



Why is the big book called the big book

Among the other possible titles considered for the book were: "One Hundred Men," "The Empty Glass," "The Dry Way," "The Dry Life," and "The Way Out," The Conference had assumed the leadership of A.A. from the co-founders. The book they wrote, Alcoholics Anonymous (the Big Book), is the basic text for AA on how to stay sober. Small wonder tensions developed among these bodies and Canada. Pressure was building outside and inside the Fellowship for A.A. to produce a pamphlet targeted at teenage alcoholics. The A.A. Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came into existence in 1944, and two years later Bill began to write a series of essays for the Grapevine came in 1 Bill once described as "a set of general principles, simply stated principles that could offer tested solutions to all of A.A.'s problems of living and working together and of relating our Society to the world outside." The Grapevine pieces were reprinted in pamphlet form in 1947. But thereafter, with the enormous growth of the Fellowship and Bill's reduced travel, only a relatively few members had ever seen him or heard him tell his story. The suggestion reached the 1982 Conference, where it was discussed and debated at length, and was finally tabled until the 1982 Conference, where it was discussed and debated at length. lengthy discussion, the Conference said that the issue could not be intelligently decided without seeing a draft of the pamphlet, which was authorized to be written. later called himself the founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, basing his claim on his being the first to use the name for a group. Partly because of that impetus, the 1977 Conference authorized the joint-biography project to go ahead. That the power of AA should lie in one man carrying the message to the next, not with financial reward but only with the goodwill of its supporters. Nelson RockefellerAlthough Bill would later give Rockefeller credit for the idea of AA being nonprofessional, he was initially disappointed with this consistent position. They assigned a seasoned writer with long service experience to prepare a simplified and popularized text and also to suggest how this text might be illustrated. And yet, it was almost not written. In the last decade of A.A.'s first 50 years, two handsome historical biographies of its co-founders were added to its major hardcover books. He would have to elaborate on the difference between "spiritual experience" and "spiritual awakening." In the 2nd printing footnotes were added to pages 35, 38 and 72 along with an appendix II on page 399 explaining the difference between "spiritual experiences" versus "spiritual awakening." The Appendix II also contained information about William James' book on, The Varieties of Religious Experience, a book Bill had read upon coming out of a blackout. William JamesIn addition on page 72 it is the only time a step has been altered. Ruth wrote Bill later about one meeting in the office: "Fitz was for going all the way with 'God'; you (Bill) were in the middle; Hank was for very little; and I trying to reflect the reaction of the nonalcoholic was for very little. The idea met substantial opposition. Lois asked Bob P., who inquired what exposure it would involve. pamphlets, Books and audio-visual materials. The first printing was the only one on which a red binding and the red "Circus" dust jacket was used. After six more years of silence, the Literature Committee in 1967 agreed to prepare a pamphlet for the Armed Services. Over a couple of years, a number of case histories were gathered from members who had reached A.A. after the age of 60, and the pamphlet "Time to Start Living" was published in 1979. That seemed a bit skimpy. The title of the book quickly became the name of the Fellowship as well. The basic text ended at page 179 not 164. Second, he suggested an initial printing of 5000 instead of the high figure Bill and Hank were thinking of. The "Big Book" is almost certainly the most widely read recovery book in history. They wanted to sell the book for \$3.50 per copy. The other convict had replied with a shrug, "It sure beats hell out of sitting in a cell!" That remark was adopted as the title for the proposed pamphlet. In it, A.A. members share their experience with medications and other drugs. With this money, the outstanding shares were acquired. All three editions of Alcoholics Anonymous were routinely registered with the U.S. Copyright Office in the years they were published. To bring it off required perhaps the oddest collaboration in the history of A.A. literature. Barry L., a seasoned, skillful freelance writer/consultant for G.S.O. was given the task. A Brief History of the Big Book I n May 1938, when Bill W. Each recommendation is considered separately in the Conference floor, where it may be discussed at length and is voted upon. The AMA had declared that alcoholism was an illness in 1956. Then one day, a staff member showed Bob P. And Morgan R., a new member, knew someone on the Catholic Committee on Publications in the New York Archdiocese. She wrote an enthusiastic letter in return and suggested getting "a number one physician who has a wide knowledge of the alcoholic's medical and social problems to write an introduction." Bill acted on the suggestion at once, and nine days later had Dr. Silkworth's manuscript in hand. Content Use Policy. But the fat was on the fire. Eager ... This portion of the workshop will be a brief history of facts and myths about the book "Alcoholics Anonymous" which we in AA affectionately call "The Big Book." Co-founder Bill Wilson began ... Why We Call It "The Big Book" A printer in Cornwall, NY, named Edward Blackwell, had been highly recommended to Bill Wilson. A decade later the employment of audio-visual material was so universal that both the Trustees' Public Information Committee and Literature Committee were discussing the need for a film about Alcoholics Anonymous to carry the message would be lost." These comments cheered Bill considerably. With which Bill was in delighted agreement. As well, it is read by hundreds of thousands of recovering alcoholics at home around the world. books, Grapevine articles, letters. mortgaged his tailor shop to obtain \$1,000 to keep A.A. afloat a few weeks longer. Partly as a result of this flap, the 1979 Conference imposed a series of seven restrictions and conditions on the distribution of the film for the first year. began work on the first draft of what is now the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, in New York City and Newark, New Jersey, he had ... Booklet that tells the story of the writing and the publication of the English, Spanish and French editions of the Big Book. The result was a pamphlet, "Students' Guide to A.A." brought out At one of the committee meetings, a member, who was an ex-con himself, related a remark made to him by a fellow convict who had suggested he attend the prison A.A. World Services who, working through the General Service Office, hires a writer (and an illustrator, if necessary) and a graphics designer, and physically produces the book or pamphlet in manuscript and layout form. With the manuscript completed and edited, Hank and Bill took it to Edward Blackwell at Cornwall Press to be printed. "The Alcoholic Husband" (reprinted from the Big Book) appeared in the late '40's or very early '50's. A.A. literature includes two booklets. It is significant that the Concepts booklet is the only piece of Conference-approved literature that carries a personal by-line: "by Bill W." However valuable to A.A.'s future, the text of the Twelve Concepts was hard reading. 5000 copies sat in the warehouse, and Works Publishing was nearly bankrupt. The aim was to avoid antagonizing the medical profession, as the piece was doing in its existing form. As it turned out, these fears were largely unfounded. "If the Foundation could acquire the outstanding shares, the book could be placed in trust for A.A. as a whole." Theorem and works Publishing was nearly bankrupt. treasurer of the Foundation, LeRoy Chipman, raised \$8,000 by borrowing from Mr. Rockefeller and his two sons, plus a few others, to be repaid out of income as the books were sold. This time the proposal was forwarded to the Conference which, in 1984, recommended the pamphlet be prepared. He even had a small committee, consisting of Ed B Also, being written in specific religious language, it would be inappropriate.) The Trustees Literature Committee, and sometimes the Conference as well, repeatedly turned down the suggestion that a guide to Fourth Step Inventory be published. Unfamiliar with A.A., she got caught up in the drama of Bill's story, and when she had finished, she said, "He was such an intelligent and talented man. However, he kept his doubts to himself until he had reported the Harper offer to the trustees, who were in "unanimously in favor of the deal." Bill then expressed his misgivings. So I am beginning to get on paper our whole experience of the last dozen years." In contrast to the joy and gratitude for recovery that permeate the Big Book, the "Twelve and Twelve" is more somber, reflecting the severe, lasting depression which afflicted Bill while he was writing it (and which he describes in its pages.) He found that enlarging upon and interpreting the Steps was particularly difficult because of the diversity among the alcoholics. The Big Book is also one of the nonfiction hardcover best sellers of all time. The text was reviewed, argued over and revised by the alcoholics in Akron and New York. "Is A.A. for You?" took the place of the earlier "A.A." pamphlet in 1953, and has been one of the basic recovery pieces ever since. Altogether, they provided answers to nearly every question about service. Dr. George G., middle-aged head of the Department of Communications at a distinguished university; and Yvonne D., functionally illiterate but street-wise teenaged black girl from a Harlem ghetto. After 1985, it was given a bright red cover with gold stamping. The first cover of "Came to Believe" was a photograph of a tender shoot in spring, peeping up through the snow.beautifully symbolic, but perhaps too subtle for the browser at the literature table. At this stage Harper and Brothers offered to publish the work. So they rejected the proposal for a piece of literature to be developed around the topic, "How We Stay Sober." It was in outline form by October 1969, and was assigned to a professional writer on the staff of a prestigious national magazine. Bill D. Also, Niles felt overwhelmed by the challenge of portraying Bill's complex character, colored by his own personal acquaintanceship with the co-founder. immediately began research for a similar biography of Bill W., except that the problem was now one of selection from the plethora of material to draw on, including the Robert Thompson biography published by Harper & Row. "I don't think happiness is the point. This made for an unusually large book. An accounting showed that the publishing company was showing a profit about \$3,000. "The Doctor's Opinion" started as page one. The Committee was delightful and gave their go-ahead. But after a delay of several months the cartoonist declared the job was too difficult for him. Big Book sales are especially remarkable in view of the following facts: It is not available from bookstores; it is obtainable only from A.A. It has never been advertised or promoted (outside A.A.). It was felt that these would provide living proof that the program worked and "would identify us with the distant reader." In addition to Bill's and Dr. Bob's stories, the book eventually contained 16 stories from Akron and 12 from New York. But the total number of titles continues slowly to increase. Together, she and George G. It remained virtually unchanged until '74, when it was revised to reduce the institutions sections since other pamphlets on institutions were then available. "Memo to an Inmate Who May Be an Alcoholic" was another Ralph B. Richards of John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, to whom the mimeographed first two chapters had been sent. Oblivious to the fact that (except for service pieces) a new piece of literature is produced only by Conference action, following the tortuous path of approval described earlier. Jack M.'s drawings were clever and amusing, but insightful as well. felt he should have been compensated more generously and should receive some sort of royalty. Eager to save costs, Bill and Hank agreed. Thus, it was hoped, any hint of promotion would be voided. It was the first time the now-renowned Twelve Steps recovery program had been written in 1961 expresses the theme: "Cooperation, Yes.Affiliation, No." Updated in 1967, this pamphlet proved enormously helpful in clarifying A.A.'s role as alcoholism agencies and treatment centers proliferated in the '70's. Bill asked Fitz M., who lived near Washington, D.C., to check both titles through the library of congress. He would work up basic ideas on a yellow scratch pad and then, at the office in Newark, New Jersey, would stand behind his nonalcoholic and often unpaid secretary, Ruth Hock, dictating to her as she typed. Sales continued to increase as the years sped by. They would form a stock company, sell shares to the New York members and publish the book themselves. As stated in the book, its main aim is to enable readers to find a power greater than themselves to solve their problems. A tiny publishing operation and a service office had grown in size and importance to the Fellowship. To the Literature Committee, depending on the subject) of the General Service Board. The Jack Alexander article from the Saturday Evening Post was also reprinted. We have to deal with the atheists, agnostics, believers, depressives, paranoids, clergymen, psychiatrists, and all and sundry. Blackwell was the President of Cornwall Press. "The Alcoholic Wife" followed shortly. The unused blue jacket is today in the Archives at the Stepping Stones Foundation. The process for creating our book, Alcoholics Anonymous1st Edition "Big Book" The title of the book Bill Wilson wrote is Alcoholics Anonymous, but it is referred to by AA members as the "Big Book." It's main objective is to help the alcoholic find a power greater than himself that will solve his problem. And third, no script would be written; the actual words of the members would tell the story. Our friendly experienced team of experts has treated people with all mental health problems for many years now. Along with a man called Dr Bob, who had also struggled with alcoholism, they had set out to find other alcoholics to help. So in the 2nd Edition in 1955, Dr. Silkworth allowed his name to be used because of the changing attitude. Hank ParkhurstThere was much debate over the God issue, therefore Chapter four was included, "We Agnostics." This was credited to Jimmy B., who was a devote atheist. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, the highly respected minister of the Riverside Church (the Rockefeller family's church), warmly approved an advanced copy and promised to review the book on publication, thus virtually guaranteeing favorable interest in Protestant circles. This approach worked, although two new artists were tried before the right style and appeal were achieved. Bill's "Three Talks to Medical Societies" were made available in pamphlet form in the early '50's. So the G.S.O. engaged Jack M., who had illustrated the Twelve Traditions pamphlet, to do some trial drawings. It is from the title of this book that the group got its name.Dr. Bob SmithThe book had 8 Roman and 400 Arabic numbered pages. raised strenuous objections based on the fact that it was one person's opinion and one person's opinion and one person's opinion and one person's opinion and strenuous objections based on the fact that it was one person's opinion and opinion told her his pick would be Crommie & Crommie, a husband and wife team of exceptional artistic talent and sensitivity, who were "into making films that affect people's lives." And they were the filmmakers finally selected. By October, 25,000 copies had been shipped. Then a sharp-eyed alternate delegate in the Southeast New York Area noticed the change and stormed into G.S.O. with several followers accusing the staff of subverting Conference-approved literature, going against Bill's wishes, and other misdemeanors. They also thought, according to some reports, that the color red would make the book more attractive and marketable. But beyond that, they not only couldn't sell it, they weren't sure they could even give it away. Produced since 1952 insofar as it is possible to reconstruct them. In a related vein, Bill wrote his thoughts on the status of drug addicts within A.A. in an article in the Grapevine in 1958. As she was from San Francisco, where she had known Mark Chase, director of the San Francisco Film Festival, Lois asked him for recommendations. What had happened was that, unexpectedly, the "Inside View" film had won first in its category of "Health Care," and had then gone on to win the Silver Award among all documentary films in the Festival. One pamphlet that was rejected two times and finally published (after 1985) was "The Twelve Concepts Illustrated." The suggestion first came by letter from a member in the State of Washington in 1980. "By 1940, we had begun to see that the A.A. book should belong to our society as a whole," relates Bill. He is credited with the phrase, "A Power greater than ourselves." The debate over "spiritual experience" versus "spiritual awakening" happened after the publication of the 1st printing of the 1st Edition. This was done, and the recommendation was made to release the film for general distribution. "Living Sober," the other booklet, published in 1975, had a more tortuous history. These are then circulated to the G.S.O. staff for their comments and input, following which the final copy goes back through the whole path once more.. And a monthly journal, the A.A. Grapevine was being published, separately. The 1964 Conference approved a gift edition, pocket sized, with blue endpapers and a ribbon marker. Later in the Second Edition it was moved to the Roman numeral section of the book. The controversy raged a year with both views being carried to all the delegates in letters. The need for such information was discussed many times in the early 70's especially as the early nembers who had known Dr. Bob and Bill were dying off. First edition printing dates are given in "The First Edition Big Book Stories" at "Printing History of the First Edition" The Big Book: Copyright Information The Big Book: Foreword to First Edition The Big Book: Foreword to Second Edition The Big Book: Foreword to Fourth Edition T Chapter 4 - We Agnostics The Big Book: Chapter 5 - How It Works The Big Book: Chapter 6 - Into Action The Big Book: Chapter 7 - Working with Others The Big Book of A.A. (1) Alcoholics Anonymous Number Three (7) The Man Who Mastered Fear (8) He Sold Himself Short (9) The Keys of the Kingdom Part II - They Stopped In Time (3) The Housewife Who Drank at Home (4) Physician, Heal Thyself (7) Crossing the River of Denial (8) Because I'm an Alcoholic (9) It Might Have Been Worse (11) Flooded With Feeling (16) Acceptance Was the Answer (17) Window of Opportunity (1) My Bottle, My Resentments, and Me (2) He Lived Only to Drink (4) Listening to the Wind (14) Freedom From Bondage (15) A.A. Taught Him to Handle Sobriety The Big Book: II - The A.A. Tradition The Big Book: II - Spiritual Experience The Big Book: III - The Medical View or A.A. The Big Book: IV - The Lasker Award The Big Book: VI - The Religious View on A.A. The Big Book: VI - How To Get in Touch With A.A. The Big Book: VI - Twelve Concepts (Short Form) This websites, including websites, including websites affiliated with other organizations. Entitled "Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers," it was published in Bill's last book, "The A.A. Way of Life," was published in 1967. Wilson, Co-founder of AAIn the early days of AA, after the new program ideas were agreed to by Bill Wilson, Dr. Bob Smith and the majority of AA members, they envisioned paid AA missionaries and free or inexpensive treatment centers. Usually by letter from an individual, or through the service structure. Of the 28 veterans whose stories were represented, five had gone back to drinking, eight more had slipped after the book was published but had come back to A.A., and 15 had remained continuously sober. Apparently the problem of dual-addiction were present from the start, for, significantly, a pamphlet on "Sedatives and the Alcoholic" was published in 1948. (A remark made by the nonalcoholic stenographer whom Mel hired to type the final manuscript should be preserved for posterity. Fitz wired back to the effect that the Library of Congress had 25 books entitled "The Way Out," 12 entitled "The Way," and none called "Alcoholics Anonymous." That settled the matter. As Bill set them down, the Twelve Concepts are a potpourri: Concepts are a potpourri: Concepts are a potpourri: Concepts are a potpourri: Concepts are a potpourri through V, plus IX and XII, deal with spiritual principles; the remainder, though they have no spiritual overtones, are devoted to describing the relationship of the various service entities and how they work together. Additional thousands of copies are published by A.A. offices overseas in 13 other languages. says the story that touched her most was of a Winnipeg, Manitoba, woman who had seen the film in a trial showing under the auspices of regional trustee Don N. and Tom P. Trying to focus his mind on the procedure that had evolved from the work of William James, the theories of Dr. Silkworth and the principles of the Oxford Group, Bill asked for guidance and began to write the Steps as he saw them. It was revised and updated in 1961-62, and again after 1985. This time on a number of them they typed "works Publishing, Inc. An announcement had appeared in a San Francisco paper further inviting the public to see the film at the award ceremonies. The committee's informal endorsement allowed Bill to breath easier. Titled "A.A. Tradition," the pamphlet also contained information on policy regarding hospitalization, anonymity, money, clubs, and the function of the office. Afrikaans, Dutch, Finnish, Flemish, French, German, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish. In 1970, a need was recognized for a basic informational piece directed not at the alcoholic prospect, but at the nonalcoholic student who was interested in knowing about Alcoholics Anonymous. "They think that the Twelve Steps can mean more than sobriety for problem True to his plans outlined in his 1952 letter (above), Bill wrote "a manual on A.A. services." Originally titled "Structure & Service," it was later redone as "The Third Legacy Manual." Because members were often unfamiliar with the Three Legacies when they entered service and found the title intimidating, it was again changed to "The A.A. Service Manual." This booklet has been greatly expanded since Bill's day, as the service structure has developed; and a new edition is issued annually, revised to reflect the actions of each annual Conference. The pamphlet, now titled, "Sedatives, Stimulants and the Alcoholic," was periodically revised over the next decade. What was their relationship to each other? Bill's biography, Pass It On, calls this book "A masterpiece. So he saw the need to put down in writing his concepts of the reasons for the structure, the lessons to be drawn from experience, the relationships, and above all the spiritual principles that undergirded it all. Again, Hank and Bill turned to their pad of blank stock certificates. Initiated under the Literature Committee, it became the province of the Correctional Facilities Committee when the latter was formed. Alas, initial fundraising efforts failed. In 1938, Bill W's brother-in-law Leonard Strong contacted Willard Richardson, who arranged for a meeting with A. These include an outline of how to go through the Twelve Steps, as well as some personal stories of "experience, strength and hope". Black or Jewish, teenaged or nearing 80, gay, lesbian, etc. "Came to Believe," published in 1973, is a collection of stories by A.A. members who tell in their own words what the phrase "spiritual awakening" means to them. If approved, it is referred to the Literature Committee (or other appropriate committee, depending on the subject) of the Conference. Rockefeller Jr. Bill envisioned receiving millions of dollars to fund AA missionaries and treatment centers, but Rockefeller refused, saying money would spoil things. But the fact is, the book Alcoholics Anonymous was already off the press, and the name had been used a year earlier to refer to the Fellowship as a whole. at G.S.O. with Bill's word by word approval. Five years previously, an A.A. member had pointed out the need, because many newcomers translate the word "spiritual" in A.A. as meaning "religious." The aim was to show the diversity of convictions implied in "God as we understood Him," pulled the material together and prepared a first draft in July '61. only to have the moratorium ignored by the next Conference when the need for a new pamphlet was felt. Forth, nationwide publicity followed John D. "44 Questions and Answers," also written by Ralph B., was first approved in 1952, and became one of A.A.'s basic pamphlets. The Trustees' Public Information Committee was charged with reviewing and evaluating the entire experience at the end of that time and formulating a suitable policy. In 1976, the challenge of creating such a piece was undertaken. The fact was, only the additional material unique to the second edition was protected. The day after the showing, she called once more to say she had seen the film and didn't know what she had been afraid of, as she was now ready to go to A.A. Because of its impact, footage from the film was later used in a series of public service announcements produced by Crommie for A.A. same style, one directed at young alcoholics and the other at inmates, which were enthusiastically received.) David and Karen have stated many times that knowing A.A. during the making of the films has profoundly changed their lives. It became known as the "Circus" jacket because of its loud circus colors. Soon, however, Catherine stopped in frustration, reporting that she could not do justice to the subject by patching and asking for permission to do a complete rewrite in her own style. All these stories were thoroughly screened, and in the preparation of the second edition, Bill was assisted by Ed B. The 1983 Conference discussed and debated the subject further, with more emotion than before, pro and con, and finally recommended that such a pamphlet not be produced at that time. Sure enough, sales picked up almost immediately and have continued at a steady level. All this before the Conference had even seen the film, much less approved it! Following a hurried phone call, the Festival officials agreed not to show the film to the public. If it is approved "by substantial unanimity," it becomes a Conference recommendation. It was judged to be too difficult for inmates to read by 1980, and so a decision was made to discontinue it. Who was in charge? By this time in 1939, the recoveries from alcoholism numbered about 100. Bill did some editing of his own, polishing his earlier work. Need for such a tool was expressed by the Literature Committee as far back as January 1958, but apparently nothing was done until '61, when a draft was authorized to be called a manual, was published in 1965. Even the average member in service. During the first 25 years, Bill's telling his story was a part of almost every group meeting and A.A. gathering at which the co-founder appeared. A few of the shareholders generously contributed the money to the Foundation. It's too bad he never did anything with his life!") The Literature Committee felt that Mel B.'s manuscript lacked vitality and failed to make Bill come alive. It has been particularly useful in lowering the anxiety of patients in treatment centers facing their first exposure to A.A. In fact, Lois F. By the mid-70's, alcohol use and abuse among teenagers was receiving a lot of attention in the national press. forward was written, it contained a statement of purpose of the organization. Alcoholics Anonymous seemed about to go under. From its first day in print until now it has been read at most Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings. The title that appeared on the Multilithed copies was "Alcoholics Anonymous." The first documented use of the name is in a letter from Bill to Willard Richardson dated July 15, 1938, in which he uses it to refer to the movement. Word spread from service sponsor to service sponsor "A Member's-Eye View of Alcoholics Anonymous," one of the most powerful and popular pamphlets in the A.A. library, almost never saw the light of day. (Their objections may have been rooted in their familiarity with a privately manufactured window-shade type of "suggested Steps" wall displays in common use at that time in the New York area.) It was pointed out to them that the wording "The Twelve Steps" was used in the Big Book (where they are "suggested as a program of recovery"), the Twelve and the parchments. It was not spiritual and contained nothing about getting sober; but it was chock-full of the kind of advice and suggestions a newcomer might get from a super-sponsor. About 8 years ago a "virgin" first printing Big Book in the original sealed shipping box was bought at auction for well over \$10,000, and the buyer did not even open the box to verify the book was inside, as it is more valuable in the sealed box. In the case of the facsimile affair, quite apart from the copyright, federal "fair trading" laws protected A.A. against someone marketing a product that appeared to be A.A.'s (After 1985 and therefore beyond the purview of this history, the Board and publishing steps to ensure that loss of copyright would not occur again, and that A.A. would be more than competitive with any outside publishers.) In the early years of A.A., pamphlets were written, printed and distributed by whoever was inspired to do so. The only change made in the content of the book since it was written was the addition of the Long Form of the Long Form of the Long Form of the Traditions, by Conference action, in 1978. "At this point we would have to tell how our program really worked. This problem really worried the life out of me." It was in this mood that Bill, "tired clear through," lay in bed at 182 Clinton Street with 18 members of the Akron group and proposed the book. The original volume proved so bulky that it became known as the "Big Book." As the pages came off the presses, they were bound in a thick, dark red cover embossed in gold. And much of it was helpful. Deceptively simple in its guise as a log of the three-day proceedings, it is actually an entire history of the Fellowship and its place in society, with whole sections given over to the vision of A.A. as held by those in society at large. The only criteria for Conference-approved literature is to meet a perceived need by the Fellowship. First, they agreed that the objective would be to portray Alcoholics Anonymous as it actually was, to counter the misconceptions and stereotyping that existed in the public mind. hand, Bill went to Washington, D.C., where some well-to-do members bought the new issue. "In my view, we of this world are pupils in a great school of life. Consternation befell the A.A. World Services Board, the General Service Board and the G.S.O. staff as they envisioned outside publishers printing the Big Book, free to change the text as they wished, thus compromising and distorting the recovery message. At least twice in 1974 and 1981 committees or task forces were appointed to review all literature with a view to see what could be combined or dropped, and several helpful suggestions resulted. As one speaker put it at the 50th Anniversary International Convention, "For two thousance or task forces were appointed to review all literature with a view to see what could be combined or dropped, and several helpful suggestions resulted. years before the Big Book appeared, there was no hope for the alcoholic. He was brilliantly articulate and touched many, many people.") When Allan met Bayard and Marjorie P. It took 34 years to sell the first million; the fourth million; the fourth million was sold in two years, the fifth in a year and a half. How did it come to be written - and how could it help everyone? The following year a draft was completed and was reviewed and revised through 1969. brought the manuscript to the AAWS Board, staff member Ann M. It was primarily written by one of the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Bill Wilson with two chapters, "To Employers" written by Henry Parkhurst. He cut the manuscript by a third to a half and sharpened up the writing in the process. He wrote to Father Dowling in July 1952, "The problem of the Steps has been to deepen and broaden them, both for newcomers and oldtimers. Finally Niles fell ill with cancer and resigned from the assignment. just as employee alcoholism programs were in their ascendancy, spurred first by the National Council on Alcoholism and later represented by ALMACA. All the other printings of the first edition, except for the fourth printing of a reverse flow of literature. The fourth printing, due to another overstock of binding material and thus, lower cost, was bound in blue as well as in green. Bill W, as he's most known today, was one of the co-founders of AA. Bill argued that, in addition to the reasons above, the book could be sent or carried to the alcoholic in different places; it could help publicize the movement among nonalcoholic; and it might even make money which could be used to establish an office, handle inquiries, etc. The basic text has remained unchanged. It was approved by the Conference and published in 1970, with a prefatory explanation which read in part, "Though the A.A. program relies upon the sharing of experience the recovery process itself is highly individual Therefore, the program is described here as it appears to one member; but the pamphlet does reflect Fellowship thinking." Although the pamphlet was originally conceived of to explain the program to alcoholism professionals and other outsiders, it has provided fresh insights for A.A. members as well. It was attended by wealthy New Yorkers as well as members of the newly founded AA. So, in 1975, the title was changed to "As Bill Sees It," with "The A.A. Way of Life" as a sub-title. AA has been holding group meetings for more than 85 years now and at present is believed to have around two million members. Instead, Bill and Bob formed a nonprofit group called the Alcoholic Foundation and published a book that shared their personal experiences and what they did to stay sober. His career and life eventually collapsed due to his alcohol addiction. With the appearance of the Jack Alexander article in the Saturday Evening Post in March 1941, sales of the Big Book were launched in a major way and a second printing was made. Then, with four separate occurrences, the turning point came. According to memories of G.S.O. staff members at the time, they were almost ignored for a time. So Bill and Hank Parkhurst (author of the personal story "The Unbeliever" in the first edition of the Big Book) went ... male and female, Black, Hispanic, etc.. Three languages — English, Spanish and French — are contained in one book. The Grapevine in 1967 ran a series of illustrated feature articles on the Washingtonians in more detail. (Parenthetically, past trustee George D. The original text in the first 164 pages was unchanged. Four years later, the Literature Committee was still studying the idea; and four years after that, they reported the same status again. The 60-30-10 Plan" "Carrying the Message Inside the Walls" "Circles of Love and Service" "A.A. In Your Community" "A.A. At A Glance" "The A.A. Member" "If You Are a "Any factual or statistical information may be updated whenever practical without going through the process of Conference action "Since A.A. Guidelines are a reflection of collective experience that is shared through G.S.O. relating to specialized topics not necessarily relevant to all groups or members. So Bill and Hank Parkhurs (author of the personal story "The Unbeliever" in the first edition of the Big Book) went to Cornwall to see Blackwell. The project then lay fallow for about a year (the failure to complete it being reported with "regret" to the 1985 Conference.) A few months later, Sarah P., literature coordinator on the G.S.O. staff, and Vinnie M., newly appointed director of publications, decided on a new approach; namely, to write the text for the pamphlet first. Except for six pieces from the Grapevine the remainder of the contributions were written especially for the book in response to an appeal by G.S.O. and represent the broadest possible sampling of members from all parts of the U.S. and Canada and The final editing of the book was done by Tom Uzzell, a faculty member at New York University. They also brought into symmetry the Three Legacies of A.A. as shown in the circle-and-triangle symbol; i.e., The Legacy of Recovery had its 12 Steps The Legacy of Unity had its 12 Traditions The Legacy of Service now had its 12 Traditions The Legacy of Service now had its 12 Steps The Legacies of A.A. as shown in the circle-and-triangle symbol; i.e., They also brought into symmetry the Three Legacies of A.A. as shown in the circle-and-triangle symbol; i.e., They also brought into symmetry the Three Legacies of A.A. as shown in the circle-and-triangle symbol; i.e., They also brought into symmetry the Three Legacies of A.A. as shown in the circle-and-triangle symbol; i.e., They also brought into symmetry the Three Legacies of A.A. as shown in the circle-and-triangle symbol; i.e., They also brought into symmetry the Three Legacies of A.A. as shown in the circle-and-triangle symbol; i.e., They also brought into symmetry the Three Legacy of the the three Legacy of the the three Legacies of A.A. as shown in the circle-and-triangle symbol; i.e., The three Legacies of A.A. as shown in the circle-and-triangle symbol; i.e., The three Legacies of A.A. as shown in the circle-and-triangle symbol; i.e., the three Legacies of A.A. as shown in the circle-and-triangle symbol; i.e., the three Legacies of A.A. as shown in the the three Legacies of A.A. as shown i Concepts The Concepts codified the Third Legacy. Bill said that more than 100 titles were considered for the book's first printing. 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" and that "it is more impressive to the professional person to watch the technique in action than to read the book." However, not all reviewers, especially those in the medical field, found merit in the book. By the time the second edition was introduced in time for the International Convention in St. Louis in 1955, the first edition had gone through 16 printings and 300,000 copies. And "Memo to an Inmate Who May Be an Alcoholic." What was still needed. Lois F., a brand-new but highly capable G.S.O. staff member, was secretary of the Literature Committee and therefore of the subcommittee as well. But as the 5,000 copies of the Big Book lay stacked in Edward Blackwell's warehouse in April 1939, Bill and Hank's problems were only beginning. The pamphlet was withdrawn and was replaced with an entirely new piece on the same general subject, which clarified A.A.'s policy of not "playing doctor" by advising newcomers to discard The same year, "Speaking at non-A.A. Meetings" received Conference approval. The matter was laid to rest by a recommendation of the 1976 Conference affirming the usage of "The Twelve Steps" without the word "suggested." The delegates in 1979-80 became concerned that A.A.'s service material (including about a dozer prescription drugs. leaflets and single-sheet flyers, and all Guidelines) did not carry the "Conference-approved" seal and were not, in fact, Conference-approved. Right on target. and more women and young people. The Foreword to the first edition contains many of the key principles that later shaped the Traditions and the AA Preamble.Dr. William SilkworthAlcoholics Anonymous: The Story of How Many Thousands of Men and Women Have Recovered from Alcoholism is a 1939 basic text, describing how to recover from alcoholism. Officially called "Alcoholism is a 1939 basic text, describing how to recover from alcoholism." of the paper it was originally printed on to save costs when published in 1939. At Tikvah Lake, in our treatments that are personalized for every client, we can give an introduction to the Twelve Steps. By 1952, Bill was ready to write Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, a book which combined the stories of 13 people who thought A.A. wouldn't work for them because they were somehow "different". He compared his feelings with the first time he had met Bill. To aid in A.A.'s work in correctional institutions, two primary pieces of literature were available. The experience of the first members now needed to be expanded to include more stories by women more "high bottom" stories, and more stories by younger members. An attempt to get an article in the Reader's Digest aborted, a national radio program by the immensely popular Gabriel Heatter had produced almost no results, and available funds reached their lowest and most desperate ebb. It seemed to some people, however, that the total was somewhat pompous and off-putting. In July 1973, the stories were completed and the foreword was being written, and the pamphlet finally came off the press in 1974. At assemblies, conferences and other service meetings, workshops on the Concepts, once deserted, became crowded. largest book printers. The review that appeared in the October 1939 volume of the Journal of the American Medical Association called the book." Similarly, the Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease said The "Big Book" was "big in words...a rambling sort of camp meeting...Of the inner meaning of alcoholism there is hardly a word. Lois and Bob P. Call us today to speak about how we can help you or someone you know. Following are the tracks of most of the individual pieces of A.A. literature. The words Alcoholics Anonymous were printed across the top in large white script. Bill, and finally the Alcoholic Foundation, raised the necessary funds to cover the initial printing costs, as Ed Blackwell could not roll the paper. Book sales and AA popularity also increased after positive articles in Liberty magazine in 1939 and the Saturday Evening Post in 1941. Gabriel HeatherAt the time of the publication of the first edition, The Big Book was typically well received by most critics, referred to by one reviewer as "the greatest redemptive force of the twentieth century." A reviewer for the New York Times stated that the thesis of the book had more of a sound base psychologically than any other book on the subject and that the book is unlike any other book ever published. However, before the piece reached publication in 1977, the Committee decided the mild profanity might offend someone, so the "hell" was removed and the title became, "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell." As A.A. literature originated in the U.S., the term "Conference originated in the U.S., the term "Con approved" refers to the U.S./Canada Conference. One of the earliest was called simply "A.A." It contained a brief section headed "Am I an Alcoholic?" plus several personal stories and endorsements from medicine and religion, and ended with the Twelve Steps. It consists entirely of excerpts from Bill's other writings.. (Bill never failed to express gratitude to Blackwell in later years, and AA continued to have the Big Book printed by Cornwell Press and its successor companies until the present time.) A price of \$3.50 was decided on (rather high in 1939), and they chose the thickest paper in Blackwell's plant "to convince the alcoholic purchaser that he was getting his money's worth!" Bill said later. A guide in the front of the book directs the reader to Bill's comments on such subjects as Acceptance, Character Defects, Fear, Resentment, Serenity and scores of \$10,000. opposed strong reference to God; Hank wanted to soft-pedal them; but Fizt M. There they were told that the book would probably be only about four hundred pages when printed. Bill's words are still as timely as they were when he first wrote them 30 years ago. Lois explained that the films are shown to small groups of judges in small meeting rooms, so the exposure would be very limited. Why We Call It The Big Book" A printer in Cornwall, NY, named ... The AA "Big Book" is almost certainly the most widely read recovery book in history. The need for literature addressed to young people was discussed by the Board in October 1952. Was scarcely aware of the Concepts, much less a student of them. was directed to find three filmmakers from which one could be selected, which she did. Please be aware that A.A.W.S. is not responsible for the content, practices, policies, or methods of any other website, including, without limitation, any other website is collection, dissemination, use, and protection of personal information, its use of tracking technology, or its level of computer security. Different" was intended in part to forestall requests for separate pamphlets directed to special groups of alcoholics. The Trustees Literature Committee discussed it earnestly. After four and a half years of organizing material and writing "What Happened to Joe," and "It Happened to Alice," two stories told in comic book style, were published in 1967 and 1968 respectively, but they had been started almost a decade before. Alexander made more substantive suggestions for improving the sentence structure and manual on how to enjoy a happy, productive life without drinking. punctuation of the essays on the Steps, sent later, but he concluded, "Otherwise the text is splendid. The Conference recommended that "The test film approximately 25 minutes in length for the purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the general public" This action was implemented during 1978, and the finished film, entitled "Alcoholics Anonymous-An Inside View," was shown to the 1979 Conference for their approval. AA meetings presently take place in 180 out of the world's 195 countries. A run of four thousand seven hundred and thirty copies rolled off the press in April 1939. But that is only the beginning for the Trustees' Literature Committee (or other appropriate committee) then becomes responsible for implementing the recommendation. That was a very large sum in those days, probably the equivalent of about \$50 today, and people might not think they were getting their money's worth. After conducting additional interviews, she started to work "How A.A. Cooperates with Community Efforts to Help Alcoholics," was a project of the Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community. In fact, Bill W later wrote: "Many people, nonalcoholics, report that as a result of the practice of AA's Twelve Steps, they have been able to meet other difficulties of life. on the manuscript. Prisons" was directed at corrections officials, describing how A.A. groups function behind bars and containing prison officials' commendation of A.A. It was first published in 1969. The committee gave the book a wonderful report, though they suggested some minor changes which Bill quickly accepted. In 1955, there apparently existed an impression, at the time, that the copyright of the second edition served to renew the original copyright. On recommendation of the Public Information Committee, excerpts from "Too Young?" were issued in leaflet form, entitled "Message to Teenagers," and offered free of charge. He brought them in to dictate to Ruth the next day. It read in the 1st printing, "Having had a spiritual experience..." to "Having had a spiritual awakening..." Archie Trowbridge, the founder of A.A. in Detroit, writes a note in his book which was one of the first print, "were purchased from the printer in small 3-6 book lots because that is all they could afford to pay for at that time." Archie TrowbridgeOn April 10, 1939, 4,730 copies of the first edition of "Alcoholics Anonymous" were published at \$3.50 a copy (\$54 in today's dollars). Ralph B. Tastefully designed by a nonalcoholic book designer Nelson Gruppo, the book was illustrated with 26 photos. They see in them a way to happy and effective living for many, alcoholic or not. Authorization was given by the Trustees to film some test footage to see if anonymity could be preserved. general manager of G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from a member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from A member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from A member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from A member who was the delegate from Delaware for his visit to G.S.O. a thank you letter from A member who was the delegate from A memb and take matters into their joint hands. Members today continue to hope that more copies of first edition printings will be found and brought to light, instead of collecting dust in some attic or basement. Selected and edited by Janet G. Also and secondarily, financial support of A.A. services was threatened. The task was assigned to Niles P., a past trustee and past assistant general manager of G.S.O. under Bob H. Bill began work on the book in March or April of 1938. The idea to include a chapter by a medical person had come from Dr. Esther L. Somewhat to Bill's surprise. On page 234, the second and third line from the bottom was printed twice. Akron and Little Rock and, I think, Memphis. Which we did." When Herb M. were of particular help. "More than anyone else, you are gualified to speak the A.A. language and you do it nobly. "Understanding Anonymity," published in 1972, arose out of a need felt by the Public Information Committee to explain and clarify both to A.A. members and to outsiders what anonymity means. 250,000 copies! By 1958, the subject of "Sedatives and the Alcoholic" was being further researched and the 1948 text was revised. After the Conference approval and to actual production. Mike R., recalling a little group in Cordell, Oklahoma, in the 1940's says, "we got material from all over. credit George D., Pacific Regional Trustee, with valiant and effective service traveling to gatherings throughout his region to calm people down. He sent a letter to all past Trustees and G.S.O. staff members with whom he was acquainted, to advance his claim. As the number of alcoholism treatment centers grew in the '60's and exploded in the '70's, demand grew for shared information on their relationship with A.A. The result was pamphlet "A.A. in Treatment Centers," first published in 1965. "I was a couple of months sober and so excited," he wrote, "so thrilled to actually meet the co-founder that I gushed all over him with what my sobriety meant to me and my undying gratitude for his starting A.A. When I ran down, he took my hand in his and said simply, 'Pass It On'" Bob P. The problem of happy sobriety. As a leader in Southern California A.A. when he joined in 1961, and says of him, "He was the most interesting man I ever met, the most stimulating. Bill did not think of his recollections contained in his three major talks as definitive history, but continued to speak of his plans to write such a book. He wrote it, he said, because he wanted to make sure that nobody misunderstood what had happened at St. Louis. Hank Parkhurst arranged for 20,000 postcards to be mailed to doctors announcing the Heather broadcast and encouraging them to buy a copy of Alcoholics Anonymous. In 2012, the Library of Congress designated it as one of 88 "Books that Shaped America." A printer in Cornwall, NY, named Edward Blackwell had an excess of red material for the bindings, so he offered them a special deal. It was completed and published the following year, with simple, convincingly authentic stories from a variety of inmates. This is quite significant in that the Twelve Steps are not just to help somebody quit alcohol one day at a time, but to also teach them how to live life on life's terms. Then he revised the manuscript accordingly. Around 1968, there were discussions by the Board of the need for a pamphlet for sober old-timers, and the need to point out "traps" or "danger signals." Members of the Literature Committee and others were asked to submit their ideas. One chapter is titled "To Wives" (when it was written in the late 1930s most AA members were men); one is for employers; and another is for agnostics. Since audio-visual materials were considered to be "literature" in another form, the Literature "in another is for agnostics. Since audio-visual materials were considered to be "literature" in another such a film could be made within the Traditions. The format was changed shortly to a pamphlet, which was published in 1971 and has proved extremely popular. Instead, the draft was copied or mimeographed in many locations, where it stirred up additional furor. and then threw up their hands. In doing so, they realized that even though the first people they tried helping drank again, they had stayed sober. Nell Wing, A.A. Archivist, wrote and submitted to the Literature Committee in 1972, brief biographies of A.A.'s co-founders. With the \$3,000 thus raised, Charlie Towns was repaid in full and the other grumbling stockholders received their money. With Bob H., general manager of G.S.O., he negotiated a flat fee for the project. After the first Rockefeller fundraising attempt fell short, he abandoned plans for paid missionaries and treatment centers. Drafts of the book were sent back and forth between Bill W's group in New York and Dr Bob in Akron, Ohio. So the burgeoning association set down its quidelines and experiences in a book called Alcoholics Anonymous which was mostly written by Bill W. The substantial number of gay groups in Alcoholics Anonymous led to an expressed need for such a pamphlet. Three hundred pre-publication copies were circulated for comments and it was finally published in 1957. It was redone as "A Clergyman Asks About Alcoholics Anonymous." Soon after his work on "Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age" was completed, Bill commenced writing "The Twelve Concepts for World Service." He had been deeply concerned about the necessity of reducing to writing exactly how the services" had an even longer gestation period. The AAWS Board and the General Service board considered his case, but declined to take action. Two years afterward, G.S.O. was still trying to collect more stories. Morgan R., recently released from an asylum, contacted his friend Gabriel Heather, host of popular radio program, "We the People," to promote his newly found recovery through AA. A separate chapter could be written about the path followed by one suggested piece of literature that was not published; namely, a pamphlet for the homosexual alcoholic. After 18 years had passed, it was again felt that the personal stories from the Armed Services, Indians, Blacks, retirees. and Nell Wing. Trustee Bayard P., an executive with a large advertising agency in New York, while on a business trip to California with his wife, Majorie (also active in the program), look up an old associate at the agency (and fellow A.A. member), Allan McG. What were their responsibilities and what were their rights? Although A.A. literature in other countries is usually a translation of U.S./Canada literature, A.A. is autonomous in each country and may develop pamphlets as directed by its own Conference. Clarence S. to write a pamphlet on "The Alcoholic Employee." After several drafts, the piece was published in January 1963. Lois said later, "I sometimes think the greatest contribution I made while at G.S.O. was finding the Crommies." The test footage was shot in New York, California and Chicago at the end of 1977 and the first part of January 1978. As he went along, he checked the draft with the Akron and New York members, from whom he sometimes got "a real mauling." After completing Chapter 3, "More About Alcoholism," and Chapter 4, "We Agnostics," Bill "reached the famous Chapter 5," he recalls. After that will come a manual on A.A. services. After nearly two years of work, he submitted a complete draft. The "problem" being an inability to stay sober on his or her own. One of the main reasons the book was written was to provide an inexpensive way to get the AA program of recovery to suffering alcoholics. Bill G. Gradually this changed, however, and their worth came to be recognized in the '70's. However, and their worth came to be recognized in the '70's. deserved the attention of anyone worried about the problems of alcoholism. How do we meet the problems we face? Which he probably was. The interview was considered vital to the success of AA and its book sales. "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" was completed and published in 1958. It was finally approved in October and "Young People and A.A." appeared early the next year. It was noted by the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers that contacts with the members of an A.A. group increases one's respect for their work. Second, in keeping with this objective, it was determined not to employ professional actors, but to photograph actual A.A.'s in real settings if it could be done without showing faces. Out of this group. Jack Alexander was one friend to whom Bill sent the essays. This situation was discovered when, early in 1985, a non-AA publisher in Ohio announced the publication of a facsimile of the first edition of Alcoholics Anonymous, jacket design and all, to coincide with the 50th Anniversary International Convention. Each shareholder in Works Publishing Company received a copy of the book. Instead, he agreed to contribute \$5,000 in \$30 weekly increments for Bill and Bob to use for personal expenses. Later, in 1940, Rockefeller also held a dinner for AA that was presided over by his son Nelson. "The Clergy Looks at A.A." was commissioned by the Literature Committee to be written by Ralph B. The following year, a second draft was circulated for review. When the G.S.O./London sent copies to G.S.O./New York, the piece was recognized as meeting a need frequently expressed on this side of the Atlantic. The medical society of the time did not prescribe to the theory that alcoholism was a disease. Dr. Howard, a psychiatrist in Montclair, New Jersey, who had received an advance copy, made an important contribution when he suggested there were too many "you musts." Bill credited him with putting the Fellowship on a "we ought" basis rather than a "you must" basis. The result of this was the phrase 'God as we understood Him,' which I don't think ever had much of a negative reaction anywhere." Bill later said these changes "had widened our gateway so all who suffer might pass through, regardless of their belief." While Bill was working his way through the main text, New York and Akron members were submitting their personal stories. "You should have no worries about your writing style," Alexander assured him. "To the layman, the book is very clear. The Literature Committee also recommended they stress recovery rather than drinking experience. Sales continued to accelerate almost every year since. The following year, a second draft was circulated to the delegates, and final Conference-approval was given, virtually by acclamation, in 1962. A number of suggested titles were considered, but none seemed quite right. A.A.'s in about 20 states either produced pamphlets of their own or distributed those obtained from other states. Jim B. It was immediately suggested that the series be adapted into a hardcover book. Almost everything the book has to say about alcoholics' problems and their recovery is still applicable today. Within a fortnight a major uproar was taking place on the West Coast, angry phone calls were pouring into G.S.O., and a petition to impeach Bob P. As can be imagined, the elapsed time to go through this path is at least two vears and may be much, much longer. After three vears of trial and error, and after a large amount of failure in getting alcoholics to recover, three successful meeting groups had emerged in America - the first in Akron, the second in New York and the third in Cleveland. Men of industry, doctors, ministers, and trustees. In 1959, the Literature Committee assigned Ralph B. It was revised by a 1980 Conference action to remove an ambiguity which existed in Bill's writings as to the advisability of using full names when speaking at public meetings. There the idea is discussed and either rejected or approved. ("A.A.'s First Aid Kit" was Bayard's name for it.) And it was written in a style unlike any other A.A. literature: breezy, impertinent, colloquial and informal. Now, some therapists are introducing adapted versions of the Twelve Steps to help with mental health issues other than addictions, including depression, anxiety and bipolar, with some extremely positive results. A.A. was already well recognized as a resource by these organizations, and the pamphlet was discontinued in 1980. The Committee also expressed the fear that opposition to tranquilizers expressed the fear that opposition to transport to the fear that opposition to the fear th dinner, he mentioned to them that he was making his annual speech about Alcoholics Anonymous to a class at U.C.L.A. which he had done for a number of years. Bob P., feeling that this was a professional matter involving primarily filmmakers, gave permission. In addition to Bill's and Dr. Bob's stories, six others were carried over from the first edition: 30 new stories were included; and the present division of the story section into three parts was instituted. Two-hundred seventy-nine books were distributed without charge. Perhaps one of the most important contributions was "The Doctor's Opinion," by Dr. Silkworth, which appears at the very beginning of the book. The original idea for a piece of literature may be brought in any number of ways. The staff agreed and the change was made routinely as pamphlets came up for reprinting. A related pamphlet, "The Traditions and How They Developed," was issued in 1955. An audio-visual subcommittee was appointed consisting of people with heavy media experience: Chuck H., Jerry D., and Bob P. It was reprinted as a pamphlet, "Problems Other Than Alcohol," and proved so pertinent as a statement of A.A.'s singleness of purpose that excerpts from it were published as a small leaflet and offered free of charge. She was given a go-ahead and spent another year and a half in producing the final book. drew up the personal stories of the teenagers and worked with an illustrator from Mad magazine to create the pamphlet entitled "Too Young?" Its graphic illustrations shocked some older A.A. members at first, but the teenagers related to them and the piece became very popular. approved" and were technically in violation of the Eleventh Tradition. as general manager was being circulated in the Northern Interior Area. It was followed up about a year later with a similar home-movie style production, "Bill Discusses the Twelve Traditions," which showed Bill speaking to a group of G.S.O. people (though no so identified) around a conference table. The words came swiftly and easily, and he was done in about half an hour. Linking to any other website, including but not limited to website, including but not limited to website, including but not limited to website by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. According to the Trustees' Correctional Institutions Committee was a pamphlet containing inmates' personal stories, directed to inmates, many of whom had only the lowest level of reading ability. Which had been spent on A.A. work at the office. A New York AA member named Ray Campbell, a recognized artist, was

asked to design the dust jacket. Others were asked to write or record their stories with a view to showing the broader range of the membership in the mid-50's. "why should I?" the Committee member had asked. Bill hoped the event would raise much money for the group. We also make sure everyone who stays with us has one-to-one therapy each day as we have seen that this achieves the best results. In 2011, Time magazine placed the book on its list of the 100 best and most influential books written by a Wall Street businessman called Bill Wilson. But as well, many of the first 100 members of AA contributed. In a 1952 letter, Bill said, "Now I'm getting down once more to serious writing I expect to do a book which will cover the application of the Twelve Steps to the whole problem of living. As each book or pamphlet originated to fill a perceived need, it is not easy to decide what should be eliminated. remembers Allan McG. And this time the project was completed. It began about a month before the Conference with the Crommies' asking Lois if they could enter the film in the San Francisco International Film Festival flap" had occurred. He submitted various designs for consideration including one which was blue and in an Art Deco style. She suggested they form a leaflet to fill requests for this information, and the Conference agreed. So many entities were involved. Silkworth did not sign the letter he submitted to Bill for the book. Yet it turned out to be not only appealing and attractive, but incredibly powerful and lasting in its effectiveness. Despite all their efforts at proofreading, there was a typographical error in the first plated, he developed grave misgivings about the book's being owned by an outside publisher. Recently the subject of how the 'Big Book' got its name came up. Thus, the book came to be nicknamed the "Big Book." Blackwell had an excess of red material for the bindings, so he offered them a special deal. With little persuasion, Bill agreed to charge ahead with the plan. How to widen the opening so it seems right and reasonable to enter there and at the same time avoid distractions, and the certain prejudices of all who may read, seems fairly much of an assignment." He followed the same practice that he had in writing the Big Book; that is, he wrote a section at a time and sent it to friends and editors for their comments. No author or editor is identified. However, the demand for it proved to be so great that this decision was rescinded. This was a project of the Public Information Committee, who was aware that over-eager but inexperienced volunteers were sometimes creating a bad impression of A.A. when they spoke to outside groups. The one which was red, and yellow, with a little black, and a little white. The "headquarters" office of A.A., as it was called then, developed several pamphlets in the 1940's to meet needs as they arose. AA's Big Book has more than 400 pages. In 1980, the "Twelve Concepts for World Service" was combined with "The A.A. Service Manual" into a single volume, by Conference action. The 1975 Conference recommended that two teenage stories be added to "Young People in A.A.," but it was then decided that a separate piece, in cartoon style, would better fit the need. Certain chapters are aimed at specific groups of people. This was corrected in the second printing. Soon, Bill W moved into Dr Bob's home and from there, both men made plans to take their message of recovery on the road. The second edition had gone through 16 printings. The product, filmed with Lois at Stepping Stones, was almost of home-movie quality with a bad sound-track, but it did accomplish the objective of preserving Bill on film. To put these figures into another perspective, in 1939-41, it took about two years to sell 5,000 copies of Alcoholics Anonymous; in 1985, it took two days. Betty L. Second, in September, Liberty magazine ran an article on A.A. Third, a series of articles in the Cleveland Plain Dealer brought a rush of new members and a rush of orders for the book. Mel B., a professional writer working in corporate relations in Toledo, Ohio, was engaged to take over. At its January 1958 meeting, the Policy Committee recommended that the idea of a comic book to reach the less literate alcoholic be explored. His story, "An Artist's Concept", appears in the Big Book's first edition. (The round metal meeting sign designed to be hung outside meeting places was "borrowed" from The editors at G.S.O. who check each pamphlet for changes in facts or figures that may be needed before reprinting, noticed in early 1975 that where the Steps were appended at the end of pamphlets or books, they were sometimes referred to as "The Twelve Suggested Steps" or simply "The Suggested Steps," but more often as "The Finland) Twelve Steps." The editors asked if they should not make the usage consistent by eliminating the word "suggested" where it appeared in a heading. They turned out to be clear and amusing. Even so, Lois recalls there was "lots of criticism," tears, protests, threats and wild rumors." The General Service Board viewed the test footage at their January 1978 meeting, gave some guidance and okayed it to be shown to the Conference. After working for two years, Mel produced a voluminous, thoroughly researched, well-written manuscript. Then, at the World Service Meeting in New York in 1976, delegates from overseas requested strongly that priority be given to a biography of Dr. Bob, as they felt they knew too little about him. First he agreed to print the book and to accept \$500 all they could afford as a down payment. The book had been created from scratch in a single year by alcoholics who had no more than two and a half years' sobriety. Towns, began to ask for their money back. This woman had called the Winnipeg central office for help on several occasions, but always refused to go to an A.A. meeting. But the dissidents remained adamant and aroused the SENY area assembly to vote to ask the Conference to recommend that the deletions be restored. did the advanced work and accompanied Karen and David Crommie during the test filming, always going through area and local service people, painstakingly explaining what was proposed and getting the group conscience of the individuals and groups being filmed. But the person who had originated the idea didn't give up, and persuaded the Washington area assembly to resubmit the proposal with the added support of the regional trustee. This is what makes the Big Book likely to be the most-read recovery book ever. By summer, he had drafted the first two chapters. So the project was turned over to Catherine N., a freelance writer in New York, to add human interest touches. "Medicine Looks at A.A." was also one of the earliest, perhaps reflecting Bill's preoccupation with getting approval from the medical profession. So, for this months offering here is a little bit of 'Big Book' history. Additionally, A.A.W.S. cannot attest to the accuracy, relevancy, timeliness, legality, or completeness of information provided by any other website Printing a single copy of this item is permitted, in accordance with A.A. World Services, Inc. Hank worked up a prospectus in which he called the new company "Works Publishing Company"...since he envisioned the forthcoming book as only the first of many "works." Next, he bought a pad of blank stock certificates in a stationary store, typed "Works Publishing, Inc., par value \$25" across the top, and put his signature at the bottom with the title, "President." Bill said, "When I protested these irregularities, Henry said there was no time to waste; why be concerned with small details?" Hank then "descended like a whirlwind on the New York alcoholics and their friends" trying to sell them stock in the new venture. First, Bert T. Chapter 12 The Big Book and Other A.A. Literature The Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, is probably the most important single factor not only in the recovery of the individual alcoholic who finds sobriety in A.A., but also in the growth of the Fellowship throughout the world. This situation was tidied-up by the 1980 Conference with three advisory actions as follows: "That the following pamphlets, leaflets, and flyers be approved with their present content: "Where Do I Go From Here" "You're A.A. G.S.O." "G.S.R." "Self-Supporting? He stayed anonymous because he did not want to be expelled out of the American Medical Association (AMA). A special task force was appointed to meet with homosexual A.A.'s and write the draft. Titled, "The A.A. Member - Medications and Other Drugs," this most recent pamphlet was written by doctors in Alcoholics Anonymous. All A.A. Except for Bill, all writers are hired on a contract basis and receive no royalties. said later that he was one of those not interested in the book project in 1938, and he did not share Bill W.'s vision of A.A.'s future. (It is adequately explained in the Big Book and Twelve, and also such a guide is available from the outside for those who insist they need one.) Repeatedly throughout the history of the Conference, delegates have come in with the complaint, "there's too much literature". The Concepts, they felt, were too lengthy, too complex, to hard to read to lend themselves to light illustrations. Since its publication, it has been translated into 67 languages and sold more than 30 million copies. Bill had completed a draft by 1960 which was sent to the Trustees for review. "It was the best thing of the kind we'd ever read, and we asked Allan's permission to take it back to New York and see if it could be an A.A. publication. Bill was responsible for getting many of the other stories for the second edition himself, taping the experiences of oldtimers which he thought were particularly helpful. In 1937, Bill and Bob met in Akron for the first time since Bill had returned from their first meeting in 1935. He then threatened legal recourse, but perhaps realizing the weakness of his case, never followed through. To ensure that Morgan stayed sober for the broadcast, members of AA kept him locked in a hotel room for several days under a 24-hour watch. Who lived in close relationship to the Fellowship." Bill worked on the book about one-and-a-half years, completing it at the end of 1956. The early use of these titles indicates the importance placed on the understanding and cooperation of the spouse in getting the alcoholic into A.A. The appearance of the Al-Anon Fellowship lessened the need for these pamphlets and eventually, in 1976, they were combined into "Is There an Alcoholic in Your Life?" "A.A. for the Woman" was probably written in the late 1940's by Ralph B., for it was being reprinted in '51. For the second edition, Bill went out of his way to include one story that had been conspicuously missing from the first. Such a pamphlet was "A Newcomer Asks," written and published in 1979 in Great Britain. But in 1952, when Bill D.'s health was failing (and after he had experienced two years as delegate at the General Service Conference), Bill W. Bill Wilson, Hank Parkhurst, Dorothy Snyder (Clarence Snyder's Wife) and Ruth Hock, Bill's secretary, went to the little hamlet of Cornwall many times to oversee the printing and correct the galleys before the final galleys were approved as ready for printing. Several Conferences had to deal with the request that the Twenty-Four Hours A Day book be adopted as A.A. literature, since it was written by an A.A. member and was in widespread use in A.A. (It was copyrighted and published by Hazelden and hence was not available How do we best learn from them and transmit what we have learned to others if they would receive the knowledge? But Bill and Dr. Bob persisted and "by the barest majority" of a single vote, the Akronites agreed that they should proceed. After two years of work by a G.S.O. committee, the Trustees' Literature Committee and the Conference Literature Committee, the third edition was published in 1976. (A.A.W.S.), or any products, services, or content displayed, provided, pr third edition had already been published in 1976.) The end result was that the heart and soul of the Big Book, the first 164 pages, had been in the public domain since 1967. "A.A.....An Inside View" has been shown on TV scores of times and has had wide use both outside and inside the Fellowship. Early members came to Bill and stated that none of them had a spiritual experience. "Living Sober" proved to be hugely popular, and after it had sold nearly a million copies, Barry L. Two years later, she suggested a companion leaflet consisting of the co-founders' last talks. So Bill "laid out this information before the next trustees meeting. It was priced slightly higher than the regular edition. and Nell Wing, working on it for a while, but Bill's attention was diverted to other projects and he died before it could be brought to fruition. They are restricted to use within A.A. only, by action of the 1965 Conference. I knew the reaction would be bad and it certainly was I knew we would have to go through with the deal despite all the objections." And we we would be bad and it certainly was I knew the reaction would be they did. Something had to be done. in July 1959, and was published in 1961. the A.A. Guidelines may be produced or revised..at the discretion of the G.S.O. staff without Conference approval." The history of A.A. literature is also told in the history of A.A. literature is also told in the history of what was not published. 29 stories were included: 10 from the east coast, 18 from the mid-west and one last-minute story from the west coast (which was ghost written by Ruth Hock and removed in the second printing). No changes were made in the first 164 pages. The Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, is probably the most important single factor not only in the recovery of the individual alcoholic who finds sobriety in ... The title of the book Bill Wilson wrote is Alcoholics Anonymous, but it is referred to by AA members as the "Big Book." It's main objective is to help the alcoholic find a power greater than himself ... This made for an unusually large book. The printer, Edward Blackwell of the Cornwall Press, was told to use the thickest paper in his shop. The Policy Committee was troubled in 1963, feeling the pamphlet needed to be revised again to stress that it was not written by experts. They picked the cheapest, thickest paper the printer had, and requested that each page be printed with unusually large margins surrounding the text. Alcoholics Anonymous should be financially self-supporting. There was only one problem they had almost no money. These few sentences with a few changes and additions, became the "Preamble" read at the beginning of tens of thousands of AA meetings every day in the ensuing years. They felt it needed such drastic revision that it should be started again from scratch by a new author. It is all on the surface material." This review went on to "degrade" the alcoholic: "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." The views about the book and about alcoholism espoused in these two journals were viewed by many in the psychiatric field during the middle of the 20th century. 1941 Saturday Evening PostOn June 29, 1939, the New York Times did a book review written by Percy Hutchison on the "Big Book." This review was a glowing report on how something was put together by former alcoholics. It is one of the best-selling books of all time, having sold 30 million copies. Just as he had been fearful in the beginning that the recovery program might be watered down or distorted unless it was codified into Twelve Steps; just as he was fearful the groups might repeat their destructive mistakes unless their experience was codified into Twelve Concepts. insisted the book should be religious in tone and content. But many of those present were against any publicity, turned thumbs down on printed material, and argued that the apostles hadn't needed books. Leroy Chapman, an assistant for \$5000, and Charles Towns of Towns Hospital loaned them \$2,500.) This decision that the embryonic society should control and publish its own literature.so controversial at the time turned out to be of immense importance for the future of A.A. Meanwhile, Bill had continued with the writing of the book. It was replaced by a simple dark blue title on an all white background, still low-key and unobtrusive. The International Convention in St. Louis in 1955 furnished the basis for Bill's next book, Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age. On the other hand, they were treasured by the Fellowship, and were offered for rental from G.S.O. They have been seen and enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of A.A.'s in the years since at gatherings from group meetings to International Conventions. They asked him if he had a manuscript of the talk, which he later showed them; it was called "A Members Eye View of A.A." "We were absolutely thrilled by it," recalls Bayard. It measured 81/2 by 51/2 and had a white cover. Ruth recalls that when he showed them to local members, there were heated discussions and many other suggestions. When he reached his stopping point, he numbered the Steps and found they added up to twelve. Finally, 78 pages of new stories from the Grapevine and 46 pages from individuals. The draft was distributed to all delegates in early 1983 as pre-Conference material, to be kept confidential. It has real authority and conviction, and I stayed with you to the end." As soon as Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions was published in January 1953, it was an immediate success. be tried out on the trustees. - written pamphlet, published in 1960. Niles' enormous and sensitive job of digesting, organizing and assembling the material from the tapes was supplemented by prodigious editing by Janet C. Niles P. Bill was worried about the reaction of organized religion. Concern over dual addiction dictated further rewording in '81. On several occasions, a moratorium has been declared on the publication of new literature.. So it was decided (mostly by Bill himself) in the early 1960's to record "Bill's Own Story" on film for archival purposes and for the sake of A.A.'s to come. The General Service Board was legally responsible for A.A.'s affairs. through the Trustees' Committee to the matching Conference Committee to the Conference floor, where it receives final Conference-approval, if all has gone well. It became clear that A.A.'s would most likely continue to buy A.A. literature from A.A., regardless of outside publishing endeavors, and that the A.A. message would continue complete unabridged and untampered with. As they tallied the results of over two years' work, they counted altogether some 40 sober alcoholics in New York and Akron, and "saw that wholesale recovery was possible." But they agreed that they needed a book "to explain to alcoholics our methods and results" and, incidentally, to prevent distortion of their program which up to that time had been transmitted by word-of-mouth. Bill himself had often been at odds with the Alcoholic Foundation, later the General Service Board. Hundreds of thousands of copies of the leaflet were distributed annually. It has remained A.A.'s second largest best-selling book. There the idea is again discussed and either rejected or recommended (i.e., "approved.") The Committee's report, containing its recommendations, is brought to the Conference as a whole. Which everyone agreed would not do at all. As well as from New York." (There was no such thing as Conference-approved literature," because there was no Conference.) The Akron pamphlets continued to be produced and used well into the 1970's. Ironically, after all this vacillation and indecision, the U.S. Navy immediately entered the largest order ever received. The large, bulky volume became known as the "Big Book" and the name has stuck ever since. If approved, it then goes back to AAWS to be published, priced, included in the next literature catalogue and distributed. To make the message even more accessible to this audience, it was also offered in a large-print version. But the Board was not impressed and "no conclusion was reached." At this time, Bill was associated with Hank P., the first alcoholic in the New York group to stay sober even for a little while, other than Bill. The two were combined into a single pamphlet, "The Co-Founders of Alcoholics Anonymous," in 1978. It is intended that we try to grow, and that we try to help our fellow travellers to grow in the kind of love that makes no demands." Thanks to Bill W, millions of addicts - including to drinking, drugs, and behavioral addictions such as gambling, sex, shopping, the internet and work around the world have transformed and saved their lives. Recognizing that America's population was growing older, the Public Information Committee made efforts in the early '70's to reach senior citizen alcoholics through magazine articles. The subcommittee met several times in 1977 and made three fundamental decisions which were crucial to the accomplishment of the project. It was also mimeographed and used for a fund-raising operation which "fizzled" out. exclaimed, "There's our title!" The book was subtitled, "The Story of Bill Wilson and how the A.A. average A.A. member. message reached the world." Again designed by Nelson Gruppo, it came off the press just before Christmas 1984. On page 170 of "AA Comes of Age" Bill W wrote that the idea behind the thick, large paper was to convince the alcoholic he was getting his money's worth. Initially the Big Book did not sell. on a Fargo/Moorhead TV station. So, except for Americanizing a few expressions, the pamphlet was "borrowed" intact. Yvonne was also an A.A. member, the sponsee of G.S.O. staffer Susan D. Dr. William D. Niles quickly exhausted the material in the archives and then undertook interviews on tape with relatives, friends and acquaintances of Dr. Bob and pioneer members of Midwestern A.A. The locals of these interviews included not only Ohio and Dr. Bob's native Vermont, but California, the D.C. area, Florida, North Carolina, New York and Texas (where he spent time with Dr. Bob's son.) In the course of the research, the book naturally expanded from biographical limits into a memoir of early A.A. in the Midwest. Therefore, there was a failure to renew the original copyright on the first edition before it ran out, unbeknownst to anyone, in 1967. "G.S.R. May Be The Most Important Job In A.A. (the title is a quote from Bill W.) made its appearance in 1965. The interview was a success. and still are

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