The “Foreword to Second Edition” provides a brief history of the first 20 years of the creation of Alcoholics Anonymous. In this Foreword, Bill W. tells how, through Dr. Silkworth and the Oxford Group, he found a solution to his alcoholism. He tells how he was able to stay sober by trying to help other alcoholics. He recounts how his business venture in Akron failed and why he so desperately felt the need to find another alcoholic to talk with. This need led to his meeting with Dr. Bob, who had tried to find a way to stay sober but had failed completely. Their meeting led to the two of them believing they could stay sober if they worked together. From their combined efforts to protect their sobriety, by searching out and going to suffering alcoholics, came a fellowship of sober alcoholics from whom came the lifesaving Program of Alcoholics Anonymous, which is the content of this book.

They tell how they found the acceptance and endorsement of some of the leading citizens of our country. We learn of some of the favorable publicity this little group of sober alcoholics received from some very influential news sources which led to a rapid growth of the Fellowship.

We are given a glance at the recognition of some of the problems our Founders faced and how they successfully developed a set of guidelines for our conduct within our respective groups and within the Fellowship itself -- the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

We learn how successful those seeking help were when the only guide we had was this Big Book, the Basic Text for our Fellowship. It is very obvious that we are not doing nearly as well today because of the emphasis on “meetings” rather than the “Program”- (These are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery).

It concludes by telling us of the hope behind the writing of this Book.
1. From the First Edition to the publication of this Edition, what had taken place?

2. What was the hope of the earliest printing?

3. Had this hope become a reality by 1955?

4. How many years passed before the Second Edition was published?
   5-a. During that period of time, how many A.A. groups had formed?
   5-b. How many alcoholics had recovered?

7. How far had A.A. spread during these sixteen years? (3 sentences)

8. What did many of our friends see ahead for our Fellowship?

9-a. Where was the first group formed?
   9-b. When was the first group formed?
   9-c. Who were the principals of the first group?

   (Comment: The stockbroker was Bill W. and the physician was Dr. Bob S.)

12-a. How long had Bill W. been recovered?
   12-b. How had Bill W. been relieved of his drinking problem?
1-c. What had preceded Bill’s recovery?
1-d. With whom had the friend (Ebby T.) been in contact?

3-a. Who else had been very helpful to the Bill’s recovery?
3-b. What was Dr. Silkworth’s specialty?
3-c. How do we, as a Fellowship, feel about Dr. Silkworth?
3-d. Where do we find his story?

7. What vital piece of information did Bill W. learn from the doctor?

8-a. Could Bill accept the tenets of the Oxford Group?
8-b. What tenets could he accept?
Comment: Refer to page 292 Third Edition and page 263 Fourth Edition

10-a. What had Bill done before going to Akron?
10-b. On what theory had he done this?
10-c. What were the results of his efforts?

13-a. What had happened to his business venture in Akron?
13-b. How did it affect him?

15. What did he realize?

16. Who did he find as the result of his efforts?

17-a. What had the doctor done to try to whip his drinking problem?
17-b. Had it worked?

19-a. What did Bill tell Dr. Bob?
19-b. Did that information prove helpful to Dr. Bob?

21. How successful was Dr. Bob doing what Bill told him he had done?

22. What did this prove?
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1. What other important fact did it prove?

(P) 2. What did the two men then do?

3. What happened with their first case? (2 sentences)

4. Did they quit with that success?

5. Were they extremely successful with others?

6-a. When did Bill return home?

6-b. What had happened that he and Dr. Bob were unaware of?

(Comment: In some copies of the Big Book, the following paragraph is broken into two paragraphs. Where that is the case, the first paragraph begins as follows

“By late 1937, the number of members having substantial sobriety time behind them was sufficient to convince the membership that a new light had entered the dark world of the alcoholic.”

The second paragraph reads:

“A second small group had promptly taken shape at New York. And besides, there were scattered alcoholics who had picked up the basic ideas in Akron or New York and were trying to form A.A. groups in other cities.”

(P) 8-a. Where was the second A.A. group formed?

8-b. When and where was the third group formed?

10. Were groups being formed elsewhere?

11. When did the sober alcoholics realize they had something really worthwhile?
12. What did they believe it was time to do?

13. What did their determination produce?

14. How many sober alcoholics were there at that time?

15. Where did the name for the Fellowship come from?

16. Did they realize they had a new road ahead?

17. What happened when this Book appeared?

18-a. What noted clergyman reviewed the Book?
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1-b. What did the noted clergyman think of this Book?

2. What happened in the Fall of 1939?
   3-a. What results did that produce?
   3-b. Where had Alcoholics Anonymous established an office?

5-a. How many inquiries were answered?
5-b. How were they answered?

7. How else were the inquiries handled?

8. What were the A.A.’s surprised to learn?

9. How many alcoholics were on their way to recovery by the end of 1939?

(P) 10. What happened in the spring of 1940?

11. What was the result of this dinner?

12. What was the estimated membership in March, 1941?

   13-a. Who wrote an article about A.A. in March, 1941?
   13-b. What were the results of this article?

15. By the end of 1941, how many members were there?

16. Was Alcoholics Anonymous now a recognized entity?
   (2 sentences)

(P) 17. What period did we then enter?

18. What test did we face?

19. What was the second question?

20. What was the third question?
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1. What was the fourth question?

2. Were these concerns valid?

3. What conviction came from this period?

4. What did they realize they must do?

(P) 5. What did the principles, for which they were searching, produce?
   *(The answer to this question includes the entire paragraph.)*

(P) 6. Where in this book do we find these lifesaving principles?

    7-a. Did these prove to be laws?
    7-b. Did the Fellowship approve of them?

9. What is one of our greatest assets?

(P) 10-a. What was happening as we were learning how to overcome our internal difficulties?
1-b. Did the public come to accept A.A.?

2. What were the two main reasons for public acceptance?

3. Were people impressed?

4. As a general statement, what percentage of alcoholics who were willing to try the Program found sobriety?
   
   Question: Are we seeing that level of success today? Why not?

5. What did thousands of alcoholics do?

6. What did great numbers of these folks finally do?

(Comment: Here, we will find discrepancies ranging from 7 - 20%)

7. What was another reason for the acceptance of A.A.?

8. Was this support important to the early growth of A.A.?

9. Where can we find some of the recommendations made by early supporters of A.A.?

10. Is Alcoholics Anonymous a religious movement?

   11-a. Does A.A. have a particular point of view?
   11-b. With which two professional fields does A.A. cooperate?

13. Is alcoholism more prevalent in particular segments of society, origins, cultures, etc.?

14. What religious affiliations find A.A. acceptable?

15. Do women make up a reasonable percentage of the A.A. membership?

(Comment: Here, we will find discrepancies ranging from 7 - 20%)
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1. Has A.A. made a significant impact on the many alcoholics in our world?

2. Does A.A. hope, someday, to completely solve the alcoholic problem?

3. Does A.A. claim to have the only solution for alcoholism?

   4-a. What is the “great hope” of Alcoholics Anonymous?

   4-b. Where is this hope to be found?

   4-c. They will then do what?