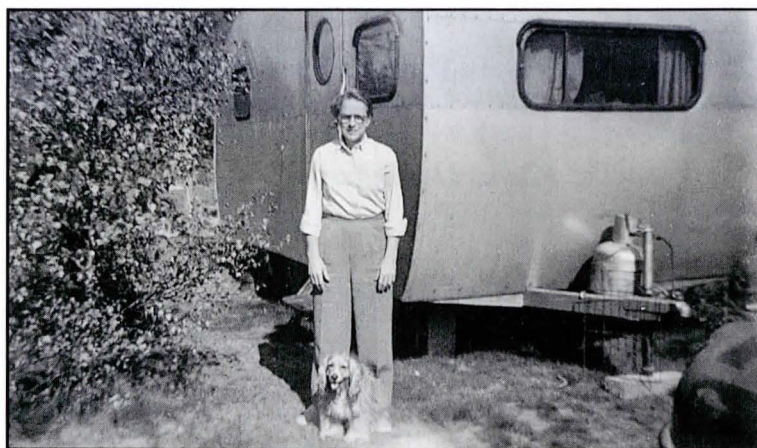




*LaRue Spiker, mid-1920s*



*LaRue Spiker, late-1950s, Mount Desert Island, Maine*

## LaRue Spiker and “America’s Most Beautiful Island”

*by Elizabeth Redhead*

Many residents of Mount Desert Island, both year-round and seasonal, remember LaRue Spiker for her feature articles in the *Bar Harbor Times*, and perhaps also for her work with the League of Women Voters, the Southwest Harbor Conservation Commission, the Natural Resources Council of Maine, the Audubon Society, and many other organizations. Her move to Mount Desert changed the island by adding to its cultural, historical, and environmental heritage through her writing and photography, and of course through the force of her indomitable personality. On MDI she found long-sought acceptance, and a place among these people so striking in their resourcefulness, independence, and community spirit.

Spiker first came to the island in 1957, spending the summer in a campground near Bar Harbor. Mount Desert was to weave a spell on her that was never broken, though she did not settle there permanently for some time. Instead, she traveled widely, perhaps as a means of coming to terms with a number of obstacles she had faced in the earlier part of that decade. She had been dismissed from the Indiana Department of Welfare for being a member of a “subversive” organization; she had been arrested and indicted for sedition when she campaigned for the right of a black couple to move to a predominantly white area of Louisville, Kentucky; and she had been unsuccessful in her attempts to have her life’s work, *Mantle of Elijah*, published as a novel. Having taken to the road, she earned her living writing articles for magazines, often aimed at the fellow traveler or mobile-home enthusiast. One such article in *Trailer Topics* magazine, documents Spiker’s first experience of Mount Desert Island:

I hitched up and headed northward, gaping in progressively greater amazement as the country changed rapidly. When I began edging along the great island-studded bays of Maine, I

almost exploded right out of the car for the blueness of them and the wild clean smell of the air. The fishing villages with their enormous elms and cleanly kept old houses were of a world I had known only in picture books. It was hard to go on through them, but I had decided, more or less at random, to try Bar Harbor for the rest of the summer. It is a choice in which I shall always rejoice.

Mount Desert Island, on which there are several villages including Bar Harbor, is a combination of everything you could ever want—unless of course you prefer the moil and toil of automobile fumes, tall buildings, magnolia blossoms, and millions of people you don't know. Here are far reaches of forest and fresh water lakes, heath bogs and bald headed pink mountains. And, in the summer particularly the island has a cultural life not to be sneezed at.

In October when the maples flamed red against the dark green of the spruce and the blueberry barrens darkened into maroon, the geese began honking their way southward overhead, and I decided I should at least show an equal amount of sense. Maine was no place to spend the winter in a trailer as small as mine; so, reluctantly, I hitched up and headed in the same direction as the geese.<sup>1</sup>

As the 1960s dawned, Spiker returned to MDI and settled in Southwest Harbor. She understood immediately the Maine spirit of self-help, and built herself a log cabin in much the same way as her pioneering predecessor, first island settler Abraham Somes. This endeared her instantly to the self-sufficient locals, and although her ideals were at that time liberal by anyone's standards, Spiker was accepted now more readily than ever before. She quickly immersed herself in the ways of the island people, and soon became a distinctive presence in her own right—known for her numerous pets and heavy smoking habit as much as for her writing and her fight for justice.

To understand the significance of this newfound acceptance, it is essential to consider how Spiker came to live on Mount Desert, and which experiences shaped her subsequent roles as environmentalist, animal rights activist, and local history enthusiast.

### **The Early Years**

Born in the provincial farming community of Bushnell, Illinois, on July 8, 1912, Spiker was a serious child. The few surviving pictures of LaRue in her youth suggest a certainty of purpose unusual in a young girl in the 1920s.

She graduated from Bushnell High School in 1928 and went on to the University of Minnesota.<sup>2</sup> She obtained a masters degree from the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration<sup>3</sup>, and set forth on a career in the social services.

She did not remain in the profession for as long as she might have expected. She worked for the Illinois Relief Commission and the Illinois Division of Child Welfare before transferring to the Indiana Children's Division in Indianapolis.<sup>4</sup> This was to be her last official position in the social services, and the events that followed were to set a pattern of active protest and lonely conviction that Spiker herself could not have predicted.

The 1950s were in some ways a melting pot of old prejudice, recent war, and imminent danger. The Russians appeared to be gaining in the world's race for arms, and, more worrying still, some Americans perceived that the shadowy ideals of Communism were infiltrating even the most sanctified of American traditions.<sup>5</sup>

In March 1950 the World Committee in Defense of Peace passed the Stockholm resolution, calling for a worldwide ban on the atomic bomb.<sup>6</sup> The U.S. Campaign Committee for the World Peace Appeal approached a number of groups throughout the country, asking them to discuss the resolution and circulate a petition among their communities.

On July 6, 1950, LaRue Spiker and fellow campaigner Iola Klaas were stopped by the police shortly after completing a house-to-house canvass of eastern Indianapolis. According to a joint statement by the two women, "...this incident was followed by a terrific blast of red-baiting by the papers and radio."<sup>7</sup>

On July 11 they were dismissed from the Indiana Department of Welfare. Among other reasons stated in a letter from Maurice Hunt, administrator of the department, they had been discharged for: "aiding and abetting the work of the Civil Rights Congress, which organization has been officially listed by the Attorney General of the United States as an organization of a subversive nature."<sup>8</sup>

Unemployed and largely unwanted in Indianapolis, Spiker moved to Louisville, Kentucky. She worked for three years on the production line of a flour mill. In a letter to Cameron Associates publisher Angus Cameron, Dec 5, 1956, she described this time as "rewarding, if exhausting."<sup>9</sup>

Having reunited with an old university friend, Louise Gilbert, Spiker soon made new, like-minded friends. Undaunted by her previous brush with the Establishment, she soon took an active part in the defense of the home of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Wade—a black couple who had purchased a house in a "white" area of Louisville. They had been unable to buy a house on several occasions because the seller would pull out of the deal as soon as the skin color of the buyers became known. Eventually the Wades appealed to their white friends, Carl and Anne Braden, to buy a house on the Wades' behalf.

When they discovered that they had been duped, many members of the community were outraged. Excerpts from the transcript of the proceedings of the September 1954 Grand Jury state that, "On May 15 a rock wrapped in an insulting message was thrown through the front window of the Wade home. Hostile crowds gathered in the neighborhood. That night a cross was burned in the lot adjoining the house, and about midnight a round of rifle shots were fired into the house."<sup>10</sup>

Spiker and Louise Gilbert were among a small number of volunteers who stood guard outside the Wade house. Police protection was scanty, and the Wades' situation worsened when the insurance company cancelled insurance on the home and the bank instituted proceedings to foreclose on the mortgage.

As the weeks wore on, the tension appeared to ease, but this was an illusion. On June 27th, at about 12:30 am, the home was destroyed by a bomb of dynamite placed under the floor.

The Grand Jury investigated the case, indicting many of the friends and protectors of the Wades with sedition, and one of the volunteer guards, Vernon Bown, with the explosion. The investigation focused on the possibility that the acquisition of the house had been a Communist plot, intended to divide the people of Indianapolis. Very little was said about the explosion or the threats made to the Wades. Consequently, both Spiker and Miss Gilbert refused to be sworn in, and were sent to jail for contempt. Spiker eventually took the Fifth Amendment on all questions not related to her knowledge of events concerning the Wades' house. The case moved on, and the Bradens were tried and convicted of sedition in December 1954. However, the conviction was later reversed by the U.S. Supreme Court, and all other charges were dismissed in November 1956.<sup>11</sup>

While all this was happening, Spiker again became unemployed, although there is no evidence to suggest that her political convictions were in any way responsible for this. In her letter to Cameron, December 5, 1956, she claimed that she resigned from the flour mill to devote time to her novel, titled *Mantle of Elijah*.<sup>12</sup> Based on a true story, *Mantle of Elijah* tells the tale of the Rev. Elijah P. Lovejoy, who was killed by a pro-slavery mob in Alton, Illinois, in 1837. He was defending the printing press of the *Alton Observer*, of which he was the editor, and it was Spiker's fervent belief in free speech and civil liberty that prompted her to pursue Lovejoy's story with such diligence. She wrote, "I am perhaps unduly anxious to contribute to an understanding of the issues involved."<sup>13</sup> She became passionately engrossed by the novel, and therefore *Elijah's* subsequent rejection by a number of

publishers must have caused Spiker great pain. "I have been a little at a loss as to next steps. I only know that I cannot forsake him."<sup>14</sup>

She made a thorough revision of the book. Several publishers suggested she turn *Mantle of Elijah* into a biography, but Spiker wrote: "I believe that many people can grasp the important issues presented in the human terms of fiction more readily than they can in non-fictional form."<sup>15</sup>

Such extensive transformation of the book would also have been time consuming, and Spiker's last full-time and regular employment had been at the flour mill, over two years previously. As the Braden case was at this time still newsworthy, and the 1954 verdict was in the process of being overturned, LaRue Spiker was not one of the most employable members of Louisville society.

In 1955 she moved to Crestwood, Kentucky, though it seems this was still not an adequate distance. "It is still difficult for 'seditionists' to find work around Louisville," she told publisher Marcella Powers.<sup>16</sup>

Ever resourceful, Spiker turned to article writing. The difficult years since her dismissal from social work caused her to reevaluate the future, and although she still campaigned against injustice when she saw it, much of her freelance writing now featured other interests, such as botany and local history.

One of her first efforts was published by the *Garden Journal of the New York Botanical Garden* in January 1956. "Green Factories" is a serious, rather technical piece, though not without that sense of barely suppressed awe which makes Spiker's writing so distinctive.

Pluck a leaf from the poplar tree outside your door. Enjoy its brilliant green symmetry, and let no hunger gnaw your vitals while you twirl it between your fingers. You hold in your hand a bit of life snipped from the source of the world's food stuffs.<sup>17</sup>

Her excitement about nature often extended to people: those living off, and in close harmony with, an ancient natural industry. The *Louisville Courier-Journal Magazine* published one such article in January 1957, titled "The Vanishing Herb Gatherer." It is a personality sketch of Sim Brackett, an elderly neighbor of LaRue's.

"Ain't going to dig no more roots when I get my pension," declared Sim Brackett decisively. "It's hard work."

Yet this year, as every fall in the past, 78-year-old Sim moves slowly through the woods of Louisville, humming tunelessly as he goes. Over one shoulder he wears a 'happy sack'; over the other he carries a grubbing hoe.

He seems unaware of the blue and gold of the day, having seen so many autumns, and does not raise his eyes from the weeds and underbrush. Despite his failing vision, he finds what he seeks and stops beside an inconspicuous plant topped with a bunch of red berries. Chopping skillfully, he unearths a small root stock about three inches long.

This he carefully places in the pocket of his overalls, rather than in his bulging bag. It is a ginseng root, worth \$1 or more per ounce on the market in Louisville.<sup>18</sup>

This loving portrait was another early indicator of the writing style for which Spiker later became known. Her affection for Sim and her admiration for his much forgotten herb-lore are evident throughout the article, and perhaps it was then, in 1957, that Spiker first turned her attention to those things already good in the world as much as to the things that needed to be fixed.

Certainly, she did not by any means forsake the problems of others, or the ever-controversial issue of racism. On February 8, 1957, her article



“Integration of the South: Two Women of Kentucky” was published by *The Commonwealth* magazine. It tells the story of Louise Gordon, a black woman wanting to send her children to a good school, and the subsequent fury of the white community. The school was boycotted in protest, until only four children other than the Gordon children remained. These attended at the order of their mother, Margaret Meazles. This particular battle was not won. Although the Supreme Court had outlawed segregation two and a half years earlier, Louise Gordon’s children were not admitted to the school in Clay, Kentucky, because “the county board of education had made no plan for integration.”<sup>19</sup> Presumably, the Gordons then returned to school alongside other black children, at Rosenwald. Spiker recorded Louise Gordon’s words:

“I’m tired of scrubbing other people’s floors.” Mrs. Gordon raised her chin, and anger glinted deep in her eyes. “I want my children to have a better life. They can’t get better jobs without an education. They can’t learn anything at Rosenwald. I know; I went there.”<sup>20</sup>

We should not underestimate the importance of these years for Spiker. Although she would have made the best of her situation, her experiences of the early 1950s involved many rejections and failures. Her transition from child welfare consultant to freelance writer was riddled with setbacks and disappointments, but by the end of the decade she had overcome many of them.

### **The Promised Land**

Spiker would probably have been the first to say that her arrival on Mount Desert Island was a significant turning point. She had lived her whole life inland, knowing a landscape without mountains or ocean, and yet her move to Mount Desert was in a sense a homecoming. Having left the Midwest, and removed herself from the war-zone of civil rights issues, Spiker found a new outlet for her love of life. In addition to the fight for environmental and civil justice, she now had the opportunity to explore botany and history and many other hitherto neglected enthusiasms.

The *Bar Harbor Times*, having first published a Spiker article in 1957, welcomed her back with open arms. Her feature articles were immediately popular, bringing MDI to its residents by way of personality profiles and insights into local industries. She wrote of anything from antique baby shoes to the art of boat-building or the precarious economic security of lobstermen. Her capacity to absorb knowledge—as well as to express it for the benefit of others – appears to have been inexhaustible.

She also continued to write freelance articles, at first making use of her recent travels. The most successful of these was “Philadelphia—Peace, Patriots, and Pretzels.” The Philadelphia article set the seal on Spiker’s future as a professional writer and indirectly enabled her to make a success of this new career on Mount Desert, by impressing an editor so much that she was soon afterward commissioned for specific work. The article focused on the heritage and evolving culture of Philadelphia, making a potentially worn out theme into something new and interesting.

It is the old section of the city which makes Philadelphia unique. If a city can have ghosts, it is here you will find them. Here was delivered the spirit not of a city but of a nation.<sup>21</sup>

Her enthusiasm and sense of drama greatly impressed editor Charles E. Durham Jr. of *Trailer Topics* magazine. On February 24, 1961, he wrote:

Your Philadelphia story is extremely well written and I just know I want to use it. Philly has always been one of my favorite cities since my Army days so you have touched a soft spot—very nicely too.<sup>22</sup>

The impact of this article on Charles (Chuck) Durham was not forgotten. Eight months later Spiker had indeed arrived as a freelance writer and received her first commission.

I’ve enclosed the material that I received the other day. After thinking over the names of our many authors, I decided I would first ask you to write this thing. Your performance

with Philadelphia is one of the major factors that I took into consideration. Because this type of story is my pet, I felt only the best would do, and I believe you're it.<sup>23</sup>

The requested piece was titled "The Heritage Trail," and while writing it, she was also working on the story of Paul Bunyan, and on an article about St. Louis. Spiker was by this point also writing regularly for the *Ellsworth American* as well as the *Bar Harbor Times*, so her career as a writer had flourished. In March 1962 she wrote Chuck Durham:

You will be interested, I think, to know that an article I wrote for the *Bar Harbor Times* last summer was selected by the New England Weekly Press Association as the best feature story in New England for 1961. Hot stuff!<sup>24</sup>

Her delight was well earned. She had attracted great criticism throughout her life, and now she also received considerable support. Spiker was appointed to the position of editor of the *Bar Harbor Times* in the summer of 1962, indicating both her competence and her popularity on the island—especially remarkable since she was such a new addition to the community.

Her social role had undergone a subtle change. Spiker not only campaigned for a just cause, but also developed the role of the impartial journalist. Never a woman to follow blindly in the footsteps of others, she did not hesitate to make changes in the format and running of the newspaper. She often did away with the editorials altogether. Sometimes a fierce opinion was not needed so much as a basic telling of the facts, and both her editorship of the *Times* and her freelance writing reflected this.

Unfortunately, just two years later in 1964, Spiker resigned as editor of the *Bar Harbor Times*. Her reasons for her resignation are not fully known, but have been attributed to the controversial nature of her liberal ideals. She disclosed in a letter to a friend:

I resigned for a number of important policy differences with the publisher which I had tried unsuccessfully over a period of months to resolve. The situation got progressively worse instead of better until I felt I was so boxed in that I could do

nothing but a hack job. Life is too short and an editor's job too demanding to sit still for that.<sup>25</sup>

She continued to write for the *Times*, supported by many letters expressing disappointment at her departure from the editor's desk. Frances W. Knickerbocker wrote, July 5, 1964:

Dear Miss Spiker,

I want to tell you of my regret that you are resigning the editorship of the *Bar Harbor Times* and my appreciation of what you have done here. As a summer resident for over 50 years, I have especially enjoyed your articles on island history, the old families and past events. I feel too that you have done a public service in pointing out the inadequacies of teachers' salaries and the terrible dangers of reckless driving.

I realize that fearless criticism arouses opposition. But I am glad that you are staying here and will continue to write feature articles for the *Times*.<sup>26</sup>

"The inadequacies of teachers' salaries and the terrible dangers of reckless driving" are among many issues Spiker concerned herself with on MDI. She fought a number of battles with the backing of the local branch of the League of Women Voters, and as a long-standing member of its Board of Directors, she took responsibility for much of the organization's concern with "environmental quality."<sup>27</sup>

Spiker spent a great deal of time, for example, researching local and State plans for the preservation of wetlands and salt marshes. On May 1, 1975, she reported in the *Ellsworth American*:

According to federal studies, all coastal states have been losing their salt marshes to dredging, fill, development, drainage, and pollution at an alarming rate. In Maine losses have tended to occur in relatively smaller acreages, but, taken together, they are a significant loss of an essential resource.

Because of their particular nature, salt marshes are one of the most fertile growing areas on earth. In its natural state a salt marsh can produce tens of tons of dry material per acre per year as against the one and a half tons produced by a wheat field, fertilized and cultivated by man. This dry matter ultimately breaks down and is washed to sea by the tides where it is an important source of nutrients essential to the food chain that culminates in marine species important to man.<sup>28</sup>

Spiker continued to urge the protection of marshes for many years, taking an active interest in the fate of the Bass Harbor Marsh in August 1989, when it was threatened by development and pollution. Her work with the League of Women Voters also included involvement with various seminars and public lectures about topics as varied as Chernobyl (1987), recycling (1989), and the quality of public school libraries in Maine (1991).<sup>29</sup>

Perhaps in search of a new project, and being tired of writing away for loaned photographs now that her commitments had multiplied so rapidly, Spiker began to develop her own films. Sending her own pictures along with articles to be published was not only convenient but also more personal. Spiker could fine-tune an article by taking photographs specifically catered for it, and now those vast collections tell stories of their own.

In 1979, in association with the League of Women Voters, she arranged a slide show titled *A Question of Harmony*. Complete with 134 of her own slides, the talk showed the trends and consequences of different types of land use in Maine, again highlighting the great benefits of wetlands, and emphasizing the most environmentally friendly ways for people to live in harmony with nature. In Spiker's own words:

The central issue lies in understanding and acceptance of Maine: a finite area with finite resources. The interrelations between the land and the living things it supports, including human beings, are infinitely complex; and changes in the patterns may result in unanticipated, and sometimes

undesirable, results. We can squander the land and its resources, or we can use them with the wisdom and restraint that flows from sound land use planning. It is a question of harmony between people and land.<sup>30</sup>

By the time she had reached Mount Desert Island, she had learned that to achieve her political ends, it was in her interest to ally with like-minded organizations and to approach the chosen issues in a steady and well-researched manner. However, this does not necessarily indicate a shift in Spiker's principles, or even a maturation of ideals. One theory suggests that such pragmatism was merely a "sign of the times" and not necessarily a significant personal adaptation.

Nevertheless, her work was not always political in nature. Indeed, she was much loved on the island for her enjoyment of its wildlife, geology, and culture, and many of her articles in the *Bar Harbor Times* continued to focus on particular species of plant or animal. Her writing often lost its business-like approach when she wrote about these things, and her love of Mount Desert roused once again the amiable style of her earlier works.

## SUE

### The Snob of the Sea Gulls

Sue, perched on top a piling, glared disapprovingly at some fifteen or twenty of her relatives. They were swarming, shoving and squawking over some discarded bait a lazy lobsterman had neglected to toss out until he had almost reached his mooring.

These same cousins, she knew, had been engaged in similar swarming, shoving and squalling all day in the wake of lobster boats from which the old bait had been properly pitched far out in the bay. Why, she wondered, must they then continue to make fools of themselves here in the harbor in front of the tourists?

She herself frequently followed in the wake of lobster boats to grab a juicy morsel now and then. As a matter of fact, she

had made a habit of it after a fisherman had once eyed her and muttered: "They'll never make an airplane can fly as pretty as that."<sup>31</sup>

It was this sincere and rather earnest technique that made Spiker's writing so popular. Although her interest in civil rights was probably undiminished, she focused increasingly on the local environment. She devoted herself not only to land and sea but also to the care and protection of animals. She became the president of Downeast Animal Welfare and was an active member of the Audubon Society and the Natural Resources Council of Maine. She was the first female member of the Board of Directors of the Coastal Resources Center. She worked extensively with the Southwest Harbor Conservation Commission, which later established an annual award in her name for those working especially hard for the conservation of Southwest Harbor. She also contributed to the island's economy by writing publicity articles for the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce.

Want to drive along the shore? Hike through a valley or over a mountain? Dance? Take a boat ride? Play cards? Fish? See a demonstration of jewelry making? Or eat fresh boiled lobster with the surf beating in your ears? It's all waiting for you in and near Bar Harbor, thanks to the work the centuries have placed on America's most beautiful island and to the planning which has been done to make vacationers feel welcome and help them to keep as busy, or idle, as they may choose.<sup>32</sup>

Fortunately, by the 1980s the hysteria regarding the "red menace" had long since declined, and the world had moved into a new phase. Spiker had also changed to some extent, settling into her role of island protector and commentator. Perhaps sensing that time was running short, she decided to travel again. She was in her 70s by this time, and as courageous as ever. Her letters to Louise Gilbert, however, are not brimming with the excited commentaries or anecdotes that came out in her earlier travel writings. In 1986, at the age of 74, Spiker appears to have been unmoved and occasionally frightened by many aspects of her latest expedition. From Texas she wrote:

The Rio Grande is about the least impressive stream I've ever seen – high, barren banks with little more than a trickle of dirty water between them. The town is called Matamaros and is a busy traffic-ridden city like Brownsville. I promptly got lost, of course, and wound up driving through an endless slum on a very narrow street with three lines of traffic. I found I was getting more and more anxious, which finally became so acute it was actual fear.<sup>33</sup>

Judging by many other similar sentiments in her letters, it may be assumed that Spiker was relieved to return to MDI. There she could make a difference to her surroundings while being safe, and perhaps she had outgrown the recklessness necessary to endure the drawbacks that come with adventure and spontaneity.

Nevertheless, her work on Mount Desert continued to be invaluable for many more years. She remained devoted to the fight for a better world, until her death on November 5, 1995. Her long-time friend and neighbor, Louise Gilbert, had died in 1994, after which Spiker suffered her first stroke. Her determination to continue smoking eventually took its toll, and her last remaining dog, Jenny, was perhaps the closest friend to survive her. It sounds like a lonely end, but Spiker was greatly admired on Mount Desert, which had by that time been her home for over twenty-five years. In MDI she had found a place where she was welcomed and loved, at least by the majority, and here she will always be remembered. She died at the age of 83, as true to her principles then as she had been in 1950:

I believe, and shall continue to believe, that the American people will learn how to preserve peace and will create a life in which there is real equality and an opportunity to live kindly and happily together.<sup>34</sup>

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## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> LaRue Spiker, "One Alone," in *Trailer Topics – The Magazine of Mobilehome Life* (December 1959), 77.
- <sup>2</sup> Bachelor of Arts Diploma, granted by the University of Minnesota on December 21, 1933.
- <sup>3</sup> Master of Arts Diploma, granted by the University of Chicago on August 23, 1940.
- <sup>4</sup> Nan Lincoln, obituary for LaRue Spiker in *Bar Harbor Times* (November 9, 1995).
- <sup>5</sup> Hugh Brogan and Addison Wesley Longman, *The Longman History of the United States of America* (Essex, UK: Addison Wesley Longman Limited, 1999), 596.
- <sup>6</sup> LaRue Spiker to Maurice Hunt, administrator of the Indiana Department of Welfare (July 10, 1950). Mimeograph copy of statement regarding Spiker's conduct in relation to the Stockholm Resolution and the Civil Rights Congress, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>7</sup> LaRue Spiker and Iola Klaas, statement regarding events that took place on July 6, 1950, signed July 24, 1950, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>8</sup> Maurice O. Hunt, to LaRue Spiker. Formal notification of Spiker's dismissal from the Indiana Department of Public Welfare, July 11, 1950, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>9</sup> LaRue Spiker to Angus Cameron, December 5, 1956, asking Cameron to look over the *Mantle of Elijah* script. Spiker gives an account of previous criticisms of the novel, and some information about her own background.
- <sup>10</sup> *The Louisville Pattern - Excerpts from the Official Transcript, Jefferson County Grand Jury Investigation, September, 1954, into an Explosion at the Home of Andrew Wade IV*, foreword.
- <sup>11</sup> LaRue Spiker to Angus Cameron, December 5, 1956, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> LaRue Spiker to Angus Cameron, January 10, 1957. Spiker encloses the *Mantle of Elijah* manuscript, and looks forward to Cameron's suggestions, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>14</sup> LaRue Spiker to Jack Rinehart, October 30, 1956, thanking Rinehart and co-worker Jean Crawford for their comments on *Mantle of Elijah*, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>15</sup> LaRue Spiker to Marcella Powers, October 30, 1956, requesting Powers read over Spiker's *Mantle of Elijah* manuscript, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>17</sup> LaRue Spiker, "Green Factories," in *The Garden Journal of the New York Botanical Garden* (New York: The New York Botanical Garden), 19.
- <sup>18</sup> LaRue Spiker, "The Vanishing Herb Gatherer," in *The Courier-Journal Magazine* (January 6, 1957), 28.
- <sup>19</sup> LaRue Spiker, "Integration of the South: Two Women of Kentucky," in *The Commonwealth* (February 8, 1957), 484.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>21</sup> LaRue Spiker, "Philadelphia - Peace, Patriots and Pretzels," personal manuscript prior to publication, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>22</sup> Charles E. Durham to LaRue Spiker (February 24, 1961). Durham accepts Spiker's Philadelphia article for publication in *Trailer Topics Magazine*, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>23</sup> Charles E. Durham to LaRue Spiker (October 5, 1961), collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>24</sup> LaRue Spiker to Charles E. Durham (March 11, 1962), collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>25</sup> LaRue Spiker to Joseph Lyford (undated). First draft of the letter, with several corrections, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>26</sup> Frances W. Knickerbocker, to LaRue Spiker (July 5, 1962), collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>27</sup> "Environmental Quality" was a term used by the League of Women Voters, and was Spiker's specific area of expertise as a board member.
- <sup>28</sup> LaRue Spiker, "Experimental Salt Marshes To Be Built In Harrington," in *Ellsworth American* (May 1, 1975).
- <sup>29</sup> Information gathered from the MDI League of Women Voters Bulletins.
- <sup>30</sup> LaRue Spiker, "A Question of Harmony" reader's copy for the slide show, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>31</sup> LaRue Spiker, "Sue: The Snob of the Sea Gulls" (undated), personal manuscript, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>32</sup> LaRue Spiker, personal manuscript with header: "For Immediate Release from Richard Stetson, chairman, Publicity Committee, Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society."
- <sup>34</sup> LaRue Spiker to Louise Gilbert (1986). Letter written from Tivoli, Texas, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.
- <sup>35</sup> LaRue Spiker to Hans W. Buchinger (September 3, 1950), thanking him for his letter of support regarding Spiker's dismissal from the Indiana Department of Welfare, collection of the Mount Desert Island Historical Society.