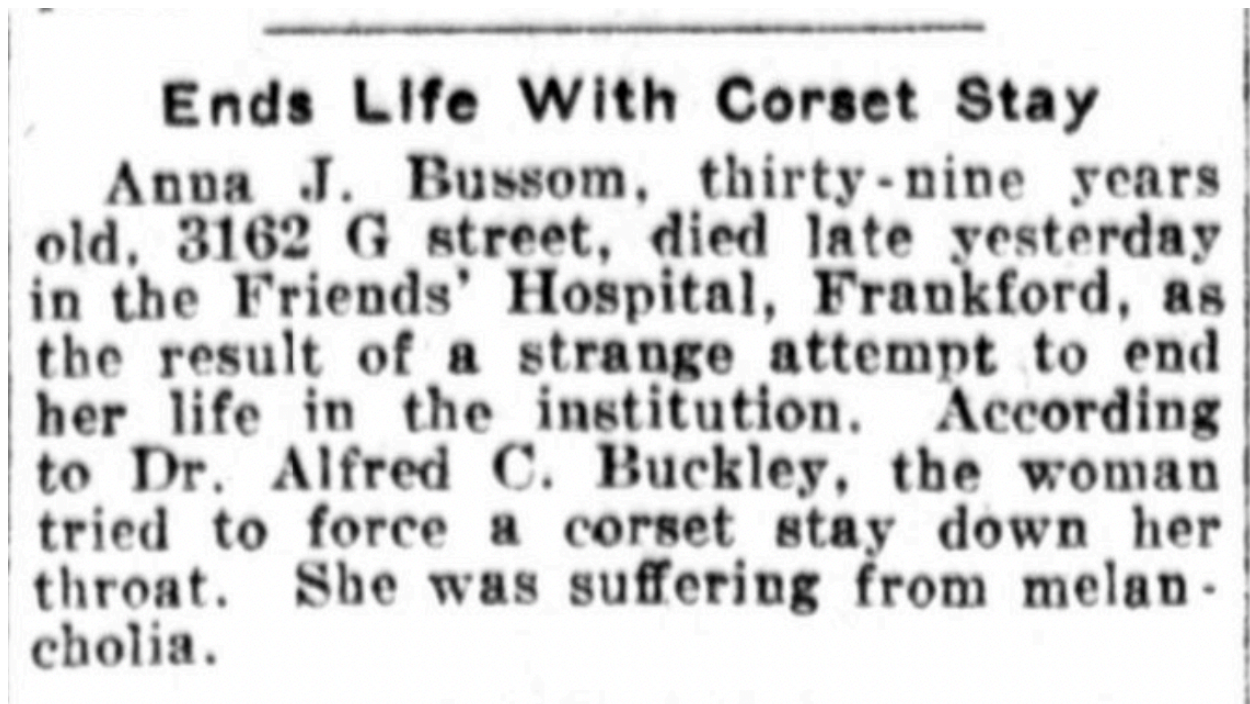


Anna (Hannah) J Bussom
Ward 1

On March 23, 1920, an article titled "Ends Life With Corset Stay"¹ appeared in the Evening Public Ledger, describing the suicide of Anna Bussom (nee Cummins) at Friends' Hospital. According to the newspaper article, Anna "tried to force a corset stay down her throat," and was "suffering from melancholia."



Anna was admitted to Ward 1 on February 25, 1920,² where she is recorded as "Hannah Bussom." She spent most of her time at the Hospital sick in bed and receiving medication. There is little other detail recorded about her condition, except that she had to be fed mechanically on March 16th. The casebook is opaque about the circumstances of her death, remarking only that she had "died 3-23-1920." At the time of her death, Anna was 37 years old.³

¹ "Ends Life With Corset Stay." *Evening Public Ledger*. March 23, 1920.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045211/1920-03-23/ed-1/seq-14/> (Accessed March 13, 2023).

² All following information, unless otherwise noted, is from Daily Record Book, 1919-1921, MC-1261, Item 116, Friends Hospital Records, Haverford College Quaker & Special Collections, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

³ "Pennsylvania, U.S., Death Certificates, 1906-1969," digital image s.v. "Anna Josephine Bussom," *Ancestry.com*

Anna's case exemplifies the limits of the casebook. While the casebook provides crucial details about treatments offered at the Hospital and records the names of those who lived there, it does not include information about patient health, birth date, reason for institutionalization or other data important to reconstructing an image of a patient's life.

February 1920

- Admitted February 25, 1920
- Sick in bed and medicine every day

March 1920 - Ward 1

- Medicine and sick in bed every day
- Takes walks w attendant on March 9 and 10
- Fed mechanically on the 16th
- Commits suicide by "forc[ing] a corset stay down her throat." on March 23, 1920 (<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045211/1920-03-23/ed-1/seq-14/>)
- Suffering from "melancholia"