

Anna Botsford Comstock

Professor of Nature Study

— *August 24, 1930*

Anna Botsford Comstock, born on a farm in western New York, spent her childhood years among the fields and woods of a beautiful countryside. Here she learned the haunts and habits of the native wild life, came to love and foster domestic animals of the farm, and grew in sympathetic understanding of the problems of farm life. She was always intensely interested in men and women, and particularly in the welfare and education of children.

Entering Cornell University almost at its beginning she began the long period of devoted service that closed with a lecture to her summer class in Nature Literature only nine days before her death. She early began the study of the art of wood engraving in order to illustrate the entomological textbooks of her husband, John Henry Comstock, and achieved marked distinction as an artist, especially in her work representing the delicate texture of the bodies and wings of butterflies. She had a large share in the early extension movement in nature study and agriculture and undertook the leadership of the work in nature study in the University at its beginning. Among her varied and rich interests nature study became the chief field of her activity as writer, lecturer, editor, and teacher of teachers.

Mrs. Comstock became endeared to a wide circle of friends beyond the possibilities of merely professional contacts through the hospitality of the home which for half a century was a rendezvous for her students and those of her husband. Here she received and entertained with that gracious sympathy and understanding that made every guest a real participant in the life of a lovely home.

In an eminent degree Mrs. Comstock possessed the quality of warm and helpful friendship. Her long life in this community attached her to a remarkably wide circle of friends, all of whom became admirers. Her personality enriched her work as well as her relationships. Her interests were greatly varied and she touched life at many diverse points with the skill of the artist, the warmth of rich enthusiasms, and the emotions of the poet. To all her associates in Cornell University her memory will remain a blessed experience, and to generations of students she will continue to be an inspiring example. We are all conscious that a great soul has passed.

As a mark of profound respect, we, her colleagues of the University Faculty wish to place in permanent form upon their minutes this tribute to a life of service to the State, the Nation, and the University.

Source: Fac. Rec. p. 1657 Resolutions of the Trustees and Faculty of Cornell University, December, Nineteen Hundred and Thirty

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