

Rachel Carson, 56, Dies of Cancer; Wrote Controversial 'Silent Spring'

SILVER SPRINGS, Md. (UPI) —Arthur-scientist Rachel Carson, a gentle, shy woman who stirred a mighty storm with her pen, died yesterday of cancer at the age of 56.

Miss Carson's controversial 1962 best-seller, "Silent Spring," spurred the Federal Government to action with a warning that man was poisoning his world with pesticides.

She touched off a Senate investigation and a Government crackdown on pesticide use. She said that wholesale use of chemical pesticides already had caused "severe, and in some cases catastrophic" losses of wildlife, and asserted that human lives were threatened, too.

Two Eulogies

Interior Secretary Udall and Sen. Ribicoff, D-Conn., who spearheaded the Senate study of pesticide dangers, eulogized Miss Carson last night.

"Rachel Carson was the kind of woman who makes men proud, a scientist of rare courage and ability and a world-renowned author whose eye was trained to destiny of generations she would never see," Udall said.

Ribicoff said Miss Carson, more than any other single person, was aware of the "great changes taking place in our environment. Rachel Carson alerted the entire world to the hazards that were being created by man changing the natural processes of nature."

"Silent Spring," the fourth and last of Miss Carson's books, led to a special study by the late President Kennedy's Science Advisory Committee. Its report, is-



RACHEL CARSON

sued in May 1963, warned that the natural environment is suffering "increasing contamination" from chemical poisons widely used to control plants and insect pests.

Among other recommendations, it urged an orderly reduction in

the use of such pesticides as DDT that leave long-lasting residues in the air, soil and water.

Miss Carson's death came on the eve of renewed hearings by Sen. Ribicoff's subcommittee into massive fish kills on the lower Mississippi River basin. Several chemical poisons, including some named in "Silent Spring," have been mentioned in connection with the fish kills.

Battle With Cancer

Miss Carson died after a long battle against cancer. Surviving are an adopted son, Roger Christie, 12, and a brother, Robert M. Carson of Damascus, Md.

Funeral arrangements were incomplete.

Besides "Silent Spring," her books, all well-known, were "Under the Sea Wind" (1941), "The Sea Around Us," for which she won the 1951 national book award, and "The Edge of the Sea."

Was Pa. Native

Born in Springdale, Pa., she took a bachelor of arts degree from the Pennsylvania College for Women in 1929 and a master's from Johns Hopkins University in 1932. She taught marine biology and zoology at the University of Maryland and at Johns Hopkins.

She joined the Federal Government in 1936, became editor of the Fish and Wildlife Service in 1949, and resigned in 1951 to devote full time to writing and research.