

**Robert Holbrook 'Dr. Bob' Smith,
1879 - 1950**



Robert H. 'Dr. Bob' Smith

b. August 8, 1879, d. November 16, 1950

Co-Founder of Alcoholics Anonymous

**Anne Ripley Smith,
1881 - 1949**



Anne Ripley Smith

b. March 3, 1881, d. June 1, 1949

The Loving "Spiritual Rock" of Early A.A.

Wife of Dr. Bob

"The Mother of A.A."

Dr. Bobs Home



Welcome to Dr. Bob's Home. Many once- hopeless alcoholics, Dr. Bob among them, made their first shaky steps toward recovery in this place. Walking through these rooms, we may reflect on those days in the 1930's and 1940's when the Smiths and their visitors spoke of spiritual matters, and reflected in gratitude, on how dramatically their lives had changed because of them.

It was in this house and surrounding neighborhood where the miracle of recovery began for many hundreds of men and women; individuals who went on to spread this welcome message of recovery around the world. Many visitors have spoken of a feeling of oneness with the spirit of AA as soon as they climbed the front steps and crossed the threshold. It is our hope and belief that you will too.

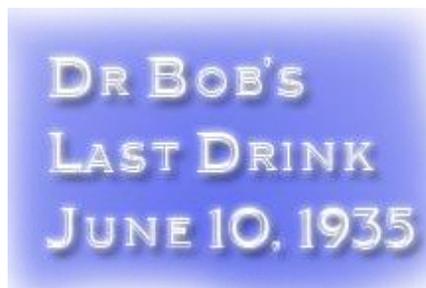
Who Was Dr. Bob

Robert Holbrook Smith was born on August 8th 1879 in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. After graduation from Dartmouth College in 1902, he completed his medical training at Rush Medical School in Chicago. While attending college, he became a steady drinker; a situation that progressed until his recovery. In 1915, some 17 years after he had first met her, he married his high school sweetheart Anne Ripley and brought her to Akron. Even though he became a successful surgeon, he continued to struggle with alcoholism.

In 1935 Dr. Bob met Bill Wilson, a New York businessman and entrepreneur who was struggling with his own alcoholism. The two immediately became close friends, with Bill showing Dr. Bob how he, Bill, with spiritual help, was finally able to recover from the effects of alcoholism. Dr. Bob had his last drink on June 10, 1935, and that is considered to be the founding date of Alcoholics Anonymous. In 1939 the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, written by Bill Wilson, Dr. Bob and other early members of our fellowship was published, and the fellowship that came to be known as Alcoholics Anonymous was born. Dr. Bob was called the "Prince of Twelfth Steppers" by Bill Wilson because he personally treated more than 5000 alcoholics without charge. Also, it was in Dr. Bob's home that some of the basic ideas essential to the A.A. way of life were developed.

Dr. Bob always said that A.A.'s fundamental ideas came from the study of the Bible and that he personally did not write or have anything to do with the later writing of the 12 Steps. In Dr. Bob's mind, the Steps in their deepest essence simply mean "love and service."

Dr. Bob died on November 16, 1950 in Akron, Ohio after 15 years of uninterrupted sobriety. Ever a self-effacing and humble man, he might be astonished, and we feel very pleased, to realize that Alcoholics Anonymous has become a world-wide organization that continues to help so many helpless alcoholics begin and continue along the Road of Happy Destiny.



Dr. Bob and Anne's gravestone, Mount Peace Cemetery, Akron, Ohio Specific Interment Location: Section 21, Lot 65, Grave 7 GPS coordinates: 41.09704N, 81.53317W

Here rest in Honored Respect and Peace, two people, for a great portion of their lives anonymous, who through their need and unstinting effort, brought so much Hope and Recovery and Amazing Grace into this world.

Dr. Bob's Farewell Talk

My good friends in A.A. and of A.A.,

... I get a big thrill out of looking over a vast sea of faces like this with a feeling that possibly some small thing I did a number of years ago played an infinitely small part in making this meeting possible. I also get quite a thrill when I think that we all had the same problem. We all did the same things. We all get the same results in proportion to our zeal and enthusiasm and stick-to-itiveness. If you will pardon the injection of a personal note at this time, let me say that I have been in bed five of the last seven months and my strength hasn't returned as I would like, so my remarks of necessity will be very brief.

There are two or three things that flashed into my mind on which it would be fitting to lay a little emphasis. One is the simplicity of our program. Let's not louse it all up with Freudian complexes and things that are interesting to the scientific mind, but have very little to do with our actual A.A. work. Our Twelve Steps, when simmered down to the last, resolve themselves into the words "love" and "service." We understand what love is, and we understand what service is. So let's bear those two things in mind.

Let us also remember to guard that erring member the tongue, and if we must use it, let's use it with kindness and consideration and tolerance.

And one more thing: None of us would be here today if somebody hadn't taken time to explain things to us, to give us a little pat on the back, to take us to a meeting or two, to do numerous little kind and thoughtful acts in our behalf. So let us never get such a degree of smug complacency that we're not willing to extend, or attempt to extend, to our less fortunate brothers that help which has been so beneficial to us.



Thank you very much.

Dr. Bob.