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South Carolinian Frances Lander Spain enjoyed an interesting and varied career as an influential and important figure in the history of American librarianship. In her long career of library service spanning 36 years, we see a woman who constantly sought new challenges and became a leader in many areas of the profession.

As a library educator and college librarian, Dr. Spain helped establish high standards for school library programs. While coordinator of children's services at the New York Public Library, and children's book review editor of the "Saturday Review," she helped promote quality in book selection for children.

Through her membership in the American Library Association and regional and state library organizations such as the South Carolina Library Association, she held the presidency or important committee assignments and helped to further the growth of the profession. As a consultant to librarians in Thailand, she helped establish the library profession in that country and set it on its modern course.

Although born in Jacksonville, Fla., in 1903, the daughter of Malcolm McPherson and Rosa Olivia Landers, Frances Lander Spain had deep roots in South Carolina. Her grandfather, Samuel Lander, was the founder of Lander College.

Exposure to libraries came early in her life. While a teen-ager on vacation from high school in 1919, she worked in the children's department of the Jacksonville Public Library.

In 1925, after attending Winthrop for four years, Dr. Spain graduated with a bachelor's degree in physical education. In the same year she married Donald Grant Spain, a banker, and began to raise a family. A son and a daughter were soon born, but unfortunately, Dr. Spain's son died in 1932 and her husband died in 1934.

After this great personal loss and with a daughter to support, Dr. Spain decided to become a librarian. In 1935 she enrolled at Emory University and, after a year's study, graduated with a bachelor's degree in library science. In 1936 Dr. Spain returned to Winthrop College where she remained for 13 years, serving as librarian and head of the library science department from 1936 to 1945 and as college librarian from 1945 to 1948.

# Dr. Spain Was Important Figure In Librarianship

While at Winthrop, she continued her education, receiving a master's degree from the graduate library school of the University of Chicago in 1940 and, with the help of a General Education Board fellowship, a doctorate in 1944 from the same institution. Her doctoral dissertation was titled "Libraries in South Carolina: Their Origin and Early History, 1700-1830."

In 1949, Dr. Spain left Winthrop to become assistant director of the School of Library Science at the University of Southern California, with responsibility for instruction in children's literature. In 1957, she received a Fulbright Foundation grant to serve as visiting lecturer in library science at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand, and as a consultant to librarians throughout the country.

Until Dr. Spain's arrival, librarians had had no formal education and, through her efforts, library science in Thailand was set on its modern course. As a result of the six-course library science curriculum set up by Dr. Spain, a one-year course leading to a diploma in library science was implemented. She also organized an informal group of Thai students who met to discuss library matters. This led to the creation of the Thai Library Association in 1954.

In 1953 she left the University of Southern California to begin a distinguished career as coordinator of children's services at the New York Public Library. During her eight years at the NYPL, Dr. Spain's professional stature continued to grow. From 1954 to 1959 she served as editor of the "Books for Young People" section of the "Saturday Review" and as visiting lecturer to the graduate library schools of Columbia University, Syracuse University, the Pratt Institute and Rutgers University. From 1960 to 1961 she served as president of the American Library Association, becoming the first children's librarian to be so honored. In 1961 she was named "Woman of the Year in Library Science" by the editors of "Who's Who of American Women." When Dr. Spain took early retirement from the New York Public Library, she was credited with having increased the circulation of children's books at the library by 50 percent.

## South Carolina's Story

### The making of a state

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Besides her role in the American Library Association, Dr. Spain was also active throughout her career in many other library organizations. This included her position as president of the South Carolina Library Association in 1947, membership on the Conference on Library Statistics of the Committee of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools from 1940 to 1948, and chairman of the Intellectual Committee of the California Library Association in 1951 and 1953.

In 1961 she was one of seven members of the American Exchange Mission of Librarians who participated in a USA-USSR cultural exchange program. This was the first American and Soviet exchange of librarians in history. Four Soviet librarians visited the United States for a month to study library techniques and this was reciprocated by the American delegation for the same length of time.

In 1961, after retiring from the New York Public Library, she returned to her native Florida. However, her retirement was of short duration and she accepted an offer to become director of library services at Central Florida Junior College in Ocala, Fla.

Her work in Thailand was not yet completed, and she was asked by the Rockefeller Foundation to return to Thailand to help start a master's degree program in librarianship at Chulalongkorn University. Dr. Spain accepted the request, taking a year's leave of absence from the college. So great has been her contribution to Thai librarianship that she has been called the "founder of modern library science in Thailand."

In 1971 Dr. Spain retired for the second time after 10 years service to Central Florida Junior College. Today, she resides in Anthony, Fla. In recognition of her outstanding contribution to society she received the Mary Mildred Sullivan Award in 1981 from Winthrop College.