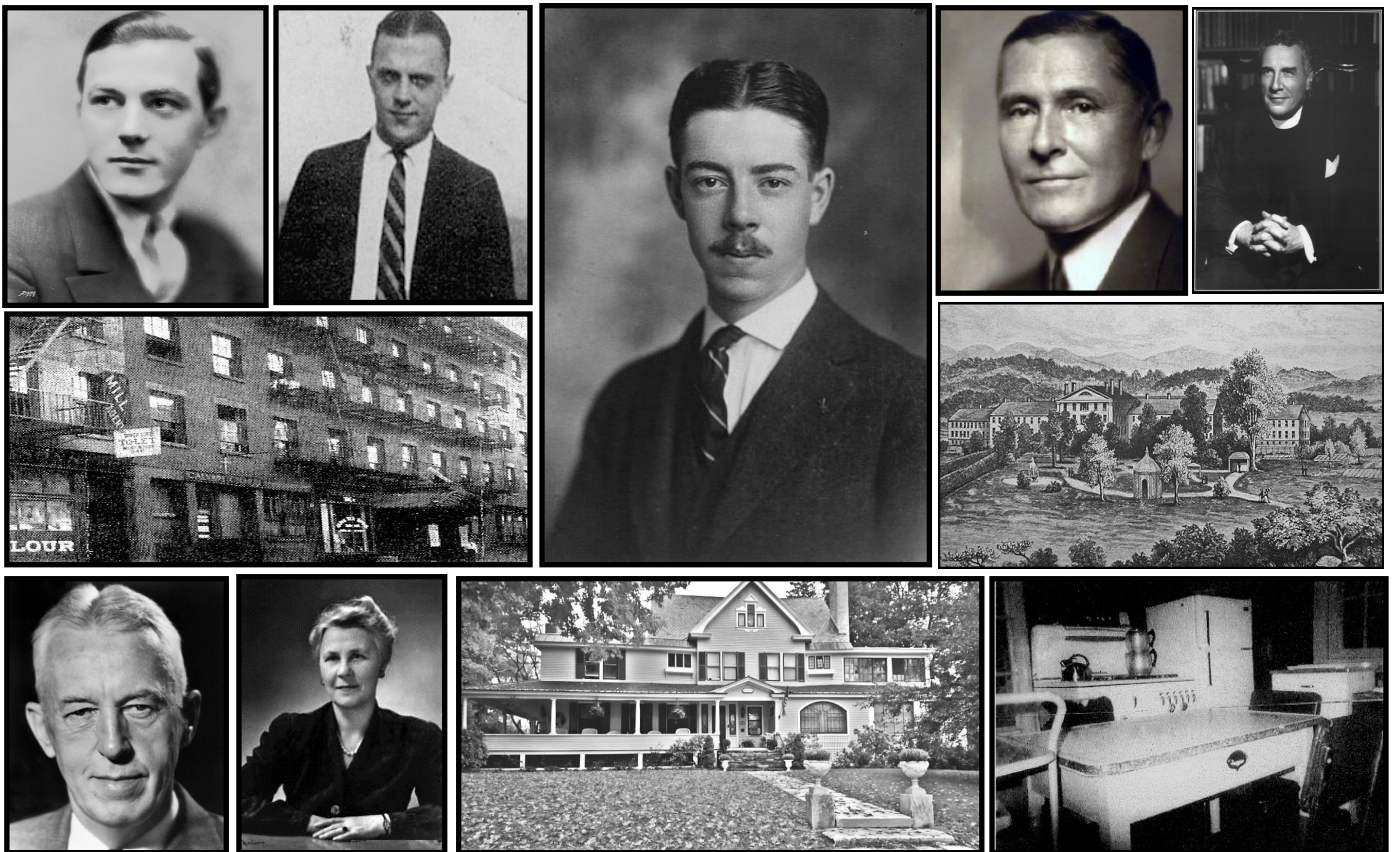
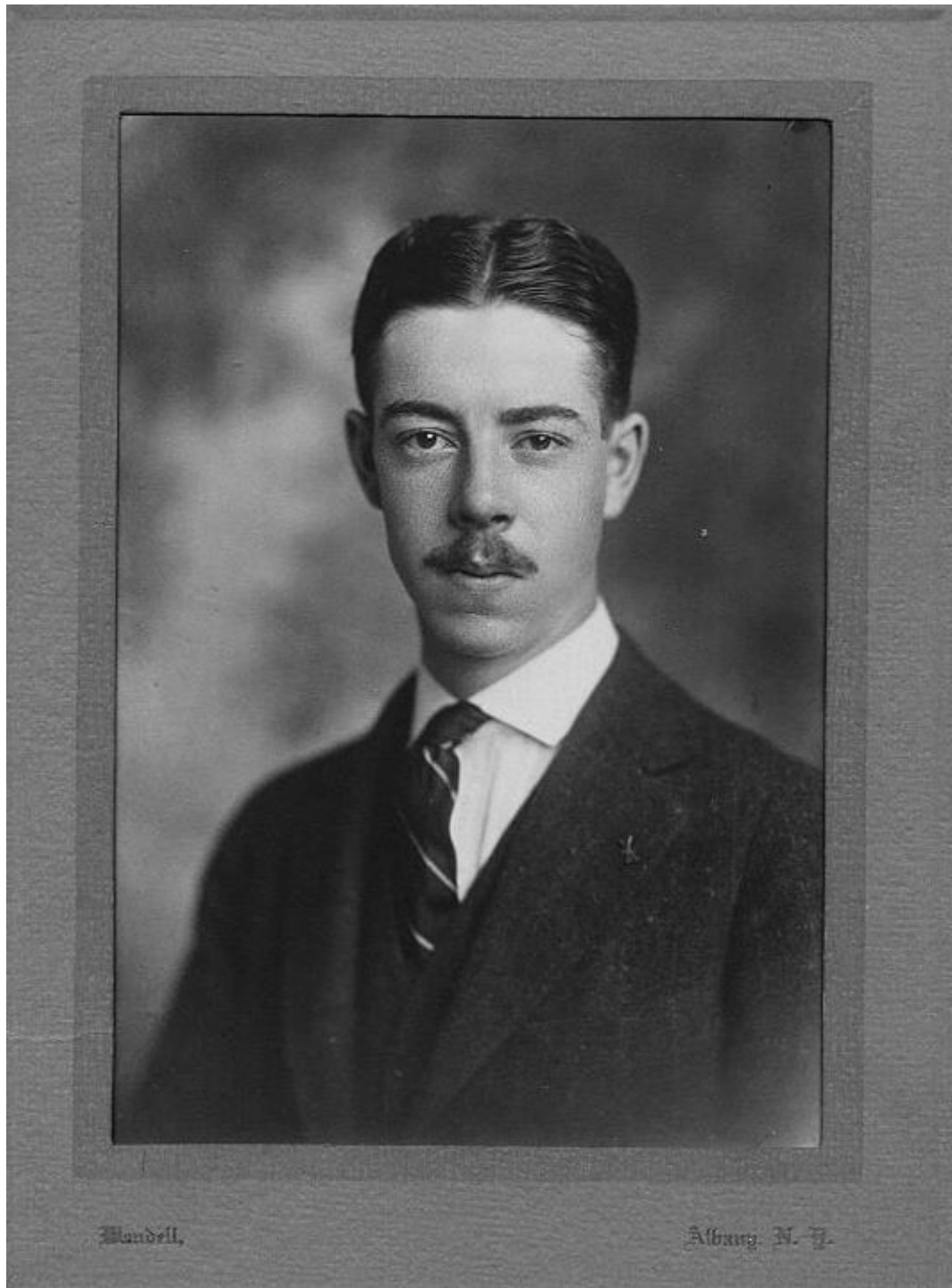


Ebby in Exile

A Vital AA Link



By Bob S.



Edwin Throckmorton Thacher
(1896-1966)

Preface

The only purpose of this minute segment of AA history is to encourage a greater interest of AA members about our fascinating history. This *confidential* writing is meant for AA members only, and not for the general public. Last names of deceased Alcoholics Anonymous are used for expedient research purposes. This private booklet is not to be published, nor sold for financial gain.

This information herein is of my own opinion; it is not endorsed by any Alcoholics Anonymous Group, District, Area or General Service Office. The enclosed information has been derived from many well known sources. They may often differ in exactitude—what you read in this booklet may not exactly square from other information you have read . . . nonetheless, I have tried to be as factual as possible.

This is a second edition, published in 2016 ~~ Bob S.



Foreword

This writing is an attempt to discuss how Ebby Thacher's seeming exile from his home town played an important part, yea, a *vital* element, in culminating a program which has helped more alcoholics than ever before—Alcoholics Anonymous.

Among the several seemingly synchronic events portrayed herein is the fact that Ebby seemed to have been “struck sober” at the same year that Bill Wilson was at his very edge of alcoholic destruction . . . then, when Ebby, once exiled from his home town, recovered his sobriety and was welcomed back home where he could be with his family and find much needed work, he decided to go to live in a dismal mission in Lower Manhattan in effort to help drunken sots—what altruism!

Ebby's unlikely decision resulted in the famous ‘kitchen table’ talk which culminated in the start of Alcoholics Anonymous seven months later. This sequence would certainly seem more than a happy coincidence! Could there have been a Guiding Hand?

I believe you may find other such ‘coincidences’ as you read these pages. AA history is chock full of surprises if we look for them!

In our history lies our hope!

One of Ebby's favorite drinks was Ballantine's Ale.



But, lucky for us, he gave his last ones to his neighbor.

Ebby's Influential Family

Edwin Throckmorton Thacher “Ebby” was born on April 29, 1896, into a family that amassed a great fortune as a railroad wheel manufacturer.

The Thacher ancestry was predominant long before Ebby's father, *George H. Thacher II*, was born in 1851. *Thomas Thacher*, his distant grandfather, came to America, from England, during the mid-sixteen hundreds to become the first pastor of the Old South Church, in Boston. The later dynasty achieved prominence in politics, including three family members who became mayors of Albany, New York:



George H. Thacher II

Ebby's older brother was *John Boyd Thacher II*. Mayor of Albany, New York, from 1927—1940.

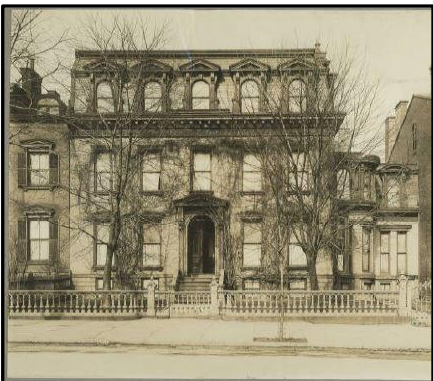
Ebby's uncle was *John Boyd Thacher*. Mayor of Albany, NY, from 1886—1888; then for two full years, 1896 through 1897.

Ebby's Grandfather was *George Hornell Thacher* (1818—1887). Mayor of Albany, New York, from 1860—1862; then from 1866—1868; and again 1870—1874.

A State Park near the suburbs of Albany in Voorheesville, New York, is named after Ebby's great uncle: *John Boyd Thacher State Park*.

Ebby's father also was a political figure and hobnobbed with the likes of Abraham Lincoln's son, Robert Todd Lincoln, and US President, William Howard Taft. As a youth, George was a skillful boxer, ballplayer, oarsman and swimmer. He became an accomplished writer and published several books. He became the director of several banks and president of the local City Savings Bank. This was Ebby's family background.

As a youth, George was a skillful boxer and all around athlete. He published books and was director of several banks. *This was Ebby's family background!*



George H. Thacher II family residence,
111 Washington Ave. Albany NY
(Demolished).



Thacher Family plot at Albany Rural Cemetery.
Ebby is buried here.

Ebby's Forefathers and Siblings

Rev. Peter Thacher	b.1554, d. 1624 (Queen Carmel, England)
Rev. Peter Thacher	b. ????, d. 1640 (Son of Rev Peter Thacher)
Rev. Thomas Thacher	b. 1620, d. 1687 (<i>Moved to America in 1635</i>)
Rev. Peter Thacher	b. 1651, d. 1727 (Son of Thomas -- lived in Massachusetts)
Rev. Peter Thacher	b. 1688, d. 1744 (Son of Rev. Peter -- born in Massachusetts)
Samuel Thacher	b. 1717, d. ????
Nathaniel Thacher	b. 1767, d. ????
Samuel Olney Thacher	b. 1789, d. ????
George Hornell Thacher	b. 1818, d. 1887 (Son of Samuel Olney Thacher -- Mayor of Albany)
John Boyd Thacher	b. 1847, d. 1909 (Mayor of Albany)
George Hornell Thacher II	b. 1851, d. 1929

Children of George Hornell Thacher II:

George H. Thacher III,	b. 1881, d. ????
John Boyd Thacher II	b. 1882 -- d. 1957 (Mayor of Albany)
Thomas Oxenbridge Thacher	b. 1884 -- d. 1941
Emma Louise Thacher	b. 1885 -- d. 1893
Roland Throckmorton Thacher	b. 1887 -- d. 1892
Kenelm Roland Thacher	b. 1892 -- d. 1966
Edwin Throckmorton Thacher	b. 1896 -- d. 1966 (Ebby)

The Mayflower arrived on our continent in 1620. Only fifteen years later (1635), Reverend Thomas Thacher arrived in Boston from Somersetshire, England. He became the first pastor of the Old South Church in Boston. There is even a Thacher Street in that city. The Thacher lineage dates among the earliest American residents from Europe. Among the many influential Thacher offsprings was Ebby Thacher, who 261 years later, became a *vital* link to the beginning of Alcoholics Anonymous.



More About Ebby's Family

Ebby's family heritage was certainly one of distinction. Thacher family history extended back several centuries to **Reverend Thomas Thacher**, who was the pastor of the the famous Old South Church of Boston in 1670. The family is said to be of Scotch-Irish origin. Thomas Thacher was the son of Rev. Peter Thacher of Somerset, England and was born on May 1, 1620. He sailed to New England on the ship James with the family of his uncle, Anthony Thacher, arriving on **June 4, 1635**—the Mayflower landed only fifteen years earlier!

Ebby's grandfather, **George Thacher**, began his career as a railroad-car wheel manufacturer in 1852. He established a well known plant in Albany, supplying most of the car wheels for the New York Central Railroad. Public service was a trait passed from father to son in the Thacher family. The business was known as The **Thacher Car Works** and produced many parts for the construction of railroad cars. This made the Thacher family very wealthy.

Ebby's uncle, **John Boyd Thacher** (1847—1909), John Boyd Thacher was one of the most distinguished and revered Albanians of his day. He was elected as a Democratic state senator Albany in 1883. As senator, he pushed through legislation establishing a commission to remedy tenement-housing problems. The commission was responsible for several successful new laws benefiting poor tenement dwellers. Thacher fought to improve the prison system and also joined then-Governor Grover Cleveland to reform corruption laws in government. He became Mayor of Albany in 1886 while Albany was celebrating its Bicentennial.

Land was available for sale and Emma and John Thacher decided to purchase farmland around the site of the Indian Ladder and Thompsons Lake so that its natural beauty would be pre-served. The 350 acres the Thachers purchased became **John Boyd Thacher State Park** in 1914.



John Boyd Thacher Town House Mansion at Washington Avenue and Dove Street in Albany, NY. It was demolished in the 1920s.



The John Boyd Thachers' summer residence in Altamont, NY, north west of Albany 7



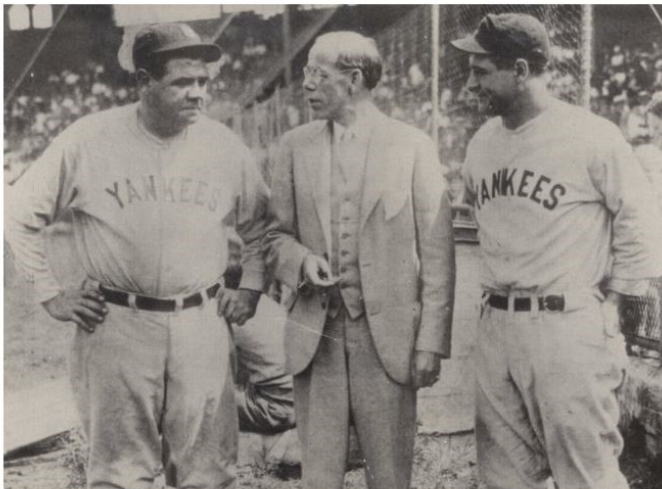
Three Thacher Mayors of Albany, NY

Ebby's Grandfather, **George Hornell Thacher** (1818-1887) was honored to be mayor of Albany for four non-consecutive two-year terms between 1860 and 1874, including much of the Civil War. He was earlier elected alderman in 1859. Mayor George Thacher was known as "that old warhorse of democracy." All of the Thacher family ancestors exhibited a thirst for knowledge that continued with John and his brother, George. Mayor George Thacher died on Feb. 25, 1887.



Ebby's Uncle, **John Boyd Thacher** (September 11, 1847 – February 25, 1909) was the Mayor of Albany, New York and New York State Senator as well as an American manufacturer, writer, and book collector. He was the son of Albany mayor, George Thacher, and the uncle of Albany mayor, John Boyd Thacher II.

John Boyd Thacher was born in Ballston, New York, graduated from Williams College in 1869 and settled in Albany, New York. He became an active scholar in writing after college and also became active in his father's business, the Thacher Car Wheel Works, which was one of the leading industries in Albany. When his father died in 1887, John and his brother George became proprietors of the business. Thacher was a member of the New York State Senate (17th D.) in 1884 and 1885. Then he was elected Mayor of Albany, serving from May 4, **1886** to April 20, **1888**. In 1890. He was elected Mayor of Albany again, serving from January 1, **1896** to December 31, **1897**.



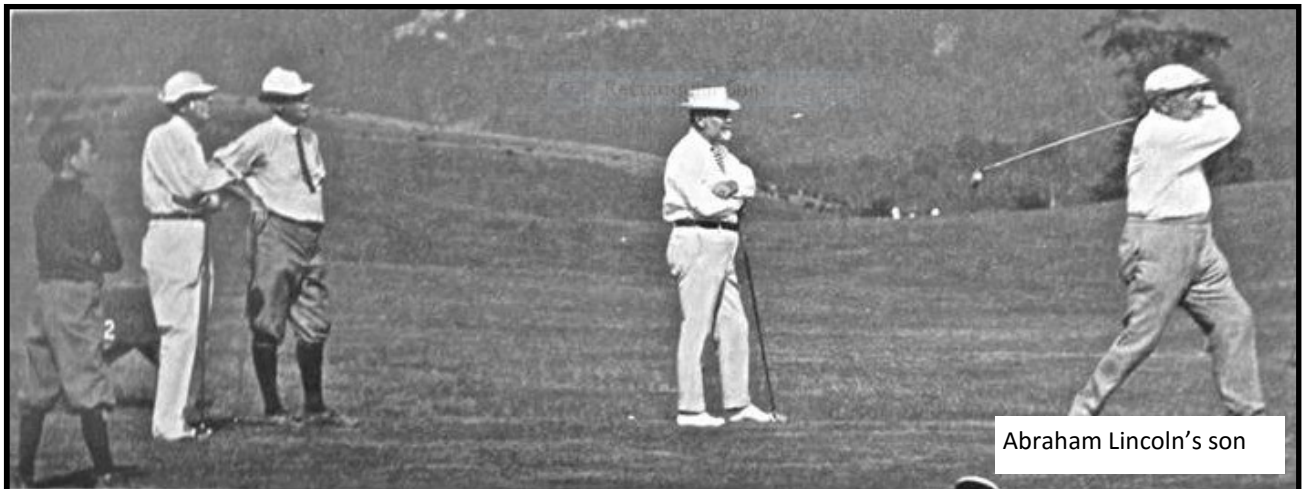
Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig of the New York Yankees chat with Albany Mayor John Boyd Thacher II prior to an exhibition game with the Albany Senators, August 18, 1929. The Yankees won 4 to 3.

Ebby's older Brother, **John Boyd Thacher II**, was Albany Mayor from 1927 to 1940. He was a Democratic contender for Governor of New York in 1932 because then NY Governor, FDR was elected US President.

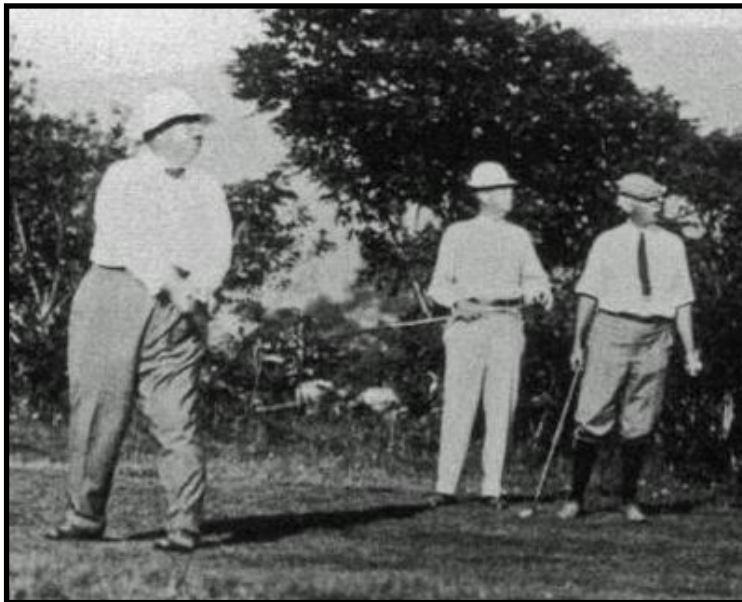
Ebby, at this crucial time was causing drinking commotion in Albany which was not beneficial to his brother's political career.

It was therefore suggested that Ebby move to their summer vacation area in Manchester, VT. This led to a series of events that sparked the beginning of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Prestigious Friends



For the 22 summers he lived in Manchester, Robert Lincoln served as president of the Ekwanok Country Club. Members of the "Lincoln Foursome," l. to r., are Robert M. Janney, George H. Thacher, Horace G. Young and Lincoln. The caddy is Jimmy Williams.

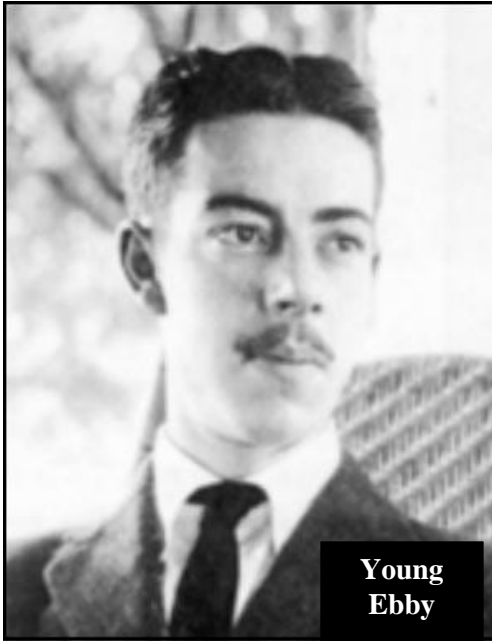


President Taft playing at the Ekwanok Country Club, Oct 1912. Ebby's father, George Thacher, and Robert Janney in the background.

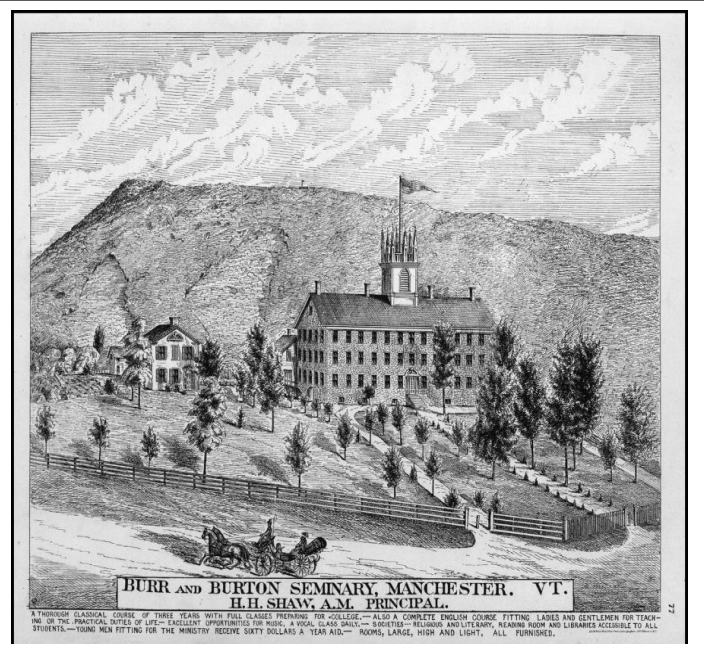


Ebby's brother, "Jack" Thacher, Mayor of Albany, on tour with FDR in 1932. He was in the running for Governor of NY when FDR became US President.

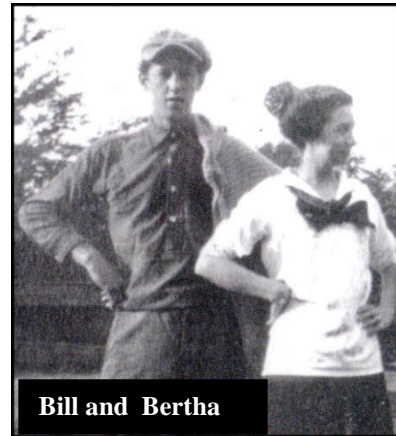
Ebby's School Years



Young
Ebby



Ebby, the youngest of five brothers, was not doing well at the Albany Academy, so, in 1912, his parents enrolled him in Burr and Burton Academy (it was then called a seminary) in the resort town of Manchester Village, Vermont. Ebby then became a classmate of Bill Wilson who was just six months his senior—he had met Bill the previous year. It is probable that he would have also known Bill's girlfriend, Bertha Bamford. sadly, Bertha died very unexpectedly from internal hemorrhage following a tumor removal operation in New York. Young Bill immediately fell into a three-year period of deep depression.



Bill and Bertha

Ebby claimed that he found a “better influence” in his life at Burr and Burton, but yet the school experience was less than successful. Because of academic problems, his parents moved Ebby back to Albany Academy after a year. Yet, his grades did not improve; it was then determined he was not college material, consequently, he took employment at the family's railroad wheel and propeller factory.

Although Ebby never obtained a college degree, he was an avid reader and known to be very bright with a wonderful sense of humor. He had developed an excellent vocabulary, as evidenced by his expertise with crossword puzzles.



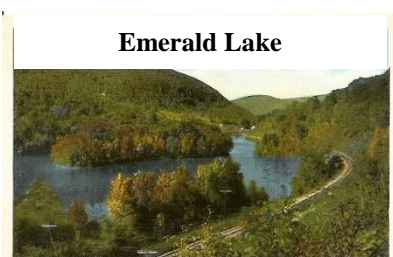
Albany Academy 1907

Youth in Manchester, Vermont

The Thacher family maintained a rented vacation house on the east side of Main Street across from the residence of Dr. Clark Burnham and Matilda Burnham (Lois Wilson's parents). As a matter of fact, Lois remembers seeing Ebby while he was still in a crib in 1896. They eventually purchased a beautiful home on Taconic Avenue in 1923, which was adjacent to the Burnham Estate.



Although Ebby was considered as a rather mischievous youth, his teen-age summers in this beautiful resort area were remembered as his very best. He enjoyed his friends and participated in many of the availabilities; there was swimming and fishing in Emerald Lake, hiking in the Green Mountains to the east, as well as the Taconic elevations to the west. Perhaps the prankster in him induced him to pretend he caught the enormous pictured fish from a nearby lake—however, this sort of fish *is* indigenous to this area.



As time passed, Ebby became a well-accepted member of the Manchester social community and developed friends who proved to be helpful to him in later life. These included Bill Wilson and Oxford Group members such as Cebra Graves. Nearby Williamstown happened to be the center of local Oxford Group (OG) activity in the 1932-1933 era.

Albany Years (1915-1932)

Although Ebby, while quite young, had spent many wonderful summers in the Green Mountain resort area, his late teen years in Albany pointed to a harbinger of difficulties to come. Ebby started his underage drinking at the Ten Eyck Hotel bar in Albany when he was nineteen. Later, the Albany Academy learned of one of his binges and wrote his father stating that the school could do no more for him. This disaster marked the end of Ebby's formal schooling. Although Ebby never received a college degree, his friends found him to be intelligent and well educated. Ebby would have been considered a "Hail fellow well met." (A popular expression among the upper class of those days.)



Thacher and Burnham Summer Homes



This is the *Hoyt House*. It is located on the east side of Main Street in Manchester Village—just north of Taconic Road. Ebby mentioned in one of his talks as how Lois remembers visiting him while he was still in a crib when she was living *across the street*. This must have been 1896. This house is still there! The Thachers rented the portion of the house with dormers. It was called the *Jermain House*. It was 6 separate structures that were eventually joined as one and the Thacher family resided in the dormered portion.



3373 Main Street in 1925 (Then called Elmo'er)

This was the Burnham's summer home where Dr. Burnham treated seasonal patients. The name Elmo'er pertains to the large *Elm* tree whose branches may have hovered *over* ('or) the house.

Thacher Family Summer Residences in Manchester

From the late 1800s, through the early 1900s. Ebby Thacher's father , George Hornell Thacher II, provided his family summer homes in Manchester, Vermont. The wealthy of that "Gilded Age" period often referred to their elaborated summer homes as "cottages." Ebby uses this term during his talks.

Late 1800s: George Thacher rented the Dolf House on Main Street, between Noah and Truman Perkins residences, which were just to the south of Elmo'er in the Village. The Thacher's rented *Dolf* house which was just south of Dr. Clark Burnham's *Elmo'er* property at 3373 Main Street. Lois Burnham Wilson recalls visiting Ebby in his cradle at the Dolf House.



Around 1900 Charles Hawley (the Hawley family built Taconic Road) had the Dolf House moved to Taconic Rd., just west of the Dunean property. It was purchased by George M. Smith who continued to rent it to the Thacher's. The current address of the Dolf property is 212 Taconic Rd.



During earlier times, the properties were often designated by names, rather than numbers, as today.

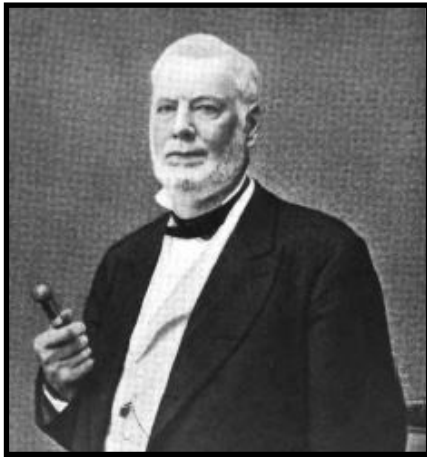
Ebby, as a youth, spent many happy summers in Manchester, VT, while residing at the Dolf House. He met Bill Wilson while living here during his teenage years.



In 1923 Fred Frehlinghaus purchased the property and the Thacher's bought Dunean from Wilhelmina Hawley. The address of the Dunean is 110 Taconic Rd. This is an important AA historical location, because this is where Ebby had a release from his alcohol obsession. He carried this good news to Bill Wilson who in turn helped begin the fellowship of Alcoholics



Thacher Family Residences



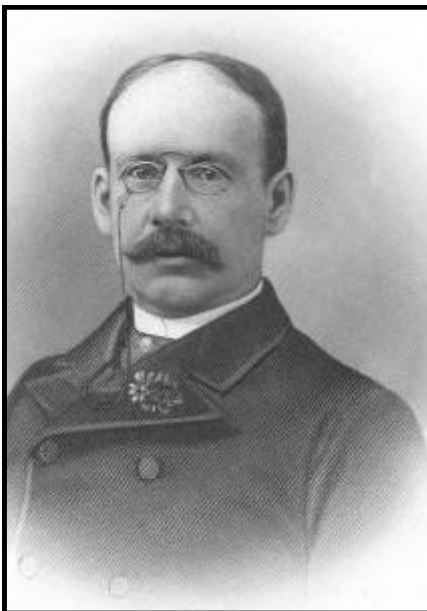
Mayor George Hornell Thacher



Upper left: Picture of Mayor George Hornell Thacher (Ebby's Grandfather) whose family residence was 729 Broadway, Albany, NY.

Upper right: John B. Thacher residence, Altamont, NY. His town residence was located at 5 Southhawk Street, in Albany, NY .

Lower Right: George H. Thacher II family residence, 111 Washington Ave. Albany NY (Demolished).



Ebby's uncle, John Boyd Thacher

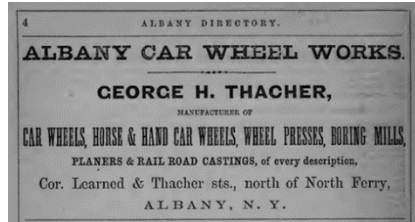


Ebby's father, George H. Thacher II



Albany Years (1915-32)

After being exiled from Albany Academy, Ebby accepted employment in the molding department of his father's railroad wheel and propeller factory, but was later promoted to a management position as purchasing agent. This profession lasted till 1922 when the factory—after seventy years—went out of business. In a June, 1951 talk at Dallas, Texas, Ebby related to this period of his youth: *"On Saturday nights I liked to drink and at that time most of my drinking was confined to Saturdays. However, when the holidays came around with all the festivities, I couldn't contain myself. Saturday night drinking turned into drinking at parties, dances and every other opportunity. The drinking really seemed to help me socialize, especially with the girls."*



Later in the talk he made this revealing statement: *"The problem was that I could never predict how much I would drink or what would happen. Sometimes I could drink the other guys under the table. Other times after only a few drinks, I was swinging from the chandeliers." . . . and later, "My drinking became progressively worse and over the next twenty years I found myself getting into various scrapes, . . ."*

Ebby mentioned a book by Richard Peabody, *"The Common Sense of Drinking,"* where two types of drinkers were differentiated—after a night of drunkenness:

The **"hard drinker"** will sober up and look forward to a new day.

The **"alcoholic"** will try to get the next drink to bring the party back. (Paraphrased)

Ebby noted that he fit into the latter group, but unfortunately, as most AA members know, self-knowledge is of little benefit for a drinker of that group.

Ebby's mother died in 1927, then his father in 1929. Each of the five boys received an inheritance of \$150,000.00 (slightly over two-million in today's money—2014). However, by the early 1930s, most of Ebby's money was lost in the stock market crash or squandered on drinking sprees.

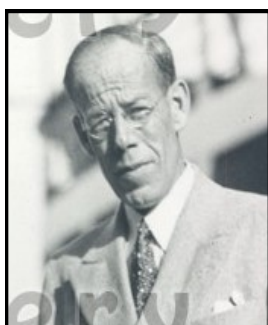
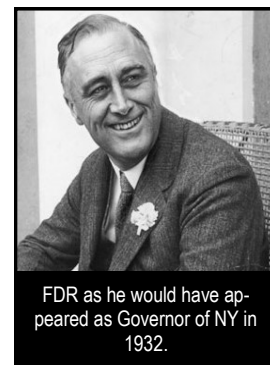
By the bye—This is a letter from President Abraham Lincoln—during the Civil War—to Ebby's Grandfather, John Hornell Thacher, dated November 2, 1863.



Ebby's Exile

Ebby's older brother, John Boyd Thacher II, "*Jack Thacher*," had been Albany's Mayor since 1926, and by 1932 had become a likely Democratic candidate for the upcoming gubernatorial election of Governorship of New York. This seat was to be soon vacated by United States President Elect, Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Jack was an outstanding speaker and well known as mayor of the State Capital. Nevertheless, brother Jack did not win the Democratic nomination. He lost to Roosevelt's Lieutenant Governor Herbert Lehman. But, brother Jack remained mayor another eight years, and then became a judge.



As Ebby previously stated, he had experienced several drinking "scrapes" with the law while living in Albany, and if there is anything a politician would like to avoid is a brother who is getting into scrapes! It is thought his family encouraged and supported the following exile to Manchester, Vermont.

Ebby had this to say about it: "*Several times in Albany, I had been reprimanded by the authorities for drinking too much. My brother [Jack] was a prominent man in town and I wasn't doing him any good. So in the fall of 1932 I took off for Manchester.*"

Jack Thacher, pictured on left, was Albany Mayor 1926 thru 1940.

Ebby in Manchester, 1932-1934

Ebby lived in the Battenkill Inn, on and off, for about two years. During his 1954 Dallas talk, Ebby spoke of his six months of sober work in the Green Mountains. He thought it probably was the winter of 1932-1933. He drank two pints of gin on the way up and that was the end of it, till he came down the mountain the following spring. Ebby enjoyed the life style of cutting trails, and hunting on the weekends. Sometimes friends from below would join the fun—but there was no drinking!

However, upon return he drank on and off during that summer till the following spring.

He stayed at a tourist place awhile, then opened a room in the large, but mostly empty Thacher family residence in Manchester, which had not been in use for some time. One might think his large inheritance was running low because he moved into the only furnished room which contained his brother's furniture. This would have been the aforementioned Thacher Summer home at 110 Taconic Road, of which they referred to as their "summer cottage."



Battenkill Inn



More Hi Jinks



Ebby remembers his January, 1929 landing; “*Consequently, we chartered a plane and my pal, Ted Burke, agreed to pilot. It was the **first** flight ever to land at the Manchester air field.*”

This is wrong! They were not the first to land at Equinox Airport.

According to the adjacent newspaper article, the first landing took place the previous summer, by pilot, W.C. Billings. The Grand Opening was July 4th., 1928.

Ebby’s drinking scrapes, which started in Albany, continued in Manchester after he came down from the six months mountain work experience. But, five years previously, the following absurd event took place:

Ebby talked about an Albany visit from Bill Wilson in January, 1929: “*This was the first and only time Bill and I ever got drunk together.*” During the course of this all night binge, they decided to hire a barnstormer pilot to fly them to the then six month old Equinox Airport in Manchester, Vermont. Bill Wilson wired his prominent friends, Mr. and Mrs. Orvis, informing them as to time of arrival. In those early days of flight, this was considered a fairly exciting and special event! Word spread through Manchester instigating a large crowd to assemble, including the high school band.

Years later, Ebby reported—in the same Dallas 1951 AA talk—the particulars of their landing: “*Once it landed both Bill and I staggered off, falling to the ground drunk, embarrassing ourselves in front of all the onlookers.*” Ebby was less concerned about this dismal event than Bill, who wrote a letter of apology to his friends, the Orvis’, the following day.

By 1934, Ebby had spent thirty-eight summers in Manchester. He had the reputation of a rather mischievous and fun-loving individual, however, he was well liked and accepted by most of the townspeople. But his reputation suffered through his continued drunken episodes. Here is another hi jinks from Ebby’s own words: “*Within a few months, I got into trouble with the law twice. The first time was for driving my car into the kitchen of a woman’s house. I stepped out of the car and politely asked her if I could trouble her for a cup of coffee.*”

Editor: Of course, this was the *exterior* of the kitchen.

Thacher Family Summer Residence of 1923



The George Hornell Thacher II residence on Taconic Avenue, Manchester, VT

The Thacher family had rented a “summer home” in Manchester since the late 1800s, but finally bought this beautiful house in 1923. When Ebby’s father died in 1929, the furniture was divided between the brothers . . . so, when Ebby took residence, during the spring of 1934, the house was practically devoid of furniture.

(The current residents asked not to be disturbed by AA observers—anyway, they are not knowledgeable of AA history.)

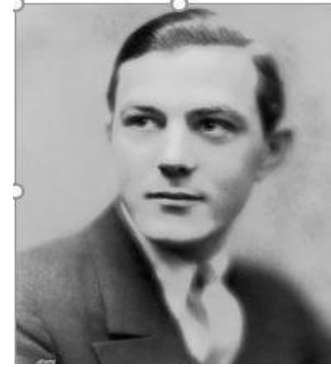
Interestingly, the pictured house on the right was just across Taconic Avenue (south side) from the Thacher house. It was occupied by Abraham Lincoln’s son, Robert Todd Lincoln, till 1903—twenty years previous to when the Thachers purchased their property. George Thacher and Robert Lincoln frequently played golf together through the years—they were members of a group tagged, “*The Lincoln Foursome.*”



Let us consider the plight of Edwin Throckmorton Thacher who grew up under most prestigious circumstances and was probably waited on hand and foot. In 1934, at thirty-nine years of age, he was now living alone in a sparsely furnished room of an otherwise vacant house. It would seem his inheritance was mostly gone, but still there were funds for large scale drinking—alcoholically. Yet, Ebby had good friends, some of which were from the Oxford Group, especially Cebra Graves and Shep Cornell who often tried to help him solve his drinking problem, but alas, to no avail. Ebby stated: “*I lived there alone, and appeared to be drinking myself to death in the not-too-distant future.*”

Ebby's Pigeon Story

The Thatcher residence became noticeably in need of paint, so Ebby took up the challenge. The ladder wasn't tall enough so he got permission from his brother to hire a local painter to help complete the job. Ebby, being busy, remained sober for this period. But he said, *"As soon as it was completed with nothing to do, I went right back to the bottle."* His friend, Cebra, helped locate and hire a proper painter.



State Senator Cebra Graves was also a successful Broadway actor

Ebby's *pigeon story* extracted from one of his recordings: *"Another time after drinking heavily, I decided I wanted to rid the house of pigeons. It was dark outside, and believe me, it was pouring down rain, so I loaded the old double-barreled shotgun and I went out and I was backing up . . . to get a shot at them. [The lawn was wet from all the rain.] Down I went and landed on my back. So there I was lying on my back and I didn't see any reason to get up and shoot at them, so I was banging away from the ground. I guess my neighbors could see me and I imagine they complained to the law."*



He went on to say: *"In Vermont at that time there was a law that anyone arrested three times within a year would serve a mandatory six months in jail. I had been drunk in public, along with the other two incidents, so I had three strikes against me and the law was looking for me. I spent a lot of time in the house so I couldn't be arrested until I decided to go to town. Once I did, the local constable arrested me and took me to Bennington to see the judge. It was a Friday afternoon and the judge happened to be the father of Cebra, one of the two men who called on me a few weeks earlier. He told me to be back in court on Monday and to be sober. The constable dropped me off at home and reminded me what the judge had said about being sober on Monday."*

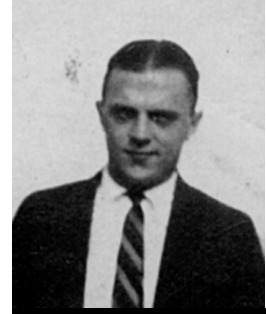
The top picture is the H. E. Hemenway Hardware Store as it was in the 1930s. Ebby was sitting on the steps when the Constable arrested him. Below is pictured the same building today.

Off The Hook!



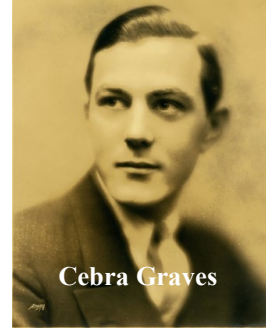
Ebby Thacher

Ebby remained in a state of reoccurring drunkenness and depression during the summer of 1934, although he was residing in his families beautiful summer Manchester home in one of the finest resort areas in the country. As his sadness loomed that July afternoon, one time Broadway actor and current State Senator, Cebra Graves, happened by Rowland Hazard’s home near Arlington, just a few miles south, where several happy Oxford Groupers were making use of the swimming pool. When the conversation turned to missionary work, Cebra remembered his old golf acquaintance, Ebby, and invited Sheppard Cornell to come along; Rowland opted to stay by the pool.



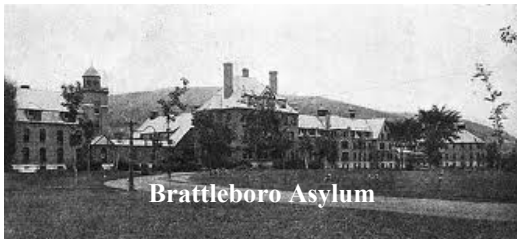
Shep Cornell

Ebby was sitting with his head in his hands; his suit was a bit dirty. “*Having a good time Ebby?*” was returned by a few angry words. “*You don’t have to live like this,*” quipped, Cebra. They cleaned his suit and got him to eat, then they spoke about the principles of the Oxford Group. Although, Ebby was not ready to quit drinking, Cebra found a professional painter to help him finish the house painting project.



Cebra Graves

The pigeon shooting incident took probably place in Late August or in September. Resultantly, Ebby was escorted to the Bennington Courthouse where he faced a possible Six months confinement in Brattleboro Asylum. Luckily, Cebra’s father was the judge and Rowland Hazard offered to take Ebby under his wing via the Oxford Group program of recovery. The judge agreed that if Ebby came back to court Monday morning sober, he would be off the hook!



It was Saturday and Ebby felt the shakes coming on strongly. He remember that there were four bottles of Ballantine’s Ale cooling down in the cellar. “*Go ahead!*” he thought “*My God, you are shaking apart!*” He picked them up . . . He later stated, “*Well, I just couldn’t do it. It wouldn’t be playing the game square the way I looked at it.*” Luckily for all of us, he took those tempting four bottles of ale three doors down the street and gave them to a neighbor. **Otherwise, than Ebby Thacher’s sense of honesty at that moment, we wouldn’t have AA today!**



Ebby's Miraculous Surrender

After Ebby returned home from handing over the bottles of ale to his neighbor, he said, and I quote: *“And Believe me that was a weight lifted off my shoulder . . . I felt a release from that time on . . . And I know that night I sat down by my bed and said my prayers like I hadn't said them in years. I said to God . . . , “I really mean this, I want to quit this drinking.” I hadn't prayed like this ever before; I hadn't prayed much at all for a very long time.”* When Ebby appeared in court the following Monday, he was met by Shep Cornell and Cebra Graves, whose father was the Judge. Also, in the room was a well respected millionaire, Rowland Hazard. Ebby stated: “I had never met him before. Judge Graves agreed to release me on my own recognizance with the understanding I would be in Rowland's custody.” Ebby stayed with Rowland for a few weeks at nearby, Shaftsbury, Vermont. Ebby had never met Rowland before, but in my calculations Rowland had only recently found sobriety with help of Cortney Baylor of the Emmanuel Movement in Boston, Massachusetts—yet, it was the Oxford Group message that Rowland conveyed to the exiled Ebby.

Rowland spent several days helping Ebby clean up his disordered house. Ebby, from a recording, said of this period: *“Rowland invited me to stay with him for a few weeks. We took road trips throughout Vermont, speaking at various places about the Oxford Group. The first weekend I spoke five times: at two churches, a junior college, and two town meetings.”* Ebby also told of guys arriving from New York, and they would have Oxford Group “House Parties.”



Bennington Courthouse in 1934



Calvary Mission Poster

Shep Cornell invited Ebby to stay his apartment in NYC as a precursor to his become a resident at the Calvary Mission. Cebra Graves claimed that Ebby actually took residence at the elegant Calvary House a few blocks distant. However, most other evidence points toward his actually residing in the mission.

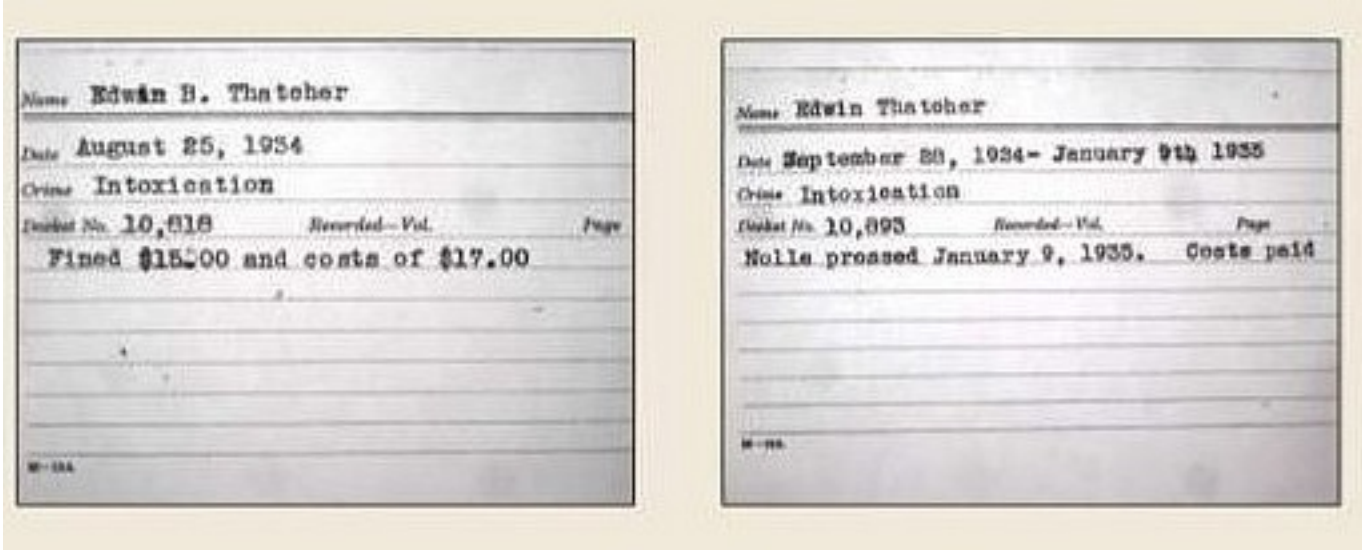


Rowland Hazard



The Hazard family “cabin,” near Shaftsbury, Vermont

Ebby's Arrest Record Cards



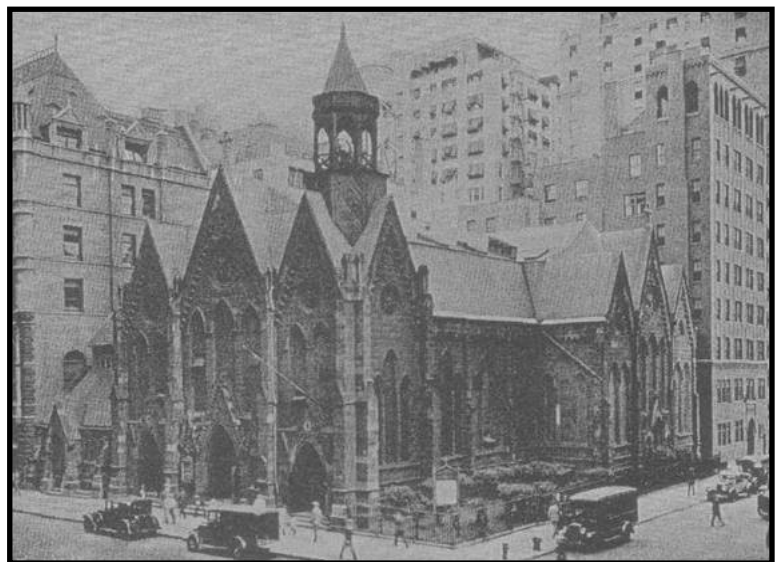
July 1934: *Ebby recalled: "I had already gotten into a brush with the law a couple of times . . . I was told if I was arrested a third time for intoxication, it might go hard on me—six months in Winsor Prison."** It is possible that the card on the left is for an intoxication arrest on August 25, 1934, and that the card on the right records a second intoxication arrest on September 28, 1934. Apparently, the fine And costs were paid on January 9, 1935. This scenario would suggest that the pigeon shooting incident took place in late September.

It is noteworthy that Ebby mentioned Windsor Prison as his potential confinement, but other information suggests that commitment to the nearby Brattleboro Asylum was more likely.

*PASS IT ON, p. 113



Calvary Parish house where the Oxford Group held their meetings



Calvary Episcopal Church. 21st Street and Park Ave. South

Activities in New York

During this formative period, Rowland taught Ebby the major ingredients of the Oxford Group fellowship, placing emphasis on the “Four Absolutes” (Standards). Though newly sober, once again, Rowland had learned much doctrine, having spent nearly three years in attendance to their house parties and conventions. Traveling with Rowland and actually presenting OG talks, must have had a powerful effect on Ebby as he was going through what he described as a “Pink Cloud” period. “Pink Clouds” are typical for newly sober alcoholics, but often short lived. Apparently *not* so for exiled Ebby. There was no reason not to return to Albany—certainly all would be forgiven and his brother, Jack, the Mayor, would find him a good job. His inheritance was now gone, so money was important, yet, instead, he followed Rowland’s offer to spend a few weeks at Shep Cornell’s Manhattan apartment while being accepted as A spiritual worker with the “*Brotherhood of Twelve Men*” at Calvary mission. Here, he might help residents learn a new-found life; perhaps finding the precious sobriety he had so recently found. Ebby’s recorded Oxford Group style *surrender* took place on November 1, 1934. He was perhaps slightly more than two months sober at that time.

Reverend Samuel Shoemaker was the leader of the Oxford Group throughout the United States. He was rector of nearby Calvary Church, which supported the Calvary Mission.

Reportedly, Ebby was a good listener with an exceptionally likeable personality—both at Calvary Mission, and later at Searcy’s Ranch in Texas. Ebby remained in service at the mission till he moved in with Bill and Lois Wilson the next year. In the meantime, Rowland took him on a summer vacation trip to his ranch in La Luz, New Mexico, where his family had a clay products business.



The Calvary Mission was located at 346 East 23rd Street in lower Manhattan.



Rev. Sam Shoemaker



Bill Wilson and his sponsor, Ebby Thacher .

Ebby’s Wall Street friends had mentioned Bill Wilson’s dire state as the result of John Barleycorn, which presented a good opportunity to carry the Oxford Group message to an old friend. Bill was living in Brooklyn Heights.

More About Rowland Hazard

(1881-1945)

Rowland Hazard III (nicknamed Roy) was born into one of the most prominent families in the Rhode Island textile industry. He was the eldest of five children. He was a graduate of the Taft School and received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Yale University in 1903. Among his Yale classmates, he was known as "Ike" or "Rowley." He married Helen Hamilton Campbell (1889–1946), a graduate of Briarcliff Manor College and daughter of a Chicago banker, in October 1910. The couple divorced in 1929, but remarried in 1931. They had one daughter, Caroline Campbell Hazard and three sons, Capt. Rowland Gibson Hazard, Peter Hamilton Hazard and Charles Ware Blake Hazard. Two of their sons, Capt. Rowland G. and Peter Hamilton Hazard, were killed in the service of the US armed forces in World War II.

Some of Rowland Hazard III's family and friends from his early years may have been influential in his famous encounter with the pioneering psychiatrist Carl Jung. Leonard Bacon, winner of the 1940 Pulitzer Prize for poetry, was Hazard's first cousin. Bacon was analyzed by Jung in 1925, an experience which inspired a short book of poetry. .

Although he briefly served in the Rhode Island state senate (1914–1916), Rowland Hazard III was primarily a businessman throughout his career. He was active in the Hazard family's primary enterprise, the Peace Dale Manufacturing Company. He was also involved in two other companies. Rowland III was instrumental in completing his father's ambition to play a leading role in the formation of the Allied Chemical and Dye Corporation (later **AlliedSignal**, then **Honeywell** .

Later in his career, he became an executive vice president of the Bristol Manufacturing Company, a maker of precision instruments based in Waterbury, Connecticut. He was a director with several companies in addition to **Allied Chemical and Dye**. (Recently valued at \$16 billion).

Rowland Hazard III's struggles with alcoholism led to his direct involvement in the chain of events that gave rise to what is today Alcoholics Anonymous. (See page 26 of the Big Book). Though Rowland himself never actually joined AA. His own efforts at recovery were markedly influenced by his consultation with pioneering psychologist Carl Jung and his subsequent involvement with the Oxford Group, one of the most highly visible Christian Evangelical movements of the 1920s and '30s. Recent research further suggests that he may have also been treated by Courtenay Baylor, a lay therapist of the psycho-spiritual therapeutic effort known as the Emmanuel Movement.



Dr. Carl Jung pronounced Rowland a chronic alcoholic and therefore hopeless and beyond the reach of medicine as it was at the time—the only hope Jung could offer was a "vital spiritual experience." Jung further advised that Rowland's affiliation with his church did not spell the necessary "vital" experience. This prognosis so shook Rowland that he sought out the Oxford Group, an evangelical Christian movement prominent in the first half of the twentieth century. The Oxford Group was dedicated to what its members termed "the Four Absolutes" as the summary of the Sermon on the Mount: absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness, and absolute love. The Group was also dedicated to the vigorous pursuit of personal change, and to extending the message of hope through change by means of "personal" evangelism: one changed person sharing his experience with another.

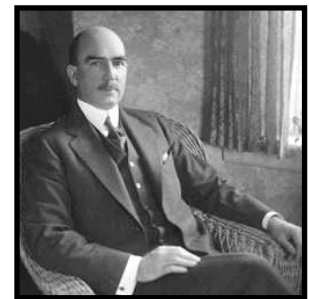
Rowland's Alcoholism Treatment

There exists a dispute concerning the historical account of dates and times of Rowland's visit with Dr. Jung. More recently, scholars have questioned this traditional account. In a 1954 recollection of his early life and the beginnings of AA, Bill Wilson stated that "A well-known American businessman named Rowland Hazard had gone to Zurich, Switzerland, probably in the year 1931, as the court of last resort Rowland remained with Jung a whole year; desperately wanting to resolve his problem. Wilson reiterates this approximate timing in his 1961 letter to Jung: "Having exhausted other means of recovery from his alcoholism, it was about 1931 that [Hazard] became your patient. I believe he remained under your care for perhaps a year."

These recollections of Bill W. have become the basis of assumption for dating Rowland's initial consultation with Jung in the approximate period of 1930-31. More recent investigation into the historical record does not support this timing. Based on research of Hazard family records of the Rhode Island Historical Society, author Richard M. Dubiel suggested in a 2004 work that the period during which Rowland could have consulted with Jung in this time frame may have been limited to some time between June and September 1931, and perhaps only a few weeks within that span.^[18]

This confusion of the historical record appears to have been subsequently resolved by researchers Amy Colwell Bluhm and Cora Finch who, though working independently, were both aided substantially by Hazard family letters and papers. Family documents clearly place Rowland in Jung's care for some months beginning in 1926 rather than 1930 or 1931. It appears likely that Wilson was simply repeating Cebra G.'s (inaccurate) recollection of the dates of Rowland's initial treatment by Jung.

These more recent investigations also shed additional light on Rowland's treatment beyond his consultation with Jung. In his 2004 work, Dubiel also discovered evidence that Rowland was likely treated in the early 1930s by Courtenay Baylor, himself a recovering alcoholic and proponent of the so called Emmanuel Movement inspired by Episcopal clergyman Dr. Elwood Worcester of Boston's Emmanuel Episcopal Church. The Emmanuel Movement began in 1906 as an effort to treat what would today be regarded as psychological afflictions and disorders such as alcoholism through the application of spiritual principles. The work of the Emmanuel Movement was largely carried on by Baylor after Worcester's death.



Courtenay Baylor

Rowland's sobriety does not appear to have been continuous, at least in early years. Bluhm and Finch find suggestions in Hazard family letters of Rowland's possible alcoholic relapse during a trip to Africa in 1927-28. Dubiel also documents a 1936 binge, but it is unclear if Rowland drank intermittently thereafter, if at all, for the remainder of his life. Dubiel notes that Rowland's later years "appear to have been prosperous enough," and included his joining the Episcopal Church in 1936, in which he remained active for the rest of his life. As noted earlier, Rowland never joined AA himself.



Carl Jung who felt he had been "reborn in stone" as a result of the experience of building his own house. Glover concluded that building his own place had defined him too. "I made that house and the house made me."

Mansions of the Hazard Family

Rowland Hazard (1763-1835)

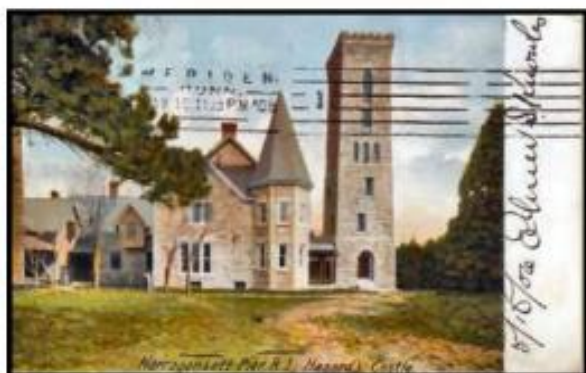
Rowland G. Hazard (1801-1888) son of above

Rowland Hazard II (1829-1898), son of above

Rowland G. Hazard II (1855-1918), son of above

Rowland Hazard III (1881-1945) son of above

Rowland Hazard III and wife, Helen (1889-1946) had four Children, Caroline (1911-1953), Rowland G. (1917-1941), Peter H. (1918-1944) and Charles B. (1920-1995).



Hazard's Castle

Hazard's Castle was constructed by **Joseph Peace Hazard**, the son of Rowland Hazard, (**the founder of the Peacedale Mills**) and Mary Peace. Joseph was born on February 17, 1807 in Burlington, New Jersey. The family moved to Peacedale, Rhode Island in 1820. During 1821, Joseph began working in the Peacedale mill run by his older brothers Roland and Isaac.

In 1835, Joseph constructed a woolen mill at Peacedale, which he ran for several years and then leased out. In 1856 Joseph traveled to England and Italy and thereafter spent most of the years until 1879 traveling abroad. During the last two years of his travels he also visited Japan and Iceland after which he returned to Peacedale. Joseph was the owner of several large tracts of land in the **Narragansett Pier** area and was instrumental in the early development of the town as a major tourist destination. In 1846, he began construction of what is now known as **Hazard's Castle**. The castle derives its name from the two towers on either side of the building.



"Oakwoods"

Built by Rowland Hazard III's Grandfather in 1854.



"Holly House"

Rowland Hazard III took residence here at eleven years old.



Upland Farm

Fredrick R. Hazard Built in 1899

Ebby's Preaching vs. Bill's Gin

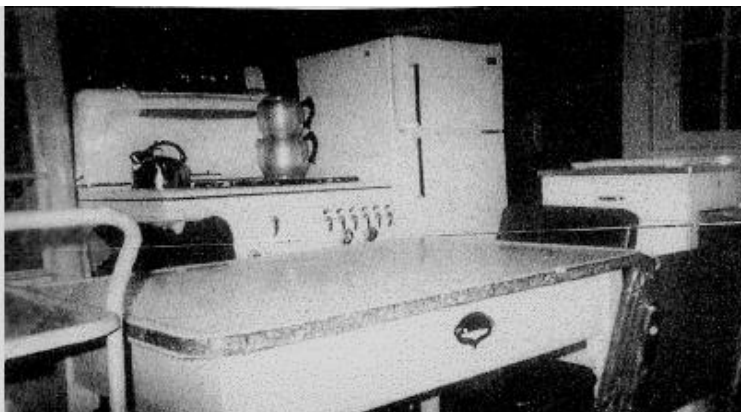
Excerpts from Ebby's 1954 talk: *"While I was staying there and working with the Oxford Group . . . I phoned one day and got Lois, his wife, . . . She invited me over for dinner a night or two later."* This is slightly different than Bill's version, but it, again, shows the importance of Lois's impact on Bill's final sobriety.

At any rate Ebby arrived at 182 Clinton Street on a bleak day late in November 1934. He sat with Bill at the now *archival-famous* table pictured below. He refused a pineapple and gin drink which greatly surprised the likes of boozy Bill Wilson, who queried: "What's this all about?" When a religious answer was in reply, Bill assumed that Ebby's hard drinking had turned him into a religious crackpot, of sorts. Bill thought to himself, well, let him rant, besides, *"My gin will last longer than his preaching."*

But Ebby had now been around the OG "mulberry bush" long enough not to sermonize, he simply related what he had learned, and placed emphasis on these two tenets:

1. A simple religious idea (a vital spiritual experience).
2. A practical program of action (The Four Absolutes and the tenets of the Oxford Group—these became the basis of the AA program of action today).

Someone said: *"Do not defend the truth; it will take care of itself."* This adage proved true for Bill, because the substance of Ebby's visit clung to him like a tick on a hound dog. A few days later, he visited Calvary Mission to see what all this was about. However, he was drunk and caused a bit of disturbance. But on the 11th day of December, he went back to Towns Hospital for treatment and never drank again—Ebby's truth set him free!



This is the kitchen table where Ebby Thacher brought his sober message to Bill. It is on display at Stepping Stones Museum in Bedford hills, NY



Lois Wilson



Bill Wilson



182 Clinton Street
Brooklyn Hts.

Seven Days in December

On a bleak day in November, 1934, Ebby Thacher, sat at Bill Wilson's kitchen table, explaining how his shocking new found sobriety was derived from a spiritual experience. Bill was dismayed because he had hoped Ebby would share his pineapple juice and gin while recalling old times. At any rate Bill knew his gin would outlast Ebby's presumed preaching. But Ebby did not preach; rather, he told of a simple religious idea (a vital spiritual experience) and a practical program of action (Oxford Group tenets). Bill was very impressed by Ebby's sobriety, however, the pineapple cocktail held precedence during this jubilant occasion.



Ebby visited again with his Oxford Group friend, Shep Cornell. But Bill was not impressed, however his waxing curiosity inspired him to check out what the Calvary Mission was all about. So the next day, **Friday, December 7th**, found Bill in a drunken state "testifying" from the podium of Calvary Mission. Amazingly, Bill lost all desire to drink on the way home; but then, he spent **Saturday and Sunday, December 8th and 9th** in his bedroom *tapering off*."



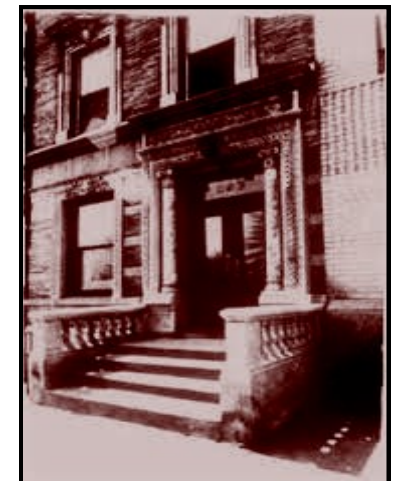
However, he came home roaring drunk on **Monday, December 10th**, which provoked an argument with Lois. Lois angrily lamented, "You don't even have the decency to die! You're crazy! You're! crazy " Bill angrily picked up her sewing machine and threw it into the wall. Lois was terrified! Bill rode the subways that night and panhandled funds for a bottle of booze. He came back home on **Tuesday morning, December 11th**, 1934 (A date to remember!). When he noticed the damaged wall caused by his sewing machine episode, he delved deeply into remorse. Recalling Ebby's success, he left a note for Lois explaining he was headed back to Town's Hospital for yet another treatment. He had only six cents in his pocket, but the trip was only a nickel. As he walked toward the subway entrance, he spied a grocery store, where his credit was still intact, whereupon he departed with four bottles of beer.



Bill arrived at Towns Hospital with a beer in one hand and two philosophy books in the other. He announced to his loyal physician, *Dr. William Duncan Silkworth*, that he had found an answer. This was Bill's fourth and final treatment at Town's Hospital. **He never drank again!**



Page 13 of the Big Book explains how, after Ebby's visit, Bill ingested the basic ingredients of what constitutes our Twelve Steps. This was **December 13, 1934**, seven days after his first trip to Calvary Mission. Bill, on that day, had a sudden and profound spiritual experience (P 14). If not for these *Seven days in December*, 1934, AA would not be here today.



Oxford Group Meetings

Ebby listened to Bill's confession (Fifth Step in AA) at Towns Hospital and brought the book, "*Varieties of Spiritual Experience*," by William James, which convinced him that his spiritual experience was valid (Pages 13-14, Big Book). Bill's spiritual experience took place approximately December 14, 1934.



Towns Hospital
293 Central Park West

Ebby lived walking distance from the Calvary House, where the Oxford Group meetings were held, as well as Stewart's Cafeteria, where a small group of alcoholics, and OG'ers, met after meetings. He would join Bill and Lois afterwards for fellowship. Here follow excerpts from one of Ebby's talks about this period of 1935: "*I 'rode herd' on Bill in the beginning and stuck by him as we attended many Oxford Group meetings. Bill got comfortable and started speaking at meetings as time went on. Those meetings were basically the same as the AA meetings today. Everyone had a chance to share their experience, strength and hope. Of course, the meetings were not confined to alcoholics, but those attending shared their problems and victories.*



Calvary Church, 277 Park Ave. South
Calvary House is at right rear

Bill traveled to Akron on a business venture in May of 1935. The trip resulted in him meeting Dr. Bob Smith and the founding of AA. [Bill returned to New York the following August.]

"I was really trying to live by the principles I had learned from the Oxford Group. The Oxford Group was based on a return to first-century Christian fellowship." [Ebby here relates the Four Absolutes: Honesty, Unselfishness, Love and Purity.]

"The Oxford Group advocated the principle of morning meditation, or as they call it, "quiet time," when one tried to release the self and get in tune with "God as you understand Him"—to try to get some guidance for the day ahead and to hold yourself flexible—not to make plans whenever it was possible not to do so. That one should try to meet each situation as it comes up and meet it believing that it was God's will that events shall transpire as they do—in other words accept what comes each day.

A few months after Bill returned to New York, he invited me to come live with him and Lois on Clinton Street. I stayed with them for a year. While I was living with Bill, we had meetings at the house. The meetings "stuck" for some of them and we began having successful recoveries. Unfortunately, I remember one chap committed suicide and we all took that hard. After a while we started a meeting at Steinway Hall in New York."

Exiled No More

30

From a recorded talk: *“By the summer of 1936, after nearly two years of sober life in New York City, I decided to move back to Albany where I had made such a mess of my life. I felt the need to begin making amends to the people I had harmed. I also needed to earn some money.*

Shortly after returning to Albany, I was hired by the Ford Motor Company in Green Island, about eight miles north of Albany. I worked two weeks on the day shift and then two weeks on the night shift. That gave me a long weekend after the night-shift schedule. That’s when I would head back to New York to see friends and attend meetings. This went on for awhile but I slowly started pulling away from the things that were keeping me on track. I began to feel lonely and sorry for myself, blaming God for not giving me the one thing I really wanted a romantic relationship with someone I could love. Somehow I felt I had been mistreated.

One day a friend from work commented that I hadn’t been myself and described me as “a piece of steel wire.” I headed for New York that weekend and checked into the Lexington Hotel. It was April of 1937 and I had been sober for more than two and a half years—a record for me.



The above New York trip signaled the end of this period of Ebby’s sobriety. He lived for thirty-one years after that first miraculous sober period in the late summer of 1934—he was sober about half of those years. The longest period was nearly seven years with his sponsor, Searcy W., while living in Texas.

Much has been written about the life of Edwin Throckmorton Thacher, but this limited writing is primarily concerned with the vital connection he produced when he carried the Oxford Group message to Bill Wilson on that bleak November day . . . and not let us forget how his innate honesty prevailed when he surrendered those incredibly tempting three bottles of Ballantine Ale to his neighbor. The future of Alcoholics Anonymous—to be, or not to be—was dependant on this most difficult decision. We can thank God for providing Ebby with that moment of integrity.

Ebby died of emphysema on March 21, 1966. He had been residing at McPike’s Farm, twenty-five miles north of Albany. Ebby had been sober for over two years.

30



Ebby is buried with his family in the Albany Rural Cemetery.

Afterword

So, dear reader, the exile of Edwin Throckmorton Thacher from his home town of Albany, New York, played a vital part in the very existence of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, and its program of Action, which is of course the Twelve Steps.

It is our great fortune that Ebby accepted Rowland Hazard's suggestion that he become part of the "Brotherhood of Twelve" at the Calvary Mission in downtown Manhattan, even with its attendant disagreeable living conditions. Ebby was broke, but could have found work—even though the depression was in full swing—if he returned home to Albany, where his brother was Mayor and his prestigious family would doubtless have accepted him with open arms, being he was now sober. Perhaps his motive was fully one of an altruistic desire to help other alcoholics recover, or perhaps there existed a fear of relapse—maybe both. Whichever, we can thank God he decided as he did!

Ebby was not aware of the desperate alcoholic plight of his old schoolmate, Bill Wilson—however, as soon as he found out, he made a visit which brought about the ever-famous "kitchen table" conversation. Ebby told his old friend of a "simple religious idea" (a vital spiritual experience) and a "practical program of action" (the precursor the Twelve Steps). Bill Wilson sobered up permanently shortly thereafter.

One might surmise that a new "Pre-AA" fellowship of three had come into existence: "*Rowland Hazard, Ebby Thacher and Bill Wilson.*" Although the *written* Twelve Steps were more than three years in the future, the essence of them were being put to use by this trio.

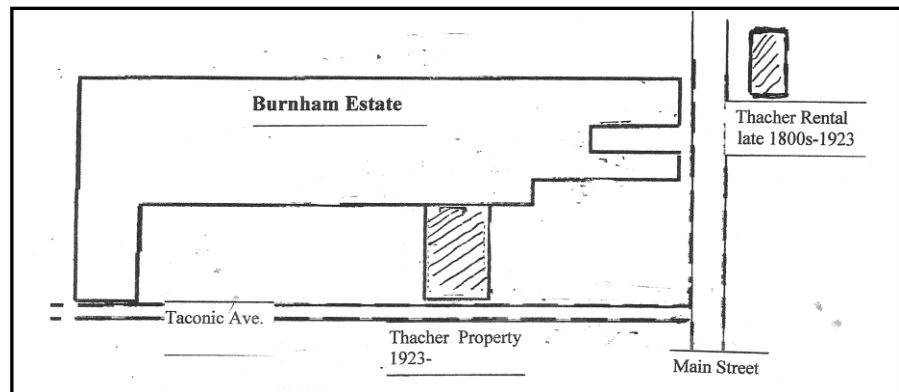
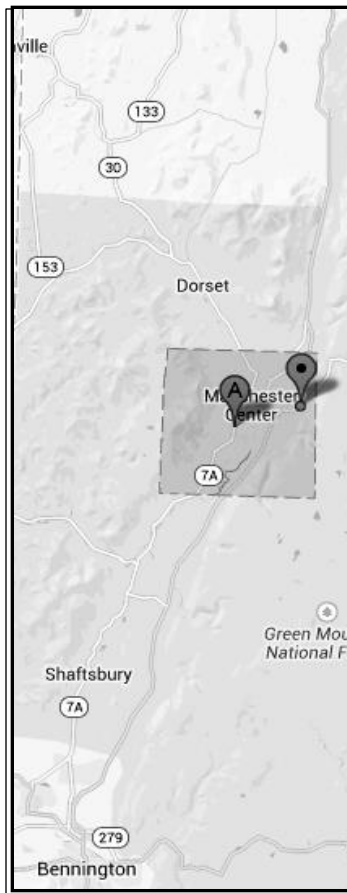
So, Ebby's decision to *remain* in exile sparked a chain of events that filtered through many years to save the lives of countless alcoholics. Father Martin stated in one of his talks: "*Bill may have scored the touchdown, but it was Ebby who handed him the ball.*"

Appendix

Here follows an assortment of related photos, diagrams and facts.

The Thachers and Burnhams Were Neighbors

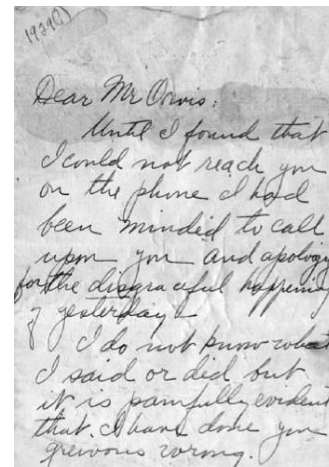
The Thacher and Burnham families were doubtless close—not only in association, but also in physical proximity. Lois remembers Ebby in a crib in 1896-1897, when she was about five years old. The Thacher family maintained a rented “summer house” east of Main Street across from the Clark and Matilda Burnham Estate. Much later, in 1923, George H. Thacher purchased a property on Taconic Avenue, whereas the north part of the grounds actually touched south part the Burnham Estate.



This map may be of some trivial help for those history buffs who decide to explore this section of essential AA beginnings. The courthouse still exists in Bennington, but the 1930s Hazard house has long ago been replaced. There is much to see in Manchester. I would advise to first visit the Wilson House in East Dorset for maps and important information—sometimes they have a tour guide! Beautiful Emerald Lake is worth the trip, but the Burnham cabin is gone, along with most of the buildings when Ebby, Bill, Lois, and the whole gang used to swim. But be real quiet—Listen! You may still hear them splashing and frolicking! I think I did!

In Manchester, you will easily recognize the Thacher property from the picture on page 7, but, once again, we are requested not to disturb the residents with questions. The exact location of the Thacher rented home on the east side of Main Street, shown in the diagram above, is the Hoyt House, pictured on earlier pages. The Thachers' possibly rented during the late 1800s, before renting other summer homes. They purchased the property at 110 Taconic Road in 1923.

On another Subject: The Equinox Airport where Ebby and Bill landed in 1929 is gone, yet the street “Airport” sign lingers on. Here is an excerpt from Bill’s letter of apology to Mr. Orvis for his and Ebby’s drunken hijinks mentioned earlier in this book.



Deed Excerpt for Thacher Property on Taconic Road



Printed Thacher Deed Excerpt

Beginning at a marble post set on the ground on the north side of said Taconic Avenue, and about 29 rods westerly from the Main Street in said Village, and also standing in the west line of land owned by Marie F. McQueen; thence running northerly along the west side of said McQueen's yard to a marble post standing on the south line of lands of Matilda Burnham; thence westerly along lands of Matilda Burnham, one hundred and twenty-five (125) feet to a stake and stones; thence southerly in a line parallel with the first described line to a north line of Taconic Avenue; thence easterly on the north side of said Taconic Avenue, and one hundred and twenty-five feet to the point of beginning.

John P. McKay & Barbara McKay to George H. Thacher.

Know all Men by these Presents: That We, John P. McKay and Barbara McKay, Jussan and resident citizens of the City of Washington, District of Columbia, Grantor, in the Consideration of one dollar paid to our full satisfaction by George H. Thacher, of Albany, New York, Grantee, by these Presents, do freely give, grant, sell, convey and confirm unto the said Grantee John Thacher and assigns forever, a certain piece of land in Massachusetts, in the County of Bennington and State of Vermont, described as follows, viz: Being a parcel of land with trees lying thereon standing adjacent on the north side of Taconic Avenue in the Village of Massachusetts in said Town of Massachusetts and which is bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a marble post set in the ground on the north side of said Taconic Avenue, and about twenty-nine (29) rods westerly from the Main Street in said Village, and also standing in the west line of lands owned by Marie F. McQueen; thence running northerly along the west line of said McQueen's land to a marble post standing in the south line of lands of Matilda Burnham; thence westerly along lands of Matilda Burnham, one hundred and twenty-five (125) feet to a stake and stones; thence southerly, in a line parallel with the first

Location

Excerpt from the written deed for 110 Taconic Road

Ebby At Various Ages

@ Our Beautiful Bar The forty-plus foot bar gracing the Depot Grille was originally a fixture in the luxury Ten Eyck Hotel, located in Albany, New York. Legend has it that the Ten Eyck was the official Republican Party headquarters for that State Capitol.

This is the bar where Ebby remembers he first started drinking at the age of nineteen—though he was underage it is possible he was served due to his prestigious family. Paradoxically, Ebby's brother was the Mayor of Albany, and a Democrat!



Ebby is second on left from Bill Wilson, then Searchy W.



Ebby and rancher Ralph Jones in Texas



Ebby — 1960s

*Edwin
Throckmorton
Thacher*

1896

—

1966



Bill and Ebby

A few Pertinent Dates

1896: Born in Albany, NY, April 29,

1911: Met Bill Wilson

Attended Albany Academy as a youth

1911-12: Attended Burr and Burton Academy

1912: Returned to Albany Academy

1914: First drink, Albany, Ten Eyck Hotel Bar

1915: Job at Albany Car Wheel Works

1922: Car Wheel Works closes

1922 or 23: Job at brokerage firm

1927: Mother died

1929: Drunken airplane flight to Manchester

1929: Father died

1929: Inherited \$150,000 from his father

1932: Brother "Jack" ran for Governor Nominee

1932: Fall—Ebby moves to Manchester, VT

1932: Winter—Clears trails in mountains

1933: Moves to Manchester's Battenkill Inn

1934: Spring—Moves to Thacher summer home

1934: Late summer—arrested as a public nuisance

1934: Late summer—resides at the Hazard "cabin"

1934: Fall—moves to Shep Cornell's Manhattan Apt.

1934: Nov. 1--makes Oxford Group "surrender"

1934: Accepts position at the Calvary Mission, NY City

1934: Late Nov.—Kitchen table talk with Bill W.

1936: Summer—returns to Albany

1937: Last part of April—gets drunk

This writing is, of course, not a biography of Ebby Thacher . . . consequently, the dates shown above are seemingly limited.

Ebby lived about thirty-one years after he experienced his miraculous release in 1934—he lived about half of those sober! Initially for two and a half years, then for about seven years in Texas, and had been on the wagon for two and a half years when he died on March 21, 1966.

Books By Bob S.

Ebby In Exile, *A Vital AA Link*, by Bob S.

A Pre-AA History Book, *A Study of Synchronic Events Between Years 1926 and 1935, Which Culminated in the Birth of Alcoholics Anonymous*, by Bob S.

Early Indianapolis AA, *A Pictorial View*, by Bob S.

History of Alcoholics Anonymous in Richmond, Indiana, by Bob S.

There is no charge for an *internet link* for these four books. Request from: rstonebraker212@comcast.net

For a free Indiana AA History, PDF file or link, please contact Bruce C., brucec55@sbcglobal.net, or go to www.aamuncie.org. Most of the above books are available on this website.