



ANNA HOPKINS ANGLE

1872-1957

Anna Hopkins Angle

Anna Hopkins was born on a farm in Bloomington, Minnesota, January 22, 1872. She was the first of eight children. Farm life, difficult anywhere at that time, was especially hard in that northern country with its long, cold winters and its short growing season. As fast as a child grew enough to do even the simplest things, it was given tasks which became its sole responsibility. Needless to say, the oldest child carried the heaviest load and, as each new one arrived, there were new tasks, new responsibilities.

Anna grew up early. She took her ordinary chores as a part of living and was constantly looking for more things to do. Throughout her life she gloried in the simple tasks of the home and whatever she did was done with the skill that comes from long practice.

When she was old enough, Anna was sent to school No. 10, a typical country school of the times. There she went through all the grades and finished her education at fourteen. We can imagine that going to school was a joy for her because at all other times she was fully occupied with farm chores and helping the younger children.

As soon as she had finished her own schooling, she began to teach at the same school and, with the meager salary she derived from this, began to supply her own needs. By the age of sixteen she was not only self-supporting but helping the family as well. The material things of life were always scarce on the Hopkins' farm, but books were always considered a necessity.

Sensing the limitations of her environment, Anna left the farm when she was sixteen and went to Minneapolis to take courses in bookkeeping

and secretarial work. But this was no "running away from home." Her strong sense of responsibility to her family never diminished throughout her life. She continued always to help them and as late as 1931, following Dr. Angle's death, she assumed complete responsibility for the two orphan daughters of one of her brothers and took them to California to live with her. She never visited the middle west without going to the farm.

After completing her training, Anna obtained a position with a large business concern in Minneapolis and continued to go to school at night. It must have been about 1893 that she took a position as secretary to Dr. Angle. It was in that year that he published the third edition of "The Angle System of Regulation and Retention of the Teeth" and the fourth edition appeared in 1895. Knowing the agony he went through in writing anything for publication, it is quite likely that his need for a secretary was very great during those years. It is also understandable that Anna could not be in contact with Dr. Angle for very long before she fell under the same spell that held him to orthodontia. At any rate, she felt the need for further training and, accordingly, entered the University of Iowa to study dentistry.

Following her professional training she once more joined Dr. Angle, who had moved to St. Louis in the meantime. It was here he gave his first course of instruction in 1900 and, in 1901, organized the American Society of Orthodontia. The records show that Anna Hopkins was secretary of the society from 1902 to 1905. Some time during the interval between 1900 and 1902,

she took her own orthodontic training. She married Dr. Angle in 1906 in Niagara Falls, New York.

The orthodontic literature of that period gives us a fairly accurate idea of what conditions were like. We know that orthodontia was witnessing the aligning of different groups, each headed by a strong personality, and that the strife that raged among them was far more violent than anything we know today.

Angle, although a sensitive man, was a hard fighter and he brought down upon his own head storm after storm of criticism and abuse. Such times were difficult for Anna. With her strong protective instincts she could only encourage and give him comfort when he was hurt, because it is doubtful that she ever was able to cause him to alter his course; even more doubtful that she would try to, knowing his strong convictions.

Her patience was endless. Dr. Angle came more and more to depend upon her, particularly in the writing of his papers. She would take down dictation as he sat and thought aloud and then, when she read it back to him, he would swear he had not said it that way. Then the whole thing would have to be done over and over again, each paragraph, each sentence, each word, until it expressed just what he wished, no more, no less. Mrs. Angle laughingly said later that she came closer to divorce when writing papers than at any other time.

In spite of her complete devotion to Dr. Angle and his work, Mrs. Angle had a whole world of interests of her own. She was an avid reader over a large range of subjects and could converse intelligently on all of them, but she had the rare trait of concealing more than she revealed of her knowledge and she never forced her opinion. Like most people of this sort, she at-

tracted friends wherever she went and to these, as well as the various causes that she espoused, she gave more than casual interest.

When the Angle course was started again in Pasadena, a considerable interval of time had elapsed since the New London days and the students were more widely separated from the Angles in age. To these younger men, Mrs. Angle was invariably "Mother" and many of them could thank her influence for smoothing their way when they were verbally "spanked" by Dr. Angle. However, she was always careful not to carry her sympathy so far that the intended lesson did no good, for she, too, believed in discipline.

The wives, too, felt her influence and there is no doubt that they took away from Pasadena more than recipes for delicious dishes. For them she was a model to be emulated.

The school closed its doors to students in 1927 and Dr. Angle died in 1930. During the last years of his life the Angle Society continued to hold its meetings in the little building. When the present society was organized in 1930 following Dr. Angle's death, Mrs. Angle journeyed to Chicago to assist the founders. She was made Honorary Chairman of the Executive Committee for life and an editor of the Angle Orthodontist. She never exercised the prerogatives of either office, although she attended the biennial meetings until 1949 wherever they were held. The Southern California Component continued to hold its meetings at the little school, now her home, until recently.

Thrust into a role of prominence as the wife of a world figure, Anna Hopkins played her role with grace, modesty, and an exquisite sense of the fitness of things. Had she been destined to a life of obscurity, she would still have made the lives of those around

her richer by those beautiful womanly characteristics that made her so dear to us.

With her passing this society has lost its closest link with Dr. Angle. But though the life may be gone, the ideals and inspiration which she gave us will live forever in the hearts of the present members of the society who were privileged to know her.

A. G. B.

The Angle Orthodontist

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by the co-workers
of Edward H. Angle,
in his memory . . .*

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