

*Dr. G. Kirby Collier, M.D.*  
*1879 – 1954*

Dr. G. Kirby Collier is one of the most influential physicians in A.A.'s history. Although, primarily remembered as the person responsible for bringing Alcoholics Anonymous to Rochester, his work with alcoholics and influence within the medical community helped to establish Alcoholics Anonymous in the eyes of the medical profession.



Internationally renown for his work in epilepsy, Dr. Collier focused his efforts on the treatment of alcoholism. Hearing of the success of A.A. in 1940, he traveled to New York and attended several meetings and met with Bill W. Being convinced of the programs merits, he took Bill W.'s suggestion and held the first meeting in Rochester in his office at 311 Alexander Street with three of his alcoholic patients. After introducing his patients to the pamphlets and the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* provided by Bill W., Dr. Collier, believing it was best that they run their own meetings and he "threw them over-board." Meetings were held in the apartment of one of the first members on South Goodman St for several weeks before moving to the Seneca Hotel, effectively starting the Seneca Group in April 1942.

Dr. Collier influence was instrumental in Bill W.'s address before the New York State Medical Society in 1944. Along with the other prominent psychiatrists Drs. Harry M. Tiebout, Foster Kennedy, and W.W. Bauer, Dr. G. Kirby Collier's respected voice in the discussion that promoted alcoholism as a disease helped to breakdown barriers in the medical community that believed alcoholism as a moral weakness and encourage comprehensive medical treatment for alcoholics.

Dr. Collier's stature and experience in Alcoholism treatment led to his appointment as the Honorary chairman of the local chapter of the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism which became a pivotal force in Rochester that promoted awareness of the disease of alcoholism and the effectiveness of Alcoholics Anonymous' program of recovery.