

I, Sue Smith Windows do hereby attest that the following statement is true and to the best of my recollection.

I am the daughter of Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith and Anne Robinson Ripley Smith.

My father was also known as "Dr. Bob" and was one of the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) along with my mother Anne Smith, Henrietta Seiberling and William IDotson, all of Akron, Ohio. William Griffith (Bill) Wilson on many occasions referred to my mother as "The Mother of AA." and "the mother of our first group, Akron Number One." I remember him saying this at my mother's funeral in June 1949 in Akron. A reference to that statement can be found in the book "The Language of the Heart" on page 353. In the New York group at Calvary Mission --called the "alcoholic squad" of the Oxford Group-- Bill Wilson was just one among several others, certainly not the founder and not their leader. Before Bill, Rowland Hazard, F. Shepard Cornel, Cebra Graves and Edwin (Ebby) Thacher sobered up between 1932 and 1934 with the help of the Reverend Samuel M. Shoemaker, a man who's sermons and books were frequently used among early AA members and in their book. Bill Wilson attended Oxford meetings and sobered up in Towns Hospital in New York City at the end of 1934. Ebby, Rowland and Bill, all in New York, are considered to be co-founders of AA as well as non-alcoholic Dr. William Duncan Silkworth, then Physician-in-Chief of the Charles B. Towns Hospital in New York. Bill stated Dr. Silkworth was very much a founder of AA. (AA comes of Age pg13) Dr. Silkworth wrote the introduction to the AA book giving it medical acceptance and standing. I make these remarks to point out, that Bill Wilson's role in the development of the AA Movement has been often overemphasized and even glorified to the point of a cult following. This cult following often obfuscates true historical facts and may have purposefully misled people into believing an overblown view of Bill's role in the founding of AA.

Prior to the founding of AA, both of my parents attended meetings of a Christian Evangelical organization known as the Oxford Group. The meetings they attended in Akron started in 1931 after James Newton helped the son of Mr. Firestone, Senior (Firestone Tire and Rubber Company) to successfully escape alcoholism. Articles referring to the Oxford Group appeared in the Akron Times-Press and the Akron Beacon Journal from January 16 to January 23, 1933 contributing much to the growth of that movement. From 1923 on James Draper Newton had been an Oxford Group activist and an ardent practitioner of Oxford Group principles. He became a good friend of Dr. Frank N. D. Buchman, and of the Reverend Samuel M. Shoemaker. Also, one of their closest co-workers, Eleanor Napier Forde who later became Newton's wife and was frequently mentioned in my mother's spiritual journal. During 1935 and through most of 1939, AA was part of the Oxford Group. Later, the Oxford Group called themselves Moral Re-Armament. In Europe they contributed much to create peace and a new lasting friendship between Germany and France after World War II.

My father was an alcoholic who was seeking relief from his alcoholism through the Oxford Group in Akron, and other means available to him since early 1933. My mother kept a diary relating to the Oxford Group teachings and philosophy which was partially typed by me. In 1992 much of it was published by Dick B. This journal outlined many of the principles and language utilized by the Oxford Group during that era. Many of these principles and wording was later used by the early alcoholic members of the Oxford Group when writing the draft for the book which was to be named, ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS.

These early members of what was to become AA were taught these principles by the elder Oxford Group members and were also told to read the literature of the Oxford Group and other spiritual literature. Much of the language utilized in the AA book came directly from the aforementioned literature and teaching of the Oxford Group.

Henrietta Seiberling, an Oxford Group member, introduced my father to Bill Wilson on May 12, 1935 at Henrietta's home, known as the "Gate Lodge," at 714 North Portage Path in Akron, Ohio. Much of the story of their meeting has been outlined in AA literature. According to a letter from Henrietta to another early AA member, she states that some of this story has been fabricated and that Bill Wilson "made up" the story of the telephone call made to Henrietta from the Mayflower Hotel in Akron. Henrietta did not go into details about what exactly took place but she was emphatic that Bill's reporting of this event was "phony."

During the period of late 1938 and through 1939, my father was involved in the writing and editing of the book, ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS (also known as the BIG BOOK) along with the other early members of what was to become known as Alcoholics Anonymous. The members of the New York "alcoholic squad" of the Oxford Group sent us proposed chapters for the book. My father and other group members were sitting at our kitchen table working on relating to the sharing of their experiences having found a solution to their alcoholism.

It is my recollection that the writing of the book was a group effort by the early members and that authorship and ownership was supposed to belong to the Fellowship as a whole and not to any one individual or business entity. AA was understood by my father and the other early members to be a Spiritual Fellowship with God (as they understood Him) as its only guiding

force and under His direction. It is my further understanding that no individual member was to derive any funds from the sale of the book and that all proceeds were to be used to further the work of the Fellowship.

The original ONE HUNDRED MEN CORPORATION as publishers of the book (it is my understanding that a facsimile of the prospectus by this corporation will also be entered into evidence) which became known as ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS sold stock shares with a par value of \$25.00 each. It is also my understanding that this corporation was never legally incorporated in the State of New York or anywhere else and thus could not have legally sold shares except by fraudulent means.

To the best of my recollection, Bill Wilson used the monies from these shares as well as other donations to the ONE HUNDRED MEN CORPORATION in order to form his own corporation, WORKS PUBLISHING COMPANY. Bill then registered the book with the United States Copyright Office in the Spring of 1939 under his own name as sole author and trading as WORKS PUBLISHING COMPANY without the knowledge and/or consent of my father or any of the other members from Ohio. A majority of members of this Spiritual Fellowship resided in Akron and Cleveland, Ohio and the New York contingent was comprised of approximately 20 out of the 100 reported members at that time.

Mr. Henry G. (Hank) Parkhurst, another early member of the NY group from New Jersey, wrote the outline for the book and at least one complete chapter (TO EMPLOYERS). An AA historian who is writing Hank P.'s biography has reported that Bill Wilson's refusal to recognize him (Hank) as the author of at least that chapter was one of the precipitating factors in Hank's eventual split with AA. It is my understanding that Bill Wilson took sole ownership of the book as copyright holder despite his not being the author and thus unlawfully copyrighted the book under his own name on April 10, 1939. The true authors of this book were the members of the Fellowship. The personal stories were written by individual members and edited by Jim Scott (an Akron, Ohio member). Bill Wilson also did not write the first eleven- (11) chapters. He only wrote a lengthy life story of his own, typed by Ruth Hock. He included some resentments against Christianity and a report about what Ebby Thacher told him. This piece was written so poorly, that it could only be used for the book after Joe Worth, a member of the NY group and successful professional founder and editor of "NY Magazine", had rewritten it entirely.

I know Bill Wilson was no way the author of Alcoholics Anonymous, but a promoter. He himself admitted to his being more of an umpire than ever an author of the book. (Page s10 in the AAWS Service Manual has Bill Wilson stating that "I became much more of an umpire than I was ever an author.") In Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers Bill Wilson is quoted, "Bob was far ahead of me in that sort of activity. I was always rushing around talking and organizing and 'teaching kindergarten.' I never grew up myself' and I can confirm that. Rather than argue with, and possibly embarrass Bill Wilson, my father chose not to expose Bill for his devious ways for the good of the Fellowship.

One of the authors of a personal story that appeared in the original manuscript (ACE FULL...SEVEN ELEVEN) from Akron asked that his story be removed from the book prior to publication after finding out about Bill's personal financial aspirations from the sale of the book. It was revealed that Bill and Ruth Hock already publicly distributed the multilith manuscript and sold it for \$3.50. A part of the approximately 400 copies were not sold. Neither my father's copy nor any of the other copies I have ever seen or heard of had been stamped "Loan Copy," or bore any such similar statement. The relating report in AA Comes of Age (page 165) is fraudulent and dead wrong. Many of the Ohio members were also upset but were told by my father that for the good of the Fellowship not to further hinder publication of the book.

My father received royalty payments from book sales at Bill's insistence for a short period of time and at my father's insistence, that money was returned to AA as soon as my father's finances improved and it was feasible to do so. If my father were not considered as a co-author as well as co-founder by Bill and the Fellowship, why then would he have received royalty payments?

The Spiritual Principles espoused by my father and by all of the early founding members and friends of AA are in direct conflict with the current trend in AA. That trend is to claim ownership and litigate in order to maintain that ownership of a book and principles truly owned by no one person or business entity. The AA literature and the principles belong to the Fellowship and to the world.

In ending, I believe that the Spiritual principle of material poverty taken from the teachings of the Oxford Group and later laid down in AA's 12 Traditions; Alcoholics Anonymous was never to "own" any property, intellectual or otherwise. This lest problems of money, property or prestige divert them from their primary purpose. That primary purpose was the reclamation of lives from the ravages of alcoholism. Even the AAWS Service Manual states (page s107) "The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous claims no proprietary right in the recovery program, for these Twelve Steps, as all spiritual truths, may now be regarded as available to all mankind." My father and all of the early AA members in Ohio believed, as I do, that AA and its literature belongs to the Fellowship and the world, and not to any individual or business entity. Also that since AA was

freely given these principles and ideas so should AA freely give them away to all who seek its wisdom and choose. to follow the way of life described in the AA book.

I believe that since the copyright on the First and Second Edition of the book, ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS was allowed to lapse, either on purpose or by oversight, so should any of Bill Wilson's written contributions to AA be placed in the public domain as have my father's writing's. Authorship of the AA book was a group effort and as such. authorship cannot be attributed to any one person.

I attest that the above statement is true to the best of my recollection and do hereby affix my signature below.
(Signed) Sue Smith Windows

Sue Smith Windows

Signed, this 7th day of January in the year of our Lord, 1999

Dorothy E. Cain

DOROTHY E. CAIN, Notary Public
Residence - Stark County
Statewide Jurisdiction, Ohio
My Commission Expires Sept. 18, 2002



photos taken Aug98

