized under this plan became active AA members.

Several new activities got underway during 1945 while we were at the 36th Street Clubhouse. In April we also decided it was imperative to have a full-time secretary, so Helen Snyder was employed as a paid secretary. In September 1945, the Women's Group, then numbering about twenty-five, began to hold a closed monthly meeting for women alcoholics and prospects only. These meetings continued and have proved to most successful, both in bringing new women into the group and creating closer cooperation with the Women's Group.

In November 1945 a third weekly Clubhouse meeting was inaugurated on Sunday afternoons from three to four, especially for new people and night workers. This meeting was initiated by Ed McGee.

Due to our tremendous growth and the responsibilities that our expansion was putting on the Management Committee, in January 1946 the members voted to incorporate. This we did, as Alcoholics Anonymous of Philadelphia (a non-profit corporation) and a complete new set of by-laws was enacted. The first officers elected were Bill Jennings, President; Jack Hurlburt, Vice

President; Pat Riley, Treasurer and Johnny MacDowell, Secretary. It was also voted to change the name of "Management Committee" to "Board of Directors". This Board was to be composed of one representative of each neighborhood group and was to serve for six months while the corporation officers were to serve for one year. This Board and office control all AA finances and club administration, while the monthly Operating Committees continue in control of AA meetings and activities.

In March 1946 we purchased our first Clubhouse at 4021 Walnut Street for \$27,500, from the Philadelphia Fidelity Trust, who immediately gave us a first mortgage of \$15,000. The remaining \$12,500 was raised by popular donation through our own membership only, with practically nobody giving over \$100.00. However, due to OPA (Government war-time) regulations we could not get immediate occupancy of the new Clubhouse, so on April 1, 1946 we moved into temporary quarters in the ballroom of the Covington Hotel, 37th and Ludlow Streets. Our membership was now around 600.

We are continuing at the Covington with our open Thursday meetings and all other club activities, but the meetings have grown so large that at present we are looking around for a more capacious place to hold these.

One of the most satisfactory developments of our growth in Philadelphia has been the establishment of neighborhood groups. The first of these was started in March 1945 in Jenkintown by George Roberts and Warren Cornell and since then others have sprung up in Camden, N.J., Ardmore, 69th St, Frankford, Germantown, Central City, and Roxborough. All these groups have their own closed weekly meetings, usually on Monday, and are a great help in making closer contact with the new people from their respective sections. All remain an integral part of the Main Group, attend the weekly open meeting at the club and contribute to the support of the Clubhouse. At the present time, the monthly Operating Committees are composed of one member from each of these neighborhood groups, including the Women's Groups and Young People's Group (of which more later) and each Thursday the open meeting is sponsored by a different local group with the Committee member from that group presiding. Each Operating Committee member serves for one month only and cannot serve again for several months, and it was the writer's opinion that this monthly changing of committee personnel has been the secret of the cooperation and success of the Philadelphia Group.

The Young People's Group, which was started around February 1946 by Bates McLean and Art Leonard, both under thirty, is one of the most encouraging things ever to happen in AA. These two members decided that AA was not doing too good a job with younger prospects so they started a weekly Monday meeting of their own, to be made up of only members under 35. They are doing a remarkably fine job, and with the ever-increasing number of younger people who come to AA for help, we feel that these younger members are just the answer to the problem of educating the alcoholic to understand his problem before he has suffered too much. The Young People's Group, which numbers a few ladies also,

are solving the problem of a substitute for their social drinking, by organizing picnics, parties and other social activities as well as their AA group therapy.

1946 saw the establishment, on June 20th, of the first private Alcoholic Clinic for the education and treatment of alcoholism. This was established, as a separate annex by St. Luke's Hospital and is located across the street from the hospital at 1242 North 8th Street. This Clinic was the realization of the efforts of two of AA's best Philadelphia friends and medical advisers, Dr. C. Dudley Saul and Dr. C. Nelson Davis, with the latter in full charge. Johnny Lee, one of our oldest members (in point of sobriety) acts as business manager. The present capacity of the clinic is 18 beds and they are now handling over 50 alcoholic patients a month. The average stay is five days and the cost is \$10 a day plus \$15 for medical services. AA in Philadelphia is cooperating wholeheartedly with this clinic and all the patients there are advised to investigate and join AA. Dr. Davis holds an informal forum on alcoholism each morning which is attended by past and present clinic patients, as well as members of the public who are interested.

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+++Message 386. The Story of Alcoholics Anonymous in
San Diego County
From: Fiona Dodd 7/1/2002 1:21:00 PM

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From: "Ron K. Long"

HISTORY OF AA IN THE SAN DIEGO AREA

The Story of Alcoholics Anonymous in San Diego County

The first (AA group) meeting in San Diego was held on November 7, 1940, a Friday night, in an apartment at 3229 Adams Avenue.

- The meeting was (later) moved to a hall at the East San Diego Women's Club.
- On its first anniversary, the group was listing 75 members.
- On December 31, 1941, San Diego AA held its first New Years Eve dance in a ballroom in the basement of the Maryland Hotel on 'F' Street.
- For a time, the Friday night meeting was moved to the mezzanine of the California Theater Building in downtown San Diego.
- The group meeting night was moved to Wednesday.

AA in San Diego reached a milestone in the spring of 1946. Attendance at the

Wednesday night meeting was running as high as 200. It was becoming difficult for a group so large to discuss and vote on the increasing amount of AA "business" and organizational details that had to be dealt with. The solution was to invite each of the seven groups then listed in the county to send representatives to a meeting at the Chamber of Commerce building in Old Town to establish a "Central Committee" for San Diego AA. The committee, held its first meeting on April 13, 1946. The new "Central Committee" in San Diego laid down the organizational framework, which eventually evolved into the Coordinating Council. Within a year the roster of groups was approaching 20 and some members of the Central Committee were convinced that the time had come for AA to rent an office and employ a secretary full-time. The committee called a general meeting of San Diego AA members on January 29, 1947, to decide the issue. A total of 127 members attended to debate whether AA should assume this new financial responsibility. The vote was 86 to 41 in favor.

- The Central Office opened in 1947 in quarters in the old Broadway Building.
- It moved in 1948 to the California Theater Building, in 1971 to 2100 Fourth Ave, and in 1989, to its present location at 7075-B Mission Gorge Rd.

The Central Committee became the Coordinating Committee and finally the Coordinating Council, with the voting system and committee structure undergoing many changes in ensuing years.

The first issue of "The Coordinator"- newsletter distributed to AA groups and members in the San Diego area- appeared in October 1948. The newsletter served to keep members abreast of the news about AA activities, and also to remind them of their obligation to the support of the Central Office. Contributions from groups, and the proceeds from passing the basket at the Wednesday night meeting, were consistently falling short of covering all the office's expenses. Early in 1950 the Central Committee voted to establish the "Buck-a-Month Club" as a way for individual AA members to contribute directly to the support of the Central Office.

The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous was established in 1951. This brought into being the San Diego Area Assembly. Tom B. was elected San Diego's first New York delegate in 1951.

From one meeting of four alcoholics in 1940, San Diego AA has grown to include more than (500) groups with a combined membership in the thousands. In March of 1977 & 1 AA office was opened in Vista as a North County branch of the San Diego Central Office. This did not fully satisfy the need for more direct services to the growing number of AA members and groups in the northern part of the county. At a meeting on June 16, 1979, representatives of North County groups voted unanimously, to establish and Support an independent office. So, beginning on July 1, 1979) AA services in the northern, and southern sections of San Diego County, were provided by separate offices. One, in Vista, and one in San Diego.

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+++Message 387. AA Work at Philadelphia Gen. Hosp. -
12/13/40
From: Fiona Dodd 7/1/2002 1:23:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

Special Report On AA Work At The Philadelphia General Hospital
December 13, 1940

The following is the complete experience of the Philadelphia A.A. Group with patients of the Philadelphia General Hospital since March 15. On this list are included only those men who have attended at least two or three A.A. meetings and have signified their intention of following the A.A. program.

Brief notes on the various individuals follow:

- Joseph A. - Dry seven months, no trouble.
- Frank B. - Dry five months, one slip after he left group one month ago.
- Herbert C. B. - Dry four months, no trouble.
- Joshua D. B. - Probably psychopathic; continuous slips.
- Charles J. C. - Dry nine months, no trouble.
- John D. - Dry four months through Philadelphia General Hospital and Byberry.
- Joseph D. - Dry four months, no trouble.
- George G. - Dry one month, no trouble.
- John H. H. - Continuous slips before and after hospitalization.
- William K. - Dry four months, no trouble.
- Alfred K. - Dry four months, no trouble.
- Arthur T. McM. - Dry eight months, no trouble.
- William P. - Continuous after two hospitalizations, only attended five meetings, no work.
- Harry McC. - Dry eleven months, one slip two months ago, hospitalization then.
- James S. - Continuous slips before and after hospitalization.
- George K. - Continuous trouble up to two months ago, first hospital May.
- C. M. M. - Dry nine months, no trouble.
- Hugh O'H. - Dry two months, no trouble.
- Edmonds P. - Dry nine months, hospitalization recent, trouble since.
- William J. P. - Dry three months, no trouble.
- James R. - Dry five months, no trouble.
- William R. - Dry six weeks, no trouble.
- Carl R. - Dry eight weeks.
- Biddle S. - Dry four months, hospital trouble now dry one month.

Thomas S. - Dry four months, one slip.
David W. - Dry seven months, no trouble.
William W. - Dry nine months, no trouble.
Margery W. - Dry three months, no trouble.

Nineteen out of twenty-eight who have come through the Philadelphia General Hospital have had no trouble. Of the nine who have had trouble, five have been with the group and had trouble previous to hospitalization.

This list was made at the request of Jack Alexander, writer for the Saturday Evening Post.

(Signed) A. W. Hammer M. D. - Surgeon
(Signed) C. D. Saul, M. D. - Chief resident, Saint Luke's Hospital
(Signed) Philadelphia General Hospital, By: John F. Stouffer M. D. - Chief Psychiatrist

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+++Message 389. 1945 Letter From Peoria To Minneapolis
From: Fiona Dodd 6/30/2002 1:31:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

A.C. Hyde Realtor
Complete and Personalized Real Estate Service
1901 Prospect Road, Peoria, Illinois
Phones 2-5522, 2-0445, 2-4304

Friday the Thirteenth, 1945

Dear Barry,

Ever since returning home I've been anxious to write all of you and thank you for including me in your Kare Phree outing. To put it very mildly, I had one helluva fine time and was certainly delighted to meet such an outstanding gang of really worthwhile guys and gals. Not only did I have a wonderful time, but your Nicollet Group certainly gives me, and in turn the Peoria Gang a real goal to shoot at.

In my usual slow and cautious manner I have proceeded to sell the Peoria Group on the Nicollet Group. Tomorrow night we all meet to vote the adoption of your by-laws, slightly altered to fit local conditions. Sunday afternoon at 4:30 our first class in the 12 steps begins. We're all attending the first series

of classes so we'll all be on an even footing; we anticipate losing quite a few fair-weather A.A. hangers-on in the elimination automatically imposed by the rule that these classes must be attended. This elimination we anticipate with a wee feeling of suppressed pleasure inasmuch as we are all extremely fed up with running a free drunk taxi and sobering-up service. Continuing in my aforementioned cautious manner, I rented some potentially fine club rooms so we'll have a nice spot for a fresh start. If the by-laws aren't adopted and they decide to blunder along in the manner of the past, I shall have rather spacious rooms for my one man meetings. There's slight chance the rules wont be adopted, however, as 90% of the boys I've talked to are tickled with the Nichollet idea. (By the way, howinell do you spell Nicollet?)

I've raved about your great city so much that now my wife is hounding me to go back to Minneapolis and find a house and we'll move up there. Does Minneapolis need a high-powered Real Estate promoter in its midst? This is beginning to get serious and I kinda like the idea myself. Guess I'll come up there in a week or so, attend your Thursday, Friday and Saturday meetings and look into the real estate business. (Again my slow and cautious manner shows itself.)

Well, Izzak Walton Collins, please extend my heartiest thanks to your wife, Don Kenyon, and all the rest of your great gang for having me up and showing me some real A.A. in action.

Best regards to you all,
Bud

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+++Message 390. Philadelphia AA Stats - 12/14/40
From: Fiona Dodd 7/1/2002 1:25:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

AA
Philadelphia Group
Post Office Box 332
William Penn Annex

To:
Alcoholic Foundation
30 Vesey Street
New York, N. Y.

December 14,1940

Gentlemen:

We believe that the time has arrived when we can give you a preliminary statement of the results of the work of Alcoholics Anonymous in Philadelphia since its inception in this city on February 20, 1940. This in effect is a ten months' report but for all practical purposes it can be considered only nine months because about a month was occupied in working out methods of prosecuting the activities.

According to the records of the Group, which have been kept with reasonable accuracy, ninety-nine men and women have during this period attended at least two meetings of the A. A. Group. In other words, they have had a fair opportunity to familiarize themselves with the A. A. program of recovery as given at the Thursday night meetings held at Saint Luke's and Children's Hospital.

Of the ninety-nine, seventy have remained dry without any slip at all; thirteen others are recovering from one or more slips, and sixteen have slipped without recovery up to the present time. It is not impossible that some of these sixteen may yet return to the Group.

Of the seventy, who have been dry without slips, thirty-nine have been dry from one to three months; seventeen from three to six months; twenty-five from six months to a year, and five from one to three years.

Obviously these five were not dried up through the activities of the Philadelphia A. A. Group but have recovered from alcoholism in other localities and through other means.

You can see that the Philadelphia A. A. Group has a core of thirty men who, we have every reason to believe, will never drink again. Seventeen more have gotten by the three months' critical period. It has been our observation that the first three months are the most difficult and that the man who gets by that period has every reason to believe that he is on the road to complete recovery.

We are even more sanguine of results which shall be achieved since we succeeded in opening our clubhouse about one month ago. It is being used extensively, especially by the unmarried men and is proving helpful not only as a social center but as a base for the spreading of the A. A. message.

We can testify as physicians to the increasing interest in A. A. work among members of the medical fraternity and are grateful for the opportunity that the A. A. has given us of assisting in the recovery of the unfortunate victims of alcoholism.

(Signed) A. W. Hammer M. D. - Surgeon

(Signed) C. Dudley Saul, Chief Resident Saint Luke's Hospital

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+++Message 391. Philadelphia AA Stats - 9/29/41
From: Fiona Dodd 7/1/2002 1:26:00 PM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

Statistical Record of Philadelphia Alcoholics Anonymous Group

The Philadelphia A. A. Group was formed February 27, 1940, with seven men as a nucleus. Six of these are definitely recovered cases.

We consider a man or woman an active member of A. A. when they have been dry in the group two months and have attended at least six general meetings.

We now have an ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP of one hundred and thirteen alcoholics, eighty-three of whom have not had a drink since their first A. A. meeting. Five of these have been dry from two to four years, twenty-seven dry from one to two years, forty-one dry from six to twelve months and twenty-six dry three to six months.

Twenty-three of these active members came directly from the Philadelphia General Hospital, thirteen from other hospitals and institutions.

There have been only twenty-three active members who do not appear to be recovering. These are not included in the above figures. Neither are the fifty other men and women who are now in the process of becoming members.

This gives us a total general membership of Two Hundred men and women.

To the best of our knowledge, the foregoing is correct.

(Signed) Dr. A. Weise Hammer
(Signed) Dr. C. Dudley Saul
Medical directors

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+++Message 392. Bill W. Speaks of Peal Harbor
From: Fiona Dodd 7/1/2002 1:32:00 PM

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From: Eric Sacon

THE FELLOWSHIP OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

By Bill.W.

As Given at the Yale School of Alcohol Studies

June, 1945

My first task is a joyous one; it is to voice the sincere gratitude that every member of Alcoholics Anonymous present feels tonight that we can stand in the midst of such an assembly. I know that in this assembly there are many different points of view, that we have social workers, ministers, doctors and others -- people we once thought did not understand us, because we did not understand them. I think right away of one of our clergyman friends. He helped start our group in St. Louis, and when Pearl Harbor came he thought to himself, "Well this will be a hard day for the A.A.'s." He expected to see us go off like firecrackers. Well, nothing much happened and the good man was rather joyously disappointed, you might say. But he was puzzled. And then he noticed with still more wonder that the A.A.s seemed rather less excited about Pearl Harbor than the normal people. In fact, quite a number of the so-called normal people seemed to be getting drunk and very distressed. So he went up to one of the A.A.'s and said, "Tell me, how is it that you folks hold up so well under this stress, I mean this Pearl Harbor?" The A.A. looked at him, smiled, but quite seriously said, "You know, each of us has had his own private Pearl Harbor, each of us has known the utmost of humiliation, of despair, and of defeat. So why should we, who have known the resurrection, fear another Pearl Harbor?"

So you can see how grateful we are that we have found this resurrection and that so many people, not alcoholics, with so many points of view, have joined to make it a reality. I guess all of you know Marty Mann by this time. I shall always remember her story about her first A.A. meeting. She had been in a sanatorium under the care of a wonderful doctor, but how very lonely she felt! Somehow, there was a gap between that very good man and herself which could not quite be bridged. Then she went to her first A.A. meeting, wondering what she would find; and her words, when she returned to the sanatorium, in talking to her friend, another alcoholic, were: "Grenny, we are no longer alone. " So we are a people who have known loneliness, but now stand here in the midst of many friends. Now I am sure you can see how very grateful for all this we must be.

I am sure that in this course you have heard that alcoholism is a malady; that something is dead wrong with us physically; that our reaction to alcohol has

changed; that something has been very wrong with us emotionally; and that our alcoholic habit has become an obsession, an obsession which can no longer reckon even with death itself. Once firmly set, one is not able to turn it aside. In other words, a sort of allergy of the body which guarantees that we shall die if we drink, an obsession of the mind which guarantees that we shall go on drinking. Such has been the alcoholics dilemma time out of mind, and it is altogether probable that even those alcoholics who did not wish to go on drinking, not more than 5 out of 100 have ever been able to stop, before A.A.

That statement always takes me back to a summer night at a drying out place in New York where I lay upstairs at the end of a long trail. My wife was downstairs talking with the doctor, asking him, "Bill wants so badly to stop this thing, doctor, why can't he? He was always considered a person of enormous persistence, even obstinacy, in those things that he wished to achieve. Why can't his will power work now? It does work even yet in other areas of life, but why not in this?" And then the doctor went on to tell her something of my childhood, showing that I had grown up a rather awkward kid, how that had thrown upon me a kind of inferiority and had inspired in me a fierce desire to show other people that I could be like them; how I had become a person who abnormally craved approval, applause. He showed her the seed, planted so early, that had created me an inferiority-driven neurotic. On the surface, to be sure, very self confident, with a certain amount of worldly success in Wall Street. But along with it this habit of getting release from myself through alcohol.

You know, as strange as it may seem to some of the clergy here who are not alcoholic, the drinking of alcohol is a sort of spiritual release. Is it not true that the great fault of all individuals is abnormal self-concern? And how well alcohol seems temporarily to expel those feelings of inferiority in us, to transport us temporarily to a better world. Yes, I was one of those people to whom drink became a necessity and then an addiction. So it was 10 years ago this summer that the good doctor told my wife I could not go on much longer; that my habit of adjusting my neurosis with alcohol had now become an obsession; how that obsession of my mind condemned me to go on drinking, and how my physical sensitivity guaranteed that I would go crazy or die, perhaps within a year. Yes, that was my dilemma. It has been the dilemma of millions of us, and still is.

Some of you wonder, "Well, he had been instructed by a good physician, he had been told about his maladjustment, he understood himself, he knew that his increasing physical sensitivity meant that he would go out into the dark and join the endless procession. Why couldn't he stop? Why wouldn't fear hold such a man in check?"

After I left that place, fear did keep me in check for 2 or 3 months. Then came a day when I drank again. And then came a time when an old friend, a former alcoholic, called me on the phone and said that he was coming over. It was perhaps right there on that very day that the Alcoholics Anonymous

commenced to take shape. I remember his coming into my kitchen, where I was half drunk. I was afraid that perhaps he had come to reform me. You know, curiously enough, we alcoholics are very sensitive on this subject of reform. I could not quite make out my friend. I could see something different about him but I could put my finger on it. So finally I said, "Ebby, what's got into you?" And he said, "Well, I've got religion." That shocked me terribly, for I was one of those people with a dandy modern education which had taught me that self-sufficiency would be enough to carry me through life, and here was a man talking a point of view which collided with mine.

Ebby did not go on colliding with me. He knew, as a former agnostic, what my prejudices were, so he said to me, blandly enough, "Well, Bill, I don't know that I'd call it religion exactly, but call it what you may, it works." I said, "What is it? What do you mean? Tell me more about this thing?" He said, "Some people came and got hold of me. They said, "Ebby, you've tried medicine, you've tried religion, you've tried change of environment, I guess you've tried love, and none of these things has been able to cure you of your liquor. Now, here is an idea for you." And then he went on to tell me how they explained, they said, "First of all, Ebby, why don't you make a thorough appraisal of yourself? Stop finding fault with other people. Make a thorough-going moral appraisal of yourself. When have you been selfish, dishonest? And, especially, where have you been intolerant? Perhaps those are the things that underlie this alcoholism. And after you have made such an appraisal of yourself, why don't you sit down and talk it out with someone in full and quit this accursed business of living alone? Put an end to this Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde situation into which you have fallen. And then, why don't you continue this policy of abating the disturbance in yourself? Why don't you take stock of all the people among your acquaintances that you have hurt -all of the people who annoy you, who disturb you. Why don't you go out to them and make amends; set things right and talk things out, and get down these strains that exist between you and them? Then, Ebby, we have still another proposal. Why don't you try the kind of giving that demands no reward? We don't mean the mere giving of money, though you once had plenty of that. No, we mean the giving of yourself to someone who is in need. Why don't you try that? Seek out someone in need and forget your own troubles by becoming interested in his." Ebby said, "Where does religion come in?" And his friends went on to say, "Ebby, it is our experience that no one can carry out such a program with enough thoroughness and enough continuity on pure self--sufficiency. One must have help. Now we are willing to help you, as individuals, but we think you ought to call upon a power greater than yourself, for your dilemma is well--nigh insurmountable. So, call on God as you understand God. Try prayer." Well, in effect, that was the explanation my friend made to me. Those of you who know a little of the A.A. are already able to see a little of the basic idea.

You see, here was my friend talking to me, one alcoholic talking to another. I could no longer say, "He doesn't understand me." Sure he understood me. We had done a lot of drinking together, and gone the route of humiliation, despair

and defeat. Yes, he could understand. But now he had something. He did not shock me by calling it the resurrection, but that's what it was. He had something I did not have, and those were the terms upon which it could be obtained.

Honesty with oneself and other people, the kind of giving that demands no return, and prayer. Those were the essentials. My friend then got up and went away, but he had been very careful not to force any of his views upon me. In no sense could I have the feeling that he was moralizing with me or preaching, because I knew it was not long ago that he was no better than I. He merely said that he was leaving these ideas with me, hoping that they would help.

Even so, I was irritated, because he had struck a blow at my pet philosophy of self-sufficiency, and was talking about dependence upon some power greater than myself. "Ah yes," I thought, as I went on drinking, "yes it's this preacher stuff. Yes, I remember, up in the old home town where my grandfather raised me, how the deacon, who was so good, treated Ed MacDonald, the local drunk - as dirt under his feet; and more than that, the old son of a gun short weighted my good old grandfather in his grocery store. If that's religion, I don't want any of it." Such were my prejudices. But the whole point of this was that my friend had got onto my level. He had penetrated my prejudices, although he had not swept them all away.

I drank on but I kept turning this thing over in my mind, and finally asked myself, "Well how much better off am I than a cancer patient." But a small percentage of those people recover, and the same is true with alcoholics, for by this time I knew quite a good deal about alcoholism. I knew that my chances were very, very slim. I knew that, in spite of all the vigilance in the world, this obsession would pursue me, even if I dried up temporarily. Yes, how much better off was I than a cancer patient? Then I began to say to myself, "Well who are beggars to be choosers? Why should a man be talking about self sufficiency when an obsession has condemned him to have none of it? Then I became utterly willing to do anything, to try to accept any point of view, to make any sacrifice, yes, even to try to love my enemies, if I could get rid of this obsession. First, I went up to a hospital to ask the doctor to clear me up so I could think things through clearly. And again, came my friend, the second day that I was there. Again I was afraid, knowing that he had religion, that he was going to reform me. I cannot express the unreasonable prejudice that the alcoholics have against reform. That is one reason that it has been so hard to reach them. We should not be that way but we are. And here was my friend, trying to do his best for me, but the first thought that flashed across my mind was, "I guess this is the day that he is going to save me. Look out! He'll bring in that high powered sweetness and light, he'll be talking about a lot of this prayer business." But Ebby was a good general, and it's a good thing for me he was.

No, he did not collide with those prejudices of mine. He just paid me a friendly visit, and he came up there quite early in the morning. I kept

waiting and waiting for him to start his reform talk, but no, he didn't. So finally I had to ask for some of it myself. I said, "Ebby, tell me once more about how you dried up." And he reviewed it again for me.

Honesty with oneself, of a kind I had never had before. Complete honesty with someone else. Straightening out all my twisted relationships as best I could. Giving of myself to help someone else in need. And prayer.

When he had gone away, I fell into a very deep depression, the blackest that I had ever known. And in that desperation, I cried out, "If there is a God, will He show Himself?" Then came a sudden experience in which it seemed the room lit up. It felt as though I stood on the top of a mountain, that a great clean wind blew, that I was free. The sublime paradox of strength coming out of weakness.

So I called in the doctor and tried to tell him, as best I could, what had happened. And he said, "Yes, I have read of such experiences but I have never seen one." I said, "Well doctor, examine me, have I gone crazy?" And he did examine me and said, "No boy, you're not crazy. Whatever it is, you'd better hold onto it. It's so much better than what had you just a few hours ago." Well, along with thousands of

other alcoholics, I have been holding on to it ever since.

But that was only the beginning. And at the time, I actually thought that it was the end, you might say, of all my troubles. I began there, out of this sudden illumination, not only to get benefits, but to draw some serious liabilities. One of those that came immediately was one that you might call Divine Appointment. I actually thought, I had the conceit really to believe, that God had selected me, by this sudden flash of Presence, to dry up all the drunks in the world. I really believed it. I also got another liability out of the experience, and that was that it had to happen in some particular way just like mine or else it would be of no use. In other words, I conceived myself as going out, getting hold of these drunks, and producing in them just the same kind of experience that I had had. Down in New York, where they knew me pretty well in the A.A., they facetiously call these sudden experiences that we sometimes have a "W.W. hot flash." I really thought that I had been endowed with the power to go out and produce a "hot flash" just like mine in every drunk.

Well, I started off, I was inspired; I knew just how to do it, as I thought then. Well, I worked like thunder for 6 months and not one alcoholic got dried up. What were the natural reactions then? I suppose some of you here, who have worked with alcoholics, have a pretty good idea. The first reaction was one of great self-pity; the other was a kind of martyrdom. I began to say, "Well, I suppose that this is the kind of stuff that martyrs are made of but I will keep on at all costs." I kept on, and I kept on, until I finally got so full of self-pity and intolerance (our two greatest enemies in the A.A.) that I

nearly got drunk myself. So I began to reconsider. I began to say, "Yes, I found my relief in this particular way, and glorious it was and is, for it is still the central experience of my whole life. But who am I to suppose that every other human being ought to think, act and react just as I do? Maybe were all very much alike in a great many respects but, as individuals, we're different too."

At that juncture I was in Akron on a trip, and I got a very severe business setback. I was walking along in the corridor of the hotel, wondering how God could be so mean. After all the good I had done Him -- why, I had worked here with drunks for six months and nothing had happened -- and now here was a situation that was going to set me up in business and I had been thrown out of it by dishonest people. Then I began to think, "That spiritual experience - was it real?" I began to have doubts. Then I suddenly realized that I might get drunk. Buy I also realized that those other times when I had had self-pity, those other times when I had had resentment and intolerance, those other times when there was that feeling of insecurity, that worry as to where the next meal would come from; yes, to talk with another alcoholic even though I failed with him, was better than to do nothing. but notice how my motivation was shifting all this time. No longer was I preaching from any moral hilltop or from the vantage point of a wonderful spiritual experience. No, this time I was looking for another alcoholic, because I felt that I needed him twice as much as he needed me. And that's when I came across Dr. "Bob" S. out in Akron. That was just nine years ago this summer.

And Bob S. recovered. Then we two frantically set to work on alcoholics in Akron. Well, again came this tendency to preach, again this feeling that it has to be done in some particular way, again discouragement, so our progress was very slow. But little by little we were forced to analyze our experiences and say, "This approach didn't work very well with that fellow. Why not? Let's try to put ourselves in his shoes and stop this preaching. see how we might be approached if we were he." That began to lead us to the idea that A.A. should be no set of fixed ideas, but should be a growing thing, growing out of experience. After a while, we began to reflect: " This wonderful blessing that has come to us, from what does it get its origin?" It was a spiritual awakening growing out of painful adversity. So then we began to look the harder for our mistakes, to correct them, to capitalize upon our errors. And little by little we began to grow so that there were 5 of us at the end of that first year; at the end of the second year, 15; at the end of the third year, 40; at the end of the forth year, 100.

During those first 4 years most of us had another bad form of intolerance. As we commenced to have a little success, I am afraid our pride got the better of us and it was our tendency to forget about our friends. We were very likely to say, "Well, those doctors didn't do anything for us, and as for these sky pilots, well, they just don't know the score." And we became snobbish and patronizing.

Then we read a book by Dr. Carrel. From that book came an argument which is now a part of our system. (How much we may agree with the book in general, I don't know, but in this respect the A.A.'s think he had something.) Dr. Carrel wrote, in effect; The world is full of analysts. We have tons of ore in the mines and we have all kinds of building materials above ground. Here is a man specializing in this, there is a man specializing in that, and another one in something else. The modern world is full of wonderful analysts and diggers, but there are very few who deliberately synthesize, who bring together different materials, who assemble new things. We are much too shy on synthetic thinking - the kind of thinking that's willing to reach out now here and now there to see if something new cannot be evolved.

On reading that book some of us realized that was just what we had been groping toward. We had been trying to build out of our own experiences. At this point we thought, "Let's reach into other people's experiences. Let's go back to our friends the doctors, let's go back to our friends the preachers, the social workers, all those who have been concerned with us, and again review what they have got above ground and bring that into the synthesis. And let us, where we can, bring them in where they will fit." So our process of trial and error began and, at the end of 4 years, the material was cast in the form of a book known as Alcoholics Anonymous. And then our friends of the press came in and they began to say nice things about us. That was not too hard for them to do because by that time we had gotten hold of the idea of not fighting anything or anyone. We began to say, "Our only motive as an organization is to help the alcoholic. And to help him we've got to reach him. Therefore, we can't collide with his prejudices. So we ain't going to get mixed up with controversial questions, no matter what we, as individuals, think of them. We can't get concerned with prohibition, or whether to drink or not to drink. We can't get concerned with doctrine and dogma in a religious sense. We can't get into politics, because that will arouse prejudice which might keep away alcoholics who will go off and die when they might have recovered."

We began, then, to have a good press, because after all we were just a lot of very sick people trying to help those who wanted to be helped. and I am very happy to say that in all the years since, not a syllable of ridicule, or criticism, has ever been printed about us. For this we are very grateful.

That experience led us to examine some of the obscure phrases that we sometimes see in the Bible. It could not have been presented at first, but sooner or later in his second, third, or fourth year, the A.A. will be found reading his Bible quite as often - or more - as he will a standard psychological work. And you know, there we found a phrase which began to stick in the minds of some of us. It was this:

"Resist not evil." Well, after all, what is one going to think? In this modern world, where everybody is fighting, here came someone saying, "Resist not evil." What did that mean? Did it mean anything? Was there anything in that

phrase for the A.A.'s?

Well we began to have some cases on which we could try out that principle. I remember one case out of which some will get a kick, and I imagine some others here may be a little shocked, but I think there is a lesson in it, at least there was for us, a lesson in tolerance. One time, after A.A. had been going for 3 or 4 years, an alcoholic was brought into our house over in Brooklyn where we were holding a meeting. He is the type that some of us now call the block-buster variety. He often tells the story himself. His name is Jimmy. Well, Jimmy came in and he was a man who had some very, very fixed points of view. As a class, we alcoholics are the worst possible people in this respect. I had many, many fixed points of view myself, but Jimmy eclipsed us all. Jimmy came into our little group -- I guess there were then 30 or 40 of us meeting - and said, "I think you've got a pretty good idea here. This idea of straightening things out with other people is fine. Going over your own defects is all right. Working with other drunks, that's swell. But I don't like this God business." He got very emphatic about it and we thought that he would quiet down or else he would get drunk. He did neither. Time went on and Jimmy did not quiet down; he began to tell the other people in the group, "You don't need this God business. Look, I'm staying sober." Finally, he got up in the meeting at our house, the first time he was invited to speak -- he had then been around for a couple of months -- and he went through his usual song and dance of the desirability of being honest, straightening things out with other people, etc. Then he said, "Damn this God business." At that, people began to wince. I was deeply shocked, and we had a hurried meeting of the "elders" over in the corner. We said, "This fellow has got to be suppressed. We can't have anyone ridiculing the very idea by which we live."

We got hold of Jimmy and said, "Listen, you've got to stop this anti-God talk if you're going to be around this section." Jimmy was cocky and he said, "Is that so? Isn't it a fact that you folks have been trying to write a book called Alcoholics Anonymous, and haven't you got a typewritten introduction in that book, lying over there on that shelf, and didn't we read it here about a month ago and agree to it?" And Jimmy went over and took down the introduction to Alcoholics Anonymous and read out of it: "The only requirement for membership in Alcoholics Anonymous is an honest desire to get over drinking." Jimmy said, "Do you mean it or don't you?" He rather had us there. He said, "I've been honest. Didn't I get my wife back? Ain't I paying my bills? And I'm helping other drunks every day." There was nothing we could say. Then we began secretly to hope. Our intolerance caused us to hope that he would get drunk. Well, he confounded us; he did not get drunk, and louder and louder did he get with his anti-God talk. Then we used to console ourselves and say, "Well, after all, this is a very good practice in tolerance for us, trying to accommodate ourselves to Jimmy." But we never did really get accommodated.

One day Jimmy got a job that took him out on the road, out from under the old A.A. tent, you might say. And somewhere out on the road his purely psychological system of staying dry broke wide open, and sure enough he got

drunk. In those days, when an alcoholic got drunk, all the brethren would come running, because we were still very afraid for ourselves and no one knew who might be next. So there was great concern about the brother who got drunk. But in Jimmy's case there was no concern at all. He lay in a little hotel over in Providence and he began to call up long distance. He wanted money, he wanted this, he wanted that. After a while, Jimmy hitchhiked back to New York. He put up at the house of a friend of mine, where I was staying, and I came in late that night. The next morning, Jimmy came walking downstairs where my friend and I were consuming our morning gallon of coffee. Jimmy looked at us and said, "Oh, have you people had any meditation or prayer this morning?" We thought he was being very sarcastic. But no, he meant it. We could not get very much out of Jimmy about his experience, but it appeared that over in that little second-rate hotel he had nearly died from the worst seizure he had ever had, and something in him had given way. I think it is just what gave way in me. It was his prideful obstinacy. He had thought to himself, "Maybe these fellows have got something with their God-business." His hand reached out, in the darkness, and touched something on his bureau. It was a Gideon Bible. Jimmy picked it up and he read from it. I do not know just what he read, and I have always had a queer reluctance to ask him. But Jimmy has not had a drink to this day, and that was about 5 years ago.

But there were other fruits of what little tolerance and understanding we did have. Not long ago I was in Philadelphia where we have a large and strong group. I was asked to speak, and the man who asked me was Jimmy, who was chairman of the meeting. About 400 people were there. I told this story about him and added: "Supposing that we had cast Jimmy out in the dark, supposing that our intolerance of his point of view had turned him away. Not only would Jimmy be dead, but how many of us would be together here tonight so happily secure?" So we in A.A. find that we have to carry tolerance of other people's viewpoints to very great lengths. As someone well put it, "Honesty gets us sober but tolerance keeps us sober.

I would like to tell, in conclusion, one story about a man in a little southern community. You know, we used to think that perhaps A.A. was just for the big places; that in a small town the social ostracism of the alcoholic would be so great that they would be reluctant to get together as a group; that there would be so much unkind gossip that we sensitive folk just could not be brought together.

One day our central office in New York received a little letter, and it came from a narcotic addict who was just leaving the Government hospital down in Lexington. Speaking of intolerance, it is a strange fact that we alcoholics are very, very intolerant of people who take "dope," and it is just as strange that they are very intolerant of us. I remember meeting one, one day, in the corridor of a hospital. I thought he was an alcoholic, so I stopped the man and asked him for a match. He drew himself up with great hauteur and said, "Get away from me you damned alcoholic." At any rate, here was a letter from a narcotic addict who explained that once upon a time he had been an alcoholic,

but for 12 years had been a drug addict. He had got hold of the book Alcoholics Anonymous and thought the spirit of that book had got hold of him, and he wanted to go back to his own little southern town which was, Shelby, North Carolina, and start an A.A. group. We were very skeptical of the offer. The very idea of a narcotic addict starting an A.A. group, even if he had once been an alcoholic! And here he was going to try to start it in a little southern town in the midst of all this local pride and gossip.

We began to get letters from him and apparently he was doing all right. He was a medical doctor, by the way, and he told us modestly, as time went on, about getting a small crowd of alcoholics together and having his trials and tribulations. Mind you, we had never seen him all this time; he had just been writing. He said that his practice had come back somewhat. And so 3 years passed. We had a little pin on a map showing that there was an Alcoholics Anonymous group at Shelby, North Carolina. It happened that I was taking a trip south to visit one of our southern groups. By this time the movement had grown and I had gotten to be kind of a big shot, so I thought, and I wondered, "Should I stop off at Shelby? You know, after all, that's kind of a small group." It is a great thing that I did stop off at Shelby, as you will soon see. Down the station came a man, followed by two others. The two in back of him were alcoholics, all right, but one looked a little bit different. I saw, as he drew near, that his lips were badly mangled, and I realized that this was the drug addict, Dr. M. In the agony of his hang-overs he had chewed his lips to pieces. Yes, it was our man, and he proved to be a wonderful person. He was really modest, and that is something you seldom see in an ex--alcoholic. He introduced me to the others, and we got into his car and went over to the town of Shelby. I soon found myself sitting at a table in one of those delightful southern ancestral homes. Here were the man's mother and his wife. They had been married about 2 years and there was a new baby. The practice had begun to come back. Still, there was very little shop talk at that meal; and there is no such thing as an A.A. meal without shop talk. I said, "Indeed, this fellow is a very modest man, I never saw an alcoholic like him." He spoke very little of his accomplishments for the group. And then came the meeting that night. Here, next to the barber shop in the hotel, on the most prominent corner in Shelby, was the A.A. meeting room, with "A.A." looming big up over the door. I thought, "Well, this chap must be some persuader."

I went inside and there were 40 alcoholics and their wives and friends. We had our meeting, I talked too much as I always do, and the meeting was over. I began to reflect that this was the largest Alcoholics Anonymous in all America in proportion to the size of the town. What a wonderful accomplishment! The next morning, my telephone rang in the hotel. A man was downstairs and he said, "I'd like to come up. There are some things you ought to know about Dr. M. who got the A.A. group together in this town."

Up came this individual, and said, "You know, I too, was once an alcoholic but for 22 years I've been on dope. I used to meet our friend Dr. M. over in

Lexington, and when he got out of there and came back here, I heard he'd beaten the dope game. So when I left, I started for Shelby, but on my way I got back on morphine again. He took me into his home and took me off it. Yes, I used to be a respectable citizen of this state, I helped organize a lot of banks here, but I've heard from my family only second-hand for many years. It's my guess you don't know what southern pride is, and you haven't any idea what this man faced when he came back to this town to face the music. People wouldn't speak to him for months. They'd say, "Why this fellow, the son of our leading doctor, goes away, studies medicine, comes back, and he's a drunk, and after a while, he's on the dope. The townspeople wouldn't have much to do with him when he first came, and I'm ashamed to say that the local drunks wouldn't either, because they said, we am' t going to be sobered up by a dope addict. But you see, Dr. M. himself had once been an alcoholic, so that he could get that indispensable bond of identification across. Little by little, alcoholics began to rally around him."

My visitor continued, "Well, that was the beginning. Intolerance, misunderstanding, gossip, scandal, failure, defeat, all those things faced our friend when he came into this town. And that was 3 years ago. Well, Bill, you've seen his mother, you've seen his wife, you've seen his baby, you've seen the group. But he hasn't told you that he now has the largest medical practice in this whole town, if not in the county. And he hasn't told you that he has been made head of our local hospital. And I know you don't know this - every year in this town the citizens have a great meeting at which they cast a ballot, and last spring, at the annual casting of the ballot, the people of this town almost unanimously declared by their ballot that Dr. M. had been the towns most useful citizen during the 12 months gone by." So I thought to myself, "So you were the big shot who planned to go straight past Shelby." I looked at my visitor and said, "Indeed, What hath God wrought!"

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++++Message 394. Philadelphia's 1st AA Newspaper
Article (4/1/40)
From: Fiona Dodd 7/2/2002 8:01:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

(This is from the Philadelphia Record dated April 1, 1940.)

EX-DRUNKARDS UNITE HERE TO HELP OTHERS
Alcoholics Anonymous Tell How They Won a Hard Fight.
By M. W. Mountjoy

Every Thursday evening in a lecture room of St. Luke's and Children's Hospital, a growing group of former drunkards gets together to buck each other up, swap experiences and greet recruits.

They are the Philadelphia chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous (the "Double A's", which may also stand for absolute abstention) a national non-profit organization that has grown up around a former New York city toper who recovered.

Started eight weeks ago by a member of the New York chapter who came to Philadelphia to live, the group already numbers 50 and is growing at the rate of 10 a week.

CANDOR PREVAILS.

The meeting of these confirmed and confessed alcoholics are curiously convivial and forthright. The one we attended included seven "hopeless" cases that had been lifted out of Philadelphia General Hospital by the chapter, and 14 wives, mothers and sisters, most of whom wore wondering smiles.

The chairman of the evening was an insurance agent. He was anonymous, of course. The chairmanship revolves at each meeting because, a member explained, "if you give a recently dry rummy too much importance he's liable to fall off again." The founder of the chapter, a representative of a New York engineering firm, who has been "dry" two and a half years, took no special part in the proceedings.

"I suppose," the chairman began, "we've all had more or less the same experience. We've paid high-priced doctors, made the rounds of sanitariums, know what the inside of an alcoholic ward looks like and the morning after taste of water from a tin cup in a police station."

He called on a young attorney who walked to the front of the room.

"Was he a lush!" proudly whispered the member next to us.

TOO SORDID TO TELL.

"With your permission I'd rather not tell my story," the attorney said. "It's a sordid one. Up to now my life has been completely self-centered. I think this is true of all alcoholics. In recent years I was a periodic drunk. I stayed sober for months, chiefly as a reaction to my last drinking bout.

"But I won a case in court today, and coming away I had that old feeling of elation, that urge to celebrate. Then I realized I ought to be thankful rather than proud.

"Stopping drinking is not enough. You've still got the bottle heat in you. You've got to be honestly thankful."

Each speaker was roundly applauded. The second was a draftsman who last month panhandled an A.A. for a nickel in a railroad station.

This man read what he had to say.

"I've been sober for 25 days," he testified, "which is my longest period of dryness since 1932." He thanked "the fellows here who broke bread with a social outcast" and commended himself to "the Power that has helped me after all else failed."

The next speaker was a strapping young man with an Irish name.

THEY CAME AND GOT HIM.

"On my last bat," he said, "which I regret to say was not very long ago, they had to come and get me. Now I've already started visiting others."

After that, members stood up and introduced starters, several of whom were living temporarily at the Salvation Army.

That was the formal part of the meeting, which continued conversationally for another hour after which the womenfolk served doughnuts and coffee.

NONE HAS FALLEN.

"Not one of this gang has fallen off yet," an older member confided.

"Although, of course, we expect some to. More than half of the national membership (now between 500 and 600) has had no relapse at all. Another quarter had trouble, but is headed for recovery. The other quarter we don't know about.

"We consider that record remarkable, since all of us had been given up as hopeless and had given up hope."

The founder of the Double A's is a tall, tanned broker with a pair of searching eyes and an unassuming manner of speech. Double A's, he reminded us, are not prohibitionists nor, necessarily churchgoers.

A TRUE ALCOHOLIC

"A man may drink steadily all his life with an occasional roaring bender and not be a true alcoholic," says an introductory pamphlet given to recruits. "If anyone who is showing inability to control his drinking can do the right-about-face, our hats are off to him. Heavens knows, we have tried long enough and hard enough to drink like other people.

"We have no desire to make the country dry or anybody else dry unless he happens to be, like us, allergic to alcohol.

HOW THEY DO IT.

"Here are the steps we took toward recovery: (The following is a summary):

"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable,

"Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

"Admitted to God, as we understood Him, to ourselves, and to another human being the nature of our wrongs.

"Made a list of all people we had harmed and made direct amends wherever possible.

"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him.

"Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

A Houston (Tex.) newspaperman, who started a chapter there, wrote:

"In non-religious terms the experience is like the realization that sometimes comes to a person who has never appreciated good music or good books and who all of a sudden gets the idea of the value and pleasure to be found in them."

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+++Message 395. Re: Dr. Silkworth, Psychological Rehabilitation of Alcoholics.
From: kyyank@aol.com 7/10/2002 5:45:00 PM

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Re: Pyschological Rehabilitation.....

This was actually an edited version (of a much longer Medical Record original submission) of another and separate expanded speech given in May, 1939 resultant of Dr. Tiebout public comments on surrender and psychology in alcoholic treatment (and had no direct relationship to the Doctor's Opinion, a letter written at Bill W's request upon the recommendation form Dr. Esther Richard's of Johns Hopkins Hospital, -- and edited for the BB by Bill W). The main result was a reinforcement of the concept of "the terminal state of paralysis of the will", a predisposing factor to alcoholism. The follow up article that same year "A New Approach to Psychotherapy in Chronic Alcoholism" was really the second half of the speech, and an attempt at presenting the overlying images of spiritual healing, psychology, and physical treatment in one speech.

Hope this helps

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+++Message 396. Early 1940's Philadelphia "Intro To AA" Pamphlet
From: Fiona Dodd 7/2/2002 8:04:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

INTRODUCTION TO AA

Philadelphia Group

1537 Pine Street

Alcoholics Anonymous

New Club House

219 South 36th Street

Phone: BARing 9698

Meetings:

Public - Thursdays

Members - Mondays

8:30 P.M.

This pamphlet is an attempt to set forth a few of the rudimentary ideas of A.A. Its purpose is to give the new member a working knowledge, so that he will have some understanding of the purposes, functioning and organization of A.A. What is covered here, we hope will give a prospective member an idea of how to at least start the A.A. program.

However, since the A.A. idea is ever evolving and developing, each new member is strongly advised to circulate freely at meetings and elsewhere with other members. It is, in fact, only by intimate personal discussion that a full understanding can be attained. All older members are willing and anxious, without obtrusion, to assist new men along this line.

I. What do the letters A.A. stand for?

Alcoholics Anonymous.

II. What is A.A.?

A.A. is a group of people for whom Alcohol has become a major problem in their lives and who, admitting it, have decided to do something about it. They have, on the evidence of their own lives, decided that for them Alcohol is a poison, and are honestly attempting to build a satisfactory mode of living without the use of Alcohol in any form.

III. What is an Alcoholic?

An Alcoholic is any person whose indulgence in Alcohol continuously or periodically results in behavior such as to disrupt his normal relations with his or her work, family or society, and is of such a nature as to cause him or her serious trouble.

An Alcoholic is any person whose mental or physical condition is so affected as to, in fact, seriously jeopardize his or her normal relations with her or his work, family or society. While the actual damage may not have been done,

it is merely a matter of time or luck when something serious will occur. Therefore, so far as the necessity of their giving up drinking is concerned they are Alcoholic.

An Alcoholic is any person who experiences an abnormal craving after drinking, and, who finds it necessary to use Alcohol the next day as a medicine or drug to alleviate the very condition which Alcohol itself has created.

An Alcoholic is any person who under any or all of these conditions finds it impossible to discontinue both its constant or periodic use.

IV. Am I an Alcoholic?

We believe that if any person will with brutal honesty face the questions raised in Paragraph III, he or she can definitely determine whether or not he is an Alcoholic.

V. Is it a disgrace to be Alcoholic?

While we do not feel it to be a happy state, we do not consider it a disgrace. Medicine and Psychiatry now both admit that the urge for Alcohol by an Alcoholic is far beyond the indulgence of a whim. That the necessity for Alcohol by an Alcoholic cannot be permanently overcome simply by medical therapy, or by mere will power alone.

Theories are advanced that the cause is a peculiar chemical makeup of the body resulting in a physical allergy, or that it is an emotional instability or immaturity; that it is due to a character deficiency or lack of will power, or to an escapist complex, inferiority complex or numerous other idiosyncrasies. Any one of these may be true in whole or in part.

However, for simplicity, we have chosen to identify it as an allergy resembling the unfortunate situation of a diabetic with an insatiable, ungovernable desire for sugar.

VI. How soon will I be cured?

If you mean when will you be able to drink in a normal way again, the answer is, never in this life. Overwhelming evidence of medicine and psychiatry is that once a man has stepped over into the classes as described in paragraph III, no person can ever drink normally again.

If, on the other hand, you mean when will you be free from the desire to drink the answer is, that alcoholic type of drinking being a way of life both in thought and action, the rapidity with which you succeed in changing your fundamental outlook on life, determines the time when you will be free. This, in turn, depends almost solely on the degree of sincerity and energy with which you throw yourself into the program. Some get almost instant release; for others it is a matter of weeks, or in rare cases months. Our case histories prove that, if a person definitely decides to give up drinking, and if he is not mentally impaired, no failure is possible, provided he honestly

and energetically follows the program.

VII. Why can A.A. help me where others could not?

Because A.A. combines the basic and essential elements of sound Alcoholic therapy. It advises you to seek medical help for your physical deficiencies, if any; a return to your God for your spiritual well-being; the righting on your part, insofar as it is possible, of all past wrongs in order to relieve your mind of inner conflicts. It furnishes you with social and physical activities for the release of nervous energy and the correction of intravert type of thinking. A.A. offers friendships and understanding such as you have probably not known in years. It gives opportunity for sympathetic mutual discussions to give relief to your complexes, repressions and self-recriminations.

Finally, it gives you an opportunity to help others in the same manner you will be helped.

VIII. What do I have in common with such a Group?

In addition to having a common Alcoholic problem you will find that A.A. is as representative a cross-section of our community life as could be found. Members of the group include representatives of every profession, trade and skill. There are business men, laborers, employee and employer, men and women, young, middle-aged and elderly, scholar and student. It is truly representative of many walks of life, social, economic, political and religious. There is little doubt that you will find types to your liking and in harmony with your tastes.

IX. Is A.A. a religious group or movement?

If admitting that we ourselves nor any human relationship or agency have been able to help us so far as the drinking problem is concerned, and that we are desperately in need of help from somewhere, and are willing to accept it, if it can be found - if that is religion - the answer is, yes.

A.A. has no dogma, no creed, no ritual.

It does not intrude into a member's conception of the Spiritual. However, we believe that an appeal for help to one's own interpretation of a Higher Power and the acceptance of that help is the indispensable factor in working toward a satisfactory adjustment to life and its problems.

X. Are there dues, fees, etc.?

There are no dues or initiation fees. A voluntary collection is taken at each meeting to defray current expenses for meeting halls, refreshments, etc. The more fortunate financially contribute \$1.00 monthly.

However, A.A. stresses the fact that there are no salaries of any kind or any financial emoluments to any member, whomsoever.

XI. What form of Government does A.A. Have?

Each group throughout the country (of which there are approximately 150) selects its own method of conducting its own business affairs. The group by whom this pamphlet is prepared has adopted the following simple procedure. It has an Executive Committee of five, elected by the Group at large at a regular monthly business meeting. Each member serves for one month, and at the expiration of the month a new Committee is elected.

The Executive Committee elects a Chairman from among their own number who serves at its discretion.

In addition, one member is elected to the House Committee for six months who serves with the Executive committee in order to have continuity in the affairs of the Group. There is also a Treasurer, Secretary, an Entertainment Committee and such other Sub-Committees as may be deemed necessary for the efficient functioning of the Group elected by the Group at large.

XII. How do I become a member?

You become a member of a Group almost automatically. There is no formal initiation or induction. If, after examining yourself honestly and courageously, you admit to yourself you are an Alcoholic, that you sincerely want to stop drinking once and for all, you have only to attend the meetings, make an energetic sincere effort to be guided by the advice and experience of those about you, and try with complete sincerity to live up to its principles, to become a member.

With continued sincerity of purpose, half your battle is won; without it neither A.A. nor anyone else can help you.

General Information.

Any one demonstrating his or her honesty and sincerity of purpose in his or her desire to stop drinking will have recourse to a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of the Group who will be glad to furnish advice and assistance.

When you feel the need of advice or companionship, do not hesitate to call on or phone any member on the list. If he or she is occupied, he will assist you in getting in contact with some other member who is available. That is an essential part of each member's work, so don't feel you are imposing.

When you have decided to become a member, make it as much a full time job as possible (regaining your former life of complete sobriety is a twenty-four hour a day job. Get active; ask the committee if there is any work you can do.

Make it your business to meet and know every other member. Do not be afraid of appearing too forward. We always try to know everyone by their first name; you do the same.

Bring your wife, husband or any other close relative you choose, to the meetings. The better informed your relatives are as to the program, the better

position they are in to cooperate with you in this important program for your readjustment.

You will at first naturally feel closer to one or two members, but it is important that you broaden your contacts and develop as many friendships as possible.

Don't act like a "patient" too long, become the "doctor" and get out and get yourself some patients.

Don't ever, at any time, imagine you are being slighted. Time and a little logic will prove to you how wrong you are. Alcoholics are inclined to hyper-sensitivity - so fight this with all your intelligence.

A.A. can and will do for you what it has done for thousands. If you are sincere in your desire to stop drinking, you can. No one can cure you. You must help yourself. A.A. gives you the tools, and shows you how to use them. It is up to you to do the work.

There are meetings nearly every evening during the week in various parts of the Metropolitan area. If you desire any information regarding them or if you wish to get in personal contact with a group, address your communication to:

P.O. Box 4735, Philadelphia, Pa.

At the first meeting you attend be sure to personally give your name, address and telephone number to the Secretary, if you desire to become a member.

A.A. publishes a 400-page book entitled ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, which is obtainable at the Clubhouse or any public library.

We urge every victim of alcohol, friends of victims, physicians, clergymen, psychiatrists or social workers to read and study this book, as it deserves the careful attention of any one interested in the problem of alcoholism.

This book will give them, as no other treatise known, an inside view of the problem which the alcoholic faces and represents the pooled experiences of 100 men and women who have been victims of alcohol, many of them declared hopeless by the experts, and who have won their freedom and recovered their sanity and self-control.

The unhappiest person in the world is the chronic alcoholic who has an insistent yearning to enjoy life as he once knew it, but cannot picture life without alcohol. He has a heart-breaking obsession that by some miracle of control he will be able to do so.

Some day he will be unable to imagine life either with alcohol or without it, then he will know loneliness such as few do. He will be at the jumping off

place. He will wish for the end.

A.A. CAN and DOES show these people a solution to their problem and its greatest recommendation is - IT WORKS!

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+++Message 397. Ham Radio and AA
From: Fiona Dodd 7/2/2002 8:05:00 AM

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From Greg H -WB9MII@AOL.COM

Amateur (Ham) Radio "meeting up" with AA is not new. One of the guys who's story was in the first edition (Smile with me, at me) was a ham. In "Pass it on" Bill W tinkered a lot with receivers when the art of radio was new. If memory serves on page 73 (of all things) in the book "Lois Remembers" one of Bills relatives said he had a transmitter going as well. AA Comes of Age speaks of Atlantic and Pacific shipboard AA's keeping in touch by radio, and personnel in Greenland doing the same. An Amateur Radio Group called "HAAMS" was started on the air by two AA's,

Ben W7FNE and Jim W3BKS (both passed away - Silent Keys). These two guys joined up on a 20 meter ham frequency and had meetings via morse code. Later Hank (N8KDW - also a Silent Key) reactivated the HAAM network . It is still active today, see the short "ad" in the back of QST magazine. I have had "on the air" meetings with various AA's and they have all helped.

All of this is true as best I can remember dedicated to my sponsor and elmer - "Slim" E. W9JMG..I miss him.

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+++Message 398. County of San Diego, California
Alcoholics Anonymous History
From: Fiona Dodd 7/2/2002 8:07:00 AM

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From: "Ron K. Long"

County of San Diego, California Alcoholics Anonymous History

Don Sheive of San Diego, good friend here in AA, provided the basic electronic text of this brochure. I performed the cosmetic changes for this effect. It is a duplication of an original San Diego Alcoholics Anonymous brochure published over 22 years ago. In 1979 three additional paragraphs were added, not included in this version, with the closing statement:

"Published August 1979 by permission of the Coordinating Council of San Diego County Groups of Alcoholics Anonymous."

-- Ron Long

The Story of Alcoholics Anonymous in San Diego

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Preface

Early in November of 1940 a sober alcoholic named Hal S. went looking in San Diego for another alcoholic who needed help. Hal had been a member of Alcoholics Anonymous for nearly two years, and he knew that his sobriety depended on helping other drunks to try to stay sober. After all Alcoholics Anonymous had started in 1935 when an alcoholic named Bill W. went looking for another drunk in Akron, Ohio, and found Dr. Bob.

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In San Diego, Hal found Tom B. --- and that was the beginning of the AA story in San Diego County.

In the fall of 1940, Alcoholics Anonymous was barely known on the West Coast. The book written by the founders of AA had been published in 1939, but there had been little national publicity about this unusual new fellowship of alcoholics who shared their experience, strength and hope with each other to solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. One year after the publication of the first edition of the "Big Book," the New York headquarters of AA was listing 22 cities where AA groups were holding weekly meetings, most of them east of the Rockies. The New York office was keeping in touch with "loners" in 16 other cities. The best estimate was that the original 100 members of AA had grown to about 1,400.

Information about AA had been appearing mainly in various newspapers. In San Diego, then a city of 200,000, a story about AA published in The New York Times had caught the eye of an anxious father whose son Tom was having the kind of trouble with alcohol that Alcoholics Anonymous might be able to help.

Tom's father wrote to the author of the Times story, Edwin C. Hill, and obtained the address of the Alcoholic Foundation, the organization which had been set up to handle the affairs of AA. From the foundation he ordered a copy of the book explained how the AA program works and containing the stories of some of the men and women the program had helped. The first AA "Big Book" reached San Diego in May 1940.

But a book supplied by his father did not help Tom. Months passed, and Tom kept on drinking. It was later in the year that Hal S., a former San Diegan who had found sobriety in AA in Los Angeles, decided to return to San Diego and bring the AA program with him. He needed a contact in San Diego, and asked the New York office for help. From the files in New York came the name and address of Tom's father.

That led to Hal's introduction to Tom, who agreed to give the AA program a try as a member of the group Hal was organizing. In his search for prospective members, Hal also got some help from a non-alcoholic friend, Ray Lanto, who was an assistant county assessor. Ray put Hal in touch with two women, Marge C. and Alta M., who were willing to try AA as a solution to their drinking problems.

The first AA meeting in San Diego was held on November 7, 1940, a Friday night, in an apartment at 3229 Adams Avenue. It brought together four alcoholics -- Hal, Tom, Marge and Alta. Actually there were 11 people present altogether, including Tom's parents and friends and relatives of the others.

Friday became the regular meeting night of the new San Diego group of Alcoholics Anonymous. The meeting was held in one member's home, rotating from week to week, remaining open for the participation of alcoholics and non-alcoholics alike.

New members were scarce, but Hal had a solution. He had been introduced to AA in Los Angeles by an understanding judge, and knew there was a ideal source of newcomers for the group -- the city jail. Ray Lanto, who became an enthusiastic friend of AA in its early days, again helped out. He persuaded Police Chief J. T. Peterson that it would be worthwhile to let Hal and his sober friends hold a meeting every week in the jail at the foot of Marker Street, which was known to the drinking crowd as "Peterson's Hotel." So beginning late in 1940, prisoners who were interested were allowed to leave the cellblock to meet with AA member from outside on Monday nights. As expected, some chose to continue their association with AA after they checked out of "Peterson's Hotel."

In its early months the San Diego group could count on around 15 alcoholics to attend the Friday night meeting -- some staying sober, some not. Non-alcoholics continued to participate fully in activities of the group. The concept of "open" and "closed" meetings had not yet developed.

In January of 1941, Hal and four members of the group got a chance to tell their stories on a local radio station, KFSD, an event which produced a spurt of inquiries about AA. By this time, a telephone number in a member's home was being listed to receive calls for Alcoholics Anonymous, and the group had rented a Post Office box to receive inquiries by mail. Posters were placed in streetcars and buses giving the AA phone number and mailing address.

A breakthrough in public interest in AA came in March 1941 with the publication of a now-famous article by Jack Alexander in *The Saturday Evening Post*, then one of the most widely read magazines in America. So intense was the response to this publicity that within a few months the nationwide membership jumped to 8,000.

The Jack Alexander article also kept the AA phone ringing in San Diego. Soon, attendance at the Friday night meeting had reached the point where the crowd could not be accommodated in the members' homes, and the meeting was moved to a hall at the East San Diego Women's Club. The San Diego group held its first picnic in the summer of 1941 at Eucalyptus Park in La Mesa. By November, on its first anniversary, the group was listing 75 members, and was ready to make its first contribution to the New York office -- \$50.

On December 31, 1941, San Diego AA held its first New Year's Eve dance in a ballroom in the basement of the Maryland Hotel on F Street. The princely sum of \$35 was spent to hire a student band from San Diego State. A New Year's party with nothing to drink stronger than coffee was considered unique enough to merit a story about the event in one of the San Diego newspapers.

San Diego at that time was being swept into the turmoil of World War II. AA members were on the move -- into the service or out of town to defense jobs. Blackouts and gas rationing disrupted the routine of San Diego life. For a time, the Friday night meeting was moved to the mezzanine of the California Theater Building in downtown San Diego, and then to the San Diego Women's Club on Third Avenue. Although the meeting place shifted, and faces changed, the continuity of AA in San Diego was not interrupted during the war years.

Al R., who came to the San Diego group in 1942, recalled many years later that the secretary would "call the roll" at the beginning of each meeting. If a name called and there was no response, someone volunteered to telephone or visit the missing member. Al recalled that soon after joining the group, he missed a couple of meetings in a row and received a postcard from the group secretary Bill K. Printed on the card was the Serenity Prayer, and across the bottom Bill had written: "Al, we missed you at the meeting." Knowing he was missed, said Al, got him back to the meetings, for good.

Hal S. had brought with him from Los Angeles the custom of opening each meeting with a reading of a portion of Chapter Five from the Big Book. This

custom had originated with the group which met at the Cecil Hotel in Los Angeles; it is still associated with AA in Southern California. The recitation of the Lord's Prayer at the end of each meeting also came with Hal from Los Angeles and has prevailed from the beginning in San Diego. The Serenity Prayer, familiar to AA members, arrived a little later. An AA member in New York had spotted it in a newspaper and called it to the attention of Bill W., the AA co-founder, and others in the New York office. They saw that it had a special meaning for alcoholics, and decided to pass it on to AA members in the newsletter published in New York for distribution to groups around the country. By 1942 the prayer was becoming firmly rooted in AA.

In December of 1943, Bill W. made his first AA talk in San Diego -- at the Friday night meeting then being held at the San Diego Women's Club. He and Lois also were guests at the New Year's Eve party held that year in the same clubrooms, and Bill helped with the entertainment by playing his violin.

Hal S. also brought from Los Angeles the unofficial rule that a member should have been sober at least a year before leading a meeting. The rule could not always be followed in San Diego in the early days; often no one was available to serve as leader who could claim a year's sobriety. As the fellowship grew, however, the one-year sobriety requirement endured as a policy for choosing leaders for the Friday night meeting, even though it did not always prevail as new, smaller groups began to be formed after the war.

The first attempt to start a second group came in 1944, when Jim H. organized a meeting in National City; however, that group failed to survive. Not until 1945 did any group make a lasting appearance. Among the earliest of these were groups in La Mesa, Old Town, North Park, Mission Hills, a women's group and a young men's group. About this time, the original group which had come to be called the Main Group, moved its meeting night to Wednesday. It was understood that any additional groups would meet on some other night so that all AA members in the San Diego area could continue to attend the Wednesday night main meeting. The first Banquet was held in November 1945 at the San Diego Club.

AA in San Diego reached a milestone in the Spring of 1946. Attendance at the Wednesday night meeting was running as high as 200. It was becoming difficult for a group so large to discuss and vote on the increasing amount of AA "business" and organizational details that had to be dealt with. The solution was to invite each of the seven groups then listed in the county to send representatives to meeting at the Chamber of Commerce building in Old Town to establish a "Central Committee" for San Diego AA. The committee, which held its first meeting on April 13, 1946, assumed responsibility for recommending an "over-all general policy" to guide AA activities in the county.

Until that time, AA members had been watching their fellowship grow with

no clear idea of where it was going or how it would get there. There were no policies to guide the activities of individual AA members, their groups, or the fellowship as a whole and to manage its business affairs. Moreover, the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous had only begun to be disseminated by the New York office to help individuals and groups find the answers to the kind of questions that were arising. The Traditions made their first appearance in the May 6, 1946, issue of the monthly "Grapevine" being published in New York. During 1946 and 1947, each issue of the "Grapevine" included an explanation of one of the traditions.

With Otto R. as chairman and John B. as vice chairman, the new "Central Committee" in San Diego laid down an organizational framework which eventually evolved into the Coordinating Council, giving a voice to all groups in the affairs of AA in the county. At first, the work of the Central Committee was tied closely to the activities of the Main Group. For instance a Leader elected for a three-month term by the Central Committee presided at the Wednesday night meeting and represented AA in any contacts with outside organizations. An Assistant Leader was responsible for conducting a Beginner's Meeting preceding the Wednesday night meeting, and automatically succeeded the Leader after three months. A Secretary elected for a one-year term served both as secretary to the Main Group and handled records and correspondence for the Central Committee. A Finance Committee looked after the Main Group's collections and dispensed its funds.

Within a year the roster of groups was approaching 20, and some members of the Central Committee were convinced that the time had come for AA to rent an office and employ a secretary full-time. The committee called a general meeting of San Diego AA members on January 29, 1947, to decide the issue. A total of 127 members attended to debate whether AA should assume this new financial responsibility. The vote was 86 to 41 -- in favor.

This began a period of difficult financial struggle for San Diego AA -- and opened a wound that was a long time healing. The La Mesa Group voted to withdraw from participation in the activities of the Central Committee, declaring that the plan to open a central office was too ambitious. The group thereafter considered itself responsible only to the New York headquarters of AA. It was several years before the La Mesa group returned to the fold.

The Central Office opened in 1947 in quarters in the old Broadway Building, with Elizabeth S., known as "Liz" to her AA friends, as the paid secretary. The office moved in 1948 to the California Theater Building, where it remained until the move to the present location at 2100 Fourth Avenue in 1971.

The Central Committee became the Coordinating Committee and finally the Coordinating Council, with the voting system and committee structure undergoing many changes in ensuing years.

The publication of the Twelve Traditions in the "Grapevine" helped groups and committees arrive at decisions affecting the future of the fellowship. In the early years, for instance, there was no distinction between the AA program and the social activities that AA members organized among themselves. Pot-luck dinners, poker parties and other entertainment were considered as much a part of AA as the more formal group meetings. One of the hopes of the new Central Committee was to obtain a building that could serve as a combination central office and "clubhouse." Timely advice came from the New York office that owning or operating clubrooms was incompatible with the Twelve Traditions.

This did not kill the idea of a club for AA members however. The "Old Town Social" on Saturday nights had been a popular AA event for years. Out of it came the inspiration for organizing San Diego's first Alano Club, which opened in 1948 in rented quarters at 1358 Fourth Avenue. Although separately organized and supported in keeping with the Traditions, it quickly became a unofficial headquarters for AA social activities.

The Alano Club was a success as a social center but was not always appropriate as a place where AA members could practice the 12th step of their program -- carrying the message to the still-suffering alcoholic. There was a need for some kind of haven for alcoholics in search of sobriety who needed a square meal and shelter as well as the moral support of AA. The result was another separate organization formed by AA members -- The Pathfinders -- which opened in a storefront at 127 F Street in 1950 and was the forerunner of the present Pathfinders recovery home and others like it.

AA members in ensuing years frequently took part in organizing clubs, recovery homes and other activities inspired by the principles of sobriety of Alcoholics Anonymous. At times there was confusion and lively debate about the proper relationship between the AA fellowship and these independent activities. The Sixth Tradition of AA regarding related facilities and outside enterprises finally became the basis for a policy of cooperation without affiliation.

In 1948 the co-founder of AA, Bill W., visited San Diego to speak at an unusual public meeting. Hundreds of doctors, clergymen, lawyers, officials of welfare and law-enforcement agencies and other interested citizens filled the Russ Auditorium to hear Bill explain the AA program and how it works. The audience of 900 made this the largest meeting ever held in San Diego up to that time at which the subject was alcoholism.

In that same year, the other AA co-founder, Dr. Bob, also visited San Diego, and the 13th anniversary of his sobriety fell during his stay. He received a birthday cake at the Central Meeting -- a cake with the most candles ever seen at an AA birthday in San Diego up to that time.

When Lois and Anne, the wives of the co-founders, accompanied Bill and Dr. Bob to San Diego on their 1948 visits they found that the seeds of Al-Anon were being sown. In 1947, the first "Associates Group" for members of the families of alcoholics had been formed. The Associates Group became San Diego's first Al-Anon Family Group when the Al-Anon organization came into being in the early 1950's.

The custom of observing the anniversary of sobriety with birthday cakes goes back to the beginning of AA in San Diego. In 1950, the now-familiar 90-day token came into use in AA groups as a symbol of early achievement of sobriety. The token, bearing the text of the Serenity Prayer, was created by Bill B., an engraver and AA associate whose wife Grace had found sobriety in AA in 1946.

The first issue of "The Coordinator" -- the newsletter distributed to AA groups and members in the San Diego area -- appeared in October 1948. The newsletter served to keep members abreast of the AA activities, and also to remind them of their obligation to the support of the Central Office. Contributions from groups and the proceeds from passing the basket at the Wednesday night meeting was consistently falling short of covering the office expenses. Early in 1950 the Central Committee voted to establish the "Buck-A-Month Club" as a way for individual AA members to contribute directly to the support of the Central Office.

The present Hospital and Institution Committee is an outgrowth of the Monday night jail meeting which dates from before World War II. In the mid-1940s AA members began carrying the message into the psychiatric ward of the County Hospital, and then into County and State honor camps on the outskirts of San Diego. The separate committees responsible for these meetings finally were merged into an H&I Committee to coordinate the entire effort.

The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous was established in 1951 to serve as an assembly of delegates from throughout the world, assuming responsibility for the future of AA services. This brought into being the San Diego Area Assembly to elect a delegate to the General Services Conference in New York and to carry back to the groups the results of each conference. Tom B., who had been one of the four alcoholics at the first AA meeting in San Diego in 1940, was elected as San Diego's first New York delegate in 1951.

AA grew steadily in San Diego. The Wednesday night Central Meeting was moved from the San Diego Women's Club to the Craftsmen's Hall on Centre Street to accommodate the growing attendance. Finally that hall became too small. On March 7, 1956, the meeting was moved to the more spacious Veterans War Memorial Building in Balboa Park, where it has been held each Wednesday night ever since.

From one meeting of four alcoholics in 1940, San Diego AA has grown to include more than 300 groups with a combined membership in the thousands. Meanwhile, the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous has circled the world and currently numbers more than one-million members in 30,000 groups.

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+++Message 399. Philadelphia AA Handbook Ideas
(5/18/42)
From: Fiona Dodd 7/2/2002 8:09:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

May 18, 1942

To:
Miss Margaret R. Burger, Secretary,
The Alcoholic Foundation,
30 Vesey Street,
New York City.

Dear Miss Burger:

Here's a story of the Philadelphia Group from the handbook standpoint, as requested in your recent mimeograph.

Our nucleus was derived from six alcoholics known to be such through their written contact with Alcoholic Foundation. Two had dried up via the Oxford Group, one of them attempted work upon other alcoholics without plan and without results. Another had attained four months sobriety through the A.A. article in "Liberty". Group organization came in February 1940 when a New York A.A. member moved to our city. He knew the background of the parent group and kept contacts with other fellowships actual or in formation. So we had the benefit of what they had found practicable.

The first few meetings were in the homes of these pioneer members. At the outset we were more fortunate than we knew in eliciting the interest of two physicians of high standing who had alcoholic problems with close relatives. They joined our enterprise with as much ardor as the seven alcoholics and had a large room in St. Luke's Hospital reserved for our Thursday night meetings, which the public may attend. One or the other of the physicians speaks at these meetings. It serves to lend a medical approval to our work.

Following a trail blazed by the parent group at Bellevue Hospital, we established similar contact with its local equivalent, Philadelphia General

Hospital. The well known psychiatrist in charge there cooperated intelligently and added further prestige to the medical recognition we had previously acquired. A small group visits patients in the alcoholic ward each Saturday afternoon. The physicians and nurses indicate which patients are likely A.A. material. They are given a chat and booklets, and invited to attend the clubhouse upon discharge. This has been a fertile field for prospects and "graduates" relish the work with new patients.

On alternate Sundays a small group visits the House of Correction. Here, too, the authorities attempt to provide an audience of alcoholics who seem fed up on drinking and ripe for consideration of our ideas. At first we were importuned by these men to have their ninety day commitments shortened, which annoyed the superintendent. Now we tell them at the outset that we will have no hand in carrying messages to the outside; that we come only to tell them of a plan that will relieve them of their alcoholism; that they are welcome at our clubhouse and our meetings. As in Philadelphia General Hospital, we are spared the necessity of convincing House of Correction inmates that they are problem drinkers. The police force and the magistrates have done that for them.

Just before we attained our first Group birthday on of our members established a pleasant and useful contact with the Salvation Army Industrial Headquarters, at Roxborough. It has proved a handy stepping-stone in the transition from Philadelphia General and House of Correction back to employment. At the Salvation Army they are provided with clean quarters and good food for which they render services in the factory or on the delivery trucks of the Industrial Department. The pay is small which acts as an incentive for the men to move into more lucrative jobs when they feel ready. A.A. members at Salvation Army hold meetings there every Tuesday, joined by others of our main Group. They attend our Thursday meetings at St. Luke's Hospital in a body.

From the first we felt that there was inherent danger in having a head man to govern our organization. So instead of a president, we decided to function through an Operating Committee, elected at the monthly business meeting to serve for the ensuing month. The person senior in membership and sobriety is automatically chairman of the six members who compose the committee. They take full charge of the Group's business, exclusive of handling the funds, which is the province of the Treasurer, elected for six months.

The Operating Committee conducts the meetings and appoints the leaders of such gatherings. It is especially responsible for the following regular meetings:

Monday - 8:30 P.M. Clubhouse, Meeting for alcoholics only.

Tuesday - 12:00 noon, Business Men's Luncheon; 8:30 P.M. Salvation Army.

Thursday - 8:30 P.M. St. Luke's Hospital, for public and members.

Friday - 8:30 P.M. Clubhouse, for new members.

Saturday - 2:00 P.M. Clubhouse to Philadelphia General Hospital.

Sunday - (alternate) House of Correction.

It can call upon any member outside of the Committee for assignment to an alcoholic prospect or for any reasonable A.A. purpose and it passes upon small loans made to members in the course of rehabilitation. The problem of the cold broke alcoholic with no place to get help is one that new groups are apt to encounter early in their existence. How it is met is important because some forty percent of the new members is apt to be so situated. The new man may take your assistance and use it wisely or foolishly. He may think he has hit a gold mine and work the entire group quietly but carefully for quite a sum of money.

In Philadelphia, we have developed the following plan and procedure: All requests for financial assistance are referred to the operating committee, who, if the cause is worthy, advance credit in the Clubhouse restaurant for meals and cash to the extent of a place to sleep in one of the local missions. We then place the man in some employment such as Hospital Orderly or the like. On his first pay-day he is expected to repay us for what we have spent. If on this pay-day he is still sober, our small investment is returned and we have a man well advanced in the program. If he is a "phony", or has not the desire to stop drinking, or is not an alcoholic, he is gone and we have lost very little and none of the individual members have lost.

This plan may seem very cold and ungenerous on first reading, but bear in mind the following:

1. If the man wants to stop drinking he is willing to do anything to achieve that goal and the man that is too good for that plan does not want real help - merely financial.
2. The man who wants to regain his place in society wants to do it himself under his own power, without too many obligations to others.
3. He is probably tremendously in debt already and we do not want to put him in any more than is really necessary.
4. He is taking a job that is not going to be too great a strain on him mentally or nervously but will still keep him occupied enough to keep his mind away from himself and make him tired enough to sleep at night and allow himself to fall into a set of decent habits and regular routine.
5. He will not have enough money in his pockets to get drunk on.
6. He is prevented from pan-handling members. This is not necessarily to protect the members, but to protect the man. We find that it is too easy to spoil a good prospect with kindness.

We have used this method in Philadelphia for two years with most satisfactory results. We have applied it regardless of former social standing or financial rating. We have even used it on some former members of other groups who have come to us. The fellows who have come up this way are themselves very proud of it and the Group is most proud of them and they are held in very high esteem.

The financial report on these loans is most interesting. In the last year we loaned \$588.98 and of that sum only \$146.41 remains unpaid to date. Contrast this with your own "loans" to drunks.

While the policy is not ironclad (we have had two exceptions) we do not encourage ministers and priests to address our gatherings. We are afraid that it might lead new people to think we are interested in some particular type of worship. On the other hand, our meetings have addressed bible classes and other church bodies and will carry our message to any interested associations.

Source material for a handbook should include a few experiments that went sour so that they will not be repeated in new Fellowships that are forming. One such comes to mind. We held a theory that men having difficulty with the A.A. program might fare better if we imposed some responsibility upon them. So the January 1941 Operating Committee was composed entirely of such fellows. Charged with the duty of running our Group one member of this Committee "slipped" two days after it assumed office. Before the end of the month every last one of them had gone off the deep end, finally the chairman. We see dangers also in having men too recently out of drink addressing our meetings. From the showmanship standpoint they are usually effective, but it frequently does something to their emotional organization which is not helpful. Getting too holy too fast has also been observed as a possible danger sign. The gutter - to sainthood - and back to the gutter is fast travelling but hardly the trip we planned for our fellow alcoholic.

We can never cease looking upon 1537 Pine Street as unique, for it is at once a club and a hospital. We enjoy a social life that is given only to people who mingle in their common deliverance. Yet, each is still an afflicted person, each at a different point on the road of recovery. Each is groping for the answers that are contained in the broad pattern of the twelve steps. We who are sick of mind and spirit, to varying degrees, here apply the medicine of helpful conversation. We'd hate to think of parting with our clubhouse. Read more of how we handle it in the copy of our letter to the Chicago Group, attached.

Please tell Bill Wilson for our membership that the Philly boys and girls look forward to publication of his handbook. It will furnish us with some of the answers that heretofore we had to find by the costlier method of trial and error.

Regards to Bill and Lois and to all of you of the Foundation, from our gang in Philadelphia.

Cordially,
THE PHILADELPHIA A.A. FELLOWSHIP
By its MAY OPERATING COMMITTEE

Signed,
Joseph E. T.
H. K. S.
Carl R.
Joseph McK.
James F.
Geo. I. S., Chairman

Enclosures:
Financial Statements (2)
Copy of letter to Chicago Group dated 5/10/42

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++++Message 400. AA 50th Anniv. (Saturday Evening Post,
1985)
From: Fiona Dodd 7/2/2002 8:11:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

Alcoholics Anonymous celebrates its 50th year

By Baz Edmeades
The Saturday Evening Post - July/August 1985

In the summer of 1935 two men managed to cast off the chains of their alcohol addiction. The fellowship they found has saved the lives of millions.

The March I, 1941, Saturday Evening Post (adorned with an appealing Norman Rockwell cover and costing five cents) is a historic issue. It contains a Jack Alexander story that turned Alcoholics Anonymous, an obscure self-help organization, into an American institution.

AA's growth has not leveled off in the intervening years. The fellowship now has more than one million members, and its message of spiritual renewal is felt worldwide.

This July in Montreal, Canada, some 50,000 people from around the world will meet to celebrate AA's 50th birthday. They will gather without hoopla or hype, for AA has a firm policy against promotion. The meeting, nonetheless, will be one of celebration, an expression of "sheer joy" by recovered alcoholics and their families. Among the honored guests will be the surviving relatives of two strong-willed men without whom Alcoholics Anonymous would never have been founded. This is their incredible story:

Alcoholics Anonymous was founded in 1935 after a New York stockbroker, William Griffith Wilson, met a fellow alcoholic, Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith, in Akron, Ohio. The fellowship is reckoned to have started on June 10 of that year, the day that Dr. Smith took his last drink, a beer accompanied by a tranquilizer. Dr. Smith needed to steady his nerves; he was about to perform an operation.

The whole story starts a few years earlier. A pebble from the Alps had started the avalanche of recovery that was to become Alcoholics Anonymous. In 1931 the Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Jung was treating an American named Rowland H. for a drinking problem. No sooner had therapy ended, however, than Rowland lapsed back into drunkenness. Refusing to take him back as a patient, Jung told Rowland bluntly that further psychiatric measures were pointless. His only hope of recovery, said Jung, lay in a "vital" spiritual experience.

Returning to the United States, Rowland found spirituality and sobriety with the Oxford Group, an evangelistic organization founded by a Lutheran minister, Dr. Frank Buchman. Rowland shared Jung's message, and his own experience, with other problem drinkers whom he met through the group.

As a result of Rowland's efforts, at least one member, Ebby T., was able to stop drinking for a time. Near the end of 1934, Ebby, then about six months sober, went to Brooklyn to see his old friend Bill Wilson, who had fallen upon hard times.

Bill, a tall, good-looking man, had been one of the first, and best, security analysts on the New York Stock Exchange. He had conceived the notion that investors would do well to take a closer look at the businesses whose stocks they were buying. He and his wife, Lois, had quit their jobs and taken to the road to do just that.

His breakthrough was to discover the great investment potential of the General Electric Company at the advent of radio. Other coups followed and brought Bill prestige and success. The crash of 1929 hurt Bill, but he made no less than two financial recoveries in the early '30s. Alcohol (in the heart of Prohibition!) finally reduced him to poverty. A friend remembered how things were during this period:

"Nearly half a century has passed, but I can still see Bill coming into Ye Olde Illegal Bar on a freezing afternoon with a slow stride he never hurried and looking over with lofty dignity at the stack of bottles back of the bar, containing those rare imported beverages straight off the liner from Hoboken. One time at Whitehall subway station, not far from Busto's [a speak-easy] he took a tumble down the steps. The old brown hat stayed on; but, wrapped up in that long overcoat, he looked like a collapsed sailboat on the subway platform. I recall how his face lit up when he fished out of the heap of clothes an unbroken bottle of gin, he reminisced.

At the time of Ebby's visit, Bill was becoming violent and increasingly abusive; his doctor suspected brain damage. For Bill, self-hate was the daily companion to the terror that he and Lois felt. Ebby, on the other hand, looked and felt good. Rather hesitantly, he explained how he had stopped drinking. He didn't really expect to get through, but as Bill was to confess later, "In no waking moment could I get that man or his message out of my head."

Bill continued, however, to drink. A month later, he was back in Charles B. Towns hospital, an alcoholic rehabilitation center, for the fourth time. Ebby paid him another visit there. Bill asked him to repeat the neat little formula that had enabled him to stop drinking; Ebby did so in perfectly good humor. The process involved admitting that you were beaten, getting honest with yourself, talking it out with somebody else, making restitution to the people you had harmed and praying to your own conception of a God.

Bill was, to say the least, uncomfortable with the idea of a higher power, but he was in the grip of a terrible depression-his pride could no longer hold out against the danger and disgrace drinking had brought upon him. Suddenly he found himself prepared to do anything, anything at all. Without faith or hope he cried, If there be a God, let Him show Himself!

Then came the event that would change everything. Suddenly the room lit up with a great white light. I was caught up in an ecstasy that there are no words to describe. It seemed to me, in the mind's eye, that I was on a mountain and that a wind not of air but of spirit was blowing. And then it burst upon me that I was a free man.

In later years Bill was to downplay this event. With cheerful iconoclasm, he would refer to it as his hot flash experience. He insisted that his real battle with ignorance and arrogance lay ahead. But he never took another drink.

Ever the skeptical Yankee, Bill suspected initially that his hot flash might have been nothing more than a hallucination associated with the d.t.'s. He discussed this fear with the hospital's chief of staff, Dr. William D. Silkworth. Silkworth, a neurologist, had already introduced Bill to the idea, unorthodox at the time, that alcoholism was a disease rather than a moral weakness. Now he affirmed that Bill had undergone some great psychic occurrence and advised him to hold on to it.

Life began anew for the Wilsons. They attended Oxford Group meetings and lived off the small wages Lois was earning as a salesclerk in a Brooklyn department store. Bill yearned to become the family's breadwinner once again, but he had always been the slave of his own enthusiasm. Caught up in something, he would give it all his considerable energies.

Now Bill was consumed by the idea of a movement of recovered alcoholics who would help their still-suffering fellows. He was convinced the message from

Dr. Silkworth and from Ebby T. could work for other alcoholics, too. Ebby's message had been particularly effective. Ebby knew the hopelessness and blindness of alcoholism from the inside; surely his empathy had enabled him to get through to Bill when nobody else not even Lois could. The first six months of Bill's sobriety were spent in enthusiastic but fruitless attempts to help other alcoholics. Bill's approach was almost exclusively spiritual. Finally, Dr. Silkworth, who was permitting him to speak to patients at Towns, suggested bluntly that he stop preaching at drunks and concentrate on the medical facts instead. If an alcoholic could be told by another alcoholic that he had a serious illness, that might do the trick....

Bill did not put this advice into practice immediately. A business opportunity intervened. He went to Akron to take part in a proxy voting battle for the control of the National Rubber Machinery Company. The prize would be a position as an officer in the company and a new career. He was, after all, only 39, and great things still seemed possible. For a while, the proxy solicitations went well, and victory appeared to be in Bill's grasp. Abruptly, however, the tide turned in favor of the opposition. Bill's past offered them an excellent weapon they did not hesitate to use. The battle was lost. Bill's associates returned to New York and left him alone in Akron to salvage the situation.

It was Friday afternoon, and Bill faced a weekend alone in a strange city. Lonely, and resentful over his defeat, he paced up and down in the lobby of his hotel. At one end of his beat was a bar, where the familiar buzz of a drinking crowd offered comfort and conversation. Bill was gripped by fear. He thought of his work with other alcoholics during the past six months. Unsuccessful as it had been from their point of view, the work had certainly kept him sober. Now he needed another alcoholic as much as that person needed him.

He called an Episcopal clergyman listed on the church directory displayed in the lobby and explained his situation as frankly as he could. One call led to another, and by Sunday he found himself in the home of a young woman member of the Oxford Group. She wanted him to speak to her friend, Dr. Robert Smith, who had recently confessed to being a drinker. Dr. Smith arrived at five that afternoon with his wife and teen-age son in tow. Hung over, he explained he could only stay 15 minutes. He stayed six hours.

Bob Smith's drinking had been a serious problem since he had been at medical school. The suffering involved in maintaining a facade through the subsequent years had been considerable. Fifty-five years old, he had by all accounts been an excellent doctor. Now, however, his career was in ruins, and his financial position desperate.

At the invitation of Bob's wife, Anne, Bill stayed with the Smiths for the rest of his time in Akron. A month later, Bob took his last drink. Only weeks later Bob and Bill carried the message to another man, Bill D., a lawyer who

had had to be tied to his hospital bed after he had blackened the eyes of two nurses. Bill D. found permanent sobriety.

Through Bob and Bill's efforts the self-help society began to grow. Bill was the pioneer, the promoter and the organizer, but Bob was unsurpassed at working personally with alcoholics. In the next few years, he would treat thousands without charge in addition to rebuilding his career as a surgeon. It is difficult, wrote a priest who worked with Bob, to speak of Dr. Smith without going into eulogistic superlatives. While he lived, he laughed them off, and now, though [he is] dead, I feel he still laughs them off. A classmate from medical school recalls a day near the end of Bob's life in 1950. One of the outstanding incidents of my life is the Sunday we spent with him at his home in Akron. It was something like people coming to Lourdes---people he'd never seen or heard of. One was a dean of a large college in Ohio. Two people who stand out in my memory were a lawyer and his wife. They had driven all the way from Detroit to tell him what he'd done for them through AA."

Two years after their first meeting, Bill and Bob could count at least 40 sober alcoholics, some of them very grim, last gasp cases that had been sober a couple of years. They realized the chain reaction they had started could spread throughout the world. What a tremendous realization that was! Bill wrote. At last we were sure. There would be no more flying totally blind.

While Bob continued to build the fellowship in Akron, Bill began writing a book (Alcoholics Anonymous; AA members call it The Big Book) about its methods and philosophy. Until then AA's message had been transmitted exclusively face-to-face. For a while, it seemed that the potent magic of that message had been lost in print the book simply didn't sell. Local newspapers and word-of-mouth continued, however, to spread the news of hope for alcoholics, and before long a steady trickle of orders began coming in.

Then Jack Alexander began working on an article about AA for The Saturday Evening Post. Initially prepared to debunk the fellowship, Alexander, after an exhaustive investigation, became an enthusiastic believer. No sooner had his article appeared in the March 1, 1941, Post than the group's small office in New York was swamped with orders for the book and letters asking for assistance. Somehow, the staff (a young woman, Ruth Hock) and volunteers (everybody else) managed to send a personal reply to each inquiry. Throughout North America (and indeed, the world) the Big Book took the place of the personal sponsorship that had brought sobriety to pre-1941 members.

AA almost burst upon the world too soon. At the time of the Post explosion, it had just begun to develop its unique corporate poverty policy without which it could not have attained its present power and importance.

Money had been a problem for Bill and Bob from the start. Both had spent their early years of sobriety in straitened circumstances. When AA was three years

old, Bill was offered an office, a decent drawing account and a very healthy slice of the profits of Towns hospital in exchange for moving his work into that institution. Initially he was delighted, but other members of the New York group persuaded him to refuse. (Today, many AA members work as paid alcoholism counselors-Ñ but in the fellowship's formative years salaries might have been too heavy a strain on AA's all-important tradition of free and voluntary assistance.) Shortly after deciding to keep his AA work nonprofessional, Bill lost his home. For the next two years he and Lois lived with friends and moved more than 50 times before they could afford their own home.

Renouncing personal gain, Bill, however, clung to the idea that AA itself should be liberally funded. He believed that AA should build a chain of hospitals and mount a public education campaign. With these aims in mind, he and his associates approached John D. Rockefeller, Jr., for financial assistance. Rockefeller dispatched an investigator to Akron. The report he received made him a lifelong supporter of the group and a firm believer that money would spoil it. In 1940, he gave a dinner for AA and invited the leading members of New York's financial community. At this dinner, he asked his son Nelson to announce that he (John D.) was donating only \$1,000 and to explain that AA required little more in the way of financial assistance. The other guests followed suit one banker sent a check for \$10!

Likewise, some members of the fellowship now began questioning whether they really wanted a well-funded organization with a powerful executive. AA had, after all, been founded on the power and enthusiasm of the individual. While the group debated this issue, the steady growth of the first years was suddenly overtaken by waves of new members in the wake of the Post article. AA began to realize it enjoyed a fabulous amount of good will. It did not need Rockefeller.

The issue of funding came to a head when one well wisher left AA a legacy of \$10,000. After a lively discussion, the group made a unique decision they would not accept it. ...At the slightest intimation to the general public from our Trustees that we needed money, we could become immensely rich. Compared to this prospect the \$10,000 was not much, but like the alcoholic's first drink, it would, if taken, inevitably set up a disastrous chain reaction. Where would that land us? Whoever pays the piper calls the tune, and if the AA foundation obtained money from outside sources, its Trustees might be tempted to run things without reference to the wishes of AA as a whole. Every alcoholic feeling relieved of responsibility would shrug and say, Oh the foundation is wealthy! Why should I bother? The pressure of that fat treasury would surely tempt the Board to do good with such funds, and so divert AA from its primary purpose. As the result of this decision, AA neither solicits nor accepts any outside contributions. Only members may contribute, and even they are asked not to donate more than \$500 per year.

So Bill had avoided becoming the president of yet another wealthy New York

charitable foundation and became, instead, the greatest social architect of the century, in Aldous Huxley's words. He died in relative obscurity in 1971. In the last part of his life, he avoided fame as assiduously as he had sought it earlier; he refused publicity and awards a Time cover portrait, an honorary doctorate from Yale.

Bill in particular was no stranger to the lure of fame and wealth, but he had come to believe that seeking personal gain including prestige from his connection with AA would be shortsighted. This belief lies at the heart of AA's all-important 12th tradition, which reads: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Appropriately enough, the Akron meeting of Bill Wilson and Bob Smith had its origins in the consulting rooms of Carl Jung, that great believer in synchronicity significant coincidences. Today, 50 years after that meeting, more than one million people have found sobriety in AA. That any single one of them is staying sober is in itself so unlikely, one must conclude that the lives of each one of those men and women have been the product of synchronicity, or what some might call a miracle.

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+++Message 401. Seattle AA Remembers Founder "Bill W."
From: Fiona Dodd 7/2/2002 8:18:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

This article, by reporter George Foster, appeared in the February 15, 1971 Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Seattle AA Remembers Founder 'Bill W.'

The faces in the crowd "some showing the strain of harder times past, some bespectacled business types, others youthful " ran the gamut of the American experience. In another perspective, they were the faces of reclaimed lives from all walks of life. Seattle's members of Alcoholics Anonymous were gathered to honor and memorialize the cofounder of their organization. Bill W., whose real name was William G. Wilson, died of emphysema Jan 24 [1971] in New York. He helped to found AA in 1935 with Dr. Robert H. Smith. Wilson's 15-year battle with the bottle had washed him out of a successful career as a Wall Street broker before he "went sober " and started a group attack on alcoholism. "We know that many of us would be long dead and gone, had it not

been for the founding of this organization," said one speaker at memorial services here at AA's 64-year-old meeting hall on East Pine Street. The crowd of more than 300 heard speakers reflect on the good works of Bill, who like all members of AA, use their first and initial of the last name to maintain anonymity. "Bill W. will never be gone as long as we do our job," said one man. Another speaker commented, "He is one of the gifted few who left the world in a different way than he found it. Wilson, who described himself as "just another guy named Bill who can't handle booze," wrote four books as a leader of AA since its founding, "Alcoholics Anonymous," "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions," "AA Comes of Age," and "The AA Way of Life." Some read excerpts from Wilson's works at yesterday's service. The meeting began with AA prayer and credo: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference." Enlarged portraits of Wilson and Dr. Bob (Smith) flanked the stage of the second floor auditorium. Hearts and streams of red leaves were hung from the balcony of the square, gothic auditorium [sic] reminding its inhabitants that it was Valentine's Day. Many of the women in the audience were decorated in red for the occasion. It was not a day of mourning.

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+++Message 402. Bill Wilson on Subject of New
Delegates, Memorandum, January 1961
From: Fiona Dodd 7/2/2002 9:11:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

Memorandum " January 1961"

Re: New Delegates

By Bill Wilson

I've been asked to venture some opinions on the questions of new Delegates to the General Service Conference.

As we know, representation is now based on one Delegate from each State or Province, regardless of population. Then, in large areas, we have extra Delegates, representing large populations. And in a few cases, where the areas are huge but sparsely populated, we have a few extra Delegates, these based on geographical considerations.

For the operation of the Conference itself, this is a sufficiently representative

cross-section of A.A. The actual conference meetings would not be hurt if we had ten less Delegates, nor appreciably helped if we had twenty more. For this particular purpose we have enough for the present. More Delegates would just mean more expense.

But this isn't the whole story. On his return home it is not fair to burden a Delegate with too great a population of groups, even though he has plenty of committeemen. Nor is it fair to burden him with a huge and sparsely populated area, too big for him and his committee to manage. If we don't make adjustments of these conditions, then our local communications will suffer.

Therefore the Conference Committee on Admissions should weigh each new application for a new Delegate on its own merit, taking into consideration the primary factors of population, geography - and also expense. But this process of adding delegates ought to be gradual, aiming at the remedy of obvious and marked flaws in local communications. We should, our budget allowing, continue to remedy obvious flaws in local communications and that is all.

It should be re-emphasized that the Conference is not a political body demanding a completely rigid formula of representation. What we shall need will always be enough Delegates at New York to afford a reliable cross-section of A.A. plus enough more to make sure of good local communication.

It is my understanding that Ontario has applied for an extra Delegate. Here I would prefer to express no specific opinion, this being the function of the Committee on Admissions and the General Service Board.

I'm only suggesting that the frame of reference described above may be a suitable one within which to make each specific determination.

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+++Message 404. Hal Marley, Mr. "Attitude of Gratitude"
dead at 86.
From: Fiona Dodd 7/2/2002 9:14:00 AM

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From: NMOlson

Hal Marley, Mr. "Attitude of Gratitude" dead at 86.

One of the first people I met when I moved from New York City to Washington, D.C., in June of 1967 was Hal Marley.

He befriended me immediately and often drove me to meetings. I invited him to testify on December 3, 1970, before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse during a hearing we held on alcoholism and drug abuse in the military.

Hal testified:

"I was a member of the regular Air Force for over 24 years. During this 24 years, the last 10, in my opinion, I was a practicing alcoholic. During this 10-year period of alcoholism, I drank from the moment I got up in the morning until I went to bed at night, and there was seldom a waking hour that passed that I did not have a drink of whisky. This included work at the desk and flying airplanes, as well.

"This 10-year period I speak of started in Warsaw, Poland, in 1955, where I was the air attache at the American Embassy. Those were interesting times -- the height of the cold war, the Hungarian Revolution, et cetera, and I had plenty of excuses for drinking around the clock."

After his service in Warsaw, Hal was reassigned to the United States. At Hamilton Air Force Base he served for four years as the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel Training, then was assigned to the East coast where he became a member of the faculty of the National War College. At the National War College, Hal said he "started falling apart," and was reassigned to the Headquarters of the New York Air Defense Sector at Maguire Air Force Base, where a kind general officer suggested he put in for retirement before he really got into trouble."

Hal had a top secret clearance, and said that "behind the Iron Curtain we had a higher clearance called 'cosmic.' It was a clearance above top secret. I think this was a 'crypto' clearance which we referred to as 'cosmic.'"

When I telephoned Hal asked him to testify he agreed without hesitation. He told me later that he had told his boss at the State Department that he was going to testify. It was the first time he had told her that he was a recovered alcoholic. She was very understanding.

I last saw Hal at the A.A. International in Minneapolis in July of 2000. I went to hear him speak at a panel on (what else?) gratitude.

This is the obituary which appeared in the Washington Post.

F. Hal Marley, 86, Dies; AA Counselor

By Bart Barnes
Washington Post Staff Writer

Tuesday, February 26, 2002; Page B07

F. Hal Marley, 86, an alcohol and drug abuse counselor, former Air Force officer and State Department employee assistance chief who established drug and alcohol awareness programs at U.S. embassies throughout the world, died of renal failure Feb. 24 at Cherrydale Rehabilitation Center in Arlington.

Dr. Marley was a 37-year member of Alcoholics Anonymous, and he was known to thousands of recovering alcoholics throughout the Washington area and the world as an apostle of what he called "an attitude of gratitude."

He had thousands of specially designed "attitude of gratitude" pins, one of which he habitually wore on his lapel, and he always carried extras. He gave them away to other alcoholics, along with the suggestion that they should be grateful for their sobriety. He eventually became known as "Dr. Gratitude."

Since he quit drinking alcohol in 1964, Dr. Marley often said, he began each day the same way. "I get down on my knees and thank God for three things: that I'm alive, that I'm sober and that I'm a member of Alcoholics Anonymous." At AA meetings, he would cite the laws of physics that stipulate that two different things cannot occupy the same space at the same time and then declare that a heart overflowing with gratitude would have no room for fear, resentment, anger or hatred.

A veteran of 24 years of military service, Dr. Marley officially retired from the Air Force as a lieutenant colonel in 1965. But at AA meetings, which he attended and led all over the world, he usually put a different spin on his separation from the service. "I was kicked out," he said, declaring that his alcoholism had left him professionally, spiritually and emotionally bankrupt.

After leaving the Air Force, Dr. Marley directed educational and vocational training programs in the Job Corps. In the 1970s, he joined the Foreign Service, where he established and led programs aimed at helping alcoholics and drug abusers recover from their addictions. He established noon AA meetings at the State Department, which he attended regularly until shortly before his death. He retired from the State Department 21 years ago at age 65 but continued serving as a consultant.

A resident of Arlington, Dr. Marley was born in Lenoir, N.C. He graduated from Columbia University, where he also received a master's degree in business administration and a doctorate in education.

At Columbia, he played trumpet in a small dance band, which performed once at a society function at Sardi's restaurant. This would be the beginning of a lifelong relationship between Dr. Marley and Sardi's, where 60 years later the

maitre d' would greet him by name when he arrived with a guest, which he did on almost every visit to New York.

After Columbia, Dr. Marley continued to play trumpet in a dance band, touring the United States and foreign nations.

He began his military career in 1941. He worked primarily in educational and professional-development assignments. From 1955 until 1958, he was stationed at the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw. In the years immediately preceding his military retirement, he was on the faculty at the National War College, where he specialized in politics, economics and military affairs and was an educational adviser to the commandant.

As an alcohol-abuse counselor with the State Department, Dr. Marley presided over a process in which rehabilitation programs were offered to drug and alcohol abusers with the understanding that officers who could remain sober and off drugs could resume their careers.

He attended hundreds of AA meetings every year, as well as dozens of luncheons, conferences, conventions and retreats, many of which he helped organize and lead. In the Washington area, he became known as a creature of habit who always sat in the same chair at an AA meeting or luncheon, the way parishioners sometimes sit in the same pew each Sunday.

"This was not always the best seat, but it became sacrosanct," a friend said. Twice a year, Dr. Marley attended a retreat at a Jesuit conference center in Southern Maryland, where he always sat in the same place during chapel services. But it did not go unnoticed or unremarked by the retreat masters that he somehow managed to be first in line when the cafeteria opened.

Over the years, he developed a seasonal routine, AA meetings or conferences in Texas at one time of year, in California at another. He attended AA functions in Europe and Asia and always made it a priority to attend the annual Bill Wilson dinner in New York, named for the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous.

For more than 20 years, he presided with aplomb at the black-tie Christmas AA dinner in Washington.

Survivors include his wife, Rosita V. Marley of Arlington.

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++++Message 405. Book Reviews of the Big Book
"Alcoholics Anonymous"
From: Fiona Dodd 7/3/2002 7:56:00 AM

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From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

BOOK REVIEWS

OF

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

A COLLECTION OF TWENTY-EIGHT REVIEWS

OF THE BASIC TEXT OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

BOOK REVIEW

NEW YORK TIMES, June 25, 1939

ALCOHOLIC EXPERIENCE

BY Percy Hutchison

Alcoholics Anonymous. 400 pp. New York: Works Publishing
Company. \$3.50

Lest this title should arouse the risibles in any reader I st me state that the general thesis of "Alcoholics Anonymous" is more soundly based psychologically than any other treatment of the subject I have ever come upon. And it is a subject not to be neglected, for, irrespective of whether we live under repeal or prohibition, there will be alcohol addicts, precisely as there are drug addicts. It is useless to argue that under one legal condition or another the number will be less or more. When populations are to be reckoned in the million, fractions cease to count. Under prohibition alcohol will be manufactured and bootlegged, as it was during our late "noble experiment," precisely as narcotics are today smuggled and bootlegged. It is, consequently, the individual only who has to be considered, not the problem of supply and dissemination. Alcoholics Anonymous is unlike any other book ever before published. No reviewer can say how many have contributed to its pages. But the list of writers should include addicts and doctors, psychiatrists and clergymen. Yet it is not a book of personal experience, except in a limited sense, any more than it is a book of rules and precepts. Whether the author of any given chapter can be physician or addict, the argument comes hack to a single fundamental; and that is that

the patient is unable to master the situation solely through what is termed "will power," or volition. One contributor, who thought he had "got by" on a diet of milk, one day said to himself that he could safely add a little whiskey to his lacteal nourishment. He did. And then a little more, and then a little more. In the end, he was back to the Sanitarium. His "will" was operating one hundred Per cent; yet there was a fallacy somewhere. It is to root out this fallacy and supplant it that this book has been compiled. The present reviewer, since this is no ordinary publication, believes it only fair that he should state that at one time he advanced fairly deeply into the field of psychology and he is free to state that the entire superstructure of "Alcoholics Anonymous" is based on a psychology of volition that he himself once advanced but which was never universally acceded to. And that is what we glibly call "will," and usefully so in general practice, should for scientific accuracy be reduced to more elemental terms. And, such an effort made, what results? Just this. That volition, "will power," tracked to its source, is the automatic and irrefutable working of a dominating idea. Consider Napoleon, the man of indomitable will. What does it, in this final psychological analysis, come down to? It comes down to the fact that so exclusively did Napoleon's mind contain the idea that he was the man of destiny that there was no room for any other idea, so that every act, every "willed" action, was the unconscious result of, flowed from, that idea. Here, then, is the key to "Alcoholics Anonymous," the great and indisputable lesson this extraordinary book would convey. The alcoholic addict, and why not change, should it seem we have become too intense, to "the drug addict," cannot, by any effort of what he calls his "will," insure himself against taking his "first dose." We saw how the chap with his whiskey in milk missed out. There is one way for our authors, and but one way. The utter suffusion of the mind by an idea, which shall exclude any idea of alcohol or of drugs. Better, let us say the usurpation of the entire ideational tract by this idea. The idea itself may be, perhaps, fairly trivial. Such as: I do not like alcoholic drinks. In fact, my stomach revolts at their mention. Those who appear to dominate these pages apparently would not subscribe to so simple a formula as I have proposed. But my point is that it might be sufficient; and I base this on the book itself, provided only that their thesis flood, so to speak, the entire ideational tract. Yet would that be possible? Or possible for long? That is the question. And, as a matter of fact, those several authors give it short shrift. I have advanced it solely to exhibit the stark psychological trail on which we have walked. The thesis of the book is, as we read it aright, that his all-embracing and all-commanding idea must be religious. Yet

here again should the reader pause, for the writers are talking of what William James called "Varieties of Religious Experience" rather than matters of individual faith. There is no suggestion advanced in the book that an addict should embrace one faith rather than another. He may fall back upon an "absolute," or "A Power which makes for righteousness" if he chooses. The point of the book is that he is unlikely to win through unless he floods his mind with the idea of a force outside himself. So doing, his individual problem resolves into thin air. In last analysis, it is the resigning word: Not my will, but Thine, he done, said in the full knowledge of the fact that the decision will be against further addiction. Most readers will pass this book by. Yet of such a majority many might not be amiss in turning its pages. There but for the grace of God, goes____. A few will reach for it furtively. It is a strange book. The argument, as we have said, has a deep psychological foundation.

BOOK REVIEW

JOURNAL-LANCET, Vol.46, July, 1939

A NEW APPROACH TO PSYCHOTHERAPY IN CHRONIC ALCOHOLISM

By W.D. Silkworth, M.D. New York, New York

The beginning and subsequent development of a new approach to the problem of permanent recovery for the chronic alcoholic has already produced remarkable results and promises much for the future this statement is based upon four years of close observation. As this development is one, which has sprung up among alcoholic patients themselves and has been largely conceived and promoted by them, it is felt that this new treatment can be reported freely and objectively.

The central idea is that of a fellowship of ex-alcoholic men and women banded together for mutual help. Each member feels duty bound to assist alcoholic newcomers to get upon their feet. These in turn work with still others, in an endless chain. Hence there is a large growth possibility. In one locality, for example, the fellowship had but three members in September, 1935, eighteen months later the three had succeeded with seven more These ten have since expanded to ninety.

It is much more than a sense of duty, however, which provides the requisite driving power and harmony so necessary for success. One powerful factor is that of self-preservation. These ex-alcoholics frequently find that unless they spend time helping others to health they cannot stay sober themselves.

Strenuous, almost sacrificial work for other sufferers is often imperative in the early days of their recovery. This effort proceeds entirely on a good will basis. It is an avocation. There are no fees or dues of any kind, nor do these people organize in the ordinary sense of the word.

These ex-alcoholic men and women number about one hundred and fifty. One group is scattered along the Atlantic seaboard with New York as a center. Another, and somewhat larger body, is located in the Middle West. Many walks of life are represented, though business and professional types predominate. The unselfishness, the extremes to which these men and women go to help each other, the spirit of democracy, tolerance and sanity which prevails, are astonishing to those who know something of the alcoholic personality. But these observations do not adequately explain why so many gravely involved people are able to remain sober and face life again.

The principle answer is each ex-alcoholic has had, and is able to maintain, a vital spiritual or "religious" experience. This so-called "experience" is accompanied, by marked changes in personality. There is always, in a successful case, a radical change in outlook, attitude and habits of thought, which sometimes occur with amazing rapidity, and in nearly all cases these changes are evident within a few months, often less.

That the chronic alcoholic has sometimes recovered by religious means is a fact centuries old. But these recoveries have been sporadic, insufficient in numbers or impressiveness to make headway with the alcoholic problem as a whole.

The conscious search of these ex-alcoholics for the right answer has enabled them to find an approach, which has been effectual in something like half of all the cases upon which it has been tried. This is a truly remarkable record when it is remembered that most of them were undoubtedly beyond the reach of other remedial measures.

The essential features of this new approach, without psychological embellishment are:

1. The ex-alcoholics capitalize upon a fact, which they have so well demonstrated, namely: that one alcoholic can secure the confidence of another in a way and to a degree almost impossible of attainment by a non-alcoholic outsider.
2. After having fully identified themselves with their "prospect" by a recital of symptoms, behavior, anecdotes, etc.,

these men allow the patient to draw the inference that if he is seriously alcoholic, there may be no hope for him save a spiritual experience. They cite their own cases and quote medical opinion to prove their point. If the patient insists he is not alcoholic to that degree, they recommend he try to stay sober in his own way. Usually, however, the patient agrees at once. If he does not, a few more painful relapses often convince him.

3. Once the patient agrees that he is powerless, he finds himself in a serious dilemma. He sees clearly that he must have a spiritual experience or be destroyed by alcohol.

4. This dilemma brings about a crisis in the patient's life. He finds himself in a position, which, he believes, cannot be untangled by human means. He has been placed in this position by another alcoholic who has recovered through a spiritual experience. This peculiar ability, which an alcoholic who has recovered exercises upon one who has not recovered, is the main secret of the unprecedented success, which these men and women are having. They can penetrate and carry conviction where the physician or the clergyman cannot. Under these conditions, the patient turns to religion with an entire willingness and readily accepts, without reservation, a simple religious proposal. He is then able to acquire much more than a set of religious beliefs; he undergoes the profound mental and emotional change common to religious "experience" (See William James' Varieties of Religious Experience). Then too, the patient's hope is renewed and his imagination is fired by the idea of membership in a group of ex-alcoholics where he will be enabled to save the lives and homes of those who have suffered as he has suffered.

5. The fellowship is entirely indifferent concerning the individual manner of spiritual approach so long as the patient is willing to turn his life and his problems over to the care and direction of his Creator. The patient may picture the Deity in any way he likes. No effort whatever is made to convert him to some particular faith or creed. Many creeds are represented among the group and the greatest harmony prevails. It is emphasized that the fellowship is non-sectarian and that the patient is entirely free to follow his own inclination. Not a trace of aggressive evangelism is exhibited.

6. If the patient indicates a willingness to go on, a suggestion is made that he do certain things which are obviously good psychology, good morals and good religion, regardless of creed.

a. That he make a moral appraisal of himself, and confidentially

discuss his findings with a competent person whom he trusts.

b. That he try to adjust bad personal relationships, setting right, so far as possible, such wrongs as he may have done in the past.

c. That he recommit himself daily, or hourly if need be, to God's care and direction, asking for strength.

d. That, if possible, he attend weekly meetings of the fellowship and actively lend a hand with alcoholic newcomers.

This is the procedure in brief. The manner of presentation may vary considerably, depending upon the individual approached, but the essential ingredients of the process are always much the same. When presented by an ex-alcoholic, the power of this approach is remarkable. For a full appreciation one must have known these patients before and after their change.

Considering the presence of the religious factor, one might expect to find unhealthy emotionalism and prejudice. This is not the case however; on the contrary, there is an instant readiness to discard old methods for new ones, which produce better results. For instance, it was early found that usually the weakest approach to an alcoholic is directly through his family or friends, especially if the patient is drinking heavily at the time. The ex-alcoholics frequently insist, therefore, that a physician first take the patient in hand, placing him in a hospital whenever possible. If proper hospitalization and medical care is not carried out, this patient faces the danger of delirium tremens, "wet brain" or other complications. After a few days' stay, during which time the patient has been thoroughly detoxicated, the physician brings up the question of permanent sobriety and, if the patient is interested, tactfully introduces a member of the ex-alcoholics group. By this time the prospect has self-control, can think straight, and the approach to him can be made casually, with no intervention by family or friends. More than half of this fellowship has been so treated. The group is unanimous in its belief that hospitalization is desirable, even imperative, in most cases.

What has happened to these men and women? For years, physicians have pursued methods, which bear some similarity to those outlined above. An effort is being made to procure a frank discussion with the patient, leading to self-understanding. It is indicated that he must make the necessary re-adjustment to his environment. His cooperation and confidence must be secured. The objectives are to bring about extraversion and to provide

someone to whom the alcoholic can transfer his dilemma.

In a large number of cases, this alcoholic group is now attaining these very objectives because their simple but powerful devices appear to cut deeper than do other methods of treatment because of the following reasons:

1. Because of their alcoholic experiences and successful recoveries they secure a high degree of confidence from the prospects.
2. Because of this initial confidence, identical experience, and the fact that the discussion is pitched on moral and religious grounds, the patient tells his story and makes his self-appraisal with extreme thoroughness and honesty. He stops living alone and finds himself within reach of a fellowship with whom he can discuss his problems as they arise.
3. Because of the ex-alcoholic brotherhood, the patient, too, is able to save other alcoholics from destruction. At one and the same time, the patient acquires an ideal, a hobby, a strenuous avocation, and a social life, which he enjoys among other ex-alcoholics and their families. These factors make powerfully for his extraversion.
4. Because of objects aplenty in whom to vest his confidence, the patient can turn to the individuals to whom he first gave his confidence, the ex-alcoholic group as a whole, or the Deity. It is paramount to note that the religious factor is all-important even from the beginning. Newcomers have been unable to stay sober when they have tried the program minus the Deity.

The mental attitude of the people toward alcohol is interesting. Most of them report that they are seldom tempted to drink. If tempted, their defense against the first drink is emphatic and adequate. To quote from one of their number, once a serious case at this hospital, but who has had no relapse since his "experience" four and one-half years ago: "Soon after I had my experience, I realized I had the answer to my problem. For about three years prior to December 1934 I had been taking two and sometimes three bottles of gin a day. Even in my brief periods of sobriety, my mind was much on liquor, especially if my thoughts turned toward home, where I had bottles hidden on every floor of the house. Soon after leaving the hospital, I commenced to work with other alcoholics. With reference to them, I thought much about alcohol, even to the point of carrying a bottle in my pocket to help them through the severe hangovers. But from the

first moment of my experience, the thought of taking a drink myself hardly ever occurred. I had the feeling of being in a position of neutrality. I was not fighting to stay on the water wagon. The problem was removed; it simply ceased to exist for me. This new state of mind came about in my case at once and automatically. About six weeks after leaving the hospital my wife asked me to fetch a small utensil, which stood on a shelf in our kitchen. As I fumbled for it, my hand grasped a bottle, still partly full. With a start of surprise and gratitude, it flashed upon me that not once during the past weeks had the thought of liquor being in my home occurred to me. Considering the extent to which alcohol had dominated my thinking, I call this no less than a miracle. During the past your years of sobriety I have seriously considered drinking only a few times. On each occasion, my reaction was one of fear, followed by the reassurance, which came with my new found ability to think the matter through, to work with another alcoholic, or to enter upon a brief period of prayer and meditation. I now have a defense against alcoholism which is positive so long as I keep myself spiritually fit and active, which I am only too glad to do."

Another interesting example of reaction to temptation comes from a former patient; now sober three and one-half years. Like most of these people, he was beyond the reach of psychiatric methods. He relates the following incident:

"Though sober now for several years, I am still bothered by periods of deep depression and resentment. I live on a farm, and weeks sometimes pass in which I have no contact with the ex-alcoholic group. During one of my spells I became violently angry over a trifling domestic matter. I deliberately decided to get drunk, going so far as to stock my guesthouse with food, thinking to lock myself in when I had returned from town with a case of liquor. I got in my car and started down the drive; still furious. As I reached the gate I stopped the car, suddenly feeling unable to carry out my plan. I said to myself, at least I have to be honest with my wife. I returned to the house and announced I was on my way to town to get drunk. She looked at me calmly, never saying a word. The absurdity of the whole thing burst upon me and I laughed and so the matter passed. Yes, I now have a defense that works. Prior to my spiritual experience I would never have reacted that way."

The testimony of the membership as a whole sums up to this: For the most part, these men and women are now indifferent to alcohol, but when the thought of taking a drink does come, they react sanely and vigorously.

This alcoholic fellowship hopes to extend its work to all parts of the country and to make its methods and answers known to every alcoholic who wishes to recover as a first step, they have prepared a book called Alcoholics Anonymous*. A large volume of 400 pages, it sets forth their methods and experience exhaustively, and with much clarity and force. The first half of the book is a text aimed to show an alcoholic the attitude he ought to take and precisely the steps he may follow to affect his own recovery. He then finds full directions for approaching and working with other alcoholics. Two chapters are devoted to working with family relations and one to employers for the guidance of those who surround the sick man. There is a powerful chapter addressed to the agnostic, as the majority of the present members were of that description. Of particular interest to the physician is the chapter on alcoholism dealing mostly with its mental phenomena, as these men see it.

By contacting personally those who are getting results from the book, these ex-alcoholics expect to establish new centers. Experience has shown that as soon as any community contains three or four active members, growth is inevitable, for the good reason that each member feels he must work with other alcoholics or perhaps perish himself.

Will the movement spread? Will all of these recoveries be permanent? No one can say. Yet, we at this hospital, from our observation of many cases, are willing to record our present opinion as a strong "Yes" to both questions.

*EDITOR'S NOTE. The book, Alcoholics Anonymous (\$3.50) may be secured from The Alcoholic foundation, Post Box 658, Church Street Annex, New York City.

BOOK REVIEW

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Works Publishing Company

Church Street P.O. Box 657

New York City...400pp....

\$3.50

Reviewed by - DR. HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

This extraordinary book deserves the careful attention of anyone

interested in the problem of alcoholism. Whether as victims, friends of victims, physicians, clergymen, psychiatrists or social workers there are many such, and this book will give them, as no other treatise known to this reviewer will, an inside view of the problem which the alcoholic faces. Gothic cathedral windows are not the only things, which can be truly seen only from within. Alcoholism is another. All outside views are clouded and unsure. Only one who has been an alcoholic and who has escaped the thralldom can interpret the experience.

This book represents the pooled experience of one hundred men and women who have been victims of alcoholism -- many of them declared hopeless by the experts -- and who have won their freedom and recovered their sanity and self-control. Their stories are detailed and circumstantial, packed with human interest. In America today the disease of alcoholism is increasing. Liquor has been an easy escape from depression. As an English officer in India, reproved for his excessive drinking, lifting his glass and said, "This is the swiftest road out of India," so many Americans have been using hard liquor as a means of flight from their troubles until to their dismay they discover that, free to begin, they are not free to stop. One hundred men and women in this volume, report their experience of enslavement and then of liberation.

The book is not in the least sensational. It is notable for its sanity, restraint, and freedom from over-emphasis and fanaticism. It is a sober, careful, tolerant, sympathetic treatment of the alcoholic's problem and of the successful techniques by which its co-authors have won their freedom. The group sponsoring the book began with two or three ex-alcoholics, who discovered one another through a kindred experience. From this personal kinship a movement started, ex-alcoholic working for alcoholic without fanfare or advertisement, and the movement has spread from one city to another. This book presents the practical experience of this group and describes the methods they employ.

The core of their whole procedure is religious. They are convinced that for the hopeless alcoholic there is only one way out - the expulsion of his obsession by a Power greater than himself. Let it be said at once that there is nothing partisan or sectarian about this religious experience. Agnostics and atheists, along with Catholics, Jews and Protestants, tell their story of discovering the Power Greater Than Themselves. "WHO ARE YOU TO SAY THAT THERE IS NO GOD," one atheist in this group heard a voice say when, hospitalized for alcoholism, he faced the utter hopelessness of his condition. Nowhere is the

tolerance and open-mindedness of the book more evident than in its treatment of this central matter on which the cure of all these men and women has depended.

They are not partisans of and particular form of organized religion, although they strongly recommend that some religious fellowship be found by their participants. By religion they mean an experience which they personally know and which has saved them from their slavery, when psychiatry and medicine had failed. They agree that each man must have his own way of conceiving God, but of God Himself they are utterly sure, and their stories of victory in consequence are a notable addition to William James' "Varieties of Religious Experience."

Although the book has the accent of reality and is written with unusual intelligence and skill, humor and modesty mitigating what could easily have been a strident and harrowing tale. - Harry Emerson Fosdick

BOOK REVIEW

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Boston, August 17, 1939

BREAKING THE DRINK HABIT

In view of the extent of liquor consumption in the United States since the repeal of national Prohibition, a book recently published on the subject of liquor addiction and its remedy seems designed for a wide usefulness. This volume is entitled "Alcoholics Anonymous," issued by the Works Publishing Company in New York and contributed to by authors with experience in the overcoming of the drink habit.

The thesis of this book, as summarized by one reviewer, is that will power is not enough to enable the patient to break the hold of alcoholism, that he is more likely to win through if he suffuses his consciousness completely with some commanding idea which excludes the thought of alcohol or stimulants, and that for the surest prospect of success this overwhelming interest should be religion - "the idea of a force outside of himself."

It has indeed been proved true in case after case that something more than individual will power - or "won't" power - is necessary in order to heal what at least one special sanitarium recognizes in its advertising as "a disease." What indeed could be more effective than an absorbing conviction that, in the

words of David, "God is my strength and power and he maketh my way perfect." fortunately thousands are finding this knowledge a sure and gratifying defense.

BOOK REVIEW

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

September 1939

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: By various writers. Cloth price \$3.50. Works Publishing Co., 17 William St., Newark, N.J.

Over one hundred men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body have contributed to this book. The stories of these individuals in their struggles physically and mentally to overcome alcoholic addiction are gripping. A physician writes in the introduction that the action of alcohol in chronic alcoholism is a manifestation of allergy. Therefore, hospitalization and proper treatment is often necessary to free the patient from his craving for liquor. When the mind is clear he is a candidate for psychological measures. This book deals principally with such measures as exemplified in the stories of alcoholics.

BOOK REVIEW

NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE

Vol. 221(15), October 12, 1939

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: The story of how more than one hundred men have recovered from alcoholism. 400 pp. New York Works Publishing Co., 1939, \$3.50.

The psychological aspect of alcoholism taxes the entire skill and intuition of the therapist, and the authors of this book claim that in the long run the ex-alcoholic patient who is properly trained in psychological method is an extremely effective person to bring about the cure of the neurotic alcoholic individual.

The first part of the book discusses methods, with particular stress on twelve steps in the recovery program. This program includes the general principles of psychotherapy found in such books as those by Durfee and Peabody. There is, however, an essentially new note, namely, that the alcoholic individual should be helped to admit to God, to himself and to another

human being (preferably an ex-alcoholic patient) the exact nature of his personality deficit. Some will perhaps shy from the emphasis on God and religion until it is realized that the alcoholic patient is asked in this relation to believe sincerely in a power greater than himself. He then sees that his life is really unmanageable without this power.

The second part contains the stories of twenty-nine individuals who were cured by the method of working out their character problems in relation to God, themselves and another human being. All these individuals were "convinced by an ex-alcoholic therapist." Those who at some time must deal with the problem of alcoholism are urged to read this stimulating account.

The authors have presented their case well, in fact, in such good style that it may be of considerable influence when read by alcoholic patients.

BOOK REVIEW

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Vol. 113(16), October 14, 1939

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS. The story of how more than one hundred men have recovered from alcoholism. Cloth. Price \$3.50. 400 pp.. New York: Works Publishing Company. 1939.

The seriousness of the psychiatric and social problem represented by addiction to alcohol is generally underestimated by those not immediately familiar with the tragedies in the families of victims or the resistance addicts offer to any effective treatment. Many psychiatrists regard addiction to alcohol as having a more pessimistic prognosis than schizophrenia. For many years the public was beguiled into believing that short courses of enforced abstinence and catharsis in "institutes" and "rest homes" would do the trick, and now that the failure of such temporizing has become common knowledge, a considerable number of other forms of quack treatment have sprung up. The book under review is a curious combination of organizing propaganda and religious exhortation. It is in no sense a scientific book, although it is introduced by a letter from a physician who claims to know some of the anonymous contributors who have been "cured" of addiction to alcohol and have joined together in an organization, which would save other addicts by a kind of religious conversion. The book contains instructions as to how to intrigue the alcoholic addict into the acceptance of divine guidance in place of alcohol in

terms strongly reminiscent of Dale Carnegie and the adherents of the Buchman ("Oxford") movement. The one valid thing in the book is the recognition of the seriousness of addiction to alcohol. Other than this; the book has no scientific merit or interest.

BOOK REVIEW

ILLINOIS MEDICAL JOURNAL

January 20, 1940

TO THE EDITOR: Of great interest to the medical profession is the new approach to a cure for chronic alcoholism developed by alcoholics themselves.

Every physician has been confronted with the problem of the incurable alcoholic. He who although sobered and apparently sane as a result of medical aid suffers the usual and expected relapse and returns to the physician or to the sanitarium for another round of treatment. In his remorse he solemnly rejects alcohol in any form. He then endures a short period of sobriety and again returns to drunkenness.

Alcoholics are the last to admit their ability to "drink like gentlemen," and therefore are prone to devise ways and means, or systems for indulgence, which although inaugurated with sincere intent at the time seem never to serve their purpose. They act only as the forerunners to bigger and better sprees.

The chronic alcoholic seldom can be cured until he reaches a point at which he admits his inability to cope with his problem and has in addition a sincere desire to achieve complete and lasting sobriety.

The chronic alcoholic resents the efforts made by his relatives and friends to help him. He feels they do not understand him nor his problem. But when he talks to people who themselves have been drunkards he realizes that these people do understand for they have had the same personal experiences.

BOOK REVIEW

CHRISTIAN HERALD

August 1940

WITNESS: There is a book on alcohol you should read. It is published by The Alcoholic Foundation of New York (P.O. Box 658,

Church Street Annex, New York). It's title: "Alcoholics Anonymous "The unnamed alcoholics write their own stories, and those stories are dynamite.

Two-thirds of them, they claim, have laid the foundation for permanent recovery. "More than half of us have had no relapse at all (after treatment) despite the fact that we have often been pronounced incurable "How were they cured? The method is simple: first of all they admitted they were powerless to overcome alcohol by themselves; second, they came to believe that "a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity;" third, they made a decision to "turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him"

There is more to the cure, but that's the heart of it. There may be some confirmed drinkers who will sneer at the method and the procedures, but they can't laugh off the fact that it has worked where other methods and procedures have failed.

BOOK REVIEW

JOURNAL OF NERVOUS AND MENTAL DISEASE

Vol. 42(3), September 1940.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: How more than one hundred men have recovered from alcoholism. (New York: Works Publishing Company, Church St. Annex P.C., \$3.50.)

As a youth we attended many "experience" meetings more as an onlooker than as a participant. We never could work ourselves up into a lather and burst forth in soapy bubbly phrases about our intimate states of feeling. That was our own business rather than something to brag about to the neighbors. Neither then nor now do we lean to the autobiographical, save occasionally by allusion to point a moral or adorn a tale, as the ancient adage put it.

This big book, i.e. big in words, is a rambling sort of camp meeting confession of experiences, told in the form of biographies of various alcoholics who had been to a certain institution and have provisionally recovered, chiefly under the influence of the "big brothers get together spirit." Of the inner meaning of alcoholism there is hardly a word. It is all on the surface material.

Inasmuch as the alcoholic, speaking generally, lives a wish-fulfilling infantile regression to the omnipotent

delusional state, perhaps he is best handled for the time being at least by regressive mass psychological methods, in which, as is realized, religious fervors belong, hence the religious trend of the book. Billy Sunday and similar orators had their successes but we think the methods of Forel and of Bleuler infinitely superior.

BOOK REVIEW

THE NEWS-LETTER

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHIATRIC SOCIAL WORKERS

Fall, 1940

ALCOHOLIC ANONYMOUS

(The story of how more than one hundred men have recovered from alcoholism.)

Publishing Company; 400 pages

This review covers the book, a discussion with the authors, and attendance at the meetings of the New York City group of Alcoholics Anonymous. Contact with this group increases one's respect for their work. To the layman, the book is very clear. To the professional person it is at first a bit misleading in that the spiritual aspect gives the impression that this is another revival movement. The book is simply and clearly written. It gives a vivid picture of the emotional predicament of the person suffering from serious alcoholism. It presents the disorder as a disease; a fatal disease in the social and physical sense. People who have benefited from the treatment tell their story in simple, compelling language. There are excellent descriptions of what happens to the family of an alcoholic. There is a sincerity and enthusiasm about the writing of this work that commands attention.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS seems to have succeeded in cases where the physician, the clergyman, the psychiatrist, or the social worker have failed. The method works only with the patient who really wants to get well; who is willing to face the truth about himself - his prejudices, his infantilism, his evasions. It effects its most phenomenal results with the patient who has gone so far that unless he does something drastic he will either become insane, kill himself in drink, or commit suicide. The patient must be willing to admit that he has failed, that he has no power over his drinking, that the "wet-nursing" of his family

only makes him worse, that he must do this thing alone. In this frame of mind he selects someone to listen to his story but for the first time in his life he is being really honest with himself and admitting that he is responsible for the mess he has made of his life. When he must prove that he is willing to face reality by trying to patch up some of the antagonisms he has created around him. Then he is ready for some deeper reorganization of patterns. It is a sink or swim psychology; there is no pampering by the group and no protection. The group accepts the newcomer as an adult who really wants to get well; they will show him how but they won't do it for him. Having admitted he has no power over his drinking, he must be willing to allow a higher power to help him. This is no ready-made spiritual formula; it is not a church religion. It is a spiritual experience that somehow even extreme atheists seem to have been able to achieve. (One can watch the process of this change at the meetings of the group). The last step in the cure, the part that keeps the patient from slipping back into drink, is that he devotes himself to helping other alcoholics. The movement is kept alive by this type of work.

It is more impressive to the professional person to watch the technique in action than to read the book. The New York City group is made up of intelligent people, many college graduates, and many professional people. There is no holier-than-thou spirit prevailing, there is good fellowship, gaiety, fun, and a real desire to stay sober.

The work is organized under an Alcoholic Foundation, which prevents and alcoholic from obtaining a salary for doing the work. One or two of the group tried using the approach on a fee basis, but the spiritual aspect which keeps these people sober seemed to have died when the patient tried earning money this way; these few people found themselves drinking again and so returned to the volunteer relationship.

This new resource is developing groups all over the country. Social workers will find them of great help with the extreme cases of alcoholism. The book describes the method in detail - it is a layman's approach, a layman's book. It needs no explanation for the patient and should certainly be read by every alcoholic.

Lee R Stainer

New York City

BOOK REVIEW

CHURCH SCHOOL MAGAZINE

December 1940

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: Works Publishing Company. 1939. \$3.50.

Here is an impressive story of the achievement of more than one hundred men in gaining freedom from alcoholism. Evidence in this volume seems to indicate that medicine and psychiatry are powerless to cure many cases of alcoholism: heretofore there was no end in sight except death or insanity. But here is factual evidence that the worst alcoholic can gain mastery over this temptation if he admits that he is powerless and turns himself completely over to God. This spiritual technique demands genuine humility, sincere efforts to make amends for all wrongs done, continued fellowship with God through prayer and meditation, and efforts to help other alcoholics who are ready to relinquish the belief that they can resist alcohol through their own will power. The experience of these men seems to offer real hope that an effective technique has been discovered for conquering an enemy that has baffled doctors, psychiatrists, pastors and thousands of distressed families.

BOOK REVIEW

SOCIAL PROGRESS

March 1941

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: Works Publishing Company, New York, \$3.50

Here is an unusual book. It is the dramatic recital of the experience of more than a hundred men and women in their fight against alcoholism, their victory, and their desire and determination to pass on to others the secret of their release. The group who has contributed to this book began with two or three alcoholics whose similar experiences drew them together. "To show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body," says the introduction, "is the main purpose of this book."

Let it be said at the outset that there is nothing sensational in these stories, although they are filled with the drama of conflict, failure and final release. These writers believe that there is but one cure for the alcoholic. That is the realization of his own inability to cope with his repeated failures and the recognition of the reality of that Power greater than himself,

whom we call God, to drive out his obsession. The head of one of the nation's great hospitals for the treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction contributes a statement to the introductory pages declaring that here is the working out of the principles of a sound "moral psychology."

The discussion of these principles is free of emotionalism. It is neither sectarian nor partisan, for men and women of all religions and of none, have contributed to the book "In our personal stories," says one writer, "you will find wide variation in the way in which each teller approaches and conceives of the Power greater than himself. One proposition, however, these men and women are strikingly agreed. Every one of them has gained access to, and believes in, a power greater than himself. This power has in each case accomplished the miraculous, the humanly impossible."

The movement has grown and spread without formal organization and groups are widely scattered over the country. Its members, mostly business and professional folk, go about their usual work, their avocation being to help others through their friendship and moral concern to find release.

For ministers, social workers, psychiatrists, and all others who are concerned with the rescue of those sick in mind and body, from the possession of the liquor habit, this book is a source of suggestion and inspiration.

E.G.R.

BOOK REVIEW

MENTAL HYGIENE

Vol. 25(2), April 1941.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: New York: Works Publishing Company, 1939. 400pp.

TWELVE AGAINST ALCOHOL: By Herbert Ludwig Nossen, M.D, New York: Harrison-Hilton Books, 1940. 246pp.

These two books are similar in that both present in great detail case histories of patients who are suffering from alcoholism. In this way many old established facts about alcoholism are brought again to our attention, such as the individual's early resort to alcohol as a means of solving his problems or temporizing his

major adjustments in life, and the tragic and dramatic way in which the alcoholic drags down his entire family with him, to say nothing of the other social and economic repercussions. Reading these case histories, one becomes more than ever convinced that the excessive drinking of alcohol is one of the relatively minor phases of the individual's whole problem, particularly when one considers the faulty psychosexual adjustments and general immaturity and infantile characteristic of the alcoholic

For the successful treatment of a person who has become addicted to alcohol, there must of necessity be a revolutionary change in the patient's personality. The achievement of more adult attitudes and the marked turning away from older selfish, infantile patterns of behavior must involve an emotional upheaval. We are all aware that this inner emotional change is more necessary than a merely intellectual appreciation of one's difficulty, or what is called intellectual insight.

It will be interesting to see how the religious program set forth by Alcoholics Anonymous will work. It is not entirely new; it has been tried before.

James H Wall

The New York Hospital, Westchester Division,

White Plains, New York.

BOOK REVIEW

WORLD CALL

June 1941

One of the most significant redemptive movements of our time is expressed in a large book of testimonies called Alcoholics Anonymous. It is written with the enthusiastic flair of discovery though its main thesis is as old as the history of Christian redemption.

Alcoholism is a disease. Physicians and psychiatrists have been working on it for years. It is a disease with an increasing prevalence. Many practicing physicians write it off as incurable. The present movement began with an individual who had been given up by the practitioners as hopeless. He was converted to religion and began to work out the practical effects of his conversion by trying to help other alcoholics. This method was

found amazingly successful and has some of the professional physicians mystified. These alcoholics find that they need spiritual support and that their own cures are best secured by helping others with like affliction. They are forming an informal group of the saved. It is a movement worth encouraging.

BOOK REVIEW

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE BIG BOOK

THE A.A. GRAPEVINE

July 1955

The new edition has 612 pages, as against 400 pages in the old. In terms of cost it is the best non-fiction buy in the country. No other commercial publisher in America could match the book, in size and format alone, at its retail price.

The first edition runs to 100,000 words, the edition just off the press is 168,869.

The old edition contained 29 stories, about 1,800 words each, the new edition has 37 -- 24 of them brand new -- and all of them running to twice the length (or about 3,300 words) of the earlier work. The new stories are more detailed and more explicit, more revealing, and of more useful contrast and variety.

The geographical spread, in the new book, is far greater: 15 cities, 10 states, and two foreign countries.

The vocational range is immense: buyer, industrial executive, surgeon, banker, writer, educator, soldier, insurance agent, advertising executive, furniture dealer, stock farmer, beautician, charwoman, truck driver, insurance investigator, salesman, real estate agent, promoter, accountant, sculptor, journalist, upholsterer, organizational executive, patent expert, lawyer, doctor, and housewife. The most numerous in this list is the housewife -- with six stories.

There are 110,000 words of absolutely new material, yet the practical, therapeutical, and expository first 175 pages of the original work are here intact. These pages have already gone into the American legend as the "greatest redemptive force of the twentieth century." And these pages will remain there, through the full history of man's pursuit of maturity.

BOOK REVIEW

BEST SELLERS

Vol. 15: 96, August 15, 1955

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS (Second Edition)

Alcoholics Anonymous Publishing Co., July 16, 1955.

This book is a revision of the first edition originally published in 1939, which has gone through 300,000 copies. Not only does it tell the appalling story of alcoholism, but it also serves to give a deep insight into the philosophy and functioning of A.A.

Five chapters devoted to the relationship of the alcoholic to his wife and family contain many instances of marital and domestic difficulties, their meaning and methods of handling them. Spouses and families that have been spared the presence of an alcoholic can never fully appreciate what it means to have a family member a victim. These chapters dispel many of the misconceptions and false notions of how the alcoholic should be treated, and they offer many sound suggestions in this area.

The second part of the book contains thirty-seven case histories of alcoholics. Twelve of these relate to pioneers of A. A.; twelve tell about people who stopped drinking in time. The remainder are inspirational in nature.

At the present time A.A. numbers more than 150,000 members. In view of its short history, less than twenty years, this is a phenomenal growth. Since we have over 800,000 problem drinkers in the U.S. it is immediately obvious that hospitalization is impossible even if it were feasible. Because of this fact, efforts like A.A. take on a practical urgency. As the book well indicates, A.A. does not seek to supplant the psychiatrist or medical man. However, the group experiences of A.A. have evidently been sufficiently strong to help chronic alcoholics take the steps necessary for their rehabilitation.

This book is a welcome addition to the literature on alcoholism. It has value for the alcoholic who is seeking help, his family and friends and even the persons professionally concerned with his treatment and recovery.

BOOK REVIEW

SATURDAY REVIEW

Vol. 38, August 27, 1955

"THE BIG BOOK" BIBLE FOR ALCOHOLICS

There was a time when the organization known as Alcoholics Anonymous, which has become one of the greatest boons to the drunkards of the world, had a membership, which was a little lopsided. On its rolls the Bowery was better represented than Park Avenue, a fact deplored by the organization's leaders. So, recognizing that the rich can become just as alcoholic as the poor, the organization decided to do something about it. Acting on its long-held tenet that only a sober ex-drunk can cure a down-and-out drunk, the A.A. leaders looked around for an ex-drunk with glamour and the ability to speak the Park Avenue language. They found it in an ex-drunk countess. The result: Park Avenue became as well represented as the Bowery on the rolls of A.A.

Now, in the past few years, another change has taken place in the membership of A.A. -- a change that has proved even more important than that accomplished by the countess, but which was comparatively unnoticed by the public-at-large until last month. At that time A.A. held its bone-dry twentieth-anniversary convention and, in conjunction with the ceremonies, issued a revised, second edition of an oversized, ocean-blue volume, which is familiarly known to all A.A. members as "The Big Book." The new edition, like its predecessors, is jacketed in a reversible dust cover, one side of which is blank, which allows it to be read in trains and buses without attracting the eyes of the curious. But, unlike its predecessor, the new edition is not intended solely for alcoholics of the last-gasp variety. Right in the middle of it lies a whole section devoted to drinkers who have not yet lost their businesses or broken up their homes or, as most of A.A.'s original members seem to have done, landed in jail. Says ex-A.A. president Bill W. (who still keeps his last name anonymous, though he has now stepped down from his executive position): "Now we're getting cases whose drinking has merely become a menacing nuisance, and we're glad for them"

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+++Message 406. NEW YORK AA MEMBER LOST SEPTEMBER 11.
From: Fiona Dodd 7/3/2002 8:07:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

Subject: NEW YORK AA MEMBER LOST SEPTEMBER 11.

Many New York AA members probably lost family or friends on September 11. And many may have been lost.

This is the first confirmation of an AA member who lost his life September 11.

Nancy

Father Mychal Judge was a Franciscan Friar, the Chaplain of the NY Fire Department, and a sober alcoholic. He was known and loved by the NYC Firefighters as well as NYC AA members. He was killed on 9-11-01, while administering last rites to a dying firefighter at the foot of the South Tower of the World Trade Center. He created the prayer that follows:

Mychal's Prayer

Lord,
Take me where you want me to go;
Let me meet who you want me to meet;
Tell me what you want me to say,
and
Keep me out of your way.

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+++Message 407. Talk by Richmond Walker, author of "Twenty-Four Hours a Day."
From: Fiona Dodd 7/3/2002 8:21:00 AM

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From: NM Olson

Posted with permission of historian Glenn C.

Richmond Walker Speaking in Rutland, Vermont in 1958

The author of *Twenty-Four Hours a Day* tells the story of his own life.

Born Aug. 2, 1892; joined A.A. in May 1942; died Mar. 25, 1965

G.C. The oldtimers in Indiana say over and over again that they got sober on two books: the *Big Book* and the *Twenty-Four Hour* book. Phrases and topical advice from both books are sprinkled throughout everything they say when they talk about their own experience of the program, and when they give advice to newcomers. You can get even more out of the *Twenty-Four Hour* book after you have read Rich's lead and begin to realize how often he was speaking, particularly in the large print section at the top of each page, about his own personal experiences, both during the years when he was destroying his life through drink, and afterwards in recovery. He joined A.A. in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1942 (only three years after the publication of the *Big Book*), and taught the early A.A. groups how you carried out the spirit of the eleventh step: "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

Rich finished putting the *Twenty-Four Hour* book together in 1948, after he had moved down to Daytona Beach, Florida, and at first printed and distributed it on his own. In 1953, he asked the New York A.A. office to take over this task, which had become totally overwhelming (around 10,000 copies a year were being ordered at some points), but Bill W. said they could not do it either. In 1954, Patrick Butler at Hazelden offered to take over this mammoth job to keep the book available.

Richmond Walker:

I was born in Brookline, Massachusetts, when my father and mother lived at 108 Upland Road (although I was not born in this house, but on Irving Street while the house was being built). My father was a lawyer by profession, although he did not practice law but went in for politics most of his active life.

My father's father, Grandfather Walker, lived in Worcester, Massachusetts, when he was first engaged in shoe manufacturing and later became United States congressman from Worcester. He served many years in the U.S. Congress in Washington, D.C., and was known as the Grey Eagle of Lake Quinsigamond, which was the name of a lake near Worcester. My grandfather sold out his business to the United Shoe Manufacturing Company and used this money to build buildings in Worcester, Boston, and Chicago.

My father became manager of the Walker Building in Boston and also spent a lot of time in politics, starting as school committeeman in Brookline,

Massachusetts. He was later sent to the Massachusetts state legislature in Boston as a representative from Brookline, and later served as speaker of the house in 1905, 1906, and 1907. He ran for governor on the Republican ticket and later on the Bull Moose ticket, but was defeated both times--he was well-liked by members of the legislature, but he would not have anything to do with political bosses. He was a thoroughly honest politician, serving from a sense of duty and not for financial reward. He was a friend of Republican President William Howard Taft and of President Theodore Roosevelt, as well as many other prominent men.

My mother was born in Providence, Rhode Island, the daughter of a cotton manufacturer, and met my father when he was attending Brown University. They were married in 1888, and came to live in Brookline, Massachusetts.

My older brother Joseph was the first born, and I was born a year and a half later on August 2, 1892. I always played second fiddle to my brother Joe, who was older, stronger, and better loved than I was. I was a lonesome kid who felt he was not loved enough or appreciated enough by my mother and father. They considered me a problem child, which I was. I showed very little affection for my family. My younger sister Dorothy was born, and died in infancy of diphtheria. Then my young brother George, and my two younger sisters Katharine and Evelyn.

My other brother Joe and I spent our early years in the summer on my Grandfather Walker's farm in New Hampton, New Hampshire. My brother Joe went to Volkman's School in Boston and later to Yale University, where he was graduated in 1913. I went to St. George's School in Newport, Rhode Island, and later to Williams College, where I was graduated in 1914. I finished my college work in three and a half years, and spent the last six months traveling abroad with Mason Garfield--we returned to Williamstown to receive our degrees on June 4, 1914. During the First World War, I served in the Medical Corps and later received a second lieutenant's commission in the Sanitary Corps as adjutant of Evacuation Hospital No. 54. I did not get overseas. My brother Joe served in the Marine Flying Corps. After the war I went into the wool business in Boston with my brother Joe, founding our own business, Walker Top Company, where I worked for thirty years.

When I was thirty years old, on May 8, 1922, I was married to Agnes Nelson of Boston, Massachusetts. We had four children: Hilda (who died), Caroline, John, and David. We lived in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, just outside of Boston, where we had a very nice house built for us by my brother Joe. In 1932 during the depression, we sold this home and moved to Cohasset, Massachusetts, where we bought a house on the water. Here the children were brought up, but I was drinking too much at the time.

After leaving college, and during the war and prohibition, I began to drink quite heavily. My disposition, perhaps due to a rather loveless youth, disposed me to become an alcoholic, but I drank for a long time during which

my alcoholism remained dormant. After my marriage, and during the growing up of my children, I drank more than I should have. I consequently missed the companionship I should have had with my wife and children. After about nineteen years of marriage, at the age of [forty]-nine, I became separated from my wife and children. My alcoholism had become evident, and my wife rightly refused to put up with it any longer. (In 1939, I had joined the Oxford Group, and stopped drinking for two and a half years, but after two and a half years I began drinking again. This lasted for a year and a half, and during this time I landed in several hospitals, culminating with [the] separation from my wife and children.)

In 1942 when I was fifty years old--and after thirty years of drinking--I finally joined Alcoholics Anonymous. I had been separated from my wife for about nine months, but upon my joining A.A., she decided to take me back. I have not had a drink of any kind of intoxicating beverage [since that time]. I have enjoyed a happy married life and the companionship of my children. Joining Alcoholics Anonymous was the best thing I had done in my life since I started drinking at the age of twenty.

The twenty years before I started drinking were good on the whole, except in my early childhood when I was a problem to my parents. But from the time I went away from home to school at St. George's in Newport, Rhode Island--and to college at Williams College--my life could have been considered quite successful. I was captain of the football team at St. George's; also played on the baseball and basketball teams; I was an honor student (next to highest in my class) and won a gold medal for the study of Greek. At Williams, I was also quite successful: I played four years on the football team, was president of my sophomore class, and also president of my graduated class; I was also president of my fraternity Alpha Delta Phi and was well regarded by my classmates. I was serious, and did some work for [the] YMCA at Williams; I thought that those who drank a lot were very foolish. I went through college in three and a half years, and received a magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa key. So my school and college life could be considered as quite successful.

Although well-respected, I did not make class friends. I was wrapped in a cloak of reserve; there was a wall between myself and other people. I did not go halfway to make friends, and there was no love in my life. In fact, true love has always been a mystery to me. As a child I was not loved, and as a result I have never learned to truly love others. I was poorly adjusted to life, being self-contained, egocentric, immature, easily hurt, and overly sensitive.

After I was graduated from college I got in with a drinking crowd, and from the first I found that drinking loosened me up and allowed me to enjoy the company of others--especially drinkers like myself. Soon alcohol became a crutch to me, which enable me to enjoy life: the companionship of girls, parties, football games, and all of my activities.

After the war, I went into the wool business with my brother Joe in Boston. We had a house on Beacon Hill, with a Japanese servant, and we did a lot of entertaining. Although I went to the office every day, I never was much of a businessman--it did not really interest me. But I enjoyed drinking parties and gay times.

After ten years of this gay drinking life, I got married at the age of thirty. Agnes Nelson and I had been on parties together and we were good companions. We eloped and were married at the Little Church Around the Corner in New York. We went to Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire on our honeymoon, then took an apartment in Brookline, Massachusetts. It was not before our first child Hilda was born that our marriage was finally announced to my family. It was part of my nature to be secretive about most things, and this applied to my marriage. After it was announced however, we were well-received by my family.

My brother Joe, at the time, was building houses in addition to his wool business, and he built us a fine house in Chestnut Hill, Brookline. Here our first three children were brought up in their early youth. We became friends with a family who lived nearby, and together we went on several trips to the West Indies, Havana, and Canal Zone. I was drinking a lot on these journeys, and my alcoholism was becoming more evident as time passed. After we had been married for two years, I bought a summer cottage in Siasconset on Nantucket Island, where we spent our summers. Our friends there were a heavy drinking crowd, and my alcoholism developed rapidly.

In 1932, during the depression, we sold our home in Chestnut Hill and moved to Cohasset, twenty-five miles south of Boston, where we bought a smaller house on the harbor. Here our youngest child David was born, and the older children (Hilda, Carol, and John) were brought up. I continued to take the train to Boston and go to the office, but my heart was not in it.

Hilda died at the age of twelve from spinal meningitis, which she contracted at a summer camp on Cape Cod. My drinking increased measurably: I was arrested three times for drunken driving and landed in several hospitals. I was lying in a hospital when my wife sent a lawyer to tell me she did not want me around any longer. In this she was certainly justified--I was of no use as a husband or father to my children. After leaving the hospital, I went to Nantucket and stayed quite drunk most of the summer. In the fall, I got a room on Beacon Street in Boston where I lived alone. I still went to the office but I was not much use as a businessman. My brother Joe was very broad-minded to put up with me, because I spent much of my time away from the office. (After Hilda's death I had resigned as a partner in the firm; Agnes and I took a trip to Sweden, and upon our return I went back to the office, not as a partner, but as a clerk working on statistics.)

Before my separation from my wife and family, I spent a great deal of my time drinking, except for the two and a half years that I was a member of the Oxford Group (1939, 1941), during which time I did not drink or smoke. It was

after I had begun drinking again that I was separated from my wife and family.

While I was drinking alone in the room on Beacon Street in Boston, I became disgusted with my life and suddenly decided I would do something about it. I talked with some members of the Oxford Group, and the next morning, in my lonely room, I prayed to God to show me how to live a better life. I went to Jim's home in Newtonville for two weeks until I had sobered up. (I had heard about Alcoholics Anonymous a year before this, but I had done nothing about it.) I met my wife at my father's funeral, and she took me back on the basis that I would never drink again--I fully believed I never would--but I had a slip, and after one week of drinking, I walked into the A.A. clubroom at 306 Newberry Street in Boston.

At this time I was fifty years old and had been drinking for thirty years. It was in May of 1942, and I have never had a drink of any kind of alcoholic beverage since that time. Since then my life has improved greatly. I get along better with people; I am accepted by my wife and children as a husband and father. I have learned how to live contentedly without liquor, which I no longer need, as the A.A. program has showed me a much better way of living.

I have learned how to go halfway to make a friend, and I enjoy the companionship of other people: other members of Alcoholics Anonymous. I have accepted the fact that I am an alcoholic and can never drink any kind of alcoholic beverage ever again as long as I live. I have recovered my faith in a power greater than myself, which I call God, who can give me the strength I need to face life, and all its ups and downs, without resorting to liquor. I have acquired more insight into my defects of character, and am trying to eliminate the blocks that keep me from a good life, such as fear, worry, resentment, jealousy, impatience, and selfishness. I have begun to understand a little of what love is, especially love for my fellow man, but I still have a long way to go in this respect. I have tried to make amends for the wrongs I have done to people in the past due to my drinking, and I carry no load of guilt for the past.

I am trying to forget the past and not worry about the future, which is in the hands of God. I realize that now--this present moment--is all that I have, and I am trying to live one day at a time, doing the best I can for this twenty-four hours only.

I am also trying to be of service to my fellow man: I have talked with hundreds of alcoholics and have tried to carry the message of the A.A. program. It has been good for me, and has helped me in this way of life. Whether or not I have helped others is in the hands of God--if so, I do not want any credit for the work I do with other alcoholics.

In 1948, I compiled a little book of daily reading for members of Alcoholics Anonymous called *Twenty-Four Hours a Day*, which has sold so far over 80,000 copies. I have also written and distributed two other pamphlets: *For Drunks*

Only and The Seven Points of A.A., which have had a wide circulation among A.A. members.

I attend two or three A.A. meetings every week (except when I am traveling) and I find that I can never learn enough about the A.A. way of life. I have spoken at hundreds of A.A. meetings, telling my story of what alcohol did to me, and how I found a happy way to live without it. Each meeting I attend, each talk I make, each time I try to help another human being, I am strengthened in this A.A. way of life.

Above all, my faith in the Great Intelligence behind the universe, which can give me all the strength I need to face whatever life has to offer, is the foundation of my present life. When I die, my body will return to dust. Heaven is not any particular place in the sky, but my intelligence or soul, if it is in the proper condition, will return to the Great Intelligence behind the universe and will blend with that Great Intelligence and be at home again whence it came. My problem, in what is left of my life, is to keep my mind or intelligence in the proper condition--by living with honesty, purity, unselfishness, love, and service--so that when my time comes to go, my passing to a greater sphere of mind will be gentle and easy.

G.C. Richmond Walker is still the second most popular A.A. author in total sales, exceeded only by Bill Wilson. The teaching of Rich's Twenty-Four Hours a Day book was based on the experiences of the A.A. oldtimers in the Boston area during the 1940's, together with the spirituality of the Oxford Group, particularly as represented in God Calling by Two Listeners. This latter book was a set of meditations, edited and published by the famous Oxford Group author A. J. Russell, which had been written by two women under the inspiration of the idea of divine guidance which Russell had talked about in For Sinners Only.

In the fine print section at the bottom of each page of his own book, Rich adapted these Oxford Group ideas for alcoholics and added many helpful suggestions of his own for the struggling alcoholic who was still trying to understand what a meaningful higher power could possibly be.

*NOTE: Foreword by Mel B. (Toledo, Ohio) to 40th Anniv. Edit. of Twenty-Four Hours a Day (1994) gives date and location for this lead.

Distributed as a handout at the Sixth National Archives Workshop at Louisville KY, Sept. 27-30, 2001.

Text taken from the Northern Indiana Archival Bulletin Vol. 4.1 (2001): 1-4, published in South Bend, Indiana under the auspices of the Area 22 Archives Committee (Northern Indiana). Please contact the Michiana Central Service Office, 814 E. Jefferson Ave., South Bend, IN 46617; phone (219) 234-7007, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Mon-Fri; e-mail michianasober@internet.net. Bulletin editor Glenn C., 219 233-7211, South Bend IN.

II
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+++Message 415. When did we start saying "I am an alcoholic," and the responses.

From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/17/2002 5:22:00 AM

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Dear AA History Lovers,

I am attempting to keep the new list trimmed down so it does not have the more than a thousand posts the Buffs list has which makes it hard for new members of the list to find information. So I will occasionally combine a question and the answers into one post, and take down the others, as I am doing in this case. Some of these responses should not have been posted as they contained only opinions, not history. Please remember to give sources where possible, and no "my sponsor told me" kind of answers. Sponsors, I am discovering, often don't know much about A.A. history. Also, please use as precise a subject line as possible. For example, this question was posted as "Sobriety statement," which I assumed at first meant the custom in some areas of giving your sobriety date when you speak at a meeting.

Your moderator, aka Nancy the Nag.

Margaret asked:

From: "Margaret Sparshu" <msparshu@vennercs.com [8] >

Date: Mon Jul 15, 2002 10:53 am

Subject: Sobriety Statement: When did we start saying it?

Hello History Lovers,

I wonder if anyone knows when we started saying our Sobriety Statement

"My name is ***** and I'm an Alcoholic"

I believe it was done to teach us humility and to humble ourselves. However, when did we start to do it, who's idea was it, does anyone have any idea?

Thanks for the help

Margaret

Gary responded:

From: "Gary Beckett" <gk@kitcarson.net [9] >

Date: Mon Jul 15, 2002 12:42 pm

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] Sobriety Statement: When did we start saying it?

I was taught, (and I have no documentation for this), that when this custom started it was to state that we were 'one of us'; not an outsider or family member, but an alcoholic.

The next response:

From: kyyank@aol.com [10]

Date: Mon Jul 15, 2002 1:09 pm

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] Sobriety Statement: When did we start saying it?

It has also been said that it was used at the first meeting with the

Rockefeller gang when Bill et. al. told them their stories, at a suggestion by Dr. Silkworth. WDS also used the same technique in 1909 when he published "Notes on the Jungle Plant", and discussed his case histories to date.

And from Jim Blair:

From: "Jim Blair" <jblair@videotron.ca [11] >

Date: Mon Jul 15, 2002 1:58 pm

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] Sobriety Statement: When did we start saying it?

I have listened to many, many tapes of AA speakers prior to 1960 and I have never heard anyone issue that statement.

My understanding is that it is a method of "qualifying" to participate in an AA meeting and it was started in California in the early 60's when heroin and morphine addicts started to show up in AA.

Bob P., mentions this practice as a detriment to AA in his final talk to the General Service Conference.

Jim

I am adding here what Bob said at this conference. It is from

Yahoo! Groups : AAHistoryLovers Messages :Message 136 of 414 [12]

At the 1986 General Service Conference, Bob gave what the 1986 Final Report called "a powerful and inspiring closing talk" titled "Our greatest danger: rigidity."

He said: "If you were to ask me what is the greatest danger facing A.A. today, I would have to answer the growing rigidity - the increasing demand for absolute answers to nit-picking questions; pressure for G.S.O. to 'enforce' our Traditions, screening alcoholics at closed meetings, prohibiting non-Conference approved literature, i.e., 'banning books,' laying more and more rules on groups and members. And in this trend toward rigidity, we are drifting farther and farther away from our co-founders. Bill, in particular, must be spinning in his grave, for he was perhaps the most permissive person I ever met. One of his favorite sayings was 'Every group has the right to be wrong.'"

And Jim did some further research:

From: "Jim Blair" <jblair@videotron.ca [11] >

Date: Tue Jul 16, 2002 10:57 am

Subject: Fw: Qualifying at meetings

The following is the response I received from Judit Santon, Archivist at the GSO in N.Y., N.Y. concerning the practice of identifying.

Thank you for contacting us. It seems that this practice came from the Oxford Group, where members used to get up and qualify as "My name is.... and I'm a sinner." Please note, that this information was shared with us by oldtimers, and we have never carried out a historic research with regards to the customs of the Oxford Group to verify this.

And Rick responded:

From: "ricktompkins" <ricktompkins@ameritech.net [13] >

Date: Mon Jul 15, 2002 9:44 pm

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] Sobriety Statement: When did we start saying it?

Hi Group(s)!

Jim B. is correct, and like many current practices, it did begin on the West

Coast. Reading "How It Works" also came from the West Coast (cal-i-for-ni-a) when the group chairs looked around for something to read, sometime in the 1940s...Before then (and since then, too), many Groups had their own special preambles, greetings, lead-off texts (the beginning of Chapter 3 was another), and so on.

Here in the Midwest, "How It Works" was usually followed by a reading from the "24 Hours a Day" book, after its circulation went 'mainstream AA' in the late 1950s...it continues today, too.

One new idea came from Chicago AAs in the 1940s, and a practice very well in place by 1950---a simple quiet time. No prayers, no litany of pre-meeting stuff, just a quiet time.

On our qualifying, personally I've never had a problem with it, introducing myself as "my name's Rick and I'm an alcoholic." Of course, many of us get creative with additional qualifiers, right?

"gratefully recovering alcoholic" alcoholic addict" and at least a dozen more that I've heard over the years. At least we can laugh with ourselves today, after we recognize we're sometimes "too damn serious." How about some postings from members about our eccentric qualifying introductions? We might all get a good laugh out of them...just curious, friends.

Rick T.,

Area 20 Historian

Rick really has three subjects in his response, the answer to the original question then information on what is read at meetings in California and elsewhere, and a requests for variations on the "I am an alcoholic" statement. Please try to keep posts to one subject so the information can be easily found by those doing research on the list.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Nancy the Nag. (Blame it on my faulty toilet training.)

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+++Message 416. Customs About What is Read at Openings
of Meetings
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/17/2002 6:14:00 AM

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This is an excerpt from a recent post:

From: "ricktompkins" <ricktompkins@ameritech.net [13] >

Date: Mon Jul 15, 2002 9:44 pm

Reading "How It Works" ... came from the West Coast (cal-i-for-ni-a) when the group chairs looked around for something to read, sometime in the 1940s ... Before then (and since then, too), many Groups had their own special preambles, greetings, lead-off texts (the beginning of Chapter 3 was another), and so on.

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One new idea came from Chicago AAs in the 1940s, and a practice very well in place by 1950---a simple quiet time. No prayers, no litany of pre-meeting stuff, just a quiet time.

Bob S. responded with the following:

rstonebraker212@insightbb.com

Dear Buffs,

Jim Burwell -- then living in San Diego, California, -- wrote the following to Bill Wilson on January 16, 1948:

"One of the things I do especially like out here in [sic] that they read the Fifth Chapter of the Book before the meetings. This seems to have more meaning

to the new fellows than the reading of the

Steps alone." {excerpt}

AA History Lovers Post, 286

Bob S., from Indiana

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+++Message 417. Examples of how people introduce themselves at meetings.

From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/17/2002 6:45:00 AM

II
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Dear AA History Lovers,

This is another excerpt from a recent post by Rick:

From: "ricktompkins" <ricktompkins@ameritech.net [13] >

Date: Mon Jul 15, 2002 9:44 pm

On our qualifying, personally I've never had a problem with it, introducing myself as "my name's Rick and I'm an alcoholic." Of course, many of us get creative with additional qualifiers, right? "gratefully recovering alcoholic" alcoholic addict" and at least a dozen more that I've heard over the years. At least we can laugh with ourselves today, after we recognize we're sometimes "too damn serious." How about some postings from members about our eccentric qualifying introductions? We might all get a good laugh out of them...just curious, friends.

Rick T.,

Area 20 Historian

Here are some responses:

FROM: mikeb384@earthlink.net

DATE: Tue, 16 Jul 2002 07:52:27 -0500

In Texas, when we are introducing ourselves at meetings, we usually include

our sobriety date. Many of us also include something such as "By the grace of God and the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, I haven't had a drink since

Mike B.

FROM: bmwebb@cstone.net

DATE: Tue, 16 Jul 2002 09:23:54 -0400

Some of my favorite:

My name is Robert, and I really am an alcoholic. My name is Phillip, and I'm powerless over everything that's fun the first time. My name is Dick, and I'm here due to a series of bad breaks and misunderstandings.

OK friends, we have had our fun, but let's get back to more serious AA history.

Nancy the Nag

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+++Message 418. The AA Preamble
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/17/2002 2:28:00 PM

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I was asked some time ago by a member of AA History Buffs about the history of the AA Preamble. This is what I have learned:

In 1947, because of the growing interest in AA, the Grapevine editors decided to write a brief definition of the Fellowship. Thus, the AA Preamble was first published in the June 1947 issue. They used portions of the Foreword to the first edition of the Big Book.

The Grapevine had just begun to circulate among nonalcoholics, and the Preamble was intended primarily to describe for them what AA is and is not. It is still often used for public information purposes. When Bill Wilson

testified before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in 1969, he used the preamble to describe what AA is and what it is not.

As time passed, it began appearing in all Conference-approved publications, and many groups now use it to open meetings.

The original version was slightly different from what we know today. For example:

1) It stated that the only requirement for membership is an HONEST desire to stop drinking, and 2) it contained only the very brief statement "AA has no dues or fees."

At the 1958 General Service Conference, a delegate pointed out that the word "honest" does not appear in the Third Tradition, and suggested that it should be deleted from the Preamble. Many delegates felt that as AA had matured, it had become almost impossible to determine what constitutes an honest desire to stop drinking, and also that some who might be interested in the program could be confused by the phrase. The mid-summer 1958 meeting of the General Service Board ratified the deletion, and since then the Preamble has read simply "a desire to stop drinking."

The phrase "AA has no dues or fees" also was clarified to read as it presently does: "There are no dues or fees for AA membership, we are self-supporting through our own contributions." The current version of the Preamble appears on the first page of every issue of the Grapevine.

Sources:

The AA Grapevine Workbook

Hearing of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, July 1969.

Nancy

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++++Message 419. Bill Wilson"s Talk to the Manhattan Group, NYC, 1955
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/17/2002 3:35:00 PM

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Manhattan Group

New York City, N.Y., 1955

By Bill W.

Already, the history of AA is being lost in the mists of its twenty-one years

of antiquity. I venture that very few people here could recount in any consecutive way the steps on the road that led from the kitchen table to where we are tonight in this Manhattan Group.

It is especially fitting that we recount the history, because at St. Louis this summer, a great event occurred. This Society declared that it had come of age and it took full possession of its Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service. It marked the time when Lois and I, being parents of a family now become responsible, declare you to be of age and on your own.

Now lets start on our story.

First of all, there was the kitchen table which stood in a brownstone house which still bears the number 182, Clinton Street, Brooklyn. There, Lois saw me go into the depths. There, over the kitchen table, Ebby brought me these simple principles now enshrined in our Twelve Steps. In those days, there were but six steps: We admitted we couldn't run our lives; we got honest with ourselves; we made a self-survey; we made restitution to the people we had harmed; we tried to carry this story one to the next; and we asked God to help us to do those things. That was the essence of the message over the kitchen table. In those days, we were associated with the Oxford Group. One of its founders was Sam Shoemaker, and this Group has just left Calvary House to come over to these larger quarters, I understand.

Our debt to the Oxford Group is simply immense. We might have found these principles elsewhere, but they did give them to us, and I want to again record our undying gratitude. We also learned from them, so far as alcoholics are concerned, what not to do -- something equally important. Father Ed Dowling, a great Jesuit friend of ours, once said to me, "Bill, it isn't what you people put into AA that makes it so good -- it's what you left out."

We got both sets of notions from our Oxford Group friends, and it was through them that Ebby had sobered up and became my sponsor, the carrier of this message to me.

We began to go to Oxford Group meetings right over in Calvary House, where you've just been gathering, and it was there, fresh out of Towns Hospital, that I made my first pitch, telling about my strange experience, which did not impress the alcoholic who was listening. But something else did impress him. When I began to talk about the nature of this sickness, this malady, he pricked up his ears. He was a professor of chemistry, an agnostic, and he came up and talked afterward. Soon, he was invited over to Clinton Street - our very first customer.

We worked very hard with Freddy for three years, but alas, he remained drunk for eleven years afterward.

Other people came to us out of those Oxford Group audiences. We began to go

down to Calvary Mission, an adjunct of the church in those days, and there we

found a bountiful supply of real tough nuts to crack. We began to invite them to Clinton Street, and at this point the Groupers felt that we were overdoing the drunk business. It seemed they had the idea of saving the world; besides, they'd had a bad time with us. Sam and his associates he now laughingly tells me, were very much put out that they had gathered a big batch of drunks in Calvary House, hoping for a miracle. They'd put them upstairs in those nice apartments and had completely surrounded them with sweetness and light. But the drunks soon imported a flock of bottles, and one of them pitched a shoe out the apartment window right through one of those stained glass affairs of the church. So the drunks weren't exactly popular when the Wilson's showed up.

At any rate we began to be with alcoholics all the time, but nothing happened for six months. Like the Groupers, we nursed them. In fact, over in Clinton Street, we developed in the next two or three years something like a boiler factory, a sort of clinic, a hospital, and a free boardinghouse, from which practically no one issued sober, but we had a pile of experience.

We began to learn the game, and after our withdrawing from the Oxford Group

-- oh, a year and a half from the time I sobered, in '34 -- we began to hold

meetings of the few who had sobered up. I suppose that was really the first

AA meeting. The book hadn't yet been written. We didn't even call it Alcoholics Anonymous; people asked us who we were, and we said, "Well, we're a

nameless bunch of alcoholics." I suppose the use of that word "nameless" sort

of led us to the idea of anonymity, which was later clapped on the book at the time it was titled.

There were great doings in Clinton Street. I remember those meetings down in

the parlor so well. Our eager discussion, our hopes, our fears -- and our fears were very great. When anyone in those days had been sober a few months and slipped, it was a terrific calamity. I'll never forget the day, a year and a half after

he came to stay with us, that Ebby fell over, and we all said, "Perhaps this is going to happen to all of us." Then, we began to ask ourselves why it was,

and some of us pushed on.

At Clinton Street, I did most of the talking, but Lois did most of the work, and the cooking, and the loving of those early folks.

Oh my! The episodes that there were! I was away once on a business trip. (I'd briefly got back to business.) One of the drunks was sleeping on the lounge in the parlor. Lois woke up in the middle of the night, hearing a great commotion. He'd got a bottle; he'd also got into the kitchen and had drunk a bottle of maple syrup.

And he had fallen naked into the coal hod. When Lois opened the door, he asked for a towel to cover up his nakedness. She once led this same gentleman through the streets late at night looking for a doctor, and not finding a doctor, then looking for a drink, because, as he said, he could not fly on one wing!

On one occasion, a pair of them were drunk. We had five, and on another occasion, they were all drunk at the same time!

There was the time that two of them began to belabor each other with two-by-fours down in the basement. And then, poor Ebby, after repeated trials and failures, was finally locked out one night. But low and behold, he appeared anyway. He had come through the coal chute and up the stairs, very much begrimed.

So you see, Clinton Street was a kind of blacksmith shop, in which we were hammering away at these principles. For Lois and me, all roads lead back to Clinton Street.

In 1937, while we were still there, we got an idea that to spread AA we would have to have some sort of literature, guide rails for it to run on so it couldn't get garbled. We were still toying with the idea that we had to have paid workers who would be sent to other communities. We thought we'd have to go into the hospital business. Out in Akron, where we had started the first group, they had a meeting and nominated me to come to New York and do all these things.

We solicited Mr. [John D.] Rockefeller [Jr.] and some of his friends, who gave us their friendship but, luckily, not much of their money. They gave Smithy [Dr. Bob] and me a little boost during the year of 1938, and that was all; they forced us to stand on our own.

In 1938, Clinton Street saw the beginning of the preparation of the book

Alcoholics Anonymous. The early chapters were written -- oh, I should think -- about May 1938. Then, we tried to raise money to get the thing published, and we actually sold stock to the local drunks in this book, not yet written. An all-time high for promotions!

Clinton Street also saw, on its second floor, in the bedroom, the writing of the Twelve Steps. We had got to Chapter Five in the book, and it looked like we would have to say at some point what the book was all about. So I remember lying there on the bed one night, and I was in one of my typical depressive snits, and I had an imaginary ulcer attack. The drunks who were supposed to be contributing, so that we could eat while the book was being written, were slow on the contributions, and I was in a damn bad frame of mind.

I lay there with a pad and pencil, and I began to think over these six steps that I've just recited to you, and said I to myself, "Well, if we put down these six steps, the chunks are too big. They'll have to digest too much all at once. Besides, they can wiggle out from in between, and if we're going to do a book, we ought to break those up into smaller pieces."

So I began to write, and in about a half an hour, I think, I had busted them up into smaller pieces. I was rather pleasantly surprised that, when numbered, they added up to twelve -- that's significant. Very nice.

At that point, a couple of drunks sailed in. I showed them the proposed Twelve Steps, and I caught fits. Why did we need them when six were doing fine? And what did I mean by dragging God from the bottom of the list up to the top?

Meanwhile the meetings in the front parlor had largely turned into hassles over the chapters of the book. The roughs were submitted and read at every meeting, so that when the Twelve Steps were proposed, there was a still greater hassle.

Because I'd had this very sudden experience and was on the pious side, I'd

lauded these Steps very heavily with the word "God." Other people began to say, "This won't do at all. The reader at a distance is just going to get scared off. And what about agnostic folks like us?" There was another terrific hassle, which

resulted in this terrific ten-strike we had: calling God (as you understand Him) "the Higher Power," making a hoop big enough so that the whole world of alcoholics can walk through it.

So, actually, those people who suppose that the elders of AA were going around in white robes surrounded by a blue light, full of virtue, are quite mistaken. I merely became the umpire of the immense amount of hassling that went into

the preparation of the AA book, and that took place at Clinton Street.

Well, of course, the book was the summit of all our hopes at the time; along with the hassling, there was an immense enthusiasm. We tried to envision distant readers picking it up and perhaps writing in, perhaps getting sober. Could they do it on the book?

All of those things we speculated on very happily. Finally, in the spring of 1939, the book was ready. We'd made a prepublication copy of it; it had got by the Catholic Committee on Publications; we'd shown it to all sorts of people; we had made corrections. We had 5,000 copies printed, thinking that would be just a mere trifle -- that the book would soon be selling millions of copies.

Oh, we were very enthusiastic, us promoters. The Reader's Digest had promised to print a piece about the book, and we just saw those books going out in carloads.

Nothing of the sort happened. The Digest turned us down flat; the drunks had thrown their money into all this; there were hardly a hundred members in AA.

And here the thing had utterly collapsed.

At this juncture, the meeting -- the first meeting of the Manhattan Group, which really took place in Brooklyn -- stopped, and it stopped for a very good reason.

That was that the landlord set Lois and me out into the street, and we didn't even have money to move our stuff into storage. Even that and the moving van -- that was done on the cuff.

Well, it was then the spring of 1939. Temporarily, the Manhattan Group moved to Jersey. It hadn't got to Manhattan yet. A great friend, Horace C., let Lois and me have a camp belonging to himself and his mother, out at Green Pond. My partner in the book enterprise, old Hank P., now gone, lived at Upper Montclair.

We used to come down to 75 William Street, where we had the little office in which a good deal of the book was actually done. Sundays that summer, we'd come down to Hank's house, where we had meetings which old-timers -- just a handful now in Jersey -- can remember.

The Alcoholic Foundation, still completely empty of money, did have one small account called the "Lois B. Wilson Improvement Fund." This improvement fund was fortified every month by a passing of the hat, so that we had the summer camp, we had fifty bucks a month, and someone else lent us a car to try to revive the book Alcoholics Anonymous and the flagging movement.

In the fall of that year, when it got cold up there at the summer camp, we moved down to Bob V.'s. Many of you remember him and Mag. We were close by the Rockland asylum. Bob and I and others went in there, and we started the first institutional group, and several wonderful characters were pried out of there. I hope old Tom M. is here tonight -- Tom came over to the V's, where he had holed up with Lois and me, then put in a room called Siberia, because it was so cold.

We bought a coal stove for four dollars and kept ourselves warm there during the winter.

So did a wonderful alcoholic by the name of Jimmy. He never made good.

Jimmy was one of the devious types, and one of our first remarkable experiences with Jimmy was this. When we moved from Green Pond, we brought Marty with us, who had been visiting, and she suddenly developed terrible pains in her stomach.

This gentleman, Jimmy, called himself a doctor. In fact, he had persuaded the authorities at Rockland that he was a wonderful physician. They gave him full access to the place. He had keys to all the surgical instruments and incidentally, I think he had keys to all the pill closets over there.

Marty was suffering awful agonies, and he said, "Well, there's nothing to it, my dear. You've got gallstones." So he goes over to Rockland. He gets himself some kind of fishing gadget that they put down gullets to fish around in there, and he fishes around and yanks up a flock of gallstones, and she hasn't had a bit of

trouble since. And, dear people, it was only years later that we learned the

guy wasn't a doctor at all.

Meanwhile, the Manhattan Group moved to Manhattan for the first time. The folks over here started a meeting in Bert T.'s tailor shop. Good old Bert is the guy who hocked his then-failing business to save the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* in 1939.

In the fall, he still had the shop, and we began to hold meetings there. Little by little, things began to grow. We went from there to a room in Steinway Hall, and we felt we were in very classic and good company that gave us an aura of respectability.

Finally, some of the boys -- notably Bert and Horace -- said, "A.A. should have a home. We really ought to have a club." And so the old 24th Street Club, which had belonged to the artists and illustrators and before that was a barn going back to Revolutionary times, was taken over. I think Bert and Horace signed the first

lease. They soon incorporated it, though, lest somebody slip on a banana peel outside. Lois and I, who had moved from the V's to live with another A.A., then decided we wanted a home for ourselves, and we found a single room down in a basement on Barrow Street in Greenwich Village.

I remember Lois and me going through Grand Central wondering where we'd light

next, just before the Greenwich Village move. We were very tired that day, and we walked off the main floor there and sat on one of those gorgeous marble stairways leading up to the balcony, and we both began to cry and say, "Where will we ever light? Will we ever have a home?"

Well, we had one for a while in Barrow Street. And when the club was opened

up, we moved into one of those rooms there. Tom M. came over from the V's,

and right then and there a Tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous was generated. It seemed that volunteers had been sweeping the club; it seemed that many of the alcoholics had keys to the club; and they came and went and sometimes stayed; and sometimes they got very drunk and acted very badly -- doing we know not what. There had to be somebody there to really look after the place. So we thought we'd approach old Tom, who had a pension as a fireman. We said, "Tom, how would you like to come and live at the club?"

Tom says, "What's on your mind?"

"Well," we said, "we really need somebody here all the time, you know, to make the coffee and see that the place is heated and throw some coal on that furnace over there and lead the drunks outside if they're too bad."

"Ain't ya gonna pay me?" Tom says.

"Oh, no," we said. "This is Alcoholics Anonymous. We can't have any professionals."

Tom says, "I do my Twelfth Step work, I don't charge 'em nothing. But what you guys want is a janitor, and if you're going to get me, you're going to pay, see?"

Well, we were very much disturbed about our own situation. We weren't exactly paid -- they were just passing the hat for us, you understand. I think that we went for seven years of the history of this Society with an average income of seventeen hundred bucks a year, which, for a former stockbroker, is not too big.

So this question of who is a professional and who isn't bore very heavily at the time on Tom and me. And Tom began to get it settled. He began to show that if a special service was asked from anybody full-time, we'd have to pay or not get it.

So, finally, we haggled Tom down on the theory that he already had a pension, and he came to live there, and meetings began in that old club.

That old club saw many a terrific development, and from that club sprang all the groups in this area. The club saw the passage of the Rockefeller dinner, when we thought we'd all be rich as a movement, and Mr. Rockefeller saved us by not giving us money.

That club saw the Saturday Evening Post article published. In fact, the Post at that time said, "No pictures, no article." If you will look up the March 1, 1941, issue of the Saturday Post, you will see a picture of the interior of the club, and a flock of us sitting before the fire. They didn't use our names, but they insisted on pictures.

Anonymity wasn't then quite what it is today. And with the advent of that piece, there was a prodigious rush of inquiries -- about 6,000 of them.

By this time, we'd moved the little office from Newark, New Jersey, over to Vesey Street. You will find in the old edition of the book [Alcoholics Anonymous] "Box 58, Church Street Annex." And that was the box into which the first inquiries came. We picked out that location because Lois and I were drifters, and we picked it because it was the center of the geographical area here. We didn't know whether we'd light in Long Island, New Jersey, or Westchester, so the first A.A. post office box was down there with a little office alongside of it.

The volunteers couldn't cope with this tremendous flock of inquiries -- heartbreakers, but 6,000 of them! We simply had to hire some help. At that point, we asked you people if you'd send the foundation a buck apiece a year, so we wouldn't have to throw that stuff in the wastebasket. And that was the beginning of the service office and the book company.

That club saw all those things transpire. But there was a beginning in that club at that time that none of us noticed very much. It was just a germ of an idea. It often looked, in after years, as though it might die out. Yet within the last three years, it has become what I think is one of the greatest developments that we shall ever know, and here I'm going to break into my little tale to introduce my partner in all this, who stayed with me when things were bad and when things have been good, and she'll tell you what began upstairs in that club, and what has eventuated from it. Lois."

(Lois then spoke about the formation and the early days of Al-Anon Family Groups.)

So, you see, it was in the confines of the Manhattan Group of those very, very early days that this germ of an idea came to life. Lois might have added that since the St. Louis conference, one new family group has started every single day of the week since, someplace in the world.

I think the deeper meaning of all this is that AA is something more than a quest for sobriety, because we cannot have sobriety unless we solve the problem of life, which is essentially the problem of living and working together. And the family groups are straightening out the enormous twist that has been put on our

domestic relations by our drinking. I think it's one of the greatest things that's happened in years.

Well, let's cut back to old 24th Street. One more thing happened there:

Another Tradition was generated. It had to do with money. You know how slow

I was on coming up with that dollar bill tonight? I suppose I was thinking back -- some sort of unconscious reflex.

We had a deuce of a time getting that club supported, just passing the hat, no fees, no dues, just the way it should be. But the no fee and dues business was construed into no money at all -- let George do it.

I'd been, on this particular day, down to the foundation office, and we'd just put out this dollar-a-year measuring stick for the alcoholics to send us some money if they felt like it. Not too many were feeling like it, and I remember that I was walking up and down the office damning these drunks.

That evening, still feeling sore about the stinginess of the drunks, I sat on the stairs at the old 24th Street Club, talking to some would-be convert. Tom B. was leading the meeting that night, and at the intermission he put on a real plug for money, the first one that I'd ever heard. At that time, money and spirituality couldn't mix, even in the hat. I mean, you mustn't talk about money! Very reluctantly, we'd gone into the subject with Tom M. and the landlord. We were behind in the rent.

Well, Tom put on that heavy pitch, and I went on talking to my prospect, and as the hat came along, I fished in my pocket and pulled out half a buck.

That very day, I think, Ebby had come in the office a little the worse for wear, and with a very big heart, I had handed him five dollars. Our total income at that time was thirty bucks a week, which had come out of the Rockefeller dinner affair; so I'd given him five bucks of the thirty and felt very generous, you see.

But now comes the hat to pay for the light and heat and so forth -- rent -- and I pull out this half dollar and I look absent-mindedly at it, and I put my hand in the other pocket and pull out a dime and put it in the hat.

So I have never once railed at alcoholics for not getting up the money. There, you see, was the beginning of two A.A. Traditions -- things that had to do with professionalism and money.

Following 1941, this thing just mushroomed. Groups began to break off out

into the suburbs. But a lot of us still wanted a club, and the 24th Street Club just couldn't do the trick. We got an offer from Norman Vincent Peale to take over a church at 41st Street. The church was in a neighborhood that had deteriorated badly -- over around Ninth Avenue and 41st. In fact, it was said to be a rather sinful neighborhood, if you gather what I mean. The last young preacher that Peale had sent there seemed very much against drinking and smoking and other even more popular forms of sin; therefore, he had no parishioners.

Here was this tremendous church, and all that we could see was a bigger and

bigger club in New York City. So we moved in. The body of the church would

hold 1,000 people, and we had a hall upstairs that would hold another 800, and we visioned this as soon full. Then there were bowling alleys downstairs, and we figured the drunks would soon be getting a lot of exercise. After they

warmed up down there, they could go upstairs in the gymnasium.

Then, we had cooking apparatus for a restaurant. This was to be our home, and we moved in. Well, sure enough, the place filled up just like mad! Then, questions of administration, questions of morals, questions of meetings, questions of which was the Manhattan Group and which was the club and which was the Intergroup (the secretary of the club was also the Intergroup secretary) began to get this seething mass into terrific tangles, and we learned a whole lot about clubs!

Whilst all this was going on, the AA groups were spreading throughout America

and to foreign shores, and each group, like our own, was having its terrific

headaches. In that violent period, nobody could say whether this thing would

hang together or not. Would it simply explode and fly all to pieces? On

thousands of anvils of experience, of which the Manhattan Group was certainly one (down in that 41st Street club, more sparks came off that anvil than any I ever

saw), we hammered out the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, which were

first published in 1946 [April Grapevine]. We hammered out the rudiments of

an Intergroup, which now has become one of the best there is anywhere, right

here in New York.

Finally, however, the club got so big that it bust. The Intergroup moved. So did the Manhattan Group, with \$5,000 -- its part of the take, which it hung on to. And from the Manhattan Group's experience, we learned that -- although the foundation needs a reserve -- for God's sake, don't have any money in a group treasury!

The hassles about that \$5,000 lasted until they got rid of it somehow.

Then, you all moved down to dear old Sam Shoemaker's Calvary, the very place of our beginning. Now, we've made another move.

And so we grow, and such has been the road that leads back to the kitchen

table at Clinton Street.

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++++Message 420. Ralph Pfau's Golden Books
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/18/2002 3:18:00 AM

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Two posts by Glenn Chesnut on Ralph Pfau's Golden Books transferred from the AA History Buffs list.

The A.A. Central Office in Indianapolis (where Father Ralph made his headquarters at the Convent of the Good Shepherd) has in its archives one of the original souvenir booklets printed and distributed at the A.A. weekend spiritual retreat at St. Joseph College in Rensselaer IN on June 6-8, 1947. That's where the Golden Books got started.

An account of the way Dohr sponsored Father Ralph is available in Ralph's autobiography, Ralph Pfau and Al Hirschberg, "Prodigal Shepherd" (1958), which is still in print, and handled now by Hazelden. (It was published by SMT Press in Indianapolis during Ralph's lifetime, and for many years after his death, one of his nieces kept that operation going; she is eighty now though, and gave Hazelden the copyright two or three years ago. Frank Nyikos and I made a trip to Indianapolis and talked with her at great length just this past Friday.)

All the early printings of the Golden Books which I had seen up to that point said they were published by "The SMT Guild, Inc., P.O. Box 313, Indianapolis." The souvenir booklet in the Indianapolis A.A. office however says "Copyright 1947, The Sons of Matt Talbot, Indianapolis."

I talked for several hours with one of Father Ralph's last surviving close relatives while I was in Indy, and she said that this is what the SMT stood for in "The SMT Guild," that is, "Sons of Matt Talbot." The Golden Books were actually printed at Abbey Press at St. Meinrad's Archabbey in southern Indiana she said (that was where Ralph went to seminary), but orders were taken and mailed out in Indianapolis from the SMT Guild post office box address. Abbey Press didn't take orders or mail out copies, all they did was the actual printing.

The souvenir booklet has a picture of Matt Talbot (1856-1925) at the back, and a short account of his life. He was an Irishman with a bad drinking problem, who got sober in 1884 by turning his life over to God, and starting work with other alcoholics. There has been a movement since 1931 to have Matt Talbot officially canonized as a Roman Catholic saint.

What is interesting is that, although Ralph had begun to realize in 1947 that his message was designed to be heard by a much wider audience, and that he could not phrase it in narrowly Roman Catholic language (because for example

the majority of people at the previous year's St. Joseph weekend retreat, the first one he held, were actually Protestant), he was still not fully ready to cut the umbilical cord connecting him with his Roman Catholic roots when he put that 1947 souvenir booklet together. He even has a Roman Catholic prayer for the canonization of Matt Talbot at the very end of the booklet! That was going to change pretty quickly though. He rapidly began to realize that he couldn't even keep it confined to Christian circles, because there were Jews and others in A.A. who did not identify themselves as Christians as all.

GOLDEN BOOKS WITHOUT GOLD COVERS

The three most-published A.A. authors who were themselves members of A.A. were Bill W. (of course), Richmond Walker (author of the 24 Hour book, etc.) and Ralph Pfau (Father John Doe, author of the Golden Books, etc.)

In my talk at the 6th National Archives Workshop in Louisville in Sept. 2002, someone said he had copies of what seemed to be the Golden Books in his archives which did NOT have gold-foil covered covers. I was puzzled, and didn't know how to answer that question, because all the copies I myself had ever seen had gold covers.

Well, by golly, I've now seen copies with different colored covers, and son of a gun, they really do exist! I'm sorry I flubbed on that one last September. Frank N. (the Northern Indiana A.A. Area 22 Archivist) and I drove down to Indianapolis, and spent last Friday afternoon going through the archives in the A.A. Central Office there. (Neil S. of Fishers IN, an Indianapolis suburb, is also working on this, and made these contacts for us - - bless you Neil!) Apparently, for a short period, Father Ralph experimented with using a different colored cover for each of the fourteen books, and sometimes even changed the name on the front cover, e.g. "The Blue Book of Happiness" and "The Silver Book" of something or other. There was one with a brown cover as well.

Frank and I also spent several hours talking to one of Father Ralph's last surviving close relatives, and learned all sorts of interesting things about his life. She took over printing and distributing his Golden Books after his death (and in fact was in charge of it until several years ago, when she turned the copyright over to Hazelden - - she's in her eighties now, and it just got to be too much for her to handle anymore). But she was not really involved with his books while he was still alive, so she didn't know when the different colored covers were used.

Frank and I are going to keep working on this one (there's one more of Father Ralph's close relatives still living, who was down with the flu last week and couldn't talk with us), and try to put some more exact dates on when the different colored covers were printed.

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GOLDEN BOOKS DID NOT ALWAYS HAVE GOLD COVERS!

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The woman Frank and I talked to said that her daughter, a journalist, went through the books at one point because she felt they were so badly written, and made revisions before they were reprinted yet again. I think from what she said (and hope) that all she did was correct obvious typographical errors. But the later editions of the Golden Books will have re-set type with some changes at least. Working out a "pure" text of the Golden Books as Ralph Pfau actually originally printed them may represent some real challenges. At some point it would be useful to have some Golden Books where we have accurate information about the date on which each copy was actually published, so we can establish a textual history. For now though, I am going to continue working principally (in the biography of Father Ralph which I am writing) with the text as currently published by Hazelden.

Over the next several weeks, I hope to find time to write up some of the other things Frank and I learned from Ralph's relative. I'll send some of the more important things around to all the AA History Buffs, but I'll put a fuller account on my webpage at www.iusb.edu/~gchesnut/

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+++Message 421. History of Sponsorship
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/18/2002 3:26:00 AM

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Transferred from the AA History Buffs list.

From: "Glenn Chesnut" <gfchesnut@m... [14] >

Date: Sun Mar 3, 2002 5:48 pm

Subject: History of Sponsorship

The pamphlet which was handed out to people being checked into the hospital by Dr. Bob and Sister Ignatia in Akron in 1940 talks at length about the role of the sponsor and the sponsor's responsibilities both during and right after the hospital stay. The sponsor was responsible, for example, for making sure that a long list of other A.A. members dropped by on the new person in his hospital room to talk. It also warns the new person that some of these visitors may appear to be ignorant, some he will not like at all, and some will seem to be just plain crazy!!! But the new person is to LISTEN TO THEM ANYWAY, because they are the ones who can tell him how to stay sober. It was the sponsor's

responsibility to take the new person to his first meeting after he was released from the hospital, and so on.

Interestingly, the 1940 Akron Pamphlet does NOT talk about what we now take for granted, the continuing role of the sponsor as spiritual guide to the new A.A. member over the years which followed. I suspect that the special one-on-one sponsor-pigeon relationship was something that was only starting to develop in 1940. By the end of 1943 however, when Ralph Pfau (Father John Doe) came into the A.A. program in Indianapolis, his relationship to Doherty Sheerin, his sponsor in the program, was the continuing, warm, close sponsor-pigeon relationship which we encourage in A.A. today.

For the 1940 Akron Pamphlet, a full-length version which can be printed out on your home printer is available on the Indiana University A.A. History & Archives website at www.iusb.edu/~gchesnut/

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++++Message 424. President Reagan Commended A.A. on Its
50th Anniversary
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/18/2002 8:04:00 AM

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The following is an excerpt from an article appearing in The Alcoholism Report, July 16, 1985:

President Reagan commended Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) on the 50th anniversary of the fellowship. Joined by First Lady Nancy Reagan, the president said:

"The disease of alcoholism strikes our people with alarming frequency, destroying lives and tearing families apart. While alcoholism can be fatal, Alcoholics Anonymous has shown us that it can be arrested, through abstinence. Beginning in 1935 with the dedication of its co-founders, the fellowship has welcomed all who have a desire to stop drinking, and with AA's help, lives have been saved, families reunited, and hope restored.

"Over the years, both counselors and lay persons have attempted to understand AA's secret of success. My favorite anecdote about this involves the late Bill W., one of AA's founders. When asked how AA worked, his reply was, 'Just fine, thanks!' People all over the world who are recovering from alcoholism join me in saying, 'Thank God, AA works just fine.'

"Alcoholics Anonymous, a grateful world salutes you."

(It is interesting to speculate on who on the White House staff, or what

friend of the President's, might have written this message. My own guess was that it was inspired by Tom Pike of California, an important Republican who arranged for the one-millionth copy of the Big Book to be presented to President Nixon. Another possibility would be Loran Archer, then Acting Director of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, who had run the California alcoholism office for Reagan when he was Governor.)

The article also quotes messages from Representative John Sieberling (D-OH), the son of Henrietta Sieberling, Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R-KS), and Representative Rod Chandler (R-WA).

Nancy

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++++Message 425. RE: Ralph Pfau's Golden Books
From: Theron 7/18/2002 5:58:00 PM

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The Akron A.A. Archives has a set of the variously colored "Golden Books", too -- I don't remember how many. I'm sure their archivist, Gail L., would be glad to show them to any interested researcher if you are visiting Akron.

Theron B.

-----Original Message-----
From: NMOlson@aol.com [mailto:NMOlson@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2002 8:18 AM
To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com
Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Ralph Pfau's Golden Books

Two posts by Glenn Chesnut on Ralph Pfau's Golden Books transferred from the AA History Buffs list.

The A.A. Central Office in Indianapolis (where Father Ralph made his headquarters at the Convent of the Good Shepherd) has in its archives one of the original souvenir booklets printed and distributed at the A.A. weekend spiritual retreat at St. Joseph College in Rensselaer IN on June 6-8, 1947. That's where the Golden Books got started.

An account of the way Dohr sponsored Father Ralph is available in Ralph's autobiography, Ralph Pfau and Al Hirschberg, "Prodigal Shepherd" (1958), which is still in print, and handled now by Hazelden. (It was published by SMT Press in Indianapolis during Ralph's lifetime, and for many years after his death, one of his nieces kept that operation going; she is eighty now

though, and gave Hazelden the copyright two or three years ago. Frank Nyikos and I made a trip to Indianapolis and talked with her at great length just this past Friday.)

All the early printings of the Golden Books which I had seen up to that point said they were published by "The SMT Guild, Inc., P.O. Box 313, Indianapolis." The souvenir booklet in the Indianapolis A.A. office however says "Copyright 1947, The Sons of Matt Talbot, Indianapolis."

I talked for several hours with one of Father Ralph's last surviving close relatives while I was in Indy, and she said that this is what the SMT stood for in "The SMT Guild," that is, "Sons of Matt Talbot." The Golden Books were actually printed at Abbey Press at St. Meinrad's Archabbey in southern Indiana she said (that was where Ralph went to seminary), but orders were taken and mailed out in Indianapolis from the SMT Guild post office box address. Abbey Press didn't take orders or mail out copies, all they did was the actual printing.

The souvenir booklet has a picture of Matt Talbot (1856-1925) at the back, and a short account of his life. He was an Irishman with a bad drinking problem, who got sober in 1884 by turning his life over to God, and starting work with other alcoholics. There has been a movement since 1931 to have Matt Talbot officially canonized as a Roman Catholic saint.

What is interesting is that, although Ralph had begun to realize in 1947 that his message was designed to be heard by a much wider audience, and that he could not phrase it in narrowly Roman Catholic language (because for example the majority of people at the previous year's St. Joseph weekend retreat, the first one he held, were actually Protestant), he was still not fully ready to cut the umbilical cord connecting him with his Roman Catholic roots when he put that 1947 souvenir booklet together. He even has a Roman Catholic prayer for the canonization of Matt Talbot at the very end of the booklet! That was going to change pretty quickly though. He rapidly began to realize that he couldn't even keep it confined to Christian circles, because there were Jews and others in A.A. who did not identify themselves as Christians as all.

GOLDEN BOOKS WITHOUT GOLD COVERS

The three most-published A.A. authors who were themselves members of A.A. were Bill W. (of course), Richmond Walker (author of the 24 Hour book, etc.) and Ralph Pfau (Father John Doe, author of the Golden Books, etc.)

In my talk at the 6th National Archives Workshop in Louisville in Sept. 2002, someone said he had copies of what seemed to be the Golden Books in his archives which did NOT have gold-foil covered covers. I was puzzled, and didn't know how to answer that question, because all the copies I myself had ever seen had gold covers.

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To unsubscribe from this group, send an email to:
AAHistoryLovers-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

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+++Message 427. 1935 Atlantic City, N.J. Convention
Dates
From: Lash, William (Bill) 7/19/2002 2:06:00 PM

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More evidence that Dr. Bob's sober date could not have been 6/10/35. -
Barefoot
Bill

-----Original Message-----
From: Laura Carroll [mailto:Laura_Carroll@ama-assn.org]
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2002 3:29 PM
To: Lash, William (Bill)
Cc: Robert Tenuta
Subject: 1935 Atlantic City, N.J. Convention Dates

The Records Management and Archives Department at the AMA has recently received your request regarding the dates of the 1935 Convention. The meeting was held Monday-Friday, from June 10-14, 1935 in Atlantic City, New Jersey. If we can assist you with any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Laura L. Carroll, M.A.
Archivist, Records Management and Archives
American Medical Association
515 North State Street
Chicago, IL 60610
laura_carroll@ama-assn.org
Phone: (312)-464-5130
Fax: (312)-464-4184
To discover the illustrious history of the AMA, visit
www.ama-assn.org/go/history

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+++Message 428. Lois Burnham Wilson

From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/19/2002 4:18:00 PM

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This is from The Alcoholism Report of October 11, 1988:

Lois Burnham Wilson -- a founder of Al-Anon Family Groups and widow of the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, Bill Wilson -- died October 5 at the age of 97 at Northern Westchester Hospital, Mount Kisco, NY. Following the establishment of A.A. in 1935, Mrs. Wilson began sharing her experiences with other relatives of alcoholics, apply the same self-help approach her husband and the late Dr. Bob Smith developed. There are an estimated 30,000 groups -- including several thousand Alateen groups (founded in 1957) -- in the U.S. and about 100 nations abroad totaling 500,000 members. (Al-Anon Family Groups, PO Box 862, Midtown Station, New York, NY 10018-0862; 212/302-7240)

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+++Message 429. Soviets Learn About Sobriety
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/20/2002 7:38:00 AM

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This is from The Alcoholism Report, November 15, 1988.

Soviets Learn About Sobriety

More than an estimated 90 million Soviets viewed a two-hour CBS television special on sobriety Oct. 4, according to the Soviet State Committee on Television and Radio. The broadcast presented the concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous and alcoholism is a family disease to the Soviets for the first time. Presented by the Soviet-U.S. Joint Conference on Alcoholism, Drug Addiction and Peace, the film "Life of the Party: The Story of Beatrice," was preceded by a taped introduction from the film's star, Carol Burnett, her daughter Carrie Hamilton and the Rev. J.W. Cantry III, Chairman of the Conference. The first Soviet AA Group has tripled in size since the broadcast and the first Al-Anon Group has been launched. The 1989 Joint Conference will sponsor a U.S. visit by four Soviet AA members and has invited Elizabeth Taylor to share her recovery experiences with the Soviets. (Rosemary Cunningham at 212/874-2331.)

A reminder to those on the Buffs list who have not joined AA History Lovers, please do so as soon as possible as the Buffs list will be discontinued

shortly.

Write to:

AAHistoryLovers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

If you have difficulty subscribing, please let me know at NMOlson@aol.com. and I will directly subscribe you.

To read the old messages go to:

Yahoo! Groups : AAHistoryLovers Messages :1-31 of 330 [15]

Nancy

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++++Message 430. History of Big Book editions.
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/20/2002 10:55:00 AM

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Transferred from AA History Buffs

From: jkw.iii@j... [16]

Date: Wed Aug 9, 2000 5:17 pm

Subject: Big Book History

The following is a copy of a report (on the history of the Big Book) that was prepared by the AAWS staff, and circulated among the Conference, Area and District Literature Committee members, to give them some background as they approached their work in the (then proposed) 4th Edition.

* * * * *

11 Jun 1997

History of Preparation and Publication of the First, Second and Third Editions of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous Prepared by Doug R, A.A.W.S. Staff.

This is an attempt to review the history of the preparation for and publication of the First, Second and Third Editions of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous. The resources of the Archives, the Files Department, the Literature committee records, both Conference and Trustees, as well as

memories of present and past staff members at the General Service Office are being used.

First Edition

On a borrowed \$4,000 Alcoholics Anonymous was produced, by Works Publishing in 1939. This little company, formed by Bill and Dr. Bob and their non-alcoholic friends along with other founding members was taken over by the Alcoholic Foundation in 1940 when the shareholders and Charles B. Towns were paid off in full by the Foundation for their 'investments' in the project. Thus, our basic text has been held in trust by first, the Foundation, and now A. A.. World Services, Inc., for the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous for all time.

In the Foreword to the First Edition. we find the premise, the simple statement of purpose which remains the hub of unity for the Fellowship, "We of Alcoholics Anonymous are more than 100 men and women who have recovered from a seemingly helpless state of mind and body. To show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the main purpose of this book. " (Page iii, Foreword to the First Edition of Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous.)

In a speech that Bill gave in Fort Worth about the writing of the book, he says, 'I suppose the book yarn really started in the living room of Doc and Annie Smith. As you know, I landed there in the summer of '35, a little group caught hold. I helped Smithy briefly with it and he went on to found the first A. A.. group in the world. And, as with all new groups, it was nearly all failure, but now and then, somebody saw the light and there was progress. Pampered, I got back to New York a little more experienced; a group started there, and by the time we got around to 1937, this thinking had leaped a little over into Cleveland, and began to

move south into New York. But, it was still, we thought in those years, flying blind, a flickering candle indeed, that might at any moment be snuffed out. So, on this late fall afternoon in 1937, Smithy and I were talking together in his livingroom, Anne sitting there, when we began to count noses. How many people had stayed dry; in Akron, in New York, maybe a few in Cleveland? How many had stayed dry and for how long? And when we added up the total, it sure was a handful of, I don't know, 35, 40 maybe. But enough time had elapsed on enough really fatal cases of alcoholism, so that we grasped the importance of these small statistics.

Bob and I saw for the first time that this thing was going to succeed. That God in his providence and mercy had thrown a new light into the dark coves where we and our kind had been and were still by the millions welling. I never can forget the elation and ecstasy that seized us both. And then we sat happily talking and reflecting. We reflected that well, a couple of score of drunks were sober but this had taken three long years. There had been an immense amount of failure and

a long time had been taken just to sober up the handful. How could we transmit our message to them, and by what means ... how could this light be a reflection and transmitted without being distorted and garbled? ... And we touched on the book. The group conscience consisted of 18 men good and true ... and the good and true men, you could see right away, were damned skeptical about it all. Almost with one voice, they chorused, 'let's keep it simple - This is going to bring money into this thing, this is going to create a professional class. We'll all be

ruined.' Well, I countered, That's a very good argument. Lots to what you say... but even within gunshot of this very house, alcoholics are dying like flies. And if this thing doesn't move any faster than it has in the last 3 years, it may be another 10 before it gets to the outskirts of Akron. How in God's name are we going to carry this message to others? We've got to take some kind of chance. We can't keep it so simple that it becomes anarchy and gets complicated. We can't keep it so simple that it won't propagate itself. And we've got to have a lot of money to do these things."

The history of the book project is well-documented in Bill's writings. It is a wonderful story which bears repeating again and again because of its significance to the fellowship. The principles which were employed by the early timers and their friends will keep us in good stead as we travel the road to the Fourth Edition of the Big Book.

Second Edition

The progress through to production of the Second Edition of the Big Book is not as nearly as well-documented as the First Edition. We do have a letter from Bill to Bernard Smith in which he notes that he, himself, will do most of the revision. And in the Archives we can see a copy of the Big Book which includes Bill's notes for the Second Edition.

In June 14, 1954, letter to Bernard Smith, Bill wrote: "The story section of the Big Book is far more important than most of us think. It is our principle means of identifying with the reader outside of A. A.. it is the written equivalent of hearing speakers at an A. A. meeting; it is our show window of results. To increase the power and variety of this display to the utmost should be, therefore, no routine or hurried job.

The best will be none too good. The difference between 'good' and 'excellent' can be the difference between prolonged misery and recovery, between life and death, for the reader outside A. A."

There were some cautions enumerated by Bill in considering the revision of the Big Book: "The main purpose of the revision is to bring the story section up to date, to portray more adequately a cross section of those who have found help -- the audience for the book is people who are coming to Alcoholics Anonymous now. Those who are here have already heard our stories. Since the

audience for the book is likely to be newcomers, anything from the point of view of content or style that might offend or alienate those who are not familiar with the program should be carefully eliminated."

There were also some further interesting notes:

Basic Editorial Approaches:

1. The desire to reproduce realistic stories should not be overemphasized to the extent of producing an unrealistic book. The stories are not important because they are tape-recorded, they are important because they have something to say about the people who were helped. There should be no shrinking from the job of editing ruthlessly if such editing will preserve the, story, without the realism.
2. Profanity, even when mild, rarely contributes as much as it detracts. It should be avoided.
3. All minor geographical references should be avoided. (Names of cities, states, etc.)
4. The stories should be "organized" coherently, either in terms of chronology or of the specific points the individual is trying to make.
5. "Selling" or other "gimmicks" -- editorial and otherwise -- should be avoided The story section is not a popular magazine. The appearance and approach should be straight forward, without frills.
6. Humor should stem from character of the storyteller and of the situations he describes, not be the result of "gags."
7. The end results of the editing should be that the stories will be suitable for reading aloud -- at closed meetings, etc., --- without embarrassment.

Bill then proceeded to redo the story section, setting it up in three parts:

Section I. reproduction of eight of the original stories, plus four other "graybeards" as he called them; Section II, consisting of "a dozen stories about milder cases, 'high bottom,' we call them of which the present story section includes

none."

Section III, where Bill included more low bottom stories selected from tape recordings which had been gathered.

Copies of letters which Bill sent out asking people whose stories seemed like a good possibility for the next edition, to sign a release and send it back to

him as soon as possible "so we could get our printer going." A copy of the release letter is also enclosed. I found both fascinating in their warmth and ease of communication.

In one letter to an individual who was interested in sending his story to him, Bill writes, "As you are probably aware the stories we need will be of the straight AA variety; the kind which would be most effective with the beginner on our program. We are looking for straight personal narratives which describes the drinking history, how the newcomer arrived in Alcoholics Anonymous, how AA, affected him, and what A. A. has since accomplished for him. For this purpose, we are not, of course, interested in the more advanced or specialized talks, the lecture or

spread-eagle oratory type of talk, we can't very well use for this particular purpose."

Another letter from Bill accompanied all the changes planned for the Second Edition of the A. A. book and enumerates these suggested changes with the caveat "Do the new stories afford the best possible variety -- do they cover drinking experiences as well as 22 histories could?" And, "Do any of the stories or titles contain material that might repel any considerable number of sensitive alcoholic readers? And if so, what changes are suggested?"

He was planning on sending a galley to the July trustees meeting the next month of 1953 and he continues with a reminder to the trustees, "It will be well to remember that the main purpose of the new story section is identification with the new man or woman alcoholic. So these stories are not necessarily about the very best AA members. They were picked because we thought they packed a wallop."

Later that month Bill sends a letter to Ralph Bugli in which he describes his disappointment in the process which he had planned on using. Apparently, using tape recordings and transcribing those had been clumsy at best, and these stories had not communicated well in the written word. There were a lot of "pungent adjectives, slang and sometimes profanity. Some of the titles intensified this condition more. In a meeting such talk usually goes over because of the background against which it is given. But not so when the recordings are condensed into writing.

"In an AA meeting the essential dignity and spirituality of a good member is evident, no matter what he says. His personality is there for all to see and feel. But a condensed tape does not show much of this, especially when the bulk of the tale consists of spectacular drinking episodes ... there isn't enough background showing what the speaker and its environment was before we drank. Neither is there too much evidence to show what he is like now -- economically, socially, spiritually. Hence, we see a horrible drunk, now sober, who is glad to be in AA

because of the fellowship, 24 hour plan, the Higher Power - or God, maybe." Bill continues, "Readers have to find in the story section individuals like themselves, economically, mentally and socially. Specially, is this true of women. If, in 22 stories, you discover only four or five folks of substance and education and the rest are assorted and spectacular drunks, then many readers can be repelled. The hard-core of A. A., may be 50% consisting of people coming from substantial

backgrounds. Therefore it isn't enough to have a lot of categories. This

'respectable' category, in particular, has to bear a reasonable relation to the percentage of such people in A. A. Otherwise, we've got another damaging distortion. The extreme low bottom, reading the present stories would surely be attracted. But would your friends and mine have been drawn to A. A.. by these 22 cases histories, snobbish, maybe.

"Nevertheless, AA experience shows that we have to identify with the people on the basis on where they think they are -- not where we think they ought to be."

The upshot of this was that half of the speakers had to be interviewed and the material had to be rewritten and a dozen more stories had to be collected. Bill was concerned with the people who had been working on the project and reminded the trustee that these workers should not be given responsibility for the delays. They were following his direction and the responsibility was mainly his because it had been his idea. He winds up with the sentence, "Don't take any of this too seriously - I may still be a fuddy duddy!"

Third Edition

The documentation for the Third Edition is very different from that of the First and Second since our co-founder, Bill, had been immersed in both the preparation and publication of both of those Editions. As I mentioned before, the documentation on the First Edition can be found in letters, talks and writings of Bill W. and history on the Second Edition is a little more difficult to track. Along with Big Book in which Bill made his notes for the Second Edition, there is much original correspondence to be seen of an archival nature.

The Third Edition, however, is almost totally documented through the reports of the Trustees' Literature Committee and the Conference Literature Committee. The first mention of a Third Edition I could uncover is found in a report of the Big Book Subcommittee dated February 4, 1974. Ralph Ahringer, an 'in town' member of the trustees' literature committee was the chair of the Big Book Subcommittee and over the next year and a half, he and members of the staff at GSO worked on the project.

In his memo, Ralph reiterated Bill's comments regarding the purpose of

revising the story section of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous. From February 1974 and throughout that year, the Big Book Subcommittee worked, and the stories cut from the Second Edition "They Stopped In Time" and from the Second Edition Section "They Nearly Lost It All" were identified fairly early. The possible replacements required a lot of study. The early list included a caution concerning dated expressions and also suggested that all dates that tended to make the stories seem like "ancient history" be omitted or edited, as Bill had done earlier.

In April of 1974 the Conference Literature Committee received an interim report on the work, and in July the Trustees' Literature Subcommittee report included far less detail concerning story names for the new edition. The going seemed to be getting rough at this point, with much work to be done on reviewing, the stories submitted. It also mentioned that they were now considering seven Indian stories, a prison story from the Grapevine, a navy story, a young person's story, as well as still looking for a retiree and another Black story. The subcommittee report

noted that they were trying to meet a press deadline of December of 1974.

September of 1974 found the Big Book Subcommittee report documenting

correspondence among the committee -- staff and Ralph Ahringer. The November Trustees' Literature Committee heard in the report of the Big Book Subcommittee that the new-stories "will be sent to the Conference Literature Committee for approval and they will not make the current rerun of the book. It will make the next rerun deadline in 18 months."

By the tone of the communication, the project was simply considered an "update" to be included in the next "rerun" of the Big Book which happened every 18 months or so.

In February of 1975 we see Ralph reporting to the committee that the selection of stories was completed and they would be ready for the next 'rerun' of the book and would go to the printers in 12 months' time.

Copies of all of the selections were being mailed to the Trustees' and Conference Literature Committees for their comment and approval.

The secretary to the Trustees' Literature Committee and Conference Literature Committee enclosed two more stories with the Conference Literature Committee background material, at the last minute, for their comments and approval.

The staff members' August report noted that the Big Book was with the editor undergoing final editorial changes to go into the next printing of the Big Book and might be at the printers by the November meeting of the literature committee in 1975.

The February 1976 meeting of the Trustees Literature Committee found the statement: "The Big Book Third Edition will go to the printers soon. No changes have been made from page xxii through page 312. In Parts 2 and 3 seven stories have been deleted and 13 new stories have been added. The Third Edition will be ready later this year."

The 26th General Service Conference Literature Committee received the report and recommended that the delegates take back to their areas a statement to the effect that the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, Third Edition, is not being changed and that only the stories have been updated and some new ones added.

After the publication and release of the Third Edition, at their August of 1976 meeting, the Trustees' Literature Committee heard the committee secretary report that A.A.W.S. had received many letters with favorable comments about the Third Edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous.

A press release dated June 1, 1976, briefly reviewed the history of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous and gave a short overview of the Fellowship as well as inviting correspondence.

Subsequently, sharing from AA members regarding "editorial changes" that had been made in the Foreword to the Second Edition of the Third Edition of the Big Book was received. As a result, 1978's General Service Conference produced an Advisory Action that, "In the next printing of Alcoholics Anonymous the Foreword to the Second Edition be included as it was originally published in the Second Edition. Further it was strongly recommended the delegates should be made aware of any changes under consideration in the book Alcoholics Anonymous prior to publication."

The 1989 Conference Literature Committee suggested distributing of Big Book workshop questions to all delegates as part of the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous. The responses were reviewed by the trustees and it was obvious that the areas participating had experience renewed interest in our Big Book.

Fourth Edition

The 1994 Trustees' Literature Committee reviewed requests for a Fourth Edition of the Big Book and suggested a letter be sent to all delegates seeking Fellowship input on a possible 4th Edition of the Big Book.

The 1995 General Service Conference recommended that, "The first 164 pages of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Preface, the Forewords, the Doctor's Opinion, Dr. Bob's Nightmare and the Appendices remain as is."

That same year the Conference Literature Committee reviewed the report on area responses "Should There Be a Fourth Edition of the Big Book," and concluded there was no need to publish a Fourth Edition of the Big

Book at that time.

The idea of the Fourth Edition went back to the Trustees Literature Committee since there did seem to be some interest in a Fourth Edition, suggesting that they, the trustees, prepare an outline of the proposed content of a Fourth Edition for consideration at the next Conference. This was seen by the 1996 Conference Literature Committee with a request on how to proceed concerning the topic of the Big Book questionnaire and outline. The Conference Literature Committee decided not to proceed with a questionnaire at that time.

The 1997 Conference Literature Committee received a recommendation from

the Trustees' Literature Committee that a draft Fourth Edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, be developed and the Conference Literature Committee agreed and the General Service Conference recommended that: A draft Fourth Edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous be developed and a progress report be brought to the 1998 Conference Literature Committee, keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action that: The first 164 pages of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Preface, the Forewords, 'The Doctor's Opinion, 'Dr. Bob's Nightmare, 'and the Appendices remain as is.

A publication of stories dropped from the First, Second and Third Editions of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, be developed, and a progress report be brought to the 1998 Conference Literature Committee.

*see Chart of Stories, Big Book Alcoholics Anonymous, rev 7110197

STORIES-ALL

* * * * *

Update: As of the April 2000 meeting of the General Service Conference, 1,222 stories had been submitted for possible inclusion in a Fourth Edition. Each story has been read at least three times by each member of the Literature Committee; the number has been "whittled down", and the current thinking is that a proposed draft of the Fourth Edition could be brought to the April 2001 GSO, along with a draft of a "new" book containing all the stories that have been dropped from the first three editions. - See the most recent BOX 459 for more details.

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+++Message 431. Rowland Hazard
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/21/2002 10:10:00 AM

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Forwarded from the Buffs:

A request was made to the Buffs for information on Rowland Hazard. Bill L, aka Barefoot Bill, wrote this response:

From: wlash@a... [17]

Date: Sat Dec 30, 2000 7:12 pm

Subject: Re: Rowland Hazard

Here is something I found not too long ago about Rowland H.

This is the most I have ever found on him.

ROWLAND THE MESSENGER

By Ron Ray, 9/24/92, from Bowling Green, KY

After telling Rowland H. that he could never regain his position in society, Dr. Carl Jung the renowned Swiss psychiatrist was asked, "Is there no exceptions?" "Yes," replied Dr. Jung, "there is. Exceptions to cases such as yours have been occurring since early times. Here and there, once in a while, alcoholics have had

what are called vital spiritual experiences." He went on to describe a spiritual experience as "To me these occurrences are phenomena.

They appear to be in the nature of huge emotional displacements and rearrangements. Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the

guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them" (pages 26/27 in the "Big Book" Alcoholics Anonymous).

The doctor admitted his failure in bringing about this psychic change and dashed water on Rowland's hope that his past strong religious convictions could alone bring on a "vital spiritual experience".

Rowland's father, Rowland Gibson H. (the H. family tree has an unbroken chain of "Rowlands" dating back to 1763 with alternate ones named "Rowland Gibson H.") was superintendent of the Congregational Sabbath School for twenty-five years. The comments in the "Big Book" coupled with the apparent religious upbringing in his father's home would lead us to the conclusion that a belief in God was an ingrained value in Rowland's life. His mother's father, a Yale graduate, was a

man of the cloth. At the time of his death (12/20/1945) Rowland was a vestryman in Calvary Episcopal Church in New York City and a member of St. Peter's-by-the-Sea, Narragansett, R.I. AA students will identify Calvary Episcopal with Rev. Sam Shoemaker and the Oxford Group which served as a spiritual support group in Bill W.'s and other early sober alcoholics lives. According to Lois W., Rowland

was an "ardent Oxford Grouper until his death." (In 1938, the Oxford Group changed its name to Moral Re-Armament or MRA). There is no mention in any of three detailed and lengthy obituaries of his affiliation with either the Oxford Group or MRA. The Rev. Sam Shoemaker, one of the founders of the Oxford Group in the U.S., broke with the Movement in 1941, a full four years before Rowland's death.

During the late thirties and early forties, many Groupers distanced themselves from the misunderstood views of Frank Buchman, the principle founder of the Movement. While they may have fled from the Group, it is difficult to believe they abandoned its teaching of Absolute Love, Absolute Honesty, Absolute Purity, and Absolute Unselfishness; nor the practice of self-evaluation, confession, restitution, guidance from God and working with others. The Oxford Group teachings and practices were not distant from AA's Twelve Steps.

The H. family of Rhode Island was a paragon of respectability, governmental dedication, industrial leadership and family values. Their roots in Rhode Island reach back over 350 years as early settlers of the colony. Rowland was the 10th generation of H.'s in Rhode Island. His forebearers were large landowners, manufacturers, men of learning in literature and science who left their imprint on

America as achievers, leaders and philanthropists. It was into this vivid family background that Rowland H. was born 10/29/1881; two years after Dr. Bob and fourteen years before Bill W.

Rowland grew up in wealth, respectability and in a family that placed great value on human relations. His grandfather of the same name was known as the "Father of the American Alkali Industry."

Unlike robber barons of his day, Grandfather Rowland had great respect for the dignity of his employees. At the family Woolen Mills in Rhode Island, he introduced one of the first employee profit sharing programs in America. After the purchase of a lead mine in Missouri in 1874 he found the miners living in "ignorance, wretchedness, squalor and drunkenness." He shortened the work week, built decent housing and started a school. He wrote, "Place a people

face-to-face with vast labors, lower the physical tone by an enervating climate, let them find by experience that the labors are too great for their powers; and listless, slipshod habits result with whisky as a relief from

trouble." In 1875, this enlightened statement must have been considered liberal and radical by his fellow

industrialists.

Rowland's grandmother Margaret is credited with introducing one of the first kindergartens to America. His Aunt Caroline was at the turn of the century President of Wellesley College and father Rowland Gibson was President of Peace Dale Manufacturing, Peace Dale, RI, and Vice-President of Solvay Process Co., Syracuse, NY.

Growing to manhood in an exciting and active environment filled with people who were making things happen was an education of its own. The H. family had its cluster of estates in Peace Dale. There was Oakwood, built in 1954 by grandfather Rowland; Holly House, where young Rowland lived from age 11; Aunt Helen's home, the Acorns, where 1941 Pulitzer Prize winning poet Leonard Bacon grew to adulthood; and Scallop Shell, home of Aunt Caroline upon her return from Wellesley.

Rowland attended Fay School in Southboro, Mass., and Taft School in Watertown, CT. The well-to-do customarily sent their young men to prep school for an education directed toward college and for training in moral disciplines and social manners.

On to Yale in 1899, Rowland received a Bachelor-of-Arts degree with the class of 1903. At Yale he was called "Ike", "Roy" and "Rowley". He sang in the Freshman and Varsity Glee Club as well as the chapel choir.

Rowland's choice of Yale was a break from his father's and grandfather Rowland's tradition of Brown University. His mother's father and their side of the family including such relatives as Eli Whitney of cotton gin fame, were Yale attendees.

In today's vernacular it could be said Rowland was born and raised with a silver spoon in his mouth. Yet while coming from a lofty station in life, he was by several accounts not aloof from his fellow man.

The years following Yale were spent learning the family business. Peace Dale Manufacturing Company was the base industry from which the family fortune sprang. The Woolen Mill was in the family's ownership from 1802 to 1918. During the Civil War, it was a major producer of army blankets. At the mill, Rowland started out in the woolsorting department. By the time Rowland entered the milling

business, it was in its waning years in the North. On the death of

his father, the mill was sold to the Stevens Company and the manufacturing was eventually relocated in North Carolina.

The family had many investments and businesses far more interesting and exciting than the wool mill. One such business was Semet-Solvay, the nations leading producer of Coke and Coke ovens.

It's sister company, Solvay Process Company, produced soda ash, caustic soda, calcium chloride, amonia, and soda bicarbonate. The latter was sold exclusively to Church and Dwight of "Arm & Hammer" brand fame. Rowland worked first for Semet-Solvay in Chicago but in 1906 he was transferred to Syracuse.

The 3rd Annual Yale Class of 1903 Reunion Book made a special note that Rowland had an appendectomy in 1906 and spent the summer recuperating in Peace Dale. Hardly worthy of note today, but in 1906 any abdominal surgery was a major medical procedure.

Following his recuperation, he returned to Peace Dale Manufacturing as Secretary-Treasurer. Working up the business ladder as son-of-the-owner is much more rapid than as the normal aspiring employee. Not intending to distract from Rowland's ability as a business manager, he did have doors of opportunity open more quickly because he was a H. of Rhode Island. Life in the business world could be adjusted to accomodate his desired lifestyle which is the

reverse of most struggling business managers.

The winter of 1909-10 was spent travelling in the west. Upon return he married Helen, a graduate of Briar Cliff and the daughter of a Chicago banker. He was just short of 29 when the marriage took place in October 1910. They spent the next few months abroad.

The H. family was involved in local, state and national politics. It came as part of being a H. that Rowland became active in the Republican Party. He attended the exciting Republican National Convention as a delegatee in 1912. The convention re-nominated President William H. Taft. From 1914 to 1916 he served in the Rhode Island State Senate.

As World War I got underway, Rowland became a civilian member of the Ordnance Department. Later he resigned to accept a commission as Captain in the Army's Chemical Warfare Service.

Helen and Rowland had four children: Caroline (1913), Rowland Gibson (1917), Peter (1918) and Charles W.B. (1920).

When Rowland's father died in 1918 neither he nor younger brother Thomas wanted to manage the day to day operation of the several companies the H. family controlled.

Peace Dale Manufacturing was sold 7/1/1918, to the Stevens Company.

Semet-Solvay Company and the Solvay Process Company joined with three other chemical companies 12/17/1920, to create Allied Chemical and Dye Corporation (now Allied Signal, an 18 billion dollar corporation). Rowland was a member of the board of directors from Allied's inception until his death. He also served for many years on the board of Interlake Iron Corporation, another H. family holding.

Any problem Rowland had with alcohol did not lead to his dismissal from either board. However, with the H. family so deeply invested in the corporations, the antics of the drinker can be explained away and covered up. "There is corporate denial."

The socially prominent families of the 1920's and 30's were mum on family problems; especially were they guarded about moral weakness in their ranks. In that day, many considered alcoholics to be morally weak. The onset of Rowland's problem with alcohol is difficult to fix. There are some events that would lead us to

believe it could have been as early as 1918.

When his father died, why did not Rowland take over the operating helm? He was 37 and had held several positions within the corporations. Brother Thomas was 26 and only three years out of college. Thomas, not Rowland, became the one to administer the estate, a responsibility of great entrustment.

There is a brief mention of Rowland being President of Solvay Securities (likely another H. family holding) from 1918-1921. His obituary shows that 1920 to 1927 he was a member of Lee Higginson & Company, a New York investment banking firm. The record shows he resigned Lee Higginson in 1927 to travel in Africa, an adventure generally reserved for the royal and rich of that time.

We know that in 1931 he was under the care and treatment of Dr. Carl Jung in Zurich, Switzerland. On page 26 of the "Big Book" we find this insight into Rowland's battle with alcohol: "For years he had floundered from one sanitarium to another. He had consulted the best known American psychiatrists." This statement leads us to believe that several years prior to 1931 Rowland and his family recognized he had an alcohol problem. Ebby T., who carried the message to Bill W. had this to say about Rowland: "I was very much impressed by his drinking career, which consisted of prolonged sprees where he traveled all over the country."

The 1927 to 1935 period is vague and sketchy. Yet in reading accounts of Rowland's life as reported in Yale Class Reunion Books and his obituary, one is left with the feeling they go to great effort to explain Rowland's absence from Wall Street.

The published account of that eight year period is a mixture of health problems and private ventures away from Peace Dale and New York City. While in

Africa, he contracted a tropical disease and in 1928 he traveled to the west coast for his health. In 1929 he bought a ranch in New Mexico. Upon discovery of high grade clay on the ranch, he organized in 1931-32 the La Luz Clay Products Company to produce floor and roof tile. In 1932 he took up residence in Vermont. Between 1932 and 1936 he divided his time between Vermont and New Mexico. There is no mention of his travel to Zurich in 1931 nor the "about one year" in Dr. Jung's care as mentioned in Bill W.'s January 1963 letter to the doctor.

Bill writes to Dr. Jung: "Mr. H. joined the Oxford Groups, an evangelical movement then at the height of its success in Europe.... Returning to New York, he became very active with "O.G." here, then led by an Episcopal Clergyman Dr. Samuel Shoemaker."

August 1934, Rowland was at his home in Shaftsbury, VT. 15 miles south of Manchester. It was during this stay in Shaftsbury that he learned through two other Groupers of Ebby T.'s possible six months sentence to Windsor Prison for repeated drunkenness. The two groupers were Shep C. and Cebra G. whose father was the judge before whom Ebby was to appear. In Bennington, Rowland and Cebra G. intervened at the hearing and asked that Ebby be bound over to

Rowland.

The Judge agreed and Rowland took Ebby to his home in Shaftsbury and later on to New York City where Ebby stayed with Shep C. Of the first meeting with Rowland, Ebby said, "...he was a good guy. The first day he came to see me he helped me clean up the place."

Ebby's carrying the message to Bill W. is well known but little is known about Rowland's personal sharing with Bill.

Robert Robert Thomsen in his book "Bill W." reports that Bill could never recollect if it was Ebby or Rowland who gave him William James' "The Varieties of Religious Experience". A likely scenario is that Rowland gave the book to Ebby who in turn gave it to Bill.

Thomsen also reveals that Grace McC., Rowland H., Ebby and others would join with Bill around a little table in the rear of Stewarts Cafeteria for coffee and sharing after their O.G. meeting.

The absence of comment by Bill, Lois, Ebby and other early A.A. members about Rowland joining AA would lead us to conclude he didn't. Lois writes in "Lois Remembers", "...he remained an ardent Oxford Grouper until his death in 1945." Lois goes on to mention that Cebra G. later joined AA in Paris.

From Rowland's perspective there was no compelling reason to join AA. After all, by the time the "Big Book" was published he had been sober eight years. His sobriety is evidenced (page 26, "Big Book"), "But this man still lives and

is a free man. He does not need a bodyguard nor is he confined. He can go anywhere on this earth where other free men may go without disaster, provided he remained willing to maintain a certain simple attitude."

In 1935 Rowland returned to Wall Street as general partner in Tailer & Robinson, a brokerage firm; 1938-39 he was associated with Lockwood Greene Engineers Inc.; 1940-41 Rowland was an independent consultant. This later job position is often a resume explanation for periods of unemployment. In 1941, Rowland became Executive Vice-President of Bristol Manufacturing of Waterburg, CT. Bristol (now Bristol Babcock of Watertown, CT.) is a leading manufacturer of

industrial measuring and recording devices.

While at his office desk on Thursday 12/20/1945, Rowland suddenly died of a coronary occlusion. At the time of his death he and his wife Helen resided on Park Avenue in New York City but held a legal residence in Peace Dale, R.I.

His past few years had been filled with sadness. Rowland Gibson, his oldest son and a Captain in the Army, was killed in 1941. Peter, his second son, a navy pilot, deliberately flew his plane into a screen of American flax while pursuing a Japanese kamikaze plane. Peter was first reported missing in action March

1945 and later confirmed killed in action.

All the contributions Rowland and his famous family made in industry and through philanthropic activities, none has had a more far reaching impact as his inselphish effort in sobering up one Ebby T. If not the first, certainly one of the earliest Twelfth Step calls. It opened the door to millions of hopeless alcoholics.

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++++Message 432. Tex Brown died October 5, 2000
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/21/2002 10:11:00 AM

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This message from the Buffs list is being reproduced here because of the many who knew Tex Brown.

Nancy

From: "Rick Tompkins" <ricktompkins@e... [18] >

Date: Fri Oct 6, 2000 9:33 am

Subject: the passing of a treasured friend

Hello Group,

Sadly, one of our members passed away suddenly yesterday morning at his home.

Tex Brown had posted messages here, always expressed a great appreciation

for our A.A. history, and, honestly, Tex participated in much of it. His age was 81 years old, and for the last eleven years, served as the Editor of the northern Illinois Area 20 Service Newsletter "NIA Concepts." The newsletter is acclaimed around the various sites of our Fellowship, and Tex brought an

effective voice and consensus that was found in its pages. For continuity

and depth of perception, coupled with his wry sense of humor, this Longtimer

shares the love of many friends. Tex had said in the past few years as part

of occasional leads to talks, "I've been drunk, and I've been

sober...sober's better."

He'd known that for over 53 years of continuous sobriety (beginning in Feb.

1947, in Skokie, Illinois), and drew the love and respect that came with his

position as an "elder statesman," but coupled with his active humility, he

didn't care to go there...our three Legacies remained paramount in his

actions. We can only remember his example now and realize those treasures

among us today, the memories left to us. Thanks, Tex.

I am only one of many who could refer to him as a close friend and

compatriot, and I know that much love goes with him to that 'big sky

meeting.' He carries God's grace much in the way he walked with it when he

was still here.

Please keep him and his family in your thoughts and prayers. Condolence

cards can be sent to:

Barbara Brown, 734 Woodlawn, Naperville IL 60540-6740.

Yours in the Fellowship,

Rick Tompkins, Area 20 Archivist

Hello Group,

Sadly, one of our members passed away suddenly yesterday morning at his home.

Tex Brown had posted messages here, always expressed a great appreciation for our A.A. history, and, honestly, Tex participated in much of it. His age was 81 years old, and for the last eleven years, served as the Editor of the northern Illinois Area 20 Service Newsletter "NIA Concepts." The newsletter is acclaimed around the various sites of our Fellowship, and Tex brought an effective voice and consensus that was found in its pages. For continuity and depth of perception, coupled with his wry sense of humor, this Longtimer shares the love of many friends. Tex had said in the past few years as part of occasional leads to talks, "I've been drunk, and I've been sober...sober's better."

He'd known that for over 53 years of continuous sobriety (beginning in Feb. 1947, in Skokie, Illinois), and drew the love and respect that came with his position as an "elder statesman," but coupled with his active humility, he didn't care to go there...our three Legacies remained paramount in his actions. We can only remember his example now and realize those treasures among us today, the memories left to us. Thanks, Tex.

I am only one of many who could refer to him as a close friend and

compatriot, and I know that much love goes with him to that 'big sky meeting.' He carries God's grace much in the way he walked with it when he was still here.

Please keep him and his family in your thoughts and prayers. Condolence cards can be sent to:

Barbara Brown, 734 Woodlawn, Naperville IL 60540-6740.

Yours in the Fellowship,

Rick Tompkins, Area 20 Archivist

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+++Message 433. Meeting Formula
From: Jim Blair 7/21/2002 7:29:00 PM

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In 1961, The AA Grapevine ran a series of four articles describing the formula for an AA meeting in the East, Chicago, Cleveland and Southern California.

This is the first article in the series

The AA Grapevine, June 1961

FORMULA FOR AN AA MEETING

IN THE EAST

First in a series reporting some regional differences that produce the same result - sobriety

In meetings along the eastern seaboard, a standard procedure is followed, with variations for some groups and localities. The group program chairman opens the meeting, giving the name of the group and mentioning that it meets every week. He then reads the preamble: "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women. . . ." He then states, "Tonight we have as guests some members of the _____ Group and I shall now turn the meeting over to their leader, Sam."

Sam thereupon takes the floor and announces, "My name is Sam Jones and I'm an

alcoholic." At this point he has considerable leeway. If there are two speakers, he may, before introducing his first speaker, "qualify" himself as an alcoholic who knows what he is talking about. In some groups it is considered slightly better form if the leader mentions only the first name of the speakers, leaving them to identify themselves by their full names if they so desire. This is a reminder to all to respect the anonymity of the members.

There are never more than three speakers at a typical meeting. Most meetings last one hour but may sometimes run fifteen or twenty minutes longer.

Before the last speaker is presented the leader customarily calls for the secretary of the group, who first announces the collection to pay expenses for the hall and the refreshments, then reads the announcements of other group meetings for the coming week. When there are too many of these, he reads only the ones where anniversaries will be celebrated. He then turns the floor back to the visiting group's leader. After the last speaker the leader invites "all those who care to" join him in the Lord's Prayer.

There are members who will lead meetings but do not like to speak themselves. Others will speak but do not want to lead.

There are a number of suggestions for the member planning to lead such an eastern-style meeting. Like almost everything else in AA these are only suggestions and probably cannot all be covered in a single meeting, but many seasoned leaders try to work in as many as they can. Here are the suggestions:

If you are leader, don't go into your own story unless your speakers are brief and you find that the program is running short.

Before you present the first speaker it is a good idea to say a few words aimed at new people who are atheists or agnostics, lest they feel that AA is "too religious" for them or get the idea that it works only on people with the gospel-tent type of Faith. Someone, leader or speaker should see to it that it is explained for the benefit of newcomers that the Higher Power can be interpreted in terms of team spirit or group solidarity of purpose. Don't "spook" the newcomer with too much piety.

Don't tell any of the speaker's story yourself - let him tell it, even though there is something in it which strikes you as a real AA gem. Similarly, if you kid the speakers, be sure they won't be ruffled or hurt by your humor. Some people are peculiar about the gentlest of jokes at their own expense - even in AA.

Make sure that alcoholism is defined as a disease and not a moral problem - that it's no disgrace to be an alcoholic. The speakers will probably cover this but take note and be sure to include it in your closing remarks if they have not mentioned it. This is one of the most important points for the newcomer who knows nothing about AA and is the most heartening news that AA

brings to most of us.

Incredible as it may seem, sometimes none of the speakers will make the point, "You don't have to stay away from all the booze in the world for the rest of your life. In AA we just stay away from one drink - the first one - today."

At the collection it is tactful to say, "If you are here for the first time please don't put anything in the collection." This is for the drunk who comes in without a dime in his jeans and is ashamed of not being able to contribute.

If the group secretary, after reading the announcements, forgets to mention that the literature on the table is free, the leader can bring this in at the close. Likewise it is good to tell newcomers (and always count on there being at least one) that there are other meetings - in the New York metropolitan area, for example, there are meetings every night in the week within easy access to anyone.

If you have any time to fill at the close of the meeting, you can mention the AA "gimmicks" so valuable to the new man or gal such as getting plenty of Vitamin B Complex, keeping liquids in the system with coffee or soft drinks at first, carrying candy for a quick "lift" (in mid-afternoon especially), the use of "telephone therapy" and the importance of a little book of AA telephone numbers. Other good advice to a new member or prospect is not to get too tired --or too anything - if he can possibly avoid it, not to make avoidable vital decisions until he has been dry at least three months and has given his thinking a chance to clear up, and not to be discouraged if he doesn't sober up instantly. He should keep coming back and "let it rub off on him."

At the close of the meeting the leader should (if the group secretary has not already done so) invite new people and their friends to stay for coffee and cake.

If, after giving out with all these bits of wisdom, you still have an extra ten minutes to go - tell one incident of your own story which has a point. Such incidents are not hard to find: the first time you really got into trouble from drinking, how you heard about AA, how you came finally to realize that your life had become unmanageable. When you have told this incident and have reached stopping time, close with the Lord's Prayer and the job is done.

If you are to lead a meeting at a group where you are not known personally to the program chairman, it is considerate to write your name and the name of your group on a slip of paper and hand it to him upon arrival.

If the meeting you are to lead is a special one - a group anniversary for instance, with prominent non-AA speakers, a clergyman, a warden or a judge - don't make your introduction of the V.I.P. long-winded. Say who he is, that he is a good friend of our Fellowship, welcome him and then let him do the talking. If he is a politician he will probably speak too long, so make

allowances for this.

If your group has a sincere and colorful speaker who cannot tell his story in less than forty minutes, don't put him on with two other speakers. Let him have "start billing"

For the evening and fill in fifteen minutes yourself first.

If the group where you are to lead does not usually set out an ashtray and a glass of water for the speakers, ask the chairman if these can be supplied.

Once in a great while a noisy drunk shows up at an open meeting and the local lads usually gather around and tactfully ask him to step outside where they can talk to him (actually to let him talk to his heart's content, but away from the meeting). If such a character shows up and nobody in the group makes a move to usher him out, you, as leader, should stop the proceedings long enough to call on the local boys for their help in handling the matter. Don't try to carry on bravely in spite of the interference.

If one of your speakers, making his maiden speech, "blows up" and has to sit down out of stage fright, give him a comforting pat on the back and ask the audience to give him a good hand for effort (they probably will anyway).

A conscientious leader should carry a watch and leave it on the reading desk or table if there is no wall clock. This is a hint to long-winded speakers to watch their time.

When leading a meeting at a prison or hospital, take along a selection of basic AA pamphlets. Institution groups seldom have any budget for literature and these will be much appreciated.

Always remember that in AA, whether leading or speaking - an ounce of sincerity is worth a ton of eloquence.

Anonymous

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+++Message 434. Lois Wilson
From: anothermemberaa 7/21/2002 10:11:00 PM

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While reading a book about some of A.A.'s history, I ran across a passage about Lois Wilson.

In the book, it mentions that sometime after The Big Book was published and before Al-anon was founded, that Lois wrote a small four page pamphlet entitled "ONE WIFE'S STORY" which described her life with Bill.

Does anyone have any information about this four page pamphlet Lois wrote--still available, when 1st published, online copy of....?

I'm not to upto date on Al-anon literture but am interested in reading Lois' pamphlet describing her life with Bill, if in fact there is such a pamphlet.

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+++Message 435. Re: Lois Wilson
From: Jim Blair 7/22/2002 7:54:00 AM

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> In the book, it mentions that sometime after The Big Book was
> published and before Al-anon was founded, that Lois wrote a small
> four page pamphlet entitled "ONE WIFE'S STORY" which described her
> life with Bill.

The AA Grapevine published the following articles by Lois.

Bill's Wife Remembers, July 1944.

It Might Have Been the Time, February 1950.

How One AA Wife Lives The 12 Steps, August 1953.

Families of Alcoholics at the AA Convention in St. Louis, May 1955.

In AA's First Five Years, January 1967

I have never seen the pamphlet but it is likely a reprint of one of the early articles.

Jim

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+++Message 436. In AA's First Five Years, by Lois Wilson
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/22/2002 11:53:00 AM

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Thanks to Ron L. of California for sending this article. I have added a few footnotes.

Nancy

AA Grapevine, January 1967 issue.

In AA's First Five Years

by Lois W.

In the early days of AA things were really different. For five years there was no Big Book. The only way to communicate with other people was to go and tell them, so that's what we did. Of course, all of the meetings were held in people's homes, the homes of those who were lucky enough to have them. Anybody who had one made it wide open to whomever the boys brought in. Our houses, Dr. Bob's in Akron and ours in Brooklyn, were just filled with drunks, either drinking, or stopped temporarily, or well on the way to real sobriety.

Yes, AA was quite different in those days for many reasons. One was that there were no people in AA except those who had gone to the very bottom. Only these would listen to the story that one drunk was telling another. When AA first started, before there was a book, it was more anonymous than it is now, because even the Fellowship was without a name. AA didn't have a name until the book was written. Before that it was just a bunch of drunks trying to help each other, a bunch of nameless drunks. They had to be worked with over and over; families and everybody did what they could to help.

There were many, many sad things that happened, many very humorous things, and inspirational things, too.

Several are coming to mind right now. Bill, as you know, came from Vermont and someone sent him some maple syrup from there. It came in a whiskey bottle. One of the boys saw this attractive container in the kitchen and he was so drunk at the time that he gulped the whole bottle of syrup, thinking it was whiskey.

We had a rule that no one could come into the house when he was drinking. One night one of the boys came home drunk. We wouldn't let him in so he pried open the coal chute and slid into the cellar. Since he was very fat it was surprising that he could slide down it, yet somehow he made it. But this same fat man did get stuck one night in the washtubs. He lived in the basement apartment. Old city houses used to have stationary tubs in the kitchen. He thought he'd try to take a bath in one. But after getting in he couldn't get out so one of us (and I think it was I) had to pull him out.

There were many other things a man committed suicide in our house after having pawned our dress clothes, left over from more prosperous days. These included Bill's dress suit and my precious evening cape. We have never owned such articles again.

AA was always thrilling. The families were included in all of the meetings; wives and parents (there weren't many alcoholic women then), and the children came too. The children were vitally interested in everything that went on. They would inquire about all the members and want to know how they were. They'd learn the Twelve Steps and really try to live by them. I don't think youngsters can be too young to be thrilled by the AA program and be helped by it.

One of the first women who came in was the ex-wife of a friend of Bill's.* She had been in Bellevue and had come from there to our house. At that time there was a wonderful man - I think he was the fourth or fifth AA - who was trying to start a group in Washington, D.C.**

This woman went down to help him and she stayed sober for quite a long time. Then she married a man they were trying to bring onto the program. He really didn't go along with the idea himself and used to say to her every once in a while, "Florence, you look so thirsty." And so she did something about that, Florence disappeared. Everybody looked for her everywhere and couldn't find her. After a couple of weeks they found her in the morgue.

At that time each group used to visit every other group. New York members would go to New Jersey or Greenwich, Philadelphia or Washington or even Cleveland or Akron. Those were the groups I recall were in existence in the first five years.

If anybody had a car a bunch of us would pile in and we'd go wherever we knew there was a meeting. Families were just as much a part of AA as the alcoholics and we did feel we belonged.

But after a while the AAs thought that they should have an occasional meeting -- at least one every week -- of just alcoholics so that they could really get down to business. When this occurred the wives thought they'd meet together, too, at the same time. At first these little gatherings of wives didn't have any particular purpose. Sometimes we'd play bridge and sometimes we'd gossip about our husbands.

Then a few of us began to see that we really needed the AA program just as much as the alcoholics. The famous case of my throwing a shoe at Bill started me wondering about myself and realizing that I needed to live by the Twelve Steps just as much as he did. He was getting way ahead of me. I always thought of myself as being the moral mentor in the house, but Bill, who never was a mentor, was certainly growing spiritually while I was standing still. Or

perhaps there is no standing still -- if I wasn't going ahead, I must be going backwards.

I decided I'd better live by the Twelve Steps. Annie S. and a number of other people had come to the same conclusion. So, whenever we visited another group, we would tell the wives and families how we found that we, too, needed to live by the Twelve Steps of AA. Little groups of wives and families all over the country began to feel the same need for something to help overcome their frustrations and help them become integrated human beings again.

That's the way Al-Anon started. We followed the AA program in every principle. I want to thank AAs so very much for showing us the way. Without your leading us we would still be the unhappy folks we were.

In our meetings we tell our own experiences just as AAs do. We tell how we came to find that we needed Al-Anon and what Al-Anon has done for us. And we seek to help other families that were, or are, having the same sort of experience.

In 1950 Bill traveled all over Canada and the United States to see how AAs would react to the idea of a general conference for Alcoholics Anonymous, and in doing so he discovered quite a few types of groups of the family of alcoholics. He thought that they should have a Central Office here in New York, just as AA did, so that they could be unified in their use of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions - a place where inquiries could be received, literature prepared and the public informed so that those in need would know where to turn.

A good friend and I started a small office in Bedford Hills***. By then AA had had eighty-seven inquiries from wives or groups who wished to register. As AA was not equipped to handle the families of alcoholics it handed over this list to us and we wrote to them. Fifty groups responded and were registered with us. That was in '51. Today (1967) there are over 3,000 Al-Anon groups.

The numerical potential of Al-Anon is greater than AA's because it is composed not only of mates of alcoholics, but children, parents and other relatives and friends. It is estimated that five people are seriously affected by one alcoholic.

Though we have barely scratched the surface, the future is bright, thanks to you AA's for your wonderful example and inspiration.

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*This was Florence Rankin. See post 64.

Yahoo! Groups : AAHistoryLovers Messages :Message 64 of 435 [19]

**This was Fitz Mayo. See post 122.

Yahoo! Groups : AAHistoryLovers Messages :Message 122 of 435 [20]

*** This was her good friend Anne B., the wife of an alcoholic and a Westchester neighbor. See post 282.

Yahoo! Groups : AAHistoryLovers Messages :Message 282 of 435 [21]

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++++Message 437. Alateen
From: pianobarb1956 7/22/2002 4:30:00 PM

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This year is the 45th Annivesary of Alateen. Our local area is going to have a special event to highlight the history. Tracing Al-Anon history is difficult enough, but tracing Alateen history is VERY difficult. Any of you out there have things you can send to me, I would be VERY VERY grateful.

Barbara A., PIANOBARB@aol.com

AFG Archivist, Georgia

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++++Message 438. Meetings in Chicago (file 2 of 4)
From: Jim Blair 7/22/2002 9:36:00 PM

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The A.A. Grapevine, July 1961

FORMULA FOR AN AA MEETING

In CHICAGO

There may be some features of Chicago AA Meetings

That would benefit your own group

Group meetings in Chicago are the open and closed type. In addition, there are

ten Sunday-morning breakfasts which offer questions and answers as well as bacon and eggs and so are, in fact, AA gatherings. A bit of history will explain the Chicago meeting pattern.

Six persons, who had gone originally to Akron to get AA, attended the first Chicago meeting held on a Tuesday night in September, 1939. Since then, there has been a group meeting every Tuesday night open to husbands and wives of members but not to the general public.

Early meetings were more of a huddle for mutual encouragement than programmed affairs. A leader, chosen a week in advance, was free to conduct the meeting as he wished. Usually, he read a passage of scripture and told his own story. Meetings were opened with a brief "quiet time" (it may be that this practice originated in Chicago) and were closed with the Lord's Prayer.

The first departure was the formation of a "setup" committee to convene before the main meeting and discuss such matters as a place to meet next week, how to get a radio program going, hospital arrangements for newcomers and even, on one occasion, how much whiskey to allow a man with the shakes. Handling secular affairs in a separate session left the main meeting free to discuss pure AA.

Within a month of the first Chicago meeting, AA had its first nation-wide publicity, in the old Liberty Magazine, and, as a result, the pioneers soon were outnumbered by new people loaded with problems. Tuesday meeting attendance increased, which, while gratifying, made it difficult to give attention to individuals. At this point, two older members had an idea. They arranged an informal session with a number of new members. It was held on a Thursday night and worked out so well as a way of dealing directly with newcomers that the idea was adopted community-wide on an organized basis.

The Chicago AA territory, including the city and suburbs, was divided into ten areas, each with its own Thursday group. Since then, through growth in membership and subdivision of the original ten districts, the number of neighborhood groups has increased to about 280.

Thursday groups (some meet Friday nights) have become the basic unit of membership, although all of them contribute to support of the Chicago Central AA office and all are serviced by that agency. Thursday meetings are still primarily to assist new people. Discussions are informal. The topic may be one of the Twelve Steps or any pertinent subject selected by the meeting leader.

In the meantime, while the Thursday groups were expanding, the Tuesday-night meetings also grew. For several years there was only one central meeting, attended by all members within fifty or so miles of Chicago. As a matter of convenience to the long-distance members, outlying meetings were set up and there are now six of these. Each is supported and attended by some forty nearby neighborhood groups.

Tuesday meeting programs have become pretty well standardized. Speakers, usually three and a master of ceremonies are provided by member groups in turn. The program committee chairman opens the meeting by reading the widely used statement on the AA Fellowship, makes whatever announcements there may be, welcomes newcomers and out-of-town visitors and then turns the microphone over to the M.C.

Usually, the speakers represent three AA ages - a new man with six months to a year on the program and still radiant from his landing in AA; one who has been in several years; and the group member with the longest whiskers. Women appear as speakers in about the same ratio of women membership in the group. At times there have been all-woman programs. Members of the inter-racial groups also speak frequently at Tuesday meetings.

All meetings, like those in the beginning, are opened with a quiet time and are closed with the Lord's Prayer. After the Tuesday-night talks, and also after the Thursday-night discussions, it has become customary for all to stay around for conversation and coffee.

L.H., Chicago, Illinois

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+++Message 439. Re: [aahistorybuffs] Bill W
From: butterfly 7/22/2002 9:59:00 PM

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Yes! of course.....lol. Hi, there guy....

My source:

although I am sure it is many places.

Is the

1997 "Twelve-by-twelve" Archives Calendar.

produced by Charlie Bishop, Jr., the Bishop of Books,

and Fran H., former secretary to Lois W.

and founding Executive Director and Archivist of the

Stepping Stories Foundation.

November 11th,

Armistice day....(quotes the big book)

now...(Veteran's Day....)

1934.

Bill W.'s final drunk begins & last

about a month.

DOS....December 11th, 1934.

Bill W. takes his last drink

and enters Towns Hospital.

But the only "officiality" of

the date is that it is his.

Sincerely,

Janet P. @~@

former Archivist

S.D. AA 1983-1990

butterfly9552@attbi.com

----- Original Message -----

From: jaxing2

To: aahistorybuffs@yahoogroups.com

Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2002 8:30 AM

Subject: [aahistorybuffs] Bill W

Does Bill W have an official sobriety date?

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++++Message 440. seattles dutch!
From: tim wilson 7/23/2002 10:22:00 AM

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Local News: Saturday, October 21, 2000
Hundreds honor Dutch Shisler, who helped many to
sobriety

By Mike Carter
Seattle Times staff reporter

There was a moment at last night's memorial Mass for Dutch Shisler that drove home the love and respect he commanded: His priest, at a loss for words in the face of the hundreds of people who crowded into the Christ the King Catholic church, turned his eyes to the heavens and implored: "Help, Dutch!"

The crowd rippled with knowing laughter because many of them had asked Dutch for help, too.

Indeed, Dutch had spent the last 30 years of his life helping others recover from alcoholism that had ravaged his first 30 years. His legacy was found in the pews of the parish last night in the hundreds of recovering alcoholics who came to pay their respects. He died Monday at 69 from liver disease.

Dutch's legacy is also found downtown, in the Harbor House Dutch Shisler Center, which provides 80 beds for the lost, addicted and homeless of Seattle.

Dutch was perhaps best-known as the driver of the first detox van and over the years had pulled hundreds of people from the gutter and sometimes into sobriety.

The service had the air of a giant Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, with perhaps only the bad coffee and cigarette smoke missing. Almost everybody knew the Serenity Prayer by heart and, at the end of the Lord's Prayer, dozens added a line not found in the Bible but common to its recitation at 12-step meetings: "Keep coming back!"

And that, said Dan Goforth, one of Dutch's closest friends, was what Dutch wanted.

"What he wanted me to pass on to everybody here was that he loved you very much, and please stay," Goforth said.

Goforth recalled Dutch as a magical and charismatic man who could move in any circle. He would talk to a drunken person on a park bench with the same sincerity and interest he showed the rich and powerful.

"This guy who was a street drunk, you felt like he'd come just to be with you, and there would be 50 people in the room who felt the same thing," he said.

But Dutch wasn't without his faults and foibles - or a sense of humor. From his deathbed, he ordered his supervisor at the King County Department of Community and Human Services, Patrick Vanzo, to entertain his mourners with "Dutch stories." Vanzo had four, including "The Missing Van," in which Dutch left the detox van running - with an unconscious person in the back seat - only to have it stolen by "one of his more regular customers."

Do You Yahoo!?
Yahoo! Health - Feel better, live better
<http://health.yahoo.com>

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+++Message 441. RE: History DC AA
From: crog1@aol.com 7/23/2002 6:33:00 AM

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This item was forwarded to me via a friend in Canada. It is short early history of AA in the Washington, DC area circa 1939/40. Chris R

The Boys of '39

The term "boys of 39" first appears in the records of the Washington Group in the spring of 1948. At that time Henry S., a member of the Chevy Chase Group, was interested in writing a history of A.A. in Washington. The term appears in correspondence with the New York office regarding the history. According to Henry S. and Hardin C., both of whom were present during the first few months,

the "boys of 39" were Fitz M., Ned F., George S., Bill E., Steve M., and Hardin C.

Fitz M., 1897 - 1943

Fitz M. has traditionally been regarded as the founder of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Washington area. He, along with Ned F., brought the A.A. experience they had gained in the established New York Group to this area. During that first year their efforts and those of a number of other alcoholics shaped the group into what it would become. But more important than who-did-what, are the principles of the program, for they are what have really shaped this group as well as all the other groups in the fellowship.

Although Fitz died an untimely death in 1943, his story is preserved in A.A. publications and correspondence and in the memories of a few old timers. In the Big Book his story, "Our Southern Friend", describes his early life, how he came to find Alcoholics Anonymous, and his return to his small town home in Maryland.

Fitz grew up in the country home of his father, a clergyman. Just before the first World War he graduated from college where he had begun his drinking career. The next fifteen years of his life were dominated by the progression of alcoholism, and landed him, in the fall of 1935, in the alcohol ward of a new York hospital. There he met Bill Wilson. His story tells how he came to find the A.A. way of life. In his simple question, "Who am I to say there is no God," is expressed the humility and spirituality that became the theme of his life.

We know from Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers that Fitz was one of the earliest members of Alcoholics Anonymous and that he sobered up with the help of Bill W. over the fall and winter of 1935. We know from the GSO correspondence that by the fall of 1939 he had taken up residence in Washington. What he did during the period 1936 - 1939 is, however, sketchy.

His story in the Big Book tells of returning to his country house and there he describes periods of depression, doubt in God, and bouts with an overpowering compulsion to drink. During this part of his story he was one of the A.A. "loners."

He tells of an unbearable isolation and a need to work with others, "I am blue again. I want to sell the place and move away. I want to get where I can find some alcoholics to help and where I can find some fellowship." He tells of traveling to distant cities and of spiritual lessons to be learned during these years. A man asks him to work with a young alcoholic. He writes, "Soon I have others who are alcoholics and some who have other problems. I begin to play God. I feel that I can fix them all. I do not fix anyone, but I am getting part of a tremendous education and I have made some new friends."

Fitz's home was on the western shore of the Chesapeake and it is possible that some of the lessons he learned during these years were³ learned in Washington. This lends some credence to the 1937 stories, but is merely speculation, for no further evidence exists of his activities in this area.

During these years he kept contact with fellow alcoholics in the New York and Akron areas where there were established A.A. groups. In *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age* Bill W. describes the contributions Fitz made to the debate over the tone of the forthcoming book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. Bill remembers:

Fitz M., one of the most lovable people that A.A. will ever know, ... fell at once into hot argument with Henry [F] about the religious content of the coming volume. A newcomer named Jimmy B., who like Henry was an ex-salesman and former atheist, also got into the hassles. Fitz wanted a powerfully religious document. Henry and Jimmy would have none of it. They wanted a psychological book, which would lure the reader in; when he finally arrived among us, there would be enough time to tip him off about the spiritual character of our society. As he worked feverishly on this project Fitz made trip after trip to New York from his Maryland home to insist on raising the spiritual pitch of the A.A. book. Out of this debate came the spiritual form and substance of the document, notably the expression, 'God as we understand Him,' which proved to be a ten strike. As umpire of these disputes, I was obliged to go pretty much down the middle, writing in spiritual rather than religious or entirely psychological terms.

Fitz and Jimmy were equally ardent to carry the A.A. message. Jimmy started the Philadelphia group in 1940 while Fitz took the good news to Washington.

Jimmy B. and Fitz are said to have been friends since boyhood. Jimmy's name will appear periodically in the Washington Group story as well as the Philadelphia and Baltimore stories.

During these years Fitz made trips to other areas also. In a letter dated November 23, 1940, he reminisces about a trip some three years previous, in which he and Bill W. had visited the group in Akron.

His reply to the Alcoholic Foundation's letter of October 26 (1939) gives us reason to believe that he had established personal relationships in Washington and that there were people staying sober — even before 1939. In most of the early correspondence with the Foundation members used full names, disregarding anonymity within the fellowship. Fitz's first letter contains lots of names and it is difficult to tell who are alcoholics and who are non-alcoholic friends. Therefore, the pertinent passage is quoted in full below.

Fitz opens his letter by saying that Hardin C., the fine fellow referred to him in the October 26 letter, had contacted him and offered his home as a meeting place. This was an answer to a prayer, for the little group of alkies could hold their Tuesday night meeting there. He mentions that he has met a

retired Navy Commander living in D.C. who had gotten his A.A. in California two years previous and who was working with albies here. He goes on to say, "We are getting sort of solid now with Comdr. Congre, Goldsmith, Dillard and myself getting together. Then we have Hardin C., the Magills, the Waters, the Andrews all very interested. Also George E. One woman â€" Florence â€" is not in evidence. She is in love with a hellion 15 years younger than she who feeds her beer, â€" poor woman â€" I hope she finds the way out. I don't think she will around here. You know how the people chatter, especially the 'gals' about the leader who slips."

This is a curious letter for although Fitz writes to Ruth Hock, secretary of the Alcoholic Foundation, as if she would recognize the names, and writes as though these people form a group, most of the names do not reappear in the later records of the Washington Group. Of the original "Boys of 39", only Fitz and Hardin were included in the ten names mentioned in his letter. There are a number of possible explanations; some of these people may have been non-alcoholic friends of Fitz's, some may have moved from the area, some may never have really gotten sober, and some of them may have been members of the group but were not mentioned in the correspondence. This may have been a group similar to the Oxford Groups â€" not restricted to albies.

Things were happening and all of his letters reflect a buoyancy and enthusiasm that seems to reflect a faith that God is in Heaven and 'the world' is unfolding as it should. This is even in the letters where he discusses his unhappy financial condition. In a letter dated Wednesday, which must have been in late October or early November, Fitz talks about his new contacts, Dr. Klein of the Green Hill Institute, and someone at St. Elizabeth's, and the new recruit, George S.

Fitz then goes on to explain that, "After trying various expedients to get what man calls a 'job', I find that nothing has happened. But I find that there is plenty to do here â€" so to hell with that other stuff â€" I may have to sleep in the dog house ... but it's O.K. with me ... If I'm supposed to have that kind I'll get it. I find plenty to do as is ... I am paid up at Gatewood until Sunday." By Monday Fitz was staying with another alky, George E., and using his sister Agnes' apartment as an office. "I have been living as circumstances direct and provide," Fitz writes, and his main concern at this time is acquiring a general headquarters for A.A. in the District, a "room with a phone as headquarters. And get some permanency in it, we are rather nebulous to the general public ... When we get the G.H.Q. I will get some publicity on it."

Financial insecurity is a theme that seems to run throughout Fitz's life. Through these problems he is able to see his salvation. "Nothing is right," he writes in "Our Southern Friend". "Finances are in bad shape. I must find a way to make some money." And he is tempted to drink over the problems. "I cannot see the cause of this temptation now. But I am later to learn that it began with my desire for material success becoming greater than my interest in my

fellow man."

The deeply spiritual nature of Fitz is remembered by those who knew him, and it precluded his involvement in such worldly activities as working for money and the accumulation of material possessions. Fitz was a man with a mission, maybe a dreamer.

In his last letter of 1939, November 25, Fitz mentions that he had received a grand letter from Clarence S. of Cleveland (the Brewmeister of the Big Book) and requests copies of endorsements of A.A. to show his new friends, two ministers and a priest. "Can you get me a copy of Harry Emerson Fosdick's letter about the A.A.'s? Also just a few of Dr. Silkworth's articles? Has any Catholic ever written any kind of endorsement of A.A.," he writes.

From what we have seen of Fitz's study we can be fairly confident that something did happen before the fall of 1939 in Washington concerning alcoholics, but the beginnings of what was to become the Washington Group occurred at this time. Fitz had arrived in town and worked with Hardin C. on referral from New York. Several days later they found George S. in the Green Hill Institute undergoing "Samaritan Treatment" and brought him into the group. And about this time Ned F., the second New York Group member arrived in town and began to work with referrals from the Foundation. Events began to occur rapidly. The publication of the Big Book had increased the calls for help from all over the country and referrals from the Washington area increased proportionately. The steady stream of referrals from New York produced new recruits and the small group's twelve step work reached drunks in the city who would otherwise have simply gone by the boards. One example of this is the story of Dick T., the man who panhandled Fitz in a downtown park and ended up getting twelve stepped into the program.

Ned F.

Ned F. had become a member of Alcoholics Anonymous during the spring of 1939. Prior to this time he had tried all the known cures for his alcoholism. He had spent the summer of 1938 in the expensive Bloomingdale Institute only to end up drunk and in trouble two weeks after his release. His next stop was the Westchester Hospital for the Insane where he met the man who introduced him to Alcoholics Anonymous and took him to his first meeting. At that meeting two things stuck in his mind. Dr. Bob S. described how he had been drunk from 1898 until he met Bill in 1934. Bill W. spoke of the hope that is the spiritual base of the fellowship, "Can you admit to the barest possibility of a power greater than yourself," he asked.

Later, as he approached a neighborhood bar, Ned contemplated the threatening reality implied by Bob's thirty-five year drunk, and he began to see that in Bill's question was the hope of salvation.

During that summer and fall Ned remained in New York where he attended

meetings and worked with still practicing drunks. A lawyer by profession, but unemployed, he survived on \$22.50 a week supplied by his mother in Cleveland.

A happy coincidence occurred when Dr. Sam Crocker, who had been treating Ned, was visited by a friend from Washington. The friend had come to New York to visit a potential employee who was also a patient of Sam's. Unfortunately the man was an alcoholic and was, at that time, the inmate of a mental institution, unable to accept the position. Sam had been impressed by Ned's recovery in A.A. and recommended him to fill the legal assistant position in the government agency.

Ned accepted and made preparation to leave for the Nation's capital. His first assignment in Washington was a referral from Bill W., who suggested that he talk to an ex-Army Sergeant who needed and might even want the program. When he arrived in town he was greeted by Ruth H. in her customary manner. "Bill Wilson advised me that you are now in Washington and would be glad to do what you could," she writes, "I have a few inquiries which I will send along shortly. Meanwhile, we have an urgent and sincere letter from Mr. Louis M. of Baltimore ..." Ned had just been officially initiated into the Washington contingent.

The Indigenous Drunks

Of the native Washington Drunks who comprised four of the six "boys of 39" very little is known. We know that Hardin C. had contacted the Foundation office and was referred to Fitz. We know that he and his wife offered their home as a meeting place for the group.

George S., the third member, held a rather prestigious position in the federal government. At the time Fitz found him he was in the Greenhill Institute undergoing "Samaritan Treatment" for his alcoholism. This was probably early in November. Shortly after his release from Greenhill he became an active member of the group and returned to his job with a New Deal agency. George was influential in acquiring the Veteran's of Foreign Wars Hall for the regular public meeting in the spring.

Bill E. was a well to do Washingtonian who worked in the publishing business. Before finding the Washington Group he had remained sober by attending the meetings of an area Oxford Group. Although he was an active member of the group, and in later years worked toward the opening of a Washington office of the National Council on Alcoholism, very little is recorded about his first year work.

Steve M. was an ex-Army Sergeant and may have been the man Bill W. had sent Ned to contact. While he was a member of the group he worked in one of the area correctional institutions. After joining the group in late 1939, he remained a member until the summer of 1941, when he moved to Atlanta and was central to the beginning of the group there.

One question that may arise is how did these men come together to form a group? Although there is no information among the records, the unverified stories that have been handed down may provide some insight. There are several versions of the YWCA story. Another holds that around Thanksgiving of 1939 Marty Mann appeared at a public meeting at the YWCA on behalf of the National Council on Alcoholism. Marty was also an AA member and this meeting may have alerted some members of the community to the presence of AA members in the area. Several other sources indicate that the Washington Group held a public meeting in a rented hall in 1939.

All the stories mentioned in this paper have come from reliable sources: members who were a part of the group at the time, AA publications and newspaper articles. Some of the stories were, however, either remembered or written many years after the event. Memories fade and exact dates, even years, tend to merge over time. Therefore, in this history, only events that were documented at the time they happened are treated as hard facts. All else, including after-the-fact accounts, are cited here as "stories". This policy has been particularly adhered to concerning public events such as meetings, locations, and dates. Some of the stories are certainly true, and probably most of them are based in some degree on fact. The reader may decide that for himself.

It will also become evident that many important names have been omitted from this story. That is because these names did not appear in the correspondence or publications available for research. Oral history may eventually fill in some of these gaps, but it is hoped that further work collecting archival documents will provide the missing information.

Bill A., a northern Virginia businessman, for example, was very active during this first year, but his story does not appear among the records. Bill may have been introduced to A.A. prior to 1940 and is remembered for his trips by train to New York where he learned, directly from the source, how A.A. works. He was active in organizing the group there during that first year, and continued his work in the southern states after leaving Washington in 1945. The activities of other members such as Paul K., the alcoholic Dutch plumber, Eddie K., Paul H., Kev S., and Len H. are not documented in the records available at this time.

But names and who-did-what are not what is important. These were the "boys of 39" and perhaps a few of the "boys of 40", and they formed the nucleus of a group that would multiply tenfold over the next ten months. Who-did-what is not so important as that something was done.

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of 4)

From: Jim Blair 7/23/2002 5:54:00 PM

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The AA Grapevine, August 1961

FORMULA FOR AN AA MEETING

In the Cleveland Area

From the birthplace of AA come customs that stand

the test of time

Our meetings are attended by members, their wives, husbands and widows. The only closed meetings are for women only or men only. We have two of each in the Cleveland area and one each in Akron. Occasionally a preacher, a personnel director or a judge will attend one of our meetings as a guest of an individual AA member. Three times yearly our Central Committee in Cleveland sponsors a Consolidated Meeting made up of members from Cuyahoga County groups and their interested friends. This is usually called an open meeting for interested people, not prospects.

We usually have one speaker. He opens with his personal prayer, the Serenity Prayer or a silent prayer. Then he speaks (we call it leads) from thirty to fifty minutes. He then asks the group to join with him in the Lord's Prayer and then the meeting is opened for comments, questions or discussion. This can go on for fifteen or twenty minutes and I have seen some go on for an hour and get pretty hot.

If the chairman keeps things in hand fairly well, our meetings usually wind up in about ninety minutes. Announcements are read by the secretary before the group has coffee and pastry. Some groups have sandwiches, occasionally, instead of pastry all of the time. Others have potluck suppers that prove to be quite popular. We call our new members "babies."

In all my travels throughout the U.S. and Canada I truly believe that our members

Are less concerned about their anonymity among themselves than any other part of these two countries. At the public level I don't believe we have had a break in anonymity since around 1946.

Since September of 1959 my group has been having assigned subject meetings. By having our speakers talk on particular aspects of the program we have been listening to prepared talks and not too much blow-by-blow drinking

experiences. This has resulted in some very interesting discussion periods and a considerable increase in attendance. The Independence Group is the only group that I know of doing it this way. So far we haven't had any rocks thrown at us.

Because we have St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, Rosary Hall at St. Vincent Charity Hospital in Cleveland and several good alcoholic nursing homes in the area, we do have many opportunities for on-the-spot Twelfth Step work.

We have found that the bottom in AA has been raised considerably in the last three years and the majority of new members want to know the right answers now. In order to be a good sponsor today it seems to me that a person should be exceptionally well informed. A lot better informed than ever before.

H.B., West Richfield, Ohio

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++++Message 443. Formula for an AA meeting in Southern California (4 of 4)
From: Jim Blair 7/23/2002 8:04:00 PM

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The AA Grapevine, September 1961

FORMULA FOR AN AA MEETING

In Southern California

Some warm and friendly customs

Have spread from the Golden State

In their attitude towards meetings, Southern California AAs tend to display a certain foot-loose, fancy-free disposition characteristic of this part of the country. Here an AA member may "belong" to a dozen AA groups (in the sense of being on the membership rolls), or to none. He may officially belong to a group he seldom attends, and attend groups he doesn't belong to. Shopping around is common. Certain speakers are drawing cards. When word gets around that one of these is going to speak, the usual attendance of a score may jump to a hundred or more.

All this is hard on secretaries. A secretary seldom knows who really is a member of the group. In a year, half the membership of a group is likely to have moved away or started frequenting other meetings, without telling the

secretary. And the busiest bee in the group may turn out not to be a member at all, or at least not enrolled.

As one might expect, group membership fluctuates in volume greatly, sometimes violently. Alcoholics here (like all Southern Californians) are freeway-trained rovers. Hence, groups draw their membership from far and wide. Whether they want to or not, groups inevitably contend to a certain extent for the same people. Supermarkets here have the same problem.

But open or closed, discussion or "speaker" meeting, every group in Southern California observes two inviolable customs.

One custom is that of opening the meeting with the reading of the first few pages of "Alcoholics Anonymous." It dates back to the first AA meeting held in Los Angeles on December 19, 1939, and it began by chance. A Denver alcoholic had gone to the Mayo Clinic to learn that his alcoholism was hopeless; but a doctor at the clinic gave him a copy of the book, which had just been published, telling him it might contain some useful ideas. The book stayed in the alcoholic's luggage on a drinking jaunt to Mexico which ended in a Palm Springs hotel. Here, searching in his luggage for a non-existent bottle one night, he found the book and desperately began reading it to pass time until dawn would break and the liquor stores would open.

He never did buy any more booze. Instead, realizing that in order to keep his tender new sobriety he had to give it away, he went to Los Angeles, assembled an assortment of lushes and started a meeting. He had never attended one, but he had the book. He began by reading Chapter Five, and since then every Southern California meeting - all descendents of that first one - has opened the same way.

From the very start, the typical Southern California meeting has a certain distinctive flavor which might be called the "Hi!" flavor.

When the chairman opens the meeting with "I'm So-and-so, and I'm an alcoholic," he is greeted with a "Hi, So-and-so!"

Whoever is chosen to read the excerpt from Chapter Five is also greeted with the "Hi!" when he (or she) gives his name, applause as he walks to the podium and applause when he concludes.

The Chapter Five reader is likely to be fairly new to the program but no matter how timid he is at first, the applause and the "Hi!" will start him on his way to becoming an AA ham.

A typical Los Angeles meeting lasts an hour and a half. Most start at 8:30 in the evening and end at 10 o'clock. There are usually two speakers, a man and a woman, but there may be several, or there may be only one if a special speaker from the "circuit" is booked.

There is usually a five or ten minute coffee break in the middle of the meeting, following the first speaker. The second part usually begins with the reading of the Twelve Traditions - another opportunity to break in timid newcomers with applause and "Hi's!" If they get hung up on the pronunciation of "autonomous" or "anonymity," as they often do, the applause afterwards is extra loud. The impression, especially in the larger meetings, is one of infectious joviality.

Another Southern California custom is that of celebrating anniversaries with birthday cakes. At the end of the meeting, just before the Lord's Prayer, the chairman may say, "We have a custom in AA of calling newcomers `babies.' We do this because we believe alcoholics finding AA sobriety for the first time have been in a certain sense reborn. And as babies grow older, they have birthdays. Tonight we are celebrating such a birthday. For 365 consecutive days of total sobriety - Jerry W.!"

At this point, to the usual applause, Jerry, dressed in his best because he knew full well what was about to happen, makes his way to the podium while someone, such as his wife or sponsor, emerges from the back room with a cake bearing a lighted candle.

The raggedly sung strains of "Happy Birthday, Dear Jerry" real out somewhat discordantly (or once in a while with grade AA barbershop harmony), and the beaming Jerry accepts the cake. The singing concludes with a mournfully drawn out "Keep coming ba-a-ack!" and Jerry blows out the candle, a feat which evokes tremendous applause. Jerry expresses his thanks in a few words, or sometimes enough to give everybody the fidgets, and returns to his seat amid more applause.

The newcomer's expressed attitude toward this may be one of supercilious condescension, and he may refer to it as rampant, blatant, sloppy sentimentalism - but he will be impressed nonetheless, and is likely to nourish a secret inner feeling of envious hope.

There may be two or more birthdays celebrated at a meeting. Some groups have an annual birthday night for old-timers who are given cakes with as many as fifteen or twenty candles. The sight of ten or twelve old-timers receiving cakes that resemble ambulatory forest fires impresses even the most hardened skeptic.

Some groups give cakes decorated with the recipient's name, and he is allowed to take his cake home. In some groups, the cake is sliced and served after the meeting. Emergencies have been known to occur in which the same cake had to be used more than once in the same meeting - hastily taken back, recandled and relit, and so on. After all, we are not saints. We claim only spiritual progress.

The thundered "Hi's!" as each speaker gives his name, the applause for everything, the universal scurrying like wheeled rabbits to everywhere from everywhere; together, they give an impression of cordiality, joviality and open-handedness that is rather startling but usually pleasing to people who encounter it for the first time.

Of course, some think it forced, even phony glad-handing greeterism. A few are genuinely shocked by the fact that most speakers and leaders give their last name as well as their first names. It seems anything but anonymous. And this light-heartedness (some might say light-headedness) is not found in all groups. It is most noticeable in the larger ones - and maybe that is why they are large.

But for the secretaries, the steering committees, the sober-sides - for all those who like things tidy, orderly and predictable - it's a hard AA life here in Southern California.

C.A., Los Angeles, Calif.

The AA Grapevine, September 1961

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C.A., Los Angeles, Calif.

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++++Message 444. Fwd: Seattletimes.com: Man who aided many feted on 100th birthday
From: tim wilson 7/23/2002 10:23:00 AM

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Note: forwarded message attached.

Do You Yahoo!?
Yahoo! Health - Feel better, live better
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This message was sent to you by sluggertimm@yahoo.com,
as a service of The Seattle Times (<http://www.seattletimes.com>).

Man who aided many feted on 100th birthday
Full story:
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[birthdayguy09m&date=20020509](http://archives.seattletimes.nwsourc.com/cgi-bin/texis/web/vortex/display?slug=birthdayguy09m&date=20020509) [22]

By Christine Clarridge
Seattle Times staff reporter

It didn't take but a second or two before the one-time film extra and vaudeville performer was on stage once again.

Doug Richardson hobbled out of his bedroom at the assisted-living quarters in Edmonds where he's lived the past two years, looked around at the crowd of 60 or so admirers, friends and relatives and began cracking jokes.

"Thank you all for coming," he said, leaning on his walker, eyes sparkling. "I never realized I had so many enemies."

Richardson, who was an entertainer in his youth, a jack-of-all trades in his middle years and a legend in local Alcoholics Anonymous groups for the past five decades, was feted on his 100th birthday this week by scores of people he's influenced over the years, many of whom still visit him and come for counsel.

"When I met him he had 40 years' sobriety, but he made me feel like he had one day, just like me," said Dave Jager of Seattle, who knows Richardson through AA.

"He taught all of us the importance of welcoming the new guy."

Bill Smith of Seattle met Richardson 21 years ago when the older man was punching a speed bag in a boxing gym at the Elks Club in Lake City. Richardson is still Smith's AA sponsor and Smith visits him a couple of times a week.

"He can still come up with a good answer," said Smith.

Richardson immigrated to Seattle from Tralee, Ireland, when he was about 10. A natural performer and storyteller, Richardson made his way to Hollywood as a young man, working as an extra in several movies.

By the mid-1940s, he owned a number of nightclubs, including one with Gene Autry. He entertained World War II troops as a singer, dancer and comedian at USO shows.

He traveled the country with his "world-famous talking puppets" and won the acclaim of Eleanor Roosevelt as the most enchanting of children's entertainers, as reported by the Daily News of Los Angeles on Nov. 18, 1954.

He played Zingo the Clown at the World's Fair in Seattle in 1962. His exploits have been widely reported in other papers as well, including the Los Angeles Times, several New York papers and The Seattle Times, which in 1963 called him the heartthrob of Seattle Center.

He married and had two sons, worked on railroads, did public relations and was a gemologist and a reflexologist.

But Richardson's drinking intensified over the years, according to his 75-year-old son, Daly, and midway through his entertainment career, he gave it up, joined AA and moved back to Seattle.

He still occasionally attends AA, going almost exclusively to first-step meetings, where recovering alcoholics take their first shaky steps toward sobriety.

"He was always the first one to hold out his hand," said Smith.

"What he did was put a smile on the faces of a lot of people who probably hadn't smiled in a while," said another friend, Kevin McLean.

"His jokes are still making the circles," said yet another.

At his party this week, many of his best were trotted out again. McLean recounted the ones about the dancing girls, the hotel in Vegas, the donkey in Korea.

When Richardson heard his stories were being retold, he charged toward the offenders: "Hey! I tell the jokes around here!"

"We have been blessed to know Doug," said Sonny Grazzette, 76, a former boxer. "Knowing a guy like him is a once-in-a-lifetime thing. He's a wonder."

Christine Clarridge can be reached at 206-464-8983 or cclarridge@seattletimes.com.

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+++Message 446. Easy Does It
From: Lash, William (Bill) 7/26/2002 3:01:00 PM

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'Easy Does It'

One of A.A.'s Most Workable and Useful Sayings

A.A. Grapevine, July, 1948

One of the most useful of the sayings that have been adopted in A.A. is that which advises, 'Easy Does It.' So universally workable is this good advice that it qualifies as the expression of one of the fundamental steps in personal rehabilitation.

If this particular saying is applied sincerely and intelligently, it will greatly ease the path of the newcomer in A.A., avert 'slips' and further the development of a mature life both inside and outside A.A.

Axioms are only words in themselves, of course, and the phraseology has become trite in many cases. Pseudo-intellectuals are especially scornful of old sayings, and even less snobbish observers may overlook the worth to be found in the meaning behind the words.

It Means Relax!

For example, 'Easy Does It,' means - relax! Don't fret and worry and stew and struggle! Take it easy! Relax!

Everyone who has an intimate knowledge of the alcoholic will agree that one of the first things he needs to do is to relax, not only in the early stages of A.A. but forever after and a day. 'Easy Does It' applies no matter how long one has been in A.A. and, in fact, it is essential to continue progress in

A.A. and to a return to more normal living outside.

Physical realization has long been identified as a characteristic of great athletes. The DiMaggios and the Williams have an easy swing that belies yet accounts for much of the power of their bats. The fastest of swimmers relax with each stroke. In football, the relaxed player is less prone to fumbles and injuries. The great runners have a relaxed stride even when they are driving the hardest.

Relaxation frees the intellectual, the emotional and even the spiritual functioning of the personality no less than it loosens the muscles of the body.

'Easy Does It' for the newcomer during those first early days of confusion, fear and doubt. If, instead of worrying and 'tensing up' because he does not grasp the whole A.A. program in the first sitting - if he will relax, he will find that the emotional understanding as well as the intellectual understanding of the A.A. philosophy will come along much more readily.

Fortunately, this is a saying which can be tested easily. It does not have to be accepted on faith alone. Anyone can find out for himself whether it works simply by trying it himself.

Suppose a problem has arisen. Suppose it is the old urge to reach for the bottle. Or suppose the problem is one of those by-products of alcoholism which continue to come up long after the urge to drink has gone. The reaction of the alcoholic, and of more than a few non-alcoholics, is to fight the problem, to worry about it, to get into a stew. The tension begins to mount. Emotion runs wild. Self control is slipping rapidly.

That's the usual sequence. It can be broken if in the midst of it, the victim sits way back, physically and mentally, and relaxes. First he must relax his muscles, because that's the easiest to do. Then he must relax his mind, by directing his thoughts to pleasant subjects, to a reminder that others have succeeded and so can he, to mental pictures of peace and success. If he will but direct his mind away from the problem, he will find a new source of strength rising up within him.

Has Advanced

At least that is the way it has worked and still works for others. The individual who has learned how to relax has already advanced a long way towards happiness and success.

Relax and enjoy A.A. Relax and enjoy life.

'Easy Does It.' If you don't believe it, try it.

J.M.D.

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++++Message 447. Sister Ignatia
From: Jim Blair 7/27/2002 8:28:00 AM

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(Flyer published by the Charity Hospital Group on the occasion of the death of
Sister Ignatia. The flyer is 7 1/4 x 17 and has a photo of Sister Ignatia
standing in front of Rosary Hall)

Charity Hospital Group

Charity Hospital Amphitheater, 6th Floor

Fridays, 8:30 P.M.

Three things are necessary for the salvation of

Man: To know what he ought to believe, to know

What he ought to desire and to know what he ought to do.

SISTER MARY IGNATIA IS DEAD

Sister Mary Ignatia died on Friday, April 1, 1966, at 9:55 a.m.

She passed away at the Mother House of the Mount Augustine Training Center,
5232 Broadview Road, West Richfield, where she had been ill for the past year.

The good sister was 77.

Her loss will be felt by many thousands who knew and loved her for the work
she did with the alcoholics.

Sister Ignatia, the former Della Gavin, was born on January 2, 1898, in County
Mayo, Ireland and came to the United States with her family at the age of
seven.

Sister Mary Ignatia entered the Community of Sisters of Charity of St.
Augustine on March 25, 1914; was clothed in the religious habit on June 17 of
that year and made her religious profession on June 28, 1916.

It was at St. Augustine's Convent that more than 50 years ago she swore oaths

of poverty, chastity and obedience, offering her life to whatever service was decided for her.

She studied music at the University of Notre Dame and she taught instrumental music, piano and voice at St. Augustine Academy in Lakewood, O., in 1927-1928.

Because of illness she had to change her plans for a career as a music teacher and in 1928 Sister Ignatia was assigned as an admitting officer of St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, O.

It was there in Akron, at St. Thomas Hospital, run by the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine that she became interested in the problems of the alcoholics.

Dr. Bob, co-founder of our beloved fellowship of AA, was on the courtesy staff then at St. Thomas.

Dr. Bob then felt that he might enlist the help of Sister Ignatia. He knew that it never seemed right to her that a drunk should be turned away. She couldn't understand why a drunk on the verge of DT's was turned away but a drunk with an injured head was admitted. They were both sick. They both needed help.

His first approach to her on the subject was casual. He didn't tell her much nor did he make any promises. He just told her that he was trying to treat alcoholics by a new method. He said that he and some other alcoholics believed that alcoholism could be controlled by medical attention and coupled with the spiritual. His remarks, though brief, made sense to her.

It wasn't long before Dr. Bob brought in an alcoholic. Sister admitted him as having acute indigestion. He was put to bed in a double room. Then Dr. Bob told her quietly, "We'd like to have him in a private room in the morning." As if it weren't bad enough to have an illegal admittance on her conscience, this man was asking for a private room! Morning found the patient peacefully asleep, on a cot in the room where flowers were trimmed and arranged for patients' rooms.

This was her beginning with the men who had a drinking problem. And she knew them well. She knew how Dr. Bob met Bill and how the fellowship of AA was born. When Bill faced Bob for the first time and Bill talked for hours. Dr. Bob knew that here was a man who knew what he was talking about. As the hours passed, Bill told of his experience with alcohol; told him of the simple message that a friend had brought..."Show me your faith and by my works I will show you mine..."

Bob slowly understood what Bill meant. The spiritual approach was as useless as any other if you soaked it up like a sponge and kept it to yourself.

Dr. Bob knew then that by giving his knowledge away, he would and could stay

sober!

All these things and a great many more, Sister Ignatia put into practice at St. Thomas' Hospital until she left there to come to Cleveland in 1952.

She had been transferred to St. Vincent Charity Hospital and helped establish Rosary Hall, the alcoholic ward, where her special talents became nationally known in treating and rehabilitating the people with a drinking problem. Many thousands today give her profound credit for their return to their families and to their place in society.

No artist could ever paint the picture nor any writer compose the words that could truly describe the frail and angelic little lady who did so much to bring happiness into the homes of those who suffered from the sickness of alcoholism. Tiny in stature, but ever so big in the eyes of those who saw the light and came to believe - came to believe that a power greater ourselves could restore us to sanity.

If you met her and knew her, there will always be a lingering emptiness in your heart, for she was the only person in the world without a drinking problem who knew the sadness, the loneliness and the sickness in the alcoholic's tortured body.

She was God's gift to the recovering alcoholic.

With your help, dear Sister Ignatia, a power greater than ourselves, and the magic of the world's greatest fellowship, Alcoholics Anonymous, we were able to find the new way of life. Not really new, because this was the way our parents taught us on their knees so many years ago.

Sister Ignatia will always be in the memory of those who had the privilege of learning their lessons in faith and God under this unique and mysterious little lady who carried ever so much power in her mind, body and soul that aides us helpless creatures back from a watery grave of alcohol.

She carried the message, and she carried it well. For well she knew the power of alcohol and the damage it had done to many that she knew who were near and dear to her. She knew the poison in it meant death, total and absolute destruction to those caught in it's vicious tide. And she knew the weakness of man in his battle over the bottle could be won if he wanted to take the first step, the step that is watched by all good AA's like the parents watch the first step of their infant child.

Before you left Rosary Hall and had your last little private talk with Sister Ignatia, she gave you a small medallion to carry with you, but should you want to take a drink, you were to return it to her before you did.

And many kept the faith she had in them, for she told all who left there,

"First unto thy self be true." And when honesty came back, half of the battle was won.

God, high in his Heaven, somehow always smiled down on his creatures who were victims of the bottle. He knew they were extremists in everything they did, and that in every man and woman there is a little good if we but look for it. And he placed in their hands a power unknown to the most learned of men of our time, the power to carry the message to those who were still out there in the shadow of the valley of no return.

And to help them return, He sent the messiah who was to lead us out of the wilderness. He gave us Sister Ignatia, for whom we shall be forever grateful.

And with her, Bill W. and Dr. Bob S. Out thanks to these wonderful people for showing us that it could be done if we wanted it.

The power of believing, the hope and faith this little sister gave to us, will always dwell in the memory of the recovering and thankful alcoholic man and women. And she knew, Oh, how she knew, when you were only trying to kid her that you were sincere in your own desire to stay sober! You never fooled her!

The strong and the mighty, the short and the tall, they were all like putty in the hands of Sister Ignatia as she tried to mold them back into something that could pass for a human being. And this she did with ever so many.

It has often been said that in a man's life there were three he could never fool: his wife, God, and Sister Ignatia. A fine tribute to a fine lady in the Lord's service.

When the good sister saw the fine work that Bill Ws wife Lois started in New York with the Alanons, she had a long talk with Lois and in January 1955, she started the Alanon group at Charity Hospital. These women meet on Fridays at 8:30pm in another part of the hospital while their husbands are upstairs on the sixth floor in the amphitheater attending a meeting of their own.

The Alanons are the non-alcoholic wives of the men with a drinking problem. They learned at these meetings the many things they must do, and not do, in order to help their loved ones get on their feet again after their battle with the bottle. These fine women learned that their men were good too., but they were to watch for the moods and spells that were sure to come for awhile, and they learned how to cope with the problems.

As their men changed, they had to adjust also to a new life, and this made for a better understanding in the home of these fine people. The good sister knew that it would take time, along with kindness and understanding on the part of the wives to bring their men back to a normal life. And the Alanons are doing a fine job today as they continue to help the newer women also to find happiness in their lives.

Today there are many of these Alanon groups in Cleveland and, one even carries the name of the Sister Ignatia Alanon Group. A fine tribute to a fine lady.

Those who knew sister well, remember how strongly she believed that to help the man best who was trying to come back, the best therapy was for him to hear the story of one who made it back. She was a firm believer that the newcomer would respond a lot easier when he found out that he wasn't the only one who drank too much, too often, too long. This made the new person believe after he had seen and heard a man tell his story, that there people were in reality somehow like him and were trying to help him get back on the right track.

She knew the importance of a person believing in themselves first, getting sober and staying sober, and when they learned all this, when they got their thinking straight, they would learn that they could lead a better life when they turned their lives over to a power greater than themselves. And this, in due time, comes to all people who want to enjoy the benefits of the peace of mind and the happy sobriety that so many seek yet so few find.

The funeral mass was held at St. John Cathedral, at 10 a.m. Tuesday, April 5, 1966.

Coadjutor Bishop Clarence G. Isseemann of the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland presided. A cousin of Sister Ignatia, the Rev. Martin J. Neary, pastor of Our Lady Knock Catholic Church, Calumet City, Ill., was celebrant.

Sister Ignatia is survived by her brother, Patrick Gavin.

Services were conducted by McGorray Funeral Home and Sister Ignatia was laid to rest in Calvary Cemetery.

When the last breath left her frail body at 9:55 a.m. Friday morning, she began her long trip back home. We know she will sit on the right hand of the Father, for if ever a lady was destined to sainthood, it was Sister Ignatia. There was no question in our minds where she will go, for us mortals have lost an honest and true friend, the kind that comes once in a lifetime.

We who keep the faith, who believed in you like you believed in you, will cherish forever the memory of your devoted life to us. For you believed in all of us, and many had to come back again and again and again, but you never let us down as long as you thought they had a chance.

We shall always remember that those who believed in you believed in God, believed in themselves and believed in the power of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Rest in peace, lovely lady.

In appreciation to a great lady, Sister Ignatia

Written by: Bill Hall

747 McKinley St. Bedford, O.

44146 Phone: 232-3197

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+++Message 448. Who was Shep C. Who Helped rescue Ebby
Thatcher?

From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/29/2002 4:26:00 AM

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Transferred from AA History Buffs

Nancy

From: "Jim Blair" <jblair@v... [23] >

Date: Sun Oct 29, 2000 4:02 pm

Subject: Re: [aahistorybuffs] Shep C.

Michael wrote: "Does anyone have any solid information about Shep C., who
along with Rowland Hazard and Cebra Graves, was responsible for bringing Ebby
Thatcher into the Oxford Group?"

Shep C. was a boyhood friend of Rowland H. and had joined the Oxford Group and
while the OG did not demand abstinence from alcohol, it was implied and they
also believed that if drunks did not stop smoking, they would probably not
stay sober.

Shep C. had success on Wall Street and was vacationing at Rowland's in
Arlington, Vt., when they decided they should do some OG missionary work and
Cebra and Shep went over to see Ebby. The next time they saw him was when he
had a court appearance.

Shep went on to become a Colonel during W.W.II and ran a large corporation in
Milwaukee after the war.

I would suggest reading "Ebby, The Man Who Sponsored Bill," By Mel B.

(Hazelden).

Jim Blair

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+++Message 449. Current Events: Court Rules/Confession
to AA members
From: JKNIGHTBIRD@aol.com 7/29/2002 2:06:00 PM

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CURRENT EVENTS:

I'm sure everyone will find this article interesting. Many may be familiar with the story from back when it first broke. I've provided the link here for those who choose to read the real thing. Scroll down further here to read the story.

Jocie in Chicago

Confession to A.A. Members Is Not Protected, Appeals Court Rules
http://www.nytimes.com/2002/07/18/nyregion/18RULI.html?ex=1028083158&ei=1&en=6ff206c3295d4f0b

NEW YORK TIMES - New York Region section
July 18, 2002

Confession to A.A. Members Is Not Protected, Appeals Court Rules
By ROBERT F. WORTH

A federal appeals court panel ruled yesterday that a man's confession to members of his Alcoholics Anonymous group that he killed a married couple in Westchester in 1988 is not protected by that group's quasi-religious status.

The ruling, which reversed a lower-court decision that had overturned the man's murder conviction, did not address the lower court's claim that conversations between A.A. members have the same protection as exchanges between clerics and parishioners.

Instead, the three-judge panel for the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit ruled that the confessions " which did not take place at A.A.

group meetings " were not made in confidence and for the purpose of obtaining spiritual guidance, and were therefore not privileged, regardless of A.A.'s status.

The man, Paul Cox, is serving a prison sentence of 16 2/3 to 50 years for the killings of Dr. Shanta Chervu and Dr. Lakshman Rao Chervu.

The crimes went unsolved until 1993, when members of Mr. Cox's A.A. group " which he had joined after the killings " came forward to say that he had told them he might have killed the Chervus during an alcoholic blackout. The couple lived in the house where Mr. Cox grew up in Larchmont, N.Y., and he said he thought he had killed them in a subconscious rage against his parents.

After a trial that drew national attention, Mr. Cox was convicted of second-degree murder in 1994. He appealed unsuccessfully at the state level, and last year sought a federal appeal. Judge Charles Brieant of United States District Court in White Plains overturned his conviction and ordered him to be released once further appeals were exhausted.

Because other courts have found that Alcoholics Anonymous is a religion for purposes of church-state separation, Judge Brieant wrote, "Disclosures of wrongs to fellow members as ordained by the 12 steps" of the program are protected as "a privilege granted to other religions similarly situated."

But yesterday the appeals court judges disagreed, ruling that "Cox failed to establish that his communications to other A.A. members would have been privileged, even were New York's clerical-congregant privilege required to be construed to protect communications made among members of A.A."

Mr. Cox's lawyer, Robert N. Isseks, said he was studying the decision.

Arati Johnston, one of the Chervus' daughters, said she was happy and relieved to hear of the ruling.

Jeanine F. Pirro, the Westchester County district attorney, who appealed last year's ruling overturning Mr. Cox's conviction, said yesterday: "It's the right decision. This attempt to turn a roommate-and-lover conversation into a priest-penitent privilege didn't cut mustard with the Second Circuit."

JKNIGHTBIRD

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+++Message 450. One hundred members when the Big Book was written?

From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/30/2002 3:31:00 AM

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Transfers from AA History Buffs:

From: archie <archie@c... [24] >

Date: Thu Nov 23, 2000 12:25 am

Subject: ? Big Book writers

We always hear of the first "one hundred" who, if you will, authored the Big Book.

I heard once there was really 89. Don't know where and have not been able to find the actual or close to the accurate number. The only reference I have found is on page 248 of the 3rd edition, paragraph 2, line 3 that states "...which about sixty of us agreed..."

Don't recall any mention in the stories of the 1st or 2nd editions.

Anyone have knowledge of this please?

--

From: Ernest Kurtz <kurtzern@u... [25] >

Date: Wed Nov 22, 2000 1:11 pm

Subject: Re: [aahistorybuffs] ? Big Book writers

Archie,

I suspect the number 89 may come in part from those who heard one of my oral presentations on AA history. It derives from the research I did for the book, _Not-God_, and is based on some of Bill W.'s correspondence and my interviews of Lois Wilson and Marty Mann. The "100 men," as you know, first surfaced as a possible title for the Big Book. The rationale was that, at the rate new members were coming in, there would be 100 by the time the book got published.

ernie kurtz

From: "Jim Blair" <jblair@v... [23] >

Date: Wed Nov 22, 2000 1:16 pm

Subject: Re: [aahistorybuffs] ? Big Book writers

I have a listing of "Pioneers By Date of Sobriety." The list has 95 names on it with dates up to somewhere in 1939. If we use the publishing date of the BB as April 1939, there are 76 people on the list with dates prior to the end of April.

I also remember Bill W. as using that number but I must try to remember where. So, I guess when they use the number 100, they were just rounding out

:)

Jim Blair

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+++Message 451. Re: One hundred members when the Big Book was written?
From: Sally Brown 7/30/2002 11:59:00 AM

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In a long, taped interview of Marty Mann by George Gordon in 1976 for the AA archives, Marty says that at her first AA meeting in April 1939 at the Wilsons' home, there were about 25 alcoholics present - along with a bunch of wives. They came from Westchester, Long Island, New Jersey, and New York City. There were a few other AAs in the NYC area who didn't happen to attend that particular night. The total membership count was probably less than 30.

I understand that Akron always had more members in the early years, partly because Sr Ignatia and Dr Bob had such easy access to the hospital, partly because of local publicity around Rollie Helmsley and through the Cleveland Plain Dealer. Doesn't Akron archives have some kind of record? I'd be surprised if there were more than 40 actual Akron area members in 1939, though.

At that first meeting of Marty's, the first printed edition of the Big Book was hot off the press and on display. That might have helped account for what was apparently a somewhat larger attendance than usual. In any event, the use of "100 sober men and women" is clearly an exaggeration. Besides Bill Wilson's publicist instincts, the other reason seems to have been the natural impulse to count even inactive AAs, such as everyone who had ever walked in the door and managed to stay alive and reasonably sober as far as any of the active members knew, even though those persons had dropped out of sight.

Incidentally, my 3rd printing of the first edition of Alcoholics Anonymous

(1941) has a revised Forward stating that "We are more than two thousand men and women...."

It will be interesting to hear what others have to contribute.

Rev. Sally Brown 1470 Sand Hill Rd., 309
United Church of Christ Palo Alto, CA 94304
Board Certified Clinical Chaplain, Ret Phone: (650) 325-5258
FAX: same

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+++Message 452. Religious Denominations in Early AA
From: NMOlson@aol.com 7/30/2002 9:46:00 AM

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Transferred from AA History Buffs

From: "Eric Sacon" <esacon@y... [26] >

Date: Tue Nov 21, 2000 4:58 pm

Subject: Religious Denominations in early AA

A question to my fellowsâ€¦

I have often wondered about the religious affiliations of early AA's. Was it strictly a Christian fellowship, evolving out of the Oxford Group movement? When did the first Jew's come into AA? What about those of Muslim and Buddhist faith? Was the development of our twelve steps directly influenced in any way by non-Christian beliefs?

In the fellowship of the Spirit,

Eric The Real

From: nmolson@a... [27]

Date: Tue Nov 21, 2000 8:22 pm

Subject: Re: [aahistorybuffs] Religious Denominations in early AA

Buffs,

Ernie Kurtz asked me to forward this response to Eric's question:

Nancy

Most of the early AAs had had a Christian upbringing but had abandoned any religious practice in their drinking years. Bill W. was an exception, having had a very untraditional religious upbringing.

Although we have no evidence of Buddhists or others, even Jews, in AA before the publication of the Big Book, even well into the 1940s, one of the very popular books among the early AAs was Lewis Browne's "This Believing World," published in 1926, which took a very syncretistic approach in describing the world's great religious traditions.

ek

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+++Message 453. Re: Religious Denominations in Early AA
From: Glenn Chesnut 7/30/2002 3:33:00 PM

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The tradition I have either heard or read about the first Jewish alcoholic in A.A. (probably the first) is as follows. I either read it in Mary Darrah's biography of Sister Ignatia, or Mary talked about it at the Second National Archives Workshop in Akron, or one of the local Akron historians had discovered the story and told it to me at that conference -- I'm sorry I can't pin down the source more closely, but it seemed to be a valid tradition, probably dependable.

At any rate, as the story was told to me, with all the previous alcoholics, Protestants as well as Catholics, Sister Ignatia made them go into the chapel at St. Thomas hospital. She and the alcoholic both got down on their knees, and Sister Ignatia prayed with him as he made his third step. When the first Jewish alcoholic protested that he couldn't go into a Christian chapel, Sister Ignatia said O.K., and made him get down on his knees with her in the hall right outside the chapel door and do his third step -- with her praying right along with him.

You need to remember that most Roman Catholic bishops forbade good Catholics to pray with Protestants back then. Sister Ignatia was already ignoring all the rules when she prayed with the people from Protestant backgrounds.

What was the basic A.A. spirit back then most of the time? You could always find some place where you could pray together, and work the steps together, and acknowledge some sort of common belief in some kind of higher power -- that was what was important.

Richmond Walker's Twenty-Four Hour book, which he wrote during the 1940's, is very important. Many of the good old-timers got sober off two books -- the Big

Book and Rich's little black book. Rich put something from the Hindu tradition ("Look to this day, for it is life") VERY prominently at the very front of the book, to tip people off. It is NOT necessary that you be a Christian. The fine-print sections in his book were produced in part by taking meditations from God Calling by Two Listeners, and removing every last reference to Jesus Christ, and replacing it with a concept of a higher power which would be acceptable in most of the higher religions of the world. This was VERY conscious and VERY deliberate.

As Ernie Kurtz has said, many early A.A.'s believed that a fairly syncretistic approach to spirituality ought to be followed.

Glenn Chesnut

www.iusb.edu/~gchesnut/

e-mail at gfchesnut@msn.com

----- Original Message -----

From: NMOlson@aol.com

Sent: Tuesday, July 30, 2002 2:57 PM

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Religious Denominations in Early AA

Transferred from AA History Buffs

From: "Eric Sacon" <esacon@y... [26] >

Date: Tue Nov 21, 2000 4:58 pm

Subject: Religious Denominations in early AA

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In the fellowship of the Spirit,

Eric The Real

From: nmolson@a... [27]

Date: Tue Nov 21, 2000 8:22 pm

Subject: Re: [aahistorybuffs] Religious Denominations in early AA

Buffs,

Ernie Kurtz asked me to forward this response to Eric's question:

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Most of the early AAs had had a Christian upbringing but had abandoned any

religious practice in their drinking years. Bill W. was an exception, having had a very untraditional religious upbringing.

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ek

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++++Message 454. DALE CARNEGIE AND BILL WILSON
From: NMOlson@aol.com 8/4/2002 2:59:00 AM

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Transferred from the Buffs list:

From: nmolson@a... [27]

Date: Mon Jun 18, 2001 7:27 pm

Subject: DALE CARNEGIE AND BILL WILSON -- REVISED

Buffs, in my effort to trim the number of posts on the site and make it easier for new members to follow subjects, I have combined the following posts on Dale Carnegie and Bill:

Nancy

From: BeckSid@aol.com [28]

Date: Mon Apr 3, 2000 11:54 am

Subject: Dale Carnegie And Bill

Hi y'all,

Does anyone know if Bill, as a Wall Street type, ever participated in Dale Carnegie's training sessions? The timing seems appropriate, and much of Carnegie's writings reflect what would become AA principles. Carnegie's

book, *How To Stop Worrying And Start Living*, contains the Serenity Prayer

(attributed to Niebuhr) and tips on compartmentalizing one's day, i.e., *One Day At A Time*. This isn't meant in any way to downplay Bill's work in developing the AA program; Bill and Dr. Bob are AA's co-founders, not its inventors. As a history buff, I'm interested in learning as much as possible about the source(s) of the pieces of the lovely puzzle that were assembled into our Fellowship.

Thanks,

Sid B.

From: nmolson@aol.com [27]

Date: Sat May 13, 2000 2:02 am

Subject: Dale Carnegie And Bill

I've finally found an answer for you Sid. I am currently reading "Lois Remembers." On page 130 Lois says: "Bill was getting tired of selling wire rope [a job Bill held briefly], and when Ned F., an AA lawyer from Washington, D.C., suggested he should be selling something inspirational like democracy, Bill flew higher than a kite. We even took three or four lessons together in a Dale Carnegie course on public speaking. Herbert W., an AA who managed the course, had recommended it as being useful in selling democracy.

Glad I was finally able to find an answer to Sid's question.

Nancy

From: "Doug B." <douglas@aahistory.com [29] >

Date: Sat May 13, 2000 3:50 am

Subject: Re: [aahistorybuffs] Dale Carnegie And Bill

Hey Gang, I bought a copy of Carnegie's book just for recreational reading after reading that passage in Lois's book several years ago....You would NOT

believe how much of our program is in that book!

There is enough similarities to Carnegie to make HIM a co-founder as much the

credit given the Oxford group. Just for fun, check it out for yourself with an open mind....its amazing....Doug

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+++Message 455. Spiritual Experiences, by Bill W.
From: NMOlson@aol.com 8/5/2002 2:48:00 AM

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From the AA Grapevine, July 1962

Spiritual Experiences by Bill W.

It is the intention of the Grapevine to carry occasional accounts of spiritual experiences. To this interesting project I would like to say a few introductory words. There is a very natural tendency to set apart those experiences or awakenings which happen to be sudden, spectacular or vision-producing. Therefore any recital of such cases always produces mixed reactions. Some will say, "I wish I could have an experience like that!" Others, feeling that this whole business is too far out on the mystic limb for them, or maybe hallucinatory after all, will say, "I just can't buy this business. I can't understand what these people are talking about."

As most AAs have heard, I was the recipient in 1934 of a tremendous mystic experience or "illumination." It was accompanied by a sense of intense white light, by a sudden gift of faith in the goodness of God, and by a profound conviction of His presence. At first it was very natural for me to feel that this experience staked me out for somebody very special.

But as I now look back upon this tremendous event, I can only feel very specially grateful. It now seems clear that the only special feature of my experience was its electric suddenness and the overwhelming and immediate conviction that it carried to me.

In all other respects, however, I am sure that my own experience was not in the least different than that received by every AA member who has strenuously practiced our recovery program.

How often do we sit in AA meetings and hear the speaker declare, "But I haven't yet got the spiritual angle." Prior to this statement, he had

described a miracle of transformation which had occurred in him -- not only his release from alcohol, but a complete change in his whole attitude toward life and the living of it. It is apparent to nearly everyone else present that he has received a great gift; and that this gift was all out of proportion to anything that might be expected from simple AA activity, such as the admission of alcoholism and the practice of Step Twelve. So we in the audience smile and say to ourselves, "Well, that guy is just reeking with the spiritual angle -- except that he doesn't seem to know it yet!" We well know that this questioning individual will tell us six months or a year hence that he has found faith in God.

Moreover he may by then be displaying "spiritual qualities" and a performance that I myself have never been able to duplicate -- my sudden spiritual experience notwithstanding.

So nowadays when AAs come to me, hoping to find out how one comes by those sudden experiences, I simply tell them in all probability that they have had one just as good -- and that theirs is identical excepting it has been strung out over a longer period of time.

Then I go on to say that if their transformation in AA extending over six months had been condensed into six minutes -- well, they then might have seen the stars too!

In consequence of these observations I fail to see any great difference between the sudden experiences and the more gradual ones -- they are certainly all of the same piece. And there is one sure test of them all: "By their fruits, ye shall know them."

This is why I think we should question no one's transformation -- whether it be sudden or gradual. Nor should we demand anyone's special type for ourselves, because our own experience suggests that we are apt to receive whatever may be the most useful for our needs.

By Bill W.

© Copyright AA Grapevine, July 1962

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+++Message 456. Bill may also have read James Allen,
From Passion to Peace
From: Thomas 8/5/2002 6:52:00 PM

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Dear Buffs,

The note about Dale Carnegie possibly influencing Bill was interesting.

I am tempted to join with identifying the sources that either influenced Bill Wilson or say much of what he said.

The author is James Allen, and his "From Passion to Peace" embodies the essential process of spiritual development we follow in AA.

The one "passion" he does not dwell upon, however, is our passion for alcohol. And, because he doesn't seem to be one of us, he does not include it as a necessary prior passion to put out of operation for the rest of the program to work.

A minimal html page of the book is located at:

<http://www.sober.org/Passion.html>

I am convinced that Bill kept this book under his mattress. <g>

Love, Thomas

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+++Message 457. Guideposts Article, 1947, by Bill W.
From: NMOlson@aol.com 8/6/2002 5:00:00 AM

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IS A.A. FOR ALCOHOLICS ONLY?

by Bill W.

Our most enthusiastic friends think Alcoholics Anonymous is a modern miracle. So they ask, "Why can't A.A. principles be applied to any personal problem?" The world today is a problem world because it is full of problem people. We are now on the greatest emotional bender of all time; practically no one of us is free from the tightening coils of insecurity, fear, resentment and avarice. If A.A. can revive an alcoholic by removing these paralyzing liabilities from him, it must be strong medicine. Perhaps the rest of us could use the same prescription.

Not being reformers, nor representing any particular sectarian or medical point of view, we A.A.'s can only tell the story of what has happened to us and suggest the simple (but not easy) principles upon which, as ex-drinkers,

our very lives now depend.

Fifty-thousand alcoholics -- the men and women members of A.A. - have found release from their fatal compulsion to drink. Each month two thousand more set foot on the A.A. high road to freedom from obsession so subtly powerful that once engulfed, few alcoholics over the centuries have ever survived. We alcoholics have always been the despair of society and, as our lives became totally unmanageable, we despair of ourselves. Obsession is the word for it.

But now, largely through A.A., this impossible soul sickness is being banished. Each recovering alcoholic carries his tale to the next. In a brief dozen years the A.A. message has spread, chain letter fashion, over the United States, Canada and a dozen foreign lands. Obsession is being exorcised wholesale.

What then, is this message whose power can restore the alcoholic his sanity and thenceforth enable him to live soberly, happily and usefully in a very confused world? The A.A. Recovery Program relates it as follows:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol -- that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to God as we understood Him.
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 ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a 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 conscious contact with God as we understand Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and

the power to carry that out.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all of our affairs.

Simple, these principles, yet a large order indeed. When one tries to apply them he is bound to collide with a most heavy obstacle. That obstacle is one's own pride.

Who, for example, cares to admit complete defeat? Who wishes to admit to himself and others his serious defects of character? Who relishes forgiving his enemies and making amends to people he has harmed? Who would like to give freely of himself without ever demanding reward? How many can really bow before "the God of their own understanding" in real faith that a Higher Power will do for them what they cannot do for themselves? Yet A.A.'s find that if we go "all out" in daily practice of our 12 Steps we soon commence to live in a new, unbelievable world. Our pride yields to humility and our cynicism to faith. We begin to know serenity. We learn enough patience, tolerance, honesty and service to subdue our former masters -- insecurity, resentment and unsatisfied dreams of power. We find that God can be relied upon; that our strength can come out of weakness; that perhaps only those who have tasted the fruits of dependence on a Higher Power can understand the true meaning of personal liberty, freedom of the human spirit.

For us of A.A. these are not theories; they are the prime facts of our very existence. The average A.A. member feels that he deserves little personal credit for his new way of life. He knows he might never have achieved enough humility to find God unless he had been beaten to his knees by alcohol. He was once that egocentric, but in the end it had to be God.

Yet we of A.A. cannot but feel that great things certainly await those who earnestly try our 12 Steps substituting their own distressing problem for that of alcohol. Nor do we think everyone needs to be so completely beaten as we were. To us, grace is an infinite abundance which surely can be shared by all who will renounce their former selves enough to truly seek it out. We often feel like shouting this ancient charter of men's liberty from the rooftops of thousands of our homes - A.A. homes that would never have been, but for the grace of God.

Guideposts, 1947.

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++++Message 458. Prayers for Joe McQ.
From: CBBB164@AOL.COM 8/7/2002 6:35:00 AM

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I am very likely going to get a spanking for this but because Joe McQ. and Charlie P. have helped so many of us understand that the Program of Alcoholics Anonymous is very clearly spelled out in a book titled ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS and if we are real alcoholics, we better put that Program to a test if we don't want to die chewing on our tongue, I feel compelled to let folks know that Joe has become the victim of Parkinson's Disease. Thank God, it has been detected early and the medications are doing their job. But it has caused Joe to curtail his efforts to "Carry This Message." Which, by the way, is the title of his latest book and it is great.

Many of us have seen the Power of Prayer and its effect on the ones prayed for. Joe McQ. deserves all the prayer we can offer.

A "Thank You" for all has done for so many of us can be E-mailed to him at: kellyadm@kellyfdn.com.

In God's love and service,

Cliff Bishop - The Primary Purpose Group - Dallas, TX

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++++Message 459. Re: Is Alcoholics Anonymous A Religion?
From: Andrew Preston 8/10/2002 3:40:00 AM

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Is Alcoholics Anonymous A Religion?

The New York Times report headed Confesion to AA members is not protected, appeals court rules, which was quoted by jknightbird (29 July 2002) records that "Courts have found AA is a religion for the purposes of church -state separation". In his book "Addiction is a choice", (Open Court Publishing Company, 2000, ISBN 0-8126-9404-X), James Schaler, PhD, writes on pages 136-137(pb),"AA advocates sometimes contend that AA is spiritual, not religious. However the courts do not recognise such a distinction in terms of the First Amendment."He continues,"....The free excise clause protects freedom from religious beleaf, including the right to Atheism and Freedom FROM religious beliefs.....New York State`s highest court declared, in a five to two ruling, on 11 June 1996, that state prison officials were wrong to penalise an inmate who stopped attending the organisations (AA`s) self-help meetings because he said he was an Athiest or an Agnostic: A fair reading of AA doctrinal writings discloses that their dominant theme is unequivically

religious. " the court said."Adherence to the AA fellowship entails engagement in religious proselytisation", (Griffin v Coughlin,88 NY2d 674-New York Court of Appeals).

In accordance with AA`s Tenth Tradition. the Fellowship itself through GSO or the Trustees would not challenge such a ruling; but I wonder if any treatment center or individual has sought to have the court`s decision overturned on the basis of Bill W`s declaration that,"As a society we must never become so vain, as to suppose that we have been the authors and inventors of a new Religion".(Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age, Page 231). In a letter dated 1940, Bill wrote:"We can never say (or insinuate) to anyone that he (sic) must agree to our formula or be excommunicated. The Athiest may stand up in an AA meeting still denying the Deity.... In such an atmosphere the orthodox and the unbeliever mix happily and usefully together. An opportunity for Spirtual growth is open to all.")AS Bill Sees It, p158).

Has anyone told the court that the ONLY requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking, and that there is cirtainly no requirement to believe in God, to say the Lords prayer or observe any AA "rituals"?

Kindest regards,

Andrew Preston

Real knowledge is to know the extent of ones ignorance.

Get a bigger mailbox -- choose a size that fits your needs. [30]

http://uk.docs.yahoo.com/mail_storage.html [30]

II
IIIIIIIIII

+++Message 460. Re: Re: Is Alcoholics Anonymous A Religion?
From: jbackman1@aol.com 8/11/2002 4:22:00 AM

II
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The issue as to whether AA constitutes a religion under the First Amendment has been the subject of a number of court cases, from those discussing whether sponsor-sponsee and related communications are privileged like those of other "priest-penitent" relationships (a freedom of religion and speech issue), to those questioning whether judges and correctional facilities may compel a person to attend AA meetings and/or participate in AA programs (an establishment of religion issue). These issues place AA members and supporters

on the horns of a very real dilemma: AA insists that it is not a religion, and indeed is grounded on this principle, yet it possesses many characteristics of a religion.

As an attorney (and a sponsor), I pray that I never get involved in a case that would require me to take a position one way or the other. For example, suppose I were representing a client, and it turned out that his AA sponsor was going to testify against him. Would I try to block the sponsor's testimony on the grounds that my client's discussions with him were privileged as "priest-penitent" communications? That would seem to be my obligation as his attorney. It would also seem contrary to what the 5th Step suggests for us --- i.e., that we admit all of our wrongs to another human being. Yet, it would mean arguing in court for the proposition that AA is a religion, even though we in AA declare that it is not.

Of course, one could argue that there is no reason to prevent a sponsor from testifying about what his sponsee told him in a 5th Step, or otherwise, because the program tells the sponsee that he must admit and make amends for his wrongs anyway. The problem here, of course, is that 9th Step amends are predicated on principles that can differ significantly from the criminal and civil law. If my stole \$1,000 from friend X while he was active, my AA sponsor and group likely would tell him that he could do his 9th Step by apologizing to X and repaying him the \$1,000. But the law might require him to do a year in jail too. I therefore believe that it would be reasonable (and not inconsistent with my AA program) for me to attempt to stop his sponsor from testifying against him.

The issue that the original contributor to this group raised poses a similar dilemma. Like the writer, I too am troubled with a court declaring that AA is a religion, and thus permitting a prisoner to refuse to attend on the grounds that he is an Atheist. Yet, But, if AA members or "experts" (no less the GSO) were to argue to the Court that AA is not a religion, then they likewise would be arguing that the prisoner should be compelled to attend AA meetings against his will. I've seen many AA's come to the program in this way, but to advocate this approach does seem a bit more like "promotion" than "attraction" as a means of obtaining AA attendance --- which our Traditions counsel against.

There are, of course, no easy answers to any of these issues. And it does seem very bizarre, at least to the outside world, that in these cases directly involving AA, the national and international AA organizations (and, in most cases, AA members as well) stand mute. But to me, that is the miracle of our Steps and our Traditions. Let those who can afford to do so fight over why and how our program should work. All I need to know is that it does work, and that with God's help it will continue to do so irrespective of the outcome of these political and legal disputes.

Jon B.

Illinois

II
IIIIIIIIII

+++Message 461. Re: Re: Is Alcoholics Anonymous A Religion?
From: crog1@aol.com 8/11/2002 11:36:00 AM

II
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I have a question... I can understand the "possible" dispute courts may have over whether AA is a "religion" or not and the question over privileged communication between sponsor/sponsee likened to a cleric hearing a confession. But, my understudying is e.g. a psychiatrist (or similar health care provider) cannot be court ordered to testify about a patient as this relationship is considered confidential. Does this vary state to state, court to court? Would a sponsor/sponsee relationship be considered "privileged" in this instance? Thanks, Chris R

II
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+++Message 462. Re: Re: Is Alcoholics Anonymous A Religion?
From: jbackman1@aol.com 8/11/2002 2:36:00 PM

II
IIIIIIIIII

In a message dated 8/11/02 4:45:54 PM Central Daylight Time, crog1@aol.com writes:

I have a question... I can understand the "possible" dispute courts may have over whether AA is a "religion" or not and the question over privileged communication between sponsor/sponsee likened to a cleric hearing a confession. But, my understudying is e.g. a psychiatrist (or similar health care provider) cannot be court ordered to testify about a patient as this relationship is considered confidential. Does this vary state to state, court to court? Would a sponsor/sponsee relationship be considered

"privileged" in this instance? Thanks, Chris R

Chris poses another wonderful hypothetical. Yes, virtually every (if not every) State in our union provides a privilege to doctor-patient (including psychiatrist- and psychologist-, but not always therapist-) communications. But, just as we insist that we are not a religion, we likewise state that we are not health care professionals. This is not to say that I do not believe there should be a sponsor-sponsee privilege, or even Member-Member privilege, just that our history and Traditions counsel against AA as a group advocating as much in public.

One other point worth noting about the doctor-patient privilege: Unlike the priest-penitent privilege, which generally protects ALL communications between the religious figure and the congregant (though, in light of recent scandals, some people want to change this), the medical privilege REQUIRES the doctor/psychiatrist/etc. to disclose to authorities when they have a reasonable belief that the patient may commit a crime involving physical injury to himself/herself or others. A failure to do so may result in civil, and even possibly criminal, liability. Thus, if anyone out there is considering taking on the privilege issues, I ask that they cite the religious, rather than the medical, privilege as the proper example.

I hope this helped.

Jon B.

Illinois

II
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+++Message 463. # of Big Books Distributed
From: Lash, William (Bill) 8/11/2002 9:37:00 PM

II
IIIIIIIIII

Approximate Number of Big Books Distributed

For the 1st, 2nd & 3rd Editions

1939 - 2001

Approximate Number of 1st Edition Big Books Distributed* 300,426

Approximate Number of 2nd Edition Big Books Distributed* 1,090,416

Approximate Sales Figures** of 3rd Edition Big Books Distributed 19,843,221

Approximate Total 1st, 2nd & 3rd Edition Big Books 21,234,063

* - Figures for the 1st & 2nd Edition Big Books have been derived from historic lists reporting the number of books distributed.

** - 3rd Edition Big Book numbers are based on sales figures reported by the G.S.O. Publications Department.

II
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++++Message 464. Fw: # of Big Books Distributed
From: Jay Lawyer 8/12/2002 12:34:00 AM

II
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Wondering would anyone have the names of the people who have received copies of BigBook at International Conventions.

ie: Nell Wing - 10,000,000 copy - 1990 Seattle, Wash. etc...

(I think I'm right on this one- SomeTimers coming on - LOL)

Thanks ,

Jay

Approximate Number of Big Books Distributed

For the 1st, 2nd & 3rd Editions

1939 - 2001

Approximate Number of 1st Edition Big Books Distributed* 300,426

Approximate Number of 2nd Edition Big Books Distributed* 1,090,416

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** - 3rd Edition Big Book numbers are based on sales figures reported by the
G.S.O. Publications Department.

II
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++++Message 465. Re: # of Big Books Distributed
From: John Wikelius 8/12/2002 7:03:00 AM

II
IIIIIIIIII

Would it be safe to assume these figures do not include foreign printings of
the Big Book?

I presume these include large print and braille. Are recordings included in
these figures?

John Wikelius
301 North Rawls Street
Enterprise, Alabama 36330
334-347-1595
May God richly bless you!

II
IIIIIIIIII

++++Message 466. Re: # of Big Books Distributed
From: Jim Blair 8/12/2002 9:10:00 AM

II
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John wrote

Would it be safe to assume these figures do not include foreign printings of
the Big Book?

Correct.

I presume these include large print and braille. Are recordings included in
these figures?

I took a look at the Final Report for the 52 General Service Conference
which contains a summary of "Literature Distributed."

Copies of the BB on disk or on tape are not consider as "books" and are

listed under miscellaneous.

I could not find a distribution figure for "books in braille."

Jim

II
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+++Message 467. Presentations of copies of the Big Book.

From: NMOlson@aol.com 8/15/2002 4:43:00 AM

II
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Several people have written about persons who were presented with special copies of the Big Book, so I am combining the information in this one post. The recipients were as follows:

President Nixon, the 1 millionth; Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Joseph Califano, the 2 millionth; (see post 364); Ruth Hock Crecelius, 5 millionth (Montreal 1985); Nell Wing the 10 Millionth (Seattle 1990) Dr. Jack Norris' widow the 15 millionth (San Diego 1995) and Alanon the 20 millionth (Minneapolis (2000).

Nancy

II
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+++Message 468. Do we know the history of other 12 step off shoots

From: carloffairlawn 8/20/2002 10:06:00 PM

II
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My name is Carl and I am trying to bring a little of the BBIA activity into my other fellowship. I was wondering if we know the history of the meetings like GA, OA, NA etc. Particularly which were first and the count on how these offshoots grew.

Anyone got any information. I would think that this should follow the requests for using the AA 12 and 12 from the groups with some minor deviations.

Thank you for the help.

Kind Regards,

Carl

II
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++++Message 469. RE: Do we know the history of other 12
step off shoots
From: Lash, William (Bill) 8/21/2002 1:39:00 PM

II
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Here is a website you may want to check out. It's the only
one with NA archives that I have ever found. Take it easy
& God bless!

www.mwbr.net/narchive

Just Love,
Barefoot Bill

-----Original Message-----

From: carloffairlawn [mailto:carloffairlawn@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 20, 2002 11:07 PM
To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com
Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Do we know the history of other 12 step off
shoots

My name is Carl and I am trying to bring a little of the BBIA
activity into my other fellowship. I was wondering if we know the
history of the meetings like GA, OA, NA etc. Particularly which were
first and the count on how these offshoots grew.

Anyone got any information. I would think that this should follow
the requests for using the AA 12 and 12 from the groups with some
minor deviations.

Thank you for the help.

Kind Regards,

Carl

II
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+++Message 475. N.Y. Intergroup's 1st Meeting List
(1946)
From: Lash, William (Bill) 8/22/2002 8:09:00 AM

II
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NEW YORK INTERGROUP'S

FIRST MEETING LIST

1946

SCHEDULE OF A.A. MEETINGS

New York City and vicinity

Group Address Type of Meeting Time

SUNDAY Manhattan 405 West 41st Street, N.Y.C. Beginners (Open) 3:00PM

SUNDAY Manhattan 405 West 41st Street, N.Y.C. Open 8:30PM

SUNDAY South Shore Girl Scout Bldg., 3 Park Avenue,
Baldwin, L.I. Open 8:30PM

SUNDAY New Rochelle Y.M.C.A. Division St. & Burling Ln. Open 8:15PM

MONDAY Manhattan 405 West 41st Street, N.Y.C. Discussion Group 8:30PM

MONDAY Forest Hills Forest Hills Inn (8th Ave. Sub.) Open 8:30PM

MONDAY Mineola New Court House, Old Country Rd.

Mineola Open 8:30PM

MONDAY Mt. Vernon Women's Club, 110 Crary Ave. Open 8:30PM

TUESDAY Manhattan 405 West 41st Street, N.Y.C. Open 8:30PM

TUESDAY Yonkers Y.W.C.A., 87 So. Broadway Closed 8:30PM

WEDNESDAY Manhattan 17 East 42nd St., Rm. 407, N.Y.C. Closed 8:30PM

WEDNESDAY Jackson Heights Republican Club,

3760 82nd St., 3rd Floor Open 8:30PM

WEDNESDAY Brooklyn St. George Hotel Closed 8:30PM

WEDNESDAY Bronx 2500 Marian Avenue Open 8:30PM

WEDNESDAY White Plains Republican Club,

Martine & Mamaroneck Avenue Open 8:30PM

WEDNESDAY Staten Island S.I. Inst. Of Arts & Science Bldg.

St. George, S.I. Open 8:30PM

WEDNESDAY Seaman's 334 ½ West 24th Street, N.Y.C. Closed 8:30PM

WEDNESDAY North Shore 75 Plandome Rd., Manhasset, L.I. Open 8:30PM

THURSDAY Manhattan 405 West 41st Street, N.Y.C. Closed (Beginners) 7:45PM

THURSDAY Manhattan 405 West 41st Street, N.Y.C. Closed (Regular) 8:30PM

THURSDAY Mt. Vernon W.M.C.A., 20 - 2nd Avenue Closed (Regular) 8:30PM

THURSDAY Flushing Good Citizens League,

Sanford Avenue & Union St. Open 8:30PM

THURSDAY South Shore Girl Scout Bldg., 3 Park Avenue,

Baldwin, L.I. Closed 8:30PM

FRIDAY Manhattan 405 West 41st Street, N.Y.C. Discussion (Open) 8:30PM

FRIDAY Yonkers Y.W.C.A., 87 So. Broadway Open 8:30PM

FRIDAY Seaman's 334 ½ West 24th Street, N.Y.C. Open 8:30PM

FRIDAY Greenwich, Conn. Bruce Museum

(Near N.Y.N.H. & H.R.R. Stat.) Open 8:30PM

FRIDAY Brooklyn St. George Hotel Open 8:30PM

FRIDAY Mineola New Court House, Old Country Rd.

Mineola Closed 8:30PM

SATURDAY Cosmopolitan Club 405 West 41st St., N.Y.C. Open House, Everybody

Welcome - `till Midnight

'God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage

to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Luncheons for A.A. members, friends and Guests:

Monday at 12:30, Restaurant at Fifth Avenue & 43rd Street 17 GROUPS, 29 MEETINGS

Tuesday at 12:30, the 400 Restaurant, 2 Park Ave., 26th Floor N.Y., Brooklyn, Bronx, Westchester,

Thursday at 12:15, St. George Hotel, Brooklyn Connecticut, Queens, Nassau

II
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+++Message 476. Pamphlet Advisory Actions
From: t 8/22/2002 3:46:00 PM

II
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much of the previous post came from this file -- has more info on pamphlets addressed by the Conference over the years.

Maybe this will give you info on dates and changes since 1951, and hints as to what may have already been around before the year of our first General Service Conference.

In reading what follows, recognize that these summaries were first condensed to fit into the original reference work. Now I have come along and done some further re editing, rephrasing, summarizing of them. I have tried to accurately represent them, but what you have is at best a secondary source of the information. If you have questions, please consult the noted source, the Conference report for a particular year, or even GSO.

In my mind, we have books and pamphlets. In GSO's mind we have books, booklets, notebooks, folders, pamphlets, service material and mimeos. Possibly even more categories. What I include references for here are things that I have seen on local groups' pamphlet shelf, irrespective of what the official designation

for
them are.

I have also included a few items which were more general decisions which had
an
impact on our pamphlets.

Pamphlets History -
as reflected in Conference Actions

Extracted from:
"A Summary:
Advisory Actions of the General Service Conference
of Alcoholics Anonymous 1951-2000" (M-39)

1951

It was recommended by the Conference Agenda Committee that (pg 4):
-this Conference feels that in future years, AA textbook literature should
have
Conference approval. (Prior to the vote on this subject, it was pointed out
that
adoption of this suggestion would not preclude the continued issuance of
various
printed documents by non Foundation sources. No desire to review, edit, or
sensor non Foundation material was implied. The objective was to provide in
the
future a means of distinguishing Foundation literature from that issued
locally
or by non AA interests.)

1953

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 50):
- a new pamphlet for young alcoholics be prepared.
- also a revision of "Medicine Looks at AA".
- a supplement for the "Third Legacy" pamphlet be introduced.

1954

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 50):
- "Your Third Legacy" and "Your Role in General Service Conference" be
combined.
- the two pamphlets "Structure and Services of AA" and "Your General Service"
be
combined.

1956

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 50-1):

- a folder on the General Service Rep plan based on an extract from "Third Legacy Manual" (now called the "AA Service Manual") be prepared.
- an instructive folder "Is AA For You" priced at \$.05 be prepared.
- a new version of "Your Role in the General Service Conference" be prepared.
- Consideration be given to possibility of material for older members.
- a group AA "Exchange Bulletin" (now "Box 4-5-9") be instituted.

1959

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 51):

- a new pamphlet for inmate alcoholics.
- preparation of a pamphlet for clergy.
- considered a recommendation for brief folder on "Cooperation but Not Affiliation" with outside agencies, suggested that this be handled as a Grapevine article and reprinted and made available to members and outside agencies by GSO.

1960

It was recommended by the Conference Public Information (PI) Committee that (pg 61):

- a report in question and answer form was prepared and approved by the General Service Conference. It was then referred to the Literature Committee with the suggestion that this fact file containing a sharing of experience on A A's relation with outside organizations be published as a pamphlet. (This material was incorporated in revision of the pamphlet "Cooperation But Not Affiliation" in 1962.)

1962

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 51):

- an introductory comic strip type pamphlet be explored further by GSO.
- a pamphlet for social workers was discussed and recommended this be given further study by GSO.

1963

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 51):

- "Partners", when revised be entitled "The Group Handbook" with subtitle "How the AA Group Starts and Grows".

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 61):

- the committee approved a question and answer section to be included in the pamphlet "Cooperation but not affiliation," clarifying AA's lack of formal relationship to retreats.

1964

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 51):

- a pamphlet "AA in Hospitals" similar to "AA in Prisons" be prepared.

1965

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 51):

- a new GSR pamphlet be prepared following the suggestions outlined by the GSB Literature Committee.
- the pamphlet "AA and the Community" be prepared with emphasis on what AA cannot do.

1966

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 51):

- idea of cartoon format for AA literature be further explored & developed to reach alcoholics unable to read well or at all.
- a "Guide to Leading Newcomer Meetings" be prepared as soon as possible.

It was recommended by the Conference Report and Charter Committee that (pgs. 22):

- when the summary of all previous Conference Advisory Actions, now mimeographed and sent yearly to all Conference members should include only the actions on the first 15 Conference's (1951-1965), and should be a chapter in the new "Third Legacy Manual" (now the "AA Service Manual) when it is written. Then only the most recent actions will have to be compiled and distributed annually and all readers of the manual can see what actions the Conference took in its first formative years.

1967

the Conference Literature Committee (pg 51-2):

- reported that "The AA Way of Life" was greatly anticipated.
- noted enthusiastic reception of comic book pamphlet "What Happened to Joe".
- the possibility of translating "What Happened to Joe" into Spanish.
- expressed interest in upcoming revisions of "AA for the Woman", "Young People in AA", and "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship".
- ask permission of Grapevine to reprint Bill's article "Problems Other Than Alcohol" for use as a pamphlet.

1968

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 52):

- brief mimeo service material (not Guidelines format) be prepared to provide listing of source material - Conference approved literature as an aid to closed meeting discussions.
- the pamphlet "The AA Group" be brought to the attention of new group officers as they rotate.

It was recommended by the Conference Cooperation with the Professional Community

(CPC) Committee that (pg 32):

-the committee approved "Suggestions for Improving AA's Relation the Medical Profession and the Community" and recommended that it be made available to all AA groups.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 62):

- the committee reviewed and approved the pamphlet "The Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous," with minor changes.

1969

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 52):

- material illustrating the GSO and the history of AA in cartoon style be considered.

1970

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 52):

- occasionally group discussion center around Conference-approved pamphlets such

as "Sponsorship", "Is AA for You?", "This is AA" or any of the others that would

be suitable for such discussion.

- The Grapevine reprints of Bill's articles "Problems Other Than Alcohol" and "Why Alcoholics Anonymous is Anonymous" be considered by AAWS.

- the suggestion from the 1969 Conference Literature Committee re: cartoon style

booklet illustrating history of AA and service activities of GSO be pursued and

the history be confined to early years of GSO.

- "A Clergyman Looks at AA" be considered for revision.

1971

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 52):

- the "AA and the Armed Services" pamphlet in preparation be directed toward the

alcoholic in the armed services rather than the higher echelon. That stories of

armed services experiences be forwarded to the committee secretary.

The Conference Report and Charter Committee stated that (pg 22):

- the summary of the Ask-It Basket questions and answers in its present form is

an important and valuable reference aid and suggested the following to make this

material even more useful:

A. Date the current summary and date each additional entry hereafter, and provide a cover index for easier research.

B. suggests this material be made available to the general Fellowship, perhaps

in the form of a handbook, as a salable item to all groups, with particular attention given to GSR and committee members for distribution.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 62):

- "A Student's Guide To Alcoholics Anonymous" (suggested by the 1970 Conference) be accepted for publication with minor revision.

1972

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 52):

- the Group Inventory material submitted to the committee be recommended as possible service material.
- a Cartoon leaflet on service responsibilities be considered by AAWS.

It was recommended by the Conference Report and Charter Committee that (pg 22-3):

- the Literature Committee consider combining the summaries of the Ask-It Basket and the advisory actions into a single loose leaf binder to be offered, as such, to groups and members as a salable item.
- any future changes to be considered in the Conference Charter or "The AA Service Manual" be brought to the attention of the committee's chairman through the secretary with the sharing of this information before it is finally adopted.

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 32):

- the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional ... " be approved with minor editorial changes.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 62):

- the pamphlet "A Brief Guide To AA" (formally "A Student's Guide To AA") be approved.

1973

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 52):

- the words 'sometimes heavily' be deleted from question 5 in pamphlet "Is AA For You?".
- the preparation of an illustrated or cartoon style "Young People and AA" pamphlet be explored.

1974

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 52):

- the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" be reviewed and rewritten to include Twelfth Step calls & sponsorship, with a new suggested title "Twelfth

Step Calls and Sponsorship".

- in memory of AA's co founders, the last talk of each be prepared in pamphlet form.
- the Grapevine reprints "Why Alcoholics Anonymous is Anonymous", "Let's Be Friendly With Our Friends", and "Problems Other than Alcohol" be prepared in standard pamphlet format.
- the Literature Committee explore the need for a pamphlet on taking the Fourth and Fifth Steps. (see 1979 & 1985 below)

1975

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 52-3):

- the original "Is AA for You?" pamphlet be dropped and the simplified version be used.
- "The Alcoholic Husband" and "The Alcoholic Wife" be combined and called "The Alcoholic Mate" or another appropriate title.
- the reprints "Why Alcoholics Anonymous is Anonymous", "Our Critics Can Be Our Benefactors", and "AA as a Community Resource" be dropped.
- an illustrated pamphlet like "What Happened to Joe" and "It Happened to Alice" directed to teenage and pre teen alcoholics be prepared.
- two teenage stories be added to the pamphlet "Young People and AA".

It was recommended by the Conference Report and Charter Committee that (pg 23):

- In order to familiarize AA's (at group level) with the Twelve Concepts, the Trustees Literature Committee consider publishing the Twelve Concepts in pamphlet form similar to "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated".

1976

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 53):

- the pamphlet "So You Think You're Different" be renamed "Do You Think You Are Different?". That the agnostic story "My Name is Jan" be added, and the Spanish story "My Name is Maria" be deleted.
- the new title of the combined pamphlets "The Alcoholic Husband" and "The Alcoholic Wife" be "Is there an Alcoholic in Your Life" with subtitle "AA's Message of Hope".
- the new title of the teenage cartoon pamphlet be "Teenagers and AA".
- action on pamphlets directed to special groups of alcoholics be deferred until after publication of "Do You Think You're Different?".

1977

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 53):

- a story be added to the pamphlet "Do You Think You're Different?" under the

title "My name is ____ and I am an alcoholic (with a language barrier)", and that the emphasis in the story be on feeling the barrier rather than on the particular language.

- the proposal on "Living Sober Longer" not be pursued further as there is insufficient need for such a pamphlet.
- suggested that AA groups be discouraged from selling literature not distributed by GSO and the Grapevine.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 63):

- the AA memberships survey be conducted in June 1977 with the cooperation of the area delegate.
- GSO prepare a one sheet flyer about AA. In addition to distributing the flyer to local P I Committees, students, and civic groups, it would be helpful to distribute it to general service representatives and group secretaries.

1978

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 53):

- neither a story about someone with a language barrier nor a story about a physician be added to the pamphlet "Do You Think You're Different?".
- no changes be made to the pamphlet "Is There an Alcoholic in Your Life?" as there is no need for clarification.

It was recommended by the Conference Policy and Admissions Committee (Conference Policy) that (pg 15):

- talks made by Bill and Bern Smith, beginning with the first General Service Conference in 1951, be circulated to the Conference and Trustees Literature Committee so that consideration could be given to making this material available to the fellowship in printed form.

It was recommended by the Correctional Facilities Committee (CFC) that (pg 36):

- the manuscript of the new inmate pamphlet, "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell", be accepted pending mail-poll approval by the committee of the final edited version and illustrations; that production then proceed under the direction of the Trustees Committee on Correctional Facilities, with the word "hell" being omitted from the title; and that consideration be given to the use of color illustrations if financially feasible.

It was recommended by the Finance Committee that (pg 41):

- a new pamphlet on Finance, in at least two colors, be prepared and distributed to stress:
 - A. self support through the 60-30-10 Plan.
 - B. How the 60-30-10 Plan helps carry the AA message around the world and that the title of the pamphlet be "Self supporting? The 60-30-10 Plan."

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 63):

- the following items be added to the P I kit:

"AA At A Glance," "Is AA For You?," "This Is AA," and a one sheet piece describing the display and how to order it.

It was recommended by the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities that

(pg

68):

- the outline for revision of the pamphlet "AA In Treatment Facilities" be approved with suggestions to be incorporated in the pamphlet.

1979

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 53-4):

- the pamphlet "The AA Group" be expanded to include previous Conference Advisory Actions recommending the AA groups not be named after institutions in which they meet or for persons living or deceased, and that the word 'family' should not be part of the name of a group.

- Jo's story be substituted for Lisa's story in the pamphlet "Young People and AA" when next reprinted.

- the Twelve Steps of AA be included in the pamphlet "Too Young?" when next reprinted.

- the pamphlet for the older alcoholic be approved by the Conference with the title "Now It's Time to Start Living" and subtitle "Stories of Those Who Came to

AA in Their Later Years".

- no pamphlet or booklet concerning the Fourth Step be considered at this time because this information is in the books "Alcoholics Anonymous" and "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions".

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 33):

- "Problems Other Than Alcohol" be Conference-approved.

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 36):

- "Where Do I Go From Here?" and "AA at a Glance" be added to the institution's discount packages.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 64):

- the mail-poll approval given for the changes made in the pamphlets "Understanding Anonymity" and "Speaking At Non-AA Meetings" reflecting the 1978

Conference indication that most AA Members use first names only when speaking at

non AA meetings be reaffirmed.

- the pamphlet "Too Young?" be included in the PI Discount Package.

It was recommended by the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities that

(pg
68):

- the Conference approve the pamphlet "How And Why AA Members Carry The AA Message Into Treatment Centers" (formerly "AA In Hospitals") with revisions.

1980

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 54):

- change the title of the pamphlet "Now It's Time to Start Living" to "Time to Start Living".

- the pamphlet from Great Britain titled "A Newcomer Asks" be accepted.

- the following pamphlets, leaflets and flyers be approved: "Where Do I Go

From

Here?", "Your AA GSO", "GSR", "Self Supporting? The 60-30-10 Plan", "Inside AA",

"Carrying the Message Inside the Walls", "Circles of Love and Service", "AA in Your Community", "AA at a Glance", "The AA Member", "If You Are a Professional".

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 33):

-the pamphlet "How AA Members Cooperate" be revised to include information in regard to the functions of the area and local Committees of Cooperation with the Professional Community.

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 36):

- a new pamphlet aimed at the dually addicted inmate not be considered it at this time.

- the pamphlet "Do You Think You're Different?" be added to the Institutions Discount Package Y.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 64):

- the 1980 AA membership survey be done.

- when updating the pamphlet "Speaking At Non AA Meetings" pages 9 and 10 give short answers to questions instead of references to another pamphlet.

- "AA In Your Community" be discontinued since this pamphlet is so much like "A Brief Guide" and "AA At A Glance".

It was recommended by the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities that

(pg
68):

- it is not appropriate to send a specific letter to treatment facilities administrators at this time. However, GSO is encouraged to forward copies of the newly published "AA In Treatment Centers" pamphlet to all facility and administrators.

1981

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 54):

- the suggestion to publish a pamphlet for the homosexual alcoholic be tabled until the 1982 Conference to allow delegates to poll the group conscience from the groups.
- the suggestion to include information about meeting newcomers from treatment centers 'where they are' be added to "The AA Group" pamphlet.
- a subcommittee be formed to review existing pamphlets with an eye to which should be combined or dropped; their report to be given to the 1982 Conference.
- suggestion to include the Twelve Traditions in all pamphlets when feasible.

It was recommended by the Conference Report and Charter Committee that (pg 24):

- The "AA Service Manual" and "Twelve Concepts for World Service" be combined into one volume.

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 33):

- the leaflet "Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community" be reinstated as General Service Conference-approved literature and put back into distribution as soon as possible.

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 36):

- the pamphlet "Memo to Inmate Who May Be an Alcoholic" be continued, but that the recommendation be reviewed again by the Conference Committee on Correctional Facilities next year.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 64):

- the 1980 membership survey be accepted as reported and that the Trustees PI Committee and AAWS develop a pamphlet, tabletop display, and wall poster of survey results if feasible.
- the rewrite of the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity" now go into production.

1982

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 54):

- a draft of a pamphlet for the homosexual alcoholic be considered by next year's Conference.
- suggestion to seek Conference approval for "Problems Other Than Alcohol (Excerpts)" be approved.
- an index and illustrations be included in "The AA Group" pamphlet.

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 33):

- the draft of a pamphlet directed to the medical profession be approved with some minor changes to be made in the editing stage, with the title "AA as a Resource for the Medical Profession".

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 36):

- the following statement be added to the pamphlets "Memo to an Inmate" (page 43, inside box) and "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell" (page 25): "AA does not provide letters of reference to parole boards, lawyers, court officials."
- the pamphlet "Memo to and Inmate" continued to be published.
- the pamphlets "Memo to in Inmate", "Carrying the Message Inside the Walls" and "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell" be translated into Spanish due to the high Spanish population in prisons.

1983

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 54-5):

- distribution of the pamphlet "The AA Member and Drug Abuse" be continued until

it is revised for consideration by the 1984 Conference.

- the following changes be made in the pamphlets:

- a. "Is AA for You?" - Substitute the following words 'disease' for 'sick' and 'alcohol' for 'booze'. Question #4 should be changed to read "Have you had to have an eye opener on awakening?"
 - b. "This Is AA" - page 5 paragraph 1 should be changed to read "There are a number of self proclaimed atheists and agnostics among us".
 - c. "It Happened to Alice?" - should be brought up to date visually. On page 19 the word 'fun' should be put in quotes.
 - d. "What Happened to Joe?" - Should be brought up to date visually.
 - e. "Question and Answers on Sponsorship" - Consider changing the wording on page 15 paragraph 3; and page 13 paragraph 2. The wording should be clear in answering the question on page 13 paragraph 2: "Is a special approach needed for present day newcomers?"
 - f. The revised manuscript of "The AA Group" pamphlet not be approved at this time and returned for further revision.
- the 1983 draft of the pamphlet for the homosexual alcoholic be approved to Conference members so that the 1984 Conference may make an informed policy decision as to whether or not the Fellowship will publish and distribute a pamphlet for the homosexual alcoholic.

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 36):

- "It Sure Beats Sitting In The Cell" and "Carrying the Message Inside the Walls" be translated into Spanish.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 64):

- a membership survey be undertaken in 1983. The survey be conducted on a random basis by area.

1984

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 55):

- the words 'queers' (p. 140) in "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions" not be

changed, recognizing the Fellowship feeling that Bill Wilson's textbook writing

be retained as originally published.

- "The AA Member - Medications and Other Drugs" be approved with some revision to replace "The AA Member and Drug Abuse".

- the General Service Conference not develop a pamphlet for the homosexual alcoholic, as the need is currently addressed in "Do You Think You're Different?".

- "The AA Group" pamphlet not be illustrated as artwork is not necessary.

- adding an index to "The AA Group" pamphlet is not necessary.

- "The AA Group" pamphlet continue to be distributed with current content generally intact as a major revision is not necessary.

- the Literature Committee review "The AA Group" pamphlet with an eye to underscoring the importance of an informed group conscience.

- the text of the pamphlet "The AA Group" referring to "What's the difference between a 'meeting' and a 'group'?" (p. 32-3) be retained as the text reflects the spirit of local autonomy.

- a "Twelve Concepts Illustrated" pamphlet be developed for consideration by the 1985 Conference.

- a pamphlet or manual for AA central offices / intergroups not be developed.

- updated illustrations for "What Happened to Joe" and "It Happened to Alice" be approved.

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 36):

- the following lines from "The AA Group" pamphlet be added to page 12 of the "AA in Prisons" pamphlet:

"In a AA groups, people who get the jobs done are called officers, but our second tradition reminds us, our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern"

"Officers are usually chosen by the group for limited terms of service."

"The jobs they do may have titles. But titles in AA do not bring authority or honor; they describe services and responsibility."

"They are ways of carrying the message. They are forms of Twelve Step work AA Members do, primarily to help themselves to recover."

It was recommended by the Finance Committee that (pg 42):

- a change be made in the pamphlet titled "Supporting The AA Support System" as

follows. Where it now reads, "Bequests in wills: acceptable only from AA's and only in the year of the AA's death. The limit is \$500. " to read, "Bequests in wills: acceptable only from AA's and only on a one time basis and not in perpetuity. The limit is \$500".

It was recommended by the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities that

(pg 69):

- the 'Guidelines' for Correctional and Treatment Facilities Committees be separated.

1985

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 55):

- preparation of a brochure or pamphlet of a condensed version of the Twelve Concepts be tabled until the 1986 Conference pending development of the

"Twelve

Concepts Illustrated".

- a condensed version of the Twelve Concepts would be especially valuable to service workers, the manuscript be reproduced and distributed by GSO as service material.

- there is no need to add reference to the Big Book as our basic recovery source

in all pamphlets or other literature.

- previous Conference actions regarding the Fourth and Fifth Step study guides be reaffirmed -- there is no need for these as current literature adequately covers these matters.

- suggested editorial revisions to "Your AA GSO" pamphlet approved:

a. ARCHIVES - replace the question "When did our group start?" with "When did AA start in your area?" (that first question is now handled in our Records Department.)

b. WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR GSO? - under "share your experience" - line three - rewrite "AA's help more alcoholics" to read "AA's carry our message."

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 33):

the following be inserted in the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional" and "How AA Members Cooperate":

- The only requirement for membership in AA is a desire to stop drinking. If a person is not sure about this point, then he or she is most welcome to attend an

open AA meeting. If the person is sure that drinking is not his or her problem,

then he or she may wish to seek help elsewhere.

-the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional" be revised and that a draft of the revision of that pamphlet be returned to the 1986 Conference Committee on CPC for consideration.

It was recommended by the Finance Committee that (pg 42):

- A cartoon treatment be approved illustrating need for greater group participation and how the individual contributess at the group level helps in carrying the message worldwide.

1986

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 55-6):

- approval of the manuscript and illustrations for the pamphlet "The Twelve Concepts For World Services Illustrated".

- the Committee on Literature complete the updating of the pamphlet "Too Young?" for presentation to the 1987 Conference.
- the following pamphlets be updated if possible and presented to the 1987 Conference: "Young People and AA", "AA and the Armed Forces".
- AAWS editorial staff continue to degenderize AA literature with the exception of Bill W's writings as the items are reprinted.
- in the "AA Group" pamphlet, in the section "What Do Treasurers Do", the text relating to the 60-30-10 Plan be reworded to reflect that this suggested plan for groups to divide contributions to AA service entities is only applicable in some areas and reference be made to the finance pamphlet "Supporting the AA Support System".
- the updated draft of "AA for the Woman" be accepted with the exception of the story 'I Hated Monday Mornings...' and the production proceed under the direction of the Literature Committee.

It was recommended by the Conference Agenda Committee that (pg 9):

- one of the presentations/discussion topics for the 1987 Conference be "Publishing -Too Much?"

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 34):

- in the pamphlet "A Clergyman Asks About Alcoholics Anonymous" in the fifth paragraph on page 8, the sentence which reads "newcomers are encouraged to attend one or more meetings a week" be changed to "newcomers are encouraged to attend meetings as frequently as possible."
- The new "If You Are a Professional" pamphlet, with some design suggestions and editorial changes in the manuscript, be approved.

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 37):

- the outline of the rewrite of the pamphlet "Memo To In Inmate Who May Be An Alcoholic" be completed for approval at the 1987 Conference.

It was recommended by the Finance Committee that (pg 42):

- the Finance cartoon flyer be changed in the third panel to list: Group expenses, district expenses, intergroup or central office, area committee and General Service Office, eliminating prudent reserve, numerals one to five, and the words "part of the remainder to" and "part to"; and that the 1957 second panel be changed to eliminate the numeral 5 and the words "part to."
- two changes were made to "Supporting The AA Support System" flyer.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 65):

- the 1986 membership survey be taken in the same manner as the 1983 survey.

It was recommended by the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities that (pg 69):

- the pamphlet "AA in Treatment Centers" be revised.
- the title of the pamphlet "AA In Treatment Centers" be changed to "AA In Treatment Facilities". It was also recommended that the word "facilities" replace the word "centers" throughout the body of the pamphlet.

1987

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 56):

- the following statement regarding AA's primary purpose be available as an AA service piece: "THIS IS A CLOSED MEETING OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS" (the 'blue cards' we have today, opposite side is read for OPEN meetings).
- the updated manuscript for "Too Young" be approved.
- a pamphlet for the Native North American be prepared and brought back to the 1988 Conference.
- following changes be made to "The AA Group" pamphlet:
 - page 25, "... the stigma attached by ignorant people to our illness ..." be changed to "... the stigma attached by people ignorant to our illness ...".
 - page 30, "Most of us do not want to cater to the cruel stigma unjustly attached by ignorant people ..." to "Most of us do not want to cater to the cruel stigma unjustly attached by people ignorant of our illness ...".
 - page 33, "On the other hand, specialized groups -- men's, women's, gays' ..." changed to "On the other hand, specialized gatherings -- men's, women's, gays' ...".
 - page 34, referring to group inventories- "(If your group tries an inventory please let GSO know the results)" to "(Please share with GSO those benefits of your group's inventory which might be of help to other groups)".
 - page 304 from "As Bill Sees It" be added to affirm AA's purpose as stated by our co founder.
- in the pamphlet "44 Questions" page 19 be changed to read "Most members arrange to attend meetings as frequently as possible" rather than "Most members arrange to attend meetings at least once a week".

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 34):

- The title of the pamphlet "A Clergyman Asks" be changed to "The Clergy Asks" when it comes up for reprint.

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 37):

- the finalized draft of the pamphlet "Memo To In Inmate Who May Be An Alcoholic" be accepted for distribution to the Fellowship as presented, with the following addition to page 29 under "What A AA Does Not Do": No. 14 furnish initial motivation for alcoholics to recover."
- a recommendation to develop a simplified "Twelve Steps Illustrated" pamphlet to carry the message to the illiterate inmate was not accepted by the

Conference.

It was recommended by the Finance Committee that (pg 42):

- two changes be made to "Supporting The A Support System". One involved changing "the group expenses" to bold face type on page one. The second involved changing the percentages from 40% to GSO and 60% to area, to 30% to GSO, 30% to area and 40% to district.

It was recommended by the Conference Grapevine Committee that (pg 47):

- no changes or additions be made to the Preamble.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 65):

- the graphics in the flyer "A Message To Teenagers" be updated with the new graphics from "Too Young?"

1988

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 57):

- the revision of the manuscript of "AA in the Armed Services" be accepted with the following changes - the Marine story from the current pamphlet be included in the revised pamphlet + the manuscript be returned for editing of Charles' story to include consideration of references to drug addiction.
- the copy 'The Home Group' be accepted for inclusion in "The AA Group" pamphlet with the following stipulations: that the third paragraph page two be underlined 'Obviously as with all group conscience matters each AA member has one vote and this ideally would be through their Home Group.' That on page three paragraph three line two, '... and greeting newcomers at the door' be added. That where repetition of information occurs in "The AA Group" pamphlet it be deleted.
- 'Specialized gatherings' found on page 33 of "The AA Group" pamphlet be changed to 'specialized gatherings'.
- the article in April/May issue of "Box 4-5-9" entitled "Service Sponsorship: A Vital Stepping Stone to Service and Sobriety" be prepared as a service piece.
- the manuscript for the Native North American not be approved as presented but that this manuscript be returned for editing to include consideration of references to drug addiction, chemical dependency, junkie and clean and then upon completion of editing be approved for publication.
- a more simplified draft of the easy to read illustrated pamphlet "Is AA for You?" be prepared for consideration by the 1989 Conference.
- "This is AA" and "44 Questions" as illustrated flyers not be published at this time.

- a simplified easy to read illustrated "Twelve Steps" pamphlet be prepared for consideration by the 1989 Conference.
- the Primary Purpose Card continue as a service piece.
- reaffirmed that 'Any factual or statistical information may be updated whenever practical without having to go through the process of Conference Action, ie. whenever inventory runs low, a new survey is completed, etc. In addition, minor copy cuts to make room for new material added to a publication may be made when necessary.' And further affirmed, 'That any other changes made in the substance of the Conference-approved literature shall be through the Conference process.'
- the revised pamphlet "Young People in AA" be approved with one revision that all personal references be removed from page 51 line 3.
- the Self-support flyer "Your DCM" be Conference-approved.
- a draft of a pamphlet for the gay/lesbian alcoholic be prepared and reviewed by the 1989 Conference.

It was recommended by the Conference Agenda Committee that (pg 9):

-one of the presentation/discussion topics for the 1989 Conference be:

Back to Basics:

The group in the structure

Sponsorship in recovery in service

AA literature - tool or mandate.

It was recommended by the Conference Report and Charter Committee that (pg 27):

- The letter "S" the used as a prefix for the first set of page numbers in "The AA Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service", so as to differentiate between the two sets of page numbers.

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 37):

- the pamphlet "AA In Prisons" be replaced with two separate revisions of the material: (1) an easy to read pamphlet for inmates and outside AA's interested in starting an AA groups in correctional facilities, which will explain how inside groups are formed and how they function. (2) a brief pamphlet or leaflet to provide information about AA to administrators of correctional facilities.

It was recommended by the Finance Committee that (pg 43):

- subject to editorial review, the Self Support Committee's suggested revisions to the "Supporting the AA Support System" pamphlet be approved what the provision that:
 - A. Titles be indicated for the addresses of Districts, Intergroup/Central Offices, Area Committees, and GSO.
 - B. A list of services provided to the Fellowship be included under the "Why"

section.

C. The message of the last panel of the cartoon supplement be incorporated.

- the cartoon supplement of the pamphlet "Supporting the AA support system" be discontinued immediately.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 65):

- the word "fight" be changed to the words "deal with" in item six under "What AA Does Not Do" in the pamphlet "A Brief Guide To Alcoholics Anonymous."

1989

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 57-8):

- work continue on an easy to read illustrated Twelve Steps pamphlet suitable for people with limited reading skills.

- an illustrated easy to read manuscript entitled "Is AA for Me?" be approved.

- the pamphlet "The AA Group" be thoroughly revised to address the many issues and concerns related to AA groups which come before the committee year after year such as: difference between a group and a meeting, meeting formats, how to

obtain a group conscience, the duties of trusted servants and their alternates,

and others as described in an outline of contents submitted by the Literature Committee.

- the manuscript for a pamphlet for gay and lesbian alcoholics be approved with

specific editorial changes which will be reviewed by the Conference Literature Committee before publication, and that the title be "AA and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic".

- a floor action recommended that the Trustees Literature Committee and the Conference Literature Committee consider the paragraph containing the 6-point definition in "The AA Group" pamphlet and bring a report and recommendation regarding this back to the 1991 General Service Conference.

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 34):

- the revised text of the pamphlet "AA and Occupational Alcoholism Programs" be

approved with minor changes.

- The title of the pamphlet "AA and Occupational Alcoholism Programs" be changed

to "AA and Employee Assistance Programs."

- the revised text of the pamphlet "The Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous" be placed on the agenda for the 1990 General Service Conference CPC Committee.

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 37):

- the flyer "Carrying The Message Inside The Walls" be replaced with the revised

version entitled "Carrying The Message Into Correctional Facilities."

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 66):

- the 1989 membership survey be conducted on a random basis, by area; and that we use the same questionnaire used in the 1986 survey.

1990

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 58):

- the revised "The AA Group" pamphlet be approved with the following change:

the

first sentence in the section on Group Inventory be changed to read "Many groups

periodically hold a group inventory meeting to evaluate how well they are fulfilling their primary purpose to help alcoholics recover through AA's suggested Twelve Steps of recovery".

- the text and illustration for the proposed "Twelve Steps Illustrated"

pamphlet

be referred to the Trustees Literature Committee for rewriting of the easy to read text with the recommendation that this language be further simplified and shortened into simple statements that would direct attention to the illustrations without attempting to rewrite the Steps; and bring the text back to the 1991 Conference for approval.

- the proposal for a pamphlet on the spiritual aspects of AA not be approved because there is not sufficient need at this time.

- the Trustees Literature Committee and the Conference Literature Committee consider the paragraph containing the 6-point definition in "The AA Group" pamphlet and bring a report and recommendation regarding this back to the 1991 Conference.

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 34):

- the revised pamphlet "Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous"

be

published with minor changes, once the present supply of the old pamphlet is exhausted.

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 37):

- the Trustees Literature Committee consider adding a story of a young person who entered AA while in prison to the pamphlet "Young People And AA", because of an expressed need for Correctional Facility materials addressed to young people.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 66):

- "The AA Membership Survey" pamphlet, the display and the poster be updated

to

reflect the findings from the 1989 membership survey.

It was recommended by the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities that

(pg

70):

- there be a pamphlet on "Bridging The Gap" developed by the Trustees

Treatment

Facilities Committee in conjunction with the Conference Treatment Facilities Committee.

1991

It was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 58):

- the 11 minor changes suggested by the Trustees Literature Committee and revised by this committee be included at the next printing "The AA Group" pamphlet, with the exception of insert #2 containing the six definitions of an AA group, which will be deleted.
- the proposed "Twelve Steps Illustrated" pamphlet be published in response to an expressed need for similar literature.
- a story of a young person who entered AA while in prison be added to the "Young People and AA" pamphlet.
- at the next printing of the "Twelve Concepts Illustrated" pamphlet, the line 'it is significant that the Twelve Concepts for World Service is the only piece of Conference-approved literature that carries a personal by-line by Bill W.' be deleted, as this statement is no longer accurate.
- the questionnaires in 7 Conference-approved pamphlets not be standardized, as the questions in each are targeted to specific populations.

It was recommended by the Conference Report and Charter Committee that (pg 28):

- The 6-point description of an AA Group in the "AA Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service" be deleted, and replaced by the Long Form of Tradition Three and a section of Warranty Six, Concept Twelve which aptly describes what an AA Group is.

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 34):

- The Preamble, the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions be added to the following pamphlets: "AA and Employee Assistance Programs," "AA as a Resource for the Medical Profession" and "If You Are a Professional," when pamphlets are reprinted.

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 37):

- the Trustees CFC Committee produce a 60 minute audiotape of selected stories from the booklet "AA In Prison: Inmate To Inmate", including culturally varied voices and some female stories, in response to an expressed need for audio visual material.

It was recommended by the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities that (pg 70):

- the manuscript prepared by the Trustees Committee On Treatment Facilities

for
a pamphlet on bridging the gap be approved, because of the need to encourage
AA
Members to serve as temporary contacts to help the alcoholic in treatment make
the transition into AA.
- once supplies are depleted, the pamphlet "AA In Treatment Facilities" be
revised to include the information about "Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous" and
other
Conference-approved videos/films relevant to treatment.

1992

It was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 58-9):
- the story of 'John' (a young person who entered AA while in prison) be added
to the pamphlet "Young people and AA" per the 1991 Conference Action.
- the 6-point definition of an AA group be removed from all literature and
replaced by the long form of Tradition Three and a section of Warranty Six,
Concept Twelve.

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 34-5):
- the revised pamphlet "AA as a Resource for the Health Care Professional" be
approved, replacing "AA as a Resource for the Medical Profession" because of
the
need to include information for all health-care professionals.
- The following changes be made in the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional"
when
reprinted:
A. Delete the word self-help in two places
B. change the second sentence, third paragraph on page 5 to read
"Consequently,
while we welcome the opportunity to share our principles and methods with
others, only they can provide the essential ingredient for success: their
common
bond."

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 38):
- the following paragraphs be included in the pamphlets "A Message to
Correctional Facilities Administrators" and "AA in Correctional Facilities"
when
reprinted:
"Many local AA Service committees will, upon request, provide informational
presentations for your organization. Sessions can be tailored to meet your
needs. A typical agenda might include one or several AA films and a
presentation
by one or more AA members on "What AA Is And What It Is Not".
"Please check your local telephone directories or newspaper for the number of
Alcoholics Anonymous."

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 67):

- the 1992 Membership Survey Questionnaire be changed as follows: (six changes are listed).

It was recommended by the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities that

(pg

70):

- the 6 points defining an AA Group in the pamphlet "AA In Treatment Facilities"

be deleted, and that the definition of a group in the pamphlet be consistent with the definition of a group in the "AA Group" pamphlet.

- the following sentence of the third paragraph on page one of the "Bridging The

Gap" pamphlet be removed from all subsequent printings as the memberships survey

is not specifically related to the temporary contact Program: "Responses to questions in the most recent memberships survey indicate that approximately 50%

of those coming to AA for the first time leave within three months."

- the words "temporary sponsor" and "sponsorship" on pages 8 and 13 of the "AA In Treatment Facilities" pamphlet be replaced with the words "temporary contacts" when the current supply is depleted, to reflect current AA terminology.

1993

It was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 59):

- AAWS produce an anonymity display card with the following verbiage:

"anonymity

is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions. Please respect this and treat

in confidence who you see and what you hear."

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 35):

- at the next printing of the pamphlet "Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community"

the following revisions be made:

A. changing the heading "AA's Position in the Field of Alcoholism" to "AA and Alcoholism."

B. delete the subheading "How AA Views Alcoholism" and change "Alcoholism is, in

our opinion..." to "From the beginning, many AA members have come to believe alcoholism is a progressive illness - spiritual and emotional (or mental), as well as physical."

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 67):

- the results contained in the final draft of the 1992 membership survey be applied to update the survey pamphlet, poster and display.

1994

It was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 59-60):

- District Meetings be added to the inverted triangle in "The Twelve Concepts of World Service Illustrated" pamphlet after the current inventory is depleted.
- the following changes be made in the "The GSR" pamphlet. (10 changes in wording).
 - the entire sentence 'mood changing medications - including uppers, sedatives, and anti-depressants are usually a threat to sobriety and you may want to learn more about this' be deleted from page 18 in the pamphlet "Is There an Alcoholic in Your Life?" and that the next sentence in the paragraph, 'the pamphlet the "AA Member - Medication and Other Drugs" discusses the problem in detail.' Be moved to the end of the same paragraph on page 19.
 - the text of material on 'Service Sponsorship' submitted by the Trustees Literature Committee be included in the pamphlet "Question and Answers on Sponsorship" when current inventory is depleted.
 - the circle and triangle logo be discontinued on all Conference-approved literature.
 - the words 'this is a general service Conference-approved literature' be displayed on the front cover all AA Conference-approved literature whenever possible.

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 35):

- the changes to "How a AA Members Cooperate with Other Community Efforts to Help Alcoholics", prepared by the Trustees CPC Committee, be approved with additional changes. The pamphlets title be changed to "How AA Members Cooperate with Professionals" with the subheading "Cooperation, But Not affiliation."

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 38):

- changes in the pamphlets "AA In Correctional Facilities" and "A Message To Correctional Facility Administrators" from a report of the Trustees Committee On Correctional Facilities be accepted and forwarded to publications for the next printing of these pamphlets.

It was recommended by the Finance Committee that (pg 44):

- the first draft of the new Self-Support pamphlet not be approved and that the Trustees Finance Committee work with the Publishing Department to develop several comprehensive layouts including the long form of the Seventh Tradition, and definition of Prudent Reserve.

1995

It was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 60):

- Minor changes in the text of Tradition Three in a "Twelve Traditions Illustrated" pamphlet be implemented after the current inventory is depleted.
- Changes in in "The AA group" pamphlet be implemented after the current inventory is depleted.
- a video on ways that GSO serves the Fellowship be developed, with accompanying service pamphlet.

It was recommended by the Finance Committee that (pg 44):

- the draft of the pamphlet, "Self Support Where Money and Spirituality Mix," which satisfies the 1993 and 1994 Conference Advisory Actions, be accepted with editorial changes placing emphasis on the informed group conscious and on page 13, for contributions to AA service entities contact your district committee, area committee, local intergroup/central office.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 67):

- the Anonymity Statement Card, revised to include anonymity reminders regarding videotaping and full names on audiotapes be approved.
- the revised and reformatted membership survey questionnaire developed by the Trustees PI Committee in preparation for a 1996 memberships survey be approved with the addition of the following new categories - race, are you physically disabled?, and marital status.

1996

It was recommended by the Finance Committee that (pg 44):

- the pamphlet "Self Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" be revised to include only two pie charts.

It was recommended by the Conference Grapevine Committee that (pg 47):

- a manuscript be developed for a pamphlet providing basic information on the AA Grapevine magazine and its place in Alcoholics Anonymous and be brought to the 1997 Conference for approval.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 67):

- the 1996 membership survey be conducted by Area on a random basis as was done in the 1992 survey.

1997

It was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 60):

- the following material from the Sixth Warranty be added to the section 'What is an AA Group?' On page 15 "The AA Group" pamphlet.

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 35):

- the following statement regarding Singleness of Purpose be added to the CPC

pamphlets: "Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community", "AA and Employee Assistance

Programs", "AA as a Resource for the Health Care Professional", "How AA Members

Cooperate with Professionals", "If You Are a Professional", and "Members of the

Clergy Ask about Alcoholics Anonymous" under the title "Singleness of Purpose and Problems Other Than Alcohol" at the next printing:

"Alcoholism and drug addiction or often referred to as 'substance abuse' or 'chemical dependency'. Alcoholics and non-alcoholics are, therefore, sometimes introduced to AA and encouraged to attend a AA meetings. Anyone may attend an open AA meetings. But only those with a drinking problem may attend closed meetings or becoming AA Members. People with problems other than alcoholism are

eligible for AA membership only if they have a drinking problem".

- the following item be added or replaced under the title "What AA Does Not Do"

to the following pamphlets: "Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community", "If You Are a Professional", and "Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous"

at the next printing:

"AA does not: furnish an initial motivation for alcoholics to recover; solicit Members; engage in or sponsor research; keep attendance records or case histories; join 'councils' of social agencies; follow-up or try to control its members; make medical or psychological diagnoses or prognoses; provide drying out or nursing services, hospitalization, drug, or any medical or psychiatric treatment; offer religious services; engage in education about alcohol; provide

housing, food, clothing, jobs, money or any other welfare or social services; provide domestic or vocational counseling; accept any money for its services or

any contributions from non-AA sources; provide letters of reference to parole boards, lawyers, court officials, social agencies, employers, etc."

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 38):

- the name of the pamphlet, "A Message To Correctional Facilities Administrators" be changed to "A Message To Correctional Professionals" and that

the following two paragraphs from the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional" be included: "AA wants to work with you" and "What AA Does Not Do".

It was recommended by the Conference Grapevine Committee that (pg 47):

- the manuscript providing the basic information of the AA Grapevine magazine and its place in Alcoholics Anonymous be produced as a pamphlet.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 67):

- the membership survey pamphlet and the membership survey display be updated to

reflect the findings from the 1996 membership survey.

- the draft of the revised 1998 membership survey questionnaire be approved.

1998

It was recommended by the CPC Committee that (pg 36):

- the draft revision of the pamphlet to replace "AA and Employee Assistance Programs" be approved with the title "Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace?"

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 68):

- the 1998 membership survey be conducted by area on a random basis as was done

in the 1996 AA membership survey.

1999

It was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 60-1):

- a draft copy of a pamphlet directed to the Black/African American alcoholic be

developed and brought back to the 2000 Conference Literature Committee for review.

- the pamphlet "Time to Start Living" be replaced with the new pamphlet to include fewer stories, stories more reflective of the current older population and stories focused more on the recovery experience of the older member, as well

as having a new title and published in large print only.

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 38):

- in the pamphlet "It Sure Beats Sitting In a Cell", the first six paragraphs on

pages 18 and 19, under the heading "We Set Up AA Contacts" be replaced with the

changes selected by the committee.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 68):

- the membership survey pamphlet and the membership survey display be updated to

reflect the findings from the 1998 membership survey.

2000

It was recommended by the CFC Committee that (pg 38):

- the revision of the pamphlet to replace "It Sure Beats Sitting In The Cell" be

approved.

It was recommended by the Conference PI Committee that (pg 68):

- the 2001 memberships survey questionnaire be approved with the deletion of question #17 (regarding whether physical disabilities affect attendance or participation in meetings) since the responses to the question have been inconclusive in two previous surveys.

II
IIIIIIIIII

+++Message 477. revised Pamphlet History list
From: t 8/22/2002 3:44:00 PM

II
IIIIIIIIII

'AA Pamphlets'

Here's a list of 'AA pamphlets'. Most all are Conference-approved or GSO service materials. Remember, Conference-approved translates into 'no earlier than 1951 when the Conference was formed'. AA did have and use pamphlets before that time which were published by individuals, groups, the _Grapevine_, our various central offices, as well as by GSO in New York. Some of these are listed at the end in the Pre Conference and Out of Print section.

Older out of print pamphlets are often hard to locate and document. For these I have relied heavily on Advisory Actions of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous 1951-2000 (M-39) published by AAWS. This unfortunately yields only documentation on pre-1951 pamphlets which were later considered (revised, renamed, etc) by our yearly Conferences.

Current pamphlets I have listed, first by the date, followed by pamphlet name then GSO tracking number. The dates I use are the copyright dates taken from the pamphlets themselves, or when they were first mentioned in Advisory Actions Some list multiple copyright and or revision dates and I am listing them under the earliest date given. Older pamphlets, mentioned in Advisory Actions ..., I am listing under the earliest year of their mention. Some pamphlets have copyright notices but no date and these I list after those with known dates. In all the catagories I tried to note if they were reprinted from other sources, giving copyright dates and the original source, which isn't always the same as when GSO began reprinting them as 'AA pamphlets'.

I also include mention of pamphlets that were considered and dropped before they were distributed within the fellowship.

Additionally, I've included mention of a few items from Advisory Actions ... which were more general actions having an impact on our pamphlets.

There are some problems with this list:

A few pamphlets I have and can see their copyright dates, yet there is mention

of them by Advisory Actions ... at an earlier date! Perhaps, there may have been two different pamphlets with the same name (Is AA For You is one example of this) at different times or there may have been major revisions warranting a new copyright date. There is also a problem with **AA in Hospitals** (in 1979 renamed **How And Why AA Members Carry The AA Message Into Treatment Centers**, then in 1986 renamed **AA In Treatment Facilities**). The actual copy of my pamphlet lists the copyright as 1961, yet from Advisory Actions ... the conference first discussed the need for the pamphlet in 1964!?! I'll leave questions like that up to others to clarify. At this point, I am leaving them under the date of the copyright actually in the pamphlet, adding notes about mention at other times.

There may also be problems with some of the pamphlets names from Advisory Actions Some of their notes are clearly abbreviated names, unfortunately some of our pamphlets have very similar sounding names (the 'Clergy' pamphlets) and those references aren't always clear, at least to me. Some of the names in Advisory Actions ... also refer to 'working titles' which aren't always the same as the names used when the pamphlets were finally published. This is why some of the references below have question marks by them.

Then there are some problems with dates. Those in Advisory Actions ... are for the Conferences that dealt with the pamphlets, while copyright dates on the pamphlets are for when they are actually published. Sometimes there has been a lag time between the Conference approving the publishing of material and when it actually 'rolled off the presses'. Usually this represents only a years difference between approval and publication. It is especially noticable in the **Membership Surveys**. The other problem with dates are when the conference discusses and suggests new material.

Sometimes there has only been a years difference between this and actual publication, other times is has approached ten years.

Also, in my mind, we have books and pamphlets. In GSO's mind we have books, booklets, notebooks, folders, pamphlets, guidelines, memeos, flyers and service material. Possibly even more catagories. What I include references for here are things that I might see on local groups pamphlet shelf, irrespective of what the official designation for them are.

--

1941

Jack Alexander Article (P-12) (c.1941
by Saturday Evening Post, "reprinted since 1941 by special permission".) When first reprinted the pamphlet name was the same as the actual article, sometime later the pamphlet was renamed the Jack Alexander Article. (? when it gained

it's current Conference-approved status? Probably when it was renamed.)

1952

44 Questions (P-2) (see 1988)

1953

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg 50):

- also a revision of *Medicine Looks at AA*. (see *Pre Conference* section)

- a supplement for the *Third Legacy* pamphlet be introduced.

1954

Letter to a Woman Alcoholic (P-14) (Reprinted from _Good Housekeeping_, c. 1954)

the Conference Literature Committee recommended that:

- _Your Third Legacy_ and _Your Role in General Service Conference_ (see 1956) be combined.

- _Structure and Services of AA_ and _Your General Service_ be combined.

1955

AA Tradition--How it Developed (P-17) (see *Pre Conference* section)

1956

AA Fact File (M-24)

the Conference Literature Committee recommended that:

- a folder on the _General Service Rep plan_ based on an extract from Third Legacy Manual (renamed AA Service Manual) be prepared. (?see 1965, 1980 and *No Date* section?)

- an instructive folder _Is AA For You_ be prepared. (see 1970, 1973, 1975, 1978, 1988)

- a new version of _Your Role in the General Service Conference_ (see 1954) be prepared.

- a group _AA Exchange Bulletin_ (now _Box 4-5-9_) be instituted

1958

Problems Other Than Alcohol (F-8) (c. _Grapevine_, Feb 1958). (see 1970, 1974, 1979, 1982)

Let's Be Friendly With Our Friends (P-34) (c. _Grapevine_, March 1958) (see 1974)

1960

The Conference Public Information Committee that (pg. 61):

- a report in question and answer form was prepared and approved by the General Service Conference. It was then referred to the Literature Committee with the suggestion that this fact file containing a sharing of experience on A A's relation with outside organizations be published as a pamphlet. (This material was incorporated in a revision of the pamphlet _Cooperation But Not Affiliation_ in 1962.)

1961

AA in Treatment Centers (P-27) (?problem with dates here? - see 1964).

Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous (P-25) (?see 1970, 1986, 1987)

Memo to an Inmate who may be an Alcoholic (P-9)

1964

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 51):

- a pamphlet _AA in Hospitals_ similar to _AA in Prisons_ be prepared. (originally *AA in Hospitals*, in 1979 renamed *How And Why AA Members Carry The AA Message Into Treatment Centers*, then in 1986 renamed *AA In Treatment Facilities* - also see 1961) (*AA in Prisons* broken into two pamphlets *AA in Correctional Facilities* and

Message to Correctional Facilities Administrators in 1988,
then *A Message To Correctional Facilities Administrators*
renamed *A Message To Correctional Professionals* in 1997).

1965

AA Group (P-16)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature
Committee that (pg. 51):

- a new *GSR pamphlet* be prepared following the suggestions outlined by the
GSB Literature Committee. (?see 1956, 1980 and *No Date* section?)

1966

AA in Your Community (P-31) (see 1980, 1981)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature
Committee that (pg. 51):

- idea of cartoon format for AA literature be further explored
& developed to reach alcoholics unable to read well or at all.

- a *Guide to Leading Newcomer Meetings* be prepared
as soon as possible. (M-1, no date)

1967

the Conference Literature Committee (pg. 51-2):

- reported that *The AA Way of Life* was greatly
anticipated.

- noted enthusiastic reception of comic book pamphlet *What Happened to Joe*.
(see 1985)

- the possibility of translating *What Happened to Joe*
into Spanish.

- expressed interest in upcoming revisions of *AA for
the Woman* (see 1968), * Young
People in AA* (see 1969, 1973, 1986),
and *Questions and Answers on Sponsorship*"
(see 1970, 1974, 1976, 1994).

1968

AA for the Woman (P-5)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 52):

- brief mimeo service material (not Guidelines format) be prepared to provide listing of source material - Conference-approved literature as an aid to *closed meeting discussion topics*. (?see *No Date* section)

It was recommended by the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee that (pg. 32):

-the Committee approved *Suggestions for Improving AA's Relation the Medical Profession and the Community* and recommended that it be made available to all AA groups.

It was recommended by the Conference Public Information Committee that (pg. 62):

- the committee reviewed and approved the pamphlet *The Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous*, with minor changes.

1969

AA's Legacy of Service (P-44) (reprint from AA Service Manual)

Young People and AA (P-4) (see 1967, 1973, 1986)

1970

Member's-Eye View of Alcoholics Anonymous (P-41)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 52):

- occasionally group discussion center around Conference-approved pamphlets such as *Sponsorship* (?see 1967, 1974, 1976, 1994), *Is AA for You?* (see 1956, 1973, 1975, 1978, 1988), *This is AA* (see 1978, 1984, 1988) or any of the others that would be suitable for such discussion.

- The _Grapevine_ reprints of of Bill's articles *Problems Other Than Alcohol* (see 1958, 1974, 1979, 1982) and *Why Alcoholics Anonymous is Anonymous* (see 1975) be considered by AAWS.

- *A Clergyman Looks at AA* be considered for revision. (?see 1961, 1986, 1987)

1971

Twelve Steps Illustrated (P-55) (see 1987, 1991)

Twelve Traditions Illustrated (P-43)

Traditions Checklist from 'AA Grapevine' (c.
by _Grapevine_ Nov 1969 through Sept 1971)

It was recommended by the Conference Public
Information Committee that (pg. 62):

- *A Student's Guide To Alcoholics Anonymous*
be accepted for publication with minor revision. (renamed *Brief Guide to
Alcoholics Anonymous* in 1972)

1972

Brief Guide to Alcoholics Anonymous (P-42) (formally
A Student's Guide To AA see 1971)(see 1980)

Co-Founders of Alcoholics Anonymous (P-53)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature
Committee that (pg. 52):

- the *Group Inventory material* submitted to the committee be recommended as
possible service material. (?was this the *Traditions
Checklist from the 'AA Grapevine'* from 1971, the inventory questions
in the *AA Group* pamphlet or something else?)

1973

Is AA For You? (P-3) (edited, shorter version from 1956) (see 1956, 1970,
1975, 1978, 1988)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature
Committee that (pg. 52):

- the preparation of an illustrated or cartoon style *Young People and AA*
pamphlet be explored. (see 1967, 1969, 1986)*

*

1974

AA and the Armed Services (P-50) (?see

1986)

How AA Members Cooperate With Professionals (P-29) (originally *How AA Members Cooperate with Other Community Efforts to Help Alcoholics* see 1994)

Inside AA (P-18) (see 1980)

Speaking at Non-AA Meetings (P-40) [I've heard from another they have a version dated 1972.] (see 1979)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 52):

-the pamphlet **Questions and Answers on Sponsorship** be reviewed and rewritten to include Twelfth Step calls & sponsorship, with a new suggested title **Twelfth Step Calls and Sponsorship**. (see 1967, 1970, 1976, 1994)

- in memory of AA's co founders, the last talk of each be prepared in pamphlet form:

Bill's Last Message (M-12) (no publication date)

Dr. Bob's Farewell Talk (M-16) (no publication date)

- the _Grapevine_ reprints **Why Alcoholics Anonymous is Anonymous** (see 1970, 1975), ** Let's Be Friendly With Our Friends** (see 1958), and **Problems Other than Alcohol** (see 1958, 1974, 1979, 1982) be prepared in standard pamphlet format.

- the Literature Committee explore the need for a **pamphlet on taking the Fourth and Fifth Steps**. (1979 & 1985 Conferences also decided these are explained well enough in Big Book and 12&12).

1975

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 52-3):

- the original **Is AA for You?** pamphlet be dropped and the simplified version be used. (see 1956, 1970, 1973, 1978, 1988)

- **The Alcoholic Husband** and ** The Alcoholic Wife** be combined into pamphlet called **The Alcoholic Mate** or another appropriate title. (see 1976 & **Pre Conference** section)

- the reprints *Why Alcoholics Anonymous is Anonymous *(see 1970, 1974), * Our Critics Can Be Our Benefactors*, and *AA as a Community Resource* be dropped.

It was recommended by the Conference Report and Charter Committee that (pg. 23):

- In order to familiarize AA's (at group level) with the Twelve Concepts, the trustees literature Committee consider publishing the *Twelve Concepts in pamphlet form* similar to *The Twelve Traditions Illustrated*. (see 1986)

1976

Do You Think You're Different? (P-13)
(edited and retitled version of *So You Think You're Different?*)

Is There an Alcoholic in Your Life? (P-30)

Questions and Answers on Sponsorship (P-15) (see 1967, 1970, 1974, 1994)

Your AA General Service Office (F-6) (see 1980)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 53):

- the new title of the combined pamphlets *The Alcoholic Husband* and *The Alcoholic Wife* be *Is there an Alcoholic in Your Life* with subtitle "AA's Message of Hope".
(see 1975 & *Pre Conference* section)

- the new title of the teenage cartoon pamphlet be *Teenagers and AA*. (?see 1977, 1988)

- action on pamphlets directed to special groups of alcoholics be deferred until after publication of *Do You Think You're Different?*

1977

Too Young? (P-37) (?see 1976)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 53):

- the proposal on *Living Sober Longer* not be pursued further as there is insufficient need for such a pamphlet.

- suggested that AA groups be *discouraged from selling literature not distributed by GSO* and the _Grapevine_.

It was recommended by the Conference Public Information Committee that (pg. 63):

- GSO prepare a *one sheet flyer about AA*. In addition to distributing the flyer to local P I committees, students, and civic groups, it would be helpful to distribute it to general service representatives and group secretaries. (? see *no date* section)

1978

Circles of Love and Service (P-45) (see 1980)

Where Do I Go From Here? (F-4) (see 1980)

Carrying the Message Inside the Walls (F-05) (see 1980, revised in 1989 and renamed *Carrying The Message Into Correctional Facilities*)

Alcoholics Anonymous Membership Survey (P-48) (surveys done in 1977, 1980, 1983, 1986, 1989, 1992, 1996, 1998, 2001 ?other years)(the pamphlet I have is copyright 1997 with the 1996 survey. Preceding list of dates are those of actual surveys, not necessarily of the pamphlets themselves)

It was recommended by the Conference Policy and Admissions Committee (Conference Policy) that (pg. 15):

- *talks made by Bill and Bern Smith*, beginning with the first General Service Conference in 1951, be circulated to the Conference and trustees Literature Committee so that consideration could be given to making this material available to the fellowship in printed form.

It was recommended by the Correctional Facilities Committee that (pg. 36):

- the manuscript of the new inmate pamphlet, *It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell*, be accepted pending mail-poll approval by the committee of the final edited version and illustrations; that production then proceed under the direction of the trustees Committee on Correctional Facilities, with the word "hell" being omitted from the title; and that consideration be given to the use of color illustrations if financially feasible.(see 1979)

It was recommended by the Finance Committee

that (pg. 41):

- a *new pamphlet on Finance*, in at least two colors, be prepared and distributed to stressing self support through the 60-30-10 Plan. How the 60-30-10 Plan helps carry the AA message around the world and that the title of the pamphlet be *Self Supporting? The 60-30-10 Plan.* (see 1980)

It was recommended by the Conference Public Information Committee that (pg. 63):

- the following items be added to the PI kit:

*AA At A Glance *(F-1)(see 1980), *Is AA For You?*(see 1956, 1970, 1973, 1975, 1988), *This Is AA*(see 1970, 1984, 1988), and a one sheet piece describing the display and how to order it.

1979

It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell (P-33) (see 1978)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 53-4):

- the pamphlet for the older alcoholic be approved by the Conference with the title *Now It's Time to Start Living* and subtitle "Stories of Those Who Came to AA in Their Later Years". (renamed *Time to Start Living* in 1980, replace by *AA For the Older Alcoholic *in 2001)(see 1980, 1991, 2001)

It was recommended by the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee that (pg. 33):

- *Problems Other Than Alcohol* be Conference-approved. (see 1958, 1970, 1974, 1982)

It was recommended by the Conference Public Information Committee that (pg. 64):

- the mail-poll approval given for the changes made in the pamphlets *Understanding Anonymity* (see 1981) and *Speaking At Non-AA Meetings* (see 1974) to reflect the 1978 Conference indication that most AA Members use first names only when speaking at non AA meetings be reaffirmed.

It was recommended by the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities that

(pg. 68):

- the Conference approve the pamphlet *How And Why AA Members Carry The AA Message Into Treatment Centers* (formerly *AA In Hospitals* see 1961, 1964, then again renamed *AA In Treatment Facilities* in 1986).

*1980

* it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 54):

- change the title of the pamphlet *Now It's Time to Start Living* to *Time to Start Living*.(see 1979, 1991, 2001)

- the following pamphlets, leaflets and flyers be approved: *W**here Do I Go From Here? *(see1978) *, Your AA GSO *(see 1976)*, GSR* (?see 1956, 1965, and *No Date* section)*, Self Supporting? The 60-30-10 Plan *(see 1978)*, Inside AA *(see 1974), _Carrying the Message Inside the Walls_ (see 1978), _Circles of Love and Service_ (see 1978), * AA in Your Community *(see 1966, 1981 and below), * AA at a Glance *(see 1978), * The AA Member*, * If You Are a Professional* (see 1986).

It was recommended by the Correctional Facilities Committee that (pg. 36):

- a new pamphlet aimed at the *dually addicted inmate* not be considered at this time.

It was recommended by the Conference Public Information Committee that (pg. 64):

- *AA In Your Community*(see 1966, 1981) be discontinued since this pamphlet is so much like *A Brief Guide* (see 1972) and *AA At A Glance*. (see 1978)

1981

Alcoholics Anonymous and Employee Assistance Programs (P-54) (originally published as *AA and Occupational Alcoholism Programs*, in 1989 renamed *AA and Employee Assistance Programs*, revised and again renamed *Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace?*

Newcomer Asks (P-24) (originally from Great Britain)

Understanding Anonymity (P-47) (older pamphlet rewritten with new copyright date - see 1979).

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 54):

- a subcommittee be formed to review existing pamphlets with an eye to which should be combined or dropped; their report to be given to the 1982 Conference.

- suggestion to include the Twelve Traditions in all pamphlets when feasible.

It was recommended by the Conference Report and Charter Committee that (pg. 24):

- The *AA Service Manual* and *Twelve Concepts for World Service* be combined into one volume.

It was recommended by the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee that (pg. 33):

- the leaflet *AA in Your Community* be reinstated as General Service Conference-approved literature and put back into distribution as soon as possible. (see 1966, 1980)

1982

Supporting the AA Support System (F-03)

AA as a Resource for the Medical Profession (P-23) (in 1992 revised and renamed *AA as a Resource for the Health Care Professional*)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 54):

- suggestion to seek Conference approval for *P**roblems Other Than Alcohol (Excerpts)* be approved. (see 1958, 1970, 1974, 1979)

1983

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 54-5):

- distribution of the pamphlet *The AA Member and Drug Abuse* be continued until it is revised for consideration by the 1984 Conference. (replaced by *The AA Member - Medications and Other Drugs* in 1984).

1984

AA Member - Medications and Other Drugs (P-11)
(replaced *The AA Member and Drug Abuse*)

This Is AA (P-1) (see 1970, 1978, 1988)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature
Committee that (pg. 55):

- a pamphlet or manual *for AA central offices / intergroups*
not be developed.

It was recommended by the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities that
(pg. 69):

- the *Guidelines on Correctional and Treatment Facilities Committees* be
separated.

1985

It Happened to Alice (P-39) |

What Happened to Joe (P-38) |both these got new illustrations this year (see
1967)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature
Committee that (pg. 55):

- a *condensed version of the Twelve Concepts* would be
especially valuable to service workers, the manuscript be reproduced
and distributed by GSO as service material.

*

1986*

If You Are a Professional (P-46) (new
version of older pamphlet see 1980)

Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated (P-8) (see 1975)

it was recommended by the Conference
Literature Committee that (pg. 55-6):

- the following pamphlets be updated if possible and presented to the 1987
Conference: *Young People and AA* (see 1967, 1969, 1973),
AA and the Armed Forces (?see 1974)

- AAWS editorial staff continue to *degenderize AA literature*

with the exception of Bill W's writings as the items are reprinted.

It was recommended by the Conference Agenda Committee that (pg. 9):

- one of the discussion topics for the 1987 Conference be "Publishing - Too Much?"

It was recommended by the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee that (pg. 34):

- in the pamphlet *A Clergyman Asks About Alcoholics Anonymous* in the fifth paragraph on page 8, the sentence which reads "newcomers are encouraged to attend one or more meetings a week" be changed to "newcomers are encouraged to attend meetings as frequently as possible." (renamed *The Clergy Asks* ... in 1987)(?see ?1961, ?1970)

It was recommended by the Finance Committee that (pg. 42):

- the *Finance cartoon flyer* be changed.

It was recommended by the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities that (pg. 69):

- the title of the pamphlet *AA In Treatment Centers* be changed to *AA In Treatment Facilities* (see 1961, 1964, 1979)

1987

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 56):

- the following statement regarding *AA's primary purpose* be available as an AA service piece: "THIS IS A CLOSED MEETING OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS" (the blue cards we have today, opposite side is read for OPEN meetings).

It was recommended by the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee that (pg. 34):

- The title of the pamphlet *A Clergyman Asks* be changed to *The Clergy Asks* when it comes up for reprint (see ?1961, ?1970, 1986,)

It was recommended by the Correctional Facilities Committee that (pg. 37):

- a recommendation to develop a simplified *Twelve Steps Illustrated* pamphlet to carry the message to the illiterate inmate not be accepted by the Conference. (see 1971, 1991)

It was recommended by the Conference _Grapevine_ Committee that (pg. 47):

- no changes or additions be made to *the Preamble*.

1988

AA in Correctional Facilities (P-26)

Message to Correctional Facilities Administrators (P-20) (revised and renamed *A Message To Correctional Professionals* in 1997) (-- these two pamphlets replaced *AA in Prisons*, see note below)

Message to Teenagers (F-9) (?see 1976, 1977)

Your DCM (F-12)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 57):

- the article in April/May issue of _Box 4-5-9_ entitled *"Service Sponsorship: A Vital Stepping Stone to Service and Sobriety"* be prepared as a service piece. (see 1994)

- a more simplified draft of the easy to read illustrated pamphlet *Is AA for You?*' be prepared for consideration by the 1989 Conference. (see 1956, 1970, 1973, 1975, 1978)

- *This is AA* (see 1970, 1978, 1984) and *44 Questions* (see 1952) as illustrated flyers not be published at this time.

- the *Primary Purpose Card* continue as a service piece. (?see 1987)

- reaffirmed that '*Any factual or statistical information may be updated* whenever practical without having to go through the process of Conference Action, ie. whenever inventory runs low, a new survey is completed, etc. In addition, minor copy cuts to make room for new material added to publication may be made when necessary.' And further affirmed, 'That any other changes made in the substance of the Conference-approved literature shall be through the Conference process.'

It was recommended by the Conference Report

and Charter Committee that (pg. 27):

- The letter "S" be used as a prefix for the first set of page numbers in *The AA Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, so as to differentiate between the two sets of page numbers.

It was recommended by the Correctional Facilities Committee that (pg. 37):

- the pamphlet *AA In Prisons* be replaced with two separate revisions of the material: (1) an easy to read pamphlet for inmates and outside AA's interested in starting an AA groups in correctional facilities, (2) a brief pamphlet or leaflet to provide information about AA to administrators of correctional facilities. (Both listed above. see 1964, 1997)

1989

AA and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic (P-32)

AA for the Native North American (P-21)

Carrying the Message Into Correctional Facilities (F-5) (replaced *Carrying The Message Inside The Walls* see 1978, 1980)

Is AA for Me (P-36)

It was recommended by the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee that (pg. 34):

- the revised text of the pamphlet *AA and Occupational Alcoholism Programs* be approved with minor changes, and the title of the pamphlet be changed to *AA and Employee Assistance Programs*. (see 1981, revised and renamed *Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace?* in 1998)

1990

Self Supporting Through Our Own Contributions (F-3)

it was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 58):

- the proposal for a *pamphlet on the spiritual aspects of AA* not be approved because there is not sufficient need at this time.

1991

Bridging the Gap (P-49)

Time to Start Living (P-7) (replaced by _AA for the Older Alcoholic _in 2001)(see 1979, 1980)

It was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 58):

- the proposed **Twelve Steps Illustrated** pamphlet be published in response to an expressed need for similar literature (see 1971, 1987)

- the **questionnaires in 7 Conference-approved pamphlets** not be standardized, as the questions in each are targeted to specific populations.

1992

AA as a Resource for the Health Care Professional (P-23) (replaced **AA as a Resource for the Medical Profession** -see1982)

It was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 58-9):

- the **6 point definition of an AA group** the removed from all literature and replaced by the long form of Tradition Three and a section of Warranty Six, Concept Twelve.

**1993 **

It was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 59):

- AAWS produce an **anonymity display card** (yellow cards) with the following verbiage: "anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions. Please respect this and treat in confidence who you see and what you hear." (see 1995)

**1994 **

It was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 59-60):

- the text of **material on 'Service Sponsorship'** submitted by the trustees literature committee be included in the pamphlet **Question and Answers on Sponsorship** when current inventory is depleted. (see 1967, 1970, 1974, 1976, 1994)

- the **circle and triangle logo** be discontinued on all Conference-approved

literature.

- the words *'this is a general service Conference-approved literature'* be displayed on the front cover all AA Conference-approved literature whenever possible.

It was recommended by the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee that (pg. 35):

- the changes to *How AA Members Cooperate with Other Community Efforts to Help Alcoholics*, prepared by the trustees CPC Committee, be approved with additional changes. The pamphlet's title be changed to *How AA Members Cooperate with Professionals* with the subheading "Cooperation, But Not affiliation." (see 1974)

1995

Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix
(F-3)

It was recommended by the Conference Literature Committee that (pg. 60):

- a video on ways that *GSO serves the Fellowship* be developed, with accompanying service pamphlet.

It was recommended by the Conference Public Information Committee that (pg. 67):

- the *Anonymity Statement Card* (yellow card), revised to include anonymity reminders regarding videotaping and full names on audiotapes be approved. (see 1993)

*1996 *

It was recommended by the Conference _Grapevine_ Committee that (pg. 47):

- a manuscript be developed for pamphlet providing basic information on the _AA Grapevine_ magazine and its place in Alcoholics Anonymous and be brought to the 1997 Conference for approval.

1997

It was recommended by the Correctional Facilities Committee that (pg. 38):

- the name of the pamphlet, *A Message To Correctional Facilities Administrators* be changed to *A Message To Correctional

Professionals* and that the following two paragraphs from the pamphlet If You Are a Professional be included: "AA wants to work with you" and "What AA Does Not Do". (see 1964, 1988)

1998

It was recommended by the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee that (pg. 36):

- the draft revision of the pamphlet to replace *AA and Employee Assistance Programs* be approved with the title *Is There an Alcoholic in the Workplace?*

(see 1981, 1989)

2001

AA for the Older Alcoholic (P-22) (replaced *Time to Start Living* -see 1979, 1980, 1991)

Can AA Help Me Too? Black / African Americans Share Their Stories (P-51)

ND - no date given with copyright statement*

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AA's Public Information Policy (?see 1977?)

GSR May Be the Most Important Job in AA (P-19) (?see 1956, 1965, 1980?)

Information on Alcoholics Anonymous (F-2) (?see 1977)

Memo to an AA Group Treasurer (F-96)

Suggested Topics for Discussion Meetings (?see 1968)

Three Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W., Co-founder of AA (P-6)

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*Pre Conference and Out of Print Pamphlets I've seen or heard mentioned

*listed by the name on the cover + "Also Known As" (AKA) names

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*

Mr. X and Alcoholics Anonymous, which was a reprint of a sermon given in 1939 by Dr. Dilworth Lupton of the Cleveland Unitarian Church praising the work of AA there. It was first distributed by the Cleveland group.

AA (AKA The Houston Pamphlet). Said to be the first of the early pamphlets printed in NY by the Alcoholic Foundation. A series of six articles written by Larry J for the Houston Press newspaper. The earliest of the articles it re-printed was published Feb 8, 1940. This 28 page pamphlet was first printed by the Foundation in April 1940. The pamphlet also includes Dr.Silkworth's article from the Lancet Journal. I have heard reports that this pamphlet may have been revised in 1943 after Larry J's death.

Alcoholics Anonymous, An Interpretation of the 12 Steps (AKA Tablemate Guide or the Detroit Pamphlet). The Detroit, Akron and Washington DC (among other) groups began printing this during the 1940's. It is still distributed by Detroit's Intergroup. (None of the three versions of this pamphlet I have seen have dates or copyright info.)

The Cleveland Four Absolutes Pamphlet put out by the Cleveland group/s or Central Committee. Probably dates to the 1940's.

Impressions of AA from the Chicago Group (sometime during the 1940's). Reportedly written by Judge John T.

Intro To AA pamphlet put out by the Philadelphia Group, 1537 Pine Street (early 1940's). Q&A format for newcomers.

What About the Alcoholic Employee? Distributed during the 1940's by the Alcoholic Foundation. Re-print of Chapter 10 from Big Book.

The Akron Manual (1941) pamphlet/booklet distributed by the King's School Group of Akron. An Akron archivist reports, Dr. Bob commissioned Evan Williams to write this pamphlet for beginners as he felt the Big Book was too complicated for some of the newcomers.

Guide to the Twelve Steps

Second Reader For Alcoholics Anonymous_

Spiritual Milestones in AA all three were first published in the 1940's (probably after the _Akron Manual_) by the King's School Group in Akron. Still being distributed by Akron Intergroup.

AA Sponsorship... Its Opportunities and Its Responsibilities by Clarence S (1944), distributed by the Cleveland Central Committee.

AA Tradition - How It Developed, by The Alcoholic Foundation, 1947. (see 1955)

About the Alcoholic Husband, by The Alcoholic Foundation, 1947. Reprint of Chapter 8, _To Wives_, from the Big Book. (combined with *The Alcoholic Wife* and renamed *Is there an Alcoholic in Your Life*) (see 1975, 1976).

Medicine Looks at Alcoholics Anonymous by Works Publishing Inc 1949. This pamphlet is a reprint of papers/talks presented to the American Psychiatric Association by Harry Tiebout, May 1943 and to The Medical Society of the State of New York by Bill W., May 1944. (see 1953)

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The Society of Alcoholics Anonymous_ by William W., Co-founder, reprinted by Works Publishing Inc (date unknown). Reprints an article which appeared in _The American Journal of Psychiatry_, Nov 1949.

AA - God's Instrument (AKA _Why We Were Chosen_ - which is actually an abbreviated form of the whole) (before 1950) originally and still printed by Chicago Central Office. AA talk that was given by a Judge John T in 1943 at the fourth anniversary dinner of the Chicago Group.

High Road to Happiness (late 1940's early 1950's) distributed by the Brighter Side Group of Waterloo, Iowa. a 20 page guide to the Steps.

AA...A Uniquely American Phenomenon Feb 1951, _Fortune_ magazine article about AA. GSO reprinted this in pamphlet form.

The Alcoholic Wife - A Message To Husbands, 1954. (combined with *The Alcoholic Husband* and renamed *Is there an Alcoholic in Your Life*) (see 1975, 1976).

Respecting Money by Bill W.(Co-Founder). This pamphlet is a reprint of an article from the Nov. 1957 _Grapevine_. In it, Bill explains how AA has handled and should handle the problems of

money.

II
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+++Message 479. This Years Founder's Day In Akron Ohio
From: Rudy Johnson 8/23/2002 9:15:00 PM

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Here is a copy of the Cleveland Plain Dealer article about Founders Day weekend in Akron for the 67th Anniversary, It was awesome. The article is worth reading to the end if you are an alcoholic like I am.

AA members old and new bask in Dr. Bob's shadow

06/10/02

Brian E. Albrecht Plain Dealer Reporter Akron- A thousand or more choppers rumbled through a scotch-colored sunrise; hot pipes burning morning mists white as beer foam to a blue-smoke crisp.

The bellow of bikes, trikes, crotch-rockets and cross-country cruisers pounded the air, echoing through downtown streets yesterday, shadowing the motorcade to Mount Peace Cemetery.

Bikers of the Sober Survivors, Sober Riders and other road roamers raised tattooed arms in a clenched-fist salute as this river of black leather and chrome flowed past tombstones and cheering spectators.

They were bound for hope, strength and, in essence, the biggest sobriety checkpoint in the nation this past weekend - the place where Dr. Bob, co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, was laid to rest, stone-cold sober after 15 years of recovery.

More than 10,000 members from across the country and places as far-flung as India and Russia, came to the city where the group was born, as they do each year to mark Founders' Day, the self-help organization's birthday. Here, they both honor the past and ensure the future by celebrating their present days, weeks or years of sobriety.

They know each other only by first name and addiction. It's

enough, even if they vary in every conceivable way. "Different folks, same pain," as Theresa of Dayton says.

There's "Dog," of the Sober Survivors, who says the nondrinking motorcycle group passes up bars on road trips anymore, "but we know where to find every Dairy Queen."

And Dan, a 61-year-old Wayne County Amish man who nearly drank himself to death, coughing up blood after binges on booze, including home-brewed hard cider. Kevin, 54, of London, England, got his call to sobriety 19 years ago - "That's rock bottom, when your own mum throws you out of the house." Marty, 72, of New Brighton, Pa., echoed many who said they simply quit when they "got sick of being sick."

They wear their emotions on their sleeves, backs and chests, in AA slogans and sayings. "Ride sober, live free." "Insist on enjoying life." They're always ready with a hug, handshake or cheer after the standard, "My name is . . . and I'm an alcoholic" introduction. They're the Serenity-Prayer, one-day-at-a-time people; only an arm's length away from the next drink. Survivors of the same shipwreck, as they say.

They came to see where it all began 67 years ago when two men created a group that now numbers about 2 million members worldwide.

Fate, or divine intervention as many AA members believe, led to a fortuitous meeting between local surgeon Dr. Robert Smith and New York stockbroker William Wilson, both alcoholics who struggled to overcome their addiction for years.

Wilson - born, coincidentally, in a small room behind a Vermont bar - was hospitalized several times after drinking binges. He had achieved some sobriety success through the Oxford Group, a nonalcoholic fellowship stressing universal spiritual values in daily life.

But during a discouraging business trip to Akron in 1935, Wilson was seized by an intense desire to tie one on.

He desperately paced between a church directory posted at one end of the hotel lobby and the Parisian Cocktail lounge at the other end.

He finally called an Akron clergyman, and was connected with a local Oxford Group member who brought Wilson together with Smith.

The two spent a sobering Mother's Day, forging a friendship and later a treatment philosophy and 12-step recovery program that became the foundation for Alcoholics Anonymous. Their approach was to treat alcoholism as a disease, not a mental or character flaw, that could be overcome through the support of fellow alcoholics and a greater, spiritual power.

In keeping with AA's tradition of anonymity, the group's co-creators become known among members as simply Bill and Dr. Bob.

Founders' Day grew out of a series of yearly member meetings (formalized in 1945), and is held as close as possible to June 10, the day Dr. Bob took his last drink - a bottle of beer to steady his hands, shaking from alcohol withdrawal, so he could operate. Dr. Bob never drank again, and died in 1950. Bill died in 1971.

Their legacy endures beyond the group they created, in historic sites treated as virtual shrines by AA members - and rightly so, according to Founders' Day committee member Bob, of Akron.

"Akron is really the Mecca of Alcoholics Anonymous, and Founders' Day is a pilgrimage for people who want to see where it was all born," he said. Touching his heart, he said, "To walk into Dr. Bob's house, what you feel right here is such an overwhelming feeling of peace and serenity, you can't describe it."

The white clapboard house, restored to reflect Dr. Bob's tenure, is open for tours from noon to 3 p.m. every day, year-round. But the place is mobbed by the faithful, passing under a "Welcome Home" banner, on Founders' Day weekend. Ardmore Avenue residents have learned that the event is a great time to hold a yard sale, and the street takes on a festive, block-party air.

It didn't spoil the effect of the house on Patty of Toronto, making her first Founders' Day visit. "The feeling I get, being touched by somebody who saved so many lives, is just so moving it brings tears to my eyes," she said.

The house was included on bus tours Saturday of such historic local AA sites as the former Kistler's Donuts (now a print shop), where the group's first members gathered to enjoy a little coffee and deep-fried fellowship - giving rise to the

now-traditional java-and-doughnuts meeting fare.

Bus riders saw the old Mayflower Hotel (now public housing), where Bill had his crisis of thirst; archives and artifacts (including Dr. Bob's golf clubs and correspondence) of the Akron Intergroup Council of Alcoholics Anonymous; and St. Thomas Hospital, where the founders and Sister Mary Ignatia first put the 12-step method to practical use.

As the bus passed a private club where Dr. Bob once hung out, Marilyn, the tour guide, noted that ladies had a separate bar in the club. "Back then, men didn't think we could drink like them," she said.

"Boy, we showed them!" a woman shouted back, to laughter.

As the Akron police headquarters came into view, Marilyn noted, "By the grace of God, none of us will be there tonight." A chorus of "Amens" rippled through the bus, joined by shouts of "Serenity!" and "Acceptance!"

"Gee, ain't it great to be sober?" Marilyn asked; perhaps the most oft-heard question of the weekend.

She would get no argument from AA members attending workshops and meetings at the University of Akron, which provided use of its dorms and facilities for the Friday-through-Sunday Founders' Day events. A visitor to a "Recovery Art Show" stared silently at a painting, "Last Call for Alcohol," depicting a skeletal Angel of Death hovering over a crumpled victim of booze. The man finally softly whispered, "I was nearly there. I truly was."

As was the white-whiskered and suspended Dan, from Ohio Amish country, outside napping under a shade tree. He still remembers the "lost" weeks of binge drinking, and the time he came so close to death that his family was planning his funeral.

Remembering helps recovery, Dan said. So does gratitude for a second chance. "You very seldom see a grateful person getting drunk," he said with a wink.

He has come to Founders' Day nearly every one of the 24 years he has been sober, to renew old friendships and meet new friends. They're people who talk the same language, he said. Folks who know what only other drunks know.

But some of the weekend's guests who aren't AA members have

a pretty good idea of those matters of the bottle. Rich, 47, of Dayton, never has had a drink. He swears he never will after seeing the results of alcohol on an older brother and sister, who he supports by joining them at Founders' Day. "I'm one of the lucky ones," he said while waiting for Saturday night's "Big Meeting" to begin.

The meeting was the weekend's hottest-ticket event, with all the foot-stomping, song-singing fervor of an old-fashioned tent revival, and musical motivation ranging from "Amazing Grace" to "We Will Rock You."

The affair's traditional countdown of sobriety duration among the crowd produced one person who hadn't had a drink in 54 years, when martinis were in vogue the first time around.

Featured speaker David, a prominent New York lawyer with five college degrees, told of a former lifetime of drinking stretching from rural North Carolina to the White House during the Kennedy administration. He joked that as co-author of early civil-rights legislation, "If you don't have adequate civil rights, blame me. I wrote the bill in a blackout."

On a serious note, he stressed a theme of responsibility. "I am not responsible for my drinking," he said. "I am responsible, with the help of God, for my sobriety." He closed his remarks by thanking AA for helping him to be free; "free at last, thank God almighty," borrowing the famous quotation from the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

A sense of dead men talking resumed early Sunday morning with the motorcycle motorcade and gravesite memorial service when a tape of Dr. Bob's last public appearance in 1950 was played for the crowd.

Few seemed to find it eerie when Dr. Bob's deep voice boomed over the loudspeaker, saying, "I get a big thrill out of looking over this vast sea of faces like this with a feeling that possibly some small thing that I did a number of years ago played an infinitely small part in making this meeting possible."

This was, after all, Dr. Bob. One of the men who bring them here, year after year. They gather shortly after sunrise and slowly - almost instinctively as the crowd grows - surround his grave in tightly packed circles of gratitude and joy.

"Look around you," said Dog of the Sober Survivors, who

From: Jan 8/25/2002 8:47:00 AM

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Regarding the history of 12-Step programs originating from the "Mother Ship", Alcoholics Anonymous, Debtors Anonymous formally began in 1976 in New York City.

Debtors Anonymous was founded by John Henderson, a recovering alcoholic with 25 years of sobriety. John died last year with 50 years of sobriety in A.A. and 25 years of solvency in D.A. There was no co-founder.

John struggled as a recovering alcoholic for many years to understand the problems he had with debt. He struggled for quite a few years to establish a program based on the A.A. model that addressed these problems.

He conducted a number of meetings with other A.A. members, first calling themselves the "Penny Pinchers" and later the "Capital Builders", before discovering that unsecured debt was the common affliction and "gateway" to a wide variety of financial problems. At this time the group was named Debtors Anonymous and its first meeting held in April 1976 in Manhattan.

D.A. is solidly based on the A.A. 12-Step and 12-Tradition program, although some of its recovery techniques were adopted from Gamblers Anonymous and some program jargon was later borrowed from Overeaters Anonymous members.

There are now more than 400 Debtors Anonymous meetings in the world. More D.A. history is available in the D.A. book "A Currency Of Hope", which is available from the D.A. General Service Office in Needham, Mass.

Jan S.

Do You Yahoo!?
Yahoo! Health - Feel better, live better
<http://health.yahoo.com>

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+++Message 483. RE: 12-Step Offshoots
From: Lash, William (Bill) 8/25/2002 1:28:00 PM

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This is the biggest list I have ever been able to find.
Take it easy & God bless!

Just Love,
Barefoot Bill

-----Original Message-----

From: John Wikelius [mailto:nov85_gr@snowhill.com]
Sent: Sunday, August 25, 2002 10:46 AM
To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com
Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] 12-Step Offshoots

Is there a listing of all the spin-off groups who use the 12 Steps of AA?

John Wikelius
301 North Rawls Street
Enterprise, Alabama 36330
334-347-1595
May God richly bless you!

Some people want THE list and proclaim it as such in media. But people are always starting and adapting groups that meet their needs. So please understand

this is a very rough draft list of 12-Step groups (and other groups that adapt the 12-steps or use "anonymous" or have adapted the steps in different ways to different issues). Please note that the figures on the numbers of local groups are a rough approximation (primarily from 1997 data - so it's old!). Contact information on most groups, but not all, are on a website database at www.selfhelpgroups.org. They welcome any corrections and especially any additions at ed@selfhelpgroups.org. (Understand that people are always starting

new groups, e.g., Pathways to Peace [www.pathwaystopeaceinc.com] for anger management, which was started by 12-Step people, but adapts only part of the Twelve Step program. Pathways to Peace Groups started first in NY State (6 groups), but after interest from Cleveland, there are now 4 groups meeting there. Nowhere else yet.)

12-Step Groups:

Alcoholics Anonymous (international - 94,000 groups)
Al-Anon Family Groups (international - 32,000+ groups)
Alateen (international - part of Al-Anon Family Groups - 4,100+ groups)
Abuse Alternatives Anonymous (1 group in Westchester, NY)
ACOA - Adult Children of Alcoholics (international - 1,700+ groups)
Adult Children of Sexual Abuse (4 groups in Florida)
Adult Children of Sexual Dysfunction (several groups in Minnesota)

Anesthetists in Recovery (national)
ARTS Anonymous (Artists Recovering thru Twelve Steps, creativity, other problems
- int'l - 90 groups)
Benzodiazepines Anonymous (several groups in CA)
Bettors Anonymous (several groups in Massachusetts)
Calix Society (national - Catholic alcoholics - 44 groups)
Caregivers Anonymous (caring for elderly relatives - 1 group in NJ)
Chapter Nine (recovering couples - a few groups in NY City area & MD)
Chemically Dependent Anonymous (national - 90 groups)
Children's & Youth Emotions Anonymous (national - 10 groups; related to Emotions Anonymous)
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Anonymous (2 groups in NJ)
Clergy Helping Clergy (groups in Minnesota)
Cocaine Anonymous (international - 1,500 groups)
Co-Anon Family Groups (cocaine - groups in New York City and Los Angeles - 40 groups)
Co-Dependents Anonymous (national - 3,500+ groups)
Co-Dependents Anonymous for Helping Professionals (international - 25 groups)
Compulsive Eaters Anonymous - H.O.W. (national - 250 groups)
Compulsive Stutterers Anonymous (national model - 4 groups)
Convicts Anonymous (to stop criminal behavior, there were 3 groups in Washington State)
Criminals & Gangs Anonymous (model 12-step group that has several groups within California prisons)
Co-S.A. (national - codependents of sex addicts)
Crystal-Meth Anonymous (15 groups in CA)
DD-Anon (loved ones of those with dissociative or multiple personality disorder
- 1 group in WI)
Debtors Anonymous (national - 400+ groups)
Depressed Anonymous (international, 5 groups)
Diabetics Anonymous (1 group in CA)
Dis-Ability Anonymous (1 group in New York City)
Divorce Anonymous (mostly in CA)
Domestic Violence Anonymous (international - 32 groups, mostly in CA)
Double Trouble Recovery, Inc. (national, based in NY)
Drugs Anonymous (national - formerly Pills Anonymous - 10 groups)
Dual Disorders Anonymous (chemical dependency & psychiatric recovery - 23 groups in Illinois area)
Dual Recovery Anonymous (chemical dependency & psychiatric recovery - 30 groups nationwide)
Eating Addictions Anonymous (national - 6 groups)

Eating Disorders Anonymous (international - 20 groups)
Emotions Anonymous (national - 1,400 groups)
Emotional Health Anonymous (national - 50 groups)
Ethnic Anonymous (prejudice, 1 group in Washington State)
Families Anonymous (national - 500 groups)
Families of Sex Offenders Anonymous (1 group in Connecticut)
Fear of Success Anonymous (national - 5 groups)
Food Addicts Anonymous (international - 118 groups)
Gamblers Anonymous (international - 1,200 groups)
Gam-Anon (international - 380 groups)
Gamateen (national)
Gangs Anonymous (former gang members - 1 group in Boston)
Grievers Anonymous (groups in Chicago area)
HIVIES (international- those with a history of substance abuse & who are HIV+
or
think they are)
Homosexuals Anonymous (national - 55 groups)
Incest Survivors Anonymous (international)
International Doctors in AA (national)
International Lawyers in AA (international - 40 groups)
International Nurses Anonymous (international)
International Pharmacists Anonymous (national)
Love-N-Addiction (national - 50 groups)
Lovers Anonymous (lost relationships, negative beliefs - 1 group in New
Orleans)
Marijuana Anonymous (international - groups primarily in California - 100
groups)
Methadone Anonymous (international - recovery from chemical dependency - 300
groups)
Narcotics Anonymous (national - 25,000+ groups)
Nar-Anon (international)
Nicotine Anonymous (national - formerly called Smokers Anonymous - 500+
groups)
Nic-Anon (1 group in California- families/friends of smokers/recovering
smokers)
Neurotics Anonymous (international - 158 groups)
Obsessive-Compulsive Anonymous (national - 50 groups)
Overcomers Outreach (Christian community, all addictions - national - 1,000
groups)
Overcomers - Victory Through Christ (international - 132 groups)
Overeaters Anonymous (international - 9,000 groups)
O-Anon (national - overeating - 50 groups)
Physician Assistant Recovery Network (international - physician assistants,
all
addictions)
Pill Addicts Anonymous (national - 6 groups)
Pills Anonymous (NY City - 2 groups)
Prescriptions Anonymous (3 groups - Atlanta, Wash. DC & Utah)

Psychologists Helping Psychologists (national)
Psychiatrically Recovering Alcoholics (several groups in NJ)
Racism & Bigotry Anonymous (those hurt by, 1 group in CA)
Recoveries Anonymous (national - any "self-destructive symptoms" - 20 groups)
Recovering Couples Anonymous (focused on relationship; international - 85 groups)
Relationships Anonymous (St. Louis, Missouri area)
Repeat-Offenders Anonymous (national - 10 groups)
S.A.R.A. (Sexual Assault Recovery Anonymous, Canadian national - incest and sexual abuse)
Sex Addicts Anonymous (national)
Sexual Abuse Survivors Anonymous (national 10 groups)
Sexual Recovery Anonymous (international 19 groups)
Sexaholics Anonymous (international)
Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (international - also known as Augustine Fellowship, S.L.A.A.)
S-Anon (international - family/friends of sex addicts)
Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (international)
Shoplifters Anonymous (1 group in Minneapolis)
Social Workers Helping Social Workers (national - 3 groups)
Spenders Anonymous (1 group in Minneapolis)
Suicide Anonymous (attempters - 3 groups in TN)
Survivors of Incest Anonymous (national - 900 groups)
Sexual Abuse Survivors Anonymous (national - 10 groups)
T4-anon (AIDS)
TARA - Total Aspects of Recovery Anonymous (national - any addiction or dysfunctional behavior - 17 groups)
Therapists in Recovery (1 group in San Diego, CA)
Trauma Survivors Anonymous
12-Step Caucus of Physician Assistants (national)
Unwed Parents Anonymous (national)
Workaholics Anonymous (international - 78 groups)
Youth Emotions Anonymous (national - 11 groups)

Groups that have adapted the 12-Step Approach

Academics Recovering Together - ART (national - university/college faculty, chem. dependency)
Combat Veterans Anonymous (for PTSD- groups developed in VA Hospitals in FL & GA)
Dentists Concerned for Dentists (national - alcohol/chemical dependency)
Double Trouble (groups in NJ -alcoholics who are on medication for psychiatric problems)
Grow, Inc (over 100 groups in Illinois and starting in several other states -mental health)
ICAP (national - alcohol/chemical dependency, for current/former female religious/nuns)
J.A.C.S. (national - Jewish Alcoholics, Chemically dependent persons & Significant others)

M.I.R.A. (several groups in Illinois - Mentally Ill Recovering Alcoholics)
Overcomers Outreach (national- Christian support for addictions, sharing 12 steps through Bible)
Phobics Anonymous (national)
Schizophrenics Anonymous (about 12 groups in Michigan area - 6 steps)

Other "Anonymous" Groups

(Here are groups that use the "anonymous" name, but appear not to be 12-step.)

Batterers Anonymous (national)
Cleptomaniacs & Shoplifters Anonymous (1 group in Michigan)
Clutterers Anonymous (groups in California - not clear if they are self-help)
Depressives Anonymous (primarily groups in New York City)
Emphysema Anonymous (national newsletter)
Free-N-One Recovery (national - 30 groups)
Fundamentalists Anonymous (national - 50 chapters)
Impotents Anonymous (national - over 100 groups)
I-Anon (national - for spouses of impotent)
Kleptomaniacs Anonymous (1 group in NYC)
Messies Anonymous (national)
Molesters Anonymous (model group - 10 groups nationwide)
Parents Anonymous (emotional/physical child abuse)
Wobblers Anonymous (national - those suffering adverse reactions to antibiotic drug, Gentamicin)

Groups No Longer Active in USA

Domestic Violence Anonymous (had several groups in San Francisco)
Neurotics Anonymous
Sexual Abuse Victims Anonymous (Canadian)
Shoppers Anonymous International
Survivors (was for death of a loved one, to include childhood losses - had groups in a few states)
Survivors of Transexuality Anonymous (group operated in NJ - no longer meeting)
Victims Anonymous

Status Unclear

Any current contacts or clarification for the following group would be appreciated:

Prostitutes Anonymous (was national & based in U.S)

FELLOWSHIPS FOR PROFESSIONALS THAT ADDRESS THEIR ADDITIONAL NEEDS DEALING WITH EMPLOYMENT CONCERNS

"As professionals in the health care field, we always support, protect, and nurture the sick till the day they die. But should a colleague become ill with alcoholism or drug abuse, the reaction of our own professional community is often closer to that of a lynch mob." - Russ, a group member. In such situations, professionals are more often fired rather than provided with help

or

support- thereby losing the insurance that they need for treatment. Denial of the problem, by other professionals, especially those in need - is very high.

If

they are fortunate enough to recognize their addiction, they often feel that they are all alone.

An increasing number of self-help groups, run by and for recovering professionals, provide support and understanding to their members. Some are also

open to family members. These groups indicate that they supplement the basic help provided by AA, NA, GA, Al-Anon, and others. They deal with the special problems faced in specific professions, such as the loss of one's license to practice, the easy accessibility to drugs, or the stigma sometimes faced by a helping professional seeking help. Among the national networks are those such as: International Doctors in AA (open to doctoral-level healthcare professionals); International Nurses Anonymous (any nurse in recovery); International Lawyers in A.A.; Social Workers Helping Social Workers; Psychologists Helping Psychologists; Therapists In Recovery, Pharmacists Concerned for Pharmacists; Anesthetists in Recovery; Physician Assistant Recovery Network; Academics Recovering Together (college & university faculty or

administrators), the Intercongregational Alcoholism Program (for Catholic nuns and former nuns); National Association of Responsible Professional Athletes, and

the Nat'l Association of Lesbian and Gay Alcoholism Professionals (the majority

of whose members are in 12-Step programs). Another national group is Co-Dependents Anonymous For Helping Professions. Others, that are developing into national networks, include ones such as the Dentists Concerned for Dentists, Realtors Concerned for Realtors, Recovered Alcoholic Clergy Assn (Episcopal) and Clergy Serving Clergy.

The groups help in various ways. Pat, a nurse, gave an example of one member's problem: "In applying for her nursing license in the new state to which she had

just moved, she was truthful and answered the question, 'Have you ever been treated for alcohol or drug addiction?' by responding 'Yes, I am a recovering alcoholic regularly attending 12-Step meetings'. Her license was denied by the board, which indicated that her attendance at a 12-Step meeting reflected how she has not recovered and therefore is not able to assume nursing responsibilities in their state. With the support of her self-help network, she

is appealing the ruling." For information on any of the networks cited above, call the Clearinghouse or use keyword search engine at our web site (www.selfhelpgroups.org).

Listing was partially updated 1/00 (but estimates of number of local groups

are
from 1997-98)

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+++Message 484. : [AAHistoryLovers] Re: Do we know the
history of other 12 steps off shoots: re: NA
From: Neeron 8/25/2002 10:57:00 PM

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WORLD SERVICE BOARD OF TRUSTEES BULLETIN #13

Some thoughts regarding our
relationship to Alcoholics Anonymous

This article was generated by the World Service Board of Trustees in November 1985 in response to the needs of the fellowship. It represents the views of the board of trustees at the time of writing.

The question of just how Narcotics Anonymous relates to all other fellowships and organizations is one which generates a good deal of controversy within our fellowship. In spite of the fact that we have a stated policy of "cooperation, not affiliation" with outside organizations, much confusion remains. The most sensitive issue of this nature involves our relationship to the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. A constant stream of letters is received by the World Service Board of Trustees asking a variety of questions about this relationship. The time has come for another Newslines article to shed some light on this important subject.

Narcotics Anonymous is modeled after, though not identical to, Alcoholics Anonymous. Nearly every NA community in existence has leaned to some degree on AA in the NA group's formative stages. Our relationship with that fellowship over the years has been very real and dynamic. Our fellowship itself sprang from the turmoil within AA over what to do with the addicts knocking on their door. So we will look at those roots for some perspective on our current relationship to AA.

Bill W., one of AA's co-founders, often said that one of AA's

greatest strengths is its single-minded focus on one thing and one thing only. By limiting its primary purpose to carrying the message to alcoholics and avoiding all other activities, AA is able to do that one thing supremely well. The atmosphere of identification is preserved by that purity of focus, and alcoholics get help.

From very early on, AA was confronted by a perplexing problem: "What do we do with drug addicts? We want to keep our focus on alcohol so the alcoholic hears the message, but these addicts come in here talking about drugs, inadvertently weakening our atmosphere of identification." The steps were written, the Big Book was written--what were they supposed to do, rewrite it all? Allow the atmosphere of identification to get blurry so that no one got a clear sense of belonging? Kick these dying people back out into the streets? The problem must have been a tremendous one for them.

When they finally studied the problem carefully and took a stand in their literature, the solution they outlined possessed their characteristic common sense and wisdom. They said that while they cannot accept addicts who are not alcoholics as members, they freely offer their steps and traditions for adaptation by any groups who wish to use them. They pledged their support in a spirit of "cooperation, not affiliation." This farsighted solution to a difficult problem paved the way for the development of the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship.

But still the problem that they wished to avoid would have to be addressed by any group who tried to adapt those principles to drug addicts. How do you achieve the atmosphere of identification so necessary for surrender and recovery if you let all different kinds of addicts in? Can someone with a heroin problem relate to someone with an alcohol or marijuana or Valium problem? How will you ever achieve the unity that the First Tradition says is necessary for recovery? Our fellowship inherited a tough dilemma.

For some perspective on how we have handled that dilemma, one more look at AA history will be helpful. Another thing Bill W. used to frequently write and speak about was what he called the "tenstrike" of AA--the wording of the Third and Eleventh Steps. The whole area of spirituality vs. religion was every bit as perplexing for them in those days as this unity issue has been for us. Bill liked to recount that the simple addition of the words "as we understood Him" after the word "God" laid to rest that controversy in one chop. An issue that had the potential to divide and destroy AA was converted into the cornerstone of the

program by that simple turn of phrase.

As the founders of Narcotics Anonymous adapted our steps, they came up with a "tenstrike" of perhaps equal importance. Rather than converting the First Step in the most natural, logical way ("we admitted that we were powerless over drugs..."), they made a radical change in that step. They wrote, "We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction..." Drugs are a varied group of substances, the use of any of which is but a symptom of our disease. When addicts gather and focus on drugs, they are usually focusing on their differences, because each of us used a different drug or combination of drugs. The one thing that we all share is the disease of addiction. It was a masterful stroke. With that single turn of phrase the foundation of the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship was laid.

Our First Step gives us one thing to focus on, so we can do that one thing supremely well. We carry the message to the addict who still suffers. As a bonus, this wording of Step One also takes the focus of our powerlessness off the symptom and places it on the disease itself. The phrase "powerless over a drug" does not go far enough for most of us in ongoing recovery--the desire to use has been removed--but "powerless over our addiction" is as relevant to the oldtimer as it is to the newcomer. Our addiction begins to resurface and cause problems in our thoughts and feelings whenever we become complacent in our program of recovery. This process has nothing to do with "drug of choice." We guard against the recurrence of our drug use by reapplying our spiritual principles before our disease takes us that far. So our First Step applies regardless of drug of choice, and regardless of length of clean time. With this "tenstrike" as its foundation, NA has begun to flourish as a major worldwide movement, clearly appropriate to contemporary addiction problems. And we've only just begun.

As any given NA community matures in its understanding of its own principles (particularly Step One), an interesting fact emerges. The AA perspective, with its alcohol oriented language, and the NA approach, with its clear need to shift the focus off the specific drug, don't mix very well. When we try to mix them, we find that we have the same problem as AA had with us all along! When our members identify as "addicts and alcoholics" or talk about "sobriety" and living "clean and sober" the clarity of the NA message is blurred. The implication in this language is that there are two diseases; that one drug is separate from the pack, so that a separate set of terms is needed when discussing it. At first glance this seems minor, but our experience clearly shows that the full impact of the NA message

is crippled by this subtle semantic confusion.

It has become clear that our common identification, our unity, and our full surrender as addicts depends on a clear understanding of our most basic fundamentals: We are powerless over a disease that gets progressively worse when we use any drug. It does not matter what drug was at the center for us when we got here. Any drug we use will release our disease all over again. We recover from this disease by applying our Twelve Steps. Our steps are uniquely worded to carry this message clearly, so the rest of our language of recovery must be consistent with those steps. Ironically, we cannot mix these fundamental principles with those of our parent fellowship without crippling our own message.

Does this mean that AA's approach is inferior to ours, and based on denial or half measures? Of course not! A casual, cursory glance at their success in delivering recovery to alcoholics over the years makes it abundantly clear: Theirs is a top notch program. Their literature, their service structure, the quality of their members' recovery, their sheer numbers, the respect they enjoy from society, these things speak for themselves. Our members ought not embarrass us by adopting a "we're better than them" posture. That can only be counterproductive.

The simple fact is that both fellowships have a Sixth Tradition for a reason: to keep them from being diverted from their primary purpose. Because of the inherent need of a Twelve Step fellowship to focus on "one thing and one thing only so that it can do that one thing supremely well," each Twelve Step fellowship must stand alone, unaffiliated with everything else. It is in our nature to be separate, to feel separate, and use a separate set of recovery terms, because we each have a separate, unique primary purpose. The focus of AA is on the alcoholic, and we ought to respect their perfect right to adhere to their own traditions and protect their focus. If we cannot use language consistent with that, we ought not go to their meetings and undermine that atmosphere. In the same way, NA members ought to respect our own primary purpose and identify ourselves at NA meetings simply as addicts, and share in a way that keeps our fundamentals clear.

As a fellowship, we must continue to strive to move forward by not stubbornly clinging to one radical extreme or the other. Our members who have been unintentionally blurring the NA message by using drug-specific language such as "sobriety," "alcoholic," "clean and sober," "dope fiend," etc., could help by identifying simply and clearly as addicts, and using the words "clean,"

"clean time," and "recovery" which imply no particular substance. And we all could help by referring to only our own literature at meetings, thereby avoiding any implied endorsement or affiliation. Our principles stand on their own. For the sake of our development as a fellowship and the personal recovery of our members, "our approach to the problem of addiction" must shine through clearly in what we say and do at meetings.

Our members who have used these sound arguments to rationalize an anti-AA stand, thereby alienating many badly needed stable members, would do well to re-evaluate and reconsider the effects of that kind of behavior. Narcotics Anonymous is a spiritual fellowship. Love, tolerance, patience and cooperation are essential if we are to live up to that.

Let's pull together our energies into our personal spiritual development through our own Twelve Steps. Let's carry our own message clearly. There's a lot of work to be done, and we need each other if we are to do it effectively. Let's get on with it in a spirit of NA unity.

(Reprinted from Newslines Vol. 2, No. 6.)

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<http://www.na.org/bull13.htm>

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+++Message 485. Lois Wilson's 1944 Grapevine Article
From: Lash, William (Bill) 8/26/2002 6:42:00 AM

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BILL'S WIFE REMEMBERS WHEN HE AND SHE
AND THE FIRST A.A.s WERE VERY YOUNG

Christmas Issue, 1944, A.A. Grapevine

As the wife of an early A.A., some of our experiences and my reactions to my husband's changed life may be interesting to other wives. Bill was an alcoholic, I believe, from the first drink he ever took, just a few months before our marriage. From then on, for seventeen years, I did everything I could think of to keep him away from liquor.

I will tell a little of our life before A.A. to help explain some of my later emotions. Bill and I had no children, so I soon felt that my job in life was to help Bill straighten himself out. As time went on, he earnestly tried to stop drinking. He was always very remorseful and perplexed the mornings-after. We would then resolve to lick this liquor situation together, launching off on some new tack.

As his drinking got worse, all decision and responsibility had to be taken by me. It was lucky that we were companionable, for gradually as our social contacts were broken we were thrust back on each other for company. In order to get away from alcohol over the week ends, I used to engineer some sort of outing, as we both loved the outdoors. If our pocketbook was flat, we might take the subway to the Dyckman Street ferry and hike along the Palisades to some scenic spot where we would nibble our sandwiches and gaze at the view. Or we might ferry to Staten Island and walk there; perhaps broiling a steak over a campfire. We have hired a rowboat at Yonkers and, using a bathtowel as a sail, floated up the Hudson, to a spit of land near Nyack, where we camped and tried to sleep. We once went so far to get away from alcohol that we both gave up our jobs and took a whole year off. This we spent motorcycling and camping over half the United States.

These trips, although good for Bill's health, did nothing towards his permanent sobriety. In fact, his alcoholism grew steadily more serious. He lost job after job until I became entirely hopeless about him.

And then suddenly and finally Bill straightened out through the help of an old friend. At once I was convinced of his complete change and was of course extremely happy. Bill began to go to religious meetings and to work feverishly with alcoholics. I would go to meetings too and would try to share his newfound enthusiasms. He always had some drunk in tow and would work all night or get up in the middle of the night to go to the suburbs if one called him. We had drunks all over the house; sometimes as many as five lived there at one time.

One drunk committed suicide in the house after having sold about 700 dollars worth of our clothes and luggage. Another slid down the coal chute from the street to the cellar when we refused him the front door. Two others took to fighting, and one chased the other all around the house with a carving knife. The intended victim was saved by a third drunk, who delivered the knife-minding one a knockout blow. An alcoholic who was living in the basement was invited up for a pancake breakfast. After eating his share, he suddenly put on his hat and started out the door remarking that he was going to Childs for PLENTY of pancakes.

Bill had found himself a job about this time; and it used to take him away from home a great deal and I was left with one or more alcoholics to look after. Once one of these boys lay in the vestibule all night and screamed invectives at me because I would not let him in. He was so loud the passers-by

all stopped, looked and listened. Another time it was 4 a.m. before I succeeded in towing a drunk home. He was anxious to be at his job the next morning and we had gone out around midnight to look for a doctor, having been unable to get one to come to the house at that hour. I helped his shaky steps up and down stoops, lit his cigarettes for him and finally, when we could not rouse a doctor, held a drink to his lips in a bar. When I asked him how he then felt he said, 'Well, a bird can't fly on one wing.'" After a few more drinks I managed to get him home, but he did not get to his job the next morning. I was once suddenly taken sick, and when my sister arrived to nurse me she found five men milling around in the living room, one of them muttering, 'One woman can look after five drunks but five drunks cannot look after one woman.'"

Now to describe my reactions to it all. When Bill first sobered up I was terribly happy but soon, without my realizing it, I began to resent the fact that Bill and I never spent any time together any more. I stayed at home while he went off somewhere scouting up new drunks or working with old ones. My life's job of sobering up Bill with all its former responsibilities was suddenly taken away from me. I had not yet found anything to fill the void. And then there was the feeling of being on the outside of a very tight little clique of alcoholics into which no mere wife could possibly enter. I did not understand what was going on within myself until one Sunday, Bill asked me to go with him to a meeting. To my own surprise as well as his I burst forth with, 'Damn all your meeting,' and threw my shoe at him as hard as I could.

This bad display of temper woke me up. I realized that I had been wallowing in self pity; that Bill's change was simply miraculous; that his feverish activity with alcoholics was absolutely necessary to his sobriety; and that if I did not want to be left way behind I had better jump on the bandwagon, too!

Bill's wife, Lois Wilson

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+++Message 486. The Washingtonians
From: mmwebs1031 8/26/2002 1:48:00 PM

II
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Hello All,
I am new to this group and am not sure how it works, I have a question and I guess I should just post it to the entire group, perhaps someone will know the answer or can point me to the proper reference:
Is it true that Bill W. learned of the Washingtonian Society only while writing his essay about the 10th tradition - that the

Washingtonians eventual downfall was not part of the knowledge and experience that shaped the creation of the tenth tradition - rather it was only used as an illustration once the tradition was already written and adopted? Peace, Peggy W

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+++Message 487. Re: The Washingtonians
From: Ernest Kurtz 8/26/2002 4:24:00 PM

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Hi Peggy,
Best evidence suggests that Bill W. learned of the Washingtonians only from Prof. Milton Maxwell, an AA trustee. That would put the time in the late 1940s. The Traditions began to be hammered out in the mid-1940s, largely under impetus of Earl T. of Chicago. If you can get your hands on some Grapevines from the period, you will see them being worked out.
ernie kurtz

mmwebs1031 wrote:

>
> Hello All,
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> question and I guess I should just post it to the entire group,
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>
>
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++++Message 488. Northern California H&I Committee
From: joannagw 8/26/2002 8:57:00 PM

II
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Hi All:

I need all the info I can get about the Northern California H&I
Committee, namely

- a. why they refused to join up with GSO, and when
- b. who believes they are in violation of Tradition 9 and who believes they are not, and why
- c. Any other info or opinions or experience anyone has with them, and any writing there is on them-- where I would be able to read about them

I have just moved to Northern California and I am trying to comprehend them and work with them and around them.

Thanks,

Joanna W.

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++++Message 489. Lois Wilson 1955 AA Grapevine Article
From: Lash, William (Bill) 8/27/2002 8:21:00 AM

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Convention News

FAMILIES OF ALCOHOLICS AT THE AA CONVENTION IN ST. LOUIS

Many families from all over the country are making plans for going to the big AA Convention in St. Louis, starting July 1, to celebrate AA's Twentieth Anniversary. It will be an outstanding event, not only for AAs but for their close relatives, too.

The Al-Anon Family Groups, to which many of these wives, husbands, parents, and children belong, have planned an extensive program to interest and inspire these relatives, whether or not they belong to Al-Anon.

During the daytime on Friday and Saturday, while AA is holding sessions primarily for alcoholics, Al-Anon will hold similar meetings. There will be open and panel discussions on such subjects as:

What to do about the children of alcoholics

How to apply the Twelve Steps to ourselves

The adjustments necessary between husbands and wives, after AA

How the Family Groups can help you and the alcoholic alike

Explanation of what the Al-Anon Headquarters is, and what it does

Reports from Al-Anon groups all over the country

Four members from Al-Anon Headquarters will be on hand to help you in any way they can. Panels will be selected from Al-Anon members of groups all over this country and Canada. And one member from Sydney, Australia, who is accompanying her husband to the Convention, has been asked to lead a meeting.

A Reception Committee will try to make sure that everyone becomes well-acquainted, will know where and when the meetings take place, where coffee can be obtained at any time of the day or night, and where small gatherings are meeting for luncheon get-togethers.

Of course everyone at the Convention - AAs and relatives alike - will all want to attend the big open AA meetings on Friday and Saturday evenings and on Sunday morning.

It is hoped that Bill's mother will be well enough to attend the Convention. One of the outstanding events will be a reception for her, if she is able to be there.

Sight-seeing trips and a program have also been arranged for the wives of Conference Delegates who will accompany their husbands to St. Louis for the Fifth Annual General Service Conference of AA, the week of June 26th, immediately preceding the Twentieth Anniversary Convention. Irma, our Program Chairman, and I will be on hand all week to do what we can to make the pre-Convention stay of the wives of delegates both interesting and profitable.

All who attend the Convention - families as well as AAs - must register in advance. If you are coming with your AA member, be sure he or she has registered for you.

If you are coming unaccompanied by an AA be sure that you yourself register. Send in your \$5.00 registration fee and make your hotel reservations well in advance direct to: Hotels Convention Reservation Bureau for AA, 911 Locust St., St. Louis 1, Missouri.

If you have any suggestions for subjects you would like discussed at the

Al-Anon meetings, write them to: Irma Flynn, Program Chairman, Box 1475, Grand Central Annex, New York 17, N.Y.

This Twentieth Anniversary should be an experience which will never be forgotten by anyone who attends.

See you in St. Louis!

Lois W.

May 1955, AA Grapevine

IMPORTANT NOTICE

To be certain of getting the accommodations you desire, please note that all hotel room reservations in St. Louis for the convention period are made through the Hotels Convention Reservation Bureau, 911 Locust St., St. Louis 1. Do not write direct to a particular hotel, since all its available rooms have been 'sold out' to the Reservation Bureau.

To assure completely fair treatment to all convention-goers, General Service Headquarters has assigned full responsibility for hotel reservations to the Reservation Bureau in St. Louis. Applications for rooms should be made on the special Convention application forms sent to all groups in November. Additional application forms may be obtained by writing to P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Annex, New York 17, N.Y.

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+++Message 490. Re: Northern California H&I Committee
From: Dean C 8/27/2002 9:54:00 AM

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The Northern California Hospital and Institution (H&I) Committee is a subcommittee of the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous (NCCAA). Both began before there was a General Service structure.

I don't know that there was ever a "refusal" to join the General Service structure. I have heard expressed a sense that, because the committee gets the job done, there's no reason to change what it's doing.

There are two substantial documents available about H&I. One is called "How It Works ... Policy and Procedures." There is also a historical booklet. I can't find my copy right now and I forget the name of

it.

Either should be available from your local H&I committee. There are other documents available as well, such as a photo history book maintained by the H&I Archivist. H&I maintains an archives in Walnut Creek (it shares space with our California Northern Coastal Area Archives Committee).

H&I has regular business meetings that I'm certain you could attend.

An H&I liaison attends our monthly Area General Service Committee meeting in Petaluma on the fourth Saturday of each month. I'm fairly certain that there is a liaison to the California Northern Interior Area as well.

If you have no local H&I committee, or your local Central Office or General Service District Committee can't help, another point of contact would be your Area Delegate (both Northern California Delegates are members of the NCCAA steering committee). Either of those two people would be able to provide you with the appropriate contacts.

-- Dean C.

----- Original Message -----

From: "joannagw" <joannagw@earthlink.net>
To: "AA History Lovers" <AAHistoryLovers@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, August 26, 2002 6:57 PM
Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Northern California H&I Committee

Hi All:

I need all the info I can get about the Northern California H&I Committee, namely

- a. why they refused to join up with GSO, and when
- b. who believes they are in violation of Tradition 9 and who believes they are not, and why
- c. Any other info or opinions or experience anyone has with them, and any writing there is on them-- where I would be able to read about them

I have just moved to Northern California and I am trying to comprehend them and work with them and around them.

Thanks,

Joanna W.

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+++Message 491. Alcoholics Anonymous Hospital and
Institution Committee of Northern California
From: Ron K. Long 8/27/2002 11:11:00 PM

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August 27, 2002
El Cajon, California

Alcoholics Anonymous Hospital and

Institution Committee of Northern California
The Legacy of Service
By Ron Long

"A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

Alcoholics Anonymous, Tradition Nine

"When Tradition Nine was first written, it said that 'Alcoholics Anonymous needs the least possible organization.' In years since then, we have changed our minds about that. Today, we are able to say with assurance that Alcoholics Anonymous -- A.A. as a whole -- should never be organized at all. Then, in seeming contradiction, we proceed to create special service boards and committees which in themselves are organized. ..."

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 172

"Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

Alcoholics Anonymous, Tradition Five

The early years of Alcoholics Anonymous provided the Fellowship most of the experiences, some hard lessons to learn for a few, which led to the realization in later years of the need of developing the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts for World Service of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The evolutionary experience of Tradition Nine began at the State of California prison in Tamal, California on the San Francisco bay. In 1942 Clinton Duffy, warden of San Quentin prison in Tamal, had realized that most of the inmates'

felony convictions were associated with individual cases of alcoholism. Warden Duffy contacted an A.A. member in Richmond, California, Warren T. and described the alcoholic realities at San Quentin.

Warren was joined by Ricardo, an inmate, in holding the first meeting at San Quentin in 1942. The development of the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous, Hospital and Institution Committee led in June of 1946, when the Hospital and Institution Committee was invited to carry the message to incarcerated inmates at Folsom Prison.

in 1947 the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous, Hospital and Institution Committee had been established. NCA communicated its purpose and structure to New York, prior to A.A. in New York fully establishing the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous, Hospital and Institution Committee during the later years of its growth formalized H&I's Purpose very succinctly. "The only purpose of the Hospital & Institution Committee of the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the alcoholic who is confined. The activities of this Committee are based on, and governed by, the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous."

The Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous, Hospital and Institution Committee grew to the Service level today in carrying the A.A. message into most of the jails, prisons, psychiatric facilities, hospital programs and treatment units where the suffering alcoholic is either confined or restricted from attending meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous in the community.

NCCAA and its Southern California panels separated in the late 1970s. The growth of the hospitals and institutions covered by H&I had become so vast throughout California that Southern California members, for certain tired of the long monthly drive to San Francisco or Stockton from such cities as San Diego and Los Angeles to attend the business meetings, joined the Southern California Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Office. NCCAA has continued to function upon its foundation, Tradition Nine.

(Most of the historical details provided here are from Policy and History of Hospital and Institution Committee Service Work, NCCAA, 1972)

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+++Message 493. Re: Chronological Listing
From: Jan 8/28/2002 7:52:00 AM

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It would be fascinating, as John suggested, if someone could come up with a list of when the first AA meeting started in each state (and foreign country, for that matter).

I don't know if this is 100 percent accurate, but all of the old-timers in my state (Vermont) who got sober in the 1940s, say Vermont was the last state of the original 48 to have an AA meeting.

This is certainly ironic, because both of our co-founders were born in Vermont, and both maintained close contact with the state throughout their lives.

Bill W. was born in East Dorset and is buried in the small cemetery there, along with his wife Lois. Two of the houses he lived in as a child and adolescent are now owned by a private foundation and operated as a retreat house and AA museum/library.

Dr. Bob was born in St. Johnsbury. Although local AAs were unable to come up with the money to buy the house he lived in as a child, it is now owned by an outpatient alcohol treatment center, and AA meetings are held there several days a week.

To this day, there is considerable debate as to whether the first AA meeting in Vermont was established in Burlington, Montpelier, or North Bennington. Each locations has its partisans who insist it was the first meeting.

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++++Message 494. The 12 Step Lockstep?
From: JKNIGHTBIRD@aol.com 8/28/2002 9:16:00 AM

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Breaking Out of the 12-Step Lockstep

Commentary

by Maia Szalavitz

(Originally published June 9, 2002 as an Op-Ed commentary on page B03 of the Washington Post. © 2002 The Washington Post Company.)

In the 1980s and '90s, 12-step programs like Alcoholics Anonymous were the gold standard for addiction treatment. Even among the non-addicted, they had become an accepted part of American culture. In Tim Robbins's 1992 film, "The Player," the title character attended AA meetings not because he drank too much but because that's where the deals were being made. In 1995, New York magazine suggested that single women attend AA to meet men.

But today, the recovery movement -- with its emphasis on childhood victimization, lifetime attendance at 12-step groups and complete abstinence from all psychoactive substances -- has fallen from pop culture favor. "There was a time when it was almost the 'in thing' to say you were in recovery," says William White, author of "Slaying the Dragon," a history of addiction treatment. Thankfully, that is no longer the case.

Vogue, Elle and the New York Times Magazine have recently run articles critical of the recovery movement. The "addictions" section of the bookstore -- once taking up several bookcases in superstores -- has shrunk to a few shelves, with a growing proportion of critical books. By the late '90s, the number of inpatient rehab facilities offering treatment centered on the 12-step process was half what it had been earlier in the decade. And AA membership, which grew explosively from the late '70s through the late '80s, has held steady at about 2 million since 1995.

Still, it is difficult to say goodbye to an organization and philosophy that may have helped save my life. Between the ages of 17 and 23, I was addicted to cocaine and then heroin. For the next 12 years, I was an often enthusiastic participant in 12-step recovery. Eventually, however, it became difficult to imagine defining myself for the rest of my life in relation to behavior that had taken up so few years of it.

During my last five years in the program, I had become increasingly uncomfortable with what it presented as truth: the notion, for example, that addiction is a "chronic, progressive disease" that can only be arrested by 12-stepping. The more research I did, the more I learned that much of what I had been told in rehab was wrong. And yet, I'd indisputably gotten better. Once an unemployed, 80-pound wreck, I had become a healthy, productive science journalist. That science part, however, became the root of my problem with a model based on anecdote as anodyne.

The 12-step model has always been rife with contradiction. Its adherents recognize, for example, that addiction is a disease, not a sin. But their treatment isn't medical; it's praying, confession and meeting. And while they claim that the belief in a "God of your understanding" on which the program rests is spiritual, not religious, every court that has ever been asked

whether ordering people into such programs violates the separation of church and state has disagreed with the "non-religious" label.

So why have the contradictions come to the fore now? For me, the first step came in 2000 when I wrote about New York's Smithers Addiction Treatment and Research Center and its attempts to modernize treatment. Its director, Alex DeLuca, saw that options needed to be expanded beyond AA. Guided by DeLuca, Smithers began publishing studies funded by the National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse showing that adding treatment options, including support for moderation rather than abstinence, was effective.

However, when a group of people in recovery learned that those options included moderation, they protested, and DeLuca was fired. Imagine cancer or AIDS patients demonstrating against evidence-based treatment offering more options. This deeply distressed me, as did AA's religious aspects. In any other area of medicine, if a physician told you the only cure for your condition was to join a support group that involves "turning your will and your life" over to God (AA's third step), you'd seek a second opinion.

The insistence on the primacy of God in curing addiction also means that treatment can't change in response to empirical evidence. Which leaves us with a rehab system based more on faith than fact. Nowhere is this clearer than in the field's response to medication use. The National Institute on Drug Abuse is pouring big bucks into developing "drugs to fight drugs" but, once approved, they sit on the shelves because many rehab facilities don't believe in medication. Until 1997, for example, the well-known rehab facility Hazelden refused to provide antidepressants to people who had both depression and addiction.

Those who promote just one means of recovery are right to find medication threatening. When I finally tried antidepressants, after years of resisting "drugs" because I'd been told they might lead to relapse, my disillusionment with the recovery movement grew. Years of groups and talking couldn't do what those pills did: allow me not to overreact emotionally, and thus to improve my relationships and worry less. I didn't need to "pray for my character defects to be lifted" (AA's 6th and 7th steps) -- I needed to fix my brain chemistry.

This is not to say that I didn't learn anything through recovery groups. The problem is their insistence that their solutions should trump all others. Many recovering people now use medication and groups both -- but within the movement there is still an enormous hostility toward this and a sense that people on medications are somehow cheating by avoiding the pain that leads to emotional growth.

Another contradiction in the notion of 12-step programs as a medical treatment shows up in the judicial system. Logically, if addiction were a disease, prison and laws would have no place in its treatment. However, to

secure support from the drug-war establishment, many 12-step treatment providers argue that addiction is a disease characterized by "denial" -- despite research showing that addicts are no more likely to be in denial than people with other diseases, and that most addicts tell the truth about their drug use when they won't be punished for doing so.

Because of "denial," however, many in-patient treatment providers use methods that would be unheard of for any other condition: restrictions on food and medications, limits on sleep, hours of forced confessions and public humiliation, bans on contact with relatives and, of course, threats of prison for noncompliance.

If these programs wanted what was best for their patients, they would support measures to fund more treatment and divert people from jail. Watching famous 12-steppers such as Martin Sheen fight against California's Proposition 36, which mandates treatment rather than punishment for drug possession, was the final straw for me.

If their argument is that people won't attend treatment without the threat of prison, how do they explain all the alcoholics they treat? How, for that matter, do they explain that 12-step programs were started by volunteers? Their opposition only makes sense in the context of a view of addicts as sinners, not patients.

The view that one can only recover via the moral improvement of the 12 steps is doing more harm than good. It is supporting bad drug policy, preventing people from getting the treatment they need and hampering research.

Yet it is important not to dismiss 12-step programs entirely. They provide a supportive community and should be recommended as an option for people with addictions. Let evidence-based research determine how people are treated medically for drug problems.

Maia Szalavitz, a New York writer, is co-author of "Recovery Options: The Complete Guide" (Wiley).

Jocie in Chicago- Please understand the above views represent those of the author..... not me! I'm a grateful recovering alcoholic, working the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, a day at a time, by the grace of my HP.

JKNIGHTBIRD

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++++Message 496. Re: Re: Chronological Listing
From: ricktompkins 8/28/2002 5:22:00 PM

II
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Hello Group,
In Illinois, the first meeting was held in Evanston, at the home of Earl T. on the first Wednesday of September 1939. The first Open Meeting in Illinois happened before the end of that same month.
Today, Area 19 Chicago holds its "All Chicago Open" to commemorate the first meetings, and the attendance is 13,000 AAs---quite an increase from the original six at the 1939 meeting.
In my own Delegate Area 20, the first meeting held outside the Chicago Chapter was located in Sterling, Illinois (40 miles east of the Moline and Mississippi River border), on a March Wednesday night in 1943 at the home of Ken S.
It took three years for Ken to assemble a few AAs, and it took Earl two years to find other members to call the first meetings.

Yours in the Fellowship,
Rick T.
Northern Illinois Area 20 Historian

----- Original Message -----
From: "Jan" <mollymuffy@yahoo.com>
To: <AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 28, 2002 7:52 AM
Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Re: Chronological Listing

| It would be fascinating, as John suggested, if someone could come up
| with a list of when the first AA meeting started in each state (and
| foreign country, for that matter).
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++++Message 497. RE: Re: Chronological Listing
From: Robert Stonebraker 8/28/2002 10:40:00 PM

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Dear AA history lovers,

Jan wrote: It would be fascinating, as John suggested, if someone could come up with a list of when the first AA meeting started in each state (and

foreign country, for that matter).

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This information is from our Northern Indiana Archival Bulletin -- Volume 1 (1998) These are excerpts from a talk by Dean B. in late 1954 or early 1955. A copy of this Bulletin is available at G.S.O. Archives.

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How and when A.A. started in Indiana

A.A. first came into Indiana through Evansville, of that I am reasonably certain, due to correspondence with one J(ohn) D. H(olmes), who now resides in Akron, Ohio, where he made his original contact as the eighth man in the organization, in October 1936, some seventeen months after the founding steps in that same city. Mrs. H(olmes), parents were Evansville residents and on the occasion of a visit there in May 1938, the couple decided to stay. His search for alcoholics who might be helped was not especially rewarding for some time, although he did make several contacts. There may have been some informal gatherings previously. but Mr. H(olmes) has advised that what he terms the first regular established A.A. meeting was held in his little four-room house, 420 South Den by Street. in April or May of 1940.

Meanwhile, in Indianapolis, that same spring, a man who had been sober on his own for almost three years read the Liberty magazine article on A.A. and sent to New York for what information was available, but experienced little reaction from what he received. This man was the late, beloved Doherty S(heerin). Later in the same year, Irvin S. M(eyerson) of the Cleveland group visited Mr. S(heerin) and took him and a Mr. Barr to Evansville to meet Mr. Holmes. Hope was revived in D(ohr)'s breast, he once told me, so that when he returned to Indianapolis, he soon interested another sufferer in the program on or about October 28, 1940, the date now marked as the founding of the movement in the capital city.

(end of quote)

Sent by Bob S., from Indiana

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+++Message 498. 1950 Grapevine Article by Lois Wilson
From: Lash, William (Bill) 8/29/2002 9:00:00 AM

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...it might have been the time...

'I too needed spiritual development'

By Lois

February 1950 AA Grapevine

It is hard to say just when Alcoholics Anonymous began. It may have been at the time a friend came to see my husband, Bill. Or it may have been at the moment of Bill's spiritual experience. Most AAs feel it is the time six months later when he met Dr. Bob in Akron and, together, they started to help other alcoholics who wanted to be rid of their addiction.

But for me it was the day I first saw the released expression on my husband's face. We had been married 17 years, and were compatible and companionable. Our interests were similar and we both deeply desired and strove for the other's welfare. The only, but considerable block to our happiness was Bill's uncontrolled drinking. In early years he said that he could stop when he wanted and I thought I'd soon be able to make life so complete for him that he would wish to quit drinking entirely. Much later when he really did want to stop, he was absolutely unable to do so, and we both then became terribly confused and frustrated. Oddly enough he had been in other matters a person of strong will power, but his will seemed to melt away where alcohol was concerned. In his remorse and disappointment he was a tragic and heart breaking figure. I too felt myself a failure, for despite every endeavor, I had not been able to help him in time, nor could I aid him in the least in his final struggle for freedom.

Today I can talk and write about these intimate details of our life together. While Bill was drinking, I dared not even speak to my family about it and tried to hide the fact of his alcoholism in every way possible. Now that I have learned that Bill was actually a very sick man, that awful feeling of disgrace has left me. I have also learned how much help the telling of such experiences can be to those who are going through similar ones. After fifteen years in AA the old trying times are so far away and foreign to Bill's and my present way of life that it seems like the experience of someone else.

After Bill left the hospital for the last time, he began to think of the thousands of alcoholics who wanted to be rid of their malady. If they could be made to feel desperate enough, they might have a releasing experience just like his. He would hold before them the medical verdict that alcoholism was hopeless. So tirelessly, day and night, we worked. Our home was filled with alcoholics in various stages of sobriety. As many as five of them lived with us at one time. But none of them stayed sober for long. Then started a long process of trial and error, certain ideas were retained, but many discarded.

It was in June 1935 that Bill went to Akron, Ohio on a business trip. The venture failed. He finally contacted Dr. Bob, an Akron surgeon soon to become cofounder of Alcoholics Anonymous. Bob too wanted above all to stop drinking. He and his wife, Anne, had done everything they could.

Something passed between these two men. There was real mutuality this time. By example they showed how it worked. Thus AA spread like a chain letter.

Bill had learned a great deal. At first he had tried to put every alcoholic he met in the way of a spiritual experience just like his own. As AA grew, he realized that what had come to him in a few dramatic minutes usually dawns on others in months or years. Sometimes the alcoholic himself does not even realize his own development, though his words and actions soon speak for him, for he is doing now what, of himself, he was unable to do before. He is staying sober and helping other people as never before. He is gaining a serenity, a joy in living.

Watching Bill and the other men at the meetings, I noticed many of them had begun to grow by leaps and bounds. This made me look at myself. I had been given a sound religious upbringing and felt I had done for Bill all a good wife could do, although this was strangely mixed with a sense of failure. At first it never occurred to me that I too needed spiritual development. I did not realize that by living such an abnormal life I might have become twisted, losing a sense of true values. After awhile I saw that unless I jumped on the bandwagon too, I would be left way behind. The AA Program I found could be most helpful to the non-alcoholic as well, a fact thousands of alcoholics' relatives and friends now apply to their own lives. Those Clinton Street days are full of memories. Some of them are humorous, some tragic. But most of them bring back a warm glow of hope and courage, of friendship and rebirth. For the fellowship in AA is unique. Ties are made overnight that it would take years to develop elsewhere. No one needs a false front. All barriers are down. Some who have felt outcasts all their lives, now know they really belong. From feeling as if they were dragging anchor through life, they suddenly sail free before the wind. For now they can be of tremendous and peculiar use to others having a dire need like their own.

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++++Message 500. 1st group in Northern California
From: Art B 8/29/2002 8:33:00 PM

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Dear John,

According to the history of Al-Anon in Northern California, called "Journey to Recovery", "Mrs. Kellogg [of the cereal family] of Monterey, California purchased the first big book delivered to California for her husband in 1939." and "Two alcoholics formed a group in Oakland and met for the first time in April 1941."

I don't know if there were earlier groups in Southern California.

Art B.

----- Original Message -----

From: <AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com>

To: <AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com>

Sent: Wednesday, August 28, 2002 8:30 PM

Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Digest Number 84

>

> To unsubscribe from this group, send an email to:

> AAHistoryLovers-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

>

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> There are 5 messages in this issue.

>

> Topics in this digest:

>

> 1. Chronological listing

> From: John Wikelius <nov85_gr@snowhill.com>

> 2. Re: Chronological Listing

> From: Jan <mollymuffy@yahoo.com>

> 3. The 12 Step Lockstep?

> From: JKNIGHTBIRD@aol.com

> 4. Re: The 12 Step Lockstep?

> From: remcuster@aol.com

> 5. Re: Re: Chronological Listing

> From: "ricktompkins" <ricktompkins@ameritech.net>

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> Message: 1

> Date: Tue, 27 Aug 2002 21:54:47 -0500

> From: John Wikelius <nov85_gr@snowhill.com>

> Subject: Chronological listing

>

> Is there a listing of when each state joined the AA movement? I think I

have seen something in the past but don't know where I saw it.

>

> John Wikelius

> 301 North Rawls Street

> Enterprise, Alabama 36330

> 334-347-1595

> May God richly bless you!

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> [This message contained attachments]

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> Message: 2

> Date: Wed, 28 Aug 2002 05:52:28 -0700 (PDT)

> From: Jan <mollymuffy@yahoo.com>

> Subject: Re: Chronological Listing

>

> It would be fascinating, as John suggested, if someone could come up

> with a list of when the first AA meeting started in each state (and

> foreign country, for that matter).

>

> I don't know if this is 100 percent accurate, but all of the

> old-timers in my state (Vermont) who got sober in the 1940s, say

> Vermont was the last state of the original 48 to have an AA meeting.

>

> This is certainly ironic, because both of our co-founders were born

> in Vermont, and both maintained close contact with the state

> throughout their lives.

>

> Bill W. was born in East Dorset and is buried in the small cemetery

> there, along with his wife Lois. Two of the houses he lived in as a

> child and adolescent are now owned by a private foundation and

> operated as a retreat house and AA museum/library.

>

> Dr. Bob was born in St. Johnsbury. Although local AAs were unable to

> come up with the money to buy the house he lived in as a child, it is

> now owned by an outpatient alcohol treatment center, and AA meetings

> are held there several days a week.

>

> To this day, there is considerable debate as to whether the first AA

> meeting in Vermont was established in Burlington, Montpelier, or

> North Bennington. Each locations has its partisans who insist it was

> the first meeting.

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> Do You Yahoo!?

> Yahoo! Finance - Get real-time stock quotes

> <http://finance.yahoo.com>

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> Message: 3

> Date: Wed, 28 Aug 2002 14:16:58 EDT

> From: JKNIGHTBIRD@aol.com

> Subject: The 12 Step Lockstep?

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> Breaking Out of the 12-Step Lockstep

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> Commentary

> by Maia Szalavitz

> (Originally published June 9, 2002 as an Op-Ed commentary on page B03 of
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> Washington Post. © 2002 The Washington Post Company.)

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> But today, the recovery movement -- with its emphasis on childhood

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> says William White, author of "Slaying the Dragon," a history of addiction

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> So why have the contradictions come to the fore now? For me, the first
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Alex

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> However, when a group of people in recovery learned that those options included moderation, they protested, and DeLuca was fired. Imagine cancer or
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> This is not to say that I didn't learn anything through recovery groups. The
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> JKNIGHTBIRD

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> Message: 4

> Date: Wed, 28 Aug 2002 18:17:28 EDT

> From: remcuster@aol.com

> Subject: Re: The 12 Step Lockstep?

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> Interesting article. I wonder if the author had ever read the "Concepts", and especially Bill's response to this type of criticism in "Concept 12, the

> Fifth Warranty". (especially pages 73 and 74). (It can be found in the A.A.

> Service Manual)

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> Hank (remcuster)

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> [This message contained attachments]

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> Message: 5
> Date: Wed, 28 Aug 2002 17:22:04 -0500
> From: "ricktompkins" <ricktompkins@ameritech.net>
> Subject: Re: Re: Chronological Listing
>
> Hello Group,
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> Northern Illinois Area 20 Historian
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> To: <AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com>
> Sent: Wednesday, August 28, 2002 7:52 AM
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> Your use of Yahoo! Groups is subject to <http://docs.yahoo.com/info/terms/>

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II
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+++Message 501. 1990 Boston Globe Article on AA
From: Lash, William (Bill) 8/31/2002 8:01:00 AM

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FORGOING CHURCH MANY FIND HELP IS 12 STEPS AWAY

Author: By Richard Higgins, Boston Globe Staff

Date: 04/29/1990 Page: 1

Section: NATIONAL/FOREIGN

NEW YORK -- The tidal wave success of "12-step" recovery programs has sparked a grass-roots spiritual renewal across the country, according to theologians, pastoral workers and clergy involved in the recovery movement.

Each week, 200 types of 12-step recovery groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Overeaters Anonymous draw 15 million Americans to 500,000 meetings across the nation, according to estimates by Terri Gorski, a therapist who has studied the movement, and the National Self-Help Clearinghouse based here.

The groups are based on the 12 steps to recovery, outlined by the founders of AA, which include admitting one's powerlessness over an addiction, taking an inventory of inner strengths as well as weaknesses, and drawing strength from the group and a "higher power."

Though the vast majority of the groups are formed to help people deal with addictions to alcohol and drugs, and the effects those addictions have on others, the groups also deal with a range of problems from agoraphobia, the fear of public places, to xenophobia, the fear of foreigners.

However, this spiritual renewal movement is largely bypassing organized religion.

"Twelve-step people are experiencing a spiritual awakening that should make every pastor and person of faith weep for joy," said Rev. Patricia Daley, a Presbyterian minister who is working on ways churches can connect with 12-step groups. "But somehow, we of the institutional church seem to be missing out on the party."

Rev. Daley spoke at a conference on "Twelve-Step Theologies" at Union Theological Seminary, which drew more than 250 theologians, clergy and lay people who are involved in the field of addiction and recovery.

Speakers analyzed recovery groups as a sectarian spiritual movement from which churches and synagogues might learn. They also pointed out the shortcomings of the 12-step recovery model in dealing with the social and political structures of oppression in society.

Twelve-step groups, sometimes called "the secret church," have elements of organized religion. Alcoholics Anonymous, for example, has apostle-like founders: Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith. Some of the groups also have a form of holy book, such as the AA founders' so-called "Big Book." Other such elements are ritual structure, use of testimony, meetings that end in

prayer and even pilgrimages to houses in which the founders lived, religion scholars have noted. Twelve-step members run the gamut from those who believe in and refer to "God" to those who are uncomfortable with referring to a higher power. Some new 12-step groups in Boston and Cambridge expressly omit reference to a higher power.

One speaker used the metaphor of early Christians in the catacombs to describe 12-step groups, which often meet in church basements and have no specific leader.

While many accounts of the movement in the national press and broadcast media tend toward tongue-in-cheek criticism of their trendiness, pain and suffering drive people through the doors of their first 12-step meeting, conference participants said.

"Addictions are a life-and-death issue for people who have them," said Beverly Wildung Harrison, a feminist theologian, who also warned that "addiction is not a metaphor that can be spread too loosely to express every ill in this society."

The appeal of the groups, like that of AA, the pioneer 12-step program founded in 1935, is that they allow people who could not stop addictive or compulsive behavior alone to find power and help in telling their stories to others -- and in sharing others' pain.

The success of 12-step programs in recent years has been a bittersweet irony for organized religion, which, according to Rev. Daley and others, has failed to reach out to 12-step participants.

While millions of Americans troop into the meeting rooms of churches and synagogues on weeknights or Sunday nights for recovery meetings, they have often been ignored by the religious communities that gather in those houses of worship.

"Sometimes one member may mutter to another about the smell of cigarette smoke that lingers after the meetings or about 'those AA people' taking up our spaces in the church parking lot," said Rev. Daley, who developed an outreach program to 12-step groups while serving a Presbyterian parish in suburban New Jersey. "But that's about it. Lost from sight, they come and

go without many good church people or synagogue members much knowing or caring."

She cited the example of a colleague in the ministry who, when presented with the possibility of welcoming 12-step members into his congregation, replied, "Well, I sure wouldn't want a bunch of drunks in my church."

Twelve-step groups may threaten churches, she said, because their spirituality "does not mean institutional religion." Members of these groups are finding their own path to a "higher power" or to God without priests, popes or ministers.

"Having hit bottom and come to themselves, these men and women have acknowledged that their lives had become unmanageable and that they were powerless to save themselves," said Rev. Daley. "They have come to believe that a power greater than themselves can restore them to sanity. In that recognition, they have made a decision to turn their wills over to the care of God. From hopelessness and helplessness, these people are discovering the reality of God's grace and forgiveness."

Instead of rejoicing in that discovery, many churches have reacted with "a note of doubt or disappointment," she said, and have shied away from efforts to integrate them.

"It's not surprising that members of 12-step programs are not pouring into the pews," she said. "In many ways, intentionally and unwittingly, we have communicated the message, 'not in my church.'"

Donald Shriver Jr., a professor and seminary president, disagreed mildly, saying that recovery groups have also neglected the churches, from which "they have something to learn."

Others suggested the limitations of the 12-step process. Rev. Carter Heyward, a feminist theologian and professor at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, said the mainstream psychotherapeutic model for addiction and recovery in America places too much emphasis on the individual and not enough on the political, social and economic "structures of injustice" in our society.

Rev. Heyward, who identified herself as a recovering alcoholic who has benefited from 12-step groups, said "the genius of AA" is its recognition that

alcoholism "is a disease of disconnection and that recovery is always relational." However the popular "addictionist model" espoused in many self-help books, she said, continues to be "sexist, racist and heterosexist" and uses the achievement of personal serenity as a substitute for achieving justice.

"I don't think serenity is possible without justice," she said in an interview. "Twelve-step programs are good at what they do best, which is helping people to stay sober and drug free and to find a more peaceful way of living, but we need more than that, in terms of raising consciousness." Addiction, she said, is exacerbated by the "alienation" of US culture and by political and social structures such as racism and sexism.

During a question period, Rev. Heywood was challenged by Rev. Kathleen Noel, a United Church of Christ minister and suicide prevention worker in Manhattan, who said that the reason AA has succeeded is that one of its "12 traditions" is to take no position on political matters. "AA was founded to help people stay sober and for no other purpose," Rev. Noel said.

Rev. Heyward later said she agreed that 12-step programs were not meant as a cure-all for US society.

Russell Davis, a professor of religion and psychiatry at Union seminary, said that in the 1980s the reigning metaphor for the growth of groups that cater to spiritual needs was "the spiritual supermarket." Today, he said, "it is more like a spiritual mall, with 12-step groups having specialty shops. The problem remains that no one specialty group integrates ministers to the whole person."

Others who critiqued the 12-step recovery process said that it has not rejuvenated the institutional church because the church has not been as honest as 12-step groups.

"It seems to me that the church is like an alcoholic still in the stages of denial" about its decline, said R. Stephen Fox, a Cornell University psychotherapist who has studied 12-step recovery programs in India and the Soviet Union.

"Until it hits bottom about its own problems, it can't begin its recovery," he said. The remark, which ended the conference, was greeted with self-effacing laughter and applause.

SIDEBAR

THE 12 STEPS

1. We admitted we were powerless over (alcohol) - that our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.
4. Made a searching and fearless inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character .
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of 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 make personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

SOURCE: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

NOTE: The use of the masculine pronoun in referring to God is the original AA language. Many 12 Step groups choose to change the pronoun to the feminine or to not use a pronoun at all.

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+++Message 502. Lois Wilson's 1953 AA Grapevine
Atricle
From: Lash, William (Bill) 9/2/2002 7:49:00 AM

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Family Circle

As non-alcoholic mates and families see the AA program...

August 1953 AA Grapevine

How One AA Wife Lives the 12 Steps

Lois W., AA's 'first lady' as the non-alcoholic wife of Bill, the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, tells the story of her own adventure in growth applying AA principles to her own life.

We have often heard it said that the Twelve Steps of AA are a way of life for anyone, if you substitute for the word 'alcohol' any particular problem of life. For a close relative of an AA, a wife or husband, even the word alcohol does not need to be changed in the First Step; simply leave out 'alcoholic' in the last, thus: 'carry the message to others, etc.'

We wives and husbands of AA in our Family Group try to live by the Twelve Steps, and the following is how one wife applies the Twelve Steps to herself:

Step 1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol...that our lives had become unmanageable.

I was just as powerless over my husband's alcoholism as he. I tried in every way I knew to control his drinking. My own life was indeed unmanageable. I was forced into doing and being that which I did not want to do or be. And I tried to manage Bill's life as well as my own. I wanted to get inside his brain and turn the screws in what I thought was the right direction. But I finally saw how mistaken I was. I, too, was powerless over alcohol.

Step 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

My thinking was distorted, my nerves over-wrought. I held fears and attitudes that certainly were not sane. I finally realized that I had to be restored to sanity also and that only by having faith in God, in AA, in my husband and myself, could this come about.

Step 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Self-sufficiency and the habit of acting as mother, nurse, caretaker, and breadwinner, added to the fact of always being considered on the credit side of the ledger with my husband on the debit side, caused me to have a smug feeling of rightness. At the same time, illogically, I felt a failure at my

life's job. All this made me blind for a long time to the fact that I needed to turn my will and my life over to the care of God. Smugness is the very worst sin of all, I do believe. No shaft of light can pierce the armour of self-righteousness.

Step 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Here is where, when I tried to be really honest, I received a tremendous shock. Many of the things that I thought I did unselfishly were, when I tracked them down, pure rationalizations - rationalizations to get my own way about something. This disclosure doubled my need to live by the 12 Steps as completely as I could

Step 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

I found this was just as necessary for me to do as it was for an alcoholic, even more so perhaps, because of my former 'mother-and-bad-boy" attitude toward Bill. Admitting my wrongs helped so much to balance our relationship, to bring it closer to the ideal of partnership in marriage.

Step 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

I came to realize there were selfish thoughts, feelings and actions that I had felt justified in keeping because of what Bill or someone else had done to me. I had to try very hard to want God to remove these. There was, for instance, my self-pity at losing Bill's companionship, now that the house was full of drunks, and we saw each other alone so seldom. At that time I didn't realize the importance of his working with other alcoholics. In order to banish his alcoholic obsession he needed to be equally obsessed by AA.

In the early days there was also my deep and unconscious resentment because someone else had done in a few minutes what I had tried my whole married life to do. Now I realize that a wife can rarely if ever do this job. The sick alcoholic feels his wife's account has been written on the credit page of life's ledger. But he knows his own has been on the debit side; therefore she cannot possibly understand. Another alcoholic, with similar debit entry, immediately identifies himself as a non-alcoholic really cannot.

This important fact took me a long time to recognize. I could find no peace of mind until I did so.

Step 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

'Humbly" was a word I never fully understood. Today it means 'in proportion," an honest relationship between myself and my fellow man, and myself and God. While striving for humility myself, it was encouraging to see my husband's growth in humility. While he was drinking he was the most

inferiority-ridden person in the world. After AA, from a doormat he bounced way up to superiority over everyone else, including me. This was pretty hard to take 'after all the good I done him." Of course few wives at first can see how natural it is for the alcoholic to feel that the most wonderful people in the world are AAs living the only true principles. Since I, too, was trying to live the AA program, this was the very point where I had to look to my own humility, regardless of my husband's progress or lack of it.

Step 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

At first I couldn't think of anyone I had harmed. But when I broke through my own smugness even a little, I saw many relatives and friends whom I had resented; I had given short, irritated answers and had even imperiled long standing friendships. In fact, I remember one friend that I threw a book at when, after a nerve-racking day, he annoyed me. (Throwing seems to have been my pet temper outlet.) I try to keep this list up to date. And I also try to shorten it.

Step 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

This is just as important for me as for the alcoholic. To have serenity and joy in living and doing, to be able to withstand the hard knocks that come along, and to help others do the same, I found I had to make specific amends for each harm done. I couldn't help others while emotionally sick myself.

Step 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

It is astounding how each time I take an inventory I find some new rationalization, some new way I have been fooling myself that I hadn't recognized before. It is so easy to fool oneself about motives. And admitting it is so hard, but so beneficial.

Step 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

I am just beginning to understand how to pray. Bargaining with God is not real prayer and asking him for what I want, even good things, I've had to learn is not the highest form of prayer. I used to think I knew what was good for me and I, the captain, would give my instructions to my Lieutenant, God, to carry out. That is very different from praying only for the knowledge of God's will and the power for me to carry it out.

Time for meditation is hard to find, I imagine, for most of us. Today's living is so involved. But I've set aside a few minutes night and morning. I am

filled with gratitude to God these days. It is one of my principal subjects for meditation; gratitude for all the love and beauty and friends around me; gratitude even for the hard days of long ago that taught me so much. At least I've made a start and have improved to some small degree my conscious contact with God.

Step 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

I am like many AAs who do not realize when their spiritual awakening occurred. Mine was a slow developing experience. Even following a sudden spiritual awakening, no one can stand still. One either moves forward, or slips backward. In retrospect I can see a change for the better between my old and new self, and I hope that tomorrow, next month, next year I shall continue to see a better new self.

And nothing has done more to move me forward than carrying the AA message to those non-alcoholics who do not yet comprehend and are still in need of the understanding and help of those who have gone before.

The Al-Anon Family Groups now number about 400. Queries and comments are welcomed at the Family Group Clearinghouse, whose mailing address is: P.O. Box 1475, Grand Central Annex, New York 17, N.Y.

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+++Message 503. Early AA Photos
From: Lash, William (Bill) 9/5/2002 7:30:00 AM

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http://www.rewritables.net/cybriety/aa_photos.htm

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+++Message 508. Robert's Rules
From: mmwebs1031 9/9/2002 1:20:00 PM

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Hello,

I am from Chicago and recently attended a business meeting that

was reduced to bedlum. It raised a question...does anyone know where in our literature procedure is laid out or Robert's Rules are pointed to specifically as a general guideline for business meetings? I have asked fellow members before and have been directed to AA's service manual - and it seems elections are covered in detail in the manual but not business meetings. I have attended many business meetings, the ones adhering to a structure always run shorter and more smoothly <-- my opinion, however, I hesitate to suggest a structure if I can't point to AA literature in support of my idea. Thanks for any input.

Enjoy your daily reprieve!

Peggy

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+++Message 509. Re: Robert's Rules
From: Charles Knapp 9/9/2002 11:57:00 PM

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I doubt you find anything like what you are looking for in any of the literature.

Like just about everything else in our program, the formats to our meeting are suggestive. It is left up to the group conscience how group meetings and business meetings are to be conducted. There are other books and guidelines

written about parliamentary procedure other than Robert's Rules of Order. Cannons Concise Guide To Rules Of Order is a one. Democratic Rules Of Order: Complete, Easy-To-Use Parliamentary Guide For Governing Meetings Of Any Size is another. Meyer's Rules of Order is still another. The US Senate and House of Representatives each has their own set of "rules of order" and a group can use any of these if it wishes to run it's meeting. It even has the right to use none of these too.

GSO would be breaking our own Traditions if it were to say you have to use Robert's Rules of order to conduct meeting. The Long Form of Tradition 4 reads: "With respect to its own affairs, each A.A. group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect A.A. as a whole without conferring with the Trustees of the General Service Board. On such issues our common welfare is paramount."

On a lighter side, the history behind Robert's Rules of Order is an

interesting one so I included it.

Henry Martyn Robert, born May 2, 1837, was an engineering officer in the regular Army. Without warning he was asked to preside over a church meeting and realized that he did not know how. He tried anyway and his embarrassment was supreme. This event, to my understanding, lasted nearly a full day. It left him determined never to attend another meeting until he knew something of parliamentary law.

Ultimately, he discovered and studied the few books then available on the subject. From time to time, due to his military duties, he was transferred to various parts of the United States where he found virtual parliamentary anarchy since each member from a different part of the country had differing ideas of correct procedure. To bring order out of chaos he decided to write Robert's Rules of Order as it came to be called.

He published the first edition of Robert's Rules of Order on February 19, 1876. After his retirement from the Army in 1901, he practiced consulting engineering devoted the last decade of his life to writing on parliamentary procedure. He died on May 11, 1923.

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smoothly <-- my opinion, however, I hesitate to suggest a structure

if I can't point to AA literature in support of my idea.
Thanks for

any input.

Enjoy your daily reprieve!

Peggy

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+++Message 511. Robert's Rules Do Not Apply To
Alcoholics Anonymous
From: Ron K. Long 9/10/2002 6:34:00 AM

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Peggy of Chicago, Illinois wrote

Hello,

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Enjoy your daily reprieve!
Peggy

Robert's Rules Do Not Apply To Alcoholics Anonymous

The Twelve Traditions, as I understand them, do not suggest any Parliamentarian, Robert's Rules or any other formal structural system which groups would be compelled to follow. On the contrary, the Fourth Tradition states, "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole." Each Alcoholics Anonymous business meeting is responsible only to its own group conscience with respect to the manner by which the business meeting is conducted. Certainly conflicts occur and someone always wants an official rule to cite to teach the angry members a lesson to change their behavior.

Of course, if such an official rule actually existed the ones who might benefit from it would not probably listen to the person citing it. That usually is the reason for conflicts occurring; some people would rather talk than listen.

On page 149 of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions a true lesson was described as "...something else that was to become an A.A. classic. It all went on a little card about golf-score size. The cover read: 'Middleton Group #1. Rule #62.' Once the card was unfolded, a single pungent sentence leaped to the eye: 'Don't take yourself too damn seriously.'"

In my opinion, Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. should publish my personal steps in participating in an A.A. General Service Office or Central Service Office or Hospital and Institution Committee business meeting.

The Ten Steps for Maintaining My Objectivity in Alcoholics Anonymous

1. Do not expect all members to be serene and rational.
2. Understand that opinions, based on preconceived ideas, will be asserted as factual by those with a glancing familiarity with A.A. literature.
3. Remember to adhere to our code, love and tolerance of others, from page 84 of the Big Book.
4. Remember Mother Teresa's words, "People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered; forgive them anyway."
5. Ask not what can this A.A. business meeting do for me, but rather, what can I do for the best interest of this A.A. business meeting? (To paraphrase John F. Kennedy).
6. Be alert to the inappropriate behaviors of others as reminders of that which I am still discontent within myself.
7. Don't take anyone else too damn seriously.
8. Be less preoccupied with the lack of perfection in others and more mindful

of the areas ahead to where I want to progress.

9. Reflect on the words of the Son of the Carpenter, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:10).

10. Never forget page 135 of the Big Book: "We have three little mottoes which are apropos. Here they are: First Things First, Live and Let Live, Easy Does It."

Happy Sobriety,

Ron Long

El Cajon, California

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+++Message 513. September 11
From: NMOlson@aol.com 9/11/2002 6:50:00 AM

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Friends,

Normally I restrict this list to AA History, but last year on this date I received many, many messages from members of AA History Buffs from around the world. When I posted word of the death of our own Father Mychal Judge at Ground Zero, and told how an AA group was started at Ground Zero, hundreds of messages flowed in -- many of them in foreign languages, to be forwarded to the group at Ground Zero.

Today I am again receiving many messages from AA members in other countries. Thank you all for these messages.

I would just like to remind everyone of what the Twenty-Four Hours a Day book says this morning in the fine print section:

"God manifests Himself in human lives as strength to overcome evil and power to resist temptation. The grace of God is that power which enables a human being to change from a useless, hopeless individual to a useful, normal person. God also manifests Himself as love -- love for other people, compassion for their problem, and a real willingness to help them. The grace of God also manifests itself as peace of mind and serenity of character. We can have plenty of power, love, and serenity in our lives if we are willing to ask God for these things each day."

And let's remember Mychal Judge's Prayer

Lord,

Take me where you want me to go;

Let me meet who you want me to meet;

Tell me what you want me to say,

and

Keep me out of your way.

Shalom and love to all.

Nancy

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++++Message 517. Sponsorship
From: Lash, William (Bill) 9/17/2002 6:30:00 AM

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WHAT CONSTITUTES A GOOD SPONSOR, AS MINNEAPOLIS SEES IT

July 1945 AA Grapevine

(Many groups have used to good advantage the sponsor system, one of which is outlined below. Other methods followed by other groups will be outlined in subsequent issues.)

1. Sincerity in A.A. and dry for certain length of time.
2. Must have friendly attitude toward new member. If that is not possible, do not accept the sponsorship.
3. Work on only one member at a time.
4. Come to all the classes with the new member.
5. Keep in close touch by telephone.
6. See that the new member comes to all the meetings and be there also.

7. See that he meets people.
8. Have older members talk to him.
9. Don't sell the club to new members.
10. Don't quote the big names in the group.
11. Uphold other members to the new member.
12. Do not encourage discussion of personalities.
13. Do not make things too easy, such as lending money, etc.
14. Help straighten out new member's financial and domestic problems by pointing out what experience has shown to be the best way.
15. When drunk goes to another sponsor with tales of persecution, if the second sponsor doesn't talk it over with the first sponsor, the issue becomes one of personalities, and the second sponsor will find that the slipper has outsmarted him.
16. Don't listen to a lot of gossip by slippers.
17. Second sponsor of same member should get in touch with the first sponsor and find out what has been done - what were the reactions of the slipper - so that he can't pull the same stuff on the second sponsor.
18. If a new member alibis about coming to classes and the Tuesday night meetings and the group meetings, after a short while, the sponsor should impress on him the importance of attendance at these meetings by both the husband and the wife. If you can't get him to come, then he has put you in a position where you cannot help him, as he will not let you. So drop him. The seed has been planted; redirect your energies elsewhere. Somewhere along the line he will be back when he wants A.A.
19. A good sponsor will not have more than two neophytes a year. But he will do a thorough job on those two.

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+++Message 519. The Third Tradition and questions about
how it came about.

From: NMOlson@aol.com 9/17/2002 11:19:00 AM

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Dear AA History Lovers,

The following are excerpts from posts asking questions about the third tradition and from some of the responses. If your post is not mentioned and you have further information which would be of help, please send it directly to the two who need the information.

Nancy

From: "davidrstack" <patchwrk@charter.net [34] >

Date: Sun Sep 8, 2002 10:12 am

Subject: Tradition 3 and Dr. Bob

I am looking for a tape to share with my 12 and 12 study group. I

am "presenting" tradition 3 on September 20th.

Tradition 3 states the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

I heard a tape played at the Florida AA Roundup back in the mid '80s where Dr. Bob Smith (I think) talking about tradition 3. In the tape he mentioned that a fellow came to the meeting in Akron OH. He had another problem other than alcohol and afraid that he would not be accepted. He was a homosexual or if you like, gay. The outcome was that he was allowed to stay. "The group decision was "What would the Master do?" as mentioned in the 12 and 12. The 12 and 12 does not mention that the fellow was a homosexual or if you like, gay. The audio tape is very specific on this point.

Do you know where I could purchase a copy of the tape?

David S.

From: "Audrey Borden" <audreyborden@earthlink.net [35] >

Date: Tue Sep 10, 2002 2:11 pm

Subject: An Introduction, A Question, & An Answer

I'm conducting research on "The Man of The Third Tradition," i.e. the man with the "double stigma" who approached Dr. Bob in Akron in 1937, asking if he could join AA.

I've searched every AA publication I can find and a good deal of the related material (published outside of AA). I am quite familiar with the standard

references to the topic (e.g. all Grapevine writings back to 1946, etc.). I've found a considerable amount on the Third Tradition, but very little about this man, for obvious reasons: his identity had to be protected.

Now, some 65 years later, I am trying to find out who he was. I plan to share what I learn in a book so others can learn about him, and so he may be recognized for his courage, his willingness to go to any lengths to get sober, and his contribution to the creation of our Third Tradition.

I'm searching for people who may have some recollection, or may know of some writing I'm unaware of (an unpublished letter, perhaps?) an oral account given by an old-timer who has since passed on? etc., regarding this brave man.

If anyone has any information (including hearsay, at this point!) I'd appreciate hearing from you.

David, I believe the tape you're looking for is from the 1985 International AA Convention in Montreal, Canada. The speaker was Barry L. (who's since passed away); the workshop was entitled "The Gay Origins of The Third Tradition." In it Barry plays a tape of Bill W. discussing the Third Tradition in a talk he (Bill) gave at the opening dinner of the 1968 World Service Conference in New York. A tape of Barry's presentation may be obtained from the IAC tape library (International Advisory Council of Homosexual Men & Women in Alcoholics Anonymous). IAC can be reached via their website.

Thanks for your assistance, -- Audrey B.

P.S. the incident involving the African American man with long blond hair ("Veronica" ;-)) who visited the AA Clubhouse in New York, occurred in 1945; the man who approached Dr. Bob in Akron did so in 1937. So it is unlikely (though possible, until proven otherwise) that Veronica is The Man of The Third Tradition.

-- Audrey

From: "Lash, William (Bill)" <wlash@avaya.com [36]>

Date: Sun Sep 8, 2002 6:10 pm

Subject: RE: [AAHistoryLovers] Tradition 3 and Dr. Bob

Dr. Bob & the Good Oldtimers says on page 240-241:

"At the same time, the earliest members began reaching out to those who might either have seemed or have felt themselves to be different. By 1939, the prevailing A.A. attitude was summed in the foreword to the Big Book, stating, 'The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking.'

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From: "Arthur Sheehan" <ArtSheehan@msn.com [37] >

Date: Tue Sep 10, 2002 12:38 am

Subject: RE: [AAHistoryLovers] Tradition 3 and Dr. Bob

In the 12&12 on Tradition Three (pages 141 - 142), Bill prefaces his story about 'the victim of another addiction' as occurring in 1937 (On the A.A. calendar it was Year Two). The philosophy of 'What would the Master do' could very well be attributed to Dr. Bob since Bill cites one of three 'elders' who were discussing the matter. There is no reference at all to homosexuality.

The documented incident involving a homosexual occurred in 1945 at the 41st Street clubhouse in New York. It is recounted in Pass It On (317 - 318) and in the book Bill W. by Francis Hartigan (182 - 183).

Arthur

From: "davidrstack" <patchwrk@charter.net [34] >

Date: Fri Sep 13, 2002 9:09 am

Subject: Tradition 3 And Bill W.

I have written previously inquiring about information on the 3rd

Tradition and Dr. Bob. I have received a tape from the 1968 open

meeting of the General Service Conference where Bill W. spoke on the traditions. I was mistaken when I thought it was Dr. Bob doing the speaking and I wish to correct myself here and now.

I am also including a transcript of the portion of the talk Bill W.

gave the conference regarding the beginnings of the formulation of

the 3rd tradition, the Man of the Third Tradition and his sexual

orientation. I have concluded that what Bill reported as "sexual

deviate" means homosexual. I am not an English scholar so forgive

the errors in punctuation etc....

Thank you all for your patience, your friendship and your willingness

to help me find this information.

In gratitude,

David S.

Bill W. talk

Open meeting

1968 General Service Conference

Talk on all the traditions

At about year two of the Akron Group, a poor devil came to Dr. Bob in a grievous state. He could qualify as an alcoholic all right. And then he said, "Dr. Bob, I've got a real problem to tell you. I don't know if I could join AA because I am sex deviate."

Well that had to go out to the group conscious. You know. Up to then it was supposed any society could say who was going to join it. And pretty soon the group conscious began to seethe and boil and it boiled over. And under no circumstances could we have such a coward and such a disgrace among us said

these gentlemen.

And you know, right then our destiny hung on a razor edge over this single case. In other words, would there be room that could exclude so called undesirability's and that caused us in that time, and for quite a time with respecting this single case, to ponder what is the more important; the reputation that we shall have. What people should think? Or is it our character.

And who are we considering our record, alcoholism is quit as unlovely. Who are we to deny a man his opportunity, any man or women.

And finally the day of resolution came. And a bunch were sitting in Dr. Bob's living room arguing what to do. Where upon dear old Bob looked around and blandly said, "Isn't it time folks to ask ourselves,' "What would the Master do in a situation like this? Would he turn this man away?"

And that is the beginning of the AA tradition that any man who has a drinking problem is a member of AA if he says so not whether we say so. Now I think that the import on this on the common welfare has already been sustained because it takes in even more territory than the confines of our fellowship. It takes in the whole world of

Alcoholics Anonymous. Their charter to freedom to join AA is assured. Indeed it was an act in general welfare.

Your message has not been posted, please send it to the two individuals who asked the question. Thanks for your cooperation.

Nancy

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++++Message 521. Re: The Third Tradition and questions
about how it came about.

From: melb 9/17/2002 7:50:00 PM

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i»¿
Hi Nancy,

I don't know how to post stuff for HistoryLovers, but I would like to allude to the letter from Arthur referring to pages 317-318 in "Pass It On." I was personally responsible for this information as it came from a telephone interview I had with Barry Leach, whom I considered a fine friend. Barry was gay but we never discussed this; it was just understood and I remember seeing him in a very depressed state shortly after his longtime partner passed away. He was highly regarded at AA World Services and was the author of "Living Sober."

Barry was a very close friend of Lois Wilson and served as her escort when she would travel to other cities such as Akron to speak. I assumed that she probably had him in her will, but unfortunately he preceded her in death.

Perhaps you will consider posting this for the HistoryLovers. I also invite anybody to contact me at melb@accesstoledo.com or to visit my website: <http://members.accesstoledo.com/melb/>.

Thank you

Mel Barger. Toledo, Ohio

----- Original Message -----

From: NMOlson@aol.com

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Sent: Tuesday, September 17, 2002 4:19 PM

Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] The Third Tradition and questions about how it came about.

Dear AA History Lovers,

The following are excerpts from posts asking questions about the third tradition and from some of the responses. If your post is not mentioned and you have further information which would be of help, please send it directly to the two who need the information.

Nancy

From: "davidrstack" <patchwrk@charter.net>
Date: Sun Sep 8, 2002 10:12 am
Subject: Tradition 3 and Dr. Bob

I am looking for a tape to share with my 12 and 12 study group. I am "presenting" tradition 3 on September 20th.

Tradition 3 states the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

I heard a tape played at the Florida AA Roundup back in the mid '80s where Dr. Bob Smith (I think) talking about tradition 3. In the tape he mentioned that a fellow came to the meeting in Akron OH. He had another problem other than alcohol and afraid that he would not be accepted. He was a homosexual or if you like, gay. The outcome was that he was allowed to stay. "The group decision was "What would the Master do?" as mentioned in the 12 and 12. The 12 and 12 does not mention that the fellow was a homosexual or if you like, gay. The audio tape is very specific on this point.

Do you know where I could purchase a copy of the tape?

David S.

From: "Audrey Borden" <audreyborden@earthlink.net [35] >
Date: Tue Sep 10, 2002 2:11 pm
Subject: An Introduction, A Question, & An Answer

I'm conducting research on "The Man of The Third Tradition," i.e. the man with the "double stigma" who approached Dr. Bob in Akron in 1937, asking if he could join AA.

I've searched every AA publication I can find and a good deal of the related material (published outside of AA). I am quite familiar with the standard references to the topic (e.g. all Grapevine writings back to 1946, etc.). I've found a considerable amount on the Third Tradition, but very little about this man, for obvious reasons: his identity had to be protected.

Now, some 65 years later, I am trying to find out who he was. I plan to share what I learn in a book so others can learn about him, and so he may be recognized for his courage, his willingness to go to any lengths to get sober, and his contribution to the creation of our Third Tradition.

I'm searching for people who may have some recollection, or may know of some writing I'm unaware of (an unpublished letter, perhaps?) an oral account given by an old-timer who has since passed on? etc., regarding this brave

man.

If anyone has any information (including hearsay, at this point!) I'd appreciate hearing from you.

David, I believe the tape you're looking for is from the 1985 International AA Convention in Montreal, Canada. The speaker was Barry L. (who's since passed away); the workshop was entitled "The Gay Origins of The Third Tradition." In it Barry plays a tape of Bill W. discussing the Third Tradition in a talk he (Bill) gave at the opening dinner of the 1968 World Service Conference in New York. A tape of Barry's presentation may be obtained from the IAC tape library (International Advisory Council of Homosexual Men & Women in Alcoholics Anonymous). IAC can be reached via their website.

Thanks for your assistance, -- Audrey B.

P.S. the incident involving the African American man with long blond hair ("Veronica" ;-)) who visited the AA Clubhouse in New York, occurred in 1945; the man who approached Dr. Bob in Akron did so in 1937. So it is unlikely (though possible, until proven otherwise) that Veronica is The Man of The Third Tradition.

-- Audrey

From: "Lash, William (Bill)" <wlash@avaya.com [36] >
Date: Sun Sep 8, 2002 6:10 pm
Subject: RE: [AAHistoryLovers] Tradition 3 and Dr. Bob

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Nancy

To unsubscribe from this group, send an email to:
AAHistoryLovers-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

Your use of Yahoo! Groups is subject to the Yahoo! Terms of Service [1] .

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+++Message 522. A Message to the Ground Zero Group
From: NMOlson@aol.com 9/17/2002 6:37:00 PM

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Dear Friends,

I took the liberty of speaking for us all when I sent this message to be read later this month at the reunion of those AA members who worked at Ground Zero. My thanks to those who sent messages to be included.

Nancy

Dear Friends from the Ground Zero Group,

I send you love, gratitude and praise from the more than 560 members of the AA History Buffs and AA History Lovers from around the world.

On September 11 last year, when the news reached the world of the attacks on the World Trade Center, I received many messages from members of this group in other lands, expressing their sympathy and their solidarity with us in our grief and shock.

When I informed them of the death at Ground Zero of Father Mychal Judge, their hearts poured out with grief and love and awe.

But when I told them that members of our fellowship working at Ground Zero had requested a meeting there, and that one had been started, hundreds of messages poured in -- many of them in French -- which I forwarded to John Friedlander so that you would know the love and support you were receiving from around the world.

How can we express the gratitude we feel for you and the example you have set for us all? I asked the group for suggestions.

Jared L. asked me to tell you: "One of the reasons we love the history of AA

is that the history of AA shows love like yours in action through service like yours. (And I think of Dr. Bob's statement that "Our Twelve Steps, when simmered down to the last, resolve themselves down to the words 'love' and 'service.'")

And Joanna W. wrote: My good friend, David W., who was a member of the Sunrises Group and the Promises Group in Woodstock, NY, worked for Cantor in the first Tower. I know his spirit is present with the Ground Zero Group and this is a prayer for him and his wife and young daughter, and for all those whose

united spirits gathered for this Higher Purpose:

"Deep down in every man, woman, and child, is the fundamental idea of God. It may be obscured by calamity, by pomp, by worship of other things, but in some form or other it is there. For faith in a Power greater than ourselves, and miraculous demonstrations of that power in human lives, are facts as old as man himself."

Jocie wrote from Chicago that she just couldn't find the words she wanted to say to you. But added "I will pray ... for you and all those awesome people."

Ron Long, wrote from California: "I commend the Ground Zero Group. The many people who were involved in Ground Zero, including those who are AA members, demonstrated courage in their selfless efforts and faith in the service manifested in their actions of both God and humanity. Those Alcoholics Anonymous members, back into the mainstream of living, certainly walked the talk. Living life on life's terms, even in the face of a traumatic experience, staying sober, having been of service to their fellow human beings, proved once again the program really works."

Barbara A. said: "This week has been a time of prayer and reflection for me and for so many members of AA and Al-Anon Family Groups in Georgia. The overwhelming feeling that I have had this weekend has been one of gratitude. Gratitude for the countless, nameless heroes that have been a part of the healing of our nation and particularly those of you who have been there on the front lines at Ground Zero. I have heard of the members of our fellowship that were lost in the World Trade Center and have prayed for their families. This week I heard that many of you thought that Father Mychal was taken first so he could welcome everyone to the Big Meeting. But know that I and the fellowship in Georgia want you all to know that we have prayed and will continue to pray for you. Our arms are outstretched to you in a hug of unconditional love that holds us all safe in the Program of Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon Family Groups."

I saw this piece from a Jewish Rabbi on the Internet: "Those final conversations (either completed calls or messages left on cell phones & voice mail) that morning from people in the Twin Towers moments before they went

down were so pure about the expression of love between husband & wife, between mother & child, seem to be incredible texts because they were at the moment of confronting life or death. Whatever your religious tradition is about, it's about this. The REAL wisdom, the REAL religious tradition, the REAL experience behind religion is about love, & it's about connection. It is no more complicated than that."

And I found this in a book written by a member of AA History Lovers. Glenn is a Methodist clergyman and AA historian. It is from a sermon he preached:

"O Lord, your messengers have taught us the nature of true love. Our hearts are filled with gratitude for your love for us. ...

Even when we could not hear you or feel you, you were always there. Your everlasting arms held us up. You, the living God, who are eternal, and can never falter nor fail: to you be the glory forever! Amen."

And he added this blessing, which I pass on to you:

"So let us now go forth in peace, hearts filled with gratitude and thanksgiving, knowing that the sunlight of God's spirit shines all around us, and that His grace can conquer all things and transform our lives from glory unto glory, filling our souls with peace and joy and faith and courage.

"May the blessing of God Almighty be upon you and remain with you always."

So, dear friends, what can I add.

Well, I would just like to remind you all of what the Twenty-Four Hours a Day book says in the fine print section for September 11:

"God manifests Himself in human lives as strength to overcome evil and power to resist temptation. The grace of God is that power which enables a human being to change from a useless, hopeless individual to a useful, normal person. God also manifests Himself as love -- love for other people, compassion for their problem, and a real willingness to help them. The grace of God also manifests itself as peace of mind and serenity of character. We can have plenty of power, love, and serenity in our lives if we are willing to ask God for these things each day."

And let's remember Mychal Judge's Prayer

Lord,

Take me where you want me to go;

Let me meet who you want me to meet;

Tell me what you want me to say,

and

Keep me out of your way.

Love and gratitude to you all, from all of us of AA History Lovers.

Sincerely,

Nancy Olson

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+++Message 523. Earl T. and Bill W.
From: ricktompkins 9/18/2002 10:24:00 AM

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LASTING AND RESILIENT FRIENDSHIP

Bill Wilson first visited Chicago in February of 1940 to share in the excitement of rapid growth in a new AA Chapter, the Chicago Group. Beginning in September of 1939 letters were exchanged between the Alcoholic Foundation office and the new members in Chicago, but Bill wrote directly to one member, the founder of the Group, Earl Treat of Evanston.

Earl got sober in 1937 under the sponsorship of Dr. Bob after visits with his family in the Akron area, and it was two years before there were other new members to hold the first Illinois AA meeting. Bill, also very close to Dr. Bob and the Akron Group, may have known about Earl but most likely didn't meet him until the 1940 Chicago visit.

Friends by letter and telephone from the start, Bill stayed with Earl and his wife Katie during that first 1940 winter trip. And, at every Illinois visit during the 1940s, Bill and Lois (when she accompanied him) stayed with the Treats. Lois Wilson's handwritten desk telephone book had Earl and Katie's Illinois numbers for every year's new book beginning with her 1940 entries, and the two families kept in touch with each other.

The favor was returned as early as 1946 when Earl

visited New York and stayed at Bill and Lois' Stepping Stones home in Bedford Hills. Bill also trusted Earl well enough to ask him to report to the Alcoholic

Foundation Board meetings in 1947, covering for Bill who was away on a trip, and he nominated Earl to the Alcoholic Foundation Board as an AA Trustee in 1949. Dozens of letters between the two friends are in the files of the GSO Archives, and the correspondence shows a strong bond of caring, insights to early AA life, and the enthusiasm for AA service growth.

Although not yet found in their correspondence, Nell Wing, Bill's long-term secretary and AA's first Archivist at the General Service Office, recalls that our Short Form of the Twelve Traditions is the direct result of Earl's friendly suggestions to Bill. Their letter-writing stopped in 1955 when Earl suffered a crippling stroke, but Bill always inquired of his good friend's health.

A tribute to Earl and Chicago AA was handwritten on a photo Bill sent to the Chicago Central Office in 1962, the year of Earl's death:

'In gratitude for your contributions in our pioneering time and since. Devotedly, Bill"

Information is courtesy of the Chicago Archives, the AA Archives at the General Service Office, and the Archives at the Stepping Stones Foundation, and is used with permission. This history piece was

released to the Illinois State A.A. Conference in August 2002.
Respectfully, N. IL. Area 20 Historian.

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+++Message 526. 12 Traditions- Short Form
From: Jim Blair 9/18/2002 2:38:00 PM

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Transcribed from a talk given by Bill W. at Chicago, IL, February 1951.

The title of the talk is "The Need for GSO."

Excerpt-

"I must say that a powerful impetus was given the Traditions by the gentleman who introduced me (Earl T.)

One day he came down to Bedford Hills after the long form of the Traditions were written out at some length because in the office we were forever having to answer questions about group troubles so the original Traditions were longer and covered more possibilities of trouble.

Earl looked at me rather quizzically and he said "Bill, don't you get it through your thick head that these drunks don't like to read. They will listen for a while but they will not read anything. Now, you want to capsule these Traditions as simply as are the Twelve Steps of recovery.

So he and I started the capsulizing process which lasted a day or two and that put the Traditions into their present form."

The full text is at <http://www.historyofaa.com>

Jim

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+++Message 529. Early correspondence in northern Illinois
From: ricktompkins 9/24/2002 10:00:00 AM

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THE FIRST OUTREACH IN NORTHERN ILLINOIS

An Illinois 1930s-era college farm town would always have at least one drug store with a soda fountain, penny candy, magazines, newspapers, cigarettes, and of course, a door with a bell at the top that would ring when it was opened or closed...

This description might be just a mythical image of an earlier time, but there is one fact of northern Illinois A.A. history---a particular Dekalb pharmacist was sober in 1939 when the Big Book was first published.

In April of 1940 a letter arrived at the office of the Alcoholic Foundation in New York City: 'Alcoholics Anonymous is new to me, and I'm interested to make contacts in this vicinity that I may become a member in good standing.'

Perrie

S., the pharmacist, wrote that he 'read `Alcoholics Anonymous' thoroughly and wished to say, that I established myself with a Superior Being by myself, with my own thoughts, during a 28 day leave from business with persons who at that time were in the same fix as myself."

Ruth

Hock, the Foundation office's secretary, replied within a few days and thanked him for his very sincere letter. She referred him to an 'Earl T. and the Chicago membership, and we assure you they will appreciate an opportunity to talk with you."

The

Chicago Group was the nearest A.A. Chapter, over 120 miles east of Dekalb, and Perrie rode the trains into the city many times to attend its meetings. Over the next few years, Perrie and Ruth exchanged letters on a regular basis.

Ruth,

in different letters from New York, suggested that he contact other new members in nearby Dixon, Sterling, and Rockford.

These towns were home to

the 1940s 'A.A. Loners" who eventually formed the first Groups in northern Illinois. Our pharmacist friend in DeKalb, Perrie S., remains the earliest correspondent of record.

Delegate Area 20 Historian, Algonquin, Illinois,
August, 2002.

Note: Quotes are used with the permission of the A.A. Archives at the General Service Office in NYC.

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+++Message 541. Re: Dr. Bob and The Good Oldtimers
From: t 9/28/2002 3:06:00 AM

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David,
My impression is that there is no set prayer that was required, pre Big Book publication. A prayer was said or ad libbed 'from the heart' so to speak. And actual saying of a prayer was not the 'surrender', it was the life one lived afterward that was the real 'surrender', at least in our earlier days.

Here's a file where I had pulled together quotes from different posts in AAHistoryBuffs on the topic of "Surrender". Right now the file is just a string of quotes, maybe one day I'll get around to writing something with them.

Thanks to all those who posted the files, and those who originally wrote them.

"The Surrender"

quotes from posts in AAHistory Buffs

Pre AA Influences

... *Early AA Thought*

... *Refer to the Big Book*

... *As Others See Us*

Pre AA Influences

#831 the serenity prayer!!!

(A long version of the Prayer)

God grant me the SERENITY to

accept the things I cannot change;

COURAGE to change the things I can;

and WISDOM to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;

enjoying one moment at a time;

accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;

taking, as He did, this sinful world

as it is, not as I would have it:

Trusting that He will make all things

right if I surrender to His Will;

that I may be reasonably happy in this life

and supremely happy with Him forever in the next.

#829 The Oxford Group Connection

They practiced absolute surrender, guidance by the Holy Spirit, sharing bringing about true fellowship, life changing, faith and prayer. They aimed for absolute standards of Love, Purity, Honesty, and Unselfishness, which were an integral part of the first AA programs in Akron and Cleveland and New York.

...

When Jim first arrived in Akron he had been welcomed into the Firestone family, and had become fast friends with a son, Russell (Bud) Firestone. Bud had a very bad drinking problem and had already been sent to several hospitals to no avail. Jim went with Bud to still another drying-out place, on the Hudson River in New York, and stayed through the entire 30 day program. Then he took Bud to an Episcopal Conference in Denver to which the Oxford Group people had been invited. On the train East again after the party, he was able to introduce Bud to his old Oxford Group minister, Sam Shoemaker. Alone with Sam, Bud surrendered his life to God in a private car on the train. His life changed, and his family situation and marriage were saved.

#956 RE: "Twenty-Four Hours a Day"

The Oxford Group, through its teachings and meetings, tried to help individuals become physically, mentally, and spiritually whole. Its disciples taught the necessity of absolute surrender to God as the directing force in their entire lives.

...

For Sinners Only chronicles Russell's interpretation of the group, with various sections of the book citing important ideas such as: the common fear of people to "let go" and trust themselves to God, the importance of surrendering to the will of God, and the way one's powerlessness to overcome sin leads that person to seek help from the Powerful One. Russell was able to make spiritual progress through insights which came during "Quiet Times" or morning meditations of listening to God. The

Oxford Group believed in the importance of "Quiet Times" for daily guidance.

#527 Some Predecessors of AA

Richard Peabody, Peabody Movement-1930's

wrote a book called Common Sense Of Drinking

stressed physical condition (medical)

surrender, deflation at depth

removal of doubts and anxieties

control of thoughts

control of will power

self-expression

Back to the top

Early AA Thought

#105 JACK ALEXANDER ARTICLE -- APRIL 1950, PART 2

...This is the much-discussed spiritual element in Alcoholics Anonymous. Most members refer to this power as God; some agnostic members prefer to call it Nature, or the Cosmic Power, or by some other label. In any case, it is the key of the A.A. program, and it must be taken not on a basis of mere acceptance or acknowledgment, but of complete surrender.

This surrender is described by a psychiatrist, Dr. Harry M. Tiebout, of Greenwich, Connecticut, as a "conversion" experience, "a psychological event in which there is a major shift in personality manifestation." He adds: "The changes which take place in the conversion process may be summed up by saying that the person who has achieved the positive frame of mind has lost his tense, aggressive, demanding, conscience-ridden self which feels isolated and at odds with the world, and has become, instead, a relaxed, natural, more realistic individual who can dwell in the world on a live-and-let-live basis."

The personality change wrought surrender is far from complete, at first. Elated by a few weeks of sobriety, the new member often enters what is known as the "Chautauqua phase" -- he is always making speeches at business meetings on what is wrong with the society and how these defects can be remedied. Senior members let him talk himself out of this stage of behavior; if that doesn't work, he may break away and form a group of his own. ...

#924 Father Ed and AA's Bill W., from The Catholic Digest, April 1991

Father Ed did give Bill a copy of the Spiritual Exercises in 1952, underlining the "Two Standards" meditation. When Father Ed met Bill, moreover, he had called him to the place where he bottomed out and surrendered to his higher power. Father Ed believed that this was the place where humiliations led to humility and then to all other blessings. In saying this, he paraphrased Ignatius's closing prayer of the "Two Standards" meditations.

#594 The Steps of A.A. -- An Interpretation. Written by Clarence Snyder

Our program of the twelve steps is really accepted in four distinct phases, as follows:

- 1) Need (admission)
- 2) Surrender (submission)
- 3) Restitution
- 4) Construction and Maintenance

Phase #1 - Is covered in Step 1- "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable" - this step points out phase 1- or our own need - there is a need for a change!

Phase #2 - Includes the 2nd through the 7th steps which constitutes the phase of submission.

Step#2 - "We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." Since we could not manage our own lives, of ourselves,

we found ourselves to be powerless over alcohol; we were encouraged by the power of example of someone or some others to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. In this step, we have the "proof of the pudding" before we are asked to eat it!! Others tell us of their experiences and share their deepest feelings with us and those members are alcoholics such as we are, and there they stand, sober, clean-eyed,

useful, confident and with a certain radiance we envy and really want for ourselves. So, we WANT to believe it! Of course, some persons could conceivably

be a bit more startled at first by the reference to "being restored to sanity," but most of us finally conclude that in hearing of some of the experiences our new friends had during their drinking careers were anything but the actions of a rational person, and when we reflect upon our own actions and deeds prior to our own introduction to A.A., it is not difficult to recognize that we too, were pretty well out in left field also! In fact, most of us are happy in the feeling that we were not really responsible for many of our past unpleasant and embarrassing situations and frankly, this step does much to relieve our feelings of guilt and self-condemnation.

Step #3 - "We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God..."

Now here is the step which separates the men from the boys (or the women from the girls) - this is the step which tells the story as to whether we are going to be in A.A., or around A.A. Yes, we can attend meetings, visit the clubs, attend the social functions, but, unless we really take step #3, we are continuing to make up our own program. Since our entire program is based upon dependence upon God and our lives are to be directed by Him! So, here we are, making a decision which in itself is quite an accomplishment for the alcoholic, since they are one of the most indecisive creatures in society, due to their incapacity to manage their own life due to their obsession- But- to make a decision to turn our life and our will over to the care of God- this creature in the far blue yonder, whom we have little acquaintance with and probably much fear of, this is really asking very, very much of an alcoholic! Rest assured, that if they are not ready, if they have not reached their "bottom" or extremity, and if they are not really "hurting more than they ever have," they are not about to take step #3. So - they go pretty much on their own as usual, except that they do have the advantage of better company than they had been associating

with and this in time, could really foul up any type of drinking life they may have in the future! Another important feature enters here, in that they know now that there is a way out of their dilemma and this is bound to "work" on them as time goes on, if they have any pride at all in themselves!

At this point - their biggest problem is to overcome FEAR and "Let go and let God."

Step #4 - "Made a searching and fearless Moral inventory of ourselves."

This is a step which should be taken with the assistance of a sponsor, or counselor who is well experienced in this changed life - due to the capacity of the alcoholic to find justification for about anything - a sponsor can bring up through sharing - many various moral weaknesses which need attention in their life and can smooth the way for the alcoholic to examine them in a frank fashion. The next step suggests that someone is helping with step #4 - since it reads as follows:

Step #5 - "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact NATURE of our wrongs."

We put ourselves on record and leave no options or reservations! Note that it states, NATURE of our wrongs- not the wrongs themselves! We are not required to narrate details of our many indiscretions. Many of them we don't even remember, nor are conscious of. This is not a laundry for dirty linen; this is recognition of character defects, which need elimination or adjustments!

Step #6 - "Were entirely ready to have God remove ALL these defects of character."

This step allows for no reservations. The alcoholic, being an extremist must go the whole route. We are not a bit ready, or about to be ready, but entirely ready to have God, not us, remove ALL these defects of character, (the interesting ones as well as the more damnable ones!).

Step #7 - "Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings."

We tried to make no deal, as we did in the past when situations would overwhelm us. It was common to say- "Dear God, get me out of this mess and I will be a good boy (or girl), I will not do thus and such, etc., etc., etc., "NONE OF THAT! We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. The Good Book assures us that anything we ask believing, we shall receive!

#570 2 _Grapevine_ Articles by Dr. Bob

THE FUNDAMENTALS - IN RETROSPECT

By Dr. Bob Smith

September 1948, _AA Grapevine_

...

We have found it wise policy, too, to hold to no glorification of the individual. Obviously that is sound. Most of us will concede that when it came to the personal showdown of admitting our failures and deciding to surrender our will and our lives to Almighty God, as we understood him, we still had some sneaking ideas of personal justification and excuse. We had to discard them, but the ego of the alcoholic dies a hard death. Many of us, because of activity, have received praise, not only from our fellow AAs, but also from the world at large. We would be ungrateful indeed to be boorish when that happens; still, it is so easy for us to become, privately perhaps, just a little vain about it all. Yet fitting and wearing halos are not for us.

We've all seen the new member who stays sober for a time, largely through sponsor-worship. Then maybe the sponsor gets drunk, and you know what usually happens. Left without a human prop, the new member gets drunk, too. He has been glorifying an individual, instead of following the program.

Certainly, we need leaders, but we must regard them as the human agents of the Higher Power and not with undue adulation as individuals. The Fourth and Tenth Steps cannot be too strongly emphasized here - "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves...Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it." There is your perfect antidote for halo poisoning.

So with the question of anonymity. If we have a banner, that word, speaking of the surrender of the individual - the ego - is emblazoned on it. Let us dwell thoughtfully on its full meaning and learn thereby to remain humble, modest, and ever conscious that we are eternally under divine direction.

#568 "The 12 Steps as Ego Deflating Devices" by Dr. Harry M. Tiebout, M.D.

What does Surrender Mean?

For reasons still obscure, the program and the fellowship of AA could cause a surrender, which in turn would lead to a period of no drinking. It became ever more apparent that in everyone's psyche there existed an unconquerable ego which bitterly opposed any thought of defeat. Until that ego was somehow reduced or rendered ineffective, no likelihood of surrender could be anticipated.

AA, still very much in its infancy, was celebrating a third or fourth anniversary of one of the groups. The speaker immediately preceding me told in detail of the efforts of his local group--which consisted of two

men--to get him to dry up and become its third member. After several months of vain efforts on their part and repeated nose dives on his, the speaker went on to say: "Finally, I got cut down to size and have been sober ever since," a matter of some two or three years. When my turn came to speak, I used his phrase "cut down to size" as a text around which to weave my remarks. Before long, out of the corner of my eye, I became conscious of a disconcerting stare. It was coming from the previous speaker.

It was perfectly clear: He was utterly amazed that he had said anything which made sense to a psychiatrist. The incident showed that two people, one approaching the matter clinically and the other relying on his own intuitive report of what had happened to him, both came up with exactly the same observation: the need for ego reduction. It is common knowledge that a return of the full-fledged ego can happen at any time. Years of sobriety are no insurance against its resurgence. No AA's, regardless of their veteran status, can ever relax their guard against a reviving ego.

The function of surrender in AA is now clear. It produces that stopping by causing the individual to say, "I quit. I give up on my headstrong ways. I've learned my lesson." Very often for the first time in that individual's adult career, he has encountered the necessary discipline that halts him in his headlong pace. Actually, he is lucky to have within him the capacity to surrender. It is that which differentiates him from the wild animals. And this happens because we can surrender and truly feel, "Thy will, not mine, be done."

Unfortunately, that ego will return unless the individual learns to accept a disciplined way of life, which means the tendency toward ego comeback, is permanently checked.

This is not news to AA members. They have learned that a single surrender is not enough. Under the wise leadership of the AA "founding fathers" the need for continued endeavor to maintain that miracle has been steadily stressed. The Twelve Steps urge repeated inventories, not just one, and the Twelfth Step is in itself a routine reminder that one must work at preserving sobriety. Moreover, it is referred to as Twelfth Step work--which is exactly what it is. By that time, the miracle is for the other person.

#35 ANOTHER LETTER FROM BILL ON DEPRESSION

If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependency and its consequent demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling demands. Then we can be set free to live and love; we may then be able to gain

emotional
sobriety.

#524 Bill W. on Emotional Sobriety

Thus I think it can work out with emotional sobriety. If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling demands. Then we can be set free to live and love; we may then be able to Twelfth Step ourselves -- and others into emotional sobriety.

#1069 "The Care of Alcoholics" by Sister Ignatia

October 1951, Hospital Progress

FOURTH DAY - THE DAY OF RESOLUTION

"Give us this day our daily bread." This is interpreted by the alcoholics to mean, "I surely can stay sober today." This is usually followed by an act of complete surrender to God. The past is finished. "I am heartily sorry." "I'll try to make amends." This means confession, repentance and firm purpose of amendment. Many Catholics return to the Sacraments after years of negligence. Scripture says, "There is more joy in heaven over one sinner doing penance than 99 just who need not penance." He used to drink because he felt like it. He permitted his emotions to run away with him. Now, with God's help and the help of his fellow A.A.'s, with his clear thinking, he can control his feelings and emotions. Reason now governs his life. Strong convictions are given him as to why he cannot take that first drink. He has learned from his fellow alcoholics that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and that it is a privilege to help others. What a joy, too! He is kept so busy helping others that he does not have time to even think about a drink. What a transformation takes place in the lives of these men and women!

#1068 Possibly the 1st AA Pamphlet

Articles from the HOUSTON PRESS by Larry J (April 1940)

Psychologists and psychiatrists will tell you that, to change a person's ingrained habits, one of two things is necessary: either a long and painful re-education of mind and body, by a supreme and often agonizing effort of the will, so that one set of habits finally is ousted and a new set

learned by deliberate and diligent dally practice; or else a change, such as a person experiences in a complete surrender to spiritual principles.

This later is what is meant by a spiritual experience. It reaches the inner man. The old passes away and behold all things are indeed become new.

If it can be achieved, it is the simplest, the easiest, the quickest, the surest way, and the safest from relapse.

William James, the noted psychologist, in his book "Varieties of Religious Experiences," illustrates the myriad paths by which this inner change may be wrought. But surrender to the higher Power, and faith therein, are of the essence of all.

In non-religious terms, the experience is like the realization that sometimes comes to a person who has never appreciated good music or good books, and who all of a sudden "gets" the idea of the pleasure, the value to be found in them. Thenceforth he proceeds with delight to enjoy that in which he formerly had found no charm, no meaning.

Similarly, the alcoholic come to a realization that the Higher Power waits to help: that with God, truly "all things are possible."

...

Now that the preliminaries of surrender and of faith are established, the period of practice comes.

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Refer to the Big Book

#788 Big Book Authors, 3rd edition -- Morris B., "A Five-Time Loser Wins."

After seeing that sign, he took the first three Steps for the first time. He surrendered totally. Now he began to sleep, to relax, to accept his plight. He started going to A.A. in prison at the group's next meeting.

#758 Big Book Authors, 3rd edition -- Author unknown, "The Housewife

Who Drank ..."

Finally a doctor recommended A.A. At one time the admission that she was an alcoholic meant shame, defeat, and failure to her. Now she was able to interpret that defeat, and that failure, and that shame, as seeds of victory. It was only through feeling defeat and feeling failure, the inability to cope with her life and with alcohol, that she was able to surrender and accept the fact that she had the disease of alcoholism and that she had to learn to live again without alcohol.

In A.A. she found that for the first time she could face her problems honestly and squarely. She took everything that A.A. had to give her. She surrendered. To her surrender brought with it the ability to run her home, to face her responsibilities, to take life as it comes day by day. She had surrendered once to the bottle, and couldn't do those things.

She was brought up to believe in God, but not until she found A.A. did she know faith in the reality of God, the reality of His power that is now with her in everything she does.

#678 People in AA History -Pt 2

Ruth R. - wife Eddie R. 1st person Bill & Dr. Bob tried help, Ruth surrendered in Oxford Group; they 2 children lived Dr. Bob & Annie; caused lot problems (B 249) (C 5,41-42) (D 77-78,80,99) (L 97) (P 151-152)

Tiebout, Dr. Harry -... wrote... "Surrender Versus Compliance Therapy"

#674 People in AA History

Eddie R. - prominent Youngstown family; wife Ruth university professor, surrendered in Oxford Group; 1st person Bill & Dr. Bob tried help, sent by J.C. Wright, hoped would be A.A. #3, failed; he & her 2 children lived with Dr. Bob & Annie; caused lot problems, threatened Annie with butcher knife; example ineffectiveness of wet nursing. He eventually got sober in 1949 at the Youngstown Ohio group (A 72) (B 249) (C 5,41-42) (D 77-78,80-1,85,93,97,99) (L 97) (P 151-2,159n) (BB#3 124)

#726 BB Authors, 2nd Edition -- John Parr, "The Professor and the Paradox"

... The four paradoxes are, (1) we surrender to win, (2) we give away to keep, (3) we suffer to get well and (4) we die to live.

#627 Re: The Professor And The Paradox

1. We SURRENDER TO WIN. On the face of it, surrendering certainly does not seem like winning. But it is in A.A. Only after we have come to the end of our rope, hit a stone wall in some aspect of our lives beyond which we can go no further; only when we hit "bottom" in despair and surrender, can we accomplish sobriety which we could never accomplish before. We must, and we do, surrender in order to win.

#1060 re: Question about origin of a prayer

You may also find some of the 'surrenders' in the stories of interest:

their 'surrender'

Bill W - 13

Bill D - 187, 190

Abby G - 218-9

Joe D - 237

Jimmy B - 247-8

Ethel M - 268-70

Archie T - 279-80

(I've only listed those in the 'Pioneers' section of Stories. I'll let you find the others.)

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As Others See Us

#925 The Catholic Contribution to the 12-Step Movement by W. Robert Auffer

As Wilson's biographer tells it, "When Bill asked if there was never to be any satisfaction, the old man snapped back, 'Never. Never any.' There was only a kind of divine dissatisfaction that would keep him going, reaching out always."

...

The priest went on: Having surrendered to God and received back his sobriety, Wilson could not retract his surrender by demanding an accounting from God when life did not unfold according to preconceived expectations. Even the sense of dissatisfaction could be an occasion of spiritual growth.

#926 The Catholicity of 12-Step Programs by W. Robert Auffer

...To this understanding, the alcoholic surrendered by the very admission 'I am an alcoholic'."

...

AA's Christian and Biblical derivation is here made obvious. No less striking is the almost Catholic emphasis that true saving faith is faith which works through charity (i.e., surrenders unreservedly to God and cooperates with his grace by persevering in charity and in working the steps of recovery). God's grace does not negate human freedom, but restores and empowers it. On the experiential level, AA members come very close to Catholic doctrine, often without realizing it.

#365 "The 'God concept' in A.A."

from *Religion In Life*, 1948.

Surrender to the Higher Power is not difficult for alcoholics, because for years they have surrendered to a lower power. It gives a lift, euphoria, escape, release, cessation from fear and worry, a lightening of reality, forgetfulness, stupor, and sleep. In time, however, there are craving and compulsion, memory blanks, shakes, sweats, headaches, and hangovers.

One man after a bout felt as though he had seven skulls. In devotion to

this autocratic tyrant alcoholics will surrender thought, time, money, health, friends, and vocation. To surrender to the Higher Power involves no more exacting a demand than the surrender they have made to alcohol, perhaps over a drinking period of twenty years.

Experienced A.A. practitioners, while admitting that they are only amateur psychologists, are wise enough not to begin by demanding beliefs. They work on thoughts, desires, attitudes, relationships, purposes, and habits. They are agreed that the root trouble is in the thinking, not the drinking. At one meeting of a rather intellectual group the drink problem was not directly mentioned. Half a dozen speakers rang the changes on freedom from fears, surrender of resentments, Cultivation of good will, positive help to others, building up a sense of dependence upon the Higher Power. When the inner life is brought under discipline the outer conduct is largely self-regulated.

...

The personality change can be sudden, unexpected, and involuntary. A well-seasoned drinker, after two months of sobriety, was asked to speak at a meeting. He answered that as yet he had nothing to say. "Then just say that you have nothing to say," he was told. When called to speak he announced that for the sake of politeness he could not refuse but "actually I have nothing to say, for nothing has happened to me." Then he paused. After a somewhat painful silence he said quietly, "Something has happened to me," and sat down. Two months later an old friend asked what had happened. He replied: "As I was saying I had nothing to say, suddenly I knew that at long last I had surrendered to goodness. All my life I had been debating and holding back. I have been different ever since and I have not the slightest desire for a drink." Without conscious effort his personality has been unified.

...

In social life an alcoholic is regarded as a misfit. Medicine looks upon him as a non-cooperative patient, very often poor paying. The law deals with him as a criminal and sends him to jail. Psychiatry diagnoses him as a mental case and confines him in an institution. The church tells him that he is a sinner and must repent. His family has convinced him that he is hopeless. Against this background of despair, Alcoholics Anonymous comes along telling him that GOD is in him, that God can be in him as much as God can be anywhere, that if God is not in him then GOD is not everywhere and so cannot be God. By the witness of another alcoholic, now sober, the life is breathed into his soul. Without soul and spirit the body is only an empty shell. A few even go so far as to say that God himself may draw upon vital strength and increase of being from their fidelity. If so, they, each one of them, may be important in the whole scheme of things. A

surrendered
life, they hold, can be of use to God.

II
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+++Message 543. 1st edition big books
From: bikergaryg@aol.com 9/29/2002 3:02:00 AM

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Does anyone know why the first edition seventh printing 1945 is so rare?

I know 5000 where printed.

the myth I heard is most where sent overseas at that time and where lost when
the supply ship was sunk they where on.

also

does anyone know the amount of different colored big book covers and why
different colors where used.

myth or truth

only 1500 of the 5000 first edition fourth printing 1943 where green covers,
the rest blue?

the first edition third printing had some green covers also?

that ink was in short supply and they used what they had in stock?

the rarer the book the more valuable it is.

but as we all know this program is priceless.

bikergaryg

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+++Message 556. Re: Changes to the forward to 3rd & 4th
Edition
From: K. Lynch 10/1/2002 2:31:00 AM

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Hi all I'm quite new on this list & still feeling my way. I was on it for a while, though not sufficiently long to be considered a "regular." I have some questions relating to an omission and reinstatement of a sentence in the Forward's to the second, third and fourth editions of "Alcoholics Anonymous." I hope you can assist.

The Forward to the Second Edition, p. xvii, second full paragraph contains the following text

"A second small group promptly took shape at New York, to be followed in 1937 with the start of a third at Cleveland."

My understanding is that Clarence S. sobered in 1938 & is regarded as the founder of AA in Cleveland. I am aware of his role in the move of the alcoholics from the Oxford Group, the formal establishment of AA and the circumstances surrounding this. However I am unaware of the following and would appreciate informed responses:

1. Why was the sentence included in the Second Edition stating Cleveland AA started in 1937, given that Clarence sobered in 1938 and is regarded as the founder of AA in Cleveland. Did someone beat him to it & disappear prior to his recovery?
2. Does anyone have insights as to why this sentence was "pulled" in the third edition & reprints. For example was it "pulled" as a result of pressure from Clevelanders, specifically Clarence?
3. Given that the Forward to the Second Edition was edited in the third edition, why was this not noted, for example, with a footnote in the Third Ed. and reprints. After all it purports to be a reprint of the Forward to the Second Edition, though it is not so in its entirety. The Preface to Third Ed. makes no mention of this omission either.
4. The obvious answer to my question 1 is that the sentence was "pulled" as it was historically inaccurate, however the sentence reappears, I'm told, in the Fourth Ed. just as it appeared in the Second Ed. (I'm told this as the 4th ed. cannot as yet be purchased in Australia.) And despite the apparent historical inaccuracy of pre dating the start of AA in Cleveland to before Clarence sobered, there is no notation relating to this in the 4th edition. Thus, it would seem, that an historical inaccuracy is perpetuated.

Maybe I'm barking at the stars here, but why not on a clear southern night.

<g>

TIA

Kieran

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+++Message 557. Re: Changes to the forward to 3rd & 4th
Edition
From: Ernest Kurtz 10/1/2002 9:21:00 AM

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Hi Kieran,

Ah, how I would love to visit AA in Australia! I suspect that the basic reason the 2nd edition "Foreword" said "1937" is that the early AAs were not great on dates. For a more striking example, Dr. Bob's last drink was almost certainly on June 17th rather than the 10th, given recent research into the dates of the medical convention he attended. One thing historians early learn is that most non-historians are very loose with dates. It is always important, when interviewing, for example, to ask what else was going on at the time.

Hope this helps.

ernie kurtz

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+++Message 558. Changes to the Forward of The Big Book
-- 3rd and 4th Edition
From: Ron K. Long 10/1/2002 1:56:00 PM

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Changes to the Forward of The Big Book -- 3rd and 4th Edition

Note from Ron Long

October 1, 2002

I read some rather interesting emails this morning. The one from TIA, Kieran concerning apparent discrepancies in the second edition of the Big Book between Clarence Snyder's 1938 sobriety date, 1937 as the beginning of Cleveland AA and the changes in the third edition is perceptive. Perceptive indeed of the "historically inaccurate" information A.A. provides about its own origin and history. I have previously written, "The meeting between Bill

Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith in the summer of 1935 in Akron, Ohio will always be regarded as the most significant historical event in the evolution of Alcoholics Anonymous. It should be noted upfront that the discrepancies found in the A.A. Conference Approved accounts of the historical development of Alcoholics Anonymous and the reluctance of the New York General Service Office to respond to the archivists and historians, who have sought to correct and revise the books and literature, has been an observation by such A.A. archivists and historians as Mitchell K.

"A common assumption is that on Bob Smith's sobriety date Alcoholics Anonymous literally began. The June 10, 1935 date long taken for granted as an accurate sobriety date has been called into question by A.A. archivists and historians with documentation that has disputed the date. It is unclear exactly when in the 1935 summer Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith stopped drinking. A letter from Bill Wilson, written in Dr. Bob's Akron office, to his wife Lois in New York established the fact that Bill remained in Akron beyond his initial planned stay to continue his intervention with Dr. Bob.

"Alcoholics Anonymous formally began after the April 1939 publication of Alcoholics Anonymous, which came to be called 'The Big Book.' Jim Burwell expressed in his comments on the evolution of Alcoholics Anonymous on June 15, 1957 in Sacramento, California that the title of the book was suggested by Joe Ward. Jim Burwell became associated with Bill and the others in 1938. It was the year after they left the Oxford Groups. Jim Burwell, sobriety date June 15, 1938, soon became fascinated with learning all of the details following Bill Wilson and Bob Smith's meeting, seeking other suffering alcoholics to help, joining the Oxford Groups and, as a nameless group in 1938, continuing to attract others. Jim probably made notes along the way or possessed a remarkable memory.

"Jim's A.A. speech on his 19th year of sobriety in Sacramento, June 15, 1957, three months and five days prior to a letter written to him by Bill Wilson, and the essays Jim wrote over the years often served as a reminder of actual details which the others often forgot. Such was a communication he wrote to Bill Wilson on the early days when the men, before Jim came into the group, ceased attending the Oxford Groups.

"Indeed, William (Bill) Griffith Wilson, Dr. Robert (Bob) Holbrook Smith and some of the other sober members of their association continued their membership in the Oxford Groups until 1937. That fact was expressed in the following letter -

"'You are dead right about 1937 being the date we parted from the Oxford Groups. Somebody else picked this up, too.'

-- Bill Wilson, letter to Jim Burwell, March 20, 1957

"However, some of the Akron, Ohio members continued their Oxford groups ties until 1938. Bill Dotson came into the group in July of 1935. Bill and Bob had visited him in an Akron hospital following his June 26th admission. Bill Dotson, Alcoholics Anonymous Number Three in the Big Book, was the subject of Chapter Eight in the Alcoholics Anonymous publication, Pass It On. Page 154

acknowledged that in the early years '... They did not have a name for their Fellowship, and they were still closely tied to the Oxford Groups, a situation that would continue in Akron for another four years.'

"Why does Alcoholics Anonymous perpetuate the myth of the anniversary date of Alcoholics Anonymous as June 10, 1935? Why not correct the error and recognize the April 1939 date as the actual A.A. anniversary date?

"I will always be grateful to Alcoholics Anonymous, regardless of the contradictions, the discrepancies in the GSO Conference Approved books and literature and the reluctance of GSO to correct the errors, for what the program and Fellowship have given to me. I have been sober since January 5, 1983 one day at a time because of the spirit of Alcoholics Anonymous and the healing love that emerges in the experience of recovery.

"The call to take inventory at a personal level, group level and Alcoholics Anonymous at the levels of the General Service Office and Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. in New York is the loving call to practice with rigorous honesty the principles in all our affairs."

I hope these considerations will address TIA's questions and be possibly interesting as well for all AA History Lovers.

Ron Long
El Cajon, California

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+++Message 559. Re: Changes to the Forward of The Big Book -- 3rd and 4th Edition
From: melb 10/1/2002 2:00:00 PM

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Hello Everybody:

This is a comment on Ron Long's suggestion that April 1939 should be the starting point for AA, not June 10, 1935.

Nell Wing (Bill's longtime secretary and later the AA Archivist) told me that the AA name was already being used by the fellowship by mid-1938. I have one of the rare first printings of the first edition of the Big Book. In the Foreword, it states, "We, of Alcoholics Anonymous.." which clearly shows that the name was in use for the fellowship by the time the book went to press, which would have been some time in advance of April, 1939.

Clarence Snyder, who was always credited for his fine work as Cleveland's founder, also gave the impression that AA started with the founding of a Cleveland group in May, 1939. He insisted that everything before that was Oxford Group. But Clarence himself owed his sobriety to the previous work of Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob.

It's my conviction that we owe a debt to the Oxford Group and its Christian principles, but we wouldn't have AA without the inspiration and effort of Bill Wilson and his association with Dr. Bob.

Bill also told me that he and the New York people left the Oxford Group in 1937, but the Akron folks stayed with it until 1939, largely because of their devotion to T. Henry and Clarace Williams, the wonderful nonalcoholic Oxford Groupers who hosted the meetings in their home. "Pass It On" and "Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers" both give specific reasons why the AA members finally made the break in both locations.

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Mel Barger

Toledo, Ohio

----- Original Message -----

From: Ron K. Long

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2002 2:56 PM

Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Changes to the Forward of The Big Book -- 3rd and 4th Edition

Changes to the Forward of The Big Book -- 3rd and 4th Edition

Note from Ron Long

October 1, 2002

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"You are dead right about 1937 being the date we parted from the Oxford Groups. Somebody else picked this up, too.'

-- Bill Wilson, letter to Jim Burwell, March 20, 1957

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"The call to take inventory at a personal level, group level and Alcoholics Anonymous at the levels of the General Service Office and Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. in New York is the loving call to practice with rigorous honesty the principles in all our affairs."

I hope these considerations will address TIA's questions and be possibly interesting as well for all AA History Lovers.

Ron Long
El Cajon, California

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II
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+++Message 561. Re: Changes to the forward to 3rd & 4th
Edition
From: Doug B. 10/1/2002 11:34:00 PM

II
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Ernie,

GSO had a picture of the large group of Doctors at the AMA convention from 1935 at the recent Archives Workshop....
Dr Bob was missing from the picture....

The picture was also dated....June 10, 1935

So it looks like like Bill and Bob werent lying all those years....

I kinda thought that all the time....why WOULD they not have Bob's correct date....?

Thanks for all your work....

Doug Barrie

Ernest Kurtz wrote:

> Hi Kieran,
>
> Ah, how I would love to visit AA in Australia! I suspect that the
> basic reason the 2nd edition "Foreword" said "1937" is that the early
> AAs were not great on dates. For a more striking example, Dr. Bob's
> last drink was almost certainly on June 17th rather than the 10th, given
> recent research into the dates of the medical convention he attended.
> One thing historians early learn is that most non-historians are very
> loose with dates. It is always important, when interviewing, for
> example, to ask what else was going on at the time.
>
> Hope this helps.
>
> ernie kurtz
>

II
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+++Message 562. Re: SPAM-WEIGHT7: Re: Changes to the
Forward of The Big Book -- 3rd and 4th Edition
From: Diz Titcher 10/2/2002 6:32:00 AM

II
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Comment on Ron Long's history account. I have the name of Joe Worthum as
the man who gave the name to the book. His family own the New Yorker Magazine.

Diz T.

Tallahassee, FL.

melb wrote:

Hello Everybody:

This is a comment on Ron Long's suggestion
that April 1939 should be the starting point for AA, not June 10, 1935.

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later the AA Archivist) told me that the AA name was already being used
by the fellowship by mid-1938. I have one of the rare first printings of

the first edition of the Big Book. In the Foreword, it states, "We, of Alcoholics Anonymous.." which clearly shows that the name was in use for the fellowship by the time the book went to press, which would have been some time in advance of April, 1939.

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Mel Barger

Toledo, Ohio

Original Message -----

From:

Ron K. Long

To:

AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Sent:

Tuesday, October 01, 2002 2:56 PM

Subject:

[AAHistoryLovers] Changes to the Forward of The Big Book -- 3rd and 4th Edition

* Changes to the Forward of The Big Book -- 3rd and 4th Edition*

* Note from Ron Long*

October 1, 2002

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"'You are dead right about 1937 being the date we parted from the Oxford Groups. Somebody else picked this up, too.'

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+++Message 563. How AA got its name
From: David R. Stack, III 10/2/2002 7:34:00 AM

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Greetings:

This past month I was doing research on the 3rd Tradition. I heard on a tape (I do not remember which one) where Bill Wilson said that that a man from Bellevue (sp) Hospital for the mentally ill was brought to a meeting in New York. He kept repeating anonymous alcoholics, anonymous alcoholics (according to Bill on the tape). Someone suggested that this would be a good name for the book that was being written. Then it was suggested that the alcoholic come first.

That is how the book got its name, Alcoholics Anonymous according to Bill on the tape.

Do you know if Joe Worthum was one of the men at the meeting that evening? Was he the man from Bellevue? Or did he suggest the words be reversed from anonymous alcoholics to Alcoholics Anonymous?

If you want I will listen to the tapes again and get back to you on which one.
Or if anyone is so inclined you can go to www.aapurpose.org and listen to tapes from our two co-founders.

Enjoying my reprieve, (thanks Peggy)

David R. Stack

----- Original Message -----

From: Diz Titcher

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2002 7:32 AM

Subject: Re: SPAM-WEIGHT7: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] Changes to the Forward of The Big Book -- 3rd and 4th Edition

Comment on Ron Long's history account. I have the name of Joe Worthum as the man who gave the name to the book. His family own the New Yorker Magazine.
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To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2002 2:56 PM

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II
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++++Message 564. Re: Changes to the forward to 3rd & 4th Edition
From: Ernest Kurtz 10/2/2002 10:18:00 AM

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"Doug B." wrote:
> Ernie,
[snip]
> So it looks like like Bill and Bob werent lying all those years....

Doug,

It's not a case of "lying": it's a matter of memory. Imagine Bill and

Bob, in late 1938, trying to remember the date, long before "last drink" meant what it has come to mean. If you will pardon some assumptions, what was the date of the last time you said "last drink" before the sequence started that you found AA?

It's sort of like Bill saying that he and Bob went to see Bill D. ("A.A. Number Three") "the next day." That was shorthand for "almost immediately": it was actually several days later. Bill was not "lying": narrative allows for such shortcuts, which help narrative flow. We have to listen to narrative AS narrative, not as some precise rendering of historical detail. The failure to recognize this is at the root of many "problems" people find in studying AA's own story and history.

And God bless you for keeping me honest.

ernie kurtz

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+++Message 565. Re: Changes to the forward to 3rd & 4th Edition
From: J. Lobdell 10/1/2002 10:06:00 AM

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The passage is in my copy of the 3rd edition, as in the 2nd, as in the 4th. In Dr Bob and the Good Oldtimers, p. 122, "it was probably early 1937 when a few prospects started drifting down from Cleveland" -- a couple are mentioned -- which could be described as "the start of a third [group] at Cleveland" -- Jared

>From: "K. Lynch"

>Reply-To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com
>To:

>Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] Changes to the forward to 3rd & 4th Edition
>Date: Tue, 1 Oct 2002 17:31:34 +1000

>
>Hi all I'm quite new on this list & still feeling my way. I was on it for a while, though not sufficiently long to be considered a "regular." I have some questions relating to an omission and reinstatement of a sentence in the Forward's to the second, third and fourth editions of "Alcoholics Anonymous." I hope you can assist.

>

>The Forward to the Second Edition, p. xvii, second full paragraph contains the following text

>

> "A second small group promptly took shape at New York, to be followed in 1937 with the start of a third at Cleveland."

>

>My understanding is that Clarence S. sobered in 1938 & is regarded as the founder of AA in Cleveland. I am aware of his role in the move of the alcoholics from the Oxford Group, the formal establishment of AA and the circumstances surrounding this. However I am unaware of the following and would appreciate informed responses:

>

>1. Why was the sentence included in the Second Edition stating Cleveland AA started in 1937, given that Clarence sobered in 1938 and is regarded as the founder of AA in Cleveland. Did someone beat him to it & disappear prior to his recovery?

>

>2. Does anyone have insights as to why this sentence was "pulled" in the third edition & reprints. For example was it "pulled" as a result of pressure from Clevelanders, specifically Clarence?

>

>3. Given that the Forward to the Second Edition was edited in the third edition, why was this not noted, for example, with a footnote in the Third Ed. and reprints. After all it purports to be a reprint of the Forward to the Second Edition, though it is not so in its entirety. The Preface to Third Ed. makes no mention of this omission either.

>

>4. The obvious answer to my question 1 is that the sentence was "pulled" as it was historically inaccurate, however the sentence reappears, I'm told, in the Fourth Ed. just as it appeared in the Second Ed. (I'm told this as the 4th ed. cannot as yet be purchased in Australia.) And despite the apparent historical inaccuracy of pre dating the start of AA in Cleveland to before Clarence sobered, there is no notation relating to this in the 4th edition. Thus, it would seem, that an historical inaccuracy is perpetuated.

>

>Maybe I'm barking at the stars here, but why not on a clear southern night.

>

>

>TIA

>

>Kieran

>

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IIIIIIIIII

+++Message 566. Clubs and A.A. meetings (puzzled)?
From: anothermemberaa 10/1/2002 5:30:00 PM

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I recently sent the following to AAWS, INC. and would sure like to get feedback from other long-standing members of the Fellowship of AA:

Good day folks!

My name is *** and I sure could use some help understanding more about clubs renting space to local A.A groups. There seems to be an ongoing debate as to the responsibilities as far as clubs and AA groups, though seperate from one-another. Heres what seems to be happening and time in the program doesn't seem to play a part in this, weather new or old timers. It is apparent through-out the ranks, regardless of position, sobriety date or how well one works the steps/learns the traditons.

After reading your guidelines on clubs and understanding them completely, heres the dilemma:

There are 2 clubs here in (city, state) one of which, (club name1) has been in existence since 19** (long time) which appears to be following the Traditons of A.A. as mentioned in your guidelines.

The other club - The (club name2), also rents space to local AA groups. The difference is, that the (club name2) also rents space to local Narcotics Anonymous groups, Al-ateen groups and Al-anon groups. This causes a problem for the (club name2) in that it is not able to follow the AA Traditions because of allowing other 12-step (non AA) meetings to rent space to hold their meetings, just as the AA meetings are allowed to do.

Clubs are not affiliated in any way to AAWS, Inc, so my personal dilemma is trying to understand the difference between the two clubs mentioned -One being able to follow the AA Traditions as mentioned in the AA Guidelines and One not being able to follow the AA Traditons according to AA Guidelines because of allowing other 12-step groups to rent space.

How am I to better be prepared in my reponse to such questions, accusations and/or statements that may arise in regards to the above, and how is this viewed by you, Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, INC.? Your guidelines has no mention of clubhouses holding other 12-step group meetings other than Alcoholics Anonymous meetings.

Best regards,
AnotherMemberAA@aol.com
just another member of AA who wishes only to do the right
thing.

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+++Message 567. "Alcoholics Anonymous" by Joe Worthum
not Joe Ward
From: Ron K. Long 10/2/2002 4:56:00 PM

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Wednesday, October 2, 2002

Diz Titcher of Tallahassee, Florida is no doubt correct that Joe
Worthum, rather than Joe Ward, was the name of the gentleman who coined
"Alcoholics Anonymous" as the title of the book. I used "Joe Ward" from a
Jim Burwell recording and either Jim did not pronounce Joe's last name
correctly or I didn't correctly hear Jim say "Worthum." I will revise my
texts to Joe Worthum.

Thanks Diz!
Ron Long,
El Cajon, California

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II
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+++Message 569. Re: Clubs and A.A. meetings (puzzled)?
From: ricktompkins 10/2/2002 12:32:00 PM

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Hello anothermemberaa,

Whether your local AA servants (District, Intergroup?) are planning to take
any action on Club No.2 with its Groups, our Sixth Tradition applies to the AA
Groups meeting there. Any member of the NA, Al-Anon and Alateen Groups would

also explain to you that their fellowships abide with the same Traditions. Hopefully you have written your Regional Correspondent and/or the Group Services desk at GSO, who will share any new experience found that supplements the AA Guideline on Clubs.

Beyond your posted message, the Tradition can direct the discussion to the fact that the "groups are bound to no one..." The AA Groups are paying rent to Club No. 2 in the same relationship as a Group pays a church or a salvation army post. It's free to move anytime and 'discard' the rental agreement.

The "cooperation without affiliation" of Tradition Six applies in the same way, but perhaps a GSR reporting from Club No.2 refers to the Group with the club's name in it's name---is this where the problem lies? If so, it's only an error of description and happens many places around our Fellowship.

Is someone locally planning on taking actions against any of the Groups in either fellowship? I certainly hope not because it breaks into the Groups' autonomy of Tradition Four. If your local AA members are uncomfortable with an NA Group meeting at the same site as an AA Group, can I suggest the idea that we, as members of Alcoholics Anonymous, need to remember to be friendly with our friends? There's a pamphlet with that title ("Let's be Friendly with our Friends" available from the Chicago Delegate Area 19 Bookstore at www.chicagoaa.org), and while it addresses the civic and professional community outside of AA, it can also apply to your local difficulty with the existence of the "non-AA" Groups.

I am not anxious, worried, or fearful about NA overtaking the membership of AAs or vice versa, and neither should any of your local AAs!

When it comes down to a meeting of the AA Group, it reaches out to the alcoholic and is responsible to its own members, especially how it abides with our Traditions. We don't 'enforce' our AA Traditions on anyone else... The NA, Al-Anon, and Alateen's Group meetings are an outside issue in this case, wouldn't you think so? "And as such, the AA Groups oppose no one."

I am surprised that none of your local longtime AAs haven't shared these views with you.

Good luck with your discussions, please lighten up, and keep in mind that Club No. 2 is only a landlord.

Yours in serenity and service,

anotherAAMember in Illinois

----- Original Message -----

From: anothermemberaa

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2002 5:30 PM

Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Clubs and A.A. meetings (puzzled)?

II
IIIIIIIIII

+++Message 573. RE: Changes to the forward to 3rd & 4th
Edition
From: Lash, William (Bill) 10/2/2002 4:28:00 PM

II
IIIIIIIIII

I have seen the photo of the AMA Convention at GSO & it is a beautiful piece! Just to let you know, 6/10/35 was a Monday back then & the Convention went from Monday until Friday. If you check page 179 in the Big Book about 2/3 of the way down, it says that Dr. Bob was still drinking in Atlantic City on Tuesday. This was BEFORE taking a train back to Ohio, being picked up at the station by his office nurse & going to her house, going back home, being detoxed for a few days by Bill W., & then drinking before the famous operation.

Just Love,
Barefoot Bill

-----Original Message-----

From: Doug B. [mailto:douglas@aahistory.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2002 12:34 AM
To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com
Cc: !Charles Knapp
Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] Changes to the forward to 3rd & 4th Edition

Ernie,

GSO had a picture of the large group of Doctors at the AMA convention from 1935 at the recent Archives Workshop....
Dr Bob was missing from the picture....

The picture was also dated.....June 10, 1935

So it looks like like Bill and Bob werent lying all those years....

I kinda thought that all the time....why WOULD they not have Bob's correct date....?

Thanks for all your work....

Doug Barrie

Ernest Kurtz wrote:

- > Hi Kieran,
- >
- > Ah, how I would love to visit AA in Australia! I suspect that the
- > basic reason the 2nd edition "Foreword" said "1937" is that the early
- > AAs were not great on dates. For a more striking example, Dr. Bob's
- > last drink was almost certainly on June 17th rather than the 10th, given
- > recent research into the dates of the medical convention he attended.
- > One thing historians early learn is that most non-historians are very
- > loose with dates. It is always important, when interviewing, for
- > example, to ask what else was going on at the time.
- >
- > Hope this helps.
- >
- > ernie kurtz
- >

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AAHistoryLovers-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

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II
IIIIIIIIII

++++Message 578. Who/What is on Page - 3rd Ed Big Book
From: tcumming 10/4/2002 11:28:00 PM

II
IIIIIIIIII

This file was originally started to make it easier to find links between people, places and things mentioned in the Third edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous. Much of the information covered in the 'first 164 pages' has become somewhat common knowledge over the years, yet I have never seen it all brought together in one document before. I've gone on and identified what I could in the stories sections, which was a bit harder to run down.

But what is all this good for, you may ask. Knowledge for the sake of

knowledge is a bit like our experience with self knowledge. OK but it won't keep you sober. What I have learned to do with this information is in working with others ... newcomers need to find people they can identify with. When I know a bit of their background I can refer them to stories of people with similar backgrounds. Othertimes someone is working on particular problems, or interested in particular topics. With this I can more easily find where those topics are touched on in the book. I have also found it useful in finding connections between different people mentioned in the Big Book. Possibly, one day, this information will be converted to a more proper looking index like that 'Names in AA' file previously posted. It might make it a bit more user friendly, yet it would lose the current feel of thumbing through the book.

Hope you find this tool useful.

1 Feb 02 ver

? indicates info not known to me, or may be followed by a 'best guess'

Who/What/Where on Page#

Pg

Name Discription

--

Preface

xi

Silkworth Dr.s Opinion

Preface 2Ed

xv

Bill W & Dr.Bob NY stockbroker & Akron physician (they first met on 5/12/35)

xvi

Ebby alcoholic friend in contact with Oxford Group

xvi

Dr. Silkworth NY specialist in alcoholism

xvii

Bill D AA#3 (Eddie R was actually 1st but he didn't stay sober)

xvii-iii

Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick noted clergyman

xviii

Fulton Oursler editor of Liberty mag.

xviii

John Rockefeller Jr gave dinner

xviii

Jack Alexander wrote Saturday Evening Post article

xx

recovery rate alcoholics who came to AA & really tried, 50% got sober at once
&
remained that way; 25% sobered up after some relapses, and among the
remainder, those who stayed on with AA showed improvement

Doctor Opinion

xxiii-xxx Dr. Silkworth well known doctor

xxiii

Bill W patient he regarded as hopeless

xxv

Bill W one of the leading contributors of this book

xxvi

ref to article in Lancet 1937 we believe and so suggested

xxix

Hank P man brought in to be treated for chronic alcoholism

xxix

Fitz M another case, had hid in a barn

Bill Story

1

Winchester Cathedral in England visted

2

Brooklyn Law School I took a night law course

2

1920's certain securities then cheap and rather unpopular

2

April, 1925 gave up our positions and off we roared on a motorcycle (Harley)

3

Ella Goldfoot's worked on farm for a month

3

Wall St partners & Lois's friends -remonstrances of friends, became
lone wolf (P 82)

3

Manchester Vt, Ekwanok Club -'29 contracted golf fever, went to
country (P 84)

4

Penick & Ford XYZ-32 (stock- P & F is a corn products company)

4

Dick Johnson friend in Montreal (worked at Greenshields & Co., a brokerage
house)

4

Dr. Clark & Matilda Burnham -wife's parents

4

Macys wife began work in dept. store

5

Matilta Spelman Burnham mother in law

5

Dr. Clark Burnham father in law

5

A. Wheeler & F. Winans '32 formed group to buy - bender ->chance vanished

6

?Dr. Leonard Strong doctor came with sedative, next day drinking gin & sedative

(P 99)

7

Dr.L.Strong & Dr.Emily brother in law & mother put him in

7

Towns hosp

7

Dr. Silkworth met kind doctor explained ill, body & mind

7

Armistice Day 1934 frightful day came when I drank once more

8-12

Ebby old school friend

9

Manchester Airport airplane jag (Ted Burke flew Bill & Ebby 1929, 1st plane to land there, all drunk)

9

Shep C, Rowland H, Cebra G two (three actually) men appeared in court

10

Fayette Griffith (Bill's) grandfather

10

Winchester Cathedral in England

12

Winchester Cathedral cathedral (England)

13

Towns / 12-11-34 At the hospital I was separated from alcohol for the last time

13

Ebby & Shep Cornell schoolmate visted at hosp (with friend)

14

Dr. Silkworth friend, the doctor

14

Ebby friend emphasized

15

Towns Hosp many times gone to my old hospital in despair

15

Cleveland in one western city

16

Bill C committed suicide in Bill & Lois home

16

36 years sober, age 75 Bill W., co-founder of AA, died January 24,1971

There Is A Solution

26

Rowland H a certain American Business man -treated by Jung

26

?Courtney Baylor had consulted the best known American psychiatrists

<http://www.h-pmuseum.org/iteminfo.boml?&item=.ul.book.HP000160&user=872cb98>

26

Dr. Carl Jung European psychiatrist

28

William James American psychologist, wrote Varieties of Religious Experience

More About Alcolism

32-3

? "man of thirty"-quit, retired at 55,started again,died 4 years

35-7

Ralph F "Jim"-car sales, mixed milk and whiskey

37-8

? jay walker story

39-43

Harry B "Fred"-sent AA's away in hosp,drank on Washington business trip

43

Dr. Percy Polick staff member world renowned hospital (Bellevue Hospital, N.Y.)

43

? two of you men, whose stories I've heard

We Agnostics

50

Alfred E. Smith "celebrated American statesman" (four time governor of New York and unsuccessful first Roman Catholic presidential candidate.)

51

Wright brothers first successful flight 1903

51

Professor Langley Samuel P. Langley, flying machine landed in Potomac -1903 project for War Dept. couldn't get off ground

52

Wright brothers built a machine that could fly

56

Fitz M "our friend was a minister's son"

56

Bill W "in hosp., approached by an alcoholic"

How It Works

Into Action

76

Book of James 2:20 &26 quote "Faith without works is dead"

79

? "man we know was remarried" -owed alimoney,wrote ex wife

80

Oxford Group member he accepted sum of money from business rival -explained in church

Working With Others

96

Bill W failed entirely with first half dozen prospects

101

(an Eskimo might turn up with a bottle) -running away from drinking to

Greenland Ice cap

102

Dr. Bob was one many of us keep liquor in our homes

To Wives

Family Afterward

124

Henry Ford

124

Eddie R alcoholic or his wife had love affairs

133

? one of doctors who read manuscript -sweets are often helpful

135

Earl T one of our friends a heavy smoker and coffee drinker-nagged-slipped

To Employers -chapter written by Hank P

136

Hank P member who spent life in world of big business

136

? "Mr B" -brother insisted on speaking to him

137

? obit for one of best salesmen ever had

137

? wife called checking on ins. - he hanged himself

138

? Frank Winans officer of one of largest banks in America-

139

? BillW,BobE,Rowland

employee of above-drunk-fired-AA contacted him-sober 'now'

140

? Dr.Edward Cowles or Dr. Craske -Chicago doctor with spinal fluid theory of alcoholics <http://www.eskimo.com/~burked/history/cowles.html>

141

Standard Oil New Jersey "if my company" (that Hank P worked for)

148

?husband of Jane S (D241) vice president of large industrial concern

149

Honors Dealers I own a little company

149-50

Bill W & Jim Burwell two alcoholic employees

Vision For You

151

Four Horsemen Terror, Bewilderment, Frustration, Dispair - Revelations 6:2-8
war,

famine, pestilence, and death - personified the four plagues of
mankind ~ sometimes also refered to as the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

153

Bill W one of our numbers, business trip came off badly

153

Akron, OH. a certain western city

153

National Rubber Machinery business (of that trip)involved in proxy fight

154

Akron, Ohio in a strange place

154

Mayflower Hotel paced a hotel lobby

154

Reverend Walter Tunks clergyman he phoned

155

St. Paul's Episcopal church selected at random

155

Dr. Bob resident near nadir of alcoholic despair

155

AMA convention went on a roaring bender (Atlantic City, NJ)

156

around 6/17/35 He (Dr. Bob) has not had a drink since. (It is generally
stated

that Dr. Bob's sobriety date and the founding date of AA is 6/10/35,
but recent facts around Dr. Bob's last drink indicate that this date
is closer to a week or so later.)

156

Mrs. Hall/Akron City Hosp head nurse of local hospital

156-8

Bill D real corker, none too promising, future AA, lawyer

158

6/26/35 He (Bill D.) never drank again.

158

ran for councilman entered a political campaign

158

Ernie G-Akron a fourth turned up, devil may care young fellow

159

Bill W. our friend of the hotel lobby incident

159

Dr.Bob,Bill D,Ernie G leaving behind his first acquaintance, the lawyer
and the devil-may-care chap

159

Ed A., Joseph D., Harlan S., J.D.H., Robert O., Dick S., Jane S., Lloyd
T., Bill VH.- among others

a year and 6 mo.s later these 3 succeeded with 7 more

160

T.Henry&Clarace Williams man and wife placed home at disposal for meetings

161

Cleveland community 30 miles away

161

Ed A, Paul S, Lloyd T, Bill J, Charlie J, Clarence S (among others)

has 15 fellows of AA

161

NYC, Wash.DC, NJ locale's eastern cities

162

Towns Hospital well known hospital for treatment of alcohol & drugs

162

Bill W member there 6 years ago

162

Dr. Silkworth doctor in attendance

162

Akron/Cleveland OH our western friends

162

New York, Akron/Cleveland our two large centers

163

Hank P/Montclair NJ AA member in large community, more alcoholics per square mile

163

Dr.Howard prominent psychiatrist he contacted/clinic (Chief Psychiatrist for the

State of NJ)

163

Dr. Russell Blaisdell chief psychiatrist of a ...

164

Rockland State Hsp, NY large public hospital

Stories In the Third Edition

Pioneers of AA

Doctor Bob's Nightmare - Dr. Bob S, Akron

171

Sister Ignatia/St. Thomas Dr. Bob was well assisted (along with Dr.Bob's nurse Lily)

171

St. Johnsbury, VT. I was born (8/8/1879) in a small New England village

171

Judge & Mrs. Walter Perrin Smith - father & mother

172

Dartmouth College one of the best colleges in the country (in Hanover, N.H., graduated 1902)

173

Univ. of Michigan entering one of the largest universities in the country

(1905)

174

Rush Medical Univ. another of the leading universities of the country (near Chicago, Ill., received medical degree 1910)

174

Akron, OH. western city

175

Scylla and Charybdis (mythology: Strait of Messina-big rock with monster/Scylla one side, whirlpool/Charybdis on other. Odysseus managed to navigate through)

175

Prohibition Eighteenth Amendment (in effect 1/16/19 - 12/5/33)

176

the City Club hide out in one of the clubs

176

Anne Smith my wife (Anne & Dr. Bob went out together for 17 years before they were married)

177

Wallace Beery/Tugboat Annie play or movie involving drinking man

177

'the beer experiment' one of Bob's stories

178

Oxford Group crowd of people -their poise, health and happiness

179

Henrietta Seiberling a lady called up my wife

179

Bill W come over meet a friend of hers

179

AMA Conv. meeting of nat'l society (in Atlantic City, NJ June 10-12, 1935)

179

nurse Lily/Cuyahoga Falls woke in friend's house, town near home

179

Bill W. my newly made friend

Alcoholics Anonymous Number Three - Bill D, Akron

182

Henrietta wife

182

Akron Law School

182

Kenmore/Akron, Ohio

183

?Ohio State Univ our state university

183

Prohibition

184

Akron City Hosp. 1935, hospitalized 8 times

184

Bill W & Dr. Bob S wife had been talking to a couple fellows
185
Bill W & Dr. Bob S
188
Bill D, Bill W & Dr Bob (all named in editors note)
188
Akron City Hosp. (named in editors note)
188
Mrs. Hall nurse on the receiving ward
189
Henrietta wife
189
AA's Number One Group
190
Cigarettes, poker & horses
190
attorney in Akron my business

He Had to Be Shown - Dick S, Akron
(rewrite of "Car Smasher" in the 1st edition)
193
Moscow, little town
194
Cuyahoga Falls
194
Scranton & Cleveland had lived in both
195
Dr. Bob
196
Cleveland blackout drinking story
200
Max R
went to get a job driving one of his trucks
202-4
Christian Science
203
beer experiment
204
Firestone working at
205
DrBob / Dr.Scuderi called a doctor, one I knew
205
St. Thomas sent me to hospital
205
Sister Ignatia
205
Paul S. my brother, associated with group, had stopped drinking
206

Paul S., Dr. Bob my brother & Dr. Bob talking to me about not drinking

206

Paul (S., brother) dispatched to get me a pint

207

paraldehyde taken five and half ounces

207

St. Thomas awoke in hospital

208

Bill D offered drink -smartest man I'd met in months

208

Joe (?D.) walked 3 miles through snow to talk to him

208

Dr. Bob, Bill D., Ernie G., Walter B., Harold G., Paul S., Joe D.,
Harlan S., J. D. H., Bob O. or G., Henry Z.

only 7-8 people in group before me

He Thought He Could Drink Like a Gentleman - Al G (aka Abby), Cleveland

210

Cleveland OH born in

211

toolmaker apprentice job - moved into drafting dpt

211

Cleveland

212

Case School

212

patent law my profession

212

Grace married when I was 28

213

Washington worked in too

213

New York, Philadelphia, Boston -

214

Catholic training in my youth

215

Grace G. my wife

215

? first approached about the Akron Group

216

?Virginia MacL. wife's hairdresser

216

Clarence S. brother in law of hairdresser

216

Dr.Bob some doctor in Akron

216

Mary (?wife Grace)

216

Clarence, hairdresser Clarence S , & sister in law the hairdresser

216

Bill W.

217

Gethsemane (scene of "agony & betrayal of Christ")

217

Dr. Bob

217

Dorothy S (Clarence's wife)

217

City Hospital (Akron)

217

Dr. Scuderi the interne

217

paraldehyde glassful of bleached lightening

217

Dr. Bob

217

barbiturates routinely took in mornings last 3 years

218

Dr. Bob didn't lay out whole program

218

Dr. Bob, Bill D., Ernie G., Phil S., Walter B., Harold G., Ed A., Paul S., Joseph D., Harlan S., J.D. H., Robert O., Henry Z., Richard S., Jane S., Lloyd T., Bill VanH., Frank C., Robert E., Charles S., Bill J., Tom L., Jack D., Charlie J., Clarence S., Jim S., Archie T., John D., Wallace G., Vaughn P., Ernie G., George McD.

every member of Akron Group visited

218

April 19, 1939 (or 26th) left on Wednesday afternoon

218

T. Henry & Clarace Williams house where encounter first meeting

218

Oxford Groupers

219

(see ref to pg 218) 28 to 30 fellows came to see & he came to believe

219

Dr. Bob Doc dwelt on idea of illness

219

Cleveland group first met end of May 1939 in 'my' home (Clarence S., Al G., George McD., John D., Dr. Harry N., Lee L., Phillips, Chas J., Clarence W., Rowland J., Deforest H., Doug G., and Lloyd T. attended)

Women Suffer Too - Marty M, NYC

222-3

"Dorothy" (came out of blackout talking to)

223

Rita (last person remembered before blackout)

223

New York, 42nd St (where she had been drinking with Rita)

224

Brooklyn (where found herself with Dorothy)

224

Willie Seabrook name she tried to find in phone book (William Seabrook)

224

"Asylum" book he had written. (New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company c1935)

224

Bellevue Hosp landed in a hospital (the neurology ward under the care of

Robert

Foster Kennedy, M.D.)

225

Scott Fitzgerald & John Held -novelist and playwright

225

John Blakemore my husband

226

Blythwood Sanitarium entered a sanitarium (in Greenwich Connecticut)

226-7

Dr. Tiebout my doctor

227

book Alcoholics Anonymous my doctor gave me to read (a multilith copy)

228

AA went to a meeting of this group of freaks or bums

228

182 Clinton St a house in Brooklyn (Bill W's house)

The European Drinker - Joe D, Akron

230

Europe-Alsace born in

230

Basle Switzerland went to Franciscan school there

230

Boxer Rebellion/China (Chinese revolt 1899-1900)

231

Cleveland growing industrial city in the middle west

232

Prohibition

234

Catholic

234

?Father Gallagher, Haas or Nagle my priest

235

Dr.Bob alcoholic who was a doctor came to see me

235

Dr. Bob, Bill D., Ernie G., Walter B., Harold G., Paul S.

not more that 4 or five members

235

? third man who came to see me

236

Matt 19:19, 22:39, Mark 12:31, Romans 13:9, Galatians 5:14

"Love thy neighbor as thyself"

237

?Harlan S sent me to tell another alcoholic my experience

The Vicious Cycle - Jimmy B, NY

238

Philadelphia, Wash.D.C.

238

Rosa my new wife

238-9

Jackie (W.) 12th Stepped him (pidgeon of Fitz M)

238-9

Fitz (M) old school friend of mine

239

AA group of fellows in New York

239

AA this "understanding fellowship"

240

Baltimore my early life spent in

240

Episcopal Sch for Boys Protestant boarding school in Virginia (Alexandria, VA)

242

in France

Bar Le Duc

242

Baltimore

242-3

Hank P big shot who fired me, met again in AA

243

Baltimore

243

?Firestone sales job with national tire company

244

thirties. Depression

245

Hank P man who fired me 11 years ago in Mississippi

245

Bill W

245

Jackie (W.) named

246

jail places matches are prohibited

246

Bill & Hank

246

Honor Dealers Co small automotobile polish company

246

Bill W., Henry G. P., Fitz M., Brooke B., Silas B., Herb D., Ned F., Ernest M., Gordon S., Myron W., Wes W., Bill R., Flo R., Ernest A., Paul K., Cliff W., Jack W.

NY composed of about 12 men

246

182 Clinton St Bill's house in Brooklyn

247

Hank P fired him (again)

248

June 16, 1938 his sobriety date

248

Big Book our big AA book

248

12 Steps

had a definite formula

248

(he inspired) God, as we understand him

249

Philadelphia brand new group

249

Rosa only 12 Step call on woman, married her

250

San Diego, CA now live in the West

The News Hawk - Jim S, Akron (helped Akron members write stories for 1st ed Big Book)

(re written and retitled version of "Traveler, Editor, Scholar" that appeared in 1st edition)

251

New York sailed for

251-2

Tom Sharkey's bar "brawling bar on 14th Street"

252

Pittsburgh

252

Liverpool

252

Australia where born, visit my people

252

Lusitania (luxury cruise ship, sunk in WWI)

253

Chicago, Omaha, Ohio

253

YMCA the local "Y"

253

Quebec, Toronto, Buffalo, Pittsburg scenes of drunks upon release

254

?Akron started housekeeping in large Ohio town

254

Washington DC

254

?Pittsburg returned to town left 3 mo.s before

254

Philadelphia

255

Houston

256

Federal Theatre in Texas

256

Federal Writers in San Antonio -

256

?Akron town left 5 years before

257

?Salvation Army did 10 weeks in social rescue institution

257

?Akron City Hosp called to the hospital

257-8

?Earl T former partner (12 stepped from hosp bed)

257

? stranger came into my shop

257-8

AA about a bunch of some 60 former drinkers and drunkards

258

Dr.Bob the doctor I had heard about

258

Chicago (where friend in hosp was from)

258

?Earl T. got me into a hospital

259

Wed/Akron left hosp on a meeting night

259

? taken home by former alcoholic and his wife

259

Upper Room read Bible daily and go over simple devotional

260

ref to Exodus 16:3 "fleshpots of Egypt"

260

Prodigal Son

From Farm to City - Ethel M., Akron

261

AA's first Group (Akron)

262

Liberty, Indiana where aunt lived

262

Ethel (name of author, Ethel M)

262

Roscoe M aka Rollo/Russ (aunt warns) he drinks too much...I married him

262

Russ (Roscoe M aka Rollo or Russ)

262

Cincinnati where he went off on a week drunk

262

Ravenna (small town east of Akron)

263

Dr.Bob

264

Charleston, W. Virg.

264-5

Bellaire, OH picked up for drunk driving there

264

Wheeling

265

Akron

265

AA

265-6

John D. (Rockefeller dinner Feb 8, 1940)1940 piece in the paper about

266

AA going to have to join that alcoholic business they're talking about

266

Elgie R woman behind the bar

266-7

Jack M. owner of the bar (?John M of Cleveland gp)

267

Akron where Jack went to quit drinking

267

Dr.Bob doctor here in Akron

267

Florida

268

?Bill D./Jimmy B. an attorney sat on the side of the bed

268

Saturday Post/Jack Alexander -Jack gave it to her to read

268

Sermon on the Mount

268

Akron every Wednesday meeting Jack told her about

268

Big Book she had one

269

Paul S.-Akron stressed reading Big Book

269

Jim G

told her to put Big Book away, then start on stories

269

Jack M

269

Ohio Edison Building Jack M met there to take to meeting

269

Klu Klux Klan (afraid AA might be like)

269

King School location of first meeting

269

Miriam & Annabelle (wives of _ & Wally G) AnnabelleG. took under her wing

270

?Ernie G-Akron young fellow led the meeting

270

?Sue talked about his wife

270

Lord's Prayer closed meeting with

270-2

Russ

270-1

King School had attended Wed. night meeting there 3 1/2 years

270

Dr.Bob & wife Anne Doc and Anne

271

Dr.Bob enjoyed coming to their house in country

271

slips story of first she knew of - Jack M

271

Jack M. (?John R of Cleveland gp)

271

Elgie R his wife dragged him to Russ

272

Hilda S invited her to Sunday dinner after 'Russ' buried

272

Doc & Anne would be at that dinner

272

old timers

173

Anne S. miss Annie's advice

273

Alice one of the men's wife

Man Who Mastered Fear - Archie T., Akron then Detroit

(originally published in 1st edition as "The Fearful One", re written for 2nd ed.)

275

Detroit started AA there

277

Depression

278

Ralph went to his room and told him truth

278-9

DrBob couple knew him, turned me over to his care

278-81

Akron

279

Akron Group

279

Akron City Hosp while in a hospital bed

279

Twelve Steps visitors explained program of recovery

279

Anne DrBob's dear wife

280

Archie's 3rd Step prayer "God, for 18 years I have been unable to handle this problem. Please let me turn it over to you"

280

Sept 1938 been 16 years since I came back to life

280

Twelve Steps

280

DrBob & Anne lived with for close to a year

281

Bill W visted Akron frequently

281

Detroit never wanted to see my home town, but did

281

Bill W stopped in Akron on way to Detroit

281

New York where Bill went after Detroit

282

who approached doctors, ministers, lawyers, men in industry & friends

282

Dick R first prospect, shipped him off to Akron

282

Akron & Toledo

282

'Cash Customers' DrBob slang for those having so little cash

282

delivering dry cleaning returned to Detroit to find work

282

?Dick R, Mike, Anne K -after 6 mos, group of 3 men had first mtg in his bedroom (also nonalcoholic Sarah Klein)

282

Depression

283

Rotary Groups talked to them abt AA

283

(Oct 39 -AACOA 182) one of the first radio broadcasts about AA

285

Sept 1938

He Sold Himself Short - Earl T - Chicago

287

Chicago

287-95

Akron born there

287-93

Chicago moved there in 1930

287

Depression

288

Katie T my wife

288

Florida dad came to get him

289

small group of men in Akron had same problem

289

?, Howard mentioned 2 I had known

289-90

Howard an ex doctor

289

these men in Akron

290

allergy + obesssion described illness

290

? ?

2 other men visited me

291

T.Henry & Clarace Williams allowed to attend first meeting - living room of a home

291

Bill D led meeting

291

Bill W & Dr. Bob

291

Lord's Prayer ended with

291

Depression

291-3

Dr. Bob spent lot of time with

292

Wednesday Dr.Bob's day off

292

six steps

292

moral inventory such as selfishness, conceit, jealousy, carelessness,
intolerance,

ill temper, sarcasm, and resentments

292

Restitution step made list of all harmed, worked out ways & means to make
restitution

293

Katie my wife (A 23)

293

inventory learned could not take inv and file it away; continue daily

294

Dick R. asked to help one of his salesmen

294

North Shore Sanitarium went to the sanitarium

294

Ken A.

man from Akron moved to Chicago

294

Big Book printed in spring 1939

294

? + Sadie two inquiries from NY (unknown name is one that reportedly didn't
make

it, his mother was more interested in his getting sober than he was
apparently)

294

'We The People' broadcast after 15 minute radio talk

294

Dr. Dan Craske doctor of one of prospects (Osteopathic Hosp in Chicago)

294

Ed & Sadie doctor gave 2 prospects

295

Dr. Brown another doctor in Evanston

295

Sylvia K turned over a woman (also refered Luke, Sam, Tee)(A 22)

Home Brewmeister - Clarence S - Cleveland

297

Cleveland

297

Dorothy S.M. my wife (1st wife)

298

Cleveland moved back to my home town

298

City National Bank in Cleveland -larger company in the finance business

299

Dorothy S.M. my mistrusting wife

301-2

Dr.Bob wife heard of a doctor in another city

302

Akron City Hosp advised me to enter a particular hospital

The Keys of the Kingdom - Sylvia K - Chicago

304

Chicago

304

cycle of alcohol & sedation

304

John Held & F.Scott Fitzgerald -popular authors of 1920's

305

sedatives (what) most prescribed

305

Chicago moved thousand miles away to

306

Caroline P was one (D 180) day and night nurses

306-10

Dr. Brown /from Evanston there was one doctor continued to struggle with me

307-8

Alcoholics Anonymous remarkable book off NY press

307

Cornwall Press off NY press

308

AA's handful of people in Akron and NY

309-10

Earl T. next day, a visit from Mr. T.

309

Akron & Chicago

310

Cleveland

310

Luke, Sam, Tee my doctor sent 2 more alcoholic patients

310

Earle T, George M, Dick R, Sylvia +2 -later Sept '39 had nucleus of six members

310

Sept 1939 first official group meeting

311

alcohol or sedatives artificial crutch I had relied on (little white pills

-DrBob

book 180-1)

Part II - They Stopped in Time

Too Young - ? - ?

317-8

Vietnam stationed there

318

?Karen girl I'll call 'Karen'

318

Arizona stationed there

318

drunken driving charged with

318

?Jean girl I'll call 'Jean'

318

Germany stationed there

319

? AA member

319-20

? AA group / meeting

320

(slogan) not to worry about yesterday ... tomorrow ... live 24 hours

Fear of Fear - Cecil M (later Cecil F)-

321-4

'George' M (named on 322) been married to a drunk

321

Greenwich Village Gp 2nd meeting with him

321

'Eileen' lovely young girl

321

? introduced me to the girl / call my sponsor

322

'George' M

322

Cecil 'Jane' (name she calls herself in story)

322

corn liquor drank on first drinking spree - allergic!

323

(yets) never went to hosp, lost job, in jail, drank in morning

323

(more yets) lost husbands, children, homes, everything

324

(slogan) I never knew it was the first drink that did it

324

(slogan) go on the wagon

325

since July 1949 only been in AA few years

325

(slogans) live & let live, Think

Those Golden Years - Cecil 'Teet' C -

327

movie publicist job he retired from

327

Social Security

327

Paramount Studios motion picture studio public relations

327

AA

327

(yets) never been told by superior drinking too much, still had wife, ...

328

Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences -been on board

328

Kansas originally from

328

'babe in Boozerville' slang

328

(slogan) on the wagon

330

obesity & alcoholism chief dangers for retiree

331

THE LAUGHS ON HOLLYWOOD even sold some (Roundtable Publishing, 1985, several magazine articles on the Marx Bros.)

331

couplet "Alcohol gave me wings to fly, And then it took away the sky"

-unknown, perhaps his writing

332

"I'll Never Smile Again" (song, various artists- Audubon Bon Bons to Frank Sinatra)

332

(more songs - C/W) "What Made Milwaukee Famous Made a Loser Out of Me" by Jerry Lee Lewis, "I'm Drinking My Christmas Dinner All Alone" (unknown)

333

barbiturates to get back to sleep

333

'eating my alcohol' (slogan)

333

Alan Ladd / "Shane" movie he had worked on

334

AA told wife he had to go to

The Housewife Who Drank At Home -

337

(slogan?) which came first, the thinking or the drinking?

338

D.T.'s

339

Jekyll & Hyde I became a ...

339

(slogan) first drink

339

(slogan) off on the usual merry go round

339

(slogan) cessation from drinking was not enough

340

Alcoholics Anonymous doctor referred her

340

(slogan) couldn't live with alcohol...couldn't live normally without it

340

(slogans) Easy Does It, etc.

Lifesaving Words - Trevor K, loner in India

342

GSO

342

Lucknow, India his home

342-3

Naini Tal (Himalayan Mountains lake resort, site of several Hindu festivals)

342

Philander Smith College American sponsored Methodist public school

343

Enid my wife

343

New Delhi stationed there

343

Charlie M in touch by mail with sponsor in New Delhi

343

AA literature

"has kept me sober"

Physician Heal Thyself - Dr. Earle M - San Francisco

345

physician

345

CA in a western state

345

(yets) lost everything, been in jail, prison, lost family, lost income, skid

row

345

skid row of success (slang)

346

Harry went up to see a friend -member of AA

346

Alcoholics Anonymous would investigate from medical point

346

pamphlet (?) had wife read it to me

347

Earle friend called him by name

347

12 Step call made before ever came to program

347

Tuesday Night Mill Valley A.A. group -first meeting

347

surgeon his profession / introduced as psychiatrist

347

Clark our community butcher

347

? one of the carpenters

347

? man who ran the bakery

347

? my friend who was a mechanic

348

Bible list of where he had 4 placed

348

Big Book on my night stand

348

12 & 12 in locker at hospital

348

?Sermon on Mount got books by Emmet Fox

348

pink cloud / pink seven felt miserable again

348

Clark the butcher

349

Alcoholics Anonymous suggested he join / instead of enjoying pink cloud

349

page 58 (How It Works) suggested he read (highlights phrases here)

349

psychoanalysis good tool, not too potent

349

12 Steps

gave some semblance of an answer

349

1st half 1st Step

350

Third Step

351

the Great Physician

351

Mary (1st wife) asked my wife wasn't there something (9th)- now does dishes

351

Janey daughter

352

Alcoholics Anonymous has helped

A Teen Ager's Decision- Lisa - Washington State

(story was first named "The Story of Lisa" in an early printing of
"Young People and A.A.")

354

Las Vegas, Washington State -hitchhiked

354

booze, pills, pot spent month doing

355

AA Thank God I knew of

355

day at a time (slogan) decision to stop drinking ...

355

? my sponsor

Rum, Radio and Rebellion - Pete W - Pittsburgh, PA

356

53 with 9 yrs AA

356

(yets) never in jail, hospitalized, cost me a job

357

Cleveland, Ohio born in

357

WW 1

357

Armistice signed the day he planned to enlist

357

Atlanta went to sign up

357

Birmingham

357-8

Prohibition

357

moonshine drank it

358

Roaring Twenties

358

Europe visited a few weeks

358

speak easy cards

358

Cleveland, New York where those 'speaks' were

358

'29 Stock Market Crash

358

Depression

358

John Barleycorn -slang for alcohol

359

Chicago

359

New York

359

Cleveland from my home town of ...

359-60

Vermont opportunity to go manage

359

Salt Lake City she had opportunity in

360

'city slicker from NY' looked upon him as

360

Rotary Club he joined

360

5 o'clock alcoholic

361

November 1938 married in Montreal

361-4

Pittsburgh moved to

362

Spring 1944 left for her parents home in Florida

363

AA had read about, called

364

Florida decided to drive to

364

AA literature

packed so she couldn't help but see it

364

New York went there alone

364

lapse (slip) didn't tell anyone

365

Big Book, 12 Step work read and did

365

first birthday in AA

366

9 month baby admitted to being (at birthday)

366

St.Petersburg Times clipping about AA (1944)

367

Pittsburg

367

AA

367

"The Man Upstairs" (God)

367

Twelve Steps most important factor in success

368

Honesty most imp't after the steps

Any Day Was Washday - ?

369

Laundromat ideal spot for alcoholic housewife

370

cirrhosis of the liver mother died of

371

women's halfway house

371-2

Alcoholics Anonymous

It Might Have Been Worse - Chet R -

374

golf and 19th hole

375

cunning, baffling, powerful -

377

(phrase) don't want to live/afraid to die

378

Alcoholics Anonymous told him "it's AA-or else"

378

(phrase) easier softer way

378

(yets) jails, sanitariums, broken homes, skid row

379

Step 1 (quoted) explained

380

allergy obsession explained

380

(slogan) one drink too much, 100 not enough

380

character defects explained

381

12 Steps

381

(directions) study AA book, go to meetings, get active

381

spiritual experience

381

12 Steps & 12 Traditions

381

Lord's Prayer

381

amends explained

382

(slogans) 1st Things 1st, Easy Does It, 24 Hours a Day

A Flower of the South - Esther E - Houston/Dallas Tx

384

Texas

384

AA

384

New Orleans

385

creme de menthe drank with siblings

385

Miss Esther father talking to her

385

Emma our old cook who liked to drink

386

Mae West film star

386

medicinal it really was ... that night

386

?Frank divorced my husband in July

386

Texas where divorced & reconcilled

386

Oklahoma moved to

386

Texas (Houston) returned after 3 years

386-94

?Frank my husband

388-9

New York Frank had to go there for 2 weeks

389

Samaritan Treatment father talked her into -took 3 times (possibly at Doctors Hosp

on Maple Ave in Dallas)(Samaritan Treatment was an aversion control type treatment)

389

?B-3 diagnosed vitamin deficiency

389-90

Houston moved to -change of environment

390

jail took my dog home and me to ...

391

hit bottom

391-2

Saturday Evening Post someone sent article on AA, Frank gave to her

391

AA something else to try

392

an actual disease

392

Box 658 PO Box to write to in NY (459 since sometime btwn '41-5)

392

General Service Off.

392

AA literature

393

Ruth Hock wrote longhand note -personal touch helped

393

Larry J man AA referred me to, had started group

393

last drunk never want to forget

394

Ruth (Hock) for personal note (Bill W's secretary)

394

Houston Group thanks to all members

394

Dallas transfered to in 2nd year sobriety (started group that first met there 4 Ap

1943)

394

12th Step work threw herself into

394

AA

395

Dr. Bob & Bill quotes from

395

(slogan) keep it simple

Calculating the Costs -

396

Navy retired

396

initiation fee AA's paid highest of any club in world

396

Drunkalogues & statistics can be boring

396

Green blood (slang) money

397

Drinking Career from 18-43

397

(slogan) one drink not enough

397,399

20%

of income went to drinking

398

giggle gurgles (slang)

398

Navy joined

398

Army to avoid

398

WW 2

399

intangible init fees

399

first drink (slogan) stay away from

399

(slogan) one day at a time

Stars Don't Fall - Felicia G - NYC

400

countess a titled lady

400

alcoholic career

400-2

Pattersons my family

400

Venus dreamed about having beauty of

400

Madonna dreamed about having purity of

400

President of US dreamed about being brilliant as

400

Shakespeare ambition to write like

400-1

AA life was in shambles until

400

Europe family home in

401

Count Josef Gizyicki my father

401

Count had a title

401

Eleanor "Cissy" Patterson my mother

401

America mother brought her here as baby

401

terrapin fork learned to hold -main academic accomplishment

401

West Coast at 18 ran away to

402

Drew Pearson married

402

Baltimore Sun & Washington Post -he was young newspaper man

402

back East came here after marriage

402

Quaker his family

402

Ellen birth of a daughter

402

Washington (DC) went after divorce

402

physical allergy to alcohol -had right away

402

"The House of Violence" 1932 -got a novel written

403

Mrs. Shakespeare had not become

403-4

Virginia had house here in fox hunting season (Nov1-Jan31 now)

403-5

Switzerland chalet here during summer

403

Long Island another house here

404

AA stayed drunk till ... 10 years later

404

bowl of milk punch drank during fox season

405

Europe went to escape

405

banks of Seine France -rented beautiful apartment

405

"Flower of Smoke" 1939 another novel abt

405

Scott Fitzgerald's poor tipsy debutante (character) (SF was famous writer of period)

405

Vogue New York fashion magazine, Paris office

405

Dudley de Lavigne married again, Englishman

405

Egypt honeymooned here

405

France wine tasting tour while waiting for English divorce

406

Geneva at large party here

406

enlarged liver said I had one

406

Europe returned to -things no better with family

406

New York moved to

407

'forget a drink' (foreign concept to alcoholic)

407-9

young Bohemians met a bunch of

407

the Village they lived in (Greenwich Village section NYC)

408

(slogan) end would be total smash up, death, or insanity

409, 411-2 Dr. Ruth Fox my third and last analyst

409

(slogan) AA had to stop my drinking first. Then I was able to do something about me.

410

fish wife, common scold (slang) I became

410

dive (slang) a sick person's place (bar)

411

Shakespeare compare self to again

411

'running into doors' excuse to explain bruises

411

'gave me the elbow' (slang)

411-2

(yets) jail, sanitarium - mugged, manhandled, semi prostitution

411

59th St. Bridge thoughts of jumping from

412

Bill W spoke at meeting

412

AA

412

Big Book I read the book, returned it to my analyst

412

taken 1st Step

412-3

Bill W go down and see Mr. W

413

AA Foundation

was in ...

413

Wall St district NY (?Vessey St location)

413

allergy, mental obsession Bill explained

413-4

Marty (M)

413

Priscilla P a friend of Marty's, another AA

413

Salvation Army

414

Robert McCormick she had known my cousin in Chicago

414

first meeting went to my

414

Priscilla with Marty and some other girls

414

Tuesday @ Clinton St only one big meeting a week then in NY

414-5

Anne (C.) fellow AA who helped me, went on bender (her story "Annie the Cop
Fighter" in 2nd edition of Big Book)

414, 416 Priscilla (Peck)

415

Joy Farm AA farm in Kent (renamed High Watch Farm in '40's)

415

New York phoned for help

415

John & Bud 2 AAs met us at station ?[perhaps John ('Fitz' M) & Bud (E)]

415-6

24 Hour Plan

416

slip except for one in first 8 months

416

(?when daughter taken away) reaction to personal tragedy in my life

416

24th Street Club AA Club -changed locks on desk as secretary

416

Intergroup secretary "interfering"

416

12th Step Work

417

"Lost and Found", Colliers Jan 5 '46, _The House of Violence_, New York
: C. Scribner's sons, 1932, and _Flower of Smoke_, New York, C.
Scribner's sons, 1939.

sold a good deal of what I've written -

417

11th Step

Growing Up All Over Again - Harris K - Illinois

418

alcohol and pills

418

Junior League wife was in

418

alcoholic & addict

419

AA

419

? dentist who started AA in ...

419

Amarillo, Tx

419

US Navy

419

Philippines 2 year tour of duty in

419

alcohol, pills, adultery binges with

419

geographic cure return to US

420

chemicals depended on to keep going

420

AA because no other doors of help

420

12 Steps

part of list of what does to stay sober

420

? second wife - AA member

421

("and a") alcoholic with a drug problem

Unto the Second Generation - ?

422

AA pushed into

422

ACUTE ALCOHOLISM diagnosis

422

Hawaii the place

422

US Navy

author was in the

423

pumping gas job after school

424

Omaha where went

424

Chicago from my hometown

425

Navy enlisted in ...

425

Army draft to escape

425

Great Lakes Boot Camp

426

Pensacola Air Base applied to photo school -

426

bartender job at Navy Chief's Club

426

Hawaii applied for duty there

426

Pearl Harbor

426

Kaneohe Bay transferred to, on

426

Oahu

427

AA folks found

427

Honolulu

427 429 D.T.'s

pineapple story(427)

428

San Diego returned to

428

Tijuana went to jail -drunk & brawl

428

met 'new parents' headed home

429

DT's again folks called a doctor

429

AA heard a lot about

Me An Alcoholic? - ?

432

coin with 2 faces

432

Who's Who in America listed in

432

'bohemian' going completely

432 434 binges

433

(yets) drunk on job, missed work, ineffective by hangover, liquor expenses within my budget

433

explanations (listed)

433

new formula (list) (how to drink without consequences)

435

schizophrenia, suicidal

435

Time & Newsweek he was quoted in -with pictures

435

AA

436

power greater than myself

437

Psalms 46:10 psalmist said "Be still, and know that I am God"

Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict - Dr. Paul O - California

originally published in the A.A. Grapevine with the title "Bronzed Moccasins"

439

prescription drugs

439

(excuse) "If you had my problems you'd drink too"

439

(excuse) "If you had my wife you'd drink too"

439-40, 444-5 Max my wife

439 445 Al-Anon

440

psycho ward

441

Wallace Beery movies

442

pep pills taking and shooting

442

Benzedrine, Demerol, morphine -used

442

codeine, Percodan, tranquilizers -never got much effect

442

Pentothal used

443

alcohol & pills necessary to get ALL out of house & possession

443

solid alcohol (slang)

444

convulsion

444

Mayo Clinic decided to send me

444

nut ward at Mayo

445

scotch went home and got bottle of

445-52

Max also my office nurse

446

3rd Step we took together out loud

446

12 Steps

446

Frank the man from AA ... an attorney

448

narcotics, pills, alcohol

449

(slogan) now what am I going to do about it?

449-50

acceptance

449

Shakespeare "All the world's a stage, all the men and women merely players"

449

AA

450

Midas touch

451

Serenity Prayer

451

AA meetings

452

12 Steps

first to the 12th

452

my serenity

452

(slogan) I do whatever is in front of me to be done

Part III - They Lost Nearly All

A Five Time Loser Wins - Morris B - Long Island, NY

457

alcohol with other drugs

457

(slogan) progressive, self induced, slow suicide

458

inside - outside (slang)

459

(Slogan) chemicals- liquid or otherwise

459

(slogan) freedom from self

459

12 Steps

460

castor oil/mineral oil punishment

460-1

AA heard of 20 years before

460

LA, Phoenix, San Francisco attended meeting there

460

California left to ...

460

jail...alcohol & speed woke up in - sick, withdrawing from

461

Serenity Prayer

461

(slogan) if continue to drink, the end is death or insanity

461

first 3 Steps took for the first time

462

big Gene civilian AA companion

462

paracounselors program to convert 'management problems' into

462

Dept. of Corrections

462

County Mental Health job as alcoholism worker

463

Marine Corps completed training in ...

463

(slogan) Guess I'll never be a saint.

Promoted to Chronic - Helen B - New York

464

solitary drinking

464

blackout

464-5

locked up in hotel room drinking

465

sleeping pills left a bottle for her

465

hotel maid might have died except for alert ...

465

border line having passed over the

465-7

Washington DC transition in life took place here

466

stealing money from him

466

New York took me to

467

Bing Crosby -Silent Night listened to over and over at restraunt

468

2 police men husband brought them to my room

468

psychopathic ward-City Hsp took to

468

merry to round (slogan)

469

"Conditional Reflex" treatment (possibly Samaritan Treatment?)

469

AA

469

Saturday Evening Post hadn't been written

469

Jack Alexander

469

Washington (DC) only a tiny group in

470

Nov 1944 at long last went to AA

470

Periodic Drinker crossed out

470

Chronic Alcoholic diagnosis

471-2

? first worman I met in AA -became sponsor

471

Easy Does It (solgan)

471

12 Steps

may not have drank again if practiced

471

getting off the beam (slogan)

472

put up on a pedestal (slogan -not recomended)

473

Faith without works is dead -(slogan)

473

24 Hour program (slogan)

Join The Tribe! - Maynard B - Fairfield, Conn

first published in the A.A. Grapevine in Feb 76 as "Son of Tall Man"

474

AA

474

Great Spirit (God)

474

Maliseet Indian his tribe

474-5

Canada

474-6

Tall Man my father (named later, probably a pseudonym though. See Nov 62

Grapevine story "An Indian named "Tall Man"" page 14-17.)

474

US Army

cousin had served in

474

Canadian Army author joined

475

Maine went to booze joint in

475

Connecticut moved to after Maine

475

Maine Turnpike turnpike in Maine -from Toll to Winthrop, Maine

475

? & Tall Man good mother and father

475

? Indian fellow been sober 3 years

475-6

AA thought it was a religion

476

?Fort Fairfield Group first meeting in small town in Maine

476

1st & 12th Steps jumped from to help brother

476

TOBIQUE Reservervation start group on reservation (3 May 58, New Brunswick

Canada)

476

Bridgeport, CN moved there after 6 mos.

476

?Eskasonia, Nova Scotia help start other groups all over Maritimes & New

England

476

Maine newsletter -Boomerang -carried Tall Man's obit

Belle of the Bar - ?

478

pill affliction

478

suicide attempted several times

480

heroin also addicted to for 2 years

480

AA

480

Al-Anon mother is in

481

12 Steps and 12 Traditions practice every day

481

? met and married a man in AA

481

flower garden new hobby

481

hockey also enjoys

482

honesty biggest word in AA

Jim's Story - Dr. Jim S - Washington DC

483

AA's first black gp originator of

483-6

Virginia born in

483

Negro

483

1st Baptist Church

485-7,490

Vi

my wife, married 30 years

485

the South father came out of

485

surgery author's profession

486

the southern "cracker" (slang)

486,490

Washington DC author went through school in

486

Howard University author attended

486

the Depression

489-90

North Carolina I went South -dry county

491

James S who police asked for (him)

492

Seattle went to to work

492

Pennsylvania wound up in a steel mill here

493-5

Ella G met while repairing outlet and got into AA

493

Jim S

(author)

494

AA, sponsor Ella didn't say anything abt - talked to wife first

494-5

Charlie G my sponsor, was white

495

Charlie & 3-4 others met at Ella G's 1st meeting of colored group in AA

495

YMCA got room for meetings at -Friday nights

495

white gps in WashDC got help & guidance from

496

12 Step work

Our Southern Friend - Fitz M - Washington, DC

497

Old Maud father's horse for buggy

498

John Barleycorn (slang for alcohol)

498

hail fellow well met (slang)

498

"Hail Hail the gang's all here" -(song)

498

"Sweet Adeline" (song)

499

eat drink and be merry (phrase)

499

Armistice (end of WW 1)

500

tuberculosis the doctor told me I'll have

500

George the elevator boy

500

Good old Charlie drinking partner

502-5

Towns Hosp in hospital for alcoholics (in NY p.505)

503

?Hank P. one comes back -tells of sober men in New York

504

Who are you to say there is no God? -

504

prayer

504

Bill & Lois some men & women come to visit my friend

505

New York wife come to -he gets out of hospital

506

constructive acts of love

507

strength has come from weakness -(slogan)

507

truth shall make us free (slogan)

The Prisoner Freed - ?

508

prison in for 20 years

508

Homicide Court

508

Old Tombs Prison

509

Sing Sing

509

Dannemora in Adirondacks

509

Wallkill "a so called rehabilitation center"

509-11

AA first exposed at Wallkill

509

Matteawan and many other mental institutions

510-11

some of old crowd -got drunk

511

? couple AA boys

511

4 years sober

Desperation Drinking - Pat M - NYC

512

AA fortunate AA is available

512

3 years ago came to AA

512

sponsor (joke)

513

blackouts

513

Pat (author)

513

Army he went into

513

New York came back to

513

Ireland came from as youngster

514

binges

514

misery parade

515

half drunk wasn't the type that got ...

515

DT's

515

Alanon House (AA group before dropping the 'n')introduced to AA

515

1st Step

516

dry jitters (slang)

516

jump in with both feet (slogan)

516

12 Steps

516

slogans -Easy Does It,

The Career Officer - Sackwille M - Dublin, Ireland

517

British officer, Irish

517

Jesuits

517

Indian Civil Service

517

Germany year in school here -drunk 1st time

518

Dublin University 2 years school here

518

Sandhurst British Military College -1916

518

WW 1

the war was on

518

France

518-9

Germany about a year occupation after war

518

England

518

Army (British)

519

India

519

Abyssinian war

519-20

Egypt stationed there

520

Palestine

520

Suez Canal

520

WW 2

Hitler's war broke out

521

Sudan, Egypt in hospital in both

521

fortnight's blackout (two weeks)

522

London, Ireland

522

geography cures

522-4

Dublin 1941

523

28 April 1947 (his sobriety date)

523

Evening Mail remembered AA story in

523

Dublin Group met on Monday nights then -1st mtg

524

Benzedrine

524

paraldehyde

524

phenobarbital

524

Country Shop restaurant (where Dublin Group met)

Another Chance - ?

526

black, Afro American

526

prison

526

Mother's Aid (precursor of AFDC?)

527

suicide tried many times

527

blackout stole fur coat & sold it

527

prison got 12 years

527-8

AA found in prison

528

Negroes only 5 Negroes in AA in my city

528

AA convention

He Who Loses His Life - E.B.'Bob' R.

531

playwright authors profession

531

suicidal drinking

531-2

Bob (author of story)

532

my proud southern blood

532-3

self pity

533

Virgil captain of football couldn't translate

534

Edna St. Vincent Millay (quote: Pity the heart ...)

534

my secret garden crutch, excuse, escape from life (self pity)

534

grown up brains, childish emotions -(slogan)

535

the purpose of life

536

Shaw (quote: Christ crucified every generation...)

536,542

jail

9 times

536,542

alcoholic ward overnight twice

536

a "special" person

537

Philistine if he were sober, I put him down as ...

537

my motto

a little man with a stick is equal to a big man

537

Paramount Theatre, Times Sq. -

538

New York

539

Jail 5 consecutive Friday nights

539

AA exposed to AA once

540

New York back to big city

541

? plumber in nearby town

541

? worked with to get group started

541

? published a book -helping other people

542

only 1 law, only 2 sins

542-3

paradox (mentions 3)

543

joy of living

Freedom From Bondage - Wynn L -

544

(slogan) drinking was "a symptom of deeper trouble"

544

(slogan) get down to "causes and conditions"

544

AA

544

(slogan) I am the result of the way I reacted to what happened

544

(slogan) match calamity with serenity

544

Florida

547

alcohol in ... I found a false courage

548

skid row inevitable end would be

549

my last drunk

549

jail went to for second time

549

AA doctor suggested

549

sedation or narcotics I take no

550

? AA members who sponsored me

550

H.O.W. the program works

550

the AA book

550

12 Steps

550

willingness to believe

550

(slogan) restore us to sanity

551

rationalization (defined)

551

John 13:16-18 (quote) "happy are ye who know these things and do them"

551

rash of self will

551

spiritual experiences

551-2

resentment

552

(sick man's prayer) (explained)

AA Taught Him to Handle Sobriety - Bob P -

554

(slogan) AA does not teach how to handle drinking, teaches how to handle sobriety

554

(slogan) no great trick to stop drinking; trick is to stay stopped

554

Kansas raised in

555

New York moved to upon graduation to persue career

555-6

boy wonder

555

Navy joined -ensign, wrote speeches for admirals later

555

self help books

555-6

(list of things tried) self help books, religion, swore off, switched to wine then ale, then vodka

557

badly enlarged liver

557

cirrhosis

558

esophageal hemorrhage doctor warned of

558

Chicago where it happened 1st time

559

Dr. Harry Tiebout psychiatrist -doctor sent him to

559

General Service Board Tiebout was trustee on board of

559

AA

559

sponsor got one & began attending meetings

559

drunk farm drying out on a

559

Big Book read

559

Grapevine read

560

4th & 5th Steps

560

(slogan) one day at a time

560

Serenity Prayer (quoted, partially)

Appendices

I. The AA Tradition

566

Tradition 6 (long form) dividing the material from the spiritual

566

Tradition 7 (long form) prudent reserves

567

Tradition 8 (long form) 12 Step work -never to be paid for

567

Tradition 9 (long form) rotating leadership, central or intergroup committee,
General Service office, AA Grapevine

567

Tradition 10 (long form) politics, alcohol reform, sectarian religion

567

Tradition 11 (long form) advertixing, pictures as AA members

II. Spiritual Experience

569

Spiritual Experience

569

God consciousness

569

William James

570

essentials of recovery honesty and open mindedness

570

Herbert Spencer

III. Medical View of AA

571

Dr. Silkworth

571

Medical Society of NY

571

Dr. Kirby Collier

571

recovery rate of 50-60%

571

Dr. Harry Tiebout

572

Dr. WW Bauer

572

American Medical Assoc 1946

572

Dr. John Stouffer at ...

572

Philadelphia General Hsp

572

American Psychiatric Assoc

572

American Journal of Psychiatry -Nov 1949

572

"3 Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W" / "Bill on Alcoholism" /
"Alcoholism the Illness"

IV. The Lasker Award

573

Lasker Award

573

American Public Health Assoc -

V. Religious View on AA

574

Edward Dowling, SJ

574

Queen's Work Catholic journal

574

Catholic Church

574

The Living Church Episcopal magazine

574

John D Rockefeller, Jr

574

Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick

VI. How to Get In Touch With AA

575

intergroup associations

575

General Service Board

575

General Service Office

575

AA Grapevine

575

Box 459

575

Al-Anon Family Groups

II

IIIIIIIIII

++++Message 583. Re: Re: Evolution of The Book Title of
Alcoholics Anonymous by Ron Long

From: melb 10/6/2002 2:57:00 PM

II

IIIIIIIIII

Hi Everybody:

This is further comment on Rick's letter about the Big Book development. The newspaperman in Akron who apparently pulled things together out there was Jim Scott. Since Akron furnished two-thirds of the stories for the First Edition, we obviously owe him a lot for getting these stories into shape.

Uzell taught writing at a New York City university and was supposed to have cut a lot of copy in the stories. Unfortunately, we don't know just what he did.

I agree with Rick in his views about reading the early draft of How It Works. I see no reason for bringing that up at meetings.

I spent a day interviewing Ruth Hock in Marietta, Ohio, where she lived for many years and was a highly respected member of the community. I also saw her briefly at the Montreal Convention in 1985, about a year before she died. She was a very capable person, and we should give her much credit for the early work she did in helping Bill with the manuscript and corresponding with the people who were getting in touch with AA.

Mel Barger

Toledo, Ohio

----- Original Message -----

From: ricktompkins

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Sent: Sunday, October 06, 2002 11:09 AM

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] Re: Evolution of The Book Title of Alcoholics Anonymous by Ron Long

Hi Joe,

Bill is the primary author of our Big Book but all through his publishing life he did have the help of writers who helped in his editing, and we can include secretaries Ruth Hock, Bobbie Burger, and Nell Wing major assistants. There are probably few of us who don't need a proofreader from time to time---a spell and Flesch grammar check wasn't available on a Remington typewriter (and that computer tool is only useful to a certain point).

Tom Uzell of NYC was one of his helpers with eh Big Book, there was another newspaperman in Akron, Chicago had a whole platoon of recovering newspapermen, but here's the thought that crosses my mind: the drafts of our book had the views and input of most all of the early members. Bill would get a chapter written and bring it to his group for their insight. The multiliths (and there were four over the span of 1938 to the winter of 1939) were sent back and forth to the Akron Group. Dr. Bob's copy of the last multilith is kept in the Akron Archives and has no red pencil editing to it. The final draft must have been acceptable to everyone who viewed it, except one. It's a story related by Ruth Hock, just as the book was ready to be set by a linotype operator at Cornwall Press. The fifth chapter, our "How It Works" had the second person singular into our Steps and their introduction and closing. The remarks (by who is not completely clear) was that the reading and intent was exceptionally awkward. That led to the suggestion that a first person plural made the section much more readable and continued the basic continuity of the rest of the draft. So, our most loved and famous beginning of Chapter Five was changed to the "we" instead of the "you." I can't imagine that Bill didn't immediately get on the phone and run the change by Smithy. I'm not an English major or a journalism graduate but I'm thankful the change was made!

To this day, since viewing the "Original Manuscript" copies that are available on the last multilith, I bristle when the unapproved "How It Works" is read at an Open AA meeting...it's like hearing "How It Would Never

Work."

Rick T.

Illinois

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AAHistoryLovers-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

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II
IIIIIIIIII

++++Message 584. Names in AA History REVISED - pt 1 of 6
From: t 10/7/2002 2:15:00 AM

II
IIIIIIIIII

The HTML version is too long so posting a plain text version - in 6
parts here. For those interested in the HTML version for all the
interlinks between names, look for it at:
http://silkworth.net/aahistory_names/names.html

[Note: I highly suggest that the user paste these three parts of the file back
together so they can use the Search or Find function that is built into what
ever program they are using to view it in.]

People In AA History - Part 1
A thru B

26 May 02 ver
names from the 575 pages of 3rd Ed Big Book added
references for the Service Manual regrettably removed (I never could find a
copy
of the right year).

People in AA History

(Many thanks go out to Archie M., who originally compiled most of this)

REFERENCES:

- (A) ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS COMES OF AGE (AA)
- (B) BILL W. by Robert Thomsen
- (C) CHILDREN OF THE HEALER by Bob Smith & Sue Smith Windows as told to P. Christine Brewer

(D) DR. BOB AND THE GOOD OLD TIMERS (AA)
(E) A.A. EVERYWHERE ANYWHERE (AA)
(G) GRATEFUL TO HAVE BEEN THERE by Nell Wing
(H) THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART (AA)
(L) LOIS REMEMBERS by Lois Wilson
(N) NOT-GOD by Ernest Kurtz
(P) PASS IT ON (AA)
(S) SISTER IGNATIA by Mary C. Darrah
(W) A.A., THE WAY IT BEGAN by Bill Pittman
(BB*) BIG BOOK of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS , (AA)

* # =edition of the Big Book-

"unnamed" BB refs have a "u" following the page number.

some BB refs appear as "page#/NAME" where pseudonyms are used in the book

Each snippet is referenced: ex. (P 111)= Pass It On page 111

Members of AA listed by first name, nonmembers listed by last name

Nicknames and pseudonyms in italics ['single quotes' for this text version]

A.A.'s & friends at Rockefeller's dinner - Bill, Dr. Bob, Clarence S ., Morgan
R
., Paul S ., Dr. Russell Blaisdell [Rockland State Hospital], Dr. Harry
Emerson
Fosdick [religion], Dr. Foster Kennedy [medical profession], Dr. Silkworth ,
Nelson Rockefeller chaired father sick. (A 14,182-183) (H 62,63,66,146) (P
233)

Ab A. - wealthy Oklahoman offered Bill \$60,000 pay debts (P 351)

Abbot - 1 of original group publishing Grapevine (A 201)

Abby G. - wife Grace ; early Cleveland A.A., lawyer, sometimes known as Al G.,
entered hospital April 17 1939; 1st A.A. mtg in Cleveland met in his home May
18
1939 16 members; 1st chairman central committee Cleveland October 1939, set
A.A.
principle of rotation, his story "He Thought He Could Drink Like a Gentleman"
in
2nd & 3rd edition (A 21) (D 164-6,169,201-3) (G 24) (N 78,88) (S 32) (BB 2/3
210-21u)

'Abercrombie' - nickname given J.D.H. by Dr. Bob

Adler, Alfred - Freud's colleague, Bill's mother studied under (P 290)

Agnes M. - Fitz M .'s sister, administrator Corcoran Art School Washington

D.C.,
lent Works Publishing Company \$1,000 help pay printer publish Big Book (A 18)
(L
101-102)

Agnes S. - Los Angeles A.A., husband Bill S . (P 288)

Al G. - see "Abby G."

Al M. - joined A.A. Los Angeles around 1941, went on 12 Step call 2 weeks
sober
(P 250,292,398)

Al S. - advertising & film person New York A.A., joined March 1944; help
structure New York Intergroup, served as secretary & director; George B . & he
instrumental persuading Knickerbocker Hospital set aside ward for just
alcoholics under A.A. sponsorship -1st New York hospital do so; editor
Grapevine
late 1948, shifted editorial emphasis away drunk stories to you're not
drinking
- now what; served director A.A. Publishing Inc; trustee General Service
Board;
composed I Am Responsible pledge 30th Anniversary Convention 1965 Toronto
Canada; chaired dinner 1948 with Dr. Bob & wife, Bill & wife there, so excited
couldn't remember Dr. Bob's name; led spiritual meeting 1975 International
Convention Denver; (D 322,323,337,339) (G 87-89,104,107,137) (H 391,394) (P
339,342)

Alec J. \ Alex - nickname 'Buckets', young Finnish man Bill met Dec. 1934 on
way
to investigate Calvary Episcopal Mission operated by Dr. Sam Shoemaker 's
Calvary Church, went with Bill to mission, took up residence there; (A 59) (B
214) (L 88,91) (N 18) (P 116,117,162)

Alex M. - joined A.A. 1939 (D 146,220-1,231-3,236,275,281)

Alexander, Jack - Judge Curtis Bok asked do A.A. story Saturday Evening Post
winter 1940-1941; cynical hard nose reporter; article published March 1941;
wrote 2nd A.A. article for Saturday Evening Post April 1950; member Board
Trustees early 1950's; trustee 1951-1956 (A
6,16,18,35,87,89,134,190-191,208,219) (B 310-311) (D 171-3,198,225) (E 16-17)
(G
73) (H 1,63,148-9,181-182,194,248,363) (L 131) (N 100-101) (P
245-248,309,354-5,364) (S 18,114) (BB3 xxviii,268,469)

Alexander, Michael - junior member Bernard Smith 's law firm during designing
A.A.'s General Service Conference; upon Smith's death came general counsel
A.A.;

1976-1985 A.A. Trustee; 1988 Chairman Board (G 140)

Alice - wife of one of the Akron groups members (BB3 273)

Alice T. - wife of Warren T. , early San Francisco A.A., worked with husband persuade top management 1 America's leading railroads to help alcoholic employees (A 90)

Allen B. - trustee, chaired 1960 International Convention Long Beach California (G 101)

Allen, Frederick Lewis - wrote on stock market 1929 (P 99n)

Alpert, Richard (Ram Dass) - along with Dr. Timothy Leary , brought LSD to national awareness in 1961 (P 376n)

Amos, Frank - advertising man; longtime friend John D. Rockefeller , present meeting December 1937 Rockefeller raise money, went Akron investigate A.A., made

good report to John D. Rockefeller Jr., recommended \$50,000 contribution February 1938; became sold on A.A. & offered services; 1 of 1st nonalcoholic trustees April 1938; died July 1965 (A 6,15,148-153,168,208) (B 274-275,277) (D

128-32,134-6,172) (E 18) (G 92) (H 59,60-1,106,143,192,194) (L 111,197) (N 65-66,68) (P 184-185,186-7,188,189n,193,203) (S 124)

Amy C. - early San Francisco A.A. (A 88)

Anderson, Dwight - with Dr. Kirby Collier persuaded Medical Society New York State 1944 and Psychiatric Association 1949 to let Bill read papers about A.A. at annual gatherings (A 2,204-205) (H 370)

'Angel Alcoholics Anonymous' - Sister Ignatia 's nickname

Annabelle G. - wife Wally G . early Akron A.A. (D 119-21,140,147,177-8,244,278,290) (BB3 269)

Anne B. - wife Devoe B .; friend Lois; meditation group met her house in Chappaqua; (G 13,75-76) (P 278-9)

Anne C. - A.A., knew Dr. Bob before took 1st drink (D 34,245,333,342)

Anne C. - a fellow AA who helped Felicia in early sobriety. Anne's story "Annie the Cop Fighter" in 2nd ed of Big Book (BB2 514-22u) (BB3 414-5)

Anne K. - early Detroit A.A., with Archie T . helped & assisted A.A. growth Detroit (A 24)

Annie B. - wife of early A.A. Ed. B . (D 274)

Annie C. - story "Annie the Cop Fighter" in 2nd edition (BB2 514-22)

Archie T. - early Akron A.A., stayed with Smiths 10 months, started Detroit A.A., story "The Fearful One" in 1st edition - re written and re named "Man Who Mastered Fear" in 2nd and 3rd editions (A 24) (D 115-6,182) (BB1 332-5u / BB2 & BB3 275-86u)

Armstrong, Dr. - name used to preserve Dr. Bob's anonymity in March 1 1941 Jack Alexander Saturday Evening Post article

Army Sergeant Roy - see "Roy Y."

Arnold, Matthew - quoted on meaning of faith (A 320)

Arthur S. - started A.A. Johannesburg South Africa 1946 (E 46)

'Artie' - nickname of "Wheeler, Author"

B., Mr. - Toledo's 1st A.A. hospitalization, in obstetric ward Women's & Children's Hospital, only place take him (D 257)

Bacon, Dr. Seldon - sociologist, appointed chairman of Conn. Commission on Alcoholism 1945 -1st program supported by state funds (H 189)

Bamford, Bertha - Bill's childhood sweetheart, daughter of Reverend & Mrs. W.H.Bamford, died of internal hemorrhage November 18, 1912, age 18, at 5th Avenue Hospital following surgery to remove tumor, started Bill on 3 year depression (B 56,61) (C 4) (N 12) (P 35-36,38,270) (W 144)

Bamford, Reverend & Mrs. W.H. - Bertha parents, Episcopal minister Manchester Vermont (P 35-36)

Barb Wilson's spent night with her & Cy (P 214)

Barney B. - early Los Angeles A.A. helped by Johnny Howe & Kaye M . (A 92)

Barrow, Waldo - Bill's great uncle, killed in 1864 Battle Wilderness (P 54)

Barry L. - joined Manhattan Group 1945; story of doing desk duty at clubhouse on 41st Street; group asked Bill what do, Bill said if he a drunk that all mattered; anonymous author Living Sober (N 352) (P 317-318)

Bauer, Dr. W.W. - psychiatrist, American Medical Association, nonalcoholic, spoke 2nd Intentional Convention St. Louis 1955 (A x ii,4,235,237-44) (G 97) (P 358) (BB3 572)

Baylor, Courtney - well known American psychiatrist Rowland had consulted before Dr. Jung (BB326u)

Beckwith, Peggy - President Lincoln's great granddaughter; Lois lunched with during motorcycle trip (L 45) (P 74)

Beebe, Jamie - boyhood acquaintance Bill's (P 47)

Beebe, Jim - acquaintance Bill's grandparents, couldn't learn to drive car (P 46)

Beery, Wallace - character in 'Tugboat Annie', hid bottles in stocking tops (D 42) (BB3 177,441)

Belford, Reverend Lee - Trustee member 1st Archives Committee 1973 (G 127)

Ben - early Sydney A.A. in late 1944 (A 86)

Benner, Judge - former probate judge, 40 years chairman board at City Hospital (D 130)

'Bern' - husband of Evelyn H ., Bill wrote her about slips (P 252-4)

'Bern' - nickname Smith, Bernard B

Bert C. - 1 of 2 successes of Paddy K . in Boston (A 96)

Bert T. - early New York A.A.; held meetings elegant 5th Avenue tailor shop and loft 1939; put business up as collateral to borrow \$1000 keeping A.A. afloat; with Horace C . discovered & guaranteed rent 1st A.A. clubhouse 24th Street Clubhouse in February 1940; after Saturday Evening Post article in early 1940's trustees sent him to Chicago & Cleveland to sound out groups & get groups to support A.A. headquarters; early Board member (A 11-12,177,180-1,186,192) (B 290,319) (H 62,64-65,339) (L 116,127,172,198) (P 216-7,221,224,238)

Bertha V. - her story "Another Chance" in 3rd edition (BB3 526-30)

Beth B. - wife Silas B . (L 102)

Betty B. - young student nurse City Hospital, joined A.A. around 1970 (D

46,48-50,70,103-4)

Betty L. - worked on 12 & 12 with Bill (A 219) (P 354)

Bill A. - well-to-do early A.A., Washington, bought Preferred Stock in Works Publishing Inc; joined Fitz M . in Washington D.C. area 1940 (A 188) (P 257,258n)

Bill B. - MC for Sunday activities 1960 International Convention Long Beach California (G 103)

Bill C. - young Canadian alkie, former attorney, compulsive gambler, stayed Bill's house nearly year, committed suicide Oct 1936 using gas stove; before died sold Wilson's clothes (B 263,265) (L 105) (P 165-166) (BB3 16u)

Bill D. - wife was Henrietta ; A.A. #3; man on the bed; lawyer, well adjusted family man, Sister Ignatia & Dr. Scuderi secretly treated 1935, Dr. Bob & Bill went to see June 28, 1935; story 2nd edition Big Book; didn't support General Service Conference idea; 1st Ohio delegate A.A. General Service Conference 1951; died September 17 1954 (A 6,7,19,71,72) (B 243-244,248) (D 82-3,85,88,90-2,96,100,106,146,169,235,246,267,276-7,325-6) (E 14,64) (H xiii,358,360-362) (L 97) (N 37-39,74,151) (P 153-154,226,356) (S 11,21) (BB2 182-192 /BB3 182-192) (BB3 xviii,156-8u,159u,182-192u,188,208,291)

Bill E. - well-to-do early A.A. Washington, bought Preferred Stock in Works Publishing Inc (A 188)

Bill G. - his story "There's Nothing the Matter With Me!" in 2nd edition (BB2 499-508)

Bill H. - alcoholic green grocer met Canadian mining engineer Bob B. early 1947, these 2 started A.A. group London (A 83)

Bill J. - early Akron A.A., salesman, slipped in Cincinnati, (D 119)

Bill J. - Cleveland banker (probably bank teller), received requests for help from AA in Cleveland, stayed with Oxford Group when Cleveland group split off (D 167,204,218)

Bill R. - early NY/NJ A.A.; attended Tuesday night meetings Bill's with nonalcoholic wife, Kathleen , 1939 Trustee -the 'NY member' of the Board of Alcoholic Foundation that got drunk; "A Business Man's Recovery" 1st ed Big Book (A 180)(BB1 242-251) (L 102) (P 162,188)

Bill S. - Los Angeles A.A., wife Agnes (P 287-288)

Bill S. - early Cleveland Catholic A.A. (N 84)

Bill V. - original Akron A.A., met & treated by Sister Ignatia 1936 (S 11)

Bill V.H. - joined A.A. September 1937 (some say 2/37), his story "A Ward of the Probate Court" in 1st edition (D 119,141,145,185,223,317,336) (BB1 296-302)

Bill W. - William Griffith Wilson, co-founder of A.A.; died January 24 1971 11:30pm Miami Heart Clinic on 53rd wedding anniversary, emphysema complicated by pneumonia; burial & memorial service May 8 1971 (A vii,ix,xi,1,12,38,52-54,56,58-59,62,64-66,87-88,100-101,115,140,157,164,183-184, 191,195,204-205) (B 15,31,72,111,135-137,148-149,180-181,144,233-234,236-239,250,263,274,277,285,295, 304,325,334,345,364,368,369) (C 4-5,8,29,35) (D 12,14,37,39,43,46,57,59-60,63-4,66-83,85-88,90-3,95,97-100,104-5,107-8,111-2,121, 123-8,135,140,142,148,151-4,157-9,161,164,166-9,172,174-5,177-8, 181-4,187,198,202-4,207-13,215-9,223,226,233-5,241,249,255,259,262,267-71,277, 279, 281,283-4,302,306-7,309-311,315,319-26,330,337,339,342-3,345) (E 11,12,15,16,18,20,21-23,62) (G ix,2,23,54-55,60,62,75-76,79,80,83,105,121) (H xiii,35-6,59,62,66,94,103,106,142,144,147-148,156,165,173,196-199,205-9,212,216, 239-40,244,245,246,247,267,278,279,283-284,298,313,325-7,355-7,367) (L 1,13-14,16,18,20-21,25-26,33-34,37,73,75,80,83,88,95-96,98,103,107,111,127-128, 131,135,138,157,162,166,171-172,197-198) (N 7-14-21,26-28,32-33,35,38-41,63-64,93,98,119,126,135,251,135,251,253) (P 13,29,36,54,59,68,77,126,139,142-143,162,169,200,232-233,247,248,272,275,311, 350,370,371,373,376,379,385, 389,391,396,398,403,407) (S ix,5,17,18-19,119) (W 144,146-148,155,158,160,162,170,173-174,179-180,186) (BB3 xvii,xxiii,xxv,56u,96u,149-50u,153u,159u,162u,179u,184u,185,188,216,245,246,281, 291,395,412-2,504u)

Bill Y. - Chicago A.A. carried message with Clan F. to Pat C. in Minneapolis 1940 (A 95)

Billy D. - Oxford Group member, assistant superintendent Calvary Episcopal Mission, Dr. Sam Shoemaker's Calvary Church operated (P 117,120)

Blackwell, Edward - president Cornwall Press, Cornwall New York (A

156,169-170,172,176) (B 287) (H 145) (P 194,204,205,207)

Blakemore, John - Marty 's husband (BB3 225u)

Blaisdell, Dr. Russell E. - head Rockland State Hospital in Monsey, New York,
Bob V . started meetings there December 1939; let bus loads committed
alcoholics
go meetings in South Orange NJ & NYC; asked Bill speak December 1939; attended
John D. Rockefeller 's A.A. dinner February 8, 1940 (A viii,12,183) (B 291) (G
73) (H 62) (P 218,232-233) (BB3 163u)

Bob's, Dr. -maternal grandfather - medical doctor, Dr. Bob wanted be doctor
like
him (D 24)

Bob B. - Canadian mining engineer went London early 1947 met Bill H .
alcoholic
green grocer, they started A.A. London (A 83)

Bob E. - wealthy banker, joined A.A. February 1937, made AA address books,
member Akron's wealthiest families (C 132) (D
101,116-9,122-3,142,146,152,156-7,176,217,221-3) (N 53)

Bob F. - picture appeared Jack Alexander article March 1 1941 Saturday Evening
Post (P 247)

Bob H. -early A.A.; general manager General Service Office 1968-1974; close to
Bill when Bill received Catholicism training; (D 149-50)(G 2,125) (P
255,281,321,398,399,400,401,402)

Bob G. - see Bob O.

Bob M. - Toledo, on 12 Step call with Walter C ., advised 12 Step brother of
Edith M . [his sister] =advised 12 Step himself (D 257)

Bob O. - sometimes refered to as Bob G; his story "The Salesman" in first
edition (BB1 317-24)

Bob P. - author of "AA Taught Him to Handle Sobriety" in 3rd edition of Big
Book
(BB3 554-561u)

Bob P. -G.S.O senior advisor, trustee, helped write Alcoholics Anonymous Comes
of Age (N 266) (P 189n)

Bob R. - see E.B. Bob R.

Bob S., Dr. - Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith; co-founder A.A.; born August 8 1879

St.

Johnsbury Vermont; diagnosed terminal cancer 1948; last appearance, talk at 1st

International Convention Cleveland 1950; died November 16 1950 of cancer (A vii,ix,1,2,6,7,9-10,11,14,19,22f,43,66,67-71,76,87,136,141,144,145,148,149,151 ,1\

52,155,164,183-184,193,206,209,211,212,214) (B

237-239,242-243,274,295,345-346)

(C 2-3,7,12,29,40,61,105,118,124,157) (D 9,46,171,255,344) (E 12-14,20,64,71)

(G

3,13,55,77-78,80,83,88) (H

58,59,60-1,62,63-4,66,67-8,107-110,113,120,122,125-6,128,137,140,142-143,160,1

68\

,193,199-200,202-3,217,227,247,262,286,345-6,353-4, 354-60,359,360,373-6) (L

95-96,145-155) (N 28-33,38-41,65,79,119,316,346) (P

76n,100,130,137-49,151-8,162,166,171,177-81,184-5,187-9,190,194,196,197,200,22

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225,232-233,234,236,248,256,266,268,275,280,301,316,320-3,326,

328,330-4,336-42,357,358,407) (S ix,8-9,1718,32,114,123,140,144,186) (W 156)

(BB1 183-93) (BB2/3 171-81) (BB3

xvu,155u,159u,171-181,184u,185,188,195,206,216u,217,218,219,235u,263,267u,270,

27\

1,272,278-9,291-3,301-2u,395)

Bob T. - early delegate, Mississippi lawyer, drew up Conference resolution not to ask for Congressional Charter (A 126-127)

Bob V. - wife Mag ; farm house Wilson's stayed fall 1939; rooms called Upper & Lower Siberia, located Bog Hollow Monsey New York; started meetings Rockland State Hospital December 1939, executive pharmaceutical house, started several groups South American counties, later slipped (A viii,11,179) (B 291) (L 122,127) (P 218)

Bobbie B. - replaced Ruth Hock as AA secretary 1942; former dancer, member A.A.;

present when some blacks came to a meeting with Southerners there, blacks were invited back as visitors (A 16,195,196) (B 334) (D 149) (H 66,152,169) (L 141) (P 304,317)

Bock, Christine - Bill's father 's 2nd wife, had daughter Helen , died January 6

1955 (B 73) (L 70) (P 80,362)

Boethius - one of possible authors of Serenity Prayer (P 258n)

Bok, Judge Curtis - owner & publisher Saturday Evening Post magazine; heard about A.A. from 2 Philadelphia friends Drs. A. Wiese Hammer & C. Dudley Saul ; asked Jack Alexander do A.A. story (A 18,190) (H 63,181,363) (L 131) (N 100)

(P
244-245)

Borton, T. E. - not alcoholic, meetings held in his home in Cleveland (A
21,209)

'Boss' - Bill's nickname for Burnham, Dr. Clark

Bove, Jessica - nonalcoholic secretary New York A.A.; wrote Grapevine article
'From Outside Looking In' (G 41)

Boyle, Dr. Ed - see "Ed B, Dr"

'Boys at Central Garage' - drove Dr. Bob home when drunk (C 117) (D 40)

Brock, Ella - Bill's grandmother, see "Griffith, Ella Brock"

Brooke B. - from Calvary Mission attended Tuesday night meetings Bill's house
(L
102) (P 162)

Brooks, Mrs. - Burr & Burton's headmaster's wife, gave Bill singing lessons (B
54)

Brooks, James - Principal Burr & Burton, announced Bertha Banford 's death,
also
pall bearer (B 60-61) (N 12) (P 36)

'Brotherhood' - those worked at Calvary Episcopal Mission 23rd Street New
York,
operated by Dr. Sam Shoemaker's Calvary Church (P 115-116)

Brown, Dr. - Evanston Indiana, introduced several patients to Earl T. (A 22)
(BB3 295u,306-10u)

Brown Family - a poor family that shared Christmas dinner 1925 with Bill &
Lois
during motorcycle trip (L 46)

Brown, Robert Lee - sharecropper trying raise tobacco, very poor, invited Bill
&
Lois who on road share Christians dinner, turnip greens, sweet potato custard
(B
158)

Browne, Lewis - wrote This Believing World, book Bill valued (G 22)

Bruce H. - 1st use radio carry A.A. message in Jacksonville (A 25)

Bruce M. - met Dr. Bob 1942 & 1943, sober 1945 Canton Ohio (D 276-7)

'Buckets' - see "Alec"

Buchman, Dr. Frank N. D. - born June 4 1878; reared deeply religious Lutheran home, student Muhlenberg College, Mount Airy Seminary; visited England 1908, at Keswick Convention heard speaker, changed life; founder/ leader Oxford Group 1921 after spiritual experience traveling Scotland; strongly advocated 1 on 1 relationship helping others; principle sharing after conversion; 1st 'house party' Calling China, became Oxford Group technique, guided make restitution & confession; met Samuel M. Shoemaker Peking January 1918; died 1961 (C 3) (D 53,55,69,155,158-9) (G 68) (H 196) (L 92) (N 48-49) (P 127,128,130,131,169-71,174,219,246,386-7) (W 113-118)

Bud E - early AA in NY, met Felicia and Anne at station (BB3 415)

Bud G. - Little Rock Arkansas, so anonymous leader spoke behind curtain 1,200 people (L 143)

Bud F. - Los Angeles A.A. (P 288)

'Buffalo' Bill - circus performer (P 30)

'Bum from St. Louis' - what Tom M. caretaker 24th Street Clubhouse called Father Dowling when he came to visit Bill 1940

'Bunky' - nickname for Jellinek, Dr. E. M. -Ph.D.

Burke, Ted - flew Bill & Ebby Manchester Airport 1929, 1st plane to land there, all were drunk (G 58) (P 83) (BB3 9)

Burneson, Virginia - managing editor Grapevine March 1952, wrote Sister Ignatia for Bill reference errors in Grapevine articles about hospitalization plan called Knickerbocker Plan (S 148)

Burnham, Dr. Clark - Lois's father, gynecologist & surgeon, Brooklyn, married Matilda Spelman who died Christmas 1932; remarried Joan Jones in May 1933, moved out 132 Clinton Street early 1933; died September 1936 (B 47,79-80,127,177) (L 1-2,84,106) (N 14,25) (P 33,63,87,98,99,164,175,213) (BB3 4u,5u)

Burnham, Kitty - Lois Burnham's sister, married Gardner Swentzel 17 June 1925, Lois was matron honor (B 111,156,180) (L 60) (P 75,90)

Burnham, Lois - Bill W's wife, see "Wilson, Lois Burnham"

Burnham, Lyman - boyhood acquaintance Bill's (P 47)

Burnham, Mrs. - Lois' mother, see "Spelman, Matilda"

Burnham, Nathan Clark - Lois' grandfather, practiced law, medicine, minister Swedenborg Church Lancaster, wrote book Discrete Degrees about relation between spiritual & natural life (L 2)

Burnham, Roger - Lois Burnham's brother & Bill's friend, told Lois of Bill, best man at their wedding; died December 1970 (B 111) (G 57) (L 74) (P 39,47,58,83)

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+++Message 585. People in AA History - pt 2
From: t 10/7/2002 2:16:00 AM

II
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People In AA History - Part 2
C thru E

'Captain Jack' S. - from Maine, captain oil taker; discovered A.A. 1947; organized Internationalist's Seamen Group 1949 (A 82) (E 32) (G 10) (L 141)

Carlin sisters - rented top floor of Wilson's house at 182 Clinton Street 1933-1935 (L 105)

Carlo I. - member Italian parliament, 12 stepped Roberto C ., both spearheaded effort for Italian Big Book (E 51-52)

Carlson, Dr. Anton - 1937 with group scientists formed Research Council on Problems of Alcohol (H 187)

Caroline P. - nurse, sister of Dorothy S.M. , married Hank P .; took Multilith Big Book Chicago doctor (D 180) (BB3 306u)

Carrell, Dr. Alexis - wrote book on prayer called Man, The Unknown (H 105)

Carry - housekeeper at Stepping Stones, her niece Harriet often helped (L 157)

Cayce, Edgar - famous psychic (G 75)

Cebra G. - Manchester judge's son, did considerable drinking with Ebby ,
joined
Oxford group, he & Roland tried help Ebby, kept Ebby out jail August 1934 (L
93)
(N 9) (P 113) (BB3 9u)

Cecil C. - his story "Those Golden Years" in 3rd edition (BB3 327-34u)

Cecil M - her story "Fear of Fear" appears in 2nd and 3rd editions of Big Book
(called Jane in the story) (BB2 330-5u / BB3 321-6u)

Chambers, Whittaker - magazine writer (A 256)

Chan F. - Chicago A.A. carried message with Bill Y . to Pat C . in Minneapolis
1940 (A 95)

Charles "C. J." K. - both he & Eddie B were in state insane asylum Toledo
voluntary commitments summer 1939, read manuscript Big Book, got out; they 12
stepped Duke P. in Toledo (D 253)

Charlie, "Good Old" - one of Fitz 's drinking partners (BB3 500)

Charlie B. - alcoholic, with help of nonalcoholic candy manufacture started AA
groups in Vancouver British Columbia (A 84)

Charlie G. - Dr. Jim S 's sponsor (BB3 494-5)

Charlie J. - early Cleveland A.A. (D 167)

Charlie M - Canadian AA, transfered to Southeast Asia. Trevor K 's sponsor.
(BB3
343u)

Charlie P. - participated Big Book seminars with Joe McQ . (G 112)

Charlie S. - his story "Riding the Rods" in 1st edition (BB1 303-16)

Charlotte L. - office worker March 1947 Alcoholic Foundation (G 5)

Chessman, Caryl - convicted murder, 12 years death row, wrote autobiography
Cell
2455 Death Row; Jack Alexander suggested he write Bill due to close
resemblance
between criminal psychopath & alcoholic, both unconsciously destroy
themselves,
Bill wrote back; executed May 2 1960 (P 364-6)

Chet M. - former patient state insane asylum Toledo, signed out patients take to Toledo meetings (D 256)

Chet R - his story "It Might Have Been Worse" in 2nd & 3rd edition (BB2 382-92 / BB3 373-83u)

'Chip' - nickname for A. LeRoy Chipman

Chipman, A. LeRoy - nickname 'Chip', John D. Rockefeller associate; became sold on A.A. & offered services; present at meeting December 1937 Rockefeller raise money; persuaded John D. Rockefeller loan A.A. \$8,000; trustee & treasurer board Alcoholic Foundation April 1938; (A 15,148,151,180,189,208) (B 274,277) (H 59-60,148,192,194) (P 184,185,188,202,227,228)

Chris - Dr. Silkworth sent to see Bill, got Bill job selling wire rope for Paulson & Weber, came A.A. sobered up, slipped never came back (L 120,130)

Chrys - visited Bill and Lois in 1939 (P 217)

Chuck - wife Lee , 1st alcoholic arrive in Los Angeles from East, artist, arrived just in time attend 1st home meeting at Kaye 's place Benecia Avenue December 19, 1939 (A 92)

Chuck C. - Los Angeles A.A. (P 348)

'City folks' - big city people who vacation in Vermont (P 39)

Clarence P., Dr. - A.A. member, chaired 20th Anniversary Convention's Medical Panel (A 235)

Clarence S. - Dorothy S.M . was wife; early Cleveland A.A., led revolt & announced special meeting of alcoholics separate from Oxford Group; started & founded group Cleveland group May 18 1939 Cleveland Heights home of Abby G ., 1st group called Alcoholics Anonymous, 16 members; called himself Father of Alcoholics Anonymous; attended John D. Rockefeller 's A.A. dinner February 8, 1940; leader of group of dissident anti Conference & anti General Service Office, his story "Home Brewmeister" in all 3 editions of Big Book (A 19-20,183) (C 49,131) (D 101,109,115,142-5,208-11,216,218-9,241,245,248,252,261,263,265,267-8,270-1,312 -3\) (G 50,103) (N 75,78,84) (P 203,224,255,257) (S 32,155) (BB1 274-81u) (BB2 297-303u) (BB3 216,297-303u)

Clark - butcher in Dr. Earle's story (BB3 347u,348)

Clem L. - A.A., Bill wrote in 1948 about organized religion (P 283)

Clementine, Reverend Mother - administrator St. Thomas Hospital when Sister Ignatia there (D 189-90)

Cliff W. - California A.A.; Dorothy was wife; Mort J . helped get sober; proposed G.S.O. publish Bill's correspondence with Yale declining honorary degree (A 93) (L 157)

Clint F. - Greenland Long Island New York, 1st met Bill at J.K. Rice Jr. & Co.,
he was telephone trader, drinking companion of Bill's from good old days,
introduced Bill to Joe Hirshhorn , wife Kay , came to A.A. 1948 (B 175) (L 75)
(P 77-9,93-8,160,161)

Cobb, Ty - baseball player (P 30)

Cochran, David - boyhood acquaintance of Bill's (P 47)

Cockran, Mr. - Prohibitionist, lent Bert T . money keep to Works Publishing going; also referred to as "Mr. G." (A 177-178) (L 116) (P 144,150n)

Cohen, Dr. Sidney - psychiatrist Los Angeles Veterans Administration Hospital, present/ guiding Bill when he took LSD August 29 1956 (P 370-371,375)

Collier, Dr. Kirby - psychiatrist, with Dr. Harry Tiebout & Dr. Foster Kennedy responsible Bill speaking 2 medical societies, endorsed paper Bill read 1944 Medical Society of New York annual meeting, early A.A. advocate (A 2,204,244) (G 67) (H 156,370) (P 334) (BB3 571)

Colvin, David Leigh - with Yale School for Alcohol Studies, ran for president of US on Prohibition ticket (H 188)

Conor F. - Irish born A.A., tavern owner Philadelphia started A.A. Dublin Ireland, 1st person helped was Richard P . (A 83) (E 43)

Coolidge, Calvin - US president (D 16,112)

Copping, Clifford - boyhood acquaintance of Bill's (P 47)

Cornell, Shep - see "Shep C"

Costello, Spoons - Oxford Group member, kitchen worker at Calvary Episcopal

Mission (P 117)

Cowles, Edward -Dr. - theory of alcoholism treatment involved draining spinal fluid (BB3 140u)

Craske, Dr. Dan - referred Sadie to Earl T in Chicago 1939 (A 22) (BB3 ?140u,294u)

Crececius, Ruth Hock - see "Hock (Crececius), Ruth"

Crosby, Bing - popular singer (BB3 467)

Cultice, Grace - Sylvia 's Chicago nonalcoholic secretary, helped start A.A. there (A 22) (D 181)

Cy - Wilson's spent night with Cy & Barb (P 214)

D. S. - wrote Grapevine about Dr. Bob and 11th Tradition (D 264)

Dale A. - Seattle Washington A.A. (A 95)

Dan K. - early Akron A.A., patient Dr. Bob's at St. Thomas Hospital (D 192,224-5,233,275,281-2,296)

Dancey, Dr. Travis - Canadian, worked with Dave B . help spread A.A. Canada, 1st Canadian trustee General Service Board (E 36) (G 112)

Darra, Mary C. - author Sister Ignatia (S iv,ix)

Dave B. - founder A.A. Montreal, 1st French members, sobered up reading Big Book his sister sent him; alcoholic trustee (A 85) (E 37) (G 112)

Dave D. - Palo Alto California A.A.; introduced Bill to Gerald Heard , british philosopher, anthropologist, metaphysician, radio commentator, mystery novelist; interested mysticism, psychic phenomena, writer, student Easter & Western religious (G 74-75) (L 143) (P 290,378)

Dave M. - A.A. member, personnel man at DuPont, co-led industrial meeting with Jake H . A.A. 15th anniversary (H 118)

Dave R. - Jersey boiler inspector brought A.A. Charlotte North Carolina (A 25)

Davis, Elrick B. - newspaper writer, probated from nut house, wrote 5 part series AA articles Cleveland Plain Dealer, set off unprecedented wave A.A. growth Cleveland (A 20,134) (D 203-204,210) (H 62,180,248) (N 83,85) (P 224) (S

155-156)

Day, Sherry - clergyman, converted by Dr. Frank Buchman (P 127-128)

Devoe B. - Husband of Anne B .; meditation group met his house Chappaqua;
Friday
meeting once help Bill cope isolation A.A.; Bill, Lois, Nell Wing, Devoe B.,
Gerald Heard, Aldous Huxley, Dave D. David & Lucille Kahn, Edgar Cayce
attended
(G 75-76)

Dick P. - perhaps 1st Spanish speaking A.A., joined Cleveland A.A. early 1940,
achieved citizenship 1963, manager Cleveland Central Office, translated Big
Book
into Spanish, finished 1946, (AACOA says Frank M. translated) gave Bill the
book, tried start A.A. Mexico, no luck (A 200) (D 249)

Dick R. - 1st convert Earl T ., Chicago A.A. (A 22) (BB3 282u,294u) (D 177)

Dick S. - AA#7, from Akron, Paul S. 's brother, Paul tried to get Dick in A.A.
February 1937; picture appeared Jack Alexander March 1941 Saturday Evening
Post
article; liked Twelve Steps way 1st written; early Board member, his story
"The
Car Smasher" in 1st edition rewritten and retitled "He Had to be Shown" for
2nd
and 3rd editions (A 162,186) (D 111,127,169,185,288,306,330-1) (P 247) (BB1
364-9) (BB2/3 193-209u)

Dick, Uncle - see "Richardson, Reverend Willard (Dick) S."

Ditman, Dr. Keith - research psychiatrist University California (P 375)

'Doc' - Bill's nickname Dr. Bob, see "Bob S., Dr."

Doc H. - Portland Oregon chiropractor (A 95) (P 288)

Doctor Bob - see "Bob S., Dr."

Doherty S. - responsible starting more groups Indiana than anybody (D 258)

Don G. - volunteer editor of Grapevine (H 158)

Don L. - 1st alcoholic patient Rosary Hall St. Vincent Charity Hospital
December
15, 1952 (S 175)

Don V. - had good mortgage business, asked Bill investigate 2 companies,

Bill's

last job before giving A.A. full self, offered to finance Stepping Stones (L 131,133)

Donovan, Colonel - recommended Bill for Supply Service in WWII, March 1942 (P 272)

Dorothy - Marty M came out of blackout talking to (BB3 222-3)

Dorothy J. - early member of Akron group, Roland 's wife (D 243)

Dorothy O. - wife of Jud O . (D 233,236,279-80,290)

Dorothy S.M. - Clarence S . was her 1st husband (A 19-20) (BB3 217,297u,299u)

(C

131) (D

101,115,142-6,151-4,162,164-5,167,171,180,182,200-4,206-8,233-5,243,249,262,27

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292,309-13) (N 84)

Dorothy W. - wife of Cliff W . Los Angeles A.A. (A 94)

'Dot' - early New York A.A., Wilson's stayed with -- see also "Wilson, Dorothy Brewster"- Bill's sister called 'Dot'(P 214)

Dowling, Father Edward -S.J. (Father Ed) - St. Louis Jesuit priest; nonalcoholic; nickname 'Puggy'; visited Cincinnati 1940 read Big Book, got interested in A.A.'s 12 Steps parallels with Exercises of St. Ignatius spiritual

discipline Jesuit Order; went to Akron see Dr. Bob & members Alcoholic Squadron

Oxford Group, never heard St. Ignatius & Spiritual Exercises, referred to Bill New York, meet Bill rainy night 1940 at 24th Street Clubhouse, Tom M . caretaker

of club called him 'some bum from St. Louis'; Bill took 5th step that night with

him had 2nd conversion experience; editor Queen's Work -a Catholic Publication;

became Bill's spiritual advisor & close friend next 2 decades; responsible founding A.A. St. Louis; 1 of 1st religious leaders endorse A.A. 1940; spoke 2nd

Intentional Convention St. Louis 1955; tried LSD cause Bill asked; died April 2

1960 (A xii,2,4,37,38,43,195,253f,254-61) (B 307-309) (BB3 574) (E 15,72) (G

48,53,65-66,77,86) (H 179,268-9,364-366) (L 131) (N 98) (P

240,241-243,272,281,354,358,361,371,385,387) (S 25-26)

Dr. Bob - see "Bob S., Dr."

Duffy, Clinton T. - liberal warden at San Quentin prison, 1st known corrections official in country to permit A.A. meeting inside maximum security prison 1942, Bill spoke 420 inmates November 28 1943; spoke A.A. 15th anniversary; present 25th Anniversary 1960 Long Beach California; died 1982 (A 89f) (E 62,72) (G 74) (H 118-9) (P 289)

Duke P. - early A.A. Toledo, salesman, wife Katie P ., 12 stepped by Charles ("C.J.") K . & Eddie B ., admitted City Hospital, did 12 Step with 36 hours sobriety Youngstown (D 150-1,176,253-257,267,290)

Dunlea, Father T. V. - October 1944 started A.A. Australia, associated with Rydalmere Mental Hospital Sydney & Australian psychiatrist S.J. Minogue (E 41) (A 85)

'Dutch' - Bill & Hank P. nickname for Ruth Hock, see "Hock (Crececius), Ruth"

'Dynamite Man' - nickname 'Icky', explosive expert, commissioned blow up pier in Houston Harbor, wrong one (A 80)

E.B. 'Bob' R. - his story "He Who Loses His Life" in 2nd and 3rd edition (BB2 540-52, BB3 531-43u)

Earl T. - early Chicago A.A. -founder Chicago group; his suggestion that Bill codify A.A. experience in late 1945 became "12 Points to Assure Our Future" then shortened into "12 Traditions" in 1949, his story "He Sold Himself Short" in 2nd & 3rd edition (A 22,203,213) (D 179-81) (G 20) (H 154) (L 147) (P 225-6,334) (BB2 & BB3 287-96) (BB3 135u,?257,309-10u)

Earle M., Dr. - psychiatrist; learned A.A. from butcher Ed M ; co-chairman 20th Anniversary Convention's Medical Panel, his story "Physician, Heal Thyself" in 2nd & 3rd edition (A 4,237) (P 301) (BB2 393-400 / BB3 343-352u,347)

Ebby T - Bill's sponsor; Bill's childhood friend Burr & Burton school days; family prominent Albany 3 generations kept summer home Manchester Vermont; sold insurance, worked investment broker;1929 he, Bill, and pilot flew into Manchester airfield drunk, 1st people land there; drove drunk into kitchen of house -asked cup coffee; had alcoholic problem but visited Bill sober 1934 -brought program sobriety learned from Oxford Group, returned with Shep C ; asked Bill visit Calvary Church 23rd Street Oxford Group U.S. headquarters led

by Reverend Sam Shoemaker ; visited Bill Towns Hospital brought book Varieties Religious Experience ; came to live at Wilson's November 18 1936, drunk May 1937; drank heavily afterward, longest sober period 6 years -taught Bill have faith in message not always messenger; Bill requested he receive monthly check life; guest Stepping Stones; died sober March 21, 1966 (A vii,46,58,62,64,140,179) (B 202-204,207,211,229-230,263,273) (C 4) (D 91) (E 11) (G 9,92,98-99) (H 196-199,244-245,277-279,283-284,298,313,367-368) (L 93-94,118,139,197) (N 7-9,16-21,33-35) (P 33,34,60,83-4,111-20,122n,124,126,131,143,162,177,178,335,336,358,381,393) (W 151,154,157) (BB3 xvi/u,8-14u)

Ed - prospect Dr. Craske sent to Earl T (BB3 294u)

Ed - salesman, Larry J . helped in Texas, sobered up in Houston, took AA to Austin (A 24)

Ed A. - early Ohio A.A. (G 25)

Ed B. - member office staff with Nell Wing ; relative famous American painter, been successful writer & editor, alcohol ruined career; discharged from Rockland State Hospital; laryngectomy unable speak; helped Bill edit 2nd edition Big Book (D 148,150,224,228-30,271,274-5,325-6) (G 15,121) (P 354)

Ed B. - early Akron A.A., wife Annie (D 148,274) (P 354,357)

Ed B, Dr. - Bill's doctor, Miami Heart Institute, with Bill in May & June 1970 trying to get him ready for convention in July; on Lear jet January 24 1971 from Bedford Hills New York to Miami Heart Clinic; arranged for Bill's body be kept in Miami until New England ground thawed for Bill's burial (B 368) (G 1,3) (L 160) (P 399-402)

Ed E. - offer Bill & Lois use Connecticut farmhouse "Dun Nibblin" (L 125)

Ed G. - early St. Johnsbury Vermont A.A., Fellowship Group member (D 300)

Ed M. - early Akron A.A., had meat market West Exchange Street, Dr. Bob would stop in & chat (D 271,277)

Ed V. - Bill bought old Stutz car from him, rumor he took money went drinking (L 134)

Ed W. - former sales manager, Bill took home to try and sober up (B 233)

Eddie B. - Toledo based salesman; with Charles ("C.J.") K. was state insane asylum Toledo voluntary commitments, summer 1939, read Big Book manuscript, got out; they then 12 stepped Duke P (D 253)

Eddie F. - U.S. A.A., sobered up Boston, founder A.A. El Salvador 1954, called there Mr. Eddie (E 47)

Eddie R. - prominent Youngstown family; wife Ruth university professor, surrendered in Oxford Group; 1st person Bill & Dr. Bob tried help, sent by J.C.

Wright, hoped would be A.A. #3, failed; he & her 2 children lived with Dr. Bob & Annie; caused lot problems, threatened Annie with butcher knife; example ineffectiveness of wet nursing. He eventually got sober in 1949 at the Youngstown Ohio group (A 72) (B 249) (C 5,41-42) (D 77-78,80-1,85,93,97,99) (L 97)(P 151-2,159n)(BB3 124u)

Eddy, Mary Baker - Christian Science founder, readings influenced Bill to the dangers of single person leadership (B 188) (G 25) (P 230,231n)

Edison, Thomas - inventor, Bill was offered job at his lab (P 65,66,144)

Edith M. - Bob M.'s sister (D 257) (P 214)

Edna McD. - wife early Cleveland A.A., county visiting nurse, helped get beds alcoholics Cleveland's Deaconess Hospital (A 20) (D 201)

'Eileen' - lovely young girl in Cecil M.'s story (BB3 321)

Eleanor E. - heard Dr. Bob & Bill speak 1946, didn't know who they were until 1966 (D 300)

Elgie R. - Oxford Group member; joined A.A. April 1939, John R.'s wife, made AA address books, 12 stepped Ethel & Rollo M. (BB3 266u,271) (C 50) (D 80-1,128,146,155,166,177,179,213,216-8,236-8,242-4,252,278,286,289-90,296-7,311, 314)

Elinor R. - wife of Frank R. in Los Angeles (P 288)

Eisenhower, Dwight D. - sent telegram good wishes A.A.'s 2nd International Convention (A 36-7)

Elizabeth D. - wife of Herb D., Americans carried A.A. to Brazil (E 47)

Ella G - Dr. Jim S met while repairing outlet and got into AA (BB3 493-5)

Ellen - daughter of Felicia G (BB3 402u)

Emily S. - her & husband Harold S . constantly opened Flatbush home for A.A. meetings (L 127) (P 217)

Emma - Esther E's family cook (BB3 385)

Emma K. - A.A., cared along with husband Lavelle K . for Dr. Bob & Annie their last years at 855 Ardmore Avenue Akron (C 61) (D 17,30,43,244,289,309,317-8,322-23,327,329-33) (N 336)

Ernest M. - attended Tuesday night meetings Bill's house (L 102) (P 162)

Enid K - Trevor K 's wife (BB3 343u)

Ernie G - Akron - A.A. #4; Akron, 1st young person -30 years old, 1st slipper, salesman, considered almost too young; drank 7 months after year sober; story "7

Month Slip" 1st edition Big Book; met Dr. Bob's daughter 1935, 14 years older, married September 1941, married 24 years divorced 1965; quit drinking 1946 (A 6,73) (B 248) (C 11-13,48,51-53) (D 20,92-93,95-6,98-100,105-6,112,140,141,143,258) (L 97) (P 154-5,226) (BB1 282-6) (BB3 158u,159u,?270)

Ernie G. - Toledo - 1939, early member from Toledo, wife is Ruth G . (D 141,148,175,226,235,253,256.258,265,300,312-3)

Eskimo - used in example of trying to run away from alcohol (BB3 101)

Estelle, W.J. (Jim) Jr. - chairperson General Service Board Alcoholics Anonymous (E 7)

Esther E. - started group Dallas Texas, her story "A Flower of the South" in 2nd & 3rd edition (L 144) (A 24) (BB2 343-54 / BB3 384-395u,385)

Ethel M. - 1st A.A. Akron women stay sober any time, Rollo M .'s wife, she weighed 300 pounds/ husband was little guy, both 12 stepped May 1941 by John & Elgie R ., her story "From Farm to City" in 2nd & 3rd edition (BB3 261-74) (D 223,243-244,284) (S 124) (BB2/3 261-74)

Evans, Dick - Oxford Group member got Bill job 1936 collecting proxies on behalf investment trust Harrisburg Pennsylvania (L 105)

Eve M. - former staff member, helped revive interest in "12 Concepts" (G 27)

Evelyn H. - Bill wrote her about slips, her husband 'Bern' slipped (P 252,254)

Everett - husband of Dr. Bob's office girl Lillian (C 124)

Exman, Eugene 'Gene' - religious editor Harper & Brothers publishing company; encouraged publication Big Book after reading 1st 2 chapters, offered \$1,500 advance, Bill turned down (A 153-5,219) (B 279) (E 23) (G 74) (H 143) (L 111) (N 68) (P 193,194,356)

II
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+++Message 586. People in AA History - pt 3
From: t 10/7/2002 2:16:00 AM

II
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People In AA History - Part 3
F thru H

Farragut, Admiral - US naval hero during Civil War, Bill 'met' the spirit of one of his sailors (P 276,278)

'Father Ed' - see "Dowling, Father Edward -S.J."

Felicia G., Countess - her story "Stars Don't Fall" in 2nd and 3rd edition (A 102) (BB2 401-18u / BB3 400-17u)

Feller, Bob (Robert William Andrew) - pitched no-hit baseball game Cleveland Indians May 1940, Rollie H. was catcher for game, got lot of publicity (D 251) (N 85-86)

Ferguson, Dr. George A. - friend Smiths, operated on Anne's cataract, most prominent eye doctor Akron, took Dr. Bob home when drunk (C 145) (D 129)

Firestone, Harvey - Dr. Tunks was his minister; brought 60 Oxford Group people Akron for 10 days gratitude after helping son quit drinking 1/2 year (N 27) (S 19)

Fitz M. (John Henry Fitzhugh M.) - 2nd man recover Towns Hospital 1935; strongly

religious; came to Tuesday night meetings at Bill's house 1935-37; spring 1937 went home to Maryland, trying start A.A. group there; present at meeting December 1937 Rockefeller raise money; led Big Book conservatives wanted more Christian doctrine, insisted Big Book should express Christian doctrine & use Biblical terms & expressions; looked at Library Congress for number books named

Way Out -12, number named Alcoholics Anonymous-0; loner Washington D.C. joined by Hardin C ., Bill A . & Florence R . started Washington Group in 1940; wrote story "Our Southern Friend" (A 17-8,74,162,166) (B 250,263,274,282,286) (D 108)

(E 25) (G 111) (H 14,107, 200) (L 107) (N 334) (P 161-162,169,191,199,257)

(BB1

226-41 / BB2 460-70) (BB3 xxixu,56u,238-9,497-507u)

Fitzgerald, F Scott - popular author (BB3 225,304,405)

Florence B. - Freddie B . 's wife, divorced after Freddie sober (L 94)

Florence R. - Bill knew her husband Wall Street; Bill & Lois got her out Bellevue; 1st female drunk stay Bill's house; only female NY A.A. when names for

Big Book discussed -objected calling it 100 Men; her story in 1st edition "Feminine Victory"; helped Fitz M . start Washington Group; returned to drinking

died apparent suicide in Washington D.C. (A 18) (B 263-264) (E 25) (L 107) (P 202) (BB1 217-225)

Florman, Nils - headed rival group in proxy fight over National Rubber Machinery

Company (P 134-5,157-8)

Ford, Henry - asked head man A.A. to come Detroit to help a friend -Bill went (L

121) (BB3 124)

Forest H., Dr. - early Los Angeles A.A. helped by Johnny Howe & Kaye M ., became

marathon 12 Stepper around Los Angeles; wife Merle (A 92) (P 287)

Fosdick, Dr. (Reverend) Harry Emerson - highly respected minister Riverside Church New York; completely satisfied with Big Book, wrote good reviews June 1939 which were reprinted by religious publications; spoke for religion at Rockefeller 's February 1940 dinner; 1st clergyman recognize A.A. (A viii,15,168,173,183-184,322f) (B 286-287,295) (G 73,86) (H 62,145-6,177) (L 116,198) (N 75,93) (P 201,223,232-233) (BB3 xvii-iii,574)

Four Horsemen - plagues of alcoholics (BB3 151)

Fox, Dr. Ruth - Felicia G 's psychiatrist 409u,411-2u

Francis C. - gave Bill a suit, late 1940 (P 241)

Francis H. - young Boston A.A., read Lois's book, offered help her late 1982; came Stepping Stones January 1983, 1st as caretaker, then secretary, stayed till

Lois's death (G 139)

Francis J. - wife Mort J ., Los Angeles A.A. (A 94) (P 288)

Francis, Saint - see "Saint Francis of Assisi"

Francis, Sister - owned & operated Joy Farm in Kent Connecticut; early A.A.'s New York & Connecticut took over as drying out place; 1940's renamed High Watch

Farm (A 181) (G 23) (L 122,199)

Francisco, Tex - huge ex-drunk ran Calvary Episcopal Mission; led meeting Bill went to there (A 59) (B 215) (L 88) (N 18) (P 117,118) (W 152)

Frank - Ester E 's husband (BB3 386-94)

Frank - a man from AA who approached Dr. Paul O (BB3446u)

Frank M. - Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age says he translated Big Book to Spanish, Dr. Bob & Good Oldtimers states Dick P. did it (A 200)

Frank M. - A.A. archivist 1982 & administrative assistant General Service Office; secretary Trustees' Archives Committee (G 112,126)

'Frank, Old' - East Dorset's shoemaker, taught Bill about nature (B 24)

Frank R. - A.A., read Big Book Arizona, book convert rushed to Los Angeles to see if true, wife Elinor (A 93-94) (P 288,389-90,392)

Frank R. - trustee Boston area (P 389)

Frank S. - Los Angeles A.A. (P 288)

Franklin, Benjamin - one of US founding fathers (A 267)

Frazer, Clint - see "Clint F"

Fred - early San Francisco A.A. (A 88)

Fred B. - see "Freddie B"

Fred K. - New Jersey A.A. help start A.A. Miami (A 25)

Freddie B. - wife Florence , divorced after sober; chemistry professor; after Bill spoke Oxford Group came talk to Bill & became friends; drank off & on 11 years before sober in A.A., attended Tuesday night meetings Bill's house (L 94,102) (P 132,162,335)

Freddie S. - joined A.A. with wife Vi S. May 1941, former mayor of Akron, is the 'Victor' who wrote 13th Step with 'Lil' (D 97-9,245-6)

Freud, Sigmund - Viennese psychiatrist (A 3) (D 12,338) (H 282)

Fulton Sheen - see "Sheen, Monsignor Fulton"

G., Mr. - put up money to help Works Publishing Company after Bert T . put tailor shop as collateral; also see "Cochran, Mr."

Galbraith, Ernie W. - see "Ernie G - Akron"

Gallagher, Father J.G. - worked with Sister Ignatia (D 221)

Gammeter, John - neighbor Henrietta Seiberling , put Bill up at Portage Country Club; self made man son of washer woman, started B.F. Goodrich Company (P 144)

Garth M. - new Toledo A.A.; group gave \$2 roll of nickels to buy 40 copies 1941 Saturday Evening Post with Jack Alexander article (P 247)

Gavin, Della - birth name for Sister Ignatia, see "Ignatia \ Sister Mary Ignatia Gavin"

Gene C. - Chicago A.A. (D 302)

'Big Gene' - 'civilian' friend of Morris B (BB3 462)

George - elevator operator in Fitz M story (BB3 500)

George B. - he & Al S . instrumental persuading Knickerbocker Hospital to set aside ward just for alcoholics under A.A. sponsorship, 1st New York hospital do so (G 87)

George D. - early A.A. (D 106)

George F. - Norwegian immigrant, started A.A. in Oslo Norway (E 44) (H 123)

George G. - chairman Trustees' Archives Committee, presided official ribbon cutting ceremonies open archives November 3 1975; professor communications Hofstra University (G 108,127,131)

George H. - stayed at Bill & Lois's house; took Jack W. Bellevue -but they locked him up instead; killed in WWII (L 105,121)

George H. - pro conference New York A.A., surveyed groups around country concerning self government 1948 (D 320-2)

'George' M - husband of Cecil M (BB3 321-4u,322)

George R. - met alcoholic Scottish nobleman Philip who had come to America look into International Christian Leadership Movement businesses men interested in bringing God into industry through breakfast clubs for prayer & planning, 1st session he met George R., Philip sobered up and took A.A. to Scotland (A 83-4)

George S. - Philadelphian; sobered after reading article "Alcoholics & God" Liberty magazine September 1939; Jimmy B . visited after, 1st A.A. Philadelphia meeting in his house (A 17-8) (P 245)

Geroldsek, John - Oxford Group member Calvary Episcopal Mission; heavy-set man, house painter, lived outside mission (P 117,118-9))

Gib K. - Milwaukee pioneer A.A.; gave Bill violin which Bill treasured (G 35)

'Gilly' - Bill's father's nickname; see "Wilson, Gilman Barrows"

Ginger B. / G. - [Ginger B. in index/ G in text] El Paso Texas; helped by letter Bill wrote, it was destroyed, asked Bill to write another; example of how Bill's letters became talismans (P 385,391n)

Ginny P. - regular member of 'spook circle', husband was Tom P . (P 280)

Gizyicki, Count Josef - husband of Felicia G (BB3 401u)

Gladys S. - Madras India, read about A.A. in Liberty Magazine, came New York, stayed Stepping Stones, nickname 'Princess', developed crush on Bill, sober 1 year when died in accident (L 138-139)

Goldfoot, Ella - owned of farm Bill & Lois worked on during 1925 motorcycle

trip

(B 150) (L 41-42,44) (P 72,73) (BB3 3u)

Gordon - early New York A.A. (P 215)

Gordon M. - October 1939 found room for A.A. meetings South Orange Community House NJ, 1st New Jersey A.A. meeting not in a home; picture appeared in Jack Alexander article Saturday Evening Post; (L 127) (P 247)

Grace - she and husband were asked to love each other using '24 hour plan' (D 256-7)

Grace G. - wife of Abby G. early Cleveland A.A. (A 21) (BB3 212u,215u,?216/Mary)

Grace O. - her & husband helped original group publish Grapevine (A 201)

Grassroots, Mr. - anonymous spokesman, Centerville U.S.A. portraying everybody in A.A. at 2nd International Convention St. Louis July 1955 (A 41-44)

Green, Hetty - richest woman Wall Street turn century, famous miser, early part century amassed large fortune & wielded equally large political power; Bill used this name as nickname for Dr. Emily, see "Wilson, Dr. Emily Griffith"

Greim, Lorraine - Ruth Hock 's assistant, nonalcoholic, started work Newark January 1940; Bill nicknamed 'Sweetie Pie' (P 235,250)

Grennie C. / Grenny - patient of Dr. Harry Tiebout at Blythewood Sanitarium, friend Marty M. who said Grennie 'we are no longer alone' -famous A.A. statement, summarizes relief felt by every isolated alcoholic finally finding Fellowship (A 3) (G 66) (H 369) (L 124,127) (P 213,216)

'Griffith' - name Jack Alexander 1941 Saturday Evening Post article gave Bill for anonymity

Griffin, Clarence - Gardner Fayette Griffith's only son, Bill's uncle, died 1894 Colorado (P 28,31,406)

Griffith, Ella Brock - Bill's mothers mother (grandmother), married Gardner Fayette Griffith, raised Bill since age 10 & sister Dorothy, died 1921 (N 10) (P 25,27,28,45,46,55,70) (W 139)

Griffith, Family - Bill's mother's family (P 15,41,126)

Griffith, Gardner Fayette - Bill's mother's father (grandfather), Bill's substitute father; Civil War veteran; married Ella Brock; nickname -Jolly because he usually wasn't, East Dorset's most prosperous citizen when he died in 1924 (P 20,25,27-28,29,30,31,32,35,45-7,52,64,70) (N 10,16) (W 139) (BB3 10u)

Griffith, Helen - husband died of alcoholism, best friend sobered up in Jersey group; newcomer Bill helped; woman of means, interested building new houses & fixing up old ones; built house Wilson's got April 11, 1941, Bill & Lois move into Bedford Hills NY home 23 years after marriage it was their 1st house, called Stepping Stones; (B 316-317) (L 133,136) (P 259-260)

Griffith, Millie - Bill's aunt, (P 13)

Griffith, Robert - Bill's cousin, Brattleboro (P 27,28)

Griffith, Silas - Gardner Fayette Griffith's cousin, Vermont's 1st millionaire (P 28)

Griffith, Will - got terms agents so Bill's grandfather could buy & sell cars (P 46)

Grinnell, Catherine 'Katy' - member rich family New Bedford Massachusetts, lost husband WWI, entertained soldiers (P 55-6)

Grinnell, Dr. - treated Bill around 1915 while Bill enrolled Norwich University (P 45)

Grinnell, Emmy - member rich family New Bedford Massachusetts, husband gone WWI, entertained soldiers (P 55-6)

Grinnell Family - wealthy & leading socialite family New Bedford Massachusetts, gave party for service men, where Bill took 1st drink -Bronx cocktail, age 22 (B 104,106) (N 13) (P 55) (W 145-146)

Gulden, Frank - former Trustee (A 6,208) (H 194)

Haas, Father Vincent - newly ordained priest, looked into A.A. for Sister Ignatia, heard confessions from alcoholic patients at St. Francis Hospital because hospital chaplain didn't think alcoholics patients truly repentant (D 189-190) (N 80) (S 86)

Hackensmith - wrestler (P 30)

Haggard, Dr. Howard W. - with Elvin M. Jellinek founded Yale Summer Studies programs; moved to New Jersey and became Rutgers School Alcohol Studies 1962; wrote article 1st Grapevine; with Dr. Henderson began publish Quarterly Journal
Studies Alcohol 1940 (E 28) (H 187-90) (P 325n)

Hal S. - founder San Diego group, helped by Johnny Howe & Kaye M . (A 92)

Hall, Mrs. - admissions nurse Akron City Hospital (D 81-4) (BB3 156u,188u)

Hammer, Dr. A. Wiese - wife Helen; Philadelphian; told friend Judge Curtis Bok owner publisher Saturday Evening Post about A.A. & have Jack Alexander do story;
secured Philadelphia Group 1st meeting rooms, introduced Dr. Stouffer chief psychiatrist Philadelphia General Hospital to A.A., visited other cities with A.A. members to talk A.A. up & paid their expenses, offered buy club house (A 18,190) (H 362-364) (P 244)

Hammer, Helen - wife Dr. A. Wiese Hammer, went to A.A. meetings with him for years (H 363-4)

Hank G. - chairman General Service Committee oversee A.A. office 1949; structured & programmed 1955 International Convention St. Louis; supervised 1960 International Convention Long Beach California; manager General Service Office (A 32) (G 9,101)

Hank \ Henry P. - salesman, early New York A.A.; he and wife Kathleen lived Teaneck NJ; drinking cost executive position Standard Oil New Jersey; 2nd prospect Bill got from Dr. Silkworth 1937; organized gasoline dealers northern New Jersey in cooperative -Honor Dealers at 17 William Street Newark in spring 1937 with Bill; present meeting December 1937 Rockefeller raise money; co-leader
with Jim B . Big Book liberals-less God stuff; partner Bill formed Works Publishing Company early 1939 publish Big Book; wrote chapter 10 Big Book "To Employers"; got drunk after 4 years April 1940; died Pennington New Jersey 1954,

story "Unbeliever" 1st edition Big Book (A 11,16f,74,154,155-7,159,163-164,167,170f,179) (B 250,263,274,282,284-285,298-299,301,321) (D 108,167,180,201,208) (E 15,18) (G 79) (H 62,106,108,144,201) (L 98,101,127,130) (N 75)

(P 161-162,167,169,191-2,194,195,199-200,204,205,207,208,213,216,217,220,226,228, 22\

9-31,235,236,241,243n,255) (W 160) (BB1 194-205u) (BB3 xxixu,136u,163u,242-3u,245u,246,247,2503u)

Hans H. - Scandinavian American brought Big Book to Bergen Norway (A 29)
'Happiness Joe' - New York radio late night host, maybe Lillian R. 's 1st A.A.
contact (G 46)

Hardin C. - joined Fitz M . in Washington D.C. area 1940; bought Preferred
Stock
in Works Publishing Inc (A 188) (P 257,258n)

Harlan S - Joe D was sent to talk to him (BB3 ?237u)

Harold G. - early Akron A.A., sent to Cincinnati to bring back Bill J. who
slipped (D 112-3,119)

Harold S. - he & wife Emily S . constantly opened Flatbush home for A.A.
meetings 1939, drove Bill & Lois to Green Pond New Jersey (L 125,127) (P 217)

Harriet - niece of Carry , Wilson's cook housekeeper at Stepping Stones (G 37)
(L 157)

Harriet G. - Nell Wing 's secretary & general assistant; died May 1986 (G 126)

Harrington, Mr. - Dr. Bob's neighbor as youth, had dog Rover (D 14)

Harris K - his story "Growing Up All Over Again" in 3rd edition (BB3 418-21u)

Harrison, Leonard V. - director public affairs Community Service Society New
York City; nonalcoholic trustee 1941 - April 1965 except 5 year hiatus
1956-1961
chairman; spoke 2nd Intentional Convention St. Louis 1955; present 25th
Anniversary 1960 Long Beach California (A 5,186,208,212) (E 72) (G 74) (H
168,195) (P 221,358)

Harry - AA friend Dr. Earle M went to see (BB3 346u,347))

Harry B - on board of Alcoholic Foundation-replaced 'NY member that got
drunk',
his story "A Different Slant" in 1st ed of Big Book, from NY (BB1 252-253)
(BB3
39-43/Fred)

Harry N., Dr. - early Cleveland A.A.; complied with junior assistant Dr.
Ippolito not to operate -1st professional intervention 1941, received
treatment;
treated so many alcoholics called 'Patron Saint Cleveland A.A.'; early treated
alcoholics castor oil & egg soup called Dr. Nash's Formula (D 201-2) (S
163-164)

Harry R. - 12 stepped Dick P. -perhaps 1st Spanish speaking A.A. (D 249)

Harry Z - his story "A Close Shave" in 1st ed of Big Book (BB1 348-350)

Hazard, Rowland - met Stewart's cafeteria after Oxford Group meetings; carried message Ebby ; former Rhode Island state senator, investment banker, senior director chemical company, concerned about his drinking saw Dr. Carl Jung psychoanalyst in Switzerland 1930, treated about year, drunk again, returned more treatment, Jung told science can't help need spiritual awakening, joined Oxford Group 1931 & found sobriety; with Cebra G. interceded with judge to accept responsibility for Ebby August 1934, helped Ebby find sobriety; died 1945

(B 229-231) (E 10) (H 276-9,282-3) (L 93) (N 8,9,21,33) (P 113-115,128,381-4,) (W 154-155) (BB3 9u,26u)

Hazel R. - Dennis Manders staff secretary (G 101)

Heard, Gerald - writer, student Eastern & Western religions, british philosopher, mystery novelist, interested mysticism, psychic phenomena, founded

Trabuco College, British radio commentator, anthropologist, metaphysician; Wilson's 1st visited Trabuco campus winter 1943-1944; wrote "Search for Ecstasy"

defined A.A. as ad hoc church in May 1958 Grapevine; introduced Bill to Aldous Huxley , 2 English psychiatrists Dr. Humphrey Osmond & Dr. Abram Hoffer working

with schizophrenics an alcoholics in Canadian hospital experimenting with LSD; Bill took LSD under his supervision California August 29 1956; (G 54,74-75) (L 143,159) (N 137) (P 290,368,370-371,375)

'Heard, H.F.' - dozens mysteries published under this pseudonym, real name Huxley, Aldous

Heatter, Gabriel - 'We the People' popular radio show; friend of Morgan R. , Hank P. Morgan interviewed on show April 1939 (A 174-175,246) (B 288) (L 115) (N 90) (P 207,209,248)

Held Jr., John - popular author of the 1920's (BB3 225,304)

Helen B. - A.A., senior office staff, recommended Nell Wing work directly with Bill to put together booklet Third Legacy, her story "Promoted to Chronic" in 2nd and 3rd edition (A 215) (G 14) (P 347) (BB2 485-94u / BB3 464-73u)

Helen P. - picture appeared Jack Alexander 1941 Saturday Evening Post article (P 247)

Helen W. - early New York female A.A., committed suicide (P 219)

Helga H. - her husband Leonard was nonalcoholic trustee; let Wilson's use apartment few months 72nd Street & Riverside Drive Manhattan (L 127) (P 216)

Henderson, Dr. - worked with Dr. H. W. Haggard at Yale (H 187)

Hennessy, J.J. - Bill wrote letter 1956 describing A.A. structure ideas (G 21)

'Henri' - Dr. Bob's nickname for Seiberling, Henrietta

Henrietta D. - wife of Bill D. A.A. #3; met Dr. Bob's wife June 28 1935; served 22 years as matron at Akron City Workhouse & helped carry message to confined female alcoholics (A 6,72) (BB3 182u,189) (C 42) (D 83-9,100,145-6,235,244,272) (H 362) (P 153,159n) (S 117)

Henry G. - part time manager 141 East 44th Street office, "Do It Now" (H 157)

Henry K. - early A.A. (P 217)

Henry P. - early A.A. (not same person as 'Hank'/Henry P, or his son) (D 106)

Henry P - Hank P 's son (P 195,236)

Henry W. - heard Dr. Bob, Bill, Bill D., Sister Ignatia at meeting Akron 1949, got drunk, got sober 1950 (D 277)

Herb D. - from New Jersey, attended Tuesday night meetings at Bill's house with wife Margaret (L 102) (P 162)

Herb D. - husband of Elizabeth D., Americans who carried A.A. to Brazil (E 47)

Herb M. - trustee 1956-1960, General Service Office general manager 1960-1968, chairman trustees' General Service Committee; he & wife bought 600 shares British Columbia oil lands due to Bill's advice, Bill made good helping them recoup losses; critical of Bill's ideas & timing; assisted committee members being majority alcoholic (G 20,53,101) (P 293,294,367n,380,392,395,396,397)

Herbert - gave Lois a ride to Newark (P 215)

Hershey, Lewis B. - director Selective Service 1942; Bill wrote letter concerning alcoholics being allowed serve in military (P 272,273)

'Hetty' - Bill's mother nickname -after famous Hetty Green, see "Wilson, Dr. Emily Griffith" or "Green, Hetty"

Hilda S - invited Ethel M to Sunday dinner after her husband was buried (BB3 272)

Hirshhorn, Joe - millionaire, Wall Street big shot; wife Olga; famous art collector; employed Bill early 1930's when no 1 else would; hired Bill analyze & evaluate companies early 1930's; parted company after Bill disgraced himself assignment Canada; renewed relationship 1962; met La Guardia Airport Bill said he was #1 drunk in America (B 175,357) (G 71) (L 75-76) (P 93-4,95,97-8,144,160,379)

Hirshhorn, Olga - wife Joe Hirshhorn (L 76)

Hock (Crecelius), Ruth - nonalcoholic, native Newark, grew up thrifty German family, divorced 24; secretary for

Hank P. 's Honor Dealers company, came to work Bill & Hank P. in 1936 at 17 William Street Newark; Bill's 1st secretary & office manager 1936-1942; nicknamed 'Dutch' & 'Duchess'; 1st national A.A. secretary, went without pay for time, typed manuscript of Big Book as Bill dictated, wanted little mention of God in steps & Big Book; Serenity Prayer brought to her 1941; picture appeared Jack Alexander March 1 1941 Saturday Evening Post article; given 5 millionth copy Big Book 50th International Convention Montreal 1985; died spring 1986 (A 16,159,166f,195-196) (B 277,292) (D 167,175-6,200-1,205-8,210) (E 18,20) (G 61,82,111-112) (H 63-4,106,107,144-5,147,152) (L 111,141) (N 99,297) (P 191-193,195-6,199,205,219,220,224,226-9,235,241,247,248,250,251,258n,272,303n, 30\ 4,392-3) (W 160,179) (BB3 393,394)

Hoffer, Dr. Abram - English psychiatrist working alcoholics & schizophrenics at Canadian mental hospital in Saskatoon Saskatchewan; tested 100s hospitalized alcoholics, gave them simple vitamin therapy B3 niacin; trying various methods break patients resistance, help through chemical means LSD 1954, worked with Dr. Humphry Osmond ; Bill met through Gerald Heard , asked Bill work with them, he did 6 years (B 358-359) (G 54) (L 159) (N 137) (P 368-369,370,376n,387-9)

Holden, Reuben A. - secretary Yale University; coordinator to give Bill honorary Doctor Laws degree (H 205-209) (P 311,313,314)

Horace C. - early A.A.; dry 3 months, one of first to see 12 Steps after Bill wrote them objected frequent use word God & asking on knees to have shortcomings removed; Wilson's stayed at his Green Pond bungalow New Jersey spring 1939; (Howard)along with Bert T . found & guaranteed rent 1st A.A. clubhouse 24th

Street Clubhouse February 1940; got Bill job selling wire rope 1940; picture appeared Jack Alexander Saturday Evening Post article; suggested printing Serenity Prayer on cards; in early 1940's trustees sent him to Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington to sound out groups & get groups supporting A.A. headquarters; also see "Howard A" (A 161,180-1,186,192,196) (B 290,319) (H 64-65,108) (L 125) (P 199,206f,222,238,247,252,255,263)

Horace "Popsie" M. - took Marty M . 1st A.A. meeting, his story "On His Way" in first edition (P 211) (BB1 375-7)

Howard - Bill's 2nd cousin, Bill found him dead drunk in New York hotel brought to Stepping Stones, stayed 5 years (L 139)

Howard, Dr. - psychiatrist Montclair New Jersey; suggested remove all forms coercion from Big Book manuscript, put on 'we ought' basis instead of 'you must' (A 167) (N 75) (P 204) (BB3 163u,289-90)

'Howard A.' - was actually Horace C / Bill changed his name in AACOA so as not to offend, see "Horace C" (P 206f)

Howard S., Dr. - general practitioner Cuyahoga Falls, A.A., helped by Dr. Bob (D 129-30,132)

Howe, Johnny - Los Angeles Probation Department; Kaye M . gave him copy of Big Book; they dug up alcoholics who started A.A. on the West Coast (A 91-92) (P 266)

Hughes, Harold - held Senate hearings alcoholism late 1960's, Bill involved (G 47)

Hunter, Reverend T. Willard - spent 18 years full time staff positions Oxford Group & M.R.A.; states he never heard of 6 Tenets; supported A.A. (P 130,206n)

Huxley, Aldous - author Brave New World & Doors Perception , teacher, philosopher, New Age pioneer; interested mysticism, psychic phenomena; wrote dozens mysteries published under pseudonym H F Heard; corresponded with Bill nearly 2 decades; introduced to Bill through mutual friend Gerald Heard , called Bill greatest social architect of this century; wrote Grapevine articles; wrote Man & Reality which appeared in souvenir book A.A. Today distributed 1960 International Convention Long beach; died 1963 (B 365) (G 75) (P 368,372,375,376n)

Hyde, Mr. - Dr. Jekyll - Mr. Hyde analogy (H 237)

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+++Message 587. People in AA History - pt 6 /last one
From: t 10/7/2002 2:18:00 AM

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People In AA History - Part 6
T thru Z

'T.' - Dr. Bob's nickname daughter after character Hortensia Twitchbottom (C 128)

Tall Man - Maliseet Indian, Maynard B 's father (BB3 474-6)

Ted - boarder of Mrs. Gordon Oram San Francisco late 1939; early A.A. didn't make it (A 88)

Teddy - Dr. Silkworth 's redheaded nurse Knickerbocker Hospital (A viii,14,206)
(H 156,176,373)

Tee - wife Sam , early A.A.'s Chicago Earl T . worked with (A 22) (BB3 310u)

Texon, Dr. Meyer - associate Dr. Silkworth Knickerbocker Hospital, filled in Dr. Silkworth 15th Anniversary, theme Gratitude (H 117)

'That guy' - Dr. Bob's reference to Bill in letters to Ruth Hock (G 80)
Thatcher, Ebby - see "Ebby, T."

Thatcher, Thomas - name on headstone outside Winchester Cathedral Bill saw England 1918, Bill thought may be ancestor of Ebby T ., read epitaph Hampshire Grenadier (B 119) (L 25) (P 60)

Thompson, Dr. Philip P. - Dr. Bob's Dartmouth junior year roommate (D 19-21,297-9)

Thompson, Francis - English Roman Catholic Poet 1859-1907; at one time opium addict (A 257,259-61)

Thomsen, Robert - Bill's biographer, author Bill W. (N 13) (P 331,379)

Tiebout, Dr. Harry - 1st AA friend in psychiatric profession; chief psychiatrist, medical director Blythewood Sanitarium Connecticut; patients Marty

M ., Grennie C .; suggested to many you & must words in Big Book; with Dr. Kirby

Collier , Dr. Foster Kennedy & Dwight Anderson responsible Bill speaking 2 medical societies; authored professional papers why A.A. worked so well, referred to Bill as Mr. X. in papers when quoting him; Bill saw for his depression summer 1944 ; wrote "Role Psychiatry Field Alcoholism" 1951, "Surrender Versus Compliance Therapy" 1953, "Ego Factors Surrender Alcoholism" 1954; spoke 2nd Intentional Convention St. Louis 1955; present 25th Anniversary
1960 Long Beach California; Class A trustee General Service Board 1957-1966; died 1966 (A xii,2-4,18,167,204,235,244f,245-51,309-19) (B 25,303,334) (E 19,72)
(G 66-67,92,97) (H 99,156,369-70) (N 126) (P 211,212,295-297,326,336,358) (BB3 226-7u,559,571)

Tom B. - wife said contact A.A. or else, wrote letter to Capetown South Africa,
received reply, started group Capetown II; (G 119) (L 164)

Tom B. - picture appeared Jack Alexander March 1941 Saturday Evening Post article; guaranteed light, heat, telephone A.A. 1st clubhouse 334 1/2 West 24th Street; early Board member (A 180,186) (P 247)

Tom K. - early A.A. Board member (A 186) (P 217)

Tom L. - early A.A., wife Maybelle , story "My Wife and I" in 1st edition (D 106,120,141) (BB1 287-95)

Tom M. - "Old Tom", ancient fireman Bill & Lois got out Rockland State, brusque
Irishman, coffee maker/general caretaker/janitor at 334 1/2 West 24th Street A.A. clubhouse, lived there; told Bill some bum from St. Louis to see him -Father Ed (A 115-116,180) (H 366) (L 122) (P 241,247)

Tom P. - entered A.A. confirmed atheist, changed mind; worked Bill editing 12 &
12, A.A. Comes Age; present Los Angeles Veterans Administration Hospital when Bill took LSD August 29 1956 (A 219) (B 356) (G 16,42) (L 156) (P 271,279,280,301,302,303,354,370-371)

Tom S. - 1 earliest Jacksonville Florida A.A.; past trustee (G 124)

Tom Y. - 1st editor Grapevine (G 88)

Tompkins, Howard - of Beer & Company, Bill got involved proxy fight control small machine tool company led him Akron; impressed with Bill's recovery & sent

glowing letter encouragement December 1934 (L 94) (P 133)

Towns, Colonel Charles B. - owner & founder Towns Hospital New York City with Dr. Lambert ; asked Bill work his hospital December 1936; loaned \$2,500 help Big

Book get published; believed 'lack of occupation greatest destroyer of men' -called them vagrant types, admit no 1 Towns hospital unless paid advance & backer; present 25th Anniversary 1960 Long Beach California (A 13f,15,100-101,115,159,171,176,188) (B 257-258) (E 72) (G 72) (H 106,144,148,176,180) (L 107) (N 63-64) (P 101,175-7,196,223,271) (W 160,163)

Trevor K - author of "Lifesaving Words" (BB3 342-4u)

Trice, Harrison - 1958 nonalcoholic trustee (G 51) (P 394)

Tunks, Reverend Walter - Harvey Firestone 's minister; Bill called from Mayflower Hotel lobby May 11 1935; Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Akron, long-time Oxford Group enthusiast, gave Bill 10 names call, last 1 Mrs. Seiberling ; conducted Dr. Bob's funeral services 15 years later (A 66,73) (B 236) (C 5,35-36,63) (D 64-5,344) (E 12) (L 95) (N 27)(P 136) (S 19) (BB3 154u)

Twitchell, Hanford - nonalcoholic Oxford Group member; well know professional New York; accompanied Bill to Towns Hospital & Calvary Mission to talk to alcoholics (G 68)

Ty M. - Milwaukee A.A., came to Akron to get help from Dr. Bob, wife Kaye M. divorced after he sobered up; wife took Big Book Los Angeles fall 1939 (D 177) (P 266)

Uncle Clarence - Bill got violin belonging him, learned play (P 31)

'Uncle Dick' - see "Richardson, Reverend Willard (Dick) S."

Uncle Marley - had influence Bill's boyhood (B 42)

Underwood, Ivan - former Trustee (A 208)

Usko - seaman, sobered up in U.S., wrote letter buddy Veikko K . in Finland (E 45)

Uzzell, Tom - on faculty New York University; writer Collier Magazine , edited & cut pre publication Big Book at least 1/3, some say 1/2, down to 400 pages (L 115) (P 204) (W 181)

Val D. - founder A.A. South Africa 1946, sobered up reading Big Book (A 85) (E

46)

Veikko K. - received letters from buddy Usko about program, started A.A.
Finland
(E 45-46)

Venus - Sylvia wished for beauty of (BB3 400)

Vi S. - joined A.A. with husband, Freddie S . Cleveland 1941, help start
women's
group, example ineffectiveness wet nursing (D 97,99,245-6)

Vi S - wife of AA member (BB3 485-7,490)

Vic M. - early Sacramento A.A. (A 88)

'Victor' - see "Freddie S"

Victorine, Sister M. - contemporary of Sister Ignatia , established alcoholic
ward St. Vincent's Charity Hospital Cleveland died January 1988 (A 20) (D 202)
(G 24-25) (H 204)

Virgil - ancient Roman poet and writer (BB3 533)

Virginia MacL. - sister of Dorothy S.M . (Clarence S . wife), patient Dr.
Leonard V. Strong (Bill's brother-in-law) (D 142,313-4) (BB3 ?216)

Voltaire - French philosopher and author 1694-1778 (A 267)

W.W. - Yale University proposed initials conveying honorary Doctor Laws degree
to protect Bill's anonymity (H 206-207) (P 313)

Wade - Akron, early user of telephone to stay sober (D 146)

Wallace, Herb - friend Bill's before A.A. started; had Bill take public
speaking
course (L 130) (P 173)

Wally G. - early Akron A.A., wife Annabelle G .; co-sponsored Ty M. from
Milwaukee with Dr. Bob; daughter went King school, checked out to start A.A.
meetings, his story "Fired Again" in 1st edition (A 11,91) (D
119-21,140-1,147,177-8,213,219,223,254,289,290) (P 266) (BB1 325-331)

Walter B. - wife Marie ; 1st alcoholic Dr. Bob & Sister Ignatia admit St.
Thomas
Hospital August 16 1939, (another source lists his sobriety date as 9/35);
notorious alcoholic & regular consumer paregoric (over counter opiate), Sister
Ignatia labeled problem acute gastritis; joined A.A. September 1939, story

"The
Back-Slider" in 1st ed of Big Book (BB1 265-273) (D 106) (H 374) (S
14,16,122,146)

Walter C. - got sober reading manuscript in Toledo state hosp., went 12 Step
with Bob (brother of Edith M .) Bob told 12 Step himself (D 253,257)

Walter P. - writer Bill contacted Towns Hospital, took home try sober up (B
233)

Walter W. - alcoholic, wife Nona W . alcoholic, early A.A.'s, friends Sister
Francis who invited to Joy Farm starting A.A.'s contact Sister Francis (L 122)

Warren C. - joined A.A. July 1939, caused debate because not hospitalized, 12
stepped by Clarence S . (D 102,109-10,158-70,203,209-10,241,261-2,264) (N 236)

Warren T. - wife Alice ; early San Francisco A.A., 1st member employed as
alcoholic specialist by industry -Kaiser shipyard, assisted in starting 1st
A.A.
penitentiary group; worked with wife persuade top management 1 America's
leading
railroads to help alcoholic employees; died 1957 (A 88-90)

Watson, E. B. - 1902 class president Dartmouth, Dr. Bob's class (D 19)

Watson, Professor - wrote letter 1958 A.A. General Service Office about Dr.
Bob
(D 19,23)

Weaver, Marion - non A.A. office worker in mid 1940's, typed the Traditions (P
321)

Weber, Delphine - friend Henrietta Seiberling , Oxford Group member, late 1932
called Henrietta in reference to Dr. Bob's drinking (D 57) (N 31)

Weekes, Dr. Frances - psychiatrist Bill saw in late 1940's (P 335)

Wes P. - chaired host committee 1970 International Convention Miami Beach;
raised \$10,000 local groups to provide complimentary coffee -consumed end 1st
day (G 106)

Wes W. - lived Wilson's basement; day before died of cancer asked Russ R .
bottle Johnnie Walker Scotch Black Label (L 119) (P 165,166)

West - nonalcoholic friend, accountant of West & Flint & Co, lifelong
associate

Willard S. Richardson , saw Works Publishing properly incorporated, personally
audited it since beginning 1938, turned over then Wilbur S . (A 188)

West, Mae - American actress known for her portrayals of defiantly sexy women of lost virtue and irreverent wit (BB3 386)

Whalon, Mark - Bill's nickname for him was 'my friend postman ', Bill's closest childhood friend, met spring or early summer 1908, 10 years older, sort of uncle or father to Bill, worked summer jobs together, helped string 1st telephone lines into East Dorset, hunted & fished together, shared interest Vermont history, drank together; died 1956 (B 42-43) (D 91) (L 32) (N 11,16) (P 22,49,50-1,84,336,364,403) (W 141)

Wheeler, Arthur - nickname 'Artie', son of president American Can Company, hard drinker, introduced Bill to Frank Winans the Chicago banker, April 8 1932 the three formed long term speculative syndicate based on Bill not taking even 1 drink, Bill drank Jersey Lighting applejack middle May 1932 (A 56) (B 180-181) (L 83) (P 90-91) (BB3 5u)

Wilbur "Bur" S. - outside accountant for headquarters office, took over from Mr. West (A 189) (G 140)

Wilbur S. - friend Wilson's, wife Ruth S ., drove them see Stepping Stones (L 133)

Wilkie, Wendell - American industrialist and political leader, unsuccessful US presidential candidate 1940, present February 1940 Rockefeller 's A.A. dinner (A 184) (B 296) (H 62)

'Will' - grandfathers nickname Bill, see "Bill W."

Williams, Clarace - wife T. Henry Williams, nonalcoholic, daughter Dorothy; friend Dr. Bob's wife , held Oxford Group meeting in their house (A 19,75,141) (C 28,44,123) (D 57-8,100,108,141,157-8,161,165,167,208,217,219) (L 104) (P 145,146) (S 31) (BB3 160u,291u)

Williams, Dorothy - daughter Clarace & T. Henry Williams (P 145)

Williams, Roger - T. Williams was direct descendant of this founder Rhode Island & champion religious freedom in colonial America (P 145)

Williams, T. Henry - wife Clarace daughter Dorothy; native Connecticut; came Akron 1915; direct descendant Roger Williams; well-to-do inventor, Oxford Group

member, held Wednesday night Oxford Group meetings home until 1954; lost job chief engineer at National Rubber Machine Company in reorganization spring 1935;

looked like alcoholic; stood by Dr. Bob worst of times (A 19,75f,141,145) (C 44,123) (D

57-58,69,79,87,100-1,106,108,112,121-2,124,130,132,137-8,141-2,144,147,155,157-8\

,161-2,165,208,212,217-9,231,252) (H 142,357,359) (L 104) (N 40,55) (P 145,146,171,180,243n) (S 31) (BB3 160u,291u)

'Willie' - Dr. Bob's nickname for Bill; Bill's grandmother's name for "Bill W."

Wilson, Barbara - Lois's sister, maid honor wedding; worked Baylis & Co. introduced Bill there (B 111,137)

Wilson, Bill - see "Bill W."

Wilson, Christine - Bill's step mother (P 80,329,360,362)

Wilson, Clifford - pall bearer Bertha Bamford , Bill's childhood sweetheart (P 36)

Wilson, Dorothy Brewster - Bill's younger sister, called 'Dot ', married Dr. Leonard Strong Jr ., they helped pay Bill's hospitalization (B vi,11,188) (L 13,86) (N 10) (P 15,35) (W 139)

Wilson, Dr. Emily Griffith - Bill's mother, born 1870; divorced Bill's father when Bill age 11; went osteopathic school in Boston after divorce; helped pay Bill's Town's hospitalization; refused nomination in Who's Who America; eccentric, kept no books, guest 1955 Intentional Convention St. Louis; died wealthy May 15 1961 at nursing home Dobbs Ferry New York age 91, buried East Dorset cemetery Griffin family plot, 2nd husband died June 1936 (B 12,41,188) (G 37,39,99) (L 13,106) (N 10) (P 13-6,19,20,22-5,27-8,40,44-5,75,85,288-90,291,324n,329,335,350,358,380,387) (W 139) (BB3 7u)

Wilson, Family - Bill's family (picture) (P 41)

Wilson, Gilman Barrows - Bill's father, born 1870, called 'Gilly ', deserted family 1905, quarryman heavy drinker not alcoholic, became manager Marblehead Quarries, Canadian Marble Works Ltd., married Christine Bock ; died February 14, 1954 (B 9,12) (L 15,22) (N 10) (P 14-5,17,22-4,25,42,43,80,329,336,360,362-3,380) (W 137,139)

Wilson, Helen - Bill's 1/2 sister born 1916, lived with Wilson's awhile in Bedford Hills; married Ralph R ., got 1st paid job in subscription department

Grapevine (G 36) (L 139,176) (P 80,263,321,330,335,336)

Wilson, Lois Burnham - Bill's wife, attended well known Pratt Institute
Brooklyn, Friends school, graduated Packer Institute Brooklyn 1912, 2 years
New
York School Fine & Applied Arts; worked Central Branch YWCA Brooklyn, taught
at
her aunt Marion's school 1917 for 1 year; worked Brooklyn Naval Hospital;
studied Braille & transcribed several stories Saturday Evening Post; opened
tea
arbor summer 1915, engaged fall 1915 married Bill January 24 1918; worked
Macy's
department \$22.50 week plus 1% commission while Bill drank, attended 3 Oxford
Group house parties with Bill; picture appeared Jack Alexander March 1 1941
Saturday Evening Post article; she died October 5 1988, 97 years old, buried
October 10, 1988 East Dorset Vermont (A 11,46,54,61,173,179,187,228f) (B
82,84-85,99,111,132,142-143) (C 4,8) (D
70-1,77-9,87,,90-1,99,107,152,168,177-8,208,210,212,216,235) (G 1,3,31,54,83)
(H
198,283,354) (L 1,4,12-14,22,74,114,130,156) (N 41) (P
27,38,39-40,48,55-9,72-6,77,78,81-4,86-92,95,96,98,99,104-6,108,109,111,116,11
7,\
119,120,122n,125,127,131,134,135,136,144,146,147,152,158,161-9,
174-7,197,200.212-22,228,229,237,238,239,241,247,248,251,255,259,260,262,263,2
64\
,267,270-2,274n,275,278,279,281,283,286-91,293,294,313,321,
324n,327-330,335,337,360-361,371,372,381,393,395,400,401,402,403) (W 145-147)

Wilson, 'Widow ' - Bill's grandmother, ran Wilson House hotel (P 13,42)

Wilson, Woodrow - US president, Bill's family may have been related (P 15,39)

Winans, Frank - Chicago banker, April 8 1932 formed long term speculative
syndicate with Bill & Arthur Wheeler based on Bill not taking even 1 drink,
middle May 1932 Bill drank Jersey Lighting applejack (A 56) (B 180-181) (L 83)
(P 90-91) (BB3 5u,?138u)

Windows, Ray - close friend Dr. Bob's daughter age 12, Sue's first beau & 2nd
husband, married her December 19 1975, died August 3 1989 (C 11-12,85,95) (D
93,106)

Windows, Sue - born February 15 1918, Smith's adopted her in 1923, married 24
years to Ernie G . A.A. #4 autumn 1935, married Ray Windows December 19 1975,
age 48 start drink (1966), helped type stories Big Book read it 36 years after
published, Dr. Bob's nickname 'T.' after character Hortensia Twitchbottom (A
6,68) (C 2,11-13,52,80-81,128) (D
10,15,30,35-7,43-4,50,60,69,71-2,74,80,87,91,93-4,98,105-7,115,126,132,154,290
,2\

97,311-2,318,321,344) (E 14) (L 77,96) (N 316) (P 76n,140,152,155,336) (S 31)

Wing, Nell - nonalcoholic executive secretary, assistant Bill, worked General Service Office March 3 1947-1982, secretary receptionist, secretary A.A. World Services Inc Board, General Service Conference duties, publications editor; heard about A.A. while attending Keuka College central New York State in Sept 1939 reading article 'Alcoholics & God' in Liberty magazine, nonconformist, met

Bill March 4 1947; began archival activity 1957, General office archivist 1971-1982; retired 1982; at International Convention Seattle 1990 given 10 millionth copy Big Book (D 81) (E 21) (G ix,1,5-7,90,93,101-102,113,121) (L 166) (N xii,252) (P 293,294,357,364,371,397,398,399,400,401,402,403) (S 29) (W 182)

'Woman' - Dr. Bob's nickname student nurses (D 48)

Wood, John E. F. - young attorney recruited for legal work establishing Alcoholic Foundation, 1 1st nonalcoholic member Alcoholic Foundation (A 151-152) (E 18) (H 61) (P 188)

Wright Brothers - proved ideas about flying machines (P 31) (BB3 51-2)

Wright, J. Carroll - sent Bill & Dr. Bob prospects, minister Presbyterian Church that Smith's attended, asked them not attend, causing friction due alcoholics, due to this Bob joined Dr. Tunks' Episcopalian Church (C 127) (D 77,119)

Wylie, Mrs. - owner Blythewood Sanitarium, let A.A. meeting hold there (A 18-9) (L 127) (P 216)

Wylie, Philip - wrote article "Philip Wylie Jabs a Little Needle into Complacency", said he was alcoholic quit solo (H 97-9)

Wynn L - story "Freedom From Bondage" appears in 2nd and 3rd editions of Big Book (BB2 553-62u / BB3 544-53u)

Mr. X. - what Dr. Harry Tiebout called "Bill W" in papers when quoting him; also used to referred to "Clarence S." in pamphlet of sermon by Dr. Dilworth Lupton ; name liquor trade association wanted to use referring to their educator in publicity (A 20,108,309) (B 335)

Zerelda - spent night with Wilson's (P 335)

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++++Message 588. People in AA History - pt 5

From: t 10/7/2002 2:17:00 AM

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People In AA History - Part 5

N thru S

N - noted radio commentator, broke anonymity for money raising & publicity (P 309)

Nagle, Father - St. Vincent's Charity Hospital, helped Cleveland alcoholics (A 20) (H 204)

Nancy - waitress served Dr. Bob at City Club (D 293)

Nancy F - "Independent Blonde" in 2nd edition of Big Book (BB2 532-9)

Nash, Dr. Harry - see Harry N, Dr

Ned - early San Francisco A.A. (A 88)

Ned F. - A.A. Washington lawyer, got Bill interested in government (L 130)

Ned P. - new alcoholic, present at meeting December 1937 Rockefeller raise money
(B 274)

Neil K. - early Youngstown Ohio A.A. (D 254,257)

Newton, Jim - Oxford Group member, supported A.A. (G 69)

Nic N. - early San Francisco A.A. (A 88)

Niebuhr, Reinhold - One of possible authors of Serenity Prayer (A 196) (P 258n)

Nona W. - alcoholic, wife Walter W . alcoholic, early A.A.'s, friends Sister Francis who invited her to Joy Farm starting A.A.'s contact Sister Francis; sponsored by Marty M (A 181) (L 122)

Norman H - his story "Educated Agnostic" in 1st edition, from Darien, CT (BB1 351-6)

Norman Y. - blind man Youngstown, 12 stepped by Jack D . (D

183-4,221,223,249-50,263)

Norris, Dr. John 'Jack' L. - nicknamed 'Dr. Jack'; medical director Eastman Kodak Rochester New York; early as 1948 investigated A.A. resource available help alcoholic employees; nonalcoholic, served A.A. 27 years trustee, helped change board membership to alcoholic majority; spoke 2nd Intentional Convention

St. Louis 1955; present 25th Anniversary 1960 Long Beach California; Bill asked

him try LSD, didn't; chairman Emeriti with Dr. Milton Maxwell International Convention Montreal 1985; 1 favorite expressions 'Sponsor your doctor'; gave Bill's eulogy; died January 1989 (A 5,208) (E 67,72) (G 29,52,72,112) (H 194,334-335,339,340) (N 259) (P 268-71,297,301,358,370,371,376,376n,395,396,400)

Northrop, Amanda - Dr. Bob's older foster sister, history professor Hunter College New York City (D 12-13,14)

Oetinger, Fredrich - one of possible authors of Serenity Prayer (P 258n)
'Old Tom' - see Tom M

Olsen, Dr. Oscar - close friend & enthusiastic A.A. since 1947; attended Seattle Convention 1990 (G 73)

Oppenheimer, Dr. J. Robert - nickname 'Oppie'; physicist, asked Bill join him at Institute Advanced Study Princeton, wanted Bill oversee & evaluate chemical composition neuroses, mostly depression, Bill didn't (B 357-358) (P 381)

'Oppie' - nickname for Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer

Ora T. - early New York A.A., Bill & Lois sublet her furnished apartment 42 Barrow Street Greenwich Village (L 130) (P 215)

Oram, Mrs. Gordon - from San Francisco, had boarder Ted whom she got Big Book, opened her flat 1st A.A. meeting late 1939 (A 88)

Orvis, Mrs. - owner famous Equinox House, headed delegation to meet arrival 1st plane landing Manchester Vermont airfield; Bill, Ebby & pilot Ted Burke drunk (G 58) (H 367) (L 76) (P 84)

Oscar V. - from old St. Louis family, stayed Bill's house (B 263)

Oscar W. - Cleveland A.A., age 29, told, when you are new, you should 'take the

cotton from your ears and put it in your mouth, sit down and listen!', wrote resignation & gave Dr. Bob, slipped, back in 6 months (D 225-6,229,231,245-7,258-9,270-1)

Osler, Sir William - late 19th-early 20th century Canadian physician (A 243)

Osmond, Dr. Humphry - English psychiatrist involved in research working with schizophrenics & alcoholics at Canadian hospital Saskatoon Saskatchewan; Bill met through Gerald Heard ; trying various methods break patients resistance, help them through chemical means -LSD 1954 and vitamin therapy -B3/niacin; worked Dr. Abram Hoffer , asked Bill work with them, he did for 6 years (B 358-359) (G 54) (L 159) (N 137) (P 368-370,372,376n,380,387,388,389)

Otis W., Father - early recovering priest (S 171)

Oursler, Fulton - editor Liberty Magazine popular national weekly 1939; wrote book Greatest Story Ever Told; Senior Editor Readers Digest; introduced Bill to Fulton Sheen ; member Board Trustees; helped raise money from friends distributing first 2 chapters Big Book when unpublished (A 17,87,172n,177,208) (G 73) (H 145,180,182-183,194) (N 52,90) (P 223-4,280,335) (BB3 xviii)

Oursler, Grace - husband was Fulton Oursler, they introduced Bill W to Fulton Sheen (P 280)

Ovshinsky, Stan - Detroit inventor, developed cheap way converting heat directly electricity; formed company Energy Conversion Laboratories marketed idea (P 380)

P., Dr. - early Sacramento A.A. (A 88)

Paddy K. - founded A.A. Boston, amazingly successful at helping others despite having slip after slip, died alcoholism; Marty M. took him to Blythewood (A 96) (P 257,258n)

Pam B. - Red Bank New Jersey; met Bill 1968 vacationing Caribbean winter 1968, made mutual pact quit smoking (P 397)

Parent, Lillie - in 1907 letter to Emily, Bill W mentions this friend of his sister Dorothy (P 23-4)

Parent, Mr. - father of Lillie, killed by a train (P 23)

Parkhurst, Kathleen - see "Kathleen P"

Parkhurst, Hank or Henry - see "Hank P"

Pat C. - Minneapolis A.A.; Chicago's Chan F . & Bill Y . carried him message 1940; tried start A.A. & club same time; (A 95)

Pat C. - from California, his story "Lone Endeavor" in 1st edition (BB1 391-6)

Pat M - his story "Desperation Drinking" in 2nd & 3rd ed (BB2 509-513u \ BB3 512-6u)

'Patron Saint of Cleveland A.A.' - see "Dr. Harry N"

Patterson, Eleanor 'Cissy' - mother of Felicia G (BB3 401u)

Paul K. - visited Bill Ruth Hock's 1st day work, Ruth heard fragments drunken misery, miserable wife, being drunk disease, roaring laughter drunken incidents;
thought Big Book should be more Christian (A 162) (E 20) (P 191u)

Paul O., Dr - his story in 3rd ed "Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict" (BB3 439-452u)

Paul S. - early Akron A.A., met Dr. Bob January 1936, came New York with Dr. Bob
attended John D. Rockefeller 's A.A. dinner February 1940; got Dr. Bob's son job
Cleveland; liked Twelve Steps way 1st written, his story "Truth Freed Me!" in 1st edition (A 162,183) (C 141) (D 111-3,117,119,132,140,143,145,169,245,288,306,310,314,) (H 59,60,62) (L 109) (N 53) (P 184,232-233) (BB1 336-9) (BB3 205u,206,269)

Paul, Saint - see "Saint Paul"

Payne, Kenneth - managing editor of Readers Digest in 1938 (A 158,171)

Peabody, Richard - lay therapist treatment alcoholism, author Common Sense Drinking, recovering alcoholic (P 176)

Peale, Norman Vincent - popular minister Collegiate Church New York, radio preacher spoke New York Intergroup dinner celebrating Bill's sobriety (L 143)

Pearson, Drew - husband of Felicia G (BB3 402u)

Peg S. - joined A.A. mid-1940's (D 247)

Peggy - friend Smiths (D 87)

Perkins, Roger - senior class member Burr & Burton, pall bearer Bill's childhood
sweetheart Bertha Bamford (P 36)

Pete A. - Dr. Bob's son's wife's (Betty) father, alcoholic; sober after daughter brought him Big Book 1944, started group Clovis New Mexico (C 157) (D 303)

Pete W. - His story "Rum, Radio and Rebellion" in 2nd & 3rd edition (BB2 317-29,
BB3 356-68)

Pfau, Father Ralph - 1st A.A. Catholic priest join A.A., organized National Clergy Conference, wrote Golden Books, wrote autobiographical account alcoholism
Prodigal Shepherd (S 197)

Phil S. - A.A. #5 in Akron, A.A.'s 1st court case, came late August or early September, 1935, insurance man (D 95-96,100,108,132)

Philip - alcoholic Scottish nobleman, journey America look into International Christian Leadership Movement -businesses men interested bringing God into industry by breakfast clubs for prayer & planning, at 1st session met George R ., sobered up took A.A. home to Scotland (A 83)

Poliak, Dr. Percy - San Francisco psychiatrist with Bellevue Hospital New York then San Francisco Country Hospital, gave A.A. group full support (A 88) (BB3 43u)

Polly F.L. - joined A.A. 1943 Chicago, later worked General Service Office (D 246,300,302)
'Princess' - see "Gladys S."

Priscilla - 1 original group publishing Grapevine (A 201) (BB3 413u,414,416)

'Puggy' - see "Dowling, Father Edward"

Quaw, Clayton - firm Quaw & Foley, firm Bill did most stock market investigations for (P 175)

'R.H.' - Dr. Bob's nickname for self, see "Bob S., Dr."

'R.H.S., Dr.' - Dr. Bob's nickname at City Hospital, 2 other Smiths on staff, see "Bob S., Dr."

Ralph - a frient of Archie T (BB3 278)

Ralph - worked press room A.A.'s 2nd International Convention St. Louis July

1955 (A 36)

Ralph B. - writer Alcoholic Foundation; frequent visitor Stepping Stones (G 145)

Ralph F. - from Springfield MA, "Another Prodigal Story" in 1st edition of Big Book, (BB1 357-363u) (BB3 35-7/'Jim')

Ralph R. - married Bill's 1/2 sister Helen (P 330)

Randolph - West Indian Rosicrucian elevator man 38 Livingston Street New York, tried keep Bill sober & safe when drunk, checked neighborhood bar's for him (L 71) (P 81)

Ray C. - designed dust cover for 1st ed Big Book, his story "An Artist's Concept" in 1st edition (BB1 380-5)

Ray H. - early San Francisco A.A. (A 88)

Ray W. - early New York A.A., atheist, went San Francisco 1940 business, told those there A.A. great stuff but put God out of it; picture appeared Jack Alexander March 1941 Saturday Evening Post article (A 87) (P 247)

Reed, Joe - friend Bill's from East Dorset (L 52)

Regnikoff, Dr. - New York Hospital doctor involved Lois's heart attack (P 361)

Rex - 1 founding members A.A. Sydney Australia, late 1944, Australia's 1st A.A. secretary (A 86) (E 41)

Rhine, Dr. J. B. - Duke University; Bill corresponded reference extrasensory perception (G 57)

Ricardo - inmate San Quentin, helpful bringing A.A. to San Quentin (A 89)

Richard P. - 1st sober A.A. Ireland, Connor F. Philadelphia tavern owner helped (A 83) (E 43)

Richards, Dr. Esther L. - John Hopkins Hospital Baltimore, suggested having Number 1 physician write introduction Big Book, Dr. Silkworth wrote it 9 days later (N 332) (P 201-2)

Richardson, Reverend Willard 'Dick' S. - called 'Uncle Dick'; ordained Baptist minister; handled John D. Rockefeller's Jr. private charities, spiritual advisor; got Bill contact through Dr. Leonard Strong; present 1937 meeting

John

D. Rockefeller's office money raising; proposed Alcoholic Foundation be formed February 4 1938; Bill requested \$50,000 turned down, given \$5,000 -\$3,000 pay Dr. Bob's mortgage the rest split Bill & Dr.

Bob \$30 monthly; 1 1st Alcoholic Foundation board member (A 14,15,114,147,148,150f,151-152,168,182,185,186,188,208,219) (B 274) (E 18) (G 98) (H 59,61,62,142-143,146,177,192,195) (L 108,197) (N 65) (P 181,182,183,184,187,188,202,232,279) (W 159)

Rickenbacker, Eddie - most decorated pilot in WWI, in WWII he and crew were adrift for 27 days after plane crashed in Pacific, Bill used analogy for group survival (A 97) (H 36)

Ripley, Mrs. Joseph Pierce - mother of Anne Ripley Smith (Bob's wife) (D 29)

Rita - a friend of Marty M (BB3 223)

Ritchie, Charlie (or Charley Richie) - had influence Bill's boyhood (B 42) (L 32-33)

Robbie (Robert) - 11 year old boy Goldfoots were raising, got close with Bill during time worked on their farm to make money during motorcycle trip 1925 (B 151) (L 42)

Robert H. - Bill wrote him in 1959 about loneliness (G 76)

Robert Ripley S. - Dr. Bob's son born June 5 1918, nicknames 'Smithy ' and 'Smit', wife Betty Smith married 1944, started drinking at 16, alcoholic, attended 45 anniversary 1980 international convention (A 68) (C 2,99,120,128,154) (D 10,15,28-30,35-7,39-40,42,50,66,72,78,80,91,96,99,105-7,111-2,115-6,126-7,132,13\ 4,146,168,201,216,241,255,272,279-80,296-7,302-5,307-9, 311-2,316-7,320,327-8,333,341,344) (E 14,76) (L 96) (P 140,143,151,155)

Roberto C. - 12 stepped by Carlo I .; together translated Big Book Italian, gave 1st Italian Big Book to Lois 1980 International Convention New Orleans (E 51-52) (G 110)

Rockefeller Jr., John D. - ardent champion Prohibition, extremely wealthy; helped A.A. steer clear trap professionalism by not giving them much money; asked to donate \$50,000, donated \$5,000 to treasury Riverside Church -\$3,000 pay off Dr. Bob's mortgage, then Bill & Bob get \$30 monthly (A vii,14f,87,111,112,134,150f,151,158,182-6,189,204) (B 276) (D 128-9,134-6) (H 61,62,66,105,143,146,149,192-3,) (L 109) (P 181,183-8,189n,232-4,256) (BB3

xviii,265,574)

Rockefeller Sr., John D. - American industrialist & philanthropist (A 14)

Rockefeller, Nelson - son John D. Rockefeller Jr. age 31, chaired February 1940 dinner for A.A. at Manhattan's exclusive Union Club (A 183f) (B 295) (E 15) (H 62-3,145,146) (L 128) (N 93,417) (P 232-233)

Roland J. - spiritualist Doc Bob talked to late 1930's (D 243,311-4)

'Rollicking Rollie' - nickname Rollie Hemsley

Rollie H. - nickname 'Rollicking Rollie', early Cleveland A.A., famous baseball player, catcher Cleveland Indians caught Bob Feller no-hitter May 1940, 1 1st big names go public -1939 revealed got sober in A.A. caused lot publicity -sports reporter really responsible; recruiting officer Akron fellowship, stayed awhile with Oxford Group after Cleveland split (A 24) (B 300) (D 167,204,218,249,251-3) (L 146) (N 85-86,95) (P 236-8,243n,307)

Rollo M. - also known as 'Roscoe' and 'Russ', joined A.A. May 1941, wife Ethel M . also A.A., 12 stepped by John & Elgie R . (D 223,243-244,284) (BB3 262,270-2)

Roosevelt, Archibald 'Archie' - trustee, thought Bill should not accept Doctorate Laws Yale University, other trustee's thought should, Bill didn't (A 32,208) (L 157) (S 124)

Roosevelt, Franklin D. - US president, (H 265)

Rosa B - Jim B 's wife (BB3 238u,249)

'Roscoe' M. - see "Rollo M"

Rose, 'Barefoot' - see, "Landon, Rose"

Roth, Robert J. - associate professor philosophy Fordham University; wrote 'William James & Alcoholics Anonymous' for America July 1965 -based on discussions & sharing at 30th International Convention Alcoholics Anonymous Toronto Canada 1965 (G 21)

Rowland H(azard) - see "Hazard, Rowland"

Roy Y. - Army sergeant, 1st Texan get sober & stay sober, contacted by Larry J ., later stationed in Tampa started 1st groups on Florida's west coast (A 24)

(D
259) (P 156)

'Rum hound from New York' - how Bill described himself to Henrietta Seiberling
May 11, 1934 (D 60)

Russ - childhood friend Bill's, communicated with Morse Code at Rutland (P
22-23)

Russ R. - once partner Time-Life, atheist, stayed at Wilson's home over year
(B
263) (L 119) (P 164,165,166,167)

Ruth J. - Lois made a skirt for her (P 239)

Ruth G. - wife of the 2nd Ernie G. - Toledo (D 141,175,226,235,300,312-3)

Ruth R. - wife Eddie R. 1st person Bill & Dr. Bob tried help, Ruth
surrendered
in Oxford Group; they 2 children lived Dr. Bob & Annie; caused lot problems (B
249) (C 5,41-42) (D 77-78,80,99) (L 97) (P 151-152)

Ruth S. - husband Wilbur S. , drove them to see Stepping Stones (L 133)

Ruth T. - joined A.A. spring 1939, from Toledo, well-to-do woman, hosted A.A.
meetings her house (D 242-3,256,311)

Ryder, John - New York advertising executive, active Oxford Group member
1930's;
knew Bill from Calvary Mission days, supported him (G 69) (P 173)

Sackville M - member Dublin group, noted as worlds champion at helping AA's by
mail, his story "The Career Officer" in 2nd and 3rd edition of Big Book (A 83)
(BB2 523-531u \ BB3 517-525u)

Sadie - patient Dr. Dan Craske Chicago mid 1939 (A 22) (BB3 294u)

Saint Francis of Assisi - Bill admired, influenced by, patron saint (A
110-111,270f) (G 22) (H 237-8) (P 302, 404-6)

Saint Ignatius of Layola - usually in reference to 'Exercises of Saint
Ignatius'
and the '12 Steps' (A 253f) (H 365) (P 242)

Saint Paul - had spiritual experience on road to Damascus (P 125)

Sam - high powered Yankee preacher, carried message to Atlanta sparked growth,
created sort of Chautauqua brand of AA (A 25)

Sam - early Chicago A.A., Earl T . worked with, wife Tee (A 22) (BB3 310u)

Sam C. - started A.A. meeting Akron area, others didn't like him (D 271)

Saul, Dr. C. Dudley - Philadelphian, told friend, Judge Curtis Bok, owner, publisher Saturday Evening Post, about A.A. (A 18) (H 363-4) (P 244)

Schneider, Norman - young Canadian; friend Lois in Young People League, asked Lois marry him, family owned meat packing firm in Kichener Ontario (B 85) (L 16) (P 48)

'Scientist' - nickname for Christian Science's (P 230)

Scott, Albert - chairman board trustees Riverside Church; associate & advisor John D. Rockefeller Jr. , chaired meeting December 1937 to raise money from Rockefeller; family owned newspaper Cambridge Ohio (A 15,148f) (B 274) (D 134) (H 59-60,192) (L 109) (N 65-66) (P 184-185,187,202)

Scuderi, Dr. Thomas P. - young emergency room intern St. Thomas Hospital, worked with Sister Ignatia on alcoholics, treated alcoholics until retirement (D 51-2,64,342) (S 9,144) (BB3 217)

Seabrook, Willie - author of Asylum (BB3 224)

Seiberling, Frank - entrepreneur, founder 1st president Goodyear Tire & Rubber company, father-in-law Henrietta Seiberling; lived 65 room mansion Portage Path (D 56) (L 95) (P 136-137)

Seiberling, Henrietta - nickname 'Henri'; Frank Seiberling's daughter-in-law, graduate Vassar College, housewife, separated from husband, lived gate house, 3 young children; friend Anne Smith ; went Oxford Group meetings in 1932 at West Hill group, introduced Dr. Bob & Anne to Oxford Group; prayed and received guidance to have special Oxford group meeting on Dr. Bob's drinking; last name on list Reverend Walter Tunks gave Bill when called from Mayflower Hotel, arranged Bill & Dr. Bob meet Mother's Day May 12 1935 her residence; she & Anne taught Bill & Dr. Bob start day quiet time, prayer, reflection; unsympathetic to Bill about conference -believed Bill finally succumbed madness (A 19,66,73,75) (B 236-237) (C 2-3,36) (D 56,58-61,63-4,66,100,108,130,137,157-61,217-9,267,271,342) (E 12) (G 51,69) (H 355-7) (L 95) (N 27,31,35) (P 136-7,142,144,189n,301) (S 18,114) (W 156) (BB3 179u)

Seltzer, Louis - editor Cleveland Press, rounded out industrial meeting 15th A.A. anniversary (H 118)

Shakespeare - English writer and playwright (BB3 400,403,411,449)

"Shane" - a cowboy movie (BB3 333)

Sharkey, Tom - owner of 'brawling bar on 14th Street' in NYC (BB# 251-2)

Shaw, Benard - Irish born writer and playwright (BB3 536)

Shaw, Elise - Frank Shaw's wife, matron of honor at Lois 's wedding, Lois oldest closest friend (B 111,137) (L 11,22,74) (P 175)

Shaw, Frank - wife Elise; Wall Street big shot, high up in J.K. Rice Company; Bill did stock market investigations for him; parted official company 1929, remained lifelong friends; died 1950's (B 137) (L 74) (P 69,72,74,75,78-80,85,175)

Shaw, Robert - lawyer, friend Willard S. Richardson , early Board member (A 186)

Shaw, W.H. - faculty at Burr & Burton, pall bearer Bertha Bamford Bill's childhood sweetheart (P 36)

Sheen, Monsignor Fulton - nationally popular, radio show Catholic Hour; then monsignor, later bishop; met with Bill on Saturday's better part of year to explain Catholicism (G 48) (N 52) (P 281-2,335)

Sheila T. - helped Nell Wing & Harriet G . with archives (G 126)

Shep C. - Vermont; did considerable drinking with Ebby T.; thru Oxford group, tried help Ebby; went with Ebby to see Bill on Ebby's 2nd visit; came Tuesday night meetings Bill's house; went Bill & Lois Oxford Group meetings Calvary Episcopal Church 4th Avenue (B 211) (L 91) (N 17-18) (P 113,115,116,162) (W 151) (BB3 9u,13u)

Shepherd - early New York A.A., folks thought would make it (P 227)

Sheppard, Norman - name Bill got from Reverend Walter Tunks at Mayflower Hotel May 11 1935, trying to find a drunk work with, he gave Henrietta Seiberling 's number to Bill (A 66) (C 5,35-36) (D 64) (L 95) (N 27) (P 136) (S 19)

Sherwood, Carlton - friend Dick Richardson , successful money charity raiser, tried raise money A.A.; assisted in Rockefeller February 8 1940 dinner (A 152,182)

Shoemaker, Helen - wife Dr. Sam Shoemaker , wrote book I Stand By the Door (H 379)

Shoemaker, Dr. Reverend Samuel - wife Helen; rector Calvary Episcopal Church; leading figure Oxford Group during 1920's-1930's; met Dr. Frank Buchman China January 1918, he decided let go of self to allow God guide him; converted by Dr.

Buchman; opened doors & made Bill see belief Higher Power not only change thinking feeling but become living force in world; nonalcoholic spoke 2nd Intentional Convention St. Louis 1955; Bill credited him for 12 Steps; died 1963

(A xii,2,4,38-40,59,74,253,261-71) (B 226,261) (E 10,72) (G 97) (H 177-8,277,279,298,368,379-80) (L 92,103) (N 9,24) (P 116,127,129,169,174,178n,199,358,371,373) (W 118,175)

Sibley D. - Marty M . found her Bellevue Hospital, guest Stepping Stones, talented violinist, didn't stay sober (L 139) (P 335)

Silas B. - wife Beth ; Bill worked with Towns Hospital, once reporter Kansas City Star, Bill took to hospital after sober, thought he going die (L 102)

Silkworth, Dr. William Duncan - little doctor who loved drunks ; ran Towns Hospital; graduate Princeton, medical degree New York University-Bellevue Medical School, not psychiatrist, specialist neurology; lost life savings 1929,

arrived Towns hospital 1930; theory alcoholism as combination physical allergy &

compulsion drink, holistic approach to disorders; met Bill during 2nd hospitalization at Towns, gave Bill information needed understand alcoholism as

illness; April 1935 told Bill quit preaching at drunks -instead talk about illness, tell them physical sensitivity & obsession, religion usually fills them

guilt or rebellion; referred prospects to Bill in 1937 - Fitz M . & Hank P .;

wrote introduction Big Book; suggested too many you & must words in Big Book;

wrote 3 articles on alcoholism Medical Record; used term moral psychology to characterize word fellowship; present meeting December 1937 Rockefeller raise

money; attended John D. Rockefeller 's A.A. dinner February 1940 (A vii-viii,13,16,38,39,52,62f,63,67,74,143,148,155,158,160,161,167,168,183,206,2

19\

,244,302-8) (B 191,224,227,233-234,274) (C 4) (D 68) (E 11-12) (G 97) (H

59,60,62,104-5,117,142,156,175-176,196-200,243-4,247,278-9,282-6,297,373) (L

85,145) (N 14-15,19-21,65) (P

99,101-102,107-9,119-20,122n,123,125,126,127,131,133,143,154,165,184-5,191,197

,2\

00-1,232-233,318,388) (W 153,156) (BB3 xi/u,xvi,xxiii-xxx,7u,14u,162u,571)

'Silky' - Dr. Silkworth's nickname, see "Silkworth, Dr. William Duncan"

'Sir William' - Dr. Bob's nickname for Bill on state occasions, see "Bill W ."

Sisters of Charity of Saint Augustine - ran admitting office St. Thomas
Hospital
(D 45, 198)

'Sky pilots' - Dr. Bob's nickname ministers (C 127)

'Slim' - anonymous name Bill used in describing danger giving someone taking
drugs alcohol (H 104)

'Smit' - Dr. Bob's nickname for son, see "Robert Ripley S."

Smith, Alfred E. - 'celebrated American statesman', 4 time gov. of NY,
unsuccessful first Catholic presidential candidate (BB3 50u)

Smith, Anne Ripley - Dr. Bob' s wife, married 1915; maiden name Anne Robinson
Ripley from Oak Park Illinois, attended Wellesley Col., teacher; stated
attending Oxford Group meetings 1932 with friend Henrietta Seiberling;
convinced

Dr. Bob go Oxford Group; Bill asked her write family chapter Big Book she said
no; suggested kneeling when giving self God; early 1936 organized wives group,
Bill called her Mother A.A.; she & Henrietta Seiberling taught Bill & Dr. Bob
start day with quiet time, prayer & reflection; talked Sister Ignatia daily;
with Sister Ignatia helped Akron's 1st alcoholic women; died June 1 1949 age
68

heart attack (A 6,19,23,67,69,73,141) (B 237) (C
2-3,6-7,12,28-29,42-43,60,83,105,132) (D
10,16,29-31,35,37-40,42,53,55-8,60,66-7,71-5,80-1,85-8,90-1,93,95,100,105,107-
8,\
114-6,119,121,123,132,134,142,145-6,152-3,165-6,168,175,
177-8,182,195,197,208,213,216-7,223-4,233-6,242-3,252,255-6,268-9,272,278,281-
3,\
292,294,296-8,300,302-4,309,311-3,316-7,320-3,327-31,336.341-2,344) (E 14) (G
71, 88) (H 119,353-4,359-7,360) (N 40) (P
76n,137,140,143,147,148,149,151,152,162,177,195,275,334,339,342) (S
114,117,121-122,128,130-131) (W 180) (BB3 176u, 270,272,273,279,280)

Smith, Bernard B. - nickname 'Bern'; international lawyer; chairman Alcoholic
Foundation; nonalcoholic trustee 1944-1956; chairman General Service Board
1951-1956; architect General Service Conference, convinced trustees change
ratio
-more alcoholics on board then nonalcoholics; chaired & spoke 2nd Intentional
Convention St. Louis 1955, Kiel Auditorium, A.A. became of age; only trustee
who
supported conference idea, worked with Bill to bring about General Service

Board

permanent successor to founders, brought majority trustees accept conference idea trial basis; helped Bill put together General Service Conference structure

/architect conference; due Bill's illness called from New York 1970 Miami

Beach

International Convention deliver main speech; responsible 1957 new bylaws; died

heart attack 1970 (A xii,4f,47,126,186,208,212,223,256,273,274-283,281) (B 353)

(E 19,72) (G 96-98,106) (H 168,194,337-9,380) (N 130,251,259) (P 328,344-345,350,358,401)

Smith, Betty - Dr. Bob's son's wife (daughter in law), married 1944; alcoholic father got sober after Betty brought him Big book 1944; goes A.A. meeting for self March 13 1979 (C 152) (D 297,302-4,309,316,318,339)

Smith, Dr. Bob - see "Bob S., Dr."

Smith, 'Bob' - Dr. Bob's son, see "Robert Ripley S."

Smith, Jack - assistant Dr. Sam Shoemaker , disapproved Bill's work with drunks

(L 103) (P 169)

Smith, Robert - wrote acceptable script about A.A. for Paramount Pictures in mid

1940's (G 8)

Smith, Robert Ripley - Dr. Bob's son; see "Robert Ripley S."

Smith, Sue 'Suzanne' - see "Windows, Sue"

Smith, Judge Walter Perrin - Dr. Bob's father, on Caledonia County [Vermont] Probate court, state attorney various times, member state legislature, superintendent St. Johnsbury schools, director Merchants National Bank, president Passumpsic Savings Bank, taught Sunday school 40 years, died 1918, didn't see son attain permanent sobriety (D 9-10,14,26,28) (BB3 171u)

Smith, Mrs. Walter Perrin - Dr. Bob's mother, lived see him attain permanent sobriety (D 9-10,172,318) (BB3 171u)

Smithers, Brinkley - chartered Lear jet to get Bill from Bedford Hills New York

to Miami Heart Clinic January 24 1971 (G 1)

'Smithy' - Bill's nickname Dr. Bob, see "Bob S."

'Smitty' - Dr. Bob's son nickname also 'Smit', see "Robert Ripley S."

'Some people' stayed Bill's house - Ebby , George H ., Oscar V ., Russell R., Bill C ., Florence R . (A 64) (B 263-264) (L 105)

Spelman, Matilda - Lois 's mother (B 80) (P 86,87) (BB3 4u,5u)

Spencer, Herbert - British social philosopher (BB3 570)

Stafford, Governor - fall 1960, 25th A.A. Vermont anniversary, gave Bill citation behalf A.A. (G 57)

Stouffer, Dr. John - chief psychiatrist at Philadelphia General Hosp (H 363) (BB3 572)

Strobel, Dr. Charles - Bill's mother 's 2nd husband (step father), cancer specialist Memorial Hospital New York, died June 1936 (B 154) (L 53,106) (P 75,290)

Strobel, Dora - daughter-in-law Bill's step father Dr. Charles Strobel (L 53)

Strobel, Percy - son of Bill's step-father, Dr. Charles Strobel (step brother) (L 53)

Strong, Dorothy - Bill's sister, married Dr. Leonard Strong (G 98) (N 14) (P 15,18-20,23-8,31-2,40,55,99,214,324n,329,335)

Strong, Dr. Leonard V. Jr. - husband Bill's sister Dorothy; osteopath; stuck by Bill lowest times; Bill's doctor confidant, gave Bill physical examination 1928, confronted Bill drinking; arranged Bill's admission Towns Hospital 1933 & paid bill; set up appointment Bill & Willard Richardson , friend John D. Rockefeller ; essential link A.A. people around John D. Rockefeller Jr.; 1 trustees 1st board Alcoholic Foundation April 1938; 1954 resigned board due question more alcoholics than nonalcoholics on board, served Board Trustees secretary, died April 24 1989 (A 6,14,147f,151-152,168,208) (B vi,188,273,277,355) (D 142) (E 18) (G 97-98) (H 59,60,142-143,192,195) (L 34,86,108,197) (N 14,65) (P 98-9,108,181-4,188,214,217,361) (W 148,159) (BB3 ?6u,7u)
Sue G - see "Windows, Sue"

'Sugar' - nickname few charge nurses Dr. Bob known & respected long time (D 48)

'Sweetie Pie' - nickname Lorraine Greim , Ruth Hock 's nonalcoholic assistant, started work Newark January 1940 (P 235,250)

Swentzel, Gardner - Lois's sister Kitty 's husband (brother in law), 1930's doing well at Taylor, Bates & Company firm closely connected J. P. Morgan 's enterprises; liked Bill, introduced him Arthur Wheeler (B 180) (P 90)

Sybil C. - 1st woman A.A. Los Angeles (G 112)

Sylvia K. - glamorous divorcee, \$700 month alimony, 1 of 2 women Chicago group 1939; credited having longest uninterrupted sobriety any woman in AA; Dr. Bob, Henrietta , Clarence & Dorothy S . worked with her, her story "The Keys of the Kingdom" in 2nd and 3rd edition (A 22) (D 180-1,241) (BB3 295u,304-12u)

II
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++++Message 589. People in AA History - pt 4
From: t 10/7/2002 2:17:00 AM

II
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People In AA History - Part 4
I thru M

Ian M. - started A.A. New Zealand 1946 (E 42)

'Icky' - 'nickname "Dynamite Man "

'Ig' - Dr. Bob's nickname Sister Ignatia

Ignatia \ Sister Mary Ignatia Gavin, C.S.A. - born January 2 1889; birth name Bridget Della Mary Gavin; called Angel Alcoholics Anonymous, Little Angel of A.A.'s, Little Sister of Alcoholics Anonymous, Dr. Bob's nickname 'Ig'; worked with alcoholics Akron 1928-1939; pioneered 1st alcoholism ward utilizing AA philosophy Akron 1939; 1st use retreat houses fortify spiritual recovery; with Dr. Bob's wife helped Akron's 1st alcoholic women; received Poverello Medal behalf A.A. December 7 1949; wrote article "Care Alcoholics - St.Thomas Hospital & A.A. Started Movement Which Swept Country" October 1951 in Hospital Progress journal Catholic Hospital Association; last day St. Thomas August 7 1954, went Charity Hospital Cleveland; received 1954 National Theta Phi Alpha's St. Catherine Sienna Award; died April 1, 1966 (A viii-ix,7-8,14,19,67,143,206) (B

346) (C 6,128) (D 45-6,185-99,221,245,277,283,328) (E 15,72) (G 24,92) (H 156,202-205,227,309,371-379) (L 145) (N 79) (P 323) (S iii-ix, 1-5-7,9,12,17,34-36,42,122,128,139,145,149-151,153,185-186,221,225-226,240,257,273) (BB3 171,205)

Ignatius, Saint - see "Saint Ignatius of Layola"

Ippolito, Dr. Victor D. - junior assistant Dr. Harry Nash in operating room Charity Hospital, told Dr. Nash not operate -1st professional intervention 1941 (S 163)

Irvin, Arba J - classmate of Dr. Bob at Dartmouth (D 24-5,67)

Irwin M. - super salesman of Venetian blinds, early Cleveland A.A., early 1940's spread A.A. message through South, started many & stimulated more new groups (A 25) (B 290,319) (D 259) (L 141)

J.D.H. - joined A.A. September 1936, 9 or 10 preceded him, Dr. Bob nicknamed him 'Abercrombie', 1 of few who weren't hospitalized, Southerner, had trouble with spiritual part, left established group to start A.A. group Evansville Indiana (D 46,111-114,140,147-9,258)

'Jack, Dr.' - nickname of Norris, Dr. John (Jack) L .

Jack C. - brought Serenity Prayer Vesey Street office June 1941, rented Bill & Lois a sporty Lincoln Zephyr (A 173,196) (L 126) (P 252)

Jack D. - early Cleveland A.A., Bill's pigeon (D 182-3,210)

Jack G. - Chicago A.A. (D 177)

Jack M. - editor Grapevine (G 137) (BB3 266-7,269,271)

Jack W. - wife Jean W., lived near Bill & Lois, Bill tried to help, didn't sober up (L 121)

Jack W. - helped Richmond A.A.'s realize getting away wives & drinking only beer not orthodox AA (A 25)

Jackie W - pidgeon of Fitz M , 12th Stepped Jimmy B (BB3 238-9,245)

Jacobs, Frank - had influence Bill's boyhood (B 42)

Jackson, John - Bill's childhood sweetheart Bertha Bamford pall bearer (P 36)

Jake H. - A.A. member, associated U.S. Steel, co-led industrial meeting with Dave M . A.A. 15th anniversary (H 118)

James, William - Harvard professor, founding father American psychology; author
Varieties Religious Experience, theory spiritual experiences have definite objective reality & might totally transform man's life; Bill called him 1 of A.A. founders (A 13,64,70,160,262,264,323) (D 69,104,306) (G 21) (H 175-6,196-7,199,279-298) (N 20,23,33-34) (P 124-125,197,199) (W 154,172) (BB3 28,569)

Jameses, Curtis - honored troops preparing to go overseas, invited Bill's whole battery his Newport estate (L 23)

Jane - pseudonym for Cecil M .

Jane S. - 1st woman Akron area maintain few months sobriety, married vice president large steel company (D 122,241)

Janet G. - she & Bill, edited A.A. Way Life, became As Bill Sees It (G 27) (P 360)

Janey - daughter of Dr. Earle M (BB3 351)

'Jean' - girl mentioned in story "Too Young" (BB3 318)

Jekyll & Hyde - (BB3 339)

Jellinek, Dr. E. M. -Ph.D. - nickname 'Bunky'; world famous scientific, medical authority on alcoholism, cofounded National Committee Education Alcoholism, founded National Committee Education Alcoholism, 1943 founded Yale Center Alcohol Studies moved to Rutgers University New Jersey 1962, author Disease Concept Alcoholism, developed famous Jellinek Chart -curve showing progression of illness & subsequent recovery; invited Bill speak Yale Center early 1940's,

after Bill's death awarded him 1st Jellinek Award; with Dr. Haggard began
publish Quarterly Journal Studies Alcohol 1940; died 1972 (E 28) (G 67-68)
(H
100,188) (L 145) (P 325n)

Jellinek, Elvin - see "Jellinek, Dr. E. M. -Ph.D."

Jennie B. - founding mother Boston A.A., daughter Back Bay family, 1 Paddy K
. 's
1st 2 successes (A 96) (P 251,257-258)

Jim G - told Ethel M to put Big Book away, then start on stories (BB3 269)

Jim S., Dr. - physician, originator 1st black group; spoke A.A. 2nd
International Convention St. Louis July;

"Jim's Story" 2nd & 3rd editions Big Book 1955 (A 37) (P 317) (BB2 471-84u /
BB3
483-96u,491,493)

Jim S. - former Akron journalist, found by Dr. Bob skid row selling hair oil
&
panhandling, interviewed & helped all Akron & Cleveland men write Big Book
stories, his story "Traveler, Editor, Scholar" in 1st edition - re written
and
re named "The News Hawk" for 2nd and 3rd edition (A 164) (D 154) (H 359) (L
113)
(P 200) (W 180) (BB1 254-64 / BB2 & BB3 251-60u)

Jim W. (James Russell Lowell W.) - confidence man, disappeared in A.A.
history
(L 123)

Jimmy B. - early New York A.A.; salesman; 1 1st 10 A.A.'s eastern U.S.;
insisted
toning down "God" references both steps & Big Book, wanted strong
psychological
emphasis; went Philadelphia needed fellow alcoholics around stay sober,
started
group 1940; responsible start A.A. Baltimore also; donated his 1st printing
/1st
edition Big Book to archives; story "Vicious Cycle" 2nd & 3rd editions Big
Book,
sometimes referred to as 'Jim B' or 'Jim Burwell' (A 17-8,163) (B 282,295)
(G
22,111,129) (H 201,363) (L 198) (N 75) (P 199,204,214,221,244-245,258n) (BB2
238-50u) (BB3 149-50u,238-250u)

Joan C. - best friend of Mrs. Griffith who built Stepping Stones -Wilson's house, helped work out plan so Wilson's could afford it (L 133) (P 259-260)

Joe - checked Bill's hat & coat at function, former member Al Capone gang (A 102) (B 344)

Joe D. - Akron, early Catholic member, "The European Drinker" one of few stories in all 3 editions of Big book. (D 112) (N 84) (BB1 206-16) (BB2 230-7u) (BB3 ?208,230-37u)

Joe M. - his story "Joe's Woes" in 2nd edition only (BB2 445-59)

Joe McQ. - 1st black Little Rock Arkansas A.A. 1962; participated Charlie P
.
Big Book seminars (G 112)

Joe P. - joined A.A. 1942, Dr. Bob's fellow Dartmouth College alumnus (D 18,191-2,226,265,287-8,290)

Joe T. - tried get Bill job Torpedo Motor Company (L 130)

Joe W. - came from Bowery, New Yorker magazine writer; supporter of Big Book title Alcoholics Anonymous; sober on & off, (some credit him with drafting chapt "To Wives") (A 166) (P 202) (W 160)

John - 2 AAs (John & Bud) met Annie & Felicia at station [?may have been John ('Fitz' M) & Bud (E)] (BB3 415)

John B. - general manager General Service Office 1988 (G 144)

John C. - early San Francisco A.A. (A 88)

John P - his story "The Professor and the Paradox" in 2nd edition (BB2 336-42)

John R. - joined A.A. March/April 1939, husband of Elgie R. , Oxford member, 12 stepped Ethel & Rollo M ., barbershop West Exchange Street, Dr. Bob stopped in to chat (C 50) (D 80,95,128,153,166,177,213,216-9,223,227,237,243-4,251-2,272,276-7,286,289,30 2,31\ 1)

John S. - joined A.A. Akron January 1940 (D 146,221,275-6,280)

John W. - help group Richmond realize A.A. was not to get away wives & drink beer at meetings (B 319)

Johnny P. - Detroit A.A., traveled a lot, inspired many AA's band together, start meetings; started A.A. Kansas City Kansas (A 95) (L 141)

Johnny R. - see John R

Johnson, Dick - Bill's Canadian friend, offered Bill job with his firm, Greenshields & Co. -brokerage firm Montreal (B 169) (L 81) (P 86) (BB3 4u)

Johnson, Dr. Gordon - leading psychiatrist Oslo Norway, helped start A.A. Norway (A 29) (G 72)

'Jolly' - nickname Bill's grandfather, see "Griffith, Gardner Fayette"

Jones, Cy - Bill's brother-in-law, Bill worked as clerk in insurance department of New York Central Railroad for Cy (A 54) (L 30) (P 63)

Jones, Joan - Lois's fathers 2nd wife (step mother) (L 84)

Jones, Kleina - General Service Office, conceived flag ceremony international conventions (G 109)

Jud O. - joined A.A. 1939, wife Dorothy O . (D 230,233,236,279,290-1)

Jung, Dr. Carl - Switzerland psychoanalyst; 1 founders modern psychology; wrote Modern Man Search Soul; treated & helped Rowland Hazard 1930, patient over 1 year in Zurich, opinion only thing help was spiritual awakening, suggested ally himself religious movement; Bill felt Jung top of list responsible for A.A.'s creation; Bill wrote him 1961; died June 6, 1961 (A 3,64,68,262) (B 231,362) (D 69) (H 98,266-7,276-277,281-6) (N 8,21,33-35) (P 114,381-6,391n) (W 154,155,172-173) (BB3 26)

Kahn, David - philanthropist; wife Lucille; interested in mysticism, psychic phenomena; close Aldous Huxley , Gerald Heard ; long time friend supporter Edgar Cayce (G 75)

Kaiser, Dr. - doctor Toledo state asylum, let Chet M. sign out patients take

Toledo A.A. meetings (D 256)

Kaiser, Henry J. - of Kaiser shipyards (A 90)

Kathleen - nonalcoholic, Bill R. 's wife (P 162)

'Karen' - girl in "Too Young" story (BB3 318)

Kathleen P. - 1 of Hank P .'s wives (L 101) (P 162,216,217,228,243n)

Katie P. - wife Duke P ., Toledo groups first treasurer (D 150,151,253-7,290)

Kay - 1 of original group publishing Grapevine (A 201)

Katie T - Earl T 's wife (BB3 288u,293u)

Kay F - Clint F .'s wife (P 78,95)

Kaye M. - nonalcoholic, Ty M .'s wife; divorced after Ty sobered; Bill chewed her out for baby sitting husband; took Big Book Johnny Howe at Los Angeles Probation Department late fall 1939, these 2 dug up alcoholics who started A.A. West Coast, (name spelled "Kay" in Dr. Bob) (A 91-92) (D 177) (P 266)

Ken - gave Lois pheasant feathers she turned into a hat (P 239)

Ken A. - tried with Dick R. & Earl T . to start A.A. group Chicago 1937 (A 22) (BB3 294u)

Ken S. - Kansas City old timer (G 112)

Kennedy, Dr. Foster - world renowned neurologist; attended & spoke John D. Rockefeller 's A.A. dinner February 1940, represented medical profession; with Dr. Harry Tiebout & Dr. Kirby Collier responsible Bill speaking 2 medical societies; defended A.A. in A.M.A.; endorsed paper Bill read 1944 Medical Society New York annual meeting; used term X factor to explain what we call God (A 14,45,183-185,204,320f) (B 295) (G 67) (H 62,145) (L 128) (N 93) (P 232-233)

Kilpatrick, Dr. O. Arnold - psychiatrist in charge New York State mental institution, nonalcoholic, spoke 2nd Intentional Convention St. Louis 1955 (A 6) (P 358)

King - early San Francisco A.A. (A 88)

King Alcohol - (BB3 151)

Kitterer, Dr. - ordained minister, trained institutional administrator, in charge at Deaconess Hospital Cleveland, helped set up alcoholic ward, got visiting privileges Dr. Bob & Dr. N. (A 20) (D 201)

Klein, Edith - professional librarian, helped Nell Wing with archives (G 126)

Klein, Sarah - nonalcoholic friend Archie T. , helped start A.A. group Detroit
1939 (A 24) (D 182)

Kolb, Guy - Lois's boss at Macy's (L 84)

Krauweel, Henk - important social worker Holland; lot do translating 12 Steps
Dutch, helped A.A. in Holland; leading authority alcoholism Europe (A 26f) (G 72)

Kuhlke, M. D. - firm Kuhlke Machine Co. merged National Rubber Machinery Company
1928, instrumental proxy fight that brought Bill to Akron (P 158)

Kurtz, Ernest - historian, wrote Not-God (P 394)

Ladd, Alan - actor in movie "Shane" (BB3 333)

Lambert, Dr. Sam - along with Charlie Towns founded Towns Hospital, developed belladonna treatment (B 257) (P 101)

Landon, Bill - lived next door Bill's grandparents East Dorset Vermont, Old Frank 's son-in-law, fought civil war, taught Bill how shoot rifle, wife Barefoot Rose, had influence Bill's boyhood (B 24,42) (P 52,54)

Landon, Rose - neighbor Bill's while staying with grandparents, Bill Landon husband, town's librarian, responsible Bill reading great deal, had influence Bill's boyhood (B 26-27,42) (P 29)

Landons - Bill's next door neighbors East Dorset (W 139)

Lang, Sidney - foremost bridge expert (D 296)

Langley, Samuel P -Professor - flying machine failed to get off the ground

and
ran into Potomac just months before Wright's flight (BB3 51)

Larry J. - newspaper man, sobered up in Cleveland, went to Houston Texas;
help
start Texas A.A., wrote series of 6 article Houston Press which became AA's
first pamphlet "AA" (A 24) (B 295) (D 259) (L 141) (BB3 393u)

Lavelle K. - A.A., along with wife Emma K . cared for Dr. Bob & Annie last
years
855 Ardmore Avenue Akron (C 61) (D 17,272,289,317-8,329-30,333,339-43)

Lavigne, Dudley de - Englishman, husband of Felicia G (BB3 405u)

'Lawyer Barber' - lawyer in Bennington Vermont involved in Bill's parents
divorce (P 25)

Leary, Dr. Timothy - along with Richard Alpert brought LSD to national
attention
in 1961 (P 376-7n)

LeBerthon, Ted - prominent Los Angeles columnist, articles helped A.A. grow
(A
92)

Lee - wife Chuck , artist, 1st alcoholic arrive Los Angeles from East (A 92)

Leo F. - Los Angeles A.A. Group, instrumental bringing A.A. San Quentin (A
89)

Leonard - early New York A.A. (P 214)

Leonard H. - wife Helga H ., let Wilson's use apartment few months 72nd
Street &
Riverside Drive Manhattan; Leonard nonalcoholic trustee (L 127) (P 216)

'Lil' - 1st lady seek A.A. help, involved 1st 13th step with 'Victor' , got
sober outside A.A. (D 97-98,109,241)

Lillian - nickname 'Lily', Dr. Bob's receptionist nurse, husband was Everett
(C
124)(D 40,50) (BB3 179u)

Lillian R. - popular singer, went public 1940's, gave small A.A. enormous
boost
Australia (G 46)

Lincoln, Abraham - US president (H 260)

Lisa - her story "The Teen-Ager's Decision" in 3rd edition (BB3 353-55u)

Little Angel of A.A.'s - see "Ignatia \ Sister Mary Ignatia Gavin"

Little, Reverend George - Toronto minister credited introducing A.A. Canada
(A
84) (E 35)

Little Sister of Alcoholics Anonymous - see "Ignatia \ Sister Mary Ignatia
Gavin"

Lloyd T. - early Cleveland A.A.; joined AA in either 2/37 or 9/37; Dorothy
S.M.
called him to get help for Clarence S., stayed with Oxford group after A.A.
split, Clarence's sponsor, his story "The Rolling Stone" in 1st edition (D
143,167,218) (BB1 386-90)

Lois K. - 1 of original group publishing Grapevine (A 201)

Luke - early Chicago A.A. Earl T. worked with (A 22)

Lupton, Dr. Dilworth - Unitarian minister Cleveland's 1st Unitarian Church,
helped rapid growth A.A. Cleveland; tried sober up Clarence S.; gave sermon
November 1939 later reprinted as pamphlet by Cleveland Gp (A 20) (D
142,162,205,210) (N 84-85)

M., Dr. - 1 of 1st, if not 1st drunk Bill & Dr. Bob tried help, disappeared
A.A.
history (P 144)

M., Mrs. - wife of Alex (D 147)

Mac, 'Poor' - early New York A.A., members didn't think he'd make it -he did
(P
227,228)

McCarthy, Ray - 1st administrator Yale School Alcohol Studies (H 189)

McCormick, Austin - Commissioner of Corrections New York, Professor
Criminology
University California, penologist; served 2 terms trustee; nonalcoholic,
spoke
2nd Intentional Convention St. Louis 1955 (A 6) (L 57) (P 358)

Madeline V. - early Akron A.A. (D 283-5)

Maeve - 1 of original group publishing Grapevine (A 201)

Madonna - Felicia dreamed of having the putity of (BB3 400)

Mag V. - wife Bob V .; farm house Wilson's stayed fall 1939 with rooms called Upper & Lower Siberia, located Bog Hollow Monsey New York (A 11,179) (B 291) (L 122,127) (P 214,218)

Main, Florence - Oxford Group leader in Akron (D 157)

Manders, Dennis - long time non-alcoholic controller General Service Office; co-worker Nell Wing ; prophesied at St. Louis Convention Bill's final stepping down from A.A. leadership would take years; in charge taping April 1970 Conference where Bill couldn't finish speech (G 50,60,76,96) (H 157) (P 372-3,393,399)

Margaret D. - wife Herb D ., attended Tuesday night meetings Bill's house (P 162)

Margaret McP. - husband Mickey , ran drying out farm Ballston Spa New York, Ebby Thatcher stayed there in 60's, cared for by Margaret (L 118)

Marian - Tom P 's aunt whose table was refinished (P 280)

Marie B. - wife Walter B . Cleveland A.A.; (Akron records state wrote chapter in Big Book 'To Wives'); story "An Alcoholic's Wife" 1st edition Big Book story section (A 164) (D 152) (S 122) (BB1 378-379)

Markey, Morris - writer, "Alcoholics & God" article Liberty magazine September 1939 (A 17,87,176-177) (H 145,180) (L 116) (N 90) (P 223,224)

Marshall B. - early Los Angeles A.A. helped by Johnny Howe & Kaye M . (A 92)

Martin, Sarah - name in Jack Alexander 's March '41 Saturday Evening Post article used for Marty M.

Marty M. - 1 of 1st A.A. women achieve lasting sobriety, came meetings Bill & Lois's; Dr. Tiebout gave Multilith copy Big Book to her at Blythewood Sanitarium Greenwich Connecticut; started Greenwich group 1939; sponsored Nona W .; introduced Bill to Dr. Harry Tiebout chief psychiatrist Blythewood; with original group publishing Grapevine; founded National Committee Education

Alcoholism [N.C.E.A.] October 2 1944, later became National Council

Alcoholism

then National Council Alcoholism & Drug Dependence; Bill & Dr. Bob publicly endorsed NCEA, were named in letter head, 1946 solicitation letter for funds looked like A.A. & N.C.E.A. were linked together -impact 7th Tradition; 1943 attended newly founded Yale School Alcohol Studies, country's 1st such educational program; broke anonymity & Bill supported; Time magazine article 1944 on NCEA told her AA background; present 25th Anniversary 1960 Long Beach

California, her story "Women Suffer Too" in 2nd & 3rd edition (A 3,18,181,201)

(B 302-303) (E 72) (G 12-13,66) (H 100-1,189,369) (L 124,127,146) (N 118,126,417) (P 210-213,216,244,248,293,295,310-1,319-20,401) (S ix) (BB2 222-9u) (BB3 222-229u,413-4)

Mary M - wife of Dr. Earle M (BB3 351u)

Max - A.A.'s 1st German member (E 52)

Max O - Dr. Paul O 's wife (BB3 439-40,444-52)

Max R - Dick S drove trucks for (BB3 200)

Maxwell, Dr. Milton - chairman Emeriti with Dr. John (Jack) L. Norris International Convention Montreal 1985; member 1st Trustees' Archives Committee; non alcoholics trustee, chairman board; died 1988 (G 112,127) (N 273)

Maybelle 'May B' L. - wife Tom L., her and husband's story in 1st edition "My Wife and I" (D 120) (BB1 287-95)

Maynard B. - his story "Join the Tribe!" in 3rd edition (BB3 474-7u)

'Mayor Houde' - Montreal's major, supported A.A., threw party maybe 1st official reception any A.A. group received (A 85)

McC. - met Stewart's cafeteria after Oxford Group meetings (B 229-230)

McCormick, Robert - Felicia G 's cousin in Chicago (BB3 414u)

McKinnon, Arch - aided Dr. S.L. Minogue & Father Dunlea at Rydalmere Mental Hospital, Sydney (A 86)

Mel B. - Michigan A.A. (P 348)

Merced, Sister - looked after 2 bed ward St. John's Hospital Cleveland (A

20) (H
204)

Merle H. - wife Doctor Forest H ., Los Angeles A.A. (P 287-288)

Mickey McP. - wife Margaret ; had rest farm Ballston Spa near Schenectady
New
York; Ebby T . spent last 2 years life (G 99)

Midge M. - Bob H. 's administrative assistant; helped Nell Wing with
archives;
secretary Trustees' Archives Committee (G 126-127)

Mielcarek, Henry - corporate personnel expert; engaged Allis-Chalmers look
after
alcoholic problem; nonalcoholic, spoke 2nd Intentional Convention St. Louis
1955
(A 5) (P 358)

Mike - early Detroit A.A. Archie T . helped, assisted A.A. growth Detroit (A
24)

Mike R. - pioneer A.A. Oklahoma; chairman Trustee's Archives Committee;
initiated Markings On Journey 1979 (G 109-110,131)

Miles N., Dr. - 1 1st A.A.'s doctor members, prodigious A.A. worker &
national
authority on chemistry of drunks (A 95)

Millay, Edna St Vincent - poet (BB3 534)

Millie - Emily Wilson's sister (P 13)

Milotte, Mary - had influence Bill's boyhood, his teacher (B 42) (L 19,33)

Minogue, S. J. - Australian psychiatrist with Rydalmere Mental Hospital
Sydney,
late 1942 wrote G.S.O. (A 85)

Miriam - wife of Akron AA member, She and Annabelle G took Ethel M under
their
wing (BB3 269)

Money, Francis - boyhood acquaintance Bill's (P 47)

Montjoy, Mr. & Mrs. - vice president hotel organization (P 288)

Morgan, J.P. - very rich Wall Street man, Bill's hero (P 81)

summer 1939 - Charles ("C.J.") K. & Eddie B. 12 stepped Duke P. Toledo, both state insane asylum Toledo voluntary commitments, read Big Book manuscript, got out
Sept 1940 - AA group started in Toledo, Duke P & others started it.

Chicago

Sept 1939 - group started by Earl T in Chicago.

Rockland State Hospital

Dec 1939 - First AA group in mental institution, Rockland State Hospital, NY.

Los Angeles

Dec 1939 - 1st home meeting Los Angeles Kaye M.'s house

Detroit & Youngstown

1939 - Meetings being held in Detroit. Archie T. & nonalcoholic friend Sarah Klein helped start; expanded into Youngstown.

St. Louis

1939 - Father Ed Dowling responsible founding A.A. St. Louis

Greenwich Connecticut

1939 Marty M pioneered group at Blythwood Sanitarium

Philadelphia

Feb 1940 - Jimmy B. moved there & started group

Houston

April 1, 1940 - Larry J. of Houston, wrote "The Texas Prayer", used to open AA meetings in Texas. He is also said to have written the "Texas Preamble".

Little Rock

April 19, 1940 - The first AA group in Little Rock, Arkansas, was formed. First 'mail order' group.

Richmond, Va

June 6, 1940 - AA group founded in Richmond, Virginia.

Baltimore

June 13, 1940 - Jimmy B helped Jim R start group in Baltimore.

Ashtabula, Ohio

Dec 1940 - group started Ashtabula, Ohio due Plain Dealer articles.

Boston

1940 - Paddy K. founded A.A. Boston

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In my previous message I gave the address for the webmaster of the Tennessee (area 64) archives but failed to post the link to the site itself. For anyone interested in AA history, its worth a visit.

area64tnarchives.org

thanks
Jethro

|||||

+++Message 609. Big Book Stories Updated, AA
Grapevine July 1967
From: Lash, William (Bill) 10/16/2002 9:22:00 PM

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July 1967 AA Grapevine

Big Book Stories - Updated (1 of 5)

The Big Book of AA, Alcoholics Anonymous, was first published in 1939. A revised edition was published in 1955. Now, twelve years later, the Grapevine begins an exciting new series of articles, to appear every other month for as long as the articles hold out: Big Book Stories - Updated. On page 336 of the Big Book (2nd edition) appears "The Professor and the Paradox." Now the professor, from a vantage of another dozen years' sobriety, reflects on why he became alcoholic and why AA works for him:

MIRACULOUS IS THE WORD

I have tried hard not to be proud that my little narrative - "The Professor and the Paradox" - was included among the Personal Stories in the Revised (1955) Second Edition of the Big Book. Whenever I get too puffed up about it, I usually remind myself of an appropriate AA story I have told on several occasions. It concerns a young Canadian priest who was serving his church in northeast Canada, travelling about on snowshoes and dog sled, covering a territory about twice the size of Texas, and ministering to a total population of about twenty-eight people. After five years of this, his headquarters in Montreal decided he needed a short rest, and he was accordingly called home for a mild celebration. At the welcome banquet given in his honor when he arrived in Montreal, the master of ceremonies of course praised the young priest highly, and apparently overdid it. For later in the

evening when the banquet was over and the young priest had retired to his room, he was overheard saying his prayers. Here is what he was saying: "Dear Lord, please keep me humble, because I am a very great man."

There is at least one disadvantage in having one's story in the Big Book. Most of us in AA have basically only one story, and that one in the Big Book is mine. As the evening's speaker, before and since the Revised Edition was published, I have delivered that speech more or less word for word to many groups in many places, particularly in my own and a few neighboring states. Once after I had thus delivered it as part of a program at an AA State Convention out west where I was virtually unknown, I was standing alone among the crowd in the lobby of the convention auditorium and happened to overhear one man telling another about me: "That last speaker was a liar and a thief and a fake. He stole every word he said right out of a story printed in the Big Book!" In the rush of the crowd I never saw him again or got a chance to correct him as to my character.

In my original account of myself I described my advent into AA as a happening brought about by some forces at work that I did not - and still do not - understand. I knew only that something happened to me that had never happened before. At one time I thought I had simply made a decision instead of a mere alcoholic promise, but I discarded that idea in favor of assigning the cause to the guiding hand of God, following by my own attempt to take the Twelve Steps to Recovery. I ended by saying that "whatever it was that brought me in, I have been in AA and I have been dry ever since." Very fortunately, I can still say so.

I have often wondered why - precisely and exactly why - I got myself into the horrible alcoholic condition I was in when I joined our AA group. I am not sure that I have discovered this yet. Of course, the alcoholic has been variously and diversely defined. It has even been suggested that he simply does not know what he really wants, or always wants something that he doesn't have, and one of the humorous definitions of him illustrates this theory beautifully. An alcoholic (according to this definition, which I learned from a fine AA from Dallas) is a fellow who when he is rich wants to be poor, and when he is poor wants to be rich; when he is single he wants to be married, and when he is married he wants to be single; when he goes to a wedding he wants to be the bride; when he goes to the dinner table he wants to make love, and when he goes to bed he wants to eat!

But let us be serious. It is now generally recognized that alcoholism is a symptom of some deep-seated maladjustment of one's personality, a symptom of some emotional conflict which one has been unable to solve. For example, in my case (perhaps not in yours, but at any rate in mine), I am a self-centered person, very egotistical, and quite unreasonable in my demands upon other people (either actually or in my thoughts about them). I became so self-centered that I withdrew myself into a small circle which got smaller and smaller until there was no one in it but myself. There was no

real company there except my bottle. Next, I am 'emotionally immature," which I explain as being emotionally susceptible (far beyond the normal) to resentment, envy, fear, anxiety and grandiose day-dreaming. (Most alcoholics I know well are extremely affected by one or more or all five of these.) Then, I tried hard to be a perfectionist, and failed, of course, to advance to anything even remotely perfect. Finally, I was running away from something - perhaps from the reality of my situation.

These (self-centeredness, emotional immaturity, striving for perfection and running away), I think, are the chief personality traits which play havoc with the alcoholic's way of living. At least they seemed to do so with me. And they are difficult traits to get rid of. I haven't got rid of mine yet, but I have improved. I have improved to the extent that I no longer have to take a drink or a pill to overcome them.

Do not ever let anybody tell you that the AA program is easy to make. It isn't. That I am unmanageable and have personality weaknesses or shortcomings which can lead me to disaster was to me most unreasonable. It was very difficult for me to realize that the Twelve Steps, which looked so naïve at first, would succeed better than all my well-thought-out methods. That I was powerless over anything was a bitter pill to swallow. It was hard for me to keep 'an open mind" or do my part to let others 'live." It took a 'bottom" of considerable crisis to reduce me to personal helplessness so acute that I was ready for humility and surrender. And all of this was not attained by me by my simply walking into an AA meeting place.

The AA program and procedure has worked well for me and for a tremendous number of other people. Why does it work when other things fail? We don't know. We really don't know. We do have a lot of ideas. We know a great deal about drinking - its pleasure as well as its tragedies, its humorous side, the flimsy alibis, the hiding places, the degradation and helplessness of alcoholic's victims. Nevertheless, we don't really know precisely why AA works.

But we do know that we get a lot of help from continual association with our groups. We get a lot of help from the observations we can make there. We benefit from associating with excessive drinkers who stay sober, and this seems to have some sort of favorable psychological effect (so much so that one is tempted to speculate that sobriety among alcoholics is contagious). We benefit from association with excessive drinkers who do not stay sober, which seems to have favorable results too. We also sit around and take everybody else's 'inventory," until the thought strikes us that we had better take our own. But above all we learn to eliminate alcoholism by doing certain things which strike at the deep-seated causes of the malady, rather than simply taking away or shutting off the whiskey. We learn to change our self-centeredness, to stop running away from things we don't like, and to remove or at least adjust our emotional shortcomings.

We do these things by taking seriously and honestly our Twelve Steps, the nearest thing to a 'cure" for alcoholism that anybody has yet discovered. We learn that these Steps (over a sufficient period of time) will change our attitudes, change our thinking, change our personalities (if that be possible), change the inner man or woman into something it had not been before, and change our pattern of living into one we had not enjoyed in the past. We learn to do these things not by just memorizing the Steps (though that is a good idea), but by attempting to live and act them each day of our lives. And eventually, often when we least expect it, we discover that as a result of all this we are happy and contented and full of thanksgiving - something I once knew (or thought I knew) I could never be, without drinking.

Members of AA groups are full of miraculous changes like that. I am one of those fortunate ones who has had it happen to me. There are hundreds of thousands of others in AA today.

J.P., Kent, Ohio

THE PROFESSOR AND THE PARADOX

Says he, We A.A.'s surrender to win; we give away to keep; we suffer to get well, and we die to live.

I am in the public information business. I use that phrase or designation because if I say I am a college professor everybody always has a tendency to run the other way. And when they learn that I am a specialist in English, they have looks of horror for fear they are going to slip up and say ain't. I often wish I sold shoes or insurance or fixed automobiles or plumbed pipes. I would have more friends.

My story is not a great deal different from others - except in a few specific details. All the roads of alcoholism lead to the same place and condition. I suppose I have always been shy, sensitive, fearful, envious, and resentful, which in turn leads one to be arrogantly independent, a defiant personality. I believe I got a Ph.D. degree principally because I wanted to either outdo or defy everybody else. I have published a great deal of scholarly research - I think for the same reason. Such determination, such striving for perfection, is undoubtedly an admirable and practical quality to have, for a while; but when a person mixes such a quality with alcohol, that quality can eventually cut him almost to pieces. At least it did so to me. I began drinking as a social drinker, in my early twenties. Drinking constituted no problem for me until well after I finished graduate school at the age of thirty. But as the tensions and anxieties of my life began to mount, and the setbacks from perfection began to increase, I finally slipped over the line between moderate drinking and alcoholism. No longer would I drink a few beers or a cocktail or two and let it go at that. No longer did I let months or even weeks go by without liquor. And when

drinking, I entered what I now know was the dream world of alcoholic fantasy. Then for about five years of progressively worse alcoholic drinking, of filling my life and home with more and more wreckage, it looked as if I were going to ride this toboggan of destruction to the bitter end.

Maybe I didn't get as bad as some of the others. I must confess that I never went to teach one of my classes drunk or drinking, but I've been awfully hungover. My pattern was to be drunk at night, boil myself out to creep to work in the morning, drunk the next night, boil myself out in the morning, drunk again the next night, boil myself out the next morning. I may not have drunk as much whiskey as some, but there isn't anybody whose drunk any more Sal Hepatica than I have!

Now there are all kinds of drunks: melancholy drunks, weeping drunks, traveling drunks, slaphappy and stupid drunks, and a number of other varieties. I was a self-aggrandizing and occasionally violent drunk. You wouldn't think a little fellow like me could do much damage, but when I'm drunk I'm pure dynamite. I'm not going into any other details - the University can fire me yet!

I came to believe actually that life was not worth living unless I could drink. I was utterly miserable and sometimes desperate, living always with a feeling of impending calamity (I knew something was bound to 'break loose'). And to do away with such a fear, I would try a little more drinking, with the inevitable result - for by this time one drink would set up in me that irresistible urge to take another and another until I was down or hungover and in trouble. In the hungover stage I would vow never to touch another drop, and then be drunk the next night.

I knew at least that there had to be some changes made. I tried to change the time and place and amount of my drinking. I tried to change my environment, my place of living - like most of us who at one time or another think that our trouble is geography rather than whiskey. I even entertained the idea of changing wives. I tried to change everything and everybody, except myself---the only thing I could change.

I did not know that it was physically impossible for me to drink moderately. I did not know that my body's drinking machinery had worn out, and that the parts could not be replaced. I did not know that just one drink made it impossible for me to control my behavior and conduct and my future drinking. I did not know, in short, that I was powerless over alcohol. My family and my friends sensed or knew these things about me long before I did.

Finally, as with most of us in A.A., the crisis came. I realized I had a drinking problem which had to be solved. My wife and a close friend tried to persuade me to contact the only member of Alcoholics Anonymous we knew of in town. This I refused to do. But I agreed that I would stop drinking altogether, maintaining stoutly and sincerely that I could and would solve

this problem 'on my own.' I would feel much better doing it that way, I insisted. I stayed sober for two entire weeks! Then I pitched a lulu of a terrible drunken affair in which I became violently insane. I also landed in the City Jail.

I don't know exactly what happened on this bender, but here are some things that did happen which I was told about subsequently. First, the officers who had come out to my house did not want to take me in - but I insisted! Also, I insisted that they wait in the living room while I went back to the bedroom and changed into my best and newest suit (with socks and tie to match), so that I would look nice in jail! I don't remember the ride downtown, but when I came to the jail corridor, I didn't like the looks of the little cage they were shoving me into, so I took issue about that with three officers and indulged in some fisticuffs with all three of them at once--each one of them twice my size and armed with a gun and a blackjack. Now what kind of thinking and acting is that? If that isn't insanity, or absurd grandiosity, or some sort of mental illness, what is it? Because I yelled so loud and made so much noise, I ended up downstairs under the concrete in a place they call solitary. (That's a fine place now isn't it? for a college professor to spend the night!)

Two days later I was willing to try A.A., which I had only vaguely heard of a few months before. I called at the home of the man who started the A.A. group in my town, and I went humbly with him to an A.A. meeting the following night.

As I look back, something must have happened to me during those two days. Some forces must have been at work which I do not understand. But on those two days - between jail and A.A. - something happen to me that had never happened before. I repeat, I don't know what it was. Maybe I had made a 'decision' - just a part of Step Three (I had made lots of promises but never a decision) - though it seems to me that I was at the time too confused and fogged up to make much of one. Maybe it was the guiding hand of God, or (as we Baptists say) the Holy Spirit. I like to think that it was just that, followed by my own attempt to take the Twelve Steps to recovery. Whatever it was, I have been in A.A. and I have been dry ever since. That was more than six years ago.

A.A. does not function in a way which people normally expect it to. For example, instead of using our 'will power,' as everyone outside A.A. seems to think we do, we give up our wills to a Higher Power, place our lives in hands - invisible hands - stronger than ours. Another example: If twenty or thirty of us real drunks get away from home and meet in a clubroom downtown on Saturday night, the normal expectation is that all thirty of us will surely get roaring drunk, but it doesn't work out that way, does it? Or talking about whiskey and old drinking days (one would normally think) is sure to raise a thirst, but it doesn't work that way either, does it? Our program and procedures seem to be in many ways contrary to normal opinion.

And so, in connection with this idea, let me pass on what I consider the four paradoxes of how A.A. works. (A paradox, you probably already know, is a statement which is seemingly self-contradictory; a statement which appears to be false, but which, upon careful examination, in certain instances proves to be true.)

1. We SURRENDER TO WIN. On the face of it, surrendering certainly does not seem like winning. But it is in A.A. Only after we have come to the end of our rope, hit a stone wall in some aspect of our lives beyond which we can go no further; only when we hit "bottom" in despair and surrender, can we accomplish sobriety which

we could never accomplish before. We must, and we do, surrender in order to win.

2. We GIVE AWAY TO KEEP. That seems absurd and untrue. How can you keep anything if you give it away? But in order to keep whatever it is we get in A.A., we must go about giving it away to others, for no fees or rewards of any kind. When we cannot afford to give away what we have received so freely in A.A., we had

better get ready for our next "drunk." It will happen every time. We've got to continue to give it away in order to keep it.

3. We SUFFER TO GET WELL. There is no way to escape the terrible suffering of remorse and regret and shame and embarrassment which starts us on the road to getting well from our affliction. There is no new way to shake out a hangover. It's painful. And for us, necessarily so. I told this to a friend of mine as he sat weaving to and fro on the side of the bed, in terrible shape, about to die for some paraldehyde. I said, "Lost John" - that's his nickname - "Lost John, you know you're going to have to do a certain amount of shaking sooner or later." "Well," he said, "for God's sake let's make it later!" We suffer to get well.

4. We DIE TO LIVE. That is a beautiful paradox straight out of the Biblical idea of being "born again" or "losing one's life to find it". When we work at our Twelve Steps, the old life of guzzling and fuzzy thinking, and all that goes with it, gradually dies, and we acquire a different and a better way of life. As our shortcomings are

removed, one life of us dies, and another life of us lives. We in A.A. die to live.

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attend a meeting, I had read the Big Book three times. And I had studied several hundred times the pages containing the Twelve Steps and the suggestions on how to use them. They didn't seem easy to me -- they didn't even seem simple, in spite of the clarity of language. But I was eager to go to work on all of them, for they seemed to me the key to that which I so desperately needed: assurance that I would be able to stay away from drinking.

In 1968 I feel no different about the Twelve Steps. They did give me what I needed to stay away from drinking. Within a few years I came to realize they had given me far more than that: a glimpse at something I had never known -- peace of mind, a sense of being comfortable with myself and with the world in which I lived, and a host of other things which could be summed up as a sense of growth, both emotional and spiritual.

Always, to me, meetings have been important. They renew the inspiration I felt at my first one. They remind me of whence I came, and how near I will always be to that twilight world of drinking. Most of all, they bring me in contact with my friends and introduce me to new ones -- in my case, because I travel a lot, all over this country and outside of it. The feeling of warmth, of understanding, of acceptance and belonging that I get at a meeting is to me one of the great rewards of being in AA. It is a rare thing we have, which the nonalcoholic world rarely experiences. It makes me know how lucky we are.

In my working life, my personal life, and my spiritual life (which I last owe to AA, for I did not have it before), I find the Twelve Steps a nearly constant guide. I carry them in my wallet. I refer to them -- to particular Steps that meet a particular need -- with regularity.

The Serenity Prayer runs through my life like a litany; I find myself using it on a vast variety of occasions to meet a vast variety of problems.

Perhaps the greatest thing I have received (and still constantly receive) from AA is the knowledge of where and how to draw the strength and flexibility to meet problems. My life seems made up of problems, but I have learned that I am not unique, that life in general is just that. Problems and strain and stress are the stuff of life in our times, and my AA-given philosophy helps me to accept this and to live with it. Each day is a new one, and I try to meet it that way, as if each day I, too, were fresh and new. The 24-hour plan gave me this outlook, and each day it confirms me in my effort to make it real for myself.

Twenty-nine years later I feel as deeply immersed in AA thinking and the AA way of life as I did at the outset. For me it is increasingly necessary as I grow older. And it is always there for me, just as it has always been since I first found it. For this I daily thank God.

Marty M., Manhattan, New York

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+++Message 612. RE: affirmation - introductions
From: t 10/18/2002 7:52:00 AM

have a Twelfth Step case to work with (I never turn down a Twelfth Step case) and on my anniversary. I do not go out looking for Twelfth Step cases as a means of insuring my continuing sobriety. Yet I always tell my new friends and even casual strangers, when I am in their company and they are having a drink, why I do not drink: I am in AA. A friend has remarked that she considers me the alcoholic the least anonymous she ever heard of. This procedure has brought me more than a few Twelfth Step cases. Always it elicits inquiries and usually intense interest about the unorganized organization called AA. If there is this interest, I explain briefly my own experience before and after joining AA, smile, accept congratulations, secretly giving thanks inside myself for the philosophy I have hooked onto. For I am hooked on AA; that is the most certain thing I know. And it makes me happy to shoot arrows into the air.

I also believe that as soon as they are a bit competent in AA, the newcomers should carry the Twelfth Step work. That's how I got well - doing constant and intense Twelfth Step work, privately, in groups, and in hospitals. I did it for a number of years, joyously. Now when I acquire a new customer, as soon as it's sensible to do so, I transfer him to an AA member younger in AA than I am, and so (I am convinced) provide him with some of the help and opportunity he needs to better himself as well as the new candidate.

I keep liquor in my home and serve it to friends. I literally do not want any. It's no deprivation for me to act as bartender for everyone except myself. I go to cocktail parties early and leave early, before my friends and the other guests get silly and argumentative and boring. I have served my time paying back for the boredom I inflicted on others when I got drunk. Sometimes I pick up a Twelfth Step case at one of these parties.

Anyone tailing me as I move around the big city where I live might think me a liar and a hypocrite, for on occasion I go - alone - into a bar. The answer is simple: from the old, bad days I know where the washrooms are and, of course, when you gotta go, you gotta go. American cities are notoriously short of this kind of convenience; the most likely place always is in a bar.

My intent in writing such details is, hopefully, to reassure the candidate for AA who hesitates about coming to that first meeting or keeping on coming. Joining AA does not mean to me the taking of perpetual vows of abstinence through years that loom ahead bleakly. Of course this is why we have the twenty-four-hour plan. But even so, two years before I achieved sobriety in AA, a friend told me not to come near her again until I had been sober for ten years. I yelled, 'I'd rather be dead than face such a terrible future!' Her reply did not comfort me: 'Keep on as you are and you will be dead.' I knew that; but I did not know that in achieving sobriety in AA I'd also achieve the free-est kind of freedom, if freedom can be qualified. I would achieve the freedom of choice. I'd like all hesitant candidates to know that and to accept it: that they are not necessarily committing themselves to a life of bondage, however healing that bondage might be.

No one would be in despair because his body cannot handle strawberries. Well, my body just can't handle alcohol, that's all. It so happens I've had my gall bladder out and can't eat grapes, but that circumstance does not make me contemplate suicide. (The doctors assure me that my past drinking had nothing to do with the gall bladder trouble, for any possibly curious readers of this essay.)

Now, while I go to meetings only occasionally, I use AA daily, hourly, I might say every waking hour of my life. I have to deal with a lot of people. Frequently, I am in the position of being able to help them in many ways. Thanks to AA, I am more tolerant and, I hope, more understanding of others. A certain former impatience is minimized; I'm working on it. The sarcasm is replaced by - at least in intention - wit, or maybe just good humor, good nature. I hope I am easier to live with. And behind the anonymity of this essay, I will confess to a joy that approaches smugness in performing good deeds, also kept anonymous, if possible. You wouldn't think that at my age anyone could be so naïve? Ah, truly, it is more blessed to give than to receive. Let not your right hand know what your left hand doeth. Retire to a private place for your prayers. Bread cast on the waters, and so on. Believe me, it's all true. At least, it's true for me.

Selfishly, for me, the best is that I'm in command. No compulsion by anything drives me to actions that I don't really want to do, don't approve of, and know are wrong. I hope I am no less human for being dry, twenty-years-plus dry, in AA.

The bad old years, the years of suffocating in the deep morass of alcoholism, are years I could have used to good advantage had I not been trapped by this hideous disease. There were seven or eight years before I found AA - oh, how I could have used those years! But they were not wasted; they stripped me of everything, including self-respect; but they made me ready for the happiness of the last twenty years in AA.

Come on, man, join us! Be happy, too. All you have to do to change your life is change your mind.

E.B.R., Manhattan, N.Y.

HE WHO LOSES HIS LIFE

An ambitious playwright, his brains got so far
ahead of his emotions that he collapsed into suicidal
drinking. To learn to live, he nearly died.

I REMEMBER the day when I decided to drink myself to death quietly,

without bothering anyone, because I was tired of having been a dependable, trustworthy person for about thirty-nine years without having received what I thought was a proper reward for my virtue. That was the day, that was the decision, I know now, when I crossed over the line and became an active alcoholic. Perhaps a better way of saying it is that, on that day, with that decision, I no longer fought drinking as an escape. Rather, I embraced it-I must in honesty admit it-with a great sense of relief. I no longer had to pretend. I was giving up the struggle. Things weren't going as I thought they should, for my greater enjoyment, comfort and fame; therefore, if the universe wouldn't play my way, I wouldn't play at all. I, a man of steel, with very high ideals, well brought up, an honor student and the recipient of scholarships and prizes, a boy wonder in business-I, Bob, the author of this essay, looked and saw that the universe was beneath my contempt, and that to remove myself from it was the only thing of dignity a man could do. Since, perhaps, suicide was a bit too drastic (actually, I was afraid), dry martinis were chosen as the slow, pleasant, private, gradual instrument of self-destruction. And it was nobody's business, nobody's but mine. So I thought.

Within a month, the police, the hospital authorities, several kind strangers, most of my friends, all of my close relatives, and a few adepts at rolling a drunk and removing his wrist watch and wallet had been involved. (There was a time, for about three months, when I bought a ten-dollar wrist watch every pay day-that is, every two weeks. Since it was wartime, I explained to the somewhat startled shopkeeper that I had many friends in the service whom I was remembering with a watch. Perhaps, without realizing it, I was.)

On that day of decision, I didn't acknowledge that I was an alcoholic. My proud southern blood would have boiled if anyone had named me such a despicable thing. No, it can best be explained in a little phrase I coined and sang to myself: "What happened to Bob? Bob found alcohol!" And having sung that phrase, I'd chuckle with amusement, turning into irony turning into self-contempt turning into self-pity, at the sad fate of Bob, that wonderful, poor little motherless boy who was so smart in school and who grew up to accept responsibility so early and so fast and who staggered under his burdens without a whimper until the time came when he thought he was too good for this world and so he ought to be out of it. Poor Bob!

That was one aspect of it, and a true one. There were several others. There was loneliness. There was the necessity for sticking to a job I hated, a dull, repetitive job performed in association with other men I had nothing in common with . . . performed for years on end, because the money was needed at home. There was the physical aspect; to be the youngest and the runt of the brood of

children, to have to wear glasses very early and so to be teased, to be bookish and bored in school because the captain of the football team could not translate Virgil and yet was the school god while you, you, you little shrimp, were the school egghead, junior size and an early model.

There was the father one lost respect for at the age of eleven, because the father broke his solemn word in a circumstance where you, eleven years old, had assumed guilt when you were innocent but the father would not believe you, no matter what; and to ease his suffering you "confessed" and were "forgiven," only-months later-to have your "guilt" brought up-only he and you knew what he was talking about-brought up in front of the stern grandmother. The sacred word was broken and you never trusted your father again, and avoided him. And when he died, you were unmoved. You were thirty-five before you understood your father's horrible anguish, and forgave him, and loved him again. For you learned that he had been guilty of the thing he had accused you of, and his guilt had brought suffering to his entire family; and he thought he saw his young son beginning his own tragic pattern.

These things were all pressures. For by thirty-five I had been drinking for a few years. The pressures had started long ago. Sometimes we are told in AA. not to try and learn the reasons for our drinking. But such is my nature that I must know the reason for things, and I didn't stop until I had satisfied myself about the reasons for my drinking. Only, having found them, I threw them away, and ordered another extra dry martini. For to have accepted the reasons and to have acted on them would have been too great a blow to my ego, which was as great, in reverse, as my body was small.

In my twenties, I found Edna St. Vincent Millay's verse:

"Pity me the heart that is slow to learn
What the quick mind sees at every turn."

That couplet contains most of my reasons for drinking. There was the love affair which was ridiculous-"imagine that midget being able to fall in love!"-and my head knew it while my heart pumped real, genuine anguish, for it hurt like hell, and since it was first love, things have never been quite the same. There was the over-weening ambition to be the world's greatest author, when-at thirty-nine-I had nothing of importance to say to the world. There was the economic fear which made me too timid to take any action which might improve my circumstances. There was the sense of being "misunderstood," when as a matter of fact by my middle twenties I was quite popular, although I hadn't grown much bigger physically. But the feeling was a crutch, an excuse. It was my "secret

garden"-bluntly, it was my retreat from life, and I didn't want to give it up.

For a while, for a long time, we can endure the intellect's being ahead of the emotions, which is the import of Millay's couplet. But as the years go by, the stretch becomes unbearable; and the man with the grown-up brain and the childish emotions—vanity, self-interest, false pride, jealousy, longing for social approval, to name a few—becomes a prime candidate for alcohol. To my way of thinking, that is a definition of alcoholism; a state of being in which the emotions have failed to grow to the stature of the intellect. I know there are some alcoholics who seem terribly, terribly grown-up, but I think that they are trying to make themselves think they are grown-up, and the strain of their effort is what is causing them to drink—a sense of inadequacy, a childish vanity to be the most popular, the most sought after, the mostest of the most. And all this, of course, is, in the popular modern jargon, "compensation" for immaturity.

I wish I knew a short cut to maturity. But I wanted a cosmos, a universe all my own which I had created and where I reigned as chief top reigner and ruler over everyone else. Which is only another way of saying, I had to be right all the time, and only God can be that. Okay, I wanted to be God.

I still do. I want to be one of His children, a member of the human race. And, as a child is a part of his father, so do I now want to be a part of God. For always, over and above everything else, was the awfulness of the lack of meaning in life. Now, for me, and to my satisfaction, I know the purpose of life: The purpose of life is to create and the by-product is happiness. To create: Everyone does it, some at the instinct level, others in the arts. My personal definition, which I submit as applying only to myself (although everyone is welcome to it who wants it), includes every waking activity of the human being; to have a creative attitude towards things is a more exact meaning, to live and to deal with other human beings creatively, which to me means seeing the God in them, and respecting and worshipping this God. If I write with the air of one who has discovered the obvious, which is to say, the eternal truths which have been offered to us since the beginning, forgive my callowness; I had to find these things out for myself. Alas for us men toward whom Shaw hurled his cry, "Must a Christ be crucified in every generation for the benefit of those who have no imagination?"

My serious drinking covered about seven years. In those years I was in jail nine times, in an alcoholic ward, overnight, twice; and I was fired from three jobs, two of them very good ones. As I write these words, it seems incredible that these things should have

happened to me, for they are, truly, against all my instincts and training. (Well! I started to cross out that last sentence, but decided to let it stand. What a revelation of ego and arrogance still remaining in me-as if anyone, instinct and training apart, likes to be in jail or in an alcoholic ward or fired from his job. After nearly eight years of sobriety in A.A., I still can set down such thoughts, "against my instinct and training," showing that I still consider myself a "special" person, entitled to special privileges. I ask the forgiveness of the reader; and from now on I shall try to write with the humility I honestly pray for.)

A pattern established itself. I never was a "secret" drinker, and I never kept a bottle at home. I'd visit one bar after another, having one martini in each, and in each hoping to find some one interesting to talk to. Actually, of course, I wanted some one to listen to me, because when I had a few martinis inside, I became the great author I longed to be; and the right listener was in for some pretty highflown theories of literature and of genius. If the listener were drunk enough, the lecture might go on through several martinis, which I was glad to pay for. If he were still sober, chances are that very quickly I put him down as a Philistine with no appreciation of literary genius; and then I went on to another bar to find a new victim.

So it was that in alcohol I found fulfillment. For a little while, I was the great man I wanted to be, and thought myself entitled to be just by reason of being me. I wonder if ever there has been a sillier reason for getting drunk all the time. Sobering up, the mind that was ahead of the emotions would impel the question: What have you written or done to be the great man? This question so insulted the emotions that clearly there was only one thing to do, go and get drunk again, and put that enquiring mind in its proper place, which was oblivion.

Depending on the stage of drunkenness, eventually I either fought or went to sleep. Brandishing my "motto," which was "A little man with a stick is equal to a big man," sometimes I varied the literary lecture by a fight with a big man, selected solely because he was big and I was little. I bear a few scars on my face from these fights, which I always lost, because the "stick" existed only in my mind. So did the waterboy on the high school football team attempt to revenge himself on the big brother who was the star quarterback; for I was the waterboy and my brother was the star quarterback, innocent of everything except the fact that he was a star quarterback.

When sleep overtook me, my practice was to undress and go to bed, wherever. Once this was in front of the Paramount Theatre in Times

Square. I was down to my shorts, unaware of wrong-doing, before the ambulance got there and hauled me off to a hospital from which anxious friends rescued me, later that night.

Still another friend and temporary host received me at four in the morning from the charge of a policeman who had found me "going to bed" in a garage far from the last place I could remember having been, a fashionable bar and restaurant in the theatrical district of New York, to which I had repaired after my date for that evening, a charming lady of the theatre who had refused my company for obvious reasons. This time, whoever had rolled me had taken my glasses as well (they were gold). When the policeman released me to my stupefied and exasperated friend at four in the morning, I went to my traveling bag and groped until I found—well, let the officer speak: "Ah," said the policeman, "he's got anuder pair, t'ank God!" Thank you, Mr. Policeman, wherever you are now.

I mentioned that this friend was my temporary host. Need I add that such was the case because I had no money to provide a roof over my head? Still, I had had funds sufficient to get plastered because that, of course, was more important than paying my own way.

Once, or even twice, such incidents might be amusing. Repeated year on end, they are horrible-frightening and degrading; a chronicle of tragedy which may be greater because the individual undergoing the tragedy, myself, knew what was happening, and yet refused to do anything to stop it. One by one, the understanding friends dropped away. The helpful family finally said, over long distance, that there would be no more money and that I could not come home.

I say, "refused to do anything to stop it." The truth is, I did not know how to stop it, nor did I want to, really. I had nothing to put in the place of alcohol, of the forgetfulness, of the oblivion, which alcohol provides. Without alcohol, I would be really alone. Was I the disloyal sort who would turn his back on this, my last and truest friend?

I fled, finally, after having been fired from my war job by a boss who wept a little (for I had worked hard) as he gave notice for me to clear out. I went back home, to a job of manual labor where for a little while I was able to keep away from alcohol. But not for long; now, for five Friday nights in a row, I went to jail, picked up sodden with beer (which I always disliked, but which was the only drink available); in jail five consecutive Friday nights in the town where I had grown up, where I had been an honor student in high school, where a kindly uncle, bailing me out, said, "Bob, our family just doesn't do this sort of thing." I had replied, "Uncle, give the judge ten dollars, or I'll have to work it out on the county road."

I was in hell. I wandered, craving peace, from one spot to another of youthful happy memory, and loathed the man I had become. I promised on the grave of a beloved sister that I would stop drinking. I meant it. I wanted to stop. I did not know how. For by now I had been exposed once to A.A., but I had treated it as a vaudeville and had taken friends to meetings so that they too could enjoy the fascination of the naked revelation of suffering and recovery. I thought I had recovered. Instead, I had gotten sicker. I was fatally ill. A.A. had not worked for me. The reason, as I learned later, was that I had not worked for A.A. I left this home town, then, after I had made a public spectacle of myself in the presence of a revered teacher whose favorite pupil I had been. I could not face the boy and youth I was in the reality of the contemptible man I had become.

Back to the big city, for another year of precarious living, paid for largely by one or two friends I still had not milked dry or worn to exhaustion with demands on their bounty. I worked when I could-piddling jobs I thought them. I was not capable of anything better. I stumbled agonizedly past the theatre where in years gone by a great star had played my play. I had even borrowed money from her, over her protest: "Bob, please don't ask me to lend you money-you're the only one who hasn't." I took her money, though; I had to have it. It paid for a ten-day binge which was the end of my drinking days. Thank God that those days are gone.

On another small borrowed sum, I went up into the country to the home of a doctor I had known since boyhood. We worked in five below zero weather, fixing on an elm tree a wrought iron device which modestly proclaimed that he was indeed a country doctor. I had no money-well, maybe a dime-and only the clothes I stood in. "Bob," he asked quietly, "do you want to live or die?"

He meant it. I knew he did. I did not remember much of the ten-day binge. But I remembered the years of agony preceding the binge, I remembered the years I had thrown away. I had just turned forty-six. Maybe it was time to die. Hope had died, or so I thought.

But I said humbly, "I suppose I want to live." I meant it. From that instant to this, nearly eight years later, I have not had the slightest urge to drink. I chose to believe that the Power greater than ourselves we ask for help, wrapped my shivering body in loving warmth and strength which has never left me. The doc and I went back into the house. He had a shot of brandy against the cold and passed me the bottle. I set it down and made myself a cup of coffee. I have not had a drink of anything alcoholic since January 12, 1947.

Please do not think it ended so simply and so easily. Simply, yes,

it did end; for I had changed my mind about alcohol, and it stayed changed. But for the next years, I worked hard and exultantly in A.A. In the nearby little town there was a plumber who once had tried to get an A.A. group going. I went over and met him, and we two started the group up again. It is going strong still, these eight years later, and some of its members have been of great influence for good in state-wide A.A. work. I myself have been lucky enough to help out. I have had the joy of seeing many a human being, down and out, learn to stand straight again, and to proceed under his own power to happiness in life. I learned the true meaning of bread cast upon the waters.

There were debts totaling nearly ten thousand dollars to be paid off. They are almost paid; the end is in sight. I have been allowed to build an entirely new career in a field I had never worked in. I have published a book covering certain aspects of this field which has been well-reviewed and which is helping other people. I have been appointed to the faculty of my old school, to teach in my new field. All of my family and loved ones, all of my friends, are nearer and dearer to me than ever before; and I have literally dozens of new friends who say they cannot believe that a short eight years ago I was ready for the scrap heap. When I remark that I have been in jail nine times, and in an alcoholic ward twice, they think I'm kidding, or possibly dramatizing for the sake of a good yarn. But I know I'm not. I remember how horrible jails are, how dreadful a thing it is to be behind steel bars. I wish we did not have to have jails; I wish every one could be in A.A. and if every one were there would be no need for jails, in my opinion.

For I am happy. I thought I could never be happy. A happy man is not likely to do harm to another human being. Harm is done by sick people, as I was sick, and doing dreadful harm to myself and to my loved ones.

For me, A.A. is a synthesis of all the philosophy I've ever read, all of the positive, good philosophy, all of it based on love. I have seen that there is only one law, the law of love, and there are only two sins; the first is to interfere with the growth of another human being, and the second is to interfere with one's own growth.

I still want to write a fine play and to get it on. I'd gladly do it anonymously, as I have done this brief account of my struggle with alcohol—merely to present certain ideas for the consideration of the reader. I don't care too much about personal fame or glory, and I want only enough money to enable me to do the work I feel I can perhaps do best. I stood off and took a long look at life and the values I found in it: I saw a paradox, that he who loses his life does indeed find it. The more you give, the more you get. The less

you think of yourself the more of a person you become.

In A.A. we can begin again no matter how late it may be. I have begun again. At fifty-four, I have had come true for me the old wish, "If only I could live my life over, knowing what I know." That's what I am doing, living again, knowing what I know. I hope I have been able to impart to you, the reader, at least a bit of what I know; the joy of living, the irresistible power of divine love and its healing strength, and the fact that we, as sentient beings, have the knowledge to choose between good and evil, and, choosing good, are made happy.

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+++Message 616. "Chronology of AA Groups ... a question"
From: bigbookglenn 10/21/2002 3:38:00 PM

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Hello All!

New to group, with a question already! October 7th tcummings and Charles K exchanged postings on the chronology of AA groups, and I'm wondering where my hometown -- Louisville Kentucky -- may fit therein?

My understanding has been that Louisville was perhaps the 5th to 7th metro area AA came to beginning with the old Louisville Group meeting first at the Dairy Building(now gone)on Broadway in downtown Louisville. Established beginnings were purportedly through efforts by Jim McC, originally of Cleveland Ohio who sobered up via a trip to Dr. Bob in akron (Perhaps circa '37?), then went back to help group efforts in Cleveland, later to be transferred by his employer -- L&N Railroad -- to Indianapolis Indiana (Circa '38?), where he began work in putting together a starting group. Then, one last time, transfered to Louisville (Circa '39?); he again repeated his actions and efforts.

Much of this info came via review of local 'newsletters' of the early '50s era with interviews of oldtimers therein. Any insights into the accuracy of all above would surely be of interest and much appreciated. I'll look foward to responses. 'Til then.

"May the road always lead, whree you need to be."

With love of Fellowship,

- Cover changed to navy blue, some light blue.
- Gold lettering deleted from cover, remained on spine.
- Added Appendix II - Spiritual Experience, p399.
- Jacket spine and front flap has print number.
- Stayed at 400 arabic pages (8 roman)

2nd Printing cont.

- Added footnote "see Appendix II", p35, 38, 72.
- P25-L23, 80 of us to 500 of us.
- P25-L26, 40-80 persons to 50-200 persons.
- P63-L13, 100 people to Hundreds of People
- P72-L03, Spiritual Experience to Awakening.
- P72-L04, Result of These Steps to Those.
- P175-L23, Many Hundreds to 500.
- P234-L27, Typo corrected, 126 not repeated.
- P391-L01, Added "Now We Are Two Thousand."
- P397-L01, Moved "Foundation" here from p399.

1st Edition - 3rd Printing

- Title changed - "SIX THOUSAND MEN AND WOMEN."
- Personal stories remain the same thru 1:16.
- Cover changed to light blue.
- Reduced in thickness 1/8 and height 1/16.
- P25-L23, 500 of us to 1000 of us.
- P27-L01, 100 Men to Hundreds of Men.
- P26-L13, Sober 3years to sober 5 years.

- P264-L13, (no time) to sober 5 years.
- P281-L09, 9 months to past 4 years.
- P391, L01, Now we are 2,000 to 6,000.
- P392,L19, 3,000 letters to 12,000 letters.

3rd Printing cont.

- P393-L06, Increased 20 fold to 60 fold.
- P393-L12, 5,000 by 01/42 to 8,000 by 01/43.
- P393-L24, 9 Groups in Cleveland to 25.
- P393-L24, 500 members in Cleveland to 1,000.
- P393-L26, 1,000 Non-A.A. people to 2,000.
- P398-L03, Touching to Touching Nationally.

1st Edition - 4th Printing

- Title states "EIGHT THOUSAND MEN AND WOMEN."
- Cover changed to green, last 1,500 navy blue.
- Piv-L03, Post Box 657 to Box 658.
- P25-L28, Added foot note "Number of Localities for A.A."
- P27-L01, 100s of Men to 1000s of Men and Women.
- P59-L25, Added foot note "Please See Appendix II."
- P168-L03, 6 years ago to 8 years ago.
- P152- L02, have been there to has been there.
- P152-L22, The bank were doing to was doing.
- P391-L24, Religious content to spiritual.
- P393-L12, 8,000 by 01/43 to 10,000 by 01/44.
- P398-L09, Works Publishing Company to Inc.

- P398-L10, organized to originally organized.
- P398-L10, members to older members

4th Printing cont.

- P398-L11, Added 49 gave up stock.
- P398-L16, this book, to this book.
- P398-L16, send money to please send money.

1st. Edition - 5th Printing

- Title states "Ten Thousand Men and Women."
- Cover changed back to light blue, some navy.
- Last Big Book in size.
- Piv-L04, New York City to New York City (7).
- P25-L28, Foot note "A.A. now in 270 localities."
- P393-L06, Increased 60 fold to 100 fold.
- P393-L12, 10,000 by 01/44 to 12,000 by 01/45.
- P394-L14, Last 2 years to last 5 years.

1st. Edition - 6th Printing

- Title states "TEN THOUSAND MEN AND WOMEN."
- Cover changed back to Navy blue. (same as today).
- Reduced in thickness by 3/8 inch.
- Piv-L04, New York City (7) to (17).
- P397-L08, 4 non-A.A. Trustees to 8 non-A.A.
- P397-L10, 4 non-A.A. Trustees to 8 non-A.A.
- P398-L21, New York City(7) to (17).

1st Edition - 7th Printing

- Title states "FOURTEEN THOUSAND MEN AND WOMEN."
- Reduced in thickness 3/16 and width 3/8 inches.
- Pii-L01, Added "WARTIME PRINTING" notice.
- PivL02, Works Publishing Company to Inc.
- P1L13, six years ago to 1934.
- P07L29, 2 years ago deleted.
- P09L04, More than 3 years ago to many years.
- P25L28, Foot note "A.A. now in 385 Localities."
- P175L22, "Cleveland" footnote deleted.
- P264L18, 5 years since to in 1937
- P273L22, one year ago to long ago.
- P281L09, Past nine months to few years.
- P331L14, for 13 months to many years.
- P392L19, 12,000 letters to innumerable.
- P393L12, 12,000 by 1/45 to thousands a year.
- P397L07, Trustees to 4 A.A. Trustees.

1st Edition - 8th Printing

- Title states "FOURTEEN THOUSAND MEN AND WOMEN."
- Reduced thickness 1/4, width 1/16, height 1 inch.
- P11L01, Has "WARTIME PRINTING" notice.

1st Edition - 9th Printing

- Title states "THOUSANDS OF MEN AND WOMEN."
- Increased thickness 1/8, width 1/8, height 3/8 inches.
- P323L20, Two years to several years.

1st Edition - 10th Printing

- Title states "THOUSANDS OF MEN AND WOMEN."
- P154L30, Abberations to Aberrations.

1st Edition - 11th Printing

- Title states "THOUSANDS OF MEN AND WOMEN."
- Increased thickness 1/16, decreased height 1/8 inches.
- P28L22, Ex-Alcoholic to Ex-Problem Drinker.
- P30L06, Ex-Alcoholic to Ex-Problem Drinker.
- P178L20, Him to HIM.
- P271L16, Ex-Alcoholic to Ex-Problem Drinker.
- P272L06, Ex-Alcoholic to understanding
- P330L30, Ex-Alcoholic to Non-Drinker.

1st Edition - 12th Printing

- Title states "THOUSANDS OF MEN AND WOMEN."
- Decreased height by 1/16.

1st Edition - 13th Printing

- Title states "THOUSANDS OF MEN AND WOMEN."
- Reduced in width 1/16, height 1/8 .

1st Edition - 14th Printing

- Title states "THOUSANDS OF MEN AND WOMEN."
- Reduced in thickness 1/16.

1st Edition - 15th Printing

- Title states "THOUSANDS OF MEN AND WOMEN."
- Increased in height by 1/16.

create a unique fellowship that has brought hope and new life to millions around the world. I am part of that fellowship, and I was given the amazing grace to know this extraordinary man.

Twenty-five year ago, doctors told me I was going to die -- soon -- if I didn't stop drinking. But I couldn't face reality without copious quantities of vodka, followed by beer chasers.

As a young man, I had come to New York City from Kansas, carved out a career in public relations, married, had three children, and established a home in a fashionable Connecticut suburb.

On the outside, I looked prosperous, but inside I was tormented by feelings of inadequacy. When I was 40, an enormous swelling was diagnosed as advanced cirrhosis of the liver. I had been getting purplish bruises all over my body and suffered nosebleeds -- all typical of this kind of liver damage. Once, on a business trip, I couldn't stop vomiting blood and lost half of all I had. My life was saved with transfusions. But I couldn't stop drinking, even after I had another hemorrhage.

Finally, my physician gave up on me and sent me to Dr. Harry M. Tiebout, one of the few psychiatrists then practicing who were sympathetic toward Alcoholics Anonymous and who recognized alcoholism as a disease, not a character flaw. Tiebout suggested I go to A.A., but I was too far gone to quit drinking at that point, and so was committed to High Watch Farm in Kent,

Conn. There I took the first of AA's 12 steps; I admitted I was powerless

over alcohol, that my life had become unmanageable. On July 4, 1961, I joined the fellowship of A.A. and started a sober life.

Three years later when I volunteered to help A.A. with public relations, I met Bill W. He was a legend, and I was nervous as I entered his Manhattan office.

Bill was slouched in a chair, his feet up on a battered oak desk that was scarred with dozens of burn marks from cigarette stubs. When he stood he was about six feet, two inches -- slender and loose-limbed. He had a long face and sparkling blue eyes. He acted as if meeting me was the nicest thing that had happened to him in years. *I*m Bill,* he said, stretching out his hand. *I*m a drunk.*

I started mumbling how I owed him my life, and Bill, embarrassed, looked at the floor and said, *Just pass it on.*

In time, I became a voluntary trustee of A.A. and came into regular contact with Bill W. At conferences and board meetings, I often watched him seek out newcomers off in a corner. He knew the loneliness, the shyness and the insecurity of the alcoholic. *I*m Bill,* he*d greet them, just as he had me. *I*m a drunk* I never heard him use the word *alcoholic* when referring to himself.

Bill acted and seemed like an ordinary man. But he was an extraordinary ordinary man. It didn*t take me long to realize that everybody who knew him had wonderful stories to tell about Bill and his wife, Lois, who co-founded Al-Anon for the families of alcoholic. But nobody had a better story to tell than Bill himself.

He called it the *bedtime story.* I heard it first in 1966 at the office Christmas party, but he had been telling it for years. We had gathered for fruit punch, cookies and carol-singing. Then, as people sat on desks and chairs, there was an expectant silence. Bill had been standing by the punch bowl. Now, with a slithering, corkscrew motion, he settled on the floor and started to talk.

East Dorset, Vt., boasted fewer than 500 inhabitants when Bill W. was born there on November 26, 1895. He grew up in a home torn by arguments, which often led to Papa's going away for a few days. Bill felt that sense of some disaster lurking around the corner which many children of broken homes experience. It tormented him as he got older. When he was ten, his parents divorced and went their separate ways -- something almost unheard of in 1906.

Bill was left with his maternal grandparents.

To make up for his loneliness and feelings of inadequacy, Bill became an overcompensator. At age 12, he began to show drive, ambition, competitiveness. When his grandfather read a book about Australia and told Bill that only a native of that country could make a boomerang, Bill spent six months whittling until he arrived one that worked. Later, he saw that boomerang as a curse -- because it proved to his ego that he had the tenacity and will to be *number one* at anything -- music, sports, science. For example, he fixed a broken fiddle and practiced until he played first violin in the school orchestra. He was not a jock by nature, but he drove himself and became captain of the baseball team.

In nearby Manchester, a popular summer resort, Bill got to know Ebby Thatcher, from Albany. The two young men became lifelong friends. In 1913, two years after meeting Ebby, Bill met and fell in love with another summer visitor, a slim, dark-haired girl from a well-to-do Brooklyn, N.Y., family. Lois's love for Bill was as burning and constant as his for her, a love that was to survive the vicissitudes of all his years of alcoholism. But alcoholism was still far down the road.

Bill W. did not take a single drink of alcohol until he was a 22-year-old army officer stationed near New Bedford, Mass., during World War I. The shy young man from Vermont felt clumsy and out of place at social gatherings -- until someone gave him a Bronx cocktail, a mix of gin, sweet and dry vermouth, and orange juice.

The barrier, he said, sighing, *that had always stood between me and other people came down. I felt I belonged, that I was part of life. What magic there was in those drinks! I could talk and be clever.*

Unlike some alcoholics who go through a slow process of increasing dependency, Bill became a blackout drinker from the start. He was one of those persons in whom alcohol powerfully alters mind and emotion. The first drink sets up a craving for a second, and the drinker has absolutely no control if he takes the first.

Bill was careful to restrain his drinking when he was with Lois and her family. He and Lois were married before he was shipped to France as a second lieutenant in the Coast Artillery. There, he discovered fine burgundy and cognac. By the time the war was over in 1918 he had proved to himself again

that he was a *number one* man, a leader of men, a hero.

When Bill returned to the States, he and Lois lived with her parents. By day he worked as a fraud investigator for an insurance firm. At night he attended Brooklyn Law School. Soon he was fascinated by the stock market and became a successful analyst, speculator, and wheeler-dealer, with clients at several brokerage houses on Wall Street.

But Bill's drinking was taking over. He was too drunk to pass his final exam at Brooklyn Law. Any disappointment -- or success -- now became an excuse for getting drunk. And when Bill drank, he often became abusive and violent. He got into fights with waiters, cabdrivers, bartenders, strangers. In the morning after moods of guilt and remorse, he would swear to Lois that he would never drink again. By evening, he was drunk.

For a long time, Bill and Lois were able to delude themselves. They lived in a luxurious apartment, joined country clubs. As late as 1928, Bill was making thousands of dollars and drinking much of it away. Some mornings Lois found him dead drunk, asleep, outside the apartment house.

The stock-market crash in October 1929 wrecked whatever Bill's drinking had not. Deeply in debt, he and Lois again moved in with her parents. Lois got a job at Macy's. Bill now lived to drink, because he had to drink to live.

Like other alcoholics, told us, *I hid liquor like a squirrel underneath flooring, in the flush box of toilets. When Lois was out working, I'd replenish my secret supply. I was now drinking for oblivion -- two, even three bottles of gin a day.*

By 1932, Bill had begun to fear for his sanity. *Once, in a drunken fit,* he

said, *I threw a sewing machine at Lois -- my dear Lois. Another time I got mad at her and stormed through the house kicking out door panels, smashing walls with my fists. I remember a night when I was in such hell that I was afraid the demons inside me would propel me through the window. I dragged my mattress downstairs so I couldn*t suddenly leap out.*

By midsummer of 1934, Bill entered New York city*s Charles B. Towns Hospital,

which specialized in the treatment of alcoholism. Most people regarded alcoholics as persons who lacked willpower, character and oral discipline.

But Bill*s doctor at Towns, William Duncan Silkworth, was one of the few medical men to conclude that alcoholism is a sickness. He told Lois that not many alcoholics as far down the slops as Bill was ever recovered. He was already showing signs of brain damage. Bill would have to be confined for the rest of his life.

But Bill looked so robust after the treatment that he went home. This time he stayed sober for several months. However the morning following Armistice Day, Lois found him in a stupor, hanging on the fence outside the house.

They looked at each other and Bill saw the last gleam of hope dying in her eyes. He knew he was doomed. Well, so be it, he thought. He reigned himself. As long as I have my gin.

Not long afterward, Ebby Thatcher, Bill*s old friend and fellow drinker, phoned. What a strange coincidence: (We in A.A. say that a coincidence is a miracle in which God chooses to remain anonymous.) Bill invited him over.

How good it would be to share a few with his former drinking buddy.

Soon the doorbell rang. There stood Ebby -- clear of eye and clean of

breath.

*What*s gotten into you, Ebby?* Bill asked.

Ebby grinned and replied, *I*ve got religion.*

So Ebby had become a starry-eyed crackpot. *I figured he*d start preaching at me,* Bill recalled. *He didn*t, He just told me how his drinking had gotten out of hand, how he*d been in trouble with the law, and how a couple of friends had given him a place to live.* One of them, Roland Hazard, a hopeless drunk, had been in and out of sanitariums for years. He finally went to Carl Jung, the Swiss Psychoanalyst. Was there no hope? Rowland asked.

Yes, Jung had said. In rare instances alcoholics had powerful spiritual experiences, *emotional displacements and rearrangements,* which suddenly turned them around. Jung had tried for such a change in Rowland and failed.

But one day Rowland attended a meeting of an organization called the Oxford Group -- where people gathered to talk about their shortcomings and to follow

certain precepts. There Rowland experienced a profound change of emotions and found a direct contact with God. He stopped drinking.

When Rowland told his story to Ebby in Vermont, the first link in the chain of what would become Alcoholics Anonymous was forged. And now Ebby was carrying the message to Bill.

Ebby told me he had to admit he was licked, Bill said. *He had to openly admit his sin, make restitution to people he had harmed, and give love without a price tag. He had to pray to whatever God he believed in -- and if he didn*t believe in a God, to act as if he did. Ebby told me he hadn*t had

a drink for six months.

*A couple of weeks later, after another bender, I went back to Towns Hospital

and checked myself in. Ebby came to see me. Get honest with yourself, he said. Talk it out with somebody else. But I didn*t want any part of this God foolishness. Pray to whatever God you think is out there, Ebby said.

That*s all there was to it.*

During one more sleepless night, Bill fell to the *very bottom,* and *my stubborn pride was wiped out* He called out, *If there is a God, let him show

himself! I am ready to do anything!*

Suddenly, the hospital room *Lit up with a great white light.* A strange ecstasy flooded through him. *A wind not of air but of spirit was blowing,* was how he described it. *I felt at peace ... and I thought, No matter how wrong things seem to be things are all right with God and his world.*

Bill was discharged on December 18, 1934. He never took another drink of alcohol. But he was always at pains to reassure us that most alcoholics did not have sudden blinding experiences like his. Most of us found a God, a higher power of our own, very slowly.

In the beginning months of his own sobriety, Bill pulled drunks out of bars and took them to Oxford Group meetings. He preached at them. Nobody stayed sober. He tried to talk WITH drunks, not AT them, and to stress the hopelessness of the disease.

Bill was getting a foothold in Wall Street again, but on a business trip to Akron, Ohio, he felt a strong urge to drink. In his hotel lobby, eh looked

at the directory of churches, selected one at random, and made a call. Was there any hopeless drunk he could talk to, he asked the minister. That led to a surgeon, Dr. Robert Smith -- Dr. Bob, as he is known to us -- a desperate alcoholic who had tried to stop drinking and couldn't.

The two men talked for hours. Bill didn't preach or exhort. He quietly told his story, and the urge to drink passed. And, after one final binge, something happened to Dr. Bob. On June 10, 1935, he took his last drink.

Alcoholics Anonymous -- although it did not have a name -- began that day. Before long, Bill was holding meetings at his home and eventually at a place on West 23rd Street. In 1938 he wrote a 164-page manuscript entitled **Alcoholics Anonymous.** And that's how our fellowship got its name. That year the book sold few copies. But the fellowship now began to grow slowly.

The first national publicity A.A. received came from an article in the magazine LIBERTY which brought 800 letters and several hundred orders for Bill W's book.

The article led to a piece in THE SATURDAY EVENING POST published in March 1941 and entitled **Alcoholics Anonymous.** It created a sensation, and groups sprang up from Maine to California -- many just based on some desperate person's reading the book and trying to put its principles into practice.

Now translated into 13 languages, the book sold over 700,000 copies in 1985, more than five million in all. And that group Bill started in Brooklyn in 1935 has now grown to approximately 35,000 groups in the United States, and 70,000 worldwide.

That was the story that Bill W. told to us each year at A.A. headquarters.

Grapevine, December 1947

Tradition One

Our whole AA program is securely founded on the principle of humility -- that is to say, perspective. Which implies, among other things, that we relate ourselves rightly to God and to our fellows; that we each see ourselves as we really are -- "a small part of a great whole." Seeing our fellows thus, we shall enjoy group harmony. That is why AA Tradition can confidently state, "Our common welfare comes first."

"Does this mean," some will ask, "that in AA the individual doesn't count too much? Is he to be swallowed up, dominated by the group?"

No, it doesn't seem to work out that way. Perhaps there is no society on earth more solicitous of personal welfare, more careful to grant the individual the greatest possible liberty of belief and action. Alcoholics Anonymous has not "musts." Few AA groups impose penalties on anyone for nonconformity. We do suggest, but we don't discipline. Instead, compliance or noncompliance with any principle of AA is a matter for the conscience of the individual; he is the judge of his own conduct. Those words of old time, "judge not," we observe most literally.

"But," some of us argue, "if AA has no authority to govern its individual members or groups, how shall it ever be sure that the common welfare does come first? How is it possible to be governed without a government? If everyone can do as he pleases, how can you have aught but anarchy?"

The answer seems to be that we AAs cannot really do as we please, though there is no constituted human authority to restrain us. Actually, our common welfare is protected by powerful safeguards. The moment any action seriously threatens the common welfare, group opinion mobilizes to remind us; our conscience begins to complain. If one persists, he may become so disturbed as to get drunk; alcohol gives him a beating. Group opinion shows him that he is off the beam, his own conscience tells him that he is dead wrong, and, if he goes too far, Barleycorn brings him real conviction.

So it is we learn that in matters deeply affecting the group as a whole, "our common welfare comes first." Rebellion ceases and cooperation begins because it must; we have disciplined ourselves.

Eventually, of course, we cooperate because we really wish to; we see that without AA there can be little lasting recovery for anyone. We gladly set aside personal ambitions whenever these might harm AA. We humbly confess that we are but "a small part of a great whole."

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slides, we are finding we have little need for manmade rules or regulations. Despite the fact that we do veer off at times on tangents, we are becoming more able to depend absolutely on the long-term stability of the AA group itself. With respect to its own affairs, the collective conscience of the group will, given time, almost surely demonstrate its perfect dependability. The group conscience will, in the end, prove a far more infallible guide for group affairs than the decision of any individual member, however good or wise he may be. This is a striking and almost unbelievable fact about Alcoholics Anonymous. Hence we can safely dispense with those exhortations and punishments seemingly so necessary to other societies. And we need not depend overmuch on inspired leaders. Because our active leadership of service can be truly rotating, we enjoy a kind of democracy rarely possible elsewhere. In this respect, we may be, to a large degree, unique.

Therefore we of Alcoholics Anonymous are certain that there is but one ultimate authority, "a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience."

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+++Message 631. TRADITION THREE AA Grapevine,
February 1948
From: NMOlson@aol.com 10/27/2002 8:08:00 AM

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Grapevine, February 1948

Tradition Three

The Third Tradition is a sweeping statement indeed; it takes in a lot of territory. Some people might think it too idealistic to be practical. It tells every alcoholic in the world that he may become, and remain, a member of Alcoholics Anonymous so long as he says so. In short, Alcoholics Anonymous has no membership rule.

Why is this so? Our answer is simple and practical. Even in self-protection, we do not wish to erect the slightest barrier between ourselves and the fellow alcoholic who still suffers. We know that society has been demanding that he conform to its laws and conventions. But the essence of his alcoholic malady is the fact that he has been unable or unwilling to conform either to the laws of man or God. If he is anything, the sick alcoholic is a rebellious nonconformist. How well we understand that; every member of Alcoholics Anonymous was once a rebel himself. Hence we cannot offer to meet

But how shall this simple ideal best be realized? Often a question, that.

We have, for example, the kind of AA who is for simplicity. Terrified of anything organized, he tells us that AA is getting too complicated. He thinks money only makes trouble, committees only make dissension, elections only make politics, paid workers only make professionals, and clubs only coddle slippers. Says he, let's get back to coffee and cakes by cozy firesides. If any alcoholics stray our way, let's look after the. But that's enough. Simplicity is our answer.

Quite opposed to such halcyon simplicity is the AA promoter. Left to himself, he would "bang the cannon and twang the lyre" at every crossroad of the world. Millions for drunks, great AA hospitals, batteries of paid organizer, and publicity experts wielding all the latest paraphernalia of sound and script; such would be our promoters dream. "Yes, sir," he would bark. "My two-year plan calls for one million AA members by 1950!"

For one, I'm glad we have both conservatives and enthusiasts. They teach us much. The conservative will surely see to it that the AA movement never gets overly organized. But the promoter will continue to remind us of our terrific obligation to the newcomer and to those hundreds of thousands of alcoholics still waiting all over the world to hear of AA.

We shall, naturally, take the firm and safe middle course. AA has always violently resisted the idea of any general organization. Yet, paradoxically, we have ever stoutly insisted upon organizing certain special services; mostly those absolutely necessary to effective and plentiful Twelfth Step work.

If, for instance, an AA group elects a secretary or rotating committee, if an area forms an intergroup committee, if we set up a foundation, a general office or a Grapevine, then we are organized for service. The AA book and pamphlets, our meeting places and clubs, our dinners and regional assemblies -- these are services, too. Nor can we secure good hospital connections, properly sponsor new prospects, and obtain good public relations just by chance. People have to be appointed to look after these things, sometimes paid people. Special services are performed.

But by none of these special services has our spiritual or social activity, the great current of AA, ever been really organized or professionalized. Yet our recovery program has been enormously aided. While important, these service activities are very small by contrast with our main effort.

As such facts and distinctions become clear, we shall easily lay aside our fears of blighting organization or hazardous wealth. As a movement, we shall remain comfortably poor, for our service expenses are trifling.

With such assurances, we shall without doubt continue to improve and extend

our vital lifelines of special service; to better carry our AA message to others; to make for ourselves a finer, greater Society, and, God willing, to assure Alcoholics Anonymous a long life and perfect unity.

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+++Message 638. TRADITION TEN AA Grapevine, September 1948

From: NMOlson@aol.com 10/29/2002 2:02:00 AM

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Grapevine, September 1948

Tradition 10

To most of us, Alcoholics Anonymous has become as solid as the Rock of Gibraltar. We like to believe that it will soon be as well known and just as enduring as that historic landmark. We enjoy this pleasant conviction because nothing has yet occurred to disturb it; we reason that we must hang together or die. Hence we take for granted our continued unity as a movement.

But should we? Though God has bestowed upon us great favors, and though we are bound by stronger ties of love and necessity than most societies, is it prudent to suppose that automatically these great gifts and attributes shall be ours forever? If we are worthy, we shall probably continue to enjoy them. So the real question is, how shall we always be worthy of our present blessings?

Seen from this point of view, our AA Traditions are those attributes and practices by which we may deserve, as a movement, a long life and a useful one. To this end, none could be more vital than our Tenth Tradition, for it deals with the subject of controversy -- serious controversy.

On the other side of the world, millions have died even recently in religious dissension. Other millions have died in political controversy. The end is not yet. Nearly everybody in the world has turned reformer. Each group, society, and nation is saying to the other, "You must do as we say, or else." Political controversy and reform by compulsion have reached an all-time high. And eternal, seemingly, are the flames of religious dissension.

Being like other men and women, how can we expect to remain forever immune

this purpose wishes to let every alcoholic in the world know that AA is truly for him, can he only want his liberation enough. Hence, our messages through public channels have never been seriously discolored, nor has the searing breath of prejudice ever issued from anywhere.

Good public relations are AA lifelines reaching out to the alcoholic who still does not know us. For years to come, our growth is sure to depend upon the strength and number of these lifelines. One serious public relations calamity could always turn thousands away from us to perish -- a matter of life and death indeed!

The future poses no greater problem or challenge to AA than how best to preserve a friendly and vital relation to all the world about us. Success will rest heavily upon right principles, a wise vigilance, and the deepest personal responsibility on the part of every one of us. Nothing less will do. Else our brother may again turn his face to the wall because we did not care enough.

So the Eleventh Tradition stands sentinel over the lifelines, announcing that there is no need for self-praise, that it is better to let our friends recommend us, and that our whole public relations policy, contrary to usual customs, should be based upon the principle of attraction rather than promotion. Shot-in-the-arm methods are not for us -- no press agents, no promotional devices, no big names. The hazards are too great. Immediate results will always be illusive because easy shortcuts to notoriety can generate permanent and smothering liabilities.

More and more, therefore, are we emphasizing the principle of personal anonymity as it applies to our public relations. We ask of each other the highest degree of personal responsibility in this respect. As a movement we have been, before now, tempted to exploit the names of our well-known public characters. We have rationalized that other societies, ever the best, do the same. As individuals, we have sometimes believed that the public use of our names could demonstrate our personal courage in the face of stigma, so lending power and conviction to new stories and magazine articles.

But these are not the allures they once were. Vividly, we are becoming aware that no member sought to describe himself in full view of the general public as an AA, even for the most worthy purpose, lest a perilous precedent be set which tempt others to do likewise for purposes not so worthy.

We see that on breaking anonymity by press, radio, or pictures, any one of us could easily transfer the valuable name of Alcoholics Anonymous over onto any enterprise into the midst of any controversy.

So it is becoming our code that there are things that no AA ever does, lest he divert AA from its sole purpose and injure our public relations. And thereby the chances of those sick ones yet to come.

a rich experience. Little by little we have been adopting the lessons of that experience, first as policy and then as Tradition. That process still goes on and we hope it never stops. Should we ever harden too much, the letter might crush the spirit. We could victimize ourselves by petty rules and prohibitions; we could imagine that we had said the last word. We might even be asking alcoholics to accept our rigid ideas or stay away. We never stifle progress like that!

Yet the lessons of our experience count for a great deal -- a very great deal, we are each convinced. The first written record of AA experience was the book "Alcoholics Anonymous." It was addressed to the heart of our foremost problem -- release from the alcohol obsession. It contained personal experiences of drinking and recovery and a statement of those divine but ancient principles, which have brought us a miraculous regeneration. Since publication of "Alcoholics Anonymous" in 1939 we have grown from 100 to 24,000 members. Seven years have passed; seven years, of vast experience with our next greatest undertaking -- the problem of living and working together. This is today our main concern. If we can succeed in this adventure -- and keep succeeding -- then, and only then, will our future be secure.

Since personal calamity holds us in bondage no more, our most challenging concern has become the future of Alcoholics Anonymous; how to preserve among us AAs such a powerful unity that neither weakness of persons nor the strain and strife of these troubled times can harm our common cause. We know that Alcoholics Anonymous must continue to live. Else, save few exceptions, we and our fellow alcoholics throughout the world will surely resume the hopeless journey to oblivion.

Almost any AA can tell you what our group problems are. Fundamentally they have to do with our relations, one with the other, and with the world outside. They involve relations of the AA to the group, the relation of the group to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole, and the place of Alcoholics Anonymous in that troubled sea called modern society, where all of humankind must presently shipwreck or find haven. Terribly relevant is the problem of our basic structure and our attitude toward those ever pressing questions of leadership, money, and authority. The future way we will depend on how we feel and act about things that are controversial and how we regard our public relations. Our final destiny will surely hang upon what we presently decide to do with these danger-fraught issues!

Now comes the crux of our discussion. It is this: Have we yet acquired sufficient experience to state clear-cut policies on these, our chief concerns? Can we now declare general principles which could grow into vital Traditions -- Traditions sustained in the heart of each AA by his own deep conviction and by the common consent of his fellows? That is the question. Though full answers to all our perplexities may never be found, I'm sure we have come at least to a vantage point whence we can discern the main

outlines of a body of Tradition; which, God willing, can stand as an effective guard against all the ravages of time and circumstance.

Acting upon the persistent urge of old AA friends, and upon the conviction that general agreement and consent between our members is now possible, I shall venture to place in words these suggestions for an Alcoholics Anonymous Tradition of Relations -- Twelve Points to Assure Our Future.

Our AA experience has taught us that:

1. Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. AA must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.
 2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority -- a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience.
 3. Our membership ought to include all who suffer alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought AA membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an AA group.
 4. With respect to its own affairs, each AA group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect AA as a whole without conferring with the trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation [now the General Service Board]. On such issues our common welfare is paramount.
 5. Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose -- that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
 6. Problems of money, property and authority may easily divert us from our primary spiritual aim. We think, therefore, that any considerable property of genuine use to AA should be separately incorporated and managed, thus dividing the material from the spiritual. An AA group, as such, should never go into business. Secondary aids to AA such as clubs or hospitals which require much property or administration, ought to be so set apart that, if necessary, they can be freely discarded by the groups. The management of these special facilities should be the sole responsibility of those people, whether AAs or not, who financially support the. For our clubs, we prefer AA managers. But hospitals, as well as other places of recuperation, ought to be well outside AA -- and medically supervised. An AA group may cooperate with anyone, but should bind itself to no one.
- . The AA groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary

contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous; that acceptance of large gifts from any source or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever is usually unwise. Then, too, we view with much concern those AA treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated AA purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non professional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counseling alcoholics for fee or hire. But we may employ alcoholics where they are going to perform those full-time services for which we might otherwise have to engage nonalcoholics. Such special services may be well recompensed. But personal Twelfth Step work is never to be paid for.

9. Each AA group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is usually the best. The small group may elect its secretary, the larger group its rotating committee, and the groups of a large metropolitan area their central committee, which often employs a full time secretary. The trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation are, in effect, our general service committee. They are the custodians of our AA Tradition and the receivers of voluntary AA contributions by which they maintain AA general Headquarters and our general secretary at New York. They are authorized by the groups to handle our overall public relations and they guarantee the integrity of our principal publication, the AA Grapevine. All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in AA are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles, Universal respect is the key to their usefulness.

10. No AA group or members should ever, in such a way as to implicate AA, express any opinion on outside controversial issues -- particularly those of politics, alcohol reform or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters they can express no views whatever.

11. Our relations with the outside world should be characterized by modesty and anonymity. We think AA ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.

12. And finally, we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a truly humble modesty. 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.

May it be urged that while these principles have been stated in rather positive language they are still only suggestions for our future. We of Alcoholics Anonymous have never enthusiastically responded to any assumption of personal authority. Perhaps it is well for AA that this is true. So I offer these suggestions neither as one man's dictum nor as a creed of any kind, but rather as a first attempt to portray that group ideal toward which we have assuredly been led by a Higher Power these ten years past.

P.S. To help free discussion I would like to amplify the Twelve Points of Tradition in future Grapevine pieces.

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+++Message 642. Traditions Stressed in Memphis Talk
Grapevine, October 1947
From: NMOlson@aol.com 10/30/2002 3:41:00 AM

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Grapevine, October 1947

Traditions Stressed in Memphis Talk

Urging all members of Alcoholics Anonymous to strive for humility before success and for unity before fame, Bill W, speaking before the third annual Southeastern Regional Convention in Memphis, Tennessee, on September 19, reviewed the Twelve suggested Traditions for the organization.

Pointing out that the success of AA could be "heady wine and a serious problem", Bill reminded members that as alcoholics "we are a people who could not exist at all except for the grace of God."

Here are the highlights of the talk as given to the AA Grapevine in advance of the Memphis meeting:

"Some years ago, Dr. Bob and I, among others, did a lot of traveling and speaking at AA groups the length and breadth of the country. Alcoholics Anonymous was just starting its astonishing growth. There was concern whether we could successfully expand so fast. Widely separated clusters of AAs were making their uncertain start, often too far from the original few groups to get much direct help. Many had to rely wholly on literature and letters.

"To meet this seeming emergency, the few of us who could do so got out among the new groups. We wanted to bring our experience and encouragement directly to the incoming thousands who were still unsure; we wanted them to feel a part of the growing whole; we wanted them to see that AA had nothing to do with geography; that it would work for them under any conditions whatever. We wished to foster a sound growth and the spirit of unity. So a few of us traveled much.

"Times have changed. As everyone knows, AA has since exceeded our wildest expectations. Speaking for Dr. Bob and myself, we feel that we oldsters need not take the prominent roles we once did. AA leadership is becoming, happily and healthily, a rotating matter. And besides, our literature, a generous press, and thousands of new travelers are carrying AA to every corner of the world.

"Yet there does remain a problem -- a serious problem, in whose solution AAs will expect us oldsters to occasionally take a hand. That is the problem of success itself. Always a heady wine, success may sometimes cause us to forget that each of us lives on borrowed time; we may forget that we are a people who cannot exist at all, but for the grace of God. The wine of forgetfulness might make us dream that Alcoholics Anonymous was our success rather than God's will. The very malignancy which once tore us apart personally could again commence to rend us as groups. False pride might lead us to controversy, to claims of power and prestige, to bickerings over property, money, and personal authority. We would not be human if these illnesses didn't sometimes attack us.

"Therefore, many of us think today the main problem of Alcoholics Anonymous is this: How, as a movement, shall we maintain our humility -- and so our unity -- in the face of what the world calls a great triumph? Perhaps we need not look far afield for an answer. We need only adapt and apply to our group life those principles upon which each of us has founded his own recovery. If humility can expel the obsession to drink alcohol, then surely humility can be our antidote for that subtle wine called success."

Bill then went on to explain in detail the Twelve Points of Tradition, first printed in an article in the April 1946 issue of the AA Grapevine: "Two years ago my old friends urged that I try to sum up our experience of living and working together; that I try to state those definite principles of group conduct which had then quite clearly emerged from a decade of strenuous trial and error. In the spirit of our original Twelve Steps, and strictly within the ample proof's of our experience. I made the following tentative attempt; Twelve Points to Assure Our Future, an Alcoholics Anonymous Tradition of Relations (recently revised in the light of later experience).

"Our AA experience has taught us that"

"1. Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. AA must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

"2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority -- a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience.

"3. Our membership ought to include all who suffer alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought AA membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an AA group, provided, of course, that as a group, they have no other affiliation.

"4. With respect to its own affairs, each AA group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect AA as a whole without conferring with the trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation. On such issues our common welfare is paramount.

"5. Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose -- that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

"6. Problems of money, property, and authority may easily divert us from our primary spiritual aim. We think, therefore, that any considerable property of genuine use to AA should be separately incorporated and managed, thus dividing the material from the spiritual. An AA group, as such should never go into business. Secondary aids to AA, such as clubs or hospitals which require much property or administration, ought to be incorporated and set apart that, if necessary, they can be freely discarded by the groups. Hence, such facilities ought not to use the AA name. Their management should be the sole responsibility of those people who financially support them. For clubs, AA managers are usually preferred. But hospitals, as well as other places of recuperation, ought to be well outside AA -- and medically supervised. While an AA group may cooperate with anyone, such cooperation ought never go so far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied. An AA group can bind itself to no one.

"7. AA groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source or contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then, too, we view with much concern those AA treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for on stated AA purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our

spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

"8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non professional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counseling alcoholics for fees or hire. But we may employ alcoholics where they are going to perform those services for which we might otherwise have to engage nonalcoholics. Such special services may be well recompensed. But our usual AA Twelfth Step work is never to be paid for.

"9. Each AA group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is the best. The small group may elect its secretary, the large group its rotating committee, and the groups of a large metropolitan area their central or intergroup committee, which often employs a full time secretary. The trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation are, in effect, our general service committee. They are the custodians of our AA Tradition and the receivers of voluntary AA contributions by which we maintain the AA General Service Office in New York. They are authorized by the groups to handle our overall public relations and they guarantee the integrity of our principal newspaper, the AA Grapevine. All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in AA are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles; they do not govern. Universal respect is the key to their usefulness.

"10. No AA group or member should ever, in such a way as to implicate AA, express any opinion on outside controversial issues -- particularly those of politics, alcohol reform, or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters they can express no views whatever.

"11. Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think AA ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as AA members ought not be broadcast, filmed or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.

"12. And finally, we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice 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.

"To sum us: For thousands of alcoholics yet to come, AA does have an answer. But there is one condition. We must, at all costs, preserve our essential unity; it must be made unbreakably secure. Without permanent unity there can be little lasting recovery for anyone. Hence our future absolutely depends

the Good Old Timers, or any other AA approved literature. It seems to me that this is not "to show the newcomer that the program works." Instead, it seems to be a celebration of my own accomplishment. The fact is God is the one who gets one sober. The celebration should be for God, not the alcoholic. In fact, it would be a good idea if the alcoholic would not even mention his name at the celebration. Just mention the name of God and tell what He has done for you. Someone please help me to understand where this came from.

Larry W.

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++++Message 645. Re: Tradition of Celebrating Sobriety Anniversary
From: Jim Blair 11/1/2002 9:04:00 AM

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Larry wrote

Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Tradition of Celebrating Sobriety Anniversary

Could someone please give me the history of celebration of sobriety. I have not been able to find this in the BB.

Here is a doc on the history of birthdays and sobriety chips

Chips, Medallions and Birthdays

The traditions of chips, medallions and birthdays vary in different parts of the country and I thought it would be interesting to look up some of the history on them.

Sister Ignatia, the nun who helped Dr. Bob get the hospitalization program started at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron was the first person to use medallions in Alcoholics Anonymous. She gave the drunks who were leaving St. Thomas after a five day dry out a Sacred Heart Medallion and instructed them that the acceptance of the medallion signified a commitment to God, to A.A. and to recovery and that if they were going to drink, they had a responsibility to return the medallion to her before drinking.

The sacred heart badges had been used prior to A.A. by the Father Matthew Temperance Movement of the 1840s and the Pioneers an Irish Temperance Movement of the 1890s.

The practice of sobriety chips in A.A. started with a Group in Elmira, N.Y. in 1947 and has grown from there.

The celebration of birthdays came from the Oxford Group where they celebrated the anniversary of their spiritual rebirth. As we have a problem with honesty, A.A. chose the anniversary of the date of our last drink.

Early celebrations of birthdays resulted in people getting drunk and Dr. Harry Tiebout was asked to look at the problem and he commented on this phenomenon in an article titled "When the Big "I" Becomes Nobody", (AAGV, Sept. 65)

"Early on in A.A., I was consulted about a serious problem plaguing the local group. The practice of celebrating a year's sobriety with a birthday cake had resulted in a certain number of the members getting drunk within a short period after the celebration. It seemed apparent that some could not stand prosperity. I was asked to settle between birthday cakes or no birthday cakes. Characteristically, I begged off, not from shyness but from ignorance. Some three or four years later, A.A. furnished me the answer. The group no longer had such a problem because, as one member said, "We celebrate still, but a year's sobriety is now a dime a dozen. No one gets much of a kick out of that anymore."

The AAGV carried many articles on chips and cakes and the following is a brief summary of some.

Feb. 1948, Why All the Congratulations? "When we start taking bows (even on anniversaries) we bow ourselves right into the cuspidor."

July, 1948. Group To Give Oscar for Anniversaries.

The Larchmont Group of Larchmont, N.Y. gives a cast bronze camel mounted on a mahogany base to celebrate 1st., 5th and 10th anniversaries.

"The camel is wholly emblematic of the purposes of most sincere A.A.s, i.e., to live for 24 hours without a drink."

August 1948. The Artesta, N.Mex. Group awards marbles to all members. If you are caught without your marbles, you are fined 25 cents. This money goes into the Foundation Fund.

June 1953, We operate a poker chip club in the Portland Group (Maine). We have poker chips of nine colors of which the white represents the probation period of one month. If he keeps his white chip for one month he is presented with a red chip for one month's sobriety.

The chips continue with blue for two months, black for three, green for four, transparent blue for five, amber for six, transparent purple for nine months and a transparent clear chip for one year. We have our chips stamped with gold A.A. letters.

Also at the end of the year and each year thereafter, we present them with a group birthday card signed by all members present at the meeting.

January 1955, Charlotte, N.C. "When a man takes "The Long Walk" at the end of a meeting, to pick up a white chip, he is admitting to his fellow men that he has finally accepted the precepts of A.A. and is beginning his sobriety. At the end of three months he exchanges his white chip for a red one. Later, a handsome, translucent chip of amber indicates that this new member has enjoyed six months of a new way of life. The nine month chip is a clear seagreen and a blue chip is given for the first year of sobriety. In some groups a sponsor will present his friend with an engraved silver chip, at the end of five years clear thinking and clean living.

March 1956, The One Ton Poker Chip. Alton, Illinois. Author gave friend a chip on his first day eight years ago (1948) and told him to accept it in the spirit of group membership and that if he wanted to drink to throw the chip away before starting drinking.

October 1956, Bangor Washington. Article about a woman who sits in a bar to drink the bartender sees her white chips and asks what it is. She tells him. He throws her out as he does not want an alcoholic in his bar. She calls friend.

April 1957, Cape Cod, Mass. Group recognizes 1st, 5th and 15th anniversaries. Person celebrating leads meeting. Person is presented with a set of wooden carved plaques with the slogans.

July 1957, New Brunswick, Canada. Birthday Board. Member contributes one dollar for each year of sobriety

July 1957, Oregon. Person is asked to speak and is introduced by his or her sponsor. The wife, mother, sister or other relative brings up a cake. The Group sings Happy Birthday. The wife gives a two or three minute talk.

April 1959, Patterson, N.J. People are asked to give "three month pin talks."

And that's a little bit of info on chips, cakes and medallions.



Nancy,

I'm on the road and forgot to transfer my personal address book to the notebook. Would it be possible to get you to post the following for me today?

tc

Armistice Day, 1934, rolled around. Lois had to go to the Brooklyn department store where she worked. Wall Street was closed down and I began to wonder what I would do. I thought of golf. I had not played in a long time. The family purse was slender, so I suggested to Lois that I might go over to Staten Island where there was a public course. She could not quite conceal her apprehension, but she managed to say cheerfully, "Oh, please do. That would be wonderful."

I crossed on the ferry and took a bus. I found myself seated beside a man with a target rifle. That brought back memories of the Remington single-shot piece grandfather had given me when I was eleven years old.

We go to talking about shooting.

Suddenly our bus collided with the bus ahead of us. There was little shock or damage. My friend and I alighted on the pavement to wait for the next bus to come along. Still talking about shooting irons, we noticed something that looked like a speakeasy. He said to me, "What about a little nip?" I said, "Fine, let's go." We walked into the place.

He ordered a Scotch and I ordered ginger ale. "Don't you drink?" he said. "No," I said, "I'm one of those people who can't manage it." And

then I dwelt on the allergy and the obsession and the whole business of alcoholism. I told him about the terrible time I had with liquor and how I was through with it forever. I carefully explained the whole illness to him.

We go onto another bus and presently found ourselves in front of a country inn well down on the Island. I was to go to the golf course nearby, and my new friend was to take another bus to his rifle range.

But it was noontime and he said, "Let's go in and have a sandwich.

Besides, I'd like to have another drink." We sat at the bar this time.

As I have said, it was Armistice Day. The place was filling up and so were the customers. There was the familiar buzz which arises from drinking crowds. My friend and I continued to talk, still on the subject of shooting. Sandwiches and another drink for him, sandwiches and ginger ale for me.

My mind turned again to Armistice Day in France, to all the joy of those hours, to the great celebration. I no longer heard what my friend was saying. Suddenly the big Irish bartender came up to us, beaming. In each hand he held a drink. "Have one on the house, boys!" he cried. "It's Armistice Day!" Without an instant's hesitation, I picked up the liquor and drank it. My friend looked at me aghast. "My God!" he cried. "Is it possible that you can take a drink after what you just told me? Your must be crazy!" And my reply was, "I am."

AA Comes of Age, pages 56-7

And so started Bill W's last drinking spree.

So on this Veteran's Day (in the US), in addition to our military veterans and those currently serving in our troubled times ... I'm also thinking of our veterans of alcoholism. Those who have 'come home' through our program of recovery ... and those who I hope and pray have gone on to a 'better home,' where their suffering is ended, forevermore. Knowing, one of them could have been me. I give thanks to those 'veterans of alcoholism' who walked the road of recovery before me, leaving but a 'simple set of directions' I could choose to follow. To them I say "Thanks."

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+++Message 654. November 16th, 1950
From: planternva 11/13/2002 8:57:00 AM

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I have a tape purportedly a copy of a talk given by Bill W. at the 1st anniversary meeting of the Kips Bay group on 11-16-50. Recently I've heard that it's not Bill W. but a "dramatization" by a Bill S. Does anyone have any information concerning the circumstances of this dramatization?
Jim S.

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+++Message 655. Re: November 16th, 1950
From: Doug B. 11/14/2002 12:49:00 AM

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Jim,

I met the man who made the tape in 1995....

dramatization.

What can we do, as responsible AA archivists and historians, other than boycott?

This gentleman you spoke of is proud that he sounds like Bill (his voice was very New England nasal), does he ask people to close their eyes during his street plays and bring his mythology to life?

Even Dana Carvey of Saturday Night Live could sound like George H. Bush, but that was entertainment, and it appears that Mr. Bill's skits are no more than just that. The Hallmark Hall of Fame television movie "My Name is Bill W." played with facts only known to the AA members who've studied our history, but it at least highlighted its disclaimer.

As an AA historian I would not be interested in Mr. Bill's game, the inventions are destructive.

Historical fiction, docudrama, and the like is the worst kind of dilution that we face from time to time.

Alcoholics Anonymous often gets a misdirected explanation in the media, in half-truths, in outright lies developed from misperceptions that aren't delivered by our members. Are we foolish enough to allow these practices to flourish among ourselves?

Our rigorous personal honesty principle has to extend to our intra-fellowship behavior and "all of our affairs" else we carry a message of deceit, and when those half-truths are remembered by others the damage is started. Remember that opinions matter most to who is delivering the opinion...

Even while Bill Wilson would sometimes exaggerate and inflate minor details, he was often called on that (read Nell Wing's memoirs about the part of her job as 'fact-checker...'). As a matter of fact and record, Bill was once advised by the General Service Board to cease and desist his promotion of Vitamin B-12 therapy as an AA affiliation, reinforcing our tradition of a primary purpose.

These are just two instances of our Fellowship's beautiful mechanism of self-correction.

I truly believe that promoting an historical fiction is much more dangerous to our Fellowship, and we have much of that today.

When the history of my Delegate Area was first completed, the facts I'd found through extensive research were cross-checked and double-checked again. I was responsible to prove the facts and it turned out easy, and here's one example: Area 20's first Area Secretary came in service to assist the newly autonomous Area in its first two years, and her prior service was to one of Chicago's Suburban Intergroup Associations as its Secretary.

During the Panel Review of the original draft, the questions arose about the fact of her elected service to Area 20.

I was able to present four corroborations of the fact of her Area 20 service, even when no Minutes exist (or have since been found) with her name

on them. I could have written that the Area's first Secretary was unknown, but that would omit the fact of this woman's important service, relocated from one service group to ours.

Can we believe everything Frances Hartigan wrote about Bill's life? Can we believe Hazelden's "autobiography" of Bill (actually from background for Robert Thomsen's 1975 work) when there is an appendix letter from Bedford Hills dated 1935 or 1936? Bill and Lois didn't even know the place was there until 1940!

All I can strongly suggest is that we always "consider the source" and if a fact can't be proven we just move on, and move on quickly!
Consider the source---it should be part of an unwritten code for our service as archivists and historians.

Yours in the Fellowship,
Rick T.
Algonquin, Illinois

----- Original Message -----

From: Doug B.
To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2002 11:49 PM
Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] November 16th, 1950

I met the man who made the tape in 1995....

He was trying to sell them at the convention in San Diego, and he also had a video for sale with a phoney Lois and Ebby in it too.

He was quite proud that he sounded like Bill W.

He loved his idea of making up the part of Bob giving Bill his favorite hat....lots of the info on the tape was made up.

|||||

+++Message 657. AA in kalamazoo
From: steve 10/28/2002 1:33:00 AM

|||||

Hello friends,

I've been trying to create an archive of AA history in kalamazoo. Does anyone have any additional info? thanks. a brief history follows:

3-?-41 Larry reads Alexander article
3-?-41 Larry writes to new york
3-16-41 Larry N. receives a letter from new york w/ 2 names of other local inquiries
3-17-41 first AA meeting at Larry's house on Washburn Street(3 in attendance)
3-17-42 7 meet to celebrate meeting's 1 year ann
3-17-51 about 50 meet to celebrate

dates are pretty firm, but may be incorrect. Unfortunately our local history is mostly holes. thanks for any help,

steve covieo

|||||

+++Message 658. GRATITUDE MONTH
From: denezmcd@aol.com 11/15/2002 11:42:00 PM

|||||

Does any one know when and why November became Gratitude Month??? AA would have been in existance 6 months in Nov. 1935 could this have any thing to do with it. A friend in service, Inez

|||||

+++Message 659. Re: GRATITUDE MONTH
From: Jim Blair 11/16/2002 5:05:00 PM

|||||

Inez wrote

Gratitude Month???

In the November 1949 issue of the GV, Bill W. made a suggestion that Thanksgiving week be adopted as Tradition Week during which special attention will be paid to the Traditions.

The entire issue of the GV was devoted to this topic and it included the first publishing of the short form of the traditions.

How it has gone from Traditions Week to Gratitude Month, I don't know.

p.s. email should be done only in plain text.

Jim

=====

+++Message 661. Re: GRATITUDE MONTH
From: ricktompkins 11/16/2002 8:00:00 PM

=====

Hi Inez,

November 1934 has a lot to do with the idea of a "Gratitude Month." Start your reading on page 8 of the Big Book! Bill's last drinking bout started on Armistice Day, lasted through Ebby's visit and announcement of new recovery principles, and ended with Bill's spiritual experience as a patient in Towns Hospital. Ebby visited Bill again there, too, gave him a copy of William James' "Varieties of Religious Experience" and he continued carrying the message of recovery to Bill as he had found it in Oxford Group principles. Bill always considered November as his anniversary month, too, and held an annual dinner in NYC for many years.

November gets a lot of themes attached to it, indeed. There was the Nov. 1949 A.A. Grapevine issue reported by Jim B. that announces the month as "Traditions Month" but it seems that the Thanksgiving holiday adds to the "Gratitude" moniker these days. In my Illinois Area we have a "Remember November" activity that celebrates this month, only as when Ebby brought the message of recovery to Bill---originally these funds were in response to a year-end plea from the General Service Office (an annual letter is still sent today). We're told that the separately-sent funds are designed to defray GSO expenses, as both individual AAs and their Groups can assemble any amount for each member's years of sobriety. Intergroups and Central Offices pitch an appeal for funds in November that coincide with both Thanksgiving and Bill's sobriety date...

To this grateful AA member, when Bill first heard Ebby's message of recovery and it quickly (over a few weeks) took ahold of Bill's consciousness, it remains a very thankful month for me.

Yours in the Fellowship,
Rick T.
Algonquin, Illinois

=====

+++Message 664. Re: AA in kalamazoo

decade when, each fall, the
General Service Board hosted
small Gratitude
Dinners - precursors of the
larger, more elaborate
Gratitude
Luncheons that
would be held during the
'60s as an initiative
of the trustees'
Public Information
Committee.

The
first official recognition
of an A.A. Gratitude
Week, specifically designed to
coincide with
Thanksgiving week in the
U.S. (Canada celebrates
in October),
occurred in 1956, when the
Sixth General Service
Conference approved the
motion, stipulating
that
"this
action be noted
in the annual pre-Thanksgiving
appeals
to
the groups for funds to
help support
A.A.'s worldwide services." Three years later,
Bill urged in a letter,
"Gratitude
should go forward, rather
than back-ward... if you
carry
the
message
to
still others,

you will be making the
best possible repayment
for the help given to
you." (As Bill Sees I__t__, p. _29).

The
motivation
behind A.A.'s Gratitude
Lunches was threefold:
to express personal gratefulness
for the gift
of sobriety
to carry the
message of A.A. to
other alcoholics; and to
express appreciation
to our professional friends
for their numerous articles,
books and radio and TV interviews
relating to
A.A. in
the
year just
past. It
was hoped, in the
words of a General Service Office memo circulated
at the
time, that
the luncheons would
"advance A.A.'s public relations
by bringing editors,
publishers, writers
and broadcasters
in personal contact
with sources of reliable
information
on the movement."

Held
without
fail in November at
New York City's
Roosevelt
Hotel, the

luncheons were always well-attend-ed.

A typical list

of invi

12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">tees

to the

1965 luncheon includ-ed representatives

of _The New York Times, McCall's Magazine,

Medical World News _and _The Chris_t__ian

Science Moni__t__or. _Bill W. always addressed the

gatherings, as did the

late "Dr. Jack"

Norris,

12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">then

servng as A.A.'s Class A (nonalcoholic) trustee

chairman. A discussion period followed the

proceedings, an ample selection

of A.A. literature

was available for the

taking, and in 1965 Bill sent

an au

12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">tographed

copy of _A.A. Comes of Age _to

every guest.

The

luncheons were discontinued

in 1968, but

the concept

of gra

12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">titude

persis

12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">ted

and expanded in scope. For decades now, A.A.s in the

U.S. have set

aside all of November as Gratitude

Month - marking the

occasion with

special contributions

to G.S.O. In the

spiri

12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">t

of the Seventh

Tradi

12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">tion

A.A. is self-supporting

through its

members' contributions,

and frequently

turns away money from
well-meaning outside
contributors.
This means that
the active
input of every A.A. is vital
to the
life of
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">the
Fellowship.

Grateful
for the sobriety
they've been given and eager
to pass it
on, A.A.s are busier than
ever in Twelfth
Stepping and service. They
are reaching out
in grea
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">ter
numbers
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">to
Loners, people with
special needs, members of minority
groups and previously unreached alcoholics. It
is clear from their
sharing
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">that
an overwhelming num-ber of A.A.s - along with
many of our professional friends - find their
own special ways to
say thank you during Gratitude
Month and, indeed, all year
long. Wri
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">tes
one member: "Enclosed is a check for Gratitude
Month, because I want
A.A.
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">to
be there for all those
who need it,
just as I did." From another:
"The enclosed check is from my own pocket,
to help groups in correctional
facili
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">ties
like mine. Some of us are struggling

to turn
our lives around. We begin the
process in here ourselves, and by reaching out."
And a nonalcoholic missionary wrote
from
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">India,
"I
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">t
is a ma
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">tter
of grea
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">t
encouragement
and sa
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">tisfaction
that
your A.A. has been a rich resource of guidance, help and light
for a number of organizations
dealing with
problems related
to alcohol...."

Besides
observing Gratitude
Month, many a member uses the
A.A. Bir
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">thday
Plan "to
give back what's
been given to
me," as one wrote.
And from another
fateful A.A.: "I want
to say thanks
today for my life and my
family's - or all of us alcoholics in recovery," he wrote.
"Enclosed is an anniversary check, because I want
the hand of A.A. to
be there for all who need it".
Like him, many members celebrate
their A.A. birthdays
by sending in a gratitude
gift to
G.S.O. - usually a dollar or two
for each year of sobriety.
Some groups follow this
Birthday Plan by collecting
contributions

from members on a voluntary
basis
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">throughout
the year, or until
the number of dollars matches
the member's total
years of sobriety.
On the group's
anniversary, the
money collected
is sen
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">t to
G.S.O. as a birthday
contribution.

Gratitude.
It's a weighty,
high-dignity
word, bu
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">t
in truth
its close companions are
humor and joy. As Bill W. observed early on in the
Big Book (p. 132), 'Outsiders
are some
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">times
shocked when we burst
into merriment
over a seemingly tragic
experience out
of the past.
But why shouldn't
we laugh? We have recovered, and have been given the
power
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">to
help o
12.0pt;font-family:"Arial Narrow";">thers."
What greater
cause can there
be for rejoicing than
this?

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:windowtext;">



of hopelessness deepened and a terrifying darkness yawned in the abyss. As the last trace of self-will was crushed, Bill said to himself, with neither faith nor hope,

'I'll do anything, anything at all! If there be a God, let Him show Himself!'

The Conference approved biography, *Pass It On*, quotes Bill as describing this experience:

'What happened next was electric. Suddenly, my room blazed with an indescribably white light. I was seized with an ecstasy beyond description. Every joy I had known was pale by comparison. The light, the ecstasy - I was conscious of nothing else for a time.

Then, seen in the mind's eye, there was a mountain. I stood upon its summit, where a great wind blew. A wind, not of air, but of spirit. In great, clean strength, it blew right through me. Then came the blazing thought, 'You are a free man.' I know not at all how long I remained in this state, but finally the light and the ecstasy subsided. I again saw the wall of my room. As I became more quiet, a great peace stole over me, and this was accompanied by a sensation difficult to describe. I became acutely conscious of a Presence, which seemed like a veritable sea of living spirit. I lay on the shores of a new world.'

Ebby had carried the message of the Oxford Group to Bill with great care and dedication---that recovery from alcoholism was possible using spiritual principles, but only if it was combined with practical actions. Bill Wilson never took another drink, and left Towns Hospital to dedicate the rest of his life to carrying the message to other alcoholics.

Ebby, however, took a different path, one that caused him to have a series of relapses. The man whom Bill Wilson called his sponsor could not stay sober himself, and became an embarrassment. There were periods of sobriety, some long, some short, but eventually Ebby would, 'fall off the wagon,' as he called it.

More revealingly, Ebby referred to his periods of sobriety as, 'being on the wagon.' For an AA to regularly use this sort of language is an indication that the commitment to sobriety is temporary in nature. If there is an 'on the wagon' then there is an 'off the wagon' too. And that was the on/off cycle of Ebby's drinking.

Ebby was born on April 29, 1896, into a prominent and well-to-do family in Albany, New York, with roots going back before the American Revolution. His grandfather started a railroad wheel manufacturing business in 1852 and became the main supplier of wheels for the New York Central Railroad, as well as Mayor of Albany. Two other members of Ebby's family were also mayors

of Albany, including his older brother, 'Jack.' One of New York State's most beautiful parks, located on the Helderberg escarpment southwest of Albany, was donated by the widow of Ebby's uncle, John Boyd Thacher and is named after him.

Ebby's full name was Edwin Throckmorton Thacher and he can be said to have arrived in the world with 'a silver spoon in his mouth.' It is possible that because of his upper-class origins, with servants waiting on him and the respect brought by his family name, Ebby developed the attitude that life should always be easy for him. He was 'entitled', it seems.

Lois Wilson shared her insights into Ebby in her biography, *Lois Remembers*, and stated that while Bill wanted sobriety with his whole soul, Ebby appeared to want just enough sobriety to stay out of trouble. In addition, Lois said, 'Beyond that crucial visit with Bill, Ebby seemed to do very little about helping others. He never appeared really a member of AA. After his first slip, many harmful thoughts seemed to take possession of him. He appeared jealous of Bill and critical, even when sober, of both the Oxford Group and AA.' Lois felt that it was important that AA's know why Ebby was not considered the founder of AA. Ebby carried the message to Bill, but he never followed it up with the years of devoted action needed to develop the AA program.

Despite his failure to follow through after his vital visit with Bill, Ebby still seemed to feel he was not recognized adequately for his contribution to the start of AA. His employer for many years in Texas said that Ebby, 'kind of thought the world owed him a living, to a certain extent. He thought he never got the recognition that he should. That was stuck in his craw for years.' Another AA who had known Ebby in Texas said that, 'Ebby held a deep resentment for Bill, Dr. Bob, and others, because he felt he was more the founder of what was to become AA than anyone else'. In the author's opinion, this resentment may be the reason for his repeated 'slips' in the program.

Ebby also had the idea that he needed the right woman and an ideal job in order to stay sober. The implication is that if he didn't have the perfect woman and the perfect job, he couldn't stay sober. And he didn't stay sober. AA members know that sobriety has to be sought without any conditions, that we have to be 'willing to go to any length to get it' and that 'half measures availed us nothing.'

Some of Ebby's own letters bring to mind Lois's observation noted earlier, that Ebby seemed to be 'around' AA, but never really 'in' it. Typical correspondence from AA's devotes substantial discussion to the AA Program and the application of the Steps to their own lives. Ebby's letters avoid these topics and are significant for what they don't say. In 1954, Bill wrote that Ebby now, 'shows more signs of really joining AA than ever before.' The implication is that Ebby had shown less commitment to the AA

program before then, but even at that time, there were still substantial doubts about his sincerity.

Earlier, in 1947, his sister-in-law received a letter from Ebby, and she wrote back suggesting that the answer to his problems was to devote himself to helping others and then continued,

'But as I read your letter this thought is far from your mind and you are again concerned with the petty and material affairs of your surroundings and the bickerings and by-plays of your associates, with the thought still deep in your mind that you have been persecuted and discriminated against by others, while the real facts might well be that it is your own ego that is at fault.'

Ebby drifted in and out of sobriety, and in and out of AA, with many AA members trying to help him regain a more stable sobriety. The person who was ultimately successful was Searcy W., who had established a hospital for alcoholics in Texas. Early in 1953, Searcy had asked Bill what he would like to see happen in AA, and Bill said, 'I would like for Ebby to have a chance to sober up in your clinic.' Several months later, it came to pass, and after a short slip in 1954, Ebby remained sober for seven years.

In 1961, Ebby's girlfriend died and the next day Ebby got drunk. He apparently still believed that his sobriety was conditional on having the right woman, and now she was gone. Ebby moved back to New York and lived at several places for the next two years, one of which was at his brother Ken's home in Delmar, a suburb of Albany. He had emphysema, the same disease that caused Bill's death, and was in poor health, his weight having dropped from 170 to 122 pounds.

Ebby eventually came to Margaret and Micky McPike's farm outside Ballston Spa, New York, in May, 1964 and it was under their loving care that he finished the final two years of his life, dying sober on March 21, 1966. While at McPike's farm, he never even attempted to get something to drink although he never attended any AA meetings. Still, AA visitors were frequent and AA principles were in constant evidence, permeating the entire atmosphere at McPike's. Dr. Bob said that the AA program boiled down to love and service and that was the essence of Margaret and Micky McPike, who helped more than four thousand persons to recover from alcoholism. Ebby was one of them.

AA's agree that no matter what happens to them, the most important thing is to not pick up that first 'sucker' drink. Once alcohol is placed in our bodies, the results are physically inevitable in the same way that once a dose of castor oil has been taken, all the mental will power in the world is of no avail. Our problem as alcoholics centers in our minds, in having an entire psychic change as a result of taking the actions set out exactly in the 12 Steps. It is said in the rooms, 'If you do what we did, you'll get

what we got." Ebby was unable, for whatever reasons, to put the AA program of action into his life on a regular basis.

All of his life, Ebby was overshadowed by the recognition and success of his father and grandfather and in his own generation, by the accomplishments and respect given to his older brothers. This may have developed in him a sense of 'never good enough' so familiar to alcoholics. It is also likely that his privileged childhood accentuated the sense of self-importance and self-focus that the AA program requires us to deflate at depth.

If Ebby had been recognized as the founder of the AA program, it would have given him respect and recognition far surpassing anyone in his family. After Bill received the message of recovery from Ebby, he devoted the rest of his life to helping other alcoholics. If Ebby had been willing and able to take similar actions of love and service, he would have been a co-founder with Bill Wilson. But he would not, or could not, do the day-to-day work with others needed to bring AA into a concrete reality.

Rather than realistically looking at his own shortcomings in establishing AA, Ebby wallowed in resentments, the greatest obstacle to sobriety and the number one killer of alcoholics. Perhaps Bill was thinking of the example of his sponsor, Ebby, when he wrote the many strong statements in the Big Book condemning resentments. For whatever the reasons, Ebby never seemed to give himself completely to the simple program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

There are many others who achieve periods of sobriety yet relapse from time to time. They are not to be condemned, but welcomed back into the Fellowship. Their experience is a lesson to others that alcohol as an enemy is indeed cunning, baffling and powerful. If anyone might feel smug or superior, he or she should be grateful that they have not gotten that bad - yet.

If there is a Higher Power, then by implication there is a lower power. And the lower power can never win, unless we give up. Despite many slips, Ebby never gave in to the lower power and always came back. He ran the race; he kept the faith and died sober. Ebby deserves to be honored for carrying the message of spiritual recovery to Bill and for acting as his sponsor. Whatever his problems may have been with sobriety, Bill was always grateful to Ebby and so should all AA's.

Bill said, in "The Language of the Heart",

'Ebby had been enabled to bring me the gift of grace because he could reach me at depth through the language of the heart. He had pushed ajar that great gate through which all in AA have since passed to find their freedom under God.'

Much of the above material is synthesized from Ebby's biography by Mel B.,

But anonymity doesn't mean members don't have tight ties, as evidenced by the round-the-clock care for Earle at John Muir Medical Center and, since Tuesday, at a convalescent center.

"He's essentially devoted his life to other alcoholics," said vigil organizer David S., who for the past 18 years has turned to Earle for help staying sober. "There are a whole lot of people who would take a bullet for him. That's how much we love him."

Over the years, Earle has given talks about alcoholism to community groups and encouraged recovering alcoholics. He became sober in 1953 and was close friends with AA co-founder Bill Wilson. In 1985, Earle wrote "Physician Heal Thyself," a book about his experience with alcoholism.

The 91-year-old Walnut Creek resident is a former obstetrician, psychiatrist and UCSF professor. He faithfully attended AA meetings until his recent illness. He was too weak to give an interview.

Earle's friends extend beyond AA, some of whom have also been stopping by to keep him company.

"It's not a vigil. It's a caring circle," said Doris Kinsley, one of several visitors Tuesday. "We really admire him. He's extremely caring. Friends and family mean so much to him."

Earle tenderly cared for his wife during her terminal illness, friends said. He also cared for his brother during his final days.

AA members use a Web site to track volunteer shifts, a schedule they plan to keep as long as he's at the convalescent center.

Earle has a unique way of relating to people, David S. said.

"If you sit down with him, in a matter of moments you feel that you are the only person in the world he cares about. He lets you know immediately that you're safe with him."

Another AA member, who has been sober for three years, agreed. "I'd shudder to think where I'd be right now," said the man, who did not want to be identified. "He's saved so many."

Earle's daughter Jane, who lives in New York, said she appreciates her father's friends.

"They're helping me enormously," said Marsh, who arrives Monday to be with her father. "It makes him feel safe, loved, and it makes him feel like he's home no matter where he is."

Six months later, I was sentenced to prison. Then I really took a look at myself. Liquor is just like a lot of other "friends" -- only good to you if you spend money on it, and act a fool with it.

A.A. people showed me a world I had never seen before. They opened my eyes to who I was and the things I could do without the bottle. Now I enjoy myself more by not being a clown, without the bottle.

-- George

2000

Clyde has 50 Years of Sobriety!

I started drinking when I was 14 years old. I joined the army in 1939, met a girl and got married. My drinking continued and got worse. Soon my wife kicked me out. For years I worked at logging camps, usually lasting for a couple of paydays before the booze won out. In 1946, the cops arrested me for nonsupport, and I got five years probation. I continued to drink. I'd just been fired for being drunk on the job when the cops caught up with me again in 1948. I was sentenced to the state penitentiary, and it was suggested that I go to A.A. meetings there -- I'd never heard of A.A.

Admittance, acceptance and action were some of the first principles I was able to grasp. God had shown me a way, and I had hope for a sober life.

In May 1949 I was paroled, and sent to a job in the town where I was raised.

I had to hire a man to work with me on the end of a power saw; and this man wanted help with his drinking problem. We started the first A.A. meeting in town -- two alcoholics and a Big Book. My family returned, and I found I was using slogans I had heard at meetings behind the walls like: "If you don't like A.A., we'll gladly refund your misery;" and "Stinking thinking will get you drinking;" or "Let go and let God."

Eventually I got permission to move to a town where I could work year-round.

Clayton C. and I started a Monday Night A.A. Group in 1952, and it's still active. I was granted a full pardon in 1956, and received permission from the warden to return to the prison once a month to carry A.A.'s message into the facility -- which I did for the next 30 years.

My first marriage ended in divorce in 1978. My second wife, who was in A.A., died after ten years of our marriage. In 1990 I married a woman I'd known for 26 years. She has 34 years sober, and I recently celebrated 50 years sober. When I came to A.A. all I had to offer was a very abused body and a warped mind. There comes a time when you get on your knees with a choice to puke or pray.

Today I am very grateful to God and the people in A.A. who have listened to me, and shared with me, reaching out with a singleness of purpose. The prison group where my journey began will soon hold its 55th anniversary, and I will return there to share my experience, strength and hope with other alcoholics. Some youngsters have asked "How do you get to be an oldtimer?" My answer is "Don't drink and don't die."

-- Clyde

doubted if even a handful of the audience could possibly agree with the views expressed in my paper. To my astonishment there was a sustained round of applause. But this was not at all a tribute to me or the contents of my paper; it was instead a tribute to Alcoholics Anonymous, a tribute to a way of life which had worked for alcoholics when other approaches had failed. This generous response was evidence that our friends the psychiatrists were being much more tolerant of us than we had been of them. If we ourselves became more open-minded, then far greater co-operation with this profession would be assured.

-- Bill Wilson

Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age, p 205

The Medical View on A.A.

Since Dr. Silkworth's first endorsement of Alcoholics Anonymous, medical societies and physicians throughout the world have set their approval upon us. Following are excerpts from the comments of doctors present at the annual meeting * of the Medical Society of the State of New York where a paper on A.A. was read:

Dr. Foster Kennedy, neurologist: "This organization of Alcoholics Anonymous calls on two of the greatest reserves of power known to man, religion and that instinct for association with one's fellows . . . the "herd instinct."

I think our profession must take appreciative cognizance of this great therapeutic weapon. If we do not do so, we shall stand convicted of emotional sterility and of having lost the faith that moves mountains, without which medicine can do little."

Dr. G. Kirby Collier, psychiatrist: "I have felt that A.A. is a group unto themselves and that their best results can be had under their own guidance , as a result of their philosophy. Any therapeutic or philosophic procedure which can prove a recovery rate of 50% to 60% must merit our consideration."

Dr. Harry M. Tiebout, psychiatrist: "As a psychiatrist, I have thought a great deal about the relationship of my specialty to A.A. and I have come to the conclusion that our particular function can very often lie in preparing the way for the patient to accept any sort of treatment or outside help. I now conceive the psychiatrist's job to be the task of breaking down the patient's inner resistance so that which is inside him will flower, as under the activity of the A.A. program."

*1944

Dr. W.W. Bauer, broadcasting under the auspices of The American Medical Association in 1949, over the NBC network, said, in part: "Alcoholics Anonymous are no crusaders; not a temperance society. They know that they must never drink. They help others with similar problems . . . In this atmosphere the alcoholic often overcomes his excessive concentration on himself. Learning to depend upon a higher power and absorb himself in his work with other alcoholics, he remains sober day by day. The days add up into weeks; the weeks into months and years."

Dr. John F. Stouffer, Chief Psychiatrist, Philadelphia General Hospital, citing his experience with A.A., said: "The alcoholics we get here at

Philadelphia General are mostly those who cannot afford private treatment, and A.A. is by far the greatest thing we have been able to offer them. Even among those who occasionally land back in here again, we observe a profound change in personality. You would hardly recognize them."

The American Psychiatric Association requested, in 1949, that a paper be prepared by one of the older members of Alcoholics Anonymous to be read to the Association's annual meeting of that year. This was done and the paper was printed in the American Journal of Psychiatry for November, 1949.

(This address is now available in pamphlet form at nominal cost through most A.A. groups or from Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163, under the title "Three Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W." - formerly called "Bill on Alcoholism" and "Alcoholism the Illness."

Alcoholics Anonymous, pp 571-572

The Lasker Award

In 1951 the Lasker Award was given Alcoholics Anonymous. The citation reads in part as follows:

"The American Public Health Association presents a Lasker Group Award for 1951 to Alcoholics Anonymous in recognition of its unique and highly successful approach to that age-old public health and social problem, alcoholism . . . In emphasizing alcoholism as an illness, the social stigma associated with this condition is being blotted out . . . Historians may one day recognize Alcoholics Anonymous to have been a great venture in social pioneering which forged a new instrument for social action, a new therapy based on the kinship of common suffering, one having a vast potential for the myriad other ills of mankind."

Alcoholics Anonymous, p 573

|||||

+++Message 684. AA Grapevine
From: Jim Myers 11/24/2002 3:40:00 PM

|||||

Good day fellow AA History Lovers!

I have begun an AA Grapevine index of articles - the newest addition to Silkworth.net. For those of you who are able to access the internet, you can view these articles here [39]

(http://silkworth.net/grapevine/grapevine_articles.html), including the 1st AA Grapevine published in 1944, in its entirety, in the same format as the original article.

For those of you who do not have access to the internet, and are seeking a

From: Ernest Kurtz <kurtzern@umich.edu [43] >

Date: Sun Nov 24, 2002 10:39 am

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] GV Article by Bill W Only Alcoholics may speak from podium

You don't say anything about when that AA Grapevine article appeared. About ten years ago, the AAGV people put out an index to all Grapevines from 1944 to 1990. I have not heard it mentioned lately, but I should think it is still in print and that you could get information by calling GSO and asking for the Grapevine office.

ernie kurtz

From: "melb" <melb@accesstoledo.com [44] >

Date: Sun Nov 24, 2002 2:53 pm

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] GV Article by Bill W Only Alcoholics may speak from podium

Comment re Glenn's question:

I don't recall any article stating that only alcoholics might speak from the podium at an AA meeting. But if any such article was ever published in the Grapevine, even if authored by Bill W., it is clearly out of bounds. It should be up to the group itself to determine who can speak from the podium at any meeting. Tradition Four states that every AA group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole. Choosing speakers is obviously a group matter that does not affect other groups or AA as a whole.

Mel Barger

From: Sbickell@aol.com [45]

Date: Sun Nov 24, 2002 4:50 pm

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] GV Article by Bill W Only Alcoholics may speak from pod...

Beginning on page 253 of Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age, c. 1957, 1985 by Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc./A.A. World Services, Inc., are examples of non-alcoholics speaking at major A.A. gatherings.

Scott

From: Joe P <jnpetrocel@yahoo.com [46] >

Date: Sun Nov 24, 2002 6:04 pm

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] GV Article by Bill W Only Alcoholics may speak from podium

In the pamphlet "THE AA GROUP" in the section entitled --the difference between open and enclosed meetings--- at the top of page 16 it states "Whether open or closed, A.A group meetings are conducted by A.A. members. At open meetings, non-AAs may be invited to share,depending upon the conscience of the group."

From: "Mike L" <mllibby@sbcglobal.net [47] >

Date: Sun Nov 24, 2002 11:49 pm

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] GV Article by Bill W Only Alcoholics may speak from podium

Our Intergroup (Contra Costa County in Northern California) has prohibited any group from allowing non-alcoholics from sharing in AA meetings, open or closed. A group that I frequent was recently "delisted" from the AA schedule because we welcomed and encouraged non-alcoholics to participate in our AA meeting as long as the sharing related to alcohol/recovery. About a third of our regular attendees are non-alcoholics, many of them members of Alanon. Only alcoholics served in service positions and only alcoholics chaired (telling of their story...) the meetings. As to the 5th tradition, we believed that we were furthering this purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholics who still suffer...albeit sometimes indirectly via the non-alcoholic relative/family member. We also wanted our meeting to be a place where a person who was struggling with the issue of alcohol in their own lives, but who had not been able/willing to identify themselves as a alcoholic...to have a safe place to share their struggles. We also questioned how the Intergroup could enforce their policy on our group without violating the 4th tradition and several of the Twelve Concepts.... Oh, well.

Our meeting has been in existence for almost 20 years and was modeled on the early meetings in Akron described in Dr. Bob and the Oldtimers (p.237). Our meeting continued to meet even after the delisting....and our membership actually grew! Recently, we've been put back on the schedule, although under a different name....but our format is still essentially the same. To be honest, not sure how that's happened because the Intergroup Guidelines have not been changed.

BTW: We did not find much help from the GSO in New York --- they seemed content to label us as a dual purpose group even though that is clearly not the case. We have no affiliation with Alanon whatsoever.

I'm wondering that if there is such a document authored by Bill W., whether he was referring to the more formal act of sharing one's own experience, strength and hope in a meeting, rather than the less formal contribution/sharing something of relevance by someone (alcoholic or not) attending the meeting. Or maybe Bill's statements were more reflective of how AA developed in New York and less reflective of how AA was developing in Akron or elsewhere. I'm also aware of a rather long tradition at AA conventions whereby Alanon members speak from the podium, as it were.

Mike

From: Jim Blair <jblair@videotron.ca [11] >

Date: Mon Nov 25, 2002 12:51 am

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] GV Article by Bill W Only Alcoholics may speak from podium

Mike wrote: A group that I frequent was recently "delisted" from the AA schedule because we welcomed and encouraged non-alcoholics to participate in our AA meeting as long as the sharing related to alcohol/recovery.

There have been two Conference Advisory Actions dealing with so called "Family Groups."

1967- The Conference approves Guidelines for group separation of AA and AI-Anon. The Guidelines noted: The use of the word "family" should be deleted from any group's name; that so-called "joint groups" can dilute the help available in each Fellowship either AA or AI-Anon can hold open discussion meetings but a group cannot be both; that officers should be either AA's or AI-Anon depending upon affiliation and that new members be encouraged to stick to either an AA or AI-Anon group since they will get the most help by staying close to the group relating to their problem.

1972- The Conference reaffirm AA group policy that "Only those with a desire to stop drinking may be members of AA groups; only AA members are eligible to be officers of AA groups; nonalcoholics are welcome at open meetings of AA." And, it is suggested that the word "family" not be used in the name of an AA group; if AA's and their non-alcoholic mates wish to meet together on a regular basis, they consider these gatherings "meetings" and not AA groups.

In Montreal, AA's and AI-anons have formed "Couples Groups" which usually meet on Friday or Saturday night for a meeting at which a couple shares

followed by a social couple of hours. There are 29 such meetings and they are not affiliated with AA or Al-Anon but provide a social atmosphere.

Jim

From: "Mike L" <mlliby@sbcglobal.net [47] >

Date: Mon Nov 25, 2002 10:33 am

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] GV Article by Bill W Only Alcoholics may speak from podium

Jim wrote:

"There have been two Conference Advisory Actions dealing with so called "Family Groups."

Jim--

I am very familiar with these Conference actions... While our group did originally have the name "AA Family and Friends" (we felt that there could be no confusion about us being AA only, but were unaware of the historical significance of the word and it's possible interpretation by some as meaning we were an Alanon Family Group...), we did change our name. I should note that we had been a listed and registered meeting with this Intergroup for over 18 years and no one had ever raised this issue until this year when the Special Worker returned our contribution to the Intergroup and threatened delisting if we didn't change our name and stop allowing non-alcoholics from sharing in our meeting. We were told that the reason for our delisting was not because of our name, but because we allowed non-alcoholics to share within the context of our AA meeting. The Intergroup guidelines for listing an AA group state the following requirement: the group requesting to be listed must "state that all members of the group are alcoholics, all alcoholics may attend, and only alcoholics may participate." Also, "Non-alcoholics may attend open meetings but they do not participate."

We thought that these two guidelines were either too restrictive or ambiguous (did "participate" mean hold a service position or chair the meeting or did it mean "speak" during the meeting). The Intergroup stated that "participate" included "speaking" and because we allowed those who did not identify as "alcoholics" to speak at our meeting that they did not consider us to be an AA meeting.

Mike

From: "momaria33772" <jhoffma6@tampabay.rr.com> [48]

Date: Mon Nov 25, 2002 10:43am

Subject: GV Article by Bill W.

The article in question is GV March 1971 Legacy of Service. It was posted as #928 of 1102 on the old Buffs page. This was Bill's reply to a group member fearful of the "hippie influx" and its drug related baggage.

[The article to which he refers is also posted on this list. Several people who wrote referred to or quoted this article. Here it is: Nancy]

Yahoo! Groups : AAHistoryLovers Messages : Message 193 of 685 [49]

From: "jlobdell54" <jlobdell54@hotmail.com> [50]

Date: Mon Nov 25, 2002 2:38pm

Subject: "Only Alcoholics"

I'm not sure, but I think I'm seeing more opinion and less historical inquiry than I would like on the subject introduced by Glenn's question. There are a couple of historical queries I would like to see answered. (1) What has historically been meant by "affecting other groups or AA as a whole"? (Early forms of the Tradition make it clear that consultation is strongly recommended before any action that might have an impact on any other group, not just on A.A. "as a whole" -- and of course Mike L.'s argument from the fact that other groups around the world have these meetings where non-alcoholics share is itself testimony to the effect actions by one group can have on others.) (2) Why, as a matter of history, is it an Intergroup looking after observance of the Traditions rather than the District or Area, whose DCM and Delegate are part of the pipeline between the groups and the custodians of the Traditions in NY? Jared

I'll just add that at my very first meeting in 1965, a non-AA member was an invited speaker at an open meeting in New York. He was Dr. Stanley Gitlow, a doctor who specialized in treating alcoholics and was invited to speak on the danger of mixing minor tranquilizers with alcohol. No one seemed upset that a non-AA was invited to speak, and it was apparently fairly common in New York at that time.

Nancy

PS: May I please ask you all to refrain from sending personal responses to a post to the entire group. Send them to the individual. Also, please don't send a post two or three times hoping it will get posted. If you want to know why a message was not posted, please write to me at NMOlson@aol.com.

5. As a group, they have no opinion on outside issues.
6. As a group, their public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion.

These 'Six points' were removed from the 'Group' pamphlet in the mid-nineties but it's been suggested and discussed at the GSC (last year) that they be replaced.

G

----- Original Message -----

From: Mike L

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogleps.com

Sent: Monday, November 25, 2002 8:33 AM

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] GV Article by Bill W Only Alcoholics may speak from podium

Jim wrote:

"There have been two Conference Advisory Actions dealing with so called "Family Groups."

Jim--

I am very familiar with these Conference actions... While our group did originally have the name "AA Family and Friends" (we felt that there could be no confusion about us being AA only, but were unaware of the historical significance of the word and it's possible interpretation by some as meaning we were an Alanon Family Group...), we did change our name. I should note that we had been a listed and registered meeting with this Intergroup for over 18 years and no one had ever raised this issue until this year when the Special Worker returned our contribution to the Intergroup and threatened delisting if we didn't change our name and stop allowing non-alcoholics from sharing in our meeting. We were told that the reason for our delisting was not because of our name, but because we allowed non-alcoholics to share within the context of our AA meeting. The Intergroup guidelines for listing an AA group state the following requirement: the group requesting to be listed must "state that all members of the group are alcoholics, all alcoholics may attend, and only alcoholics may participate." Also, "Non-alcoholics may attend open meetings but they do not participate."

We thought that these two guidelines were either too restrictive or ambiguous (did "participate" mean hold a service position or chair the meeting or did it mean "speak" during the meeting). The Intergroup stated that "participate" included "speaking" and because we allowed those who did not identify as "alcoholics" to speak at our meeting that they did not consider us to be an AA meeting.

Jim, you also made the statement, "I've travelled a fair bit and when I show up at what is listed in an AA meeting turns out to be non-alcoholics sharing, I feel cheated." In my opinion, you have a perfect right to feel cheated and you need not return to that group if you like. But if the membership of that group (which is comprised only of alcoholics, several with 10+ and 20+ years of sobriety..) has a group conscience that allows, no, welcomes non-alcoholics to share in their AA meeting, I see nothing in the traditions or conference advisories that would prevent them from doing so. To the contrary, everything that I've read in the traditions and the twelve concepts states that our group has the full right to do as it pleases, so long as it doesn't harm AA as a whole. Given that there are many open discussion meetings such as ours around the world, I personally don't think there's any valid argument that our little meeting holds the slightest potential of harming anyone other than those who want to impose their narrow-minded view of AA on everyone else. Not sure if having your worldview "jiggled" constitutes a harm.

Mike

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|||||

+++Message 689. Re: GV Article by Bill W Only
Alcoholics may speak from podium
From: mlibby95814 11/25/2002 10:58:00 PM

|||||

Jared made some really good points and I'll try to restrict myself to historical issues from now on, even though there are times where past and present need to be discussed concurrently. I have no qualms with staying away from opinions as to what's right/wrong as I am all too often on the wrong side of that fence.

I have been intrigued by the questions surrounding the first of Jared's two questions: "What has historically been meant by "affecting other groups or AA as a whole"? By that, I'm curious as to what sort of matter (an action or practice made by a particular AA group) would satisfy this exception to the general rule of AA groups being autonomous? What sort of "affect" was required before a

group's autonomous act took themselves outside AA? In addition, I'm wondering what sorts of sanctions or consequences have been imposed over time when a particular group crosses the proverbial line?

The only historical story that I know that seems to deal with these issues (although it contains lots of gaps in terms of information...) is the story of the Middleton Group found in the chapter on Tradition 4 in the 12x12 (p.147-149). What I find interesting about this story is that nowhere in the story does it say that New York handled this wayward group by taking any action against them, all it says is that they advised the group against doing what it proposed (which included soliciting and accepting non-AA monies, and developing the infamous 61 rules and regulations for the group's operations. It does say that New York declined the group's request for a Charter (not sure what legal significance that had).

It does appear, without further facts, that the New York office (at least in Bill's telling of the story...) played a rather hands off approach to this matter. Nothing is said about delisting the group. Nor was anything said that because of the group's refusal to take New York's advice certain actions were taken against the group.

All that is stated is that the group's innovations ultimately failed and that the group's leader wrote to New York acknowledging this fact and the institution of Rule 62, "Don't take yourself too damn seriously."

What's interesting to me is that the story ends with a lesson not about proper corporate management techniques or group due process: it ends with the "moral" that under Tradition 4 "an AA group had exercised its right to be wrong." Moreover, they grew from the experience and gave witness to humility.

I guess my question to the group is whether there is any historical evidence that might shed further light on either the Middleton Group story or on how AA has dealt with such group "innovations" during it's history.

I do know something about some fairly recent actions by AAWS/GSO and some foreign GSO's (one of the Mexican GSO's and the German GSO) which involved a GSO taking a legal dispute against other members of AA to court. There was also, I believe, some threatened legal actions by the AAWS/GSO back in the 1990's re: the circle and triangle trademark issue (as I understand it, the threat was ultimately dropped because there was a strong likelihood that no such property right in the circle/triangle would be found in a court action). I don't know if such legal actions by AA is in line with past historical practice or the traditions.

reaffirmed by a conference advisory action in 1974.

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">1983: a reference to photographs be added to the Anonymity Card - the third paragraph to read as follows: Thus we respectfully ask that no A.A. speaker - or indeed, any A.A. member - be identified by full name or photograph in published or broadcast reports of our meetings.

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">1988: the 1971 General service Conference Action be reaffirmed: 'A.A. members generally think it unwise to break the anonymity of a member even after death, but in each situation the final decision must rest with the family' [note: this recommendation is not spelled out in the summary of advisory actions in 1971].

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">1993: each area delegate encourage discussions within all A.A. groups on the spiritual principles of Anonymity, including photographs, publications and posthumous Anonymity, as related to our Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions.

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">With the exception of photos of Bill W. and Dr. Bob I don't believe any conference approved literature contains the photo of any other alcoholics. Bill W. made two videos (Bill's Own Story and a talk on the Traditions). These videos are designated confidential for use within A.A. only (Bill's Own S

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">tory can be made available to Al-Anon groups under the same conditions). The film Markings on the Journey is also confidential for A.A. use only.

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">I attended a meeting where videos and photographs were taken for GSO Public Informa

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">tion purposes. The intent to tape and photograph was announced well in advance to the group and the photographers carefully ensured that member anonymity was preserved. A.A. approved

videos are edited to blur the face of members.

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">For our Area Archives, we accept photos of group facilities and far-distance photos of events (which obscure the identity of attendees). We decline any other kind of photo. My home group does not allow cameras at meetings. The Traditions emphasize 'personal anonymity'.

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Cheers

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Arthur

-----Original Message-----

From: Pat [mailto:patcoate@earthlink.net]

Sent: Wednesday,
November 27, 2002 5:47 AM

To:
AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Re:
Photographs

We had this same dilemma arise in our group on
Birthday Sundays, so

we wrote to the GSO to ask what they
thought. They said that each

group, of course, is autonomous -- but they
strongly suggested that

no photos of any kind be taken within the walls of
an A.A. meeting

of any kind. Hope this helps with some
ideas. It helped us.

--- In AAHistoryLovers@y..., "melb"
<melb@a...> wrote:

> Re: Photographs at Meetings

>

> I think it's usually a bad practice to take photos at AA meetings

unless

> there is a specific, well-defined purpose that has group

agreement. Group

> picnics, dances, etc., are another matter, and photos are usually

okay at

> these functions.

> Mel Barger

> ----- Original Message -----

> From: "leef007us"
<Lee007@s...>

> To: <AAHistoryLovers@y...>

> Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2002 8:41 AM

> Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Photographs

>

>

>> I was wondering if anyone could help me with the subject of

>> photographs taken at AA meetings. While I cannot find anything

>> specific in the literature that advises against this practice,

>> I often wonder what newcomers make of cameras being used in a

>> supposed anonymous setting.

>>

>> Are there guidelines or is it a group autonomy issue?

>>

>> Curious and confused in Canada.

>>

>> Lee F.

>>

>>

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He had been taken to court and was about to be committed to an asylum, but two men had gotten him off by promising to help him stop drinking. They had given him a few simple principles to follow and he had been sober ever since. Bill could stop drinking if he asked God to help him. He did and hasn't taken a drink since.

Bill described his miraculous recovery to other alcoholics; it worked with them too, and they organized Alcoholics Anonymous to pass the word along to other drinkers. The cure is not medical, but spiritual, yet it pays allegiance to no church or sect. The alcoholic simply puts his faith in some power greater than himself, and asks it to help free him from an overpowering habit. It makes no difference what a man calls this power or how he conceives of it so long as he believes in it. Most alcoholics recognize it as God, but atheists and agnostics have been cured too. Bill has outlined the cure in twelve specific steps, which contain four major points.

- 1) Alcoholics must accept their inability to drink like normal people. They must become absolute abstainers.
- 2) But alcoholics can become abstainers only when they have asked for divine assistance.
- 3) Then they must patch up the friendships and placate the enemies selfish drinking has made. Anger and resentment are almost as great enemies as alcohol.
- 4) And to make the cure permanent, the alcoholic must pass the word along to others, for "faith without works is dead."

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS is anonymous because it is a handicap to be known as a former alcoholic, and because its members make helping others an avocation. They are interested only in helping others. They do not condemn drinking as an institution, and they admire those who can drink moderately. As alcoholics they cannot.

Alcoholism is a medical-not a moral problem. It is a form of sickness which baffles medicine and religion; exhortation and "will power" are also useless. Alcoholics are not bums, but able, intelligent people who are apparently normal in everything but their drinking. They have such a constant craving for liquor that knowledge of its effect upon their health and happiness makes no lasting impression. They know that the first drink is poisonous, for it leads to another and another. But there is always an insanely trivial excuse for beginning the savage routine with the first-just one this time. Alcoholics frequently drink themselves into unconsciousness. When they come to, they must calm their jitters "with a little hair off the dog that bit them"; this nip makes them feel like having another, and so it goes.

Alcoholics live in a little world of their own-just themselves and the bottle. They lose their jobs and their friends when they drink, and they drink when they have no job or friends. Alcoholic addiction develops insidiously from small beginnings. Most alcoholics have been "social drinkers," but the situations which apparently created a desire for more and more liquor are as varied as the cases. Men have begun drinking heavily when they failed-and when they succeeded.

"I became acquainted with the `hilarious life' just when I was beginning to settle down," one ex-alcoholic writes in the book published by charter members of Alcoholics Anonymous. "My wife became pregnant and the doctor recommended the use of beer. Somehow or other, I must have misunderstood the doctor's instructions, for I not only made the beer for my wife, I also drank it for her.

"I discovered that a little shot of liquor now and then between beers put me in a whacky mood much quicker than having to down several quarts of beer to obtain the same results. I soon learned that beer made a very good wash for whiskey. Yes sir, the old boiler-maker and his helper. The last day of my drinking career, I drank twenty-two of them between 10 and 12 A.M."

And the consequences-

"In two years I had ten different jobs ranging from newspaper copy desk and rewrite to traffic director for an oil field equipment company. I was good for at least ten days or two weeks of every two months I worked, getting drunk and then half-heartedly sobering up.

"For eight months my daily routine was steady drinking. Even after slumping into bed late at night in a semi-stupor, I would get up at all hours and drive to some all-night spot where I could get what I wanted. All my troubles seemed to be piling up on me and liquor was the only refuge I knew.

"After holding good positions, making better than average income for over ten years, I was in debt, had no clothes to speak of, no money, no friends, and no one tolerating me but my wife."

The alcoholic makes resolutions: he will not drink before noon, he will drink only beer, he will drink whiskey only with milk, he will take just one drink, he will lay off altogether. Instead he often sells all his possessions, including his clothes, for liquor. Church and friends can do next to nothing with him-and doctors can do little more. One man had been to a sanitarium one hundred times, and several others began drinking again in ambulances on the way home from "cures."

"I remember one doctor," a former alcoholic writes, "who thought a course of seventy-two injections, three a week, after two weeks in a private hospital,

would supply the deficiency in my system that would enable me to stop drinking. The night after the seventy-second injection I was paralyzed drunk."

THERE ARE no qualifications for membership in Alcoholics Anonymous except a genuine desire to get well. For this reason, the most promising recruits are alcoholics of long standing. On the edge of collapse, they are ready to try anything. People who have been cured find the best insurance-and sometimes the only way to avoid a "slip"-is to help some one else. Members introduce friends, but more often they call upon strangers.

One member, tempted to have the fatal "one" on a lonesome week-end, forgot all about it when he called upon a minister who sent him to talk to several members of his congregation. The Alcoholics have volunteered their services to doctors, clergymen, endeavor societies, and State institutions. Every Sunday, the State sends twenty alcoholic patients down from Rockland State Hospital to a meeting in New York City.

Alcoholics Anonymous has no dues or officers, and the membership expands like a chain-letter. In five years it has grown to over 700. There are large groups in New York, Cleveland and Akron. Smaller ones have been started in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Washington and Houston.

The growth of the Houston group is an example of how members have enlisted half the alcoholics they have encountered and cured two-thirds of them through patience and sympathetic assistance. The man who started it is Larry....About six months ago Larry was in Cleveland, where he had spent three weeks trying to taper off a friend by drinking with him. The friend finally went to a sanitarium, where Larry visited him and met several members of the Cleveland Alcoholics Anonymous. A few days later when Larry was getting thoroughly drunk in his hotel room, he had a visit from an unfamiliar member of the Cleveland group. Larry wasn't interested. He wasn't an alcoholic; he just needed a little self-control. So they went to a bar. The Alcoholic drank coffee and bought Larry whiskey until he passed out.

The next evening when Larry was further gone than ever, he had another call from his new friend. Again they went to a bar where the friend finally persuaded Larry to go to a sanitarium, and drove him fifty miles in a blizzard to one endorsed by Alcoholics Anonymous. After eight hours of talk, the friend left at 4 A.M. Larry had taken his last drink. For a week, members of Alcoholics Anonymous visited him every day and on the fourth he accepted their program of recovery.

When he was discharged, his new friends lent him fare to Houston, where he got a newspaper job. Three weeks later he began a series of articles about Alcoholics Anonymous. The first one had hardly gotten into print when he received a call for assistance. He answered them all and began forming a new group. So far twenty people have been weaned and as many more introduced to

the Alcoholic's program. His newspaper has printed editorials about the work, and Larry has traveled hundreds of miles speaking before church and welfare groups.

WHEREVER Alcoholics Anonymous has an established group, all members meet regularly to discuss their experiences and encourage each other. There is fraternity, and there are reunions every week. "Reunion" is the only way to describe one of the New York meetings I attended a few weeks ago.

It was held in a large studio of an uptown concert hall. About 130 people - men and women of all ages and creeds - were present. Three alcoholics shook hands and introduced themselves to every one who came in. Every one looked comfortably prosperous - and extremely happy. All have gone through the same experience and are glad to explain it to strangers, for they know that only absolute frankness will satisfy the growing curiosity of churches and the medical profession.

BILL told me something about the organization and how it has grown. Keeping in touch with the various groups takes all his time now. The other men I talked to were quite frank about their experiences. One of them had just come from an uptown hotel, where he had been urging a prospect to go to a hospital. Another had been a member about a year. "I prayed the Lord to help me stop drinking," he said. "And then I asked him to bring me some more customers, and He did that, too."

"I've had nineteen jobs in sixteen years," a third man told me. "The last time I took a drink was at a Christmas party at the office. I'd been going pretty good, so I thought I'd have just one. That was on December 23 and I woke up on January 14."

The meeting itself consisted simply of talks by five ex-alcoholics. Each of them described how his faith in a power greater than himself had eliminated his desire for alcohol and brought renewed health, a job, friends, and resistance to temptation. All of the talks were brief, informal, and sincere. And in all of them was a repetitious theme; these people had not only given up alcohol, but they had also found new and happier lives - aspirations to work for and accomplishments to be proud of.

The chairman, an attractive woman of thirty, put it this way. "I first thought that alcohol was the only thing the matter with me. And then faith struck me between the eyes. I have learned more about faith in the three months since my one slip than during the eleven months before when I didn't touch a drop. All alcoholics are abnormal - not enough to be insane, but abnormal for them. We are all extremists. My greatest ambition now is to be a normal human being."

The meeting lasted about an hour and a half. The stories told by the speakers were familiar and encouraging because they renewed confidence in a

the
pamphlet
but
are not
detailed
in the
summary of conference advisory actions (M-39).

c)

11.0pt;font-family:Arial;">The wording change in the pamphlet (on page 16)
was changed from *'Whe__t__her*
open or closed, A.A. group mee__
italic;">t__
11.0pt;font-family:Arial;font-style:italic;">ings are
conduc__t__ed by A.A. members. A__t__
open mee__
11.0pt;font-family:Arial;font-style:italic;">t__ings non-A.A.'s may be
invi__t__ed
__t__o share, depending on __t__he
conscience of __
italic;">t__
11.0pt;font-family:Arial;font-style:italic;">he group_"
11.0pt;font-family:Arial;">to *'Whe__t__her*
open or closed, A.A. group mee__
italic;">t__
11.0pt;font-family:Arial;font-style:italic;">ings are
conduc__t__ed by A.A. members, who de__t__ermine
__t__he forma__
italic;">t__
11.0pt;font-family:Arial;font-style:italic;"> of __t__heir
mee__t__ings_".

d)

11.0pt;font-family:Arial;">In a precursor pamphlet titled
'Partners
in A.A.' (c. 1960) it describes 'open', 'closed' and
'public' meetings. An 'open' meeting was described as a (multiple) speaker
meeting and had the allowance of inviting a physician, psychiatrist,
clergyman, public official, author, etc.,

Arial;">to be one of the speakers. Discussion, Step, Tradition, Panel and
Beginners' meetings were defined as closed (for
alcoholics only). The public meeting was oriented to
public informa
11.0pt;font-family:Arial;">tion.

*

bold;">2.

A.A. Guidelines - Rela

bold;">t**

11.0pt;font-family:Arial;font-weight:bold;">ionship Be**

bold;">t**

11.0pt;font-family:Arial;font-weight:bold;">ween A.A. and AI-Anon (MG-8) *

a)

11.0pt;font-family:Arial;">This publication poses a possible source of confusion on the

matter. It states, in par

11.0pt;font-family:Arial;">t:

b)

—

bold;font-style:italic;">Ques__t__ion: _*

bold;">Should a group be affilia**t**

bold;">ed wi**

11.0pt;font-family:Arial;font-weight:bold;">t**h

bo**t*h

A.A. and AI-Anon?

_Answer: _As the

primary purpose of the A.A. group is to help

11.0pt;font-family:Arial;">the

sick alcoholic to recover and the primary

purpose of the AI-Anon Family Group is to help the AI-Anon to live with

herself or himself, as well as with

Arial;">the alcoholic, it is suggested they not be combined, but remain separate groups. This enables both Fellowships to function within their Twelve Traditions and to carry their messages more effectively. Thus, the

group

name, the officers, and the meeting should

be either A.A. or AI-Anon, but not both. "The A.A. Group"

pamphle

11.0pt;font-family:Arial;">t suggests, "Whether open or closed, A.A. group

meet

11.0pt;font-family:Arial;">ings are conduct

11.0pt;font-family:Arial;">ed by A.A. members. At open meetings, non A.A.s

may be invited

11.0pt;font-family:Arial;">to share, depending upon the conscience of the

group". Naturally, all are

welcome to

open meetings

of both

A.A. and Al-Anon groups.

c)

The MG-8 guideline citation to

the pamphlet, The AA Group, has not been updated to reflect the deletion of the words cited.

Cheers

Arthur

=====

+++Message 697. Johns Hopkins 20 Questions
From: kentedavis@aol.com 11/27/2002 8:05:00 AM

=====

The 20 questions is in a pamphlet "Memo to an Inmate" that is GSO approved and I was wondering if anyone had any information about its origin and use? I know several intergroups/central offices use a version of it. Our intergroup is considering using it in a pamphlet for newcomers. Can anyone be of help on its use or origin?

We have contacted GSO and Johns Hopkins but neither seem to have produced anything on it as yet.

Kent

=====

+++Message 698. RE: Photographs
From: Bob M 11/27/2002 7:11:00 PM

=====

Hi,

The fellow creating the footage for the video "Your AA General Service Office, The Grapevine and the General Service Structure" approached the 1997

General Service Conference for permission to shoot a few minutes of it. We refused, even though we were assured anonymity would be preserved, feeling it would interfere with the process. We realized, however, that showing the process was an integral part of what needed to be on the video. So we arrived at a compromise.

Near the end of our lunch period about half of us, all volunteers, filled the front few rows of the Conference floor. We conducted a mock Conference just for the photographer. That's what appears within this 20-minute video (VS-24).

bob

-----Original Message-----

From: Arthur Sheehan [mailto:ArtSheehan@msn.com]

Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2002 9:43 AM

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Subject: RE: [AAHistoryLovers] Re: Photographs

Conference advisory actions (under Public Information):

1968: the showing of the full face of an A.A. member at the level of press, TV and films is a violation of our tradition of anonymity, even though the name is withheld. This was reaffirmed by a conference advisory action in 1974.

1983: a reference to photographs be added to the Anonymity Card - the third paragraph to read as follows: Thus we respectfully ask that no A.A. speaker - or indeed, any A.A. member - be identified by full name or photograph in published or broadcast reports of our meetings.

1988: the 1971 General service Conference Action be reaffirmed: 'A.A. members generally think it unwise to break the anonymity of a member even after death, but in each situation the final decision must rest with the family' [note: this recommendation is not spelled out in the summary of advisory actions in 1971].

1993: each area delegate encourage discussions within all A.A. groups on the spiritual principles of Anonymity, including photographs, publications and posthumous Anonymity, as related to our Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions.

With the exception of photos of Bill W. and Dr. Bob I don't believe any conference approved literature contains the photo of any other alcoholics. Bill W. made two videos (Bill's Own Story and a talk on the Traditions). These videos are designated confidential for use within A.A. only (Bill's Own Story can be made available to Al-Anon groups under the same conditions). The film Markings on the Journey is also

confidential for A.A. use only.

I attended a meeting where videos and photographs were taken for GSO Public Information purposes. The intent to tape and photograph was announced well in advance to the group and the photographers carefully ensured that member anonymity was preserved. A.A. approved videos are edited to blur the face of members.

For our Area Archives, we accept photos of group facilities and far-distance photos of events (which obscure the identity of attendees). We decline any other kind of photo. My home group does not allow cameras at meetings. The Traditions emphasize 'personal anonymity'.

Cheers

Arthur

-----Original Message-----

From: Pat [mailto:patcoate@earthlink.net]
Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2002 5:47 AM
To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com
Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Re: Photographs

We had this same dilemma arise in our group on Birthday Sundays, so we wrote to the GSO to ask what they thought. They said that each group, of course, is autonomous -- but they strongly suggested that no photos of any kind be taken within the walls of an A.A. meeting of any kind. Hope this helps with some ideas. It helped us.

--- In AAHistoryLovers@y..., "melb" <melb@a...> wrote:

> Re: Photographs at Meetings
>
> I think it's usually a bad practice to take photos at AA meetings unless
> there is a specific, well-defined purpose that has group agreement. Group
> picnics, dances, etc., are another matter, and photos are usually okay at
> these functions.

> Mel Barger

> ----- Original Message -----

> From: "leef007us" <Lee007@s...>
> To: <AAHistoryLovers@y...>
> Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2002 8:41 AM
> Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Photographs

>

>

>> I was wondering if anyone could help me with the subject of

There was a very early list of questions to determine if a person was an alcoholic which came from Johns Hopkins University. Versions of this list were used back in the 1940's in A.A. pamphlets.

One version of the list was used in what I call the Detroit Pamphlet. I'm still doing research on that -- it appears as though the first PRINTED version of that set of four beginners lessons may have been produced by the A.A. people in Washington D.C. -- and I don't know whether they simply had a printer do multiple copies of a mimeographed work they had gotten from Detroit, or whether the A.A. group in Washington D.C. added stuff of their own.

A good deal of this Detroit Pamphlet -- or maybe we should call it the Detroit/Washington Pamphlet?? -- is reproduced verbatim in Wally P.'s Back to Basics Book -- in fact, in my own opinion, those are the worthwhile parts of that book.

At any rate, if you want to see that particular list (from the 1940's) of test questions which were said to come from the researchers at Johns Hopkins University, I have put the whole Detroit Pamphlet on my web site. This set of questions is too long (35 of them) to post on this web site.

The basic address for my web site is <http://www.iusb.edu/~gchesnut>

and the first of the four beginners lessons (with the test questions from Johns Hopkins) is at

<http://www.iusb.edu/~gchesnut/hsdetr1.html>

I have seen a slightly different version of these Johns Hopkins questions used in another early A.A. pamphlet, but I can't remember where right off hand. If this set of questions (from the 1930's or 1940's?) is the one you've got, that's why the people who are at Johns Hopkins now can't figure out what you've got -- almost none of the people on their faculty now were probably even born yet, at the time those questions were put together.

But please let me know whether the Detroit Pamphlet list matches up at all with your twenty questions in the Memo to an Inmate pamphlet.

Glenn Chesnut (South Bend IN)

----- Original Message -----

From: kentedavis@aol.com

Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2002 3:30 PM

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoo.com

Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Johns Hopkings 20 Questions

The 20 questions is in a pamphlet "Memo to an Inmate" that is GSO approved and I was wondering if anyone had any information about its

in place. Thanks, Mel. And, Happy Thanksgiving, everybody.

Michael O'Neil
DeBary, Florida

THE ROUNDTABLE OF AA HISTORY

April 12, 1998

Rowland Hazard (1881-1945)

Rowland Hazard was the sober alcoholic who brought the spiritual message of The Oxford Group to Ebby Thacher. Thacher carried the message to Bill Wilson. Wilson then based much of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous on Oxford Group principles. The rest is history; millions have recovered from alcoholism.

Hazard was born October 29, 1881 into a prominent, enormously wealthy Rhode Island industrial family. He was the oldest son of Rowland Gibson and Mary Pierrepont Bushnell Hazard. An unbroken line of Hazard men named Rowland dates back to 1763. His grandfather and great-great-grandfather had the same name. So: he sometimes used the name Rowland Hazard III. He named one of his companies, Rowland Third, Inc. The Hazard family's colonial roots dated back to 1635 and its members were large-scale landowners, manufacturers and people of learning in science and literature. They were respected widely as achievers and as philanthropists.

The family resided in a colony of estates at Peace Dale, Rhode Island. Oakwood was built in the 1800's by Rowland's paternal grandfather. Rowland lived from age 11 at Holly House. His Aunt Helen's home, The Acorns, was where 1941 Pulitzer Prize winning poet Leonard Bacon grew up. And, there was Scallop Shell, the home of Rowland's Aunt Caroline, on her return from serving as President of Wellesley College.

Rowland was the tenth generation of Hazards born in Rhode Island. The subject of this writing was a Yale graduate (BA, 1903). Some of his classmates called him, "Ike" or "Rowley". He sang in the varsity glee club and chapel choir and was a member of Alpha Delta Phi fraternity. Both his father and paternal grandfather had graduated from Brown University. The males on his mother's side of the family favored Yale. One of these was Eli Whitney, who invented the cotton gin.

Rowland spent the years immediately following Yale learning the various family businesses. He began at The Peace Dale Manufacturing Company, of Peace Dale Rhode Island, a woolen mill that produced much of the family wealth. That mill had made blankets for the Army during the Civil War. Rowland then moved on to work in family industries producing coke and coke ovens, soda ash, calcium chloride and soda bicarbonate in Chicago and

Syracuse, before returning to Peace Dale Manufacturing in 1906, as Secretary-Treasurer.

In October 1910, Rowland married his wife, Helen Hamilton Campbell, a Briar Cliff graduate, the daughter of a Chicago banker. They had one daughter and three sons. Two of their three sons were killed while serving with the U-S armed forces during World War Two.

Like many of his family, Rowland was active in Republican Party politics. He was a delegate to the 1912 national party convention, which re-nominated President William Howard Taft. Hazard was a Rhode Island State Senator from 1914 to 1916. Previously he had served as President of the South Kingstown, Rhode Island Town Council

When World War 1 began, Rowland became a civilian official of the Ordinance Department. But, he resigned later to accept a commission as Captain in the U-S Army's Chemical Warfare Service.

It's unclear precisely when Rowland's drinking problems began. The socially elite of that time were quite guarded about private family matters. But, relatives who were alive at the time this research began say they believe Rowland's alcohol problems began when he was quite young. These relatives note that covering up his heavy drinking was no problem for Rowland, because he was a member of the family that owned the businesses. And they conclude that he probably hit bottom hard before he decided to consult with doctors for help.

Rowland sought treatment for his rapidly progressing alcoholism from all of the major psychiatrists in the United States. None had an answer that worked. Dr. Sigmund Freud, according to legend, was too busy to take Rowland's case. So: in 1931, still drinking, at 50, Hazard traveled to Zurich, Switzerland, where he consulted Dr. Carl Gustav Jung---then considered, with the possible exception of Freud, the finest psychiatrist in the world.

Dr. Jung treated Rowland for his drinking problem. That much is clear from

Jung's correspondence with Bill Wilson, published in the AA book, "Pass It On". But, there are at least two different conclusions concerning precisely when, to what extent and at what intervals the treatment took place.

Some AA historians believe Jung treated Hazard, in Zurich, for almost a year and that Hazard then felt fully ready to return home to the United States--convinced he had solved his drinking problem, and that the solution was self-knowledge. They believe Rowland left Zurich by train and got as far as Paris before he got drunk. Other AA historians believe Rowland returned to the United States before he drank again. It's generally agreed that Hazard returned immediately to Zurich and Dr. Jung for an explanation

concerning his relapse.

But, records on file among the Hazard Family Papers in the Manuscripts Division of the Rhode Island Historical Society show that Rowland was in the United States for part of every month of 1931 and 1932, with the exception of a family trip to Europe from June 12 to September 10, 1931. During that time period, Hazard can be traced to France, on July 9, Italy on July 20 and apparently to England on August 13, 1931. Furthermore, there is no evidence in the records of the RIHS to suggest Hazard was in Switzerland at all during 1931 or '32. And RIHS officials note that the Hazard family commented quite freely, on other occasions, about Rowland's travels and treatment.

That Jung treated Rowland Hazard hardly seems in dispute. In his published correspondence with Bill Wilson, Jung said he treated him. But, the RIHS records make it appear unlikely that the treatment was seven days per week, for an entire year. It is possible the treatment took place over a one-year period, but was intermittent.

At the conclusion of treatment, following Hazard's relapse, Jung told Rowland that he had done everything he could for him, clinically. He told the despondent Hazard that psychiatry and medicine could do nothing more for him and that his only hope would be to have what the psychiatrist called a "vital spiritual experience". Dr. Jung further suggested that Rowland find what we would now call a "self-help group" to help him have such an experience.

Hazard joined The Oxford Group, a spiritual, evangelical group founded on first-century Christian principles and practices (prayer, meditation, and guidance). The Group was then at the height of its success and popularity in Europe. Through attending meetings and practicing the group's beliefs, Rowland had a conversion experience such as Dr. Jung had described, an experience that released him from the obsession/compulsion to drink. (There is disagreement among A.A. historians over whether Rowland's spiritual experience happened in Europe or the U-S. Most believe it happened in Europe.)

Some psychiatric experts call it a blessing that Dr. Freud was too busy to see Rowland. They say it's fortunate he consulted Dr. Jung. They point out that while Jung insisted the solution to Rowland's alcoholism was spiritual, a turning to God, a conversion experience: Freud would have condemned any such spiritual experience as a neurosis.

In the United States, Hazard connected with The Oxford Group in New York, led by the Rev. Dr. Samuel Shoemaker, at the mission of Calvary Episcopal Church, on 23rd. Street, in Manhattan.

In 1932, Rowland moved to Shaftsbury, Vermont. There, during August 1934, he heard from two other Oxford Groupers about Edwin Throckmorton "Ebby"

Thacher's pending six-month sentence to Windsor Prison for drunkenness and alcoholic insanity.

Hazard and fellow Oxford Grouper Cebra Graves attended Ebby's sentencing hearing in court at Bennington, Vermont. There are two conflicting accounts of what happened next. The first version says they told the presiding judge, Judge Collins Graves, Cebra's father, of their group's success in controlling alcohol problems and asked the Court to release Ebby to Rowland's custody. This version says Judge Graves consented. The second version says it was Judge Graves who asked Hazard to take Ebby under his wing and that Rowland consented. Both versions conclude the same way: that Ebby was released to Rowland's custody and, Rowland, Cebra and a third Group member, Shep Cornell, began taking Ebby with them to Oxford Group meetings in Vermont.

Ebby moved with Rowland to New York, later in 1934. And, it was there, during late November 1934 that Ebby Thacher, sober approximately two months, brought the message of recovery from alcoholism through the principles of The Oxford Group, to Bill Wilson, in Wilson's kitchen, at 182 Clinton Street, Brooklyn Heights. That visit would result, approximately seven months later, in the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Yet, Rowland Hazard, who played such a major part in AA's birth, returned to drinking. Records of the Hazard family indicate he was treated in 1933-1934 by the well-known lay therapist Courtenay Baylor.

In August 1936, the Hazard family paid to have Rowland brought home to Rhode Island from his ranch in Alamogordo, New Mexico, because his drinking had become still more serious. Rowland apparently consented. His younger brother, Thomas, authorized the use of funds from the family-owned Aguadero Corporation to cover the expenses.

But, later events tempt one to conclude that Rowland must have stopped drinking, again, at least for a time. From 1938 to 1939 he was associated with an engineering firm, Lockwood-Greene Engineers, Inc. From 1940 to 1941 he was an independent consultant. In 1941 he became vice-president and general manager of the Bristol Manufacturing Company of Waterbury, Connecticut. (Bristol was a leading manufacturer of industrial measuring and recording devices.)

Rowland Hazard died of a coronary occlusion, (a heart blockage) on Thursday, December 20, 1945, while at work in his office at Bristol Manufacturing. He was 64. The fact that he was a top executive of a major corporation at the time of his death suggests that Rowland had stopped drinking again. Nonetheless, some A.A. historians question whether he died sober.

He had stayed active in The Oxford Group and remained in the group after it changed its name to Moral Rearmament (MRA) in 1938. Some early AA members

believe that the idea of this particular kind of four week series of beginners' lessons started in Detroit, and that the idea (and maybe the actual materials in mimeographed form) were borrowed from Detroit by the A.A. group in Washington D.C., which actually first had it printed on a printing press.

The wording I have comes from Detroit, but it matches word for word with what Wally P. said was printed in Washington D.C. Do any archivists out there from the Detroit or Washington D.C. area have any light to shed on this?

Glenn Chesnut (South Bend IN)

Here are the actual questions, taken verbatim from the Detroit Pamphlet:

Suggested Test Questions

1. Do you require a drink the next morning?
2. Do you prefer a drink alone?
3. Do you lose time from work due to drinking?
4. Is your drinking harming your family in any way?
5. Do you crave a drink at a definite time daily?
6. Do you get the inner shakes unless you continue drinking?
7. Has drinking made you irritable?
8. Does drinking make you careless of your family's welfare?
9. Have you harmed your husband or wife since drinking?
10. Has drinking changed your personality?
11. Does drinking cause you bodily complaints?
12. Does drinking make you restless?
13. Does drinking cause you to have difficulty in sleeping?
14. Has drinking made you more impulsive?
15. Have you less self-control since drinking?

16. Has your initiative decreased since drinking?
17. Has your ambition decreased since drinking?
18. Do you lack perseverance in pursuing a goal since drinking?
19. Do you drink to obtain social ease? (In shy, timid, self-conscious individuals.)
20. Do you drink for self-encouragement? (In persons with feelings of inferiority.)
21. Do you drink to relieve marked feelings of inadequacy?
22. Has your sexual potency suffered since drinking?
23. Do you show marked dislikes and hatreds since drinking?
24. Has your jealousy, in general, increased since drinking?
25. Do you show marked moodiness as a result of drinking?
26. Has your efficiency decreased since drinking?
27. Has your drinking made you more sensitive?
28. Are you harder to get along with since drinking?
29. Do you turn to an inferior environment since drinking?
30. Is drinking endangering your health?
31. Is drinking affecting your peace of mind?
32. Is drinking making your home life unhappy?
33. Is drinking jeopardizing your business?
34. Is drinking clouding your reputation?
35. Is drinking disturbing the harmony of your life?

If you have answered yes to any one of the Test Questions, there is a definite warning that you may be alcoholic.

If you answered yes to any two of the Test Questions, the chances are that you are an alcoholic.

If you answer yes to three or more of the Test Questions you are definitely an alcoholic.

NOTE: The Test Questions are not A.A. questions but are the guide used by Johns Hopkins University Hospital in deciding whether a patient is alcoholic or not.

In addition to the Test Questions, we in A.A. would ask even more questions. Here are a few:

36. Have you ever had a complete loss of memory while, or after, drinking?
37. Have you ever felt, when or after drinking, an inability to concentrate?
38. Have you ever felt remorse after drinking?
39. Has a physician ever treated you for drinking?
40. Have you ever been hospitalized for drinking?

Many other questions could be asked, but the foregoing are sufficient for the purpose of this instruction.

----- Original Message -----

From: Arthur Sheehan

Sent: Thursday, November 28, 2002 12:40 PM

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Subject: RE: [AAHistoryLovers] Johns Hopkings 20 Questions

In a similar vein, the pamphlet "Is A.A. for you?" (P-3), contains a list of 12 questions. They are not word-for-word identical to the 20 questions in the pamphlet "Memo to an Inmate who may be an Alcoholic" (P-9) but essentially cover the same subject matter in terms of identifying the consequences of drinking. Based on the publication numbers it seems that the "Is A.A. for you?" pamphlet predates the "Memo to an Inmate" pamphlet (unless publication numbers have been recycled by GSO in the past).

I can't confirm it as factual, but didn't the pioneering NCEA (Marty Mann et al) also circulate information to the public, in the form of a series of questions, to help determine how to identify a problem with alcohol?

Cheers and happy Thanksgiving History Lovers

Arthur

Michael O'Neil
DeBary, Florida

THE ROUNDTABLE OF AA HISTORY

April 12, 1998

Rowland Hazard (1881-1945)

Rowland Hazard was the sober alcoholic who brought the spiritual message of The Oxford Group to Ebby Thacher. Thacher carried the message to Bill Wilson. Wilson then based much of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous on Oxford Group principles. The rest is history; millions have recovered from alcoholism.

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Some AA historians believe Jung treated Hazard, in Zurich, for almost a year and that Hazard then felt fully ready to return home to the United States--convinced he had solved his drinking problem, and that the solution was self-knowledge. They believe Rowland left Zurich by train and got as far as Paris before he got drunk. Other AA historians believe

Rowland returned to the United States before he drank again. It's generally agreed that Hazard returned immediately to Zurich and Dr. Jung for an explanation concerning his relapse.

But, records on file among the Hazard Family Papers in the Manuscripts Division of the Rhode Island Historical Society show that Rowland was in the United States for part of every month of 1931 and 1932, with the exception of a family trip to Europe from June 12 to September 10, 1931. During that time period, Hazard can be traced to France, on July 9, Italy on July 20 and apparently to England on August 13, 1931. Furthermore, there is no evidence in the records of the RIHS to suggest Hazard was in Switzerland at all during 1931 or '32. And RIHS officials note that the Hazard family commented quite freely, on other occasions, about Rowland's travels and treatment.

That Jung treated Rowland Hazard hardly seems in dispute. In his published correspondence with Bill Wilson, Jung said he treated him. But, the RIHS records make it appear unlikely that the treatment was seven days per week, for an entire year. It is possible the treatment took place over a one-year period, but was intermittent.

At the conclusion of treatment, following Hazard's relapse, Jung told Rowland that he had done everything he could for him, clinically. He told the despondent Hazard that psychiatry and medicine could do nothing more for him and that his only hope would be to have what the psychiatrist called a "vital spiritual experience". Dr. Jung further suggested that Rowland find what we would now call a "self-help group" to help him have such an experience.

Hazard joined The Oxford Group, a spiritual, evangelical group founded on first-century Christian principles and practices (prayer, meditation, and guidance). The Group was then at the height of its success and popularity in Europe. Through attending meetings and practicing the group's beliefs, Rowland had a conversion experience such as Dr. Jung had described, an experience that released him from the obsession/compulsion to drink. (There is disagreement among A.A. historians over whether Rowland's spiritual experience happened in Europe or the U-S. Most believe it happened in Europe.)

Some psychiatric experts call it a blessing that Dr. Freud was too busy to see Rowland. They say it's fortunate he consulted Dr. Jung. They point out that while Jung insisted the solution to Rowland's alcoholism was spiritual, a turning to God, a conversion experience: Freud would have condemned any such spiritual experience as a neurosis.

In the United States, Hazard connected with The Oxford Group in New York, led by the Rev. Dr. Samuel Shoemaker, at the mission of Calvary Episcopal Church, on 23rd. Street, in Manhattan.

In 1932, Rowland moved to Shaftsbury, Vermont. There, during August 1934, he heard from two other Oxford Groupers about Edwin Throckmorton "Ebby" Thacher's pending six-month sentence to Windsor Prison for drunkenness and alcoholic insanity.

Hazard and fellow Oxford Grouper Cebra Graves attended Ebby's sentencing hearing in court at Bennington, Vermont. There are two conflicting accounts of what happened next. The first version says they told the presiding judge, Judge Collins Graves, Cebra's father, of their group's success in controlling alcohol problems and asked the Court to release Ebby to Rowland's custody. This version says Judge Graves consented. The second version says it was Judge Graves who asked Hazard to take Ebby under his wing and that Rowland consented. Both versions conclude the same way: that Ebby was released to Rowland's custody and, Rowland, Cebra and a third Group member, Shep Cornell, began taking Ebby with them to Oxford Group meetings in Vermont.

Ebby moved with Rowland to New York, later in 1934. And, it was there, during late November 1934 that Ebby Thacher, sober approximately two months, brought the message of recovery from alcoholism through the principles of The Oxford Group, to Bill Wilson, in Wilson's kitchen, at 182 Clinton Street, Brooklyn Heights. That visit would result, approximately seven months later, in the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Yet, Rowland Hazard, who played such a major part in AA's birth, returned to drinking. Records of the Hazard family indicate he was treated in 1933-1934 by the well-known lay therapist Courtenay Baylor.

In August 1936, the Hazard family paid to have Rowland brought home to Rhode Island from his ranch in Alamogordo, New Mexico, because his drinking had become still more serious. Rowland apparently consented. His younger brother, Thomas, authorized the use of funds from the family-owned Aguadero Corporation to cover the expenses.

But, later events tempt one to conclude that Rowland must have stopped drinking, again, at least for a time. From 1938 to 1939 he was associated with an engineering firm, Lockwood-Greene Engineers, Inc. From 1940 to 1941 he was an independent consultant. In 1941 he became vice-president and general manager of the Bristol Manufacturing Company of Waterbury, Connecticut. (Bristol was a leading manufacturer of industrial measuring and recording devices.)

Rowland Hazard died of a coronary occlusion, (a heart blockage) on Thursday, December 20, 1945, while at work in his office at Bristol Manufacturing. He was 64. The fact that he was a top executive of a major corporation at the time of his death suggests that Rowland had

stopped drinking again. Nonetheless, some A.A. historians question whether he died sober.

He had stayed active in The Oxford Group and remained in the group after it changed its name to Moral Rearmament (MRA) in 1938. Some early AA members said they knew Rowland because he sometimes visited the old 24th. Street clubhouse, which Bill, Lois and others had established during early June 1940 in a former stable at 334½ West 24th Street, in Manhattan. But, there is no evidence that Rowland Hazard ever joined AA.

-0-

SOURCES: AA publications "Alcoholics Anonymous", "Pass It On" and "The Grapevine" (May 1995); The Hazard Family Papers, Manuscripts Division of The Rhode Island Historical Society and Rick Stattler, Curator; "Not-God" by Ernest Kurtz; "Ebby The Man Who Sponsored Bill W." by Mel B; "Lois Remembers" by Lois Burnham Wilson; "Bill W." by Francis Hartigan; The Archives of the AA General Service Office and The Providence Journal. .

-0-

I'm very grateful for the above sources. Any mistakes are my own.

-0-

Researched/written for The Roundtable of AA History by: Mike O. (Michael O'Neil), of The Just Do It Big Book Study Group of Alcoholics Anonymous, DeBary, Florida. Updated/revised periodically through July 2001.

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|||||

+++Message 704. Re: Johns Hopkins 20 Questions
From: melb 11/29/2002 12:08:00 AM

|||||

i»¿
Hi All,
Glenn's Detroit list caught my attention. I moved to Pontiac, Michigan, in

September, 1950, a few months after getting sober in my home state, Nebraska. Detroit AA seemed very exciting to me, and I lived there in 1951 and '52. I also attended lots of Detroit meetings during the nineteen years I lived in Jackson, Michigan.

In all this time, I never came across that list or pamphlet. But I don't doubt that it existed and was probably used by different members.

Here is a bit of speculation: The founder of Detroit AA was Archie Trowbridge, who is "The Man Who Mastered Fear" in the Big Book. Archie spent many months living with Dr. Bob and Anne Smith in Akron before returning to Detroit and launching AA there. Could it be that these questions came out of Akron in some way?

While it's nice to have the list, I think the 12 questions that are issued today by AA World Services do the job nicely.

Mel Barger
Toledo, Ohio

----- Original Message -----

From: Glenn Chesnut

To: AA AA History Lovers

Sent: Thursday, November 28, 2002 9:37 PM

Subject: Re: [AAHistoryLovers] Johns Hopkins 20 Questions

Since there are members of this web group who are interested in traditional tests to see if someone should be diagnosed as an alcoholic, I thought I would put the actual questions from the Detroit Pamphlet on this web site -- I don't know whether we are talking about the same fundamental set of test questions or not. I have the full pamphlet on my own web site at Indiana University,
<http://www.iusb.edu/~gchesnut/hsdetr1.html>

I myself believe that these old Johns Hopkins questions are better than any of the test questions I see around at alcohol awareness tables and so on nowadays -- particularly the grading system! If you take the test yourself, don't look at the grading system until you get to the end and have tabulated your score! (And be honest about question 22, you guys.)

As I indicated previously, there are some (including Wally P., who quoted from this pamphlet verbatim very extensively in his Back to Basics Book) who believe that the idea of this particular kind of four week series of beginners' lessons started in Detroit, and that the idea (and maybe the actual materials in mimeographed form) were borrowed from Detroit by the A.A. group in Washington D.C., which actually first had it printed on a printing press.

The wording I have comes from Detroit, but it matches word for word with what Wally P. said was printed in Washington D.C. Do any archivists out there from the Detroit or Washington D.C. area have any light to shed on this?

Glenn Chesnut (South Bend IN)

Here are the actual questions, taken verbatim from the Detroit Pamphlet:

Suggested Test Questions

1. Do you require a drink the next morning?
2. Do you prefer a drink alone?
3. Do you lose time from work due to drinking?
4. Is your drinking harming your family in any way?
5. Do you crave a drink at a definite time daily?
6. Do you get the inner shakes unless you continue drinking?
7. Has drinking made you irritable?
8. Does drinking make you careless of your family's welfare?
9. Have you harmed your husband or wife since drinking?
10. Has drinking changed your personality?
11. Does drinking cause you bodily complaints?
12. Does drinking make you restless?
13. Does drinking cause you to have difficulty in sleeping?
14. Has drinking made you more impulsive?
15. Have you less self-control since drinking?
16. Has your initiative decreased since drinking?
17. Has your ambition decreased since drinking?
18. Do you lack perseverance in pursuing a goal since drinking?
19. Do you drink to obtain social ease? (In shy, timid, self-conscious individuals.)

20. Do you drink for self-encouragement? (In persons with feelings of inferiority.)
21. Do you drink to relieve marked feelings of inadequacy?
22. Has your sexual potency suffered since drinking?
23. Do you show marked dislikes and hatreds since drinking?
24. Has your jealousy, in general, increased since drinking?
25. Do you show marked moodiness as a result of drinking?
26. Has your efficiency decreased since drinking?
27. Has your drinking made you more sensitive?
28. Are you harder to get along with since drinking?
29. Do you turn to an inferior environment since drinking?
30. Is drinking endangering your health?
31. Is drinking affecting your peace of mind?
32. Is drinking making your home life unhappy?
33. Is drinking jeopardizing your business?
34. Is drinking clouding your reputation?
35. Is drinking disturbing the harmony of your life?

If you have answered yes to any one of the Test Questions, there is a definite warning that you may be alcoholic.

If you answered yes to any two of the Test Questions, the chances are that you are an alcoholic.

If you answer yes to three or more of the Test Questions you are definitely an alcoholic.

NOTE: The Test Questions are not A.A. questions but are the guide used by Johns Hopkins University Hospital in deciding whether a patient is alcoholic or not.

In addition to the Test Questions, we in A.A. would ask even more questions. Here are a few:

36. Have you ever had a complete loss of memory while, or after, drinking?

37. Have you ever felt, when or after drinking, an inability to concentrate?

38. Have you ever felt remorse after drinking?

39. Has a physician ever treated you for drinking?

40. Have you ever been hospitalized for drinking?

Many other questions could be asked, but the foregoing are sufficient for the purpose of this instruction.

----- Original Message -----

From: Arthur Sheehan

Sent: Thursday, November 28, 2002 12:40 PM

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Subject: RE: [AAHistoryLovers] Johns Hopkings 20 Questions

In a similar vein, the pamphlet "Is A.A. for you?" (P-3), contains a list of 12 questions. They are not word-for-word identical to the 20 questions in the pamphlet "Memo to an Inmate who may be an Alcoholic" (P-9) but essentially cover the same subject matter in terms of identifying the consequences of drinking. Based on the publication numbers it seems that the "Is A.A. for you?" pamphlet predates the "Memo to an Inmate" pamphlet (unless publication numbers have been recycled by GSO in the past).

I can't confirm it as factual, but didn't the pioneering NCEA (Marty Mann et al) also circulate information to the public, in the form of a series of questions, to help determine how to identify a problem with alcohol?

Cheers and happy Thanksgiving History Lovers

Arthur

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=====

+++Message 705. RE: Re: Photographs
From: Ed 11/29/2002 10:55:00 AM

=====

"Bill W. made two videos (Bill's Own Story and a talk on the Traditions). These videos are designated confidential for use within A.A. only (Bill's Own Story can be made available to Al-Anon groups under the same conditions). "

Does anyone know where I can get these videos???

Thanks

Ed S

PS. I want you all to know that I'm very grateful for all the info you great people have been providing. You all really help me stay sober and you all bring joy to my life.

=====

+++Message 706. RE: Johns Hopkins 20 Questions
From: Arthur Sheehan 11/29/2002 12:11:00 PM

=====

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Below is info from four AAWS pamphlets for comparison to the John Hopkins questions circulated by Glen:

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

a)
P-9 - *Memo **t**o an Inma**t**e who may be an Alcoholic* (3/88 version): a pocket size pamphlet that contains 20 questions among much other info.

It suggest that for three or more 'yes' answers 'you may be an alcoholic".

1.

Did you lose time from work due to drinking?

2.

Did drinking make your
home life unhappy?

3.

Did you drink because you
were shy with people?

4.

Has drinking affected your reputation?

5.

Have you gotten into trouble with money because of your drinking?

6.

Did you associate with people you didn't respect and hang out in places you
didn't want to be in when drinking?

7.

Did your drinking make
you careless of your family's welfare?

8.

Has your drinking
decreased your ambition?

9.

Did you want a drink 'the morning after'?

10.

Did you have a hard time sleeping because of
your drinking?

11.

Has your ability to work decreased since
drinking?

12.

Did drinking get you into trouble on the job or in business?

13.

Did you drink to escape from problems or
worries?

14.

Did you drink alone?

15.

Have you ever had a
comple

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">te loss
of memory as a result of drinking?

16.

Has a doctor ever treated you for drinking?

17.

Did you drink to build up
self-confidence?

18.

Have you ever been arrested, locked up, or hospitalized on account of
drinking?

19.

Have you ever felt guilty after drinking?

20.

Did you have to have a drink at a certain time each day?

b)

P-3 - *Is AA for you?* (6/98

version): a brochure which contains 12 questions with some brief commentary
after each question.

It suggests that for four or more 'yes"
answers 'you are probably in trouble with alcohol".

1.

Have you ever decided to stop drinking for a week or
so, bu

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">t only
las

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">ted for a
couple of days?

2.

Do you wish people would
mind

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">their own

business about your drinking - stop telling you what to do?

3.

Have you ever switched from one kind of drink
10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">to another in hope that this would keep you from getting drunk?

4.
Have you ever had to have an eye-opener upon awakening during the past year?

5.
Do you envy people who can drink without getting into trouble?

6.
Have you had problems connected with drinking during the past year?

7.
Has your drinking caused trouble at home?

8.
Do you ever try to get 'extra' drinks at a party because you do not get enough?

9.
Do you tell yourself you can stop drinking any time you want to, even though you keep getting drunk when you don't mean to?

10.
Have you missed days of work or school because of drinking?

11.
Do you have 'blackouts'.

12.
Have you ever felt that your life would be better if you did not drink?

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

c)
F-9 - *A Message **t**o Teenagers* (5/97 version): an illustrated brochure which contains 12 questions (two are multiple questions).

It suggests that a 'yes'

answer

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">to any

one of

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">the questions then 'maybe it's time

you took a serious look at what your drinking might be doing to you".

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

1.

Do you drink because you
have problems? To relax?

2.

Do you drink when you get mad at other people, your friends
or parents?

3.

Do you prefer to drink alone, rather than with others?

4.

Are your grades starting to slip? Are you goofing
off on your job?

5.

Did you ever try to stop drinking or drink less
- and fail?

6.

Have you begun to drink in the morning before school
or work?

7.

Do you gulp your drinks?

8.

Do you ever have loss of
memory due to your drinking?

9.

Do you lie about your drinking?

10.

Do you ever get into trouble when you're
drinking?

11.

Do you get drunk when you drink

even when you don't mean to?

12.

Do you think it's cool to be able to hold your liquor?

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

d)

P-36 - *Is AA for me?* (4/01

version): a pamphlet with illustrations and brief commentary on the questions.

It contains 12 questions and instructs 'Answer each question yes or no. Yes answers will tell you if A.A. is for you".

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

1.

Have I tried to stop drinking for a week or so, bu

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">t could not do it?

2.

Have I wished people would s

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">top talking about my drinking?

3.

Have I changed drinks to try not to get drunk?

4.

Do I ever need a drink to get going in the morning?

5.

Do I envy people who can drink without getting into trouble?

6.

Does my drinking cause problems at home?

7.

Does my drinking cause problems with other people?

8.

Do I try to get extra drinks?

9.
Have I tried to stop drinking but still got drunk?

10.
Have I missed work or cut school because of drinking?

11.
Do I have blackouts - times I cannot remember?

12.
Would my life be better if I quit drinking?

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">I remember in the mid-1980's, in San Jose, Ca, (and surrounding cities) that it was quite common for groups to have a single sheet flyer with 20 questions. I believe it was distributed by the San Jose Central Office.

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Endearingly, at many an A.A. meeting, it seemed almost a badge of honor to claim to have answered yes to all 20.

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Cheers

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Arthur

-----Original Message-----

From: Glenn Chesnut [mailto:gfchesnut@msn.com]

*Sen**t**

bold;">:* Thursday, November 28, 2002 8:38 PM

To: AA AA History Lovers

*Subjec**t**.* Re:

[AAHistoryLovers] Johns Hopkins 20 Questions

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italic;">remorse_ after drinking?

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40. Have you ever been hospitalized for drinking?

Many other questions could be asked, but the foregoing are sufficient for the purpose of this instruction.

----- Original Message -----

From: Arthur
Sheehan

Sent: Thursday,
November 28, 2002 12:40 PM

To:
AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Subject: RE:
[AAHistoryLovers] Johns Hopkings 20 Questions

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a similar vein, the pamphlet 'Is A.A. for you?' (P-3), contains a list of 12 questions. They are not word-for-word identical to the 20 questions
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I can't confirm it
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help determine how to identify a problem with alcohol?

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">New York, NY 1993
"Beyond your wildest dreams"

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Cleveland, OH 1992
"Back to Basics"

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">San Francisco, CA 1991 "There
is a Solution"

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Montreal, PQ 1990
"Heart to Heart around the World"

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Salt Lake Ci
Arial;color:black;">ty, UT 1989 "Carry
the
Message"

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Nashville, TN 1988
"I am Responsible"

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Boston, MA 1987
"SOBAH"

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Miami, FL 1986
"Sunlight of the Spirit"

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Denver, CO 1985
"A Magnificent Reality"

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Chicago. IL 1984

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Cincinnati, OH 1983

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">New York, NY 1982

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Minneapolis, MN 1981

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Tucson, AZ 1980
"Sweet Surrender"

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Vancouver, BC 1979

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">atlan
Arial;color:black;">ta, GA 1978

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Houston, TX 1977

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Philadelphia, PA 1976

"The Spirit of 76"

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Memphis, TN 1975

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Indianapolis, IN 1974

"We've only just begun"

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">San Francisco, CA 1973

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Cleveland, OH 1972

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Reno, NV 1971

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Fort Wor

Arial;color:black;">th, TX 1970

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Philadelphia, PA 1969

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Toronto, Ont. 1968

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Denver, CO 1967

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">St. Louis, MO 1966

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Long Beach, CA 1965

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Detroi

Arial;color:black;">t, MI 1964

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Columbia, SC. 1963

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Hamilton, Ont. 1962

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Milwaukee, WI 1961

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Philadelphia, PA 1960

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Chicago, IL 1959

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:black;">Niagara Falls, 1958

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Cheers

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Arthur

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

-----Original Message-----

From: Andy [mailto:andywalthall@yahoo.com]

*Sen**t**

bold;">:* Saturday, November
30, 2002 2:33 AM

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

*Subjec**t**:* [AAHistoryLovers]

Re: ? - First Young People's Conference was
when?

ICYPAA was in Niagara Falls, 1958

Andy

--- In AAHistoryLovers@y..., "Troy" <tdpoppl@y...> wrote:

> Good Morning Everyone,

>

> I am curious as to when the first Young People's
Conference was and

> where. Any help is appreciated.

>

> Love and Service,

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A.A.'s can write for further information. Their addresses are listed in the front of the A.A. Directories for the U.S. and Canada.

In the mid-1970's, when feelings against "special purpose" groups were at their height, the point was made that these should not be called "special purpose" groups since all A.A. groups have the same purpose: sobriety. Rather, they are "special composition" groups. In 1977, after tempers had cooled down a bit, Dr. Jack Norris, then Chairman of the General Service Board, made a presentation on the subject to the Conference. He said, in part: "When other requirements are added that might seem to exclude some alcoholics, these should be considered A.A. meetings and not A.A. groups. We have never discouraged A.A.'s from forming special-purpose meetings of any or all kinds to meet the needs of interested individuals, but we have been hesitant to consider as groups those that might seem to exclude any alcoholic, for whatever reason.

"Many members feel that no A.A. group is special and, therefore, that no group should be labeled as such or even give the impression that it is 'special.' However, the fact is that such groups do exist...These groups feel that 'labels' serve the purpose of attraction (providing double identification) and are not intended to imply exclusion of other alcoholics."

In a Grapevine article in October of the same year, K.S. said, "When I discussed the purpose of such groups with people who attend them, they expressed a definite belief that they could not be entirely open about themselves in most regular A.A. groups. . . Homosexuals believe that the specifics of their emotional relationships would not be understood or accepted in regular A.A. meetings. Young people are convinced that their life -styles...are not understandable to older members. And professionals feel they get more understanding from those they consider their peers, particularly in matters relating to their conduct in their professions when they were active alcoholics.

"Furthermore, there seems to be genuine concern about anonymity" -- especially, K.S. noted, among people whose professional status calls for licensing, homosexuals who are in groups made up mostly of heterosexuals, and young people who were once involved illegally with drugs. "Members of special groups are certain that many of their kind would never be able to get themselves to A.A. if they had to enter through a regular group. Whether or not we agree with this thinking, the point is that many alcoholics do believe in it. And they believe in it seriously enough to form these special groups and make them work."

Women

Women's groups were probably the first special groups to form. The first Women's group in the world is believed to be one started in Cleveland, Ohio, in June 1941. The following year, Ruth B. wrote G.S.O. from Minneapolis,

"There has been some discussion here of having the women alcoholics meet in a separate group. We have heard that women do meet in separate groups in Chicago and Cleveland...We have less than a dozen women alcoholics in Minneapolis, only four of whom are very active..." Bobbie B. replied, "I suggest you write directly to Marion R., 12214 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, Ohio. Marion is the secretary of a women's group out there who recently celebrated their first anniversary. New York who has about 40 women alcoholics on their lists, 25 of whom have been dry since contacting A.A., holds a meeting once every two weeks for women only..." At about the same time, Bobbie received a similar query from Harrisburg, Pa., and replied in part, "There are over 60 in the New York [women's] group. This is remarkable, because when I first met the group a little over two years ago, there were only 2, and some thought that perhaps this program just wouldn't work for women." In a letter which Grace O. of New York wrote Bill W. in 1945, she said, "Our gal's group now has 19 newcomers -- all in seven weeks!

San Diego, California, has had a women's group that has met continuously, every week, since September 1945. It met first at the office of the husband of one of the members, but soon rotated among the homes of the various women. By February 1946, a strong nucleus of 15 members made it possible to rent a meeting place of their own. The first Women's group in Salt Lake City listed itself with G.S.O. in the spring of 1952. Significantly, a special session for Women members was included in the program of the First International Convention of A.A. in 1950 in Cleveland. No attempt has been made to keep a count of women's groups over the years, but it is safe to say they exist in almost any sizeable community where there is A.A.

The reason was touched upon in a letter from the Archivist, Nell Wing, replying in 1979 to an inquiry from a woman writer. She explained, "It was difficult for a woman to approach AA. in the late '30's or early '40's, and more difficult still to be accepted in an A.A. group. It was generally felt by male members that women had no place in an A.A. meeting where their presence was considered by many to be a disturbing factor. Since much of the success of the A.A. program centered around a one-to-one relationship (especially in the beginning years of the Fellowship), there was a perhaps justifiable concern that a side effect of sharing and practicing the program together might result in some hanky-panky." When an occasional woman alcoholic showed up, men felt it best not to sponsor her and often turned her over to the wives of A.A. members to befriend and offer support. As more women came in, they were actively encouraged to form their own groups.

"Duke" P., who came into A.A. in 1940, explains (with his wife Katie's corroboration) that there was sometimes resistance to women attending regular meetings by the spouses -- from both sides! That is, the wives of the men were suspicious of the motives and the behavior of the women alcoholics. And if the woman newcomer was married, her husband would forbid her to spend evening after evening with a bunch of men. So the answer was to form women's groups.

Women in A.A. decided to meet in a national conference of their own in February 1964. The purpose was "to provide a forum to share experiences common to women alcoholics; to discuss problems of particular interest; to provide opportunities to Share with women from other areas; and to learn how to be of greater service to those who still suffer." At the first National A.A. Women's Conference, held in Kansas City, Missouri, 45 women were present. It has been held annually ever since, and attendance has grown to several hundred. The permanent motto of the event is, "The Language of the Heart Will Be Spoken Here."

Black Alcoholics

Alcoholics Anonymous always welcomed any alcoholic, in principle — regardless of race, color, religion or any other characteristic that might otherwise set him apart. However, A.A. is inescapably a part of the society in which it exists. And when the Fellowship was founded -- and for three decades thereafter -- de facto discrimination against Blacks was accepted in many places. Later, and indeed even now, when a Black alcoholic comes into a white A.A. meeting, even though he may be warmly welcomed with every effort made to make him feel at home, he often feels "different" and is likely to drift away.

Although alcoholism is rampant in the Black community, A.A. has never enjoyed a percentage of Black membership equivalent to the percentage of Blacks in the general population. Joe McQ., himself the first Black member of A.A. in Little Rock, Arkansas, believes cultural differences mitigate against Blacks seeking help -- in A.A. or elsewhere. In his day, he says, from the viewpoint of the young Black male, his world was divided rather sharply between the pious, spiritual-singing church-goers who were teetotalers; and the bottle-drinking, hip group who hung out in the pool halls and on the street corners. And the drinkers identified any nondrinker as a part of the pious group, of which they wanted no part. This stereotype has faded in the last two decades with the rapid assimilation of Blacks into the general society, but the fact that A.A. is not reaching Black alcoholics as it should has been a continuing concern of the General Service Board and G.S.O.

The problem was to be the topic of a General Sharing Session on a Board weekend in January 1986. Garrett T., the first Black Trustee (1983-87), shared that when he came to A.A., Blacks were not welcomed at white meetings in Washington, D.C., so his home group has always been a Black group, the Mideast. It was brought out that in keeping with its Traditions, A.A. has not taken an aggressive or advocative role with regard to racial causes, but has "let it happen." The result, in A.A., has been that in many parts of the country, integration came earlier and easier than segregation (i.e., formation of Black groups.)!

The first inquiry received at G.S.O. from a "colored" alcoholic came from Pittsburgh in 1943. In reply to the next inquiry in October 1944, Bobbie B.

wrote, "We do not have a colored group anywhere and the problem is popping up more and more every day. In Pittsburgh they have ~ colored member, and I suggest you write and find out how the situation is handled there." In 1945, however, there were Black groups in both Washington, D.C., and St. Louis, Missouri. In January of the following year, a group started in Los Angeles and within a year had 20 members. In June, the Outhwaite group in Cleveland, Ohio, registered at G.S.O. with eight members. And a month later there was news of a colored group in Charleston, South Carolina. In the same period, colored groups began in Kansas City, Missouri, and Toledo, Ohio.

By 1947, the pace picked up. A colored group began in New York's Harlem, and two were reported in New Jersey. Philadelphia's first negro group met for the first time at the end of June, and a group was formed in Cincinnati. The first negro group in Crowley, Louisiana, was started in May 1949. By 1952, there were about 25 known negro groups, according to Ann M., who was especially dedicated to helping A.A. reach Black alcoholics. As no effort has been made at G.S.O. to distinguish Black groups from others in the A.A. Directories, it is next to impossible to trace their growth in the intervening decades, nor to estimate the present number. They are obviously very strong in Northern Ohio; Detroit, Michigan; Washington, D.C.; Atlanta, Georgia; and probably in most major cities with concentrations of Black population.

Young People

When A.A. was young, most of the members were not. The majority of those whose alcoholism had brought them to their knees were middle-aged. On the other hand, there has always been a sprinkling of younger alcoholics, who were regarded almost as curiosities; in fact, many of today's long-time members came in at a relatively youthful age -- or they wouldn't still be around! There were enough Young People in A.A. by 1950 that the First International Convention that year in Cleveland included a session for them! Then, as A.A. grew older in the '50's and '60's, more alcoholics began showing up in their early thirties, their twenties and even their teens.

There were several reasons for this trend. Awareness of alcoholism was much higher, so those with a problem sought help earlier. The stigma was steadily reduced. Drugs, as they became more available and more commonly used by young people, hastened their progression and ultimate desperation. Later on, treatment centers turned out large numbers of younger graduates. And here, as always in A.A., the principle that "like attracts like" applied. When a youthful alcoholic hesitantly approached a group for the first time and saw another youth, he or she was more likely to stay. And when a kid -- rejecting his family (or rejected by them) and running with a street crowd -- found acceptance, a new way of life and evident joy in A.A., his young alcoholic peers were sometimes attracted to see what had happened to him.

In 1985, one of the better known examples of A.A.'s ability to turn a young person's life around was the story of June G., who came to Alcoholics Anonymous in Venice, California, in 1972 at the age of 13. The product of delinquent, violent, alcoholic parents June was pathologically suicidal as a child, and had been turned out onto the street before she had reached her teens because she had physically abused her mother as a result of her own drinking and drugging. Beaten up in a gang fight, the waif attempted suicide once more, and ended up in the hospital. From there, she was induced to go to an A.A. meeting. And she kept showing up, as she had nowhere else to go. "I hated the people there, and they avoided me," she says. Her appearance and dress, her language and her attitude were unacceptable. "It was a year before I put on shoes," June admits. But she kept coming, and gradually some of the adult members -- and particularly a caring sponsor -- took her under their wing. They virtually adopted her -- gave her a place to sleep, slowly changed the way she dressed, persuaded her to attend school, made her get some kind of work. June G. went on to high school, then the university, then law school -- and today practices as a public defender in the court system of the City of Los Angeles. A charming, lovely looking, smartly attired young lady of 26 (in 1985), June has 13 years of solid sobriety -- thanks to her only "family": Alcoholics Anonymous.

Typically, the path of most young people coming to A.A. was not without obstacles. Many in the '60's told how they were ignored or scorned by older members at regular A.A. groups. "You're too young to be an alcoholic," they were told. "Go out and do some more drinking." One speaker at a young people's A.A. convention said, "As I was leaving one of my first meetings, I overheard an older member remark, 'I've spilled more booze than that young punk has drunk' He probably had, but it was the alcohol I had drunk -- not what he spilled -- that made my life unmanageable.

And even when a regular group made them feel welcome, the young people sometimes felt different for the same reasons that nonalcoholic youngsters feel different from adults; they dressed differently, talked differently, and had different fears and hang--ups.

Some helpful insights into young people in A.A. were gained from a strictly unofficial study done in 1976 by Darlene L., a college student and A.A. member in Southern California, assisted by Jerry F., the then Delegate. The project consisted of distributing questionnaires addressed to "under 30" A.A.'s in that area. Darlene got 79 replies from which she drew her conclusions. The first discovery was that three out of four had a parent or other close relative who was an alcoholic (a much more startling fact in 1976 than today!). Many respondents had attended their first A.A. meeting as a child; in the company of a parent, so they knew where to come when they got into trouble themselves. The second discovery was that the young persons' progression into serious alcoholism was very fast; within three years of beginning to drink regularly, they knew they had a problem. Similarly, the study revealed they realized their powerlessness over alcoholism very early,

enabling them to overcome their denial syndrome. Most of the young alcoholics had also been drug users, greatly speeding up their reaching a bottom. And finally, when they came to A. A., most identified with the alcoholism of the older members but had problems arising out of their identity as young people.

So the younger members in various parts of the country began banding together in their own groups. The first known group "for men and women under 35" was formed in January 1946 in Philadelphia. Within a year, it had about 30 members and an admirable record of sobriety. The same year, in October, a similar group was started in San Diego, California, but for young men only. It was followed within months by a young women's group. In 1947, a "35 and under" group began in New York City "with a mere handful." But three years later, it had 75 to 100 alcoholics.

A September 1961 Grapevine article on these "Youth Groups" states, "In some places, naturally enough, (they) were started with high hopes and flood-tide energy, but little stable or wise leadership. Groups turned into social clubs, or other Traditions were broken, and groups died." But in the long run, most of the groups survived and became viable, because they filled a need. "One girl admitted, 'I guess we just rebel more at our age, even in A.A. groups. And here, I don't have to try to compare my drinking with that of fellows who reminisce about bathtub gin or speakeasies.' And another fellow said, 'My young people' s group helps me with current problems. Because I'm young, I have lots of domestic, professional and other personal problems. Getting started in a career or starting a family are not problems most older members are now facing, so we younger ones can face them together and help one another. That's in addition to helping each other stay sober -- which always comes first.'"

Young people's groups were often regarded with suspicion by older groups. Not uncommonly, they were not included in the local service structure because they were "not A.A." But the youngsters continued doing their thing and gradually came to be not only accepted but admired. In the 1961 article, the Milwaukee A.A. Central Office secretary is quoted as saying, "These young people's groups are the lifesavers of A.A. in our area. The service workers under 35 are where we get most of our best volunteers who keep our Central Office functioning. They're the ones we can count on most to take on Twelfth Step jobs, institutional work and public information tasks."

The young people's groups -- along with young people from regular A.A. groups -- banded together in 1958 to form the International Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous, or ICYPAA (pronounced "Icky-Pa") for short. They held their first convention at Niagara Falls, New York, April 26-27, 1958. Less than a hundred people attended. The event has been held annually ever since in different cities from coast to coast, and the attendance now runs 3,000 or more, and are eagerly bid for by young A.A. 's in the host regions and eagerly sought by the convention bureaus of host cities.

Predictably, the large conventions and the existence of ICYPAA caused more controversy within conventional A.A. than the individual young people's groups. It was immediately accused of being some kind of non-affiliated splinter group. Older A.A.'s felt vaguely threatened. ICYPAA leaders kept insisting, "We're not a separate movement or a breaking-away from Alcoholics Anonymous. The Ninth Tradition says 'we may create service committees directly responsible to those they serve.' Our primary purpose is to carry the message to younger alcoholics."

The resistance from regular AA. groups has now generally disappeared. Trustees from the General Service Board (including its Chairman) now routinely and delightedly attend the annual ICYPAA conventions -- and sometimes the regional ones, too. Past members of young people's groups have become trusted servants, Delegates and even Trustees. (George D., past Pacific Regional Trustee, was a former member of the first young people's group in Los Angeles.) The Conventions are very large supporters of G.S.O. At the invitation of the General Service Board, ICYPAA leaders have attended a Board sharing session, and they gave extremely valuable assistance in arranging subjects to be interviewed and filmed for A.A.'s documentary film targeting young people. These are the future of A.A.

Seniors

Ironically, this influx of young people into the Fellowship has led older members of A.A. to form a number of groups and meetings for senior citizen alcoholics. The first of these is believed to be the Golden Years group started in North Hollywood, California, in 1978. "Teet" C., one of the founders, says they had seen older alcoholics "fall by the wayside because they felt they did not belong in large 'wide-open' A.A. meetings." He adds, however, that all newly sober elders are cautioned against making the Golden Years group their sole participation." Many of the members are long-timers with 25 to 40 years' sobriety, who try to help the newcomer break through his or her denial. In the last decade, many other "over-40", "sober seniors" or "golden years" groups have formed throughout the country. A.A. has recognized the special needs of the older alcoholic with the publication of the pamphlet, "Time To Start Living", including a large-type edition. A.A. has exhibited at conventions of the American Association of Retired People, and the staff member on the CPC assignment has also attended.

Homosexual Alcoholics

Homosexual --i.e., gay and lesbian alcoholics have found help and recovery in Alcoholics Anonymous from its very early days. Bill W. refers to them in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and in a 1958 letter expresses deep sympathy and concern. The dedication and talents of gay and lesbian A.A. members have often led them into service, where they have contributed enormously in all capacities including Delegate and Trustee. Almost never

overt in their lifestyle, they have been completely accepted.

In 1975, Lillen Fifield published a study of alcohol abuse in the Los Angeles gay community entitled, "On My Way to Nowhere: Alienated, Isolated, Drunk." Its title suggested the author's theory to account for the high incidence of alcoholism among homosexuals -- which is reflected in the number of homosexual A.A.s in that city. The point was made that A.A. serves unique needs for gay and lesbian alcoholics over and above those of straight alcoholics. The former are frequently estranged from their families at an early age, and hence feel rejected, lonely and "different" -- which makes them especially vulnerable to alcoholism. Add to this that their social life usually revolves around gay bars, partying and drinking. When they reach their bottom and come to A.A., they find in recovery not only a new way of life and new values, but also an acceptance and, indeed, a new "family" they have never had before.

Therefore, in large cities with a significant homosexual population -- New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, Boston - gays and lesbians came to A.A. as early as the 1940's and in increasing numbers ever since. Going back to the late '40's and more noticeably in the '50's and '60's, there were groups in certain neighborhoods such as Greenwich Village and the East Side of Manhattan in New York, and downtown San Francisco, which were primarily composed of gay people, though they were not listed or designated as gay groups. "We were getting along fine," recalls a gay A.A. member in San Francisco, "with plenty of gay people getting sober in groups downtown or Mann or East Bay which were predominantly gay but also had a rich diversity of people."

However, although the gays identified with the drinking and the feelings of straight A. A. 's, they sometimes had difficulty being comfortable or openly sharing their experiences and problems. And so, in San Francisco in about 1967, some people felt they wanted a group which was exclusively gay. It is recalled that there was considerable debate and controversy within the gay A.A. community whether or not to do it, but it was finally decided to give it a try downtown at the Episcopal Church on Fell Street. At first, the members identified themselves with names and "I'm a gay alcoholic." Shortly, however, most of them dropped saying "gay" and said simply, "I'm an alcoholic." "We regarded this just as a place where homosexual alcoholics could come who were intimidated in coming to a straight A.A. group," a founder says. "We had no idea of creating something in which people would come in and get sober and spend their entire A.A. life. But that's what's happened, and if we hadn't done it, someone else would. And someone else was indeed doing it in other cities. In Washington, D.C., for example, four alcoholics - two gay and two lesbian - gathered for a meeting in a private home on December 8, 1971. All of them found an exclusively homosexual group extremely helpful. They continued meeting on Sundays at two homes in nearby Virginia until the summer of 1972, when Cade W. and Bob W approached Fr. Goodrich of St. James Episcopal Church and

requested meeting space. He gave his permission. A later pastor said, "If it had gone to the Vestry Council, it would have been turned down." Soon a Wednesday Step meeting was added to the Sunday meeting at St. James. Besides Cade and Bob, early members included Blanche M., Gerry Kay T., Tom H., Ray C., Vern W., Barbara C., Nancy T. and Dennis L.

In early 1974, Ray C. started the St. Margaret's open speaker meeting on Friday evenings. The Lambda group in Virginia followed on Saturday nights. A Big Book meeting began at St. Thomas in late '75, and the Montrose group began a month later. A.A. groups for gays continued to grow and in 1985 Washington, Maryland and Virginia had 15 groups with about 40 meetings a week.

As similar patterns of growth occurred in other cities, and A.A. groups for gays began to appear in other locations, the need was felt for a directory of gay/lesbian groups. (Since 1974, they were listed, without special designation, in A.A.'s Directories for U.S./Canada, by Conference action.) For this purpose as well as to provide a contact point for homosexual alcoholics, the International Advisory Council for Homosexual Men and Women in Alcoholics Anonymous was organized. They also publish a helpful pamphlet. The Council is listed in the front of the A.A. Directories, along with contacts for other special composition groups, and the Council has worked with G.S.O. to help provide workshops and social events for gay/lesbian A.A.'s at International Conventions since 1980. However, gay members in other cities are quick to point out that the Council does not speak for all gay A.A.'s, nor is it responsible to them. "Some of us out here," says a member in San Francisco, "are a little nervous and a little resentful at the recognition given to this particular bunch."

The question of listing groups for homosexuals raged in Los Angeles (and some other localities) long after the Conference had decided it at the national level. The problem in Southern California was due not only to the large number of such groups, but it was further complicated by the existence of a whole coterie of groups for gays who called themselves "Alcoholics Together." They pressured the Los Angeles Central Office to list them in the local meeting directory. Actually, however, "Alcoholics Together" were religious in origin and, though they patterned themselves after all aspects of the A.A. program, they were not A.A. -- which finally settled the issue.

In 1975, an ad hoc group of gay A.A. 's in Northern California decided they would put on an A.A. round-up. A gay member who tried to help them says the trouble was, none of the Sponsoring group had more than two years' sobriety. "They made a lot of mistakes, including putting out a flyer that was carefully designed to offend almost everybody, without their realizing they were offending anybody." Howls of protest were heard as far as the G.S.O. in New York, and the local Delegate was asked to meet with them and try to straighten them out. Subsequently, a second flyer was produced, and when it was shown to staff member Cora Louise B. during the Conference, she

remarked, "My, this is as proper and decorous as an invitation to a coming-out party in Greenville, Mississippi!"

That first round-up in 1976 was a great success, with about 200 in attendance from as far away as Vancouver, British Columbia, and Los Angeles. They immediately wanted to go home and have a similar event of their own and so the idea spread. The format of the ICYPAA conferences was followed in many cases. Criticism has been heard that the largest of these round-ups in New York and San Francisco, drawing around 2,000 people, have gotten far afield from A.A. in their workshops. But other recent local gatherings of gay A.A.'s have been "pure, basic A.A. -- absolutely marvelous!" according to one discriminating member.

Doctors in A.A.

Bill W. courted the favor of doctors toward Alcoholics Anonymous. He considered medical recognition of alcoholism as a disease to be critical to A.A.'s future, and he valued doctors as a resource to reach the still-suffering alcoholic and refer him to A.A. However, though the co-founder was a doctor and another doctor's personal story was included in the first edition of the Big Book, it was not fully recognized that doctors had a more direct relationship with A.A. as recovered drunks. Doctors are statistically more prone to alcoholism than any other profession; yet they are less prone to recognize their problem or accept help from anyone other than another doctor.

It was the late Dr. C.P., of Cape Vincent, New York, who, after Joining Alcoholics Anonymous in 1946, realized that doctors in A.A. needed to band together to help other doctors. The first meeting of ten doctors was held in the garage of Dr. Clarence P. in Clayton, New York, in 1947. As three of them were Canadians, they were "International" from the beginning. Clarence then issued an invitation through the Grapevine, which resulted in a gathering of 25 doctors from all over, in late summer 1949. Those present agreed that an annual gathering, held in different parts of the U.S./Canada, would be a desirable addition to their attendance at local A.A. meetings the rest of the year.

The annual meetings have been held the first weekend in August every year since, at various locations including Chicago, Denver, San Antonio, San Diego, Toronto, New York, etc., etc. Guest speakers, in and out of A.A., representing fields connected with alcoholism, are featured, with plenty of time for regular A.A. sharing. There are no dues, but a modest registration fee at the annual meeting covers expenses of the meeting, postage for the year, and a contribution to G.S.O.

The International Doctors in A.A., as they call themselves, have upwards of 2,000 on their confidential mailing list --including names in Australia, New Zealand, South America, South Africa, Japan, etc. All are assumed to be

active in their local A.A. groups as well. The IDAA itself is organized loosely like an A.A. group, with a Secretary-Treasurer who maintains the mailing list, corresponds with newcomers, and circulates newsletters periodically. Dr. Lewis "Luke" R., of Youngstown, Ohio, has had the position through most of IDAA's existence. Regional meetings and groups, organized by local A.A. doctors, have also been successful and well attended.

The majority of IDAA members are medical doctors --physicians, surgeons, psychiatrists, etc. The membership also includes dentists, psychologists, veterinarians and medical scientists such as biochemists and microbiologists. "Through our association with this group," states Dr. "Luke" R, "we hope to better cope with and understand our own problems, the problems of other doctors, and most certainly the problems of our patients."

Lawyers in A.A.

Admittedly indebted to the International Doctors in A.A. for advice and inspiration, a number of lawyers in A.A., led by Igor S. of Hartford, Connecticut, founded the International Lawyers in A.A. at a meeting in Niagara Falls, Ontario, in September 1975. Twenty lawyers were present, 16 from Canada and four from the U.S.

They met in September of the next year in Buffalo, New York, at what they called their second annual convention. Again, about 20 were present. The conventions have continued ever since.

They shared their drinking experiences and identified strongly with their common difficulties in the practice of law when drinking alcoholically. They widened their focus to discuss when and under what circumstances they should divulge their A.A. membership, and how best to extend a hand to colleagues or clients in trouble with booze. They concluded they were in a position to carry the A.A. message effectively without risking their professional reputations or practices. Like IDAA, the ILAA viewed themselves not as a special-purpose group, but rather as a supplement to attendance at regular A.A. meetings and a "vestibule" for lawyers with a drinking problem to meet with other lawyers before entering mainstream A.A.

Igor S. says, "ILAA emphatically does not seek to form a separatist or elitist group. Instead, it serves as a sharing community, demonstrating to the frightened, guilt-laden lawyer that he is not alone."

Concurrently with the founding of International Lawyers in A.A., state bar associations began to set up procedures to identify alcoholism or drug abuse in the profession and to provide help. Local lawyer's groups were able to assist by offering their experience, strength and hope to those in trouble.

Airline Pilots in A.A.: "Birds of a Feather"

With airline pilots, an alcohol problem had large and terrifying dimensions.

If they were discovered, even in recovery they would lose their jobs, under FAA regulations. They had no secure place to go to attend A.A. meetings. "We had a constant, gut-wrenching, sweat producing fear of being found out -- even after treatment," says one pilot in A.A.

The first discussion of the special needs of alcoholic airline personnel for treatment and subsequent recovery in A.A. was held in the early summer of 1975 between Mike M., an airline dispatcher at the Seattle-Tacoma (SEA-TAC) airport, and Larry Haynie, then director of the Alcoholism Treatment Center at Puget Sound Hospital in Tacoma. Mike had also been discussing with Ward B., a pilot, the need for an airmen-only A.A. meeting, so he was drawn into a second appointment with Haynie. These three are considered the co-founders of what came to be called "Birds of a Feather" (BOAF). The first organized group meeting was held Friday, December 5, 1975, in a conference room at Puget Sound Hospital.

It soon included Rudy D., who vigorously championed the need for a secret, protective meeting. His airline had just announced that they had no alcoholic pilots, because if they found one, they would fire him. Al J. also became an active organizer and contact for the "Birds."

From that modest beginning, BOAF grew to about 90 names throughout the world. Their meetings, which they call "nests," are held usually at or near airports in Atlanta, Washington, Denver, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago, La Jolla, Seattle, Burlingame and Morristown, N.J. In June 1981, the formation of a "nest" at Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, made the "Birds" truly international, in addition to "solo" members in Ireland, Germany, Iceland and India. Membership has broadened to include other licensed cockpit crew besides pilots. Birds of a Feather meetings are simply closed A.A. meetings at which the strictest anonymity is observed. They are registered at G.S.O., but are not listed in any A.A. Directories (except for the address of the national contact) or local Intergroup meeting lists.

In 1978 the need was recognized for a national BOAF body to coordinate the meetings and serve as a communications link. John R. was appointed its first secretary, followed by Chuck C., Al J., Pat W., Grant B. and Ron D. A newsletter, the "Bird Word," is circulated periodically. In December 1982, Renton, Washington, hosted the first international convention of the Birds, followed by Atlanta and Chicago. In addition, every December 7, the Washington, D.C., "nest" hosts a "Pearl Harbor Day" meeting attended by several hundred ex-airmen from the military as well as current pilots. The Pearl Harbor day meeting pre-dates BOAF by many years and has none of its secrecy.

Other Special Composition Groups

The hearing impaired may be more susceptible to alcoholism than hearing people because of their isolation and sense of being "different." And their

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">The pamphlet "The AA Group" is likely the most direct source. It seems to boil down to the basic question of 'what is an A.A. group'?"

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10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">The 10/99 version pamphlet states:

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10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">'Some A.A.s come together as specialized A.A. groups - for men, women, young people, doctors. Gays and others. If the members are all alcoholics, and if they open the door to all alcoholics who seek help, regardless of profession, gender or other distinction, and meet the other aspects defining an A.A. group, they may call themselves an A.A. group".

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">In the past, the pamphlet attempted to define distinctions among a (1) group, (2) mee ting or (3) ga thering.

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10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">The first 'special interest' group is likely documented in 'Jim's Story' in the pioneer section stories in the Big Book. In the early 1940's he joined what he claims was the first 'colored group' in A.A. He is also mentioned on page 37 of 'A.A. Comes of Age'. Racial prejudices of the times influenced this.

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10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Most of the debate I hear on the matter seems to focus on whether 'special interests' (1) help promote the legacy of unity or not, and (2) whether or not they stray from the principle of singleness of purpose of the Fellowship.

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10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Cheers

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10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Arthur

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

-----Original Message-----

From: Shawn Murphy
[mailto:3des@linuxmail.org]

Sent: Thursday, November 28, 2002
10:38 PM

To: AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Subject: [AAHistoryLovers]
"special interest" groups

I'm looking for information reagrding the first
"special interest"

A.A. groups, e.g. "men's meetings" &
"women's meetings" and also

looking for an online source for WSO approved
literature and

pamphlets (are there pamphlets that deal
specifically with the

concept of special interest groups?)

Thanks,

~Shawn

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group, send an email to:

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+++Message 713. Need Critical Reviewers to Comment on
History of AA in Fort Worth, TX
From: Arthur Sheehan 12/2/2002 10:28:00 AM

=====

Dear
AA History Lovers

I'm
looking for critical reviewers to comment
on a written history of the story of the part of A.A. in Fort Worth, Texas. The material is contained in a Microsoft Word document and is 153kb in size. Rather than distribute the document to the entire group please individually reply if you'd like to be a reviewer and I will send you the material via separate e-mail.

Thanks
in advance for your assistance

Arthur

=====

quietly left. He showed his great desire to see perpetuated in A.A. what he had worked so hard to accomplish.

Bill Wilson closed the meeting, speaking for an hour. He reviewed A.A. from its beginning to the present time and expressed belief that this Conference cemented all A.A. groups into one vast enterprise, and that the important thing is not the single group, but their combination.

It was impossible for anyone to attend this Convention without coining away with the awareness of how insignificant all of us should be in this work, but yet how important it is that we as individual members never, by word or thought, should do anything to detract from the work.

Our one thought must be: How can I repay a little of so much that has been given to me?

After the 1950 International Conference, the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous and its standing committee(s) assumed the entire responsibility of organizing and planning for A.A. International Conventions.

Our 20th Anniversary International Convention was held in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1955. At this historic Convention, Bill W. declared that A.A. had come of age. It's when the leadership of A.A. was turned over to the General Service Conference, the structure to which local groups, area committees, and Conference delegates expressed the collective conscience of Alcoholics Anonymous. The paid registration was 3,800, although it was said that probably about 5,000 were actually there. The Convention incurred a net loss of \$16,000—an enormous amount of money in those days.

But this financial loss did not discourage the Northern California group of representatives. In September 1955, they asked that the 1956 Conference approve a proposal that anniversary Conventions of Alcoholics Anonymous be held every two years, that the location be shifted geographically to permit a maximum number of members to attend, and that the 1957 Convention be held "somewhere in California." On a voice vote, the proposal was defeated overwhelmingly. Later in the same Conference session, following a stirring comment by one of the California delegates, the Conference voted unanimously to recommend to the General Service Board that the next Convention be held in California. So the 1960 International Convention was held in Long Beach. The California AA's sponsored the show and dance which were a great success, and the proceeds were turned over to the General Service Board, resulting in a net income for that Convention.

In 1965, we moved to Toronto. Approximately 10,500 were in attendance for the Fellowship's 30th anniversary. And it was at the big Saturday night

meeting that AA's from around the world declared individually and in unison: "When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible." This Convention was also self-supporting financially.

At our 35th Anniversary Convention in 1970 at Miami Beach, Florida, 10,700 were present, almost 300 more than in Toronto. This Convention was a success Fellowship-wise and financially. And it was there on the stage Sunday morning at the Spiritual Meeting that our co-founder Bill W. made his last public appearance.

The size of our International Conventions was continuing to grow. In 1974, the trustees' International Convention Committee recommended that a convention consultant be hired to assist us in dealing with convention bureaus, convention centers, decorators, bus companies, etc. Time has proved that this kind of expertise pays for itself by keeping expenses down.

What happened in the early 1970's with the proliferation of alcoholism agencies and treatment centers is history, but could not be foreseen when planning for our 40th Anniversary Convention in Denver. We had anticipated an attendance of 14,000, but when July 4, 1975, came, 19,300 had registered. Three times during the weekend, fire alarms went off due to the smoking and overcrowding, and the entire Denver Fire Department showed up, fully equipped with axes, hoses, and screaming sirens. And the surplus of funds from this weekend was \$83,000—an embarrassing amount of money when you're aiming to more or less break even.

Our 45th Anniversary International Convention was held in New Orleans, with A.A. members from over 30 countries. This time, for a number of reasons (the major factor being inflation), we experienced a net loss of \$203,000. The Convention itself was a fabulous success, with a record registration of 22,500. In 1981, there was a Conference action recommending that all future events of this type be self-supporting.

Within the next month or two, we will be in full swing planning for our 50th

Anniversary Convention in Montreal. We have booked 13,000 rooms, the Olympic Park Stadium and the Convention Center in preparation for our celebration.

We have also hired a completely bilingual convention consultant, who has been

of great assistance to us in working out contracts with the Olympic Park

Stadium and the Convention Center.

As I mentioned earlier, the General Service Board of A.A., through its

*Mark**ings on ***the Journey* - item number M-57 * (SS-100 Spanish over-dubbing) price \$16.00 (please consider checking this one out as well).

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Note *: *Mark**ings on ***the Journey* is a new revised version showing the history of A.A. from materials from the A.A. Archives.. I haven't seen the new one yet but Delegates were given a preview screening at the 2002 General Service Conference. Our Area Delegate said it received a standing ovation.

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10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">The videos are classified 'confidential' (available to A.A. members only) and the catalog asks that they be ordered through your group. What this boils down to is getting your group's GSO ID number (listed in the Directory for your Region - or available from your GSR) and providing it at the time of order.

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10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">GSO accepts orders by mail, fax, phone and e-mail. MasterCard and VISA are also accepted.

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Phone Order entry department (8AM - 4:45PM eastern time) 1-212-870-3312

Fax 24 hour availability, 1-212-870-3137 or 1-800-437-3584

E-mail orders@AA.org

Mail (should use a pre-printed order form and mail it to)

A.A.
World Services

PO Box 459

Grand
Cen
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New
York

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">, NY 10163

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10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Happy viewing

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10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">Arthur

10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">

-----Original Message-----

From: Ed
[mailto:fxst@adelphia.net]

Sent: Friday, November 29, 2002
9:56 AM

To:
AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com

Subject: RE: [AAHistoryLovers] Re:
Photographs

Importance: High

"Bill W.
made
10.0pt;font-family:Arial;color:navy;">two videos (Bill's Own Story and a
talk on the Traditions). These videos are designated confidential for use
within A.A. only (Bill's Own Story can be made available to Al-Anon
groups under the same conditions). "

Does anyone know where I
can get these videos???

Thanks

Ed S

PS. I want you all to
know that I'm very grateful for all the info you great people have been
providing. You all really help me stay sober and you all bring joy to my
life.

To unsubscribe from this

they say; I don't believe that anybody else in AA is quite as bad as I was and, in many ways, still am."

This feeling of being a little bit worse than and therefore a little bit different from anybody else in AA stayed with me for many years. I could not shake a maudlin sense of unworthiness. I would lick it for a while and think, 'Now I've made it. Now I'm really sober - on the program in thought as well as deed.' Then the old self-doubts would return, and I would sink into yet another long, black depression.

Thank God for AA and the meetings and thank God for my wonderful friends in AA. I had help, and so I was able to stay sober. And I could say to myself, 'I have a great many wonderful friends. Since they like and love me enough to stick by me, I can't be all that bad.' The person I couldn't really sell was myself. Trying to talk, pray, and work myself out of these moods was like trying to push an angleworm uphill on a rainy day. It couldn't be done. Of course, I dramatized this soggy condition. I called it 'my inner sense of bleeding loss.' I thought that perhaps I was trapped in the coils of original sin. My, my, how I did carry on! And then would come another mood swing, and I would feel on top of the world again. Life was wonderful, everything was coming my way. I would never, never have another depression. And then, when something came along to upset me, back I would go into another long, dark tunnel, that surely, this time, was for eternity!

Well, I did work and pray and persist. And my friends did hang on, God bless them all. And I did keep going to meetings, no matter how I felt, and I tried to do Twelfth Step work, even when my pigeons were in better shape than I was! I knew one thing: I had not really been able to let go and let God. I did not trust anybody but me to get me out of this. Oh, I kept right on praying, as best I knew how. But it was that same old sense of apartheid - a spiritual segregation from life - that was the problem. It had been my problem. It had been my problem when I was drunk, too.

One day, a couple of years ago, I was walking along a sand road on the West Coast of Florida, when an answer came to me. I suddenly said to myself, 'I want everybody whom I hate or fear, everybody who has ever injured me, or whom I may have injured - I want them all to be as happy as I want to be. I want them to be happy right now, wherever they are.' And then I thought of a couple of people and named them out loud and said, 'I want you to be happy.' Something happened. It was as if a black bird flew suddenly out of my heart. I felt a wonderful sense of peace, and my eyes filled with tears.

After that, things began happening. The first thing that happened was that I slowly stopped fearing these people. I went through the whole time span and forgave them retroactively and in the present and on into the future. I forgave them forever, and in this way I slowly began to forgive myself. This self-forgiveness brought new self-respect. Even when things went wrong, I didn't hate myself as I had.

edition, stresses themes that seem of the greatest importance to him now - responsibility and gratitude to AA: 'It distresses me particularly when I see older members gradually drop out of the picture.'

No Graduation from AA!

This question has been asked of me on more than one occasion: 'If you had it to do over again, would you change your story in the Big Book?' My story (titled 'Rum, Radio and Rebellion') was written after nine years of sobriety in AA. Today, after twenty-one years of this new way of life, I will let the story stand, however much I would like to add to it. I have been very fortunate in having the opportunity to speak at AA conferences, banquets, and state conventions. (Join AA and see the world!) And here I want to give just a short qualification and spend more time on what Alcoholics Anonymous means to me. Nine years of AA certainly did not qualify me on two subjects I now like to stress (not that I am fully qualified on these now, or ever will be): the spiritual part of our program and the responsibility to our group and to AA as a whole.

My opinions on these subjects are not mine alone, but are what I have gathered from many who have been in the program for a long time and are still working it successfully one day at a time.

I came into AA in 1945. I believed in God, but that was about the limit of my spiritual qualifications. Actually, I was in the program about three years before I found comfort and deep satisfaction in prayer. Insight gradually came to me through the voices of older members. I became convinced through meditation and prayers (Step Eleven) that I had neglected one of the most important facets of our program.

When we moved into a new home and district several years ago in Pittsburgh, various ministers called inviting us to attend their churches. It became a little embarrassing to my wife at times when the minister was groping around to find out just what our religion was. One young minister came quickly to the point by asking, 'Mrs. W-----, just what is your husband's religion?'

Without hesitancy, she said, 'Alcoholics Anonymous.'

His reply was 'I don't know of a better one!'

Of course AA is not a religion, but it is most definitely a spiritual program. In my years in this Fellowship, I have yet to see a happy member who does not seek and take advantage of the spiritual benefits to their fullest extent.

Our responsibility to our group, to AA as a whole, and especially to General Service is a subject dwelt upon far too lightly by many of our members. It distresses me particularly when I see older members gradually drop out of

the picture. Not only do we need their good experience, but they should be grateful enough to carry on the message as their responsibility to the future of Alcoholics Anonymous and, in many instances, to their very own sobriety.

I'll never forget one individual who approached me several years ago. He opened conversation by stating that I probably did not remember him, but six years ago I had brought him to his first AA meeting. He went on to say that it did not "take" until three years later, when he found himself on skid row and remembered me and the meeting I took him to. He then sought AA again. He had been sober three years and had driven over 200 miles to thank me for showing him the way.

That night I gratefully thanked God for my sobriety and my active association with AA. You and I will never know when some future member will walk through the door of your meeting or mine, bankrupt in every department, but seeking us out for help because we planted the seed months and even years ago. At times like this, I am so grateful that I was at my meeting to extend a welcoming hand.

It could be most distressing to that prospective member if he asked for you and was told, "He never made the grade. As far as we know, he is still drinking." Such an answer would be more than disconcerting to the down-and-outer. It could mean that his life was left hanging in the balance.

I hate to meet members who consider that they have graduated from AA. They are missing so much! I know now that sobriety is not a destination, but an endless journey. I hastily add: a very beautiful journey.

P.W., Cleveland, Tenn.

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+++Message 718. Stars Don't Fall
From: Sally Brown 12/4/2002 1:08:00 AM

|||||

Many thanks to Bill Lash for printing Felicia Gizycka Magruder's 25th AA anniversary article from the 1967 Grapevine. Although her story, Stars Don't Fall, was dropped from the new 4th edition of the Big Book, I understand it is included in a supplementary edition of other early stories that were dropped. Can anyone verify this?

I met Felicia a few months before she died in early 1999 in Laramie, WY with 55 years of wonderful sobriety. By then she was a very old lady in her 90s.

Until around 1996 she had continued to live in New Canaan, CT, but when she became too frail, her grandsons, who adored her, moved her to Laramie where two of them lived. She spent her last years in an apartment in a lovely retirement home, with a fulltime day attendant.

When my husband, Dave, and I began our research on the Marty Mann biography in 1998, people who knew Marty constantly asked us if we'd interviewed Felicia yet because the two women were very close friends. Marty was in fact Felicia's sponsor. Nobody knew where Felicia was, however, but we did learn that she was closely related to the great Chicago publishing family of Robert McCormick. When we were in Chicago, we pored through some of McCormick's biographies in a special room devoted to his life and history in the main Chicago Public Library. In one book we were very disappointed to find a genealogy that showed Felicia as having died in 1985. So we promptly forgot about trying to locate her.

A year later we were trying to find her daughter, and in the process came across Felicia's grandsons instead. I'll never forget my initial phone call to Joe Arnold.

"Hello, Joe Arnold?"

"Yes."

After explaining about the Marty Mann book, I said I was really trying to locate his mother, Felicia's daughter, to interview her, and that I was so sorry his grandmother had died.

Joe paused, then said, "Would you like to talk to her?"

You can imagine my reaction! I wondered if we were on the same wave length. After Joe explained about Felicia, I realized the book back in the Chicago library was of course dead wrong. It was an important lesson in always checking sources. In retrospect, Dave and I should have gone straight to his internet genealogy records to verify the date, etc of Felicia's purported death in 1985.

The rest of the story is that I flew the next day to Laramie to interview Felicia. Joe said his grandmother was probably not up to recalling much, but I was welcome to try. He was right, but it turned out she had kept meticulous journals all her life. They are a fabulous treasure trove of AA history and people (along with all the rest of her amazing life). The Marty Mann book was immensely enriched because of Felicia.

I will always treasure my brief one-day encounter with this great lady.

Sally

March 1968 AA Grapevine

Big Book Stories - Updated (5 of 5)

This is the fifth article in the Grapevine's series by authors of the personal histories in the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous. The Big Book was published in 1939; a revised, enlarged version came out in 1955. Now, the author of "The Career Officer," page 523 in the revised (second) edition, reports on thirteen more years of sobriety in Ireland, where he first found AA twenty-one years ago.

Living the Program in All Our Affairs

More than twelve years have passed since I ended my story in the Big Book with the words 'AA has made me very happy.' Nothing that has happened since has made me change my mind. The personal details of my life in between are unimportant to anyone but myself. They have made me more grateful to our founders and to the vast army of my comrades in Alcoholics Anonymous. But the passage of time has given me more time to think. And in the hope that what I write will not be taken as the views of an Angry Old Man, I put forward some of the things I think about.

In No Man Is an Island, Thomas Merton wrote, "Tradition is living and active, but Convention is passive and dead. Tradition does not form us automatically; we have to work to understand it. Convention is accepted passively, as a matter of routine. It offers us only pretended ways of solving the problems of living, a system of gestures and formalities....One goes through an act, without trying to understand the meaning of it all, merely because everyone else does the same."

Convention does rule the lives of most of us. We do go through life saying things and doing things because others do them and say them. For instance, our Slogans. A slogan originally was the war cry of the Scottish Highlands. Anyone who can imagine a Highland chief urging his clan into battle with slogans such as Think or Easy Does It cannot be very well acquainted with the Scots. Yet for us, today, these AA Slogans are very useful pieces of advice. When we merely accept them passively, as if brainwashed, that is lazy thinking, and lazy thinking can become an important defect if applied to our Steps.

The Twelfth Step sets out that our founder members tried to practice these principles in all their affairs. And still, so many tell us that no one could possibly apply these principles to his whole life. Is this not lazy thinking? Do some of us just accept the Steps, to be 'with it,' without working out what these principles really are for each of us?

My own list of the principles I must practice consists of: realism, with its frequent reminders of humanity; faith, anchored to some unchanging norm of

goodness (God, as I understand Him); atonement; patience; and thinking with spiritual discipline. Can I honestly tell myself that the practice (though not the finished accomplishment) of these principles is impossible for me in all my affairs?

Perhaps with advantage to ourselves - especially at the start - we might pay more attention to a few words in our purpose: to solve our common problem. Our common problem is not, as we quite naturally may have thought, just to stop drinking period; we can all remember from our past the dreary, unending sequence of stop, restart, stop, restart. The problem is to remain securely abstinent permanently, albeit we work at it one day at a time. Obviously, no one will stay dry for long or willing unless life without drink gives him satisfaction. He can arrive at that satisfaction only by learning to live with himself in peace, with his neighbor in charity, and with his conscience in reasonable repose. That, at least for me, is the guide motif of our Steps. That is why it doesn't now seem right to me to go about saying, 'AA is a strange program,' though I used to for a time. It no longer appears strange to me. It seems the only sort of recovery program that could possibly work for an alcoholic.

Yet so many of us still tell a newcomer that he has only to stay dry for today and to come to meetings. The meetings won't practice the Steps for him, though they may and should help him to persevere in his own practice of them. Even the most meeting-minded member has to pass many hours of the day when he is alone and must depend on his own inner strength. These are the hours when practice of these principles in all his affairs must cease to be a conventional, superficial acceptance of them and become a matter of the heart and the will.

I find that over the years I have acquired a few mild dislikes. The calling of the Higher Power, or God as we understand Him, "The Man Upstairs" is one. The advertising of some member as a star speaker and a special attraction is another. (This isn't envy!) Can we not take every speaker, silver-tongued or tongue-tied, at his real value of being another alcoholic who is doing his best to stay recovered himself and trying to help us to do the same? And I do somehow feel from time to time that the increasing number of conventions and the like, through the amount of preliminary organization and work involved, are diverting time and effort from our primary purpose. These distastes are, however, very slight ripples in a sea of contentment.

In the sense that I have been a member of our group for all but five months of its more than twenty years' existence, I suppose I rank as an old-timer. My group has always been marvelously kind to me and tolerant of a personality that has consistently demanded a great measure of tolerance. Old-timers must often be a headache to younger members. But the old-timer who has come to realize, as I hope I have myself, that he is not God's gift to AA, but that AA is God's gift to him, still has something good to give to his group: the demonstration of his continued sobriety, his active

membership, and his gratitude for his recovery to - under God - the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

My prayer for my AA contemporaries and myself is that we may to the end remain, in Tennyson's words, 'Strong in will / To strive, to seek, to find and not to yield.'

S.M., Dublin, Ireland

|||||

++++Message 721. AA Grapevine, So Changed A Life by Ceil F.
From: Joy Harris 12/7/2002 7:39:00 PM

|||||

The following AA Grapevine article was originally published in the September 1968 issue and reprinted in the November 1999 AA Grapevine, under the category of "Big Book Authors."
Ron Long, El Cajon, California

AA Grapevine
Fear of Fear -- Ceil F. (Ceil Mansfield?)
September 1968

So Changed A Life

The author of "Fear of Fear" updated her story.

What a change in our lives since that day eighteen years ago when George and I came into AA! We were two spiritually, mentally, and physically beaten people. Our children were ashamed of us; our family did not want any part of us. Our drinking friends (the only ones we had) were as almost far gone as we were, so we were two lost lambs -- more like goats, I would say. We were afraid of asking anyone for help (if we even knew we needed help), fed up with each other, ready to call the whole thing off, without the strength to know where to look for help.

Now, after these happy years, what do we have?

We still, thank God, have each other.

AA has taught us to be grateful. That sounds trite, but gratitude is the one thing neither one of us knew before AA.

Our families can trust us again. As for our friends, most of them, with the exception of our church friends, are in the Fellowship. And what friends! Physically, we are in better shape (and I do mean shape) than when we came in -- two shaky, befuddled people.

you're senile. So now I prayed silently, "God help me not to feel this way."

And then I saw this little coffee shop on 58th Street. I went in gratefully to sit down at a table, dump my packages, and order a cup of coffee.

"You have to sit at the counter," the waitress said.

"I'm so tired, and I have all these packages."

"It's a three-dollar cover charge."

"I don't care," I said.

As soon as she'd served me, a poor, ragged, dirty, unshaven man came up to me and asked me for a dollar. "I need it for food," he said.

The manager, who was standing in back of the counter, shook his head. Then he said, "Go on! Get out of here."

The man's hands were shaking. "Please, quick!" he begged me. "Quick! Just a dollar."

The manager said, "Lady, don't give it to him. He's just a bum. He'll spend it on booze."

"Of course he will," I said. "He needs a drink. He has to have one."

I whipped out a dollar, and the man snatched it, said, "Thanks," and fled.

"Whatcha go doing that for?" the manager wanted to know. "Now we'll have a bunch of them in here."

"I know what it is to be desperate for a drink," I told him. "I'm an arrested alcoholic. The only difference between that man and me is that I've stopped drinking. If I had one drink, I'd go on and get drunk and be just like him."

"And I suppose you'd look like him? Come on, lady! You're a nice lady."

"Well, quite a few years ago, I was anything but!"

"You've got to be kidding," said the manager, who then turned away to wait on customers.

But it's true, of course. I was never as filthy as that poor man, but the difference between us was purely economic. I did not hit skid row. But if I'd been broke, I would have. Thank God, I found AA and a wonderful sponsor. I've been sober and going to meetings for a good many years. I keep working the Twelve Steps, I try to help others.

As I sat there resting and drinking my coffee, I thought of the time I'd paced back and forth in front of a bar opposite Grand Central Station. I was hoping desperately that it would open before I had to catch my train. It was just a few minutes before opening time. Could I run in there, gulp a quick one, and run for my train? But the bar did not open on time. I shook like a leaf all the way to my suburban destination. The kind friends who met me at the station had to wait while I went and got a drink.

Now, a young woman came up to my table and stood there smiling. She said, "That was very nice of you, giving that man a dollar."

"Well, he needed a drink," I said.

"Yes, I know," she said. "I heard what you told the manager." She patted my arm.

I began feeling good. Why, here I was, sober, solvent, happy, and healthy, with work I enjoy and lots of people left whom I love. Of course, I miss my friends who have gone, but perhaps I'll see them again someday.

I felt even better when the waitress handed me my check, which was for sixty

the group had not diminished. After we come to AA, after the fog is lifted from our thinking, then we begin to find ourselves. When we have had the time to complete that all-important, searching personal inventory, we must ask, "What is it I really want from life? Sobriety? Yes, of course, for there can be no future without this. But if I can maintain sobriety -- then what? What can I do with what remains of my life?"

The answers may vary somewhat, but I think there are certain fundamental desires that are much the same in all of us. We want, first of all, to be liberated from dependence on any human crutch. Next, we want to achieve dependability and trustworthiness, so that our self-respect is restored and we can earn the right of respect from others. Then we must find some reason for our existence, so that we may obtain purpose in our lives -- a purpose worth striving to achieve. We need to learn to laugh again, relax again, enjoy living again. We want to be capable of meeting the daily challenges as they come, with courage and good humor. Instead of running from life's problems, we'd like to find we can meet them head-on and handle them well. It seems like a pretty big order, and it is. Yet all these wishes and many more can become realities if we just follow the AA blueprint for living. The AA concept tends to simplify life. It teaches us how to keep ourselves straightened away by weeding out the crippling attitudes and replacing erroneous premises with true values. It wisely counsels us to turn the inner searchlights on what underlies our motivations before we act, so that the chances for constructive action will be greater. Also, when we learn to take a good look before we leap, we can eliminate the purely emotional decisions we used to act upon, so often to our sorrow and destruction.

The AA approach to life steers us along a maturing course. We become willing to accept the responsibility of our actions. We learn to improve the quality of our living by constantly striving to improve ourselves. Although we cannot change the world, we find that for us relative (yet miraculous) change does occur outside ourselves as we change inwardly. And after a while we begin to realize that we are developing a pretty sound philosophy to live by.

The very nature of this approach to life calls for a continuous striving toward the personal goals we have set for ourselves. We will never outgrow the program. Always, as new vistas open up for us, or when we reach a new plateau, we find the need to climb a little higher, or go a bit further.

"What is it I really want from life?" Now we can answer that question.

We want to mature. We want to be able to make a constructive contribution to our world. We want to develop well-integrated, whole personalities. We want to balance in our lives; we want to develop all the areas of our being equally. We want to improve our understanding of and appreciation for our fellowman, and thereby learn how we may serve him. We want to earn the privilege and the joy of being wanted, needed, and loved by those around us. We find that the principles of honesty, purity (or motivation), unselfishness, and love (without ourselves at the center) do work, when we apply them to any and all departments of our living. It often takes courage to make the experiment of applying these principles to our daily affairs, in our personal relationships, or in our business contacts. But by gum these

principles do work. They work because everything we have to do in this world involves other people, and people will and do respond to this kind of approach, no matter what the problem at hand. I can make this statement because I have had, not one, but many experiences with all kinds of people in all kinds of situations over the last twenty-nine years.

We never really know anything theoretically. We truly know only that which we have experienced. And this is why we say to the new person, "Don't take our word for it. Instead, try it for yourself. Only then can you be sure you have latched on to a design for living that can really work for you."

My faith in our program continues to increase through my personal experience with it. The last thirteen years have found me still striving toward the shining goals laid out for me long ago. I now live in Florida with my husband, and we will soon be celebrating, most happily, our eighteenth wedding anniversary. He is an alky, too, and our lives have been enriched by our mutual faith and perseverance in the AA way of life. Through it we have found a quality of happiness and serenity that, we believe, could not have been realized in any other way. Small wonder our gratitude knows no bounds. S.B.S., Sarasota, Florida

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+++Message 729. AA and Christianity
From: melb 12/9/2002 1:17:00 PM

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To: History Lovers

The following article was rejected at least twice by the AA Grapevine. It was considered too controversial and was likely to create undesirable reactions.

Since we are AA history students, I feel that we can discuss such ideas without harming AA in any way. While there are parallels to the Twelve Steps in many religions and philosophies, the facts show that AA principles came out of evangelical Christianity as practiced by the Oxford Group. The famous Four Absolutes, for example, came from a book titled "The Principles of Jesus," authored by Robert Speer.

Most of AA's spiritual principles, I believe, can be traced to The Sermon on the Mount, the parables of The Prodigal Son and The Good Samaritan, the Book of James, and I Corinthians 13. I have tried to show some of these connections.

Please feel free to send me your criticisms at melb@accesstoledo.com. I also invite you to send any information relating AA principles to other faiths

and philosophies, of whatever kind. If you like "AA and Jesus," please forward it to other friends and ask them to forward it to others.

AA AND JESUS

How ancient spiritual teachings are linked to the inspirational program of Alcoholics Anonymous

By Mel B., Toledo, Ohio

On my way to a favorite bar, I sometimes passed a church sign whose blazing neon letters proclaimed: "JESUS SAVES."

The message annoyed me because I thought it was in poor taste and tended to intrude on my privacy. I resented the zeal of those who would erect such a sign. I agreed that the world needed saving, but it would be saved by tolerant, broadminded people like myself, not by religious zealots. I hurried on towards neon signs that seemed more inviting and to companions who did not threaten my way of thinking.

That was in the late 1940s. By April 1950 my reasonable way of thinking had landed me in a state hospital as an alcoholic patient. It hit me, then, that there were some problems which individuals could not solve by intelligent reasoning or personal determination. One of them was alcoholism, and a mere glance about the hospital ward told me that there were other more sinister human problems. In short, I needed saving---from myself. At the same time, I realized that I had no answers for the others in the hospital, the victims of terrible mental and physical diseases.

Well, my answer came via AA. Its principles and practices have carried me over some very

rough spots in the past 27 years.* In its way, curiously enough, AA has been a form of personal salvation like that offered by the old time religionists who proclaimed that "Jesus Saves." It has neither altar call nor sawdust trail, but some of its best ideas appear to have come from the teachings of Jesus. In fact, some of AA's most novel and radical ideas are not new or different at all; they are just new and different in our time. Here are a few of them that first saw the light of day in the sayings of Jesus:

Anonymity

By all accounts, the principle of anonymity came to AA in a gradual way, and was discovered almost by chance. There were members who didn't want their association with the fellowship to be known, so the pioneers instituted a policy of discreet silence. The AA founders also worried about what would happen if a well-publicized member slipped, so anonymity was also an

attractive way to protect the society from unfavorable publicity. Then the AA book was published under the title "Alcoholics Anonymous," chosen because its authors had no bylines. The name caught on for the society and has become so identified with the ideal of mutual help in problem-solving that other societies have adopted the "anonymous" tag.

But anonymity also has a deep spiritual purpose. It is the spiritual purpose that Jesus must have had in mind when he warned against doing good for public praise: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father

*Written in 1977.

which is in heaven...When thou doest alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee...That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly."

The Trusted Servant

Another of AA's startling ideas has been the tradition that "our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern." In a world that writhes with power struggles, AA has been almost unique in putting a severe limitation on the authority, tenure, and prestige of its leaders. And for good reason. Power struggles, by their very nature, generate the bitterness and resentment that would destroy our effectiveness in carrying the message. We cannot afford the strife that seems to be second nature to many organizations.

Where did AA get this radical idea about limiting the power of leaders? It may have been inspired, in part, by Jesus' instructions to his own disciples: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them...But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

Attraction Rather Than Promotion

It is nothing short of miraculous that AA settled upon a policy of "attraction rather than promotion" quite soon after its origin. The very first AA member was a stockbroker skilled in the arts of salesmanship and persuasion, while others who soon followed him into AA were advertising men and business promoters of all types. What convinced those promoter types that something besides the established ways of publicizing and advancing an enterprise was needed for AA? If promotion is good for business, why isn't it good for AA?

One reason for rejecting promotion is that we have nothing to sell. Another reason may be in the ethics of the thing:: promotion would be bad for us in

the same way that it's deemed to be bad for certain professional people.**
But the best reason for putting aside promotion may be that it's simply inferior to attraction, which is more appropriate for a spiritual fellowship.

**Since the time this was written, professionals have begun to advertise, making the comparison expressed here somewhat out of date!

Attraction is also more lasting, because it tends to work on real feelings of the heart rather than surface desires. Heavy promotion might cause us to buy a certain automobile, but it would never keep many of us in AA for long.

This form of reaching others was called "letting your light shine" in the sayings of Jesus: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The same thought is evident in the writing of Emerson and others: we attract people by what we are and not necessarily by what we say or do. If we are sincere and unselfish, people intuitively understand this and seek us out for help, but if we are hypocritical and self-seeking they will turn away. It is always the quality of AA that counts, never the quantity of publicity that happens to be coming our way.

Placing Principles Before Personalities

One of the characteristics attributed to alcohol is that "it's no respecter of persons." Oddly enough, this same attribute is often applied to God; again and again, we hear that "He is no respecter of persons." Both sayings are true for the same reason: "Principles are no respecters of persons and always take precedence over personalities."

The alcoholic in his cups does not understand this truth. He grovels before certain people, tries to grind certain others in the dust, plots vengeance against those who have harmed him, and makes pitiful attempts to love and to reward the few who approve of him. He tends to react to others rather than to respond to them in accordance with certain principles in his own life. Thus, it is all right in this distorted way of thinking to behave badly towards some people because they "deserve" it, and it is all right to cheat some individuals and to steal from others.

Alcoholics are not the only people who fail to place principles before personalities, and the problem must have been rampant in Jesus' day. Hence the following saying, one of the great utterances of all time: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, `Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. `"

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."

"That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

"For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?"

"And if ye salute your brethern only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?"

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

It should be obvious that the principles of Jesus which have been stated in one form or another in the AA Traditions directly concern the ordering of the society of Alcoholics Anonymous, whereas the AA Twelve Steps directly apply to the individual. The Twelve Steps are indeed the vital organs of AA, but the Traditions are the bones or framework without which the Steps would cease to function.

Inventory, Confession, and Restitution

Jesus also contributed ideas to AA's Twelve Steps, though these principles for personal recovery depended on AA's founding members for their present form. It is not true, as some AA members believe, that the Twelve Steps can be related to similar passages in the Holy Bible. With one or two exceptions, such passages are not to be found. But it certainly is true that the ideas of the Twelve Steps and certain thoughts in specific scriptures can be paralleled.

The idea of taking personal inventory can be discerned in Jesus' emphasis on "cleaning the inside of the cup" and his statement that it is what comes out of the mouth (and the heart) that defiles a man. He also warned against taking the other person's inventory: "Judge not that ye be not judged...And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?"

Confession, or AA's Fifth Step, comes from the Book of James, which is sometimes called the "Little Sermon on the Mount" and closely approximates, in tone at least, the teachings directly attributable to Jesus: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Restitution, AA's Ninth and Tenth Steps, is to be found in Jesus' teachings on being reconciled with one's brother before bringing gifts to the altar. There is also the idea of agreeing quickly with an adversary and being willing to forgive an endless number of times.

The Lord's Prayer and the Slogans

The Lord's Prayer, repeated at the close of AA meetings the world over, comes to us from the Sermon on the Mount, while the AA slogans may also have a New Testament origin: 1) First Things First---"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you;" 2) Live and Let Live ---"He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (the woman taken in adultery); 3) Easy Does It---"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me...For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The Prodigal Son and The Good Samaritan

Where in the Bible can we find the First and Twelfth Steps of AA? There are remote parallels in several places, but it seems to me that the parables of The Prodigal Son and The Good Samaritan convey the intent of these steps as much as anything does. I suspect that The Prodigal Son really covers the initial three steps of the program and, in its entirety, symbolizes the Fatherhood of God. The story of The Good Samaritan is our Twelfth Step, and it represents the Brotherhood of Man.

The alcoholic appears in both parables. As the prodigal son, he takes his God-given inheritance of good health and natural talents to a far country, there to squander them in the frantic pursuit of pleasure. Finally he comes to ruin and rejection among the swine, far from his father, far from God. He recognizes his mistakes and realizes that he would be better off back in his father's house (the Second Step), and so he decides to return to his father on whatever terms his father will give him (takes the Third Step). The rest of the story, with its celebration and feast on fatted calf, is well known.

The alcoholic is also the man who takes a journey from Jerusalem to Jericho, in the parable of The Good Samaritan. The road between those two cities is downhill all the way, so the symbolism is clear: the man is doing something wrong and is on the skids. Along the way, he runs into thieves who strip him of his belongings and leave him half dead in a ditch. A priest and a Levite pass on the other side, too busy to be bothered with one who may have brought most of his trouble on himself.

Things are hopeless until that great Twelfth Stepper, the Good Samaritan, arrives on the scene and takes charge. He takes the victim to a hostelry, and dresses his wounds with oil and wine. Since oil and wine often represent God's Love and Life in the Bible, we can conclude that something of great spiritual importance is taught here. It is this: if we love our fellow man and pour our own lives into helping him in his hour of distress, we are doing the work of Eternal Love and Eternal Life. Faith without works is dead, it passes by on the other side of the road. But the most ordinary man,

model).

Jerry also told me how handy the one-volume Columbia Encyclopedia is for a writer. I now have one right at my fingertips, and I often think of Jerry when I use it.

Jerry was very touchy, and this might have been his problem at the GV. Bill W., who had recommended hiring him, took personal responsibility for letting him go, although I heard no criticism of Bill from Jerry. Jerry did describe Bill "as an old codger who comes in now and then!"

Mel Barger
Toledo, Ohio

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++++Message 731. Biography Magazine
From: Billyk4 12/11/2002 8:13:00 AM

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The current issue of Biography Magazine has a full story about Bill W. and his life. Its a keeper.

does anyone have information on this?

particularly an electronic version of the article. i checked the web site but found nothing.

thanks
billyk

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++++Message 732. Bill W. has last drink today, 1934
From: Robert Stonebraker 12/11/2002 12:12:00 PM

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Dear AA History Lovers,

It is, I think, noteworthy that on this very morning 68 years ago, Dec. 11, 1934, Bill W. had his last drink. He decided to return to Towns Hospital where Dr. Silkworth had treated him several times before. So with small change in his pocket -- the subway then cost only a nickel -- he began his

(and our) happily fated journey from Brooklyn to upper Manhattan; but he passed a store where his wife, Lois, had a charge account. Well, of course, Wad-a-ya-think, Bill went marched right in and ordered four bottles of beer to guzzle along the way.

But, thank God, he followed through with his decision. Bill marched triumphantly through his arch to freedom at 234 Central park West (Towns Hospital) waving his last beer and announcing to Dr. Silkworth that he had "found something!" This was followed by bed, barbiturates and the belladonna treatment; a Vital Spiritual Experience followed a few days later.

Bill never drank again!

Bob S., Richmond, IN

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+++Message 734. Bill W. & Biography Magazine
(re-correction)
From: Lash, William (Bill) 12/11/2002 4:10:00 PM

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The current issue of Biography Magazine ***DOES NOT HAVE*** a full story about Bill W. and his life. The story will be in the January 2003 issue, which comes out this Friday.

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+++Message 735. Why Alcoholics Anonymous Is Anonymous
From: Joy Harris 12/12/2002 2:57:00 PM

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Sixty-eight years ago today was Bill Wilson's first day of sobriety. His January 1955 AA Grapevine article, Why Alcoholics Anonymous Is Anonymous, is reprinted this month in the Grapevine. A copy follows.
Ron Long, El Cajon, California

Why Alcoholics
Anonymous
Is Anonymous
by Bill

As never before, the struggle for power, importance and wealth is tearing civilization apart. Man against man, family against family, group against group, nation against nation.

Nearly all those engaged in this fierce competition declare that their aim is peace and justice for themselves, their neighbors and their nations: Give us power and we shall have justice; give us fame and we shall set a great example; give us money and we shall be comfortable and happy. People throughout the world deeply believe that, and act accordingly. On this appalling dry bender, society seems to be staggering down a dead end road. The stop sign is clearly marked. It says "Disaster."

What has this got to do with anonymity, and Alcoholics Anonymous?

We of AA ought to know. Nearly every one of us has traversed this identical dead end path. Powered by alcohol and self-justification, many of us have pursued the phantoms of self-importance and money right up to the disaster stop sign. Then came AA. We faced about and found ourselves on a new highroad where the direction signs said never a word about power, fame or wealth. The new signs read, "This way to sanity and serenity-the price is self-sacrifice."

Our new book, "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions," states that "Anonymity is the greatest protection our Society can ever have." It says also that "The spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice."

Let's turn to AA's twenty years of experience and see how we arrived at that belief, now expressed in our Traditions Eleven and Twelve.

At the beginning we sacrificed alcohol. We had to, or it would have killed us. But we couldn't get rid of alcohol unless we made other sacrifices. Big shot-ism and phony thinking had to go. We had to toss self-justification, self-pity, and anger right out the window. We had to quit the crazy contest for personal prestige and big bank balances. We had to take personal responsibility for our sorry state and quit blaming others for it.

Were these sacrifices? Yes, they were. To gain enough humility and self-respect to stay alive at all we had to give up what had really been our dearest possession - our ambitions and our illegitimate pride.

But even this was not enough. Sacrifice had to go much further. Other people had to benefit too. So we took on some Twelfth Step work; we began to carry the AA message. We sacrificed time, energy and our own money to do this. We couldn't keep what we had unless we gave it away.

Did we demand that our new prospects give us anything? Were we asking them for power, over their lives, for fame for our good work or for a cent of their money? No, we were not. We found that if we demanded any of these things our Twelfth Step work went flat. So these natural desires had to be sacrificed; otherwise, our prospects received little or no sobriety. Nor, indeed, did we.

Thus we learned that sacrifice had to bring a double benefit, or else little at all. We began to know about the kind of giving of ourselves that had no price tag on it.

When the first AA group took form, we soon learned a lot more of this. We found that each of us had to make willing sacrifices for the group itself, sacrifices for the common welfare. The group, in turn, found that it had to

give up many of its own rights for the protection and welfare of each member, and for AA as a whole. These sacrifices had to be made or AA couldn't continue to exist.

Out of these experiences and realizations, the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous began to take shape and substance.

Gradually we saw that the unity, the effectiveness -- yes, even the survival of AA -- would always depend upon our continued willingness to sacrifice our personal ambitions and desires for the common safety and welfare. Just as sacrifice meant survival for the individual, so did sacrifice mean unity and survival for the group and for AA's entire Fellowship.

Viewed in this light, AA's Twelve Traditions are little else than a list of sacrifices which the experience of twenty years has taught us that we must make, individually and collectively, if AA itself is to stay alive and healthy.

In our Twelve Traditions we have set our faces against nearly every trend in the outside world.

We have denied ourselves personal government, professionalism and the right to say who our members shall be. We have abandoned do-goodism, reform and paternalism. We refuse charitable money and prefer to pay our own way. We will cooperate with practically everybody, yet we decline to marry our Society to anyone: We abstain from public controversy and will not quarrel among ourselves about those things that so rip society asunder--religion, politics and reform. We have but one purpose: to carry the AA message to the sick alcoholic who wants it.

We take these attitudes not at all because we claim special virtue or wisdom; we do these things because hard experience has told us that we must -- if AA is to survive in the distraught world of today. We also give up rights and make sacrifices because we ought to -- and, better yet, because we want to. AA is a power greater than any of us; it must go on living or else uncounted thousands of our kind will surely die. This we know.

Now where does anonymity fit into this picture? What is anonymity anyhow? Why do we think it is the greatest single protection that AA can ever have? Why is it our greatest symbol of personal sacrifice, the spiritual key to all our Traditions and to our whole way of life?

The following fragment of AA history will reveal, I deeply hope, the answer we all seek.

Years ago a noted ballplayer sobered up through AA. Because his comeback was so spectacular, he got a tremendous personal ovation in the press and Alcoholics Anonymous got much of the credit. His full name and picture, as a member of were seen by millions of fans. It did us plenty of good; alcoholics flocked in. We loved this. I was specially excited because it gave me ideas.

Soon I was on the road, happily handing out personal interviews and pictures. To my delight, I found I could hit the front pages, just as he could. Besides, he couldn't hold his publicity pace, but I could hold mine.

I only needed to keep traveling and talking. The local AA groups and newspapers did the rest. I was astonished when recently I looked at those old newspaper stories. For two or three years I guess I was AA's number one

anonymity-breaker.

So I can't blame any AA who has grabbed the spotlight since. I set the main example myself, years ago.

At the time, this looked like the thing to do, Thus justified, I ate it up.

What a bang it gave me when I read those two column spreads about "Bill the Broker," full name and picture, the guy who was saving drunks by the thousands!

Then this fair sky began to be a little overcast. Murmurs were heard from AA skeptics who said, "This guy Bill is hogging the big time. Dr. Bob isn't getting his share." Or, again, "Suppose all this publicity goes to Bill's head and he gets drunk on us?"

This stung. How could they persecute me when I was doing so much good? I told my critics that this was America and didn't they know I had the right of free speech? And wasn't this country and every other run by big-name leaders? Anonymity was maybe okay for the average AA. But co-founders ought to be exceptions. The public certainly had a right to know who we were. Real AA power-drivers (prestige-hungry people, folks just like me) weren't long in catching on. They were going to be exceptions too. They said that anonymity before the general public was just for timid people: all the braver and bolder souls, like themselves, should stand right up before the flashbulbs and be counted. This kind of courage would soon do away with the stigma on alcoholics. The public would right away see what fine citizens recovered drunks could make. So more and more members broke their anonymity, all for the good of AA. What if a drunk was photographed with the Governor? Both he and the Governor deserved the honor, didn't they? Thus we zoomed along, down the dead end road!

The next anonymity breaking development looked even rosier. A close AA friend of mine wanted to go in for alcohol education. A department of a great university interested in alcoholism wanted her to go out and tell the general public that alcoholics were sick people, and that plenty could be done about it. My friend was a crack public speaker and writer. Could she tell the general public that she was an AA member? Well, why not? By using the name Alcoholics Anonymous she'd get fine publicity for a good brand of alcohol education and for AA too. I thought it an excellent idea and therefore gave my blessing.

AA was already getting to be a famous and valuable name. Backed by our name and her own great ability, the results were immediate. In nothing flat her own full name and picture, plus excellent accounts of her educational project, and of AA, landed in nearly every large paper in North America. The public understanding of alcoholism increased, the stigma on drunks lessened, and AA got new members. Surely there could be nothing wrong with that. But there was. For the sake of this short-term benefit, we were taking on a future liability of huge and menacing proportions.

Presently an AA member began to publish a crusading magazine devoted to the cause of Prohibition. He thought Alcoholics Anonymous ought to help make the world bone-dry. He disclosed himself as an AA member and freely used the AA name to attack the evils of whiskey and those who made it and drank it. He pointed out that he too was an "educator," and that his brand of education

was the "right kind." As for putting AA into public controversy, he thought that was exactly where we should be. So he busily used AA's name to do just that. Of course, he broke his anonymity to help his cherished cause along.

This was followed by a proposal from a liquor-trade association that an AA member take on a job of "education." People were to be told that too much alcohol was bad for anyone and that certain people - the alcoholics - shouldn't drink at all, What could be the matter with this?

The catch was that our AA friend had to break his anonymity; every piece of publicity and literature was to carry his full name as a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. This of course would be bound to create the definite public impression that AA favored "education," liquor-trade style.

Though these two developments never happened to get far, their implications were nevertheless terrific. They spelled it right out for us. By hiring Out to another cause, and then declaring his AA membership to the whole public, it was in the power of an AA to marry Alcoholics Anonymous to practically any enterprise or controversy at all, good or bad. The more valuable the AA name became, the greater the temptation would be.

Further proof of this was not long in showing up. Another member started to put us into the advertising business. He had been commissioned by a life insurance company to deliver a series of twelve "lectures" on Alcoholics Anonymous over a national radio hookup. This would of course advertise life insurance and Alcoholics Anonymous - and naturally our friend himself - all in one good-looking package.

At AA Headquarters, we read the proposed lectures. They were about 50% AA and 50% our friend's personal religious conviction. This could create a false public view of us. Religious prejudice against AA would be aroused. So we objected.

Our friend shot back a hot letter saying that he felt "inspired" to give these lectures, and that we had no business to interfere with his right of free speech. Even though he was going to get a fee for his work, he had nothing in mind except the welfare of AA. And if we didn't know what was good for us, that was too bad! We and AA's Board of Trustees could go plumb to the devil. The lectures were going on the air.

This was a poser. Just by breaking anonymity and so using the AA name for his own purposes, our friend could take over our public relations, get us into religious trouble, put us into the advertising business and, for all these good works, the insurance company would pay him a hand-some fee. Did this mean that any misguided member could thus endanger our Society any time or any place simply by breaking anonymity and telling himself how much good he was going to do for us? We envisioned every AA advertising man looking up a commercial sponsor, using the AA name to sell everything from pretzels to prune juice.

Something had to be done. We wrote our friend that AA had a right to free speech too. We wouldn't oppose him publicly, but we could and would guarantee that his sponsor would receive several thousand letters of objection from AA members if the program went on the radio. Our friend abandoned the project.

But our anonymity dike continued to leak. AA members began to take us into

politics. They began to tell state legislative committee publicly, of course -- just what AA wanted in the way of rehabilitation, money and enlightened legislation.

Thus, by full name and often by pictures, some of us became lobbyists. Other members sat on benches with police court judges, advising which drunks in the lineup should go to AA and which to jail.

Then came money complications involving broken anonymity. By this time, most members felt we ought to stop soliciting funds publicly for AA purposes. But the educational enterprise of my university-sponsored friend had meanwhile mushroomed. She had a perfectly proper and legitimate need for money and plenty of it. Therefore, she asked the public for it, putting on drives to this end. Since she was an AA member and continued to say so, many contributors were confused. They thought AA was in the educational field or else they thought AA itself was raising money when indeed it was not and didn't want to.

So AA's name was used to solicit funds at the very moment we were trying to tell people that AA wanted no outside money.

Seeing what happened, my friend, wonderful member that she is, tried to resume her anonymity. Because she had been so thoroughly publicized, this has been a hard job. It has taken her years. But she has made the sacrifice, and I here want to record my deep thanks on behalf of us all.

This precedent set in motion all sorts of public solicitations by AA's for money -- money for drying out farms, Twelfth Step enterprises, AA boarding houses, clubs, and the like -- powered largely by anonymity breaking.

We were next startled to learn that we had been drawn into partisan politics, this time for the benefit of a single individual. Running for public office, a member splashed his political advertising with the fact that he was an AA and, by inference, sober as a judge! AA being popular in his state, he thought it would help him win on election day.

Probably the best story in this clan tells how the AA name was used to back up a libel lawsuit. A member, whose name and professional attainments are known on three continents, got hold of a letter which she thought damaged her professional reputation. She felt something should be done about this and so did her lawyer, also an AA. They assumed that both the public and AA would be rightfully angry if the facts were known. Forthwith, several newspapers headlined how Alcoholics Anonymous was rooting for one of its lady members -- named in full, of course -- to win her suit for libel.

Shortly after this, a noted radio commentator told a listening audience, estimated at twelve million people, the same thing. This again proved that the A.A. name could be used for purely personal purposes -- this time on a nationwide scale.

The old files at AA Headquarters reveal many scores of such experiences with broken anonymity. Most of them point up the same lessons.

They tell us that we alcoholics are the biggest rationalizers in the world; that fortified with the excuse we are doing great things for AA we can, through broken anonymity, resume our old and disastrous pursuit of personal power and prestige, public honors, and money--the same implacable urges that when frustrated once caused us to drink; the same forces that are today

ripping the globe apart at its seams. Moreover, they make clear that enough spectacular anonymity breakers could someday carry our whole Society down into that ruinous dead end with them.

So we are certain that if such forces ever rule our Fellowship, we will perish too, just as other societies have perished throughout human history. Let us not suppose for a moment that we recovered alcoholics are so much better or stronger than other folks; or that, because in twenty years nothing has ever happened to AA, nothing ever can.

Our really great hope lies in the fact that our total experience, as alcoholics and as AA members, has at last taught us the immense power of these forces for self-destruction. These hard-won lessons have made us entirely willing to undertake every personal sacrifice necessary for the preservation of our treasured Fellowship.

This is why we see anonymity at the general public level as our chief protection against ourselves, the guardian of all our Traditions and the greatest symbol of self-sacrifice that we know.

Of course no AA need be anonymous to family, friends, or neighbors. Disclosure there is usually right and good. Nor is there any special danger when we speak at group or semi-public AA meetings, provided press reports reveal first names only.

But before the general public -- press, radio, films, television and the like -- the revelation of full names and pictures is the point of peril.

This is the main escape hatch for the fearful destructive forces that still lie latent in us all. Here the lid can and must stay down.

We now fully realize that 100% personal anonymity before the public is just as vital to the life of AA as 100% sobriety is to the life of each and every member.

I say all this with what earnestness I can; I say this because I know what the temptation of fame and money really is. I can say this because I was once a breaker of anonymity myself. I thank God that years ago the voice of experience and the urging of wise friends took me out of the perilous path into which I might have led our entire Society. Thus I learned that the temporary or seeming good can often be the deadly enemy of the permanent best. When it comes to survival for AA, nothing short of our very best will be good enough.

We want to maintain 100% anonymity for still another potent reason, one often overlooked. Instead of securing us more publicity, repeated self-serving anonymity breaks could severely damage the wonderful relation we now enjoy with press and public alike. We could wind up with a poor press and little public confidence at all.

For many years, news channels all over the world have showered AA with enthusiastic publicity, a never ending stream of it, far out of proportion to the news values involved. Editors tell us why this is. They give us extra space and time because their confidence in AA is complete. The very foundation of that high confidence is. They say, our continual insistence on personal anonymity at the press level,

Never before had news outlets and public relations experts heard of a society that absolutely refused personally to advertise its leaders or

looking for input to date this article. One note of interest is that sentences from this article can be found in the January 1958 GV article by Bill titled -The Next Frontier: Emotional Sobriety.

A GIMMICK TO GET US OUT OF THE DUMPS

(The following was written by Bill W., co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous for "The Road Back", a bimonthly publication by the Dublin, Ireland, group, and is reprinted therefrom.)

By Bill W.

I think we oldsters who have put the A.A. booze cure to such severe tests, yet still find we lack emotional sobriety, are probably the spearhead for the next major development in AA - the development of something like real maturity and balance (which is to say, humility) in our relations with ourselves, with our fellows and with God. Those adolescent urges for top approval, perfect security and the perfect romance, urges quite appropriate to age 17, prove to be an impossible way of life at 47 or 57.

Since AA began, I've taken immense wallops in all these departments because of my failure to grow up, emotionally and spiritually. How painful it is to keep insisting on the impossible, and how painful to discover that we have the cart before the horse. Then comes the final agony of seeing how wrong we are, but still finding ourselves unable, seemingly, to get off the merry-go-round.

Problem of Everyone. How to translate right intellectual conviction into right emotional results and so into easy, happy, active and good living - that's not only the neurotic's problem. It's the problem of life itself for all who have got to the point of willingness to hew to right principles. Even then, as we hew away, peace and joy still elude us. That's the place so many of us AA oldsters have come to. How shall the unconscious - from which our fears, compulsions and phony aspirations still stream - be brought into line with what we actually believe, know and want? How to convince our dumb, raging and hidden "Mr. Hyde" becomes the final task.

I've recently become to believe this can be done. I believe so because I began to see many benighted ones, folks like you and me, commencing to get results.

Last fall, depression, having no really rational cause at all, took me to the cleaners. I began to be scared that I was in for another five-year chronic spell. Considering the grief I've had with depression, it wasn't a bright prospect.

I kept asking myself, "Why can't the twelve steps work to release depression?" By the hour I stared at the St. Francis prayer...It's better to

understand than to be understood...It's better to love than be loved...It's better to comfort than to be comforted..." Here was the formula. But why didn't it work?

Suddenly I realized what the matter was. My basic flaw had always been dependence, absolute dependence, on people or circumstances to supply me with prestige, security and romance. Failing to get these, according to my still childish dreams and specifications, I had fought for these things. And when defeat came, so did depression. There wasn't a chance of making the outgoing love of Francis a workable and joyous way of life until these fatal and really absolute dependencies were cut away.

Because I had undergone a little spiritual development the absolute quality of these frightful liabilities had never before been so starkly revealed. Therefore, reinforced by what grace I could secure in prayer, I found I must exert every ounce of will and action to cut off these emotional dependencies upon people, upon A.A. - indeed upon any set of circumstances whatever. Then, only then, would I be free to love as Francis could. Emotional or instinctual satisfactions, I saw, were really the extra dividends of having love, offering love and expressing love appropriate to each relation of life.

Must Offer Love To God. Plainly, I could not avail myself of God's love until I was able to offer it back to Him by loving others as He would have me. And I couldn't possibly do that so long as I was victimized by my dependencies. For dependencies meant demand; demand for possession and control of people and conditions.

While the words "absolute dependency" may look like a gimmick, they were the ones that triggered my release into my present stability and quietness of mind which I am now trying to consolidate by having love and offering love, regardless of the return.

This is the primary healing circuit; our outgoing love of God's creation and His people, by which we avail ourselves of His love for us. But the real current can't flow until our dependencies are broken at depth. Only then can we have a glimmer of what adult love really is.

Spiritual calculus, you say? Not a bit of it. Watch any A.A. of six months working on a new 12th step case. If the case says, "the hell with you," the 12th stepper smiles and turns to another case. He doesn't feel frustrated or rejected. If his case responds and starts to give love and attention to other alcoholics, but returns none to the sponsor, then the sponsor is happy anyway. He still doesn't feel rejected.

And when his case turns out in later time to be his best friend (or romance), then the sponsor is joyful. But his happiness and joy were by-products, and no more. The real stabilizing thing was having the offering

nicknames there are for drunks - i.e. rummie, sot, lush, boozier, etc.
Apparently Benjamin Franklin had described drunks as appearing pigeon-eyed. So, it follows that one who is pigeon-eyed is a "pigeon".

This certainly fits with the citation Warren gave from Dr. Bob & the Good Oldtimers (p. 146), that "Dr. Bob used a considerable amount of slang as part of his conversation."

It had NOTHING to do with "flying around #\$\$&ing all over everyone" or "if you give a message to a pigeon it may deliver it someplace but never gets the message itself" or the other derogatory connotations it's been given. Its initial use was meant endearingly.

Tom M.
Boynton Beach, Florida

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+++Message 743. "Moments" - An Evening with Bill W.
From: Bill McNiff 12/20/2002 10:42:00 PM

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I've been informed that the piece of work I wrote, and have performed a number of times, has been a source of some controversy to the Lovers of AA History. I truly regret any bad feelings that it may have caused. My intention in bringing the work forward was to help others, mostly those less fortunate, in coming to understand the genesis and the genius of AA and its two founders.

Very early in my own recovery I was given the opportunity to carry AA's message into prisons, mental institutions and hospitals. I have been engaged in that activity for over 33 years, and it has been source of tremendous joy and privilege. Not long after I was involved in this work I discovered that most of the people I met with could neither read, nor write. For the most part this could be overcome by sticking to the basic framework of AA . All I needed to do was tell my story, what it was like, what happened and what it is like now, and of course, let them tell theirs. But after years of doing this I realized that they were still not getting the full impact of AA and how it developed. Especially of the principals involved. I could read to them from the Big Book, the Twelve and Twelve and all the other approved literature. Invariably, when I did this, I would see their eyes roll to the back of their heads. It just didn't do it!

One day, I came upon a photograph of Bill W. at a podium, telling his story. I believe it is in AA Comes of Age. I can't check it out right now as I

gave someone my copy. The caption under the photo stated that wherever Bill went he "told his story to an eager and attentive audience". I was in recovery while Bill was still alive and missed the chance to hear him speak. I've always regretted that lost opportunity. But the picture gave me the idea that Bill's story should be told, not read, and it would have a greater impact than anything I would ever say... I wasn't much of a drunk. I told my story once to an audience in Weston State Hospital in Massachusetts and after the meeting one of the attendees let me know that "my drinking wouldn't have raised a pimple on his ass." But , I could tell Bill's. And then my Higher Power, God, gave me the break I would need to carry this off... a heart attack that necessitated a long recovery and a change in occupations. From a world traveler, I became a night counselor at our local detox. I took the job because they said I could write all I wanted... it would keep me awake. In the next two years I researched and then wrote "Moments". The first performance was here in Lancaster, PA, Christmas Eve, 1988. The play was a gigantic flop. I had put together an assemblage of dates, facts and quotes that towards the end was incomprehensible. It wasn't Bill's story at all. Just a bunch of stuff that needed a road map if you wanted to follow along. It was AA Comes of Age in verse form... an historian's delight. But I stuck at it and got away with it because my audience, inmates, couldn't walk out. Little by little I began to realize that I only held their attention when I spoke about the two main characters and their inner actions. The audience liked them... not the facts about them... just them, two drunks that were helping each other and staying sober.

That's when I decided to dramatize the events and personalities thus giving them a wider appeal. Shakespeare did it to great effect so why not yours truly? I invented a fictitious AA group, Kips Bay, that was celebrating their first anniversary. Bill W. was the featured speaker and because of his friends death, that day, he decides to tell Bob's story with his own. Everything that goes after that is the truth of AA as it was told to me or that I read at the Archives in New York during the two years I took to write the presentation. Over the years I have been given additional anecdotes that I have incorporated into the monologue. At the conclusion of the presentation I did invent a device in order to encapsulate the essential truth of AA. Passing it on! I used a hat, a hat passed from one man to another. It worked. I have performed this piece of work all over the United States, Canada, Mexico and Europe. Everyone remembers the hat. I doubt anyone remembered a date.

I do not impersonate Bill W. The only thing we had in common was a few crooked teeth, our skin color and our addiction. I was born and raised in New York City, Bill was from Vermont. I'm 80 pounds overweight, Bill was a bag of bones. His speech patterns were likened to Jimmy Stewart, mine sound like one of the Dead End Kids.

The play has been presented to an audience of 7,000 in Cleveland, (1992) and

>

> EARLY PHILADELPHIA

>

> I was introduced to AA in late winter or early spring 1940 by C. Dudley Saul, M.D. Dr. Saul was our family physician and when my drinking reached the critical point in late 1938, my wife, Marie, called him in to see what he could do. It so happened that Dr. Saul had two sons who were alcoholics and had struggled without much success to straighten them out. He told me, "John you're an alcoholic." My reply was, "Yes?" "And," he added, "you are going to die or go crazy." "Is that all?" I asked. "That's all," he replied, "unless you make up your mind never to take a drink again."

>

> I was in an emotional state where I was not inclined to quarrel with his diagnosis or his remedy but what was interesting to me as I looked back on that experience was that in 17 years of drinking Dr. Saul told me for the first time I had ever heard what was wrong with me.

>

> Dr. Saul suggested going to a Turkish bath to get the alcohol out of my system - a mistaken program as we now know but it seemed to make sense. So I sweated at the bath for a couple of days and drank at the doctor's suggestion lots of liquids.

>

> Then I did what we tell AA prospects to do: I called my father, a clergyman who had been sorely grieved by my drinking, and told him that I was going to quit. He was delighted; he said nothing like "it's about time" as might be expected; he came to see me and we had a good talk and cemented the bonds of love which held us together; I called my boss and told him what had happened and he, too, was pleased and told me to take whatever time I needed to get back in shape.

>

> There was no AA in Philadelphia where my home was at the time, but Dr. Saul, in effect had his own group. His patients, and there were others like me, were invited to come by his office (thus reminding ourselves we were sick), say "hello" to him and report on how things were going, and chat with other patients in his waiting room. I've often wondered what Dr. Saul's non-alcoholic patients thought of what was going on.

>

> And so I stayed dry, helping by the expression of confidence by the members of my church (of which father was the pastor) who elected me a Ruling Elder, the highest office a layman can hold in our Presbyterian system. After that there were many times I wanted a drink very badly but although I might have taken one as far as I was concerned or father, or Marie or Dr. Saul were concerned but I just couldn't let those people down who had trusted me.

alcoholic in any talk!

Mel Barger
Toledo, Ohio

----- Original Message -----

From: <How-It-Works@excite.com>

To: <AAHistoryLovers@yahoogroups.com>

Sent: Friday, December 27, 2002 11:12 PM

Subject: [AAHistoryLovers] Re: Early Philadelphia

> The material quoted below is from Johnny L. (1903-1983), also known
> by his full name, John P. L., who was an alcoholic Trustee 1957-1961,
> a contributor to the AA Grapevine, and a well-known speaker,
> especially on the Twelve Steps. He lived the last twenty-plus years
> of his life in Albuquerque. Johnny was instrumental in re-founding
> or rebuilding early groups in Harrisburg and the Lehigh Valley, as
> well as elsewhere in PA, in the years from the late 1940s to the mid-
> 1950s. Please note that the full final text of which this is part is
> in the Archives in New York in a letter to Nell Wing and may be
> subject to their restrictions on reprinting; the abbreviated text
> here was earlier written for the Philadelphia Archives and copied (I
> am told) with permission for personal use.

>

> The above was sent to me from: M Khalil H---- <mh----

> @marauder.millersv.edu>

>

>> From: "Lash, William (Bill)"

>>

>> I found this in the archives office but have no idea who wrote it.

> Also, it seems almost incomplete since it ends at the bottom of one

> page, but it's all I found. Take it easy & God bless! Just Love -

> Barefoot Bill

>>

>> EARLY PHILADELPHIA

>>

>> I was introduced to AA in late winter or early spring 1940 by

> C. Dudley Saul, M.D. Dr. Saul was our family physician and when my

> drinking reached the critical point in late 1938, my wife, Marie,

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> drink very badly but although I might have taken one as far as I was
> concerned or father, or Marie or Dr. Saul were concerned but I just
> couldn't let those people down who had trusted me.

>>

>> Early in 1940 Jimmy Burwell came over to Philadelphia from New
> York and, in effect, brought AA to the city. He got in touch with
> Dr. Saul and with another physician, Dr. Wiese Hammer and told them
> about AA. The two doctors were on the staff of St. Luke's &
> Children's Medical Center and they invited the tiny new AA group to
> meet at the hospital. What this meant to AA was tremendous; it gave
> sponsorship and emphasized the AA message, that alcoholics are sick
> people. And Dr. Saul told me about the new group and advised me to
> go.

>>

>> So I went. The first meeting was chaired by a man who had
> been a member of the Oxford Group, with which I had had unfortunate
> experiences in school and college. So the next day I told Dr. Saul I
> wanted none of it. "John," he said, "how many AA meetings have you
> been to?" I told him, "Only the one, of course." "Well," he
> replied, "don't be such a mental snob. You go back. You need AA and

> AA needs you." So I did go back and attend the weekly meetings
 > faithfully.
 >>
 >> That was where I met Bill Wilson. He came over to our
 > meetings from New York rather frequently in those early days and
 > helped make the Philadelphia group a success.
 >>
 >> I continued in the Philadelphia group until early 1942 when I
 > got a job in Washington and started attending meetings there. I
 > don't recall ever seeing Bill at any of our meetings.
 >
 >
 > To unsubscribe from this group, send an email to:
 > AAHistoryLovers-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com
 >
 >
 >
 > Your use of Yahoo! Groups is subject to <http://docs.yahoo.com/info/terms/>
 >
 >

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+++Message 747. December 1952 Grapevine article...
 For the Holidays...some AA history...
 From: Chuck Irvin 12/28/2002 8:37:00 AM

=====

Hello AAHistoryLovers,
 Can anyone verify this December 1952 Grapevine
 article or are these links verification enough?
 Thanks, Chuck Irvin
<http://www.aagrapevine.org/archive/earlierarticles/HolidayHistory.html>
<http://www.aagrapevine.org/mycgi/search.cgi>
<http://www.aagrapevine.org/archive/Archive.html>

Between noon of Tuesday, December 24, 2002 and
 midnight of Wednesday, January 1st, 2003, some 2 to 4
 million members of AA will have seen their dreams of a
 dry holiday and their hopes of a sane New Year's come
 safely true.

The first Christmas for AA was the depression year of
 1935. There were three old timers to mark it ...
 hardly a dozen newcomers to share it with them. In
 Akron, Dr. Bob and Bill D. were going on their second

six months. Four recruits had from four months to two months. in New York, Bill W. had thirteen months since his last drink, seven months since his historic trip to Akron and the start of AA.

In Akron, the six gathered with their families at Dr. Bob's. There was no ceremony ... no exchange of presents. The Twelve Steps had not yet been formulated. The Big Book was only a vague stirring that would not even be in manuscript until three more Christmases had been achieved. But there was joy that this most dangerous of times for the alcoholic had arrived ... and twenty-four hours by twenty-four hours was being mastered.

"There was thanks," remembers one of the two who survives that first Akron Christmas, "that we had come this far. However, I am certain that there was still considerable fear and trembling ... not fear that this new way would not work, but doubt and uncertainty that we would be able to hold on to it.

Bill W. recalls only a quiet day in New York that Yule of 1935 where there were very few involved. Five years later, there was a place in New York for an AA Christmas party ... the first AA clubhouse. And about the 24th Street Club there hangs a real Santa Claus story!

Or rather, it is a Saint Nicholas story. Just one hundred years before, in 1840, the building was erected at Number 334 1/2 West 24th Street ... the property of a family named Moore who were large landowners in Manhattan Island's Chelsea section. And driving across the snow-covered lawn, Dr. Clement Clarke Moore began to compose (some say just as his sled runners touched what is now the meeting room of AA's first clubhouse!) his immortal gift to children of all ages ... " 'Twas the night before Christmas."

(From an old Grapevine of December 1952.... The dates were originally for that year, and the number of sober members was about 120,000.)

<http://www.aagrapevine.org/archive/earlierarticles/HolidayHistory.html>

<http://www.aagrapevine.org/mycgi/search.cgi>

<http://www.aagrapevine.org/archive/Archive.html>

|||||

+++Message 748. Death of Mary P, sober 50 years
From: Stephanie 12/28/2002 9:16:00 AM

|||||

Mary Parker, of Virginai and Floria died this year in May. Mary had 50 years of continous sobriety. Her Husband Robert Parker who orrignally came to AA in 1944, has been diagnosed with a lung cancer and is expected to have died by Christmas.

Mary Parker was known for her sweet dispositon. She was married for just under 50 years to Robert. They were married in the first year of their sobriety.

Robert had a relapse of 12 years and returned to AA in 1976. He orignially came to AA in 1944. I have on file a conversation with him in text on tradtion four and his memories of those days preceeding the tradtions. Since I have just upgraded the pc to xp and am working off my laptop, I will have to go through the cd's I used to back up the computer files prior to upgrading. I also have on file a picture of both Mary and Robert just before Mary died.

anyone wishing more information may contact me at bigbooklover@msn.com

Thank You
Stephanie B.

|||||

+++Message 749. Origin of the slogan "Think, Think, Think"?
From: Arthur Sheehan 12/20/2002 8:21:00 PM

|||||

Hi
History lovers

I can
find four of our slogans in
10.0pt;">the Big
Book:

- [1] <http://docs.yahoo.com/info/terms/>
- [2] <http://www.aagrapevine.org/archive/billw/#anchor1069885>
- [3] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=091028060237158135169057031036006239018>
- [4] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=023176235078018086170056031077114237147006139057010149>
- [5] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=230212113185221091227056000140247130177098188189251099144055141205220126121>
- [6] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=093123119095040101189216064248147063248048234051197>
- [7] <http://www.steppingstones.org/>
- [8] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/post?protectID=029059104237127233170168203246130090000248042218077130252055210>
- [9] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/post?protectID=123202101163082134025098109219176090071026057192>
- [10] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/post?protectID=200028180237078182015098065064129241078152>
- [11] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/post?protectID=045181235237082209015037186208130063018143066234209171114>
- [12] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/message/136>
- [13] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/post?protectID=194176219163175190072147159026006088136144211189251099074143166059142057017152>
- [14] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=123044219122056233172168031248124088000048234051197>
- [15] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/messages/1>
- [16] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=045202139132082132036218249119006063071179066034>
- [17] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=125128113112042135169037175245147208098145211>
- [18] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=194176219163175190072147159026006088136248196136043241031242141127142057017152>
- [19] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/message/64>
- [20] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/message/122>
- [21] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/message/282>
- [22] <http://archives.seattletimes.nwsourc.com/cgi-bin/teaxis/web/vortex/display?slug=birthdayguy09m&date=20020509>

[23]

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=045181235237082209015037186208130063018143066234209171114>

[24]

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=243212219122082198015102001140172144163005238179226109152211073019>

[25]

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=200075091165074198218158203119124089098058139189018193>

[26]

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=070059113098193116015097175004176063071179066034>

[27]

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=091232253078099190172218175024247208098145211>

[28]

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=023056219163237132227218175024247208098145211>

[29]

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aahistorybuffs/post?protectID=114233044108018031090218175140244089163230066136169130252055210>

[30] http://uk.yahoo.com/mail/tagline_xtra/?http://uk.docs.yahoo.com/mail_storage.html

[31] <http://www.na.org/bulletins-bot.htm>

[32] <http://www.na.org/bulletins.htm>

[33] <http://www.na.org/index.htm>

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<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/post?protectID=243075080180056028180149109208130090136248196136043241031242141127142057017152>

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[38] <http://g.msn.com/1HM1ENUS/c156??PI=44364>

[39] http://silkworth.net/grapevine/grapevine_articles.html

[40] <http://silkworth.net/sitemap.html>

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<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/post?protectID=174212178078056116172138097010114002188179066234039109252238172194143142>

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[49] <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/message/193>

[50] http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/member_detail?id=42468645

[51] <http://g.msn.com/8HMEEN/2015>