

November 1955

In Memory of Helen

JUST six years ago last month, a girl named Helen made a journey from Boston to New York. She came to this city to join the staff of AA's General Service Headquarters.

Her decision to leave Boston's Central Office, where she had for three years been much loved as its first Secretary, was to result in benefits beyond measure to worldwide AA. But for her, this decision proved to be a fateful one.

Helen died in my home at Bedford Hills September 28, 1955. Her death was the climax of a long period of severe exhaustion and of many difficulties. She had come to stay with Lois and me to recuperate for the fresh start about which she had eagerly written to friends only one day before the unexpected attack of illness that did, in a matter of minutes, carry her away from us.

All the countless AAs who knew Helen will surely declare her to have been one of the finest servants that we have ever had. Speaking for ourselves here at Headquarters we feel that a void has been left in our lives of the kind which can never quite be filled. With Lois and me, Helen always stood high among our most devoted and treasured friends.

One more unforgettable thing: When the crucial decisions were made in 1951 that a Conference of elected AAs should be called to meet yearly with our Trustees, that this Conference should ultimately become the guide and conscience for our entire Society, and the successor to its founders, a most difficult problem had to be faced. Anxiously we asked ourselves, "How can this be done?"

Because of her keen sense of AA feeling and reaction, her inborn flair for sound diplomacy, Helen was assigned to help me in the preparation of the Third Legacy. This document, on which the future of AA so much depends, and of which so many of us recently became conscious at St. Louis, will ever bear the stamp of Helen's great perception and devotion.

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Bill W.

Helen B. was buried in Rockland, Massachusetts on Saturday, October 1, following a Solemn High Mass of Requiem at the Church of the Holy Family in Rockland.