Dr. Frances Lander Spain

Founder of Modern Library Service
In Thailand

by

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Preface

It has been the purpose of the Department of Library Science, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University since its beginning to publish research writings in the field of librarianship undertaken by its teaching staff and students. It is very happy therefore to make available this first issue of its LIBRARY SCIENCE PAPERS entitled “Dr. Frances Lander Spain: Founder of Modern Library Service in Thailand” written by Associate Professor Suthilak Ambhanwong, Head of the Department. This article, formerly known as “Dr. Frances Lander Spain As I Know Her” was produced in mimeographed form for earlier distribution.

More publications on various aspects of librarianship and related subjects will appear occasionally in this series in the hope that they will be of some value to library science students, librarians, and those interested in library science and books.

Department of Library Science
Faculty of Arts

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Dr. Frances Lander Spain

Founder Of Modern Library Service In Thailand

Among several American librarians who have been of service in Thailand, Dr. Frances Lander Spain is one of the best known and the most loved. Her work in promoting librarianship in this country was so remarkable and impressive that she has been highly esteemed as founder of modern library service in Thailand.

Dr. Spain came out here for the first time in September 1951 as the first Fulbright professor of library science to develop a library training program at Chulalongkorn University. Her charming personality marvelously won the heart of Thai librarians. Her instruction on modern library services profoundly impressed them. They had to wait for 13 years to welcome back their beloved teacher.

Her second appointment to Thailand beginning on September 1, 1964, lasting only 11 months was under The Rockefeller Foundation grant. She helped inaugurate a graduate pro-
Realizing that the lack of a national plan for library development in Thailand retards the growth and progress of libraries throughout the country, Dr. Spain encouraged the setting up of such a plan. She served as consultant to the Ad Hoc Committee, which has been formed by the Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation to draw up a five—year plan for development.

In her spare time, Dr. Spain did extensive travelling to several provinces in Thailand. She went to Penang for a short visit. She also joined the annual convention of the Philippines Library Association held in Manila on June 8-11, 1965.

It was amazing to think of how much Dr Spain has accomplished in only 11 month’s time. One of her suggestions for promoting library service here is “to recruit more men into the library profession.” She said “men are often able to work with government officials and will help get recognition for the profession.” Dr. Spain worked so closely with Thai librarians that she was fully accepted as one of them. Thai librarians are very proud and happy to have her with them for the second time.

Dr. Spain left Bangkok, Thailand on July 31, 1965 to re-assume her work at The Central Florida Junior College Library in the hope shared by all her Thai friends that she would make a return visit again “in the next 7 years,” as was said by Dr. Spain herself.

References

Current Biography June 1960.
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