DR. M. C. CRANE WELL KNOWN IN TORRANCE IS HERO WHEN QUAKE DEALS DEATH IN JAPAN

Dr. M. C. Crane, well known in Torrance and owner of considerable property here, was one of the outstanding heroes of the Japanese earthquake.

Dr. Crane, a great personal friend of M. L. May of this city, is doctor on the ship "Java Pacific Lijn." A letter written by the captain of the ship, F. Van Schermbeck, details the heroism of Dr. Crane at Yokohama. The letter follows:

"September 25, 1923.

"Do you know how proud I am, and why? Come here then and do listen. Just because I am the Commander of "Mike" C. Crane; and not only his Commander, but that he thinks me worthy of being his friend.

"His dear little wife in California will have the fullest right to be the proudest woman in the United States. When the story of Yokohama is written she'll know, for I was there from the beginning and saw everything myself and can tell the people about it.

"Do you know that the first and only First Aid Station in Yokohama was run by an American with a very big heart and that American boy was Dr. M. C. Crane?

"He was there already at 3:30 p. m. on the first of September, when Yokohama was burning like hell and the earth still quaking.

"Do you have any idea what that First Aid Station was like? Let me tell you. A piece of broken wall lying in a broken-up street near the shore, opposite what used to be the Grand Hotel—an old suitcase full of instruments, bandages, splints, etc. and all the flames, heat and smoke suffocating you, and "Mike' making things worse with his eternal Camel cigarette, his nice hair blowing about his head in the storm, and he himself as cool as a cucumber, working as though he was in the best outfit on earth.

"I am glad I was there to see him. A REAL HE-MAN. Wouldn't have missed that sight for a million dollars. You don't know how I love him!

"Never a moment afraid, just doing and working. The whites of his eyes all burned red. Working the whole day and night by the light of the burning town. Never tired, never cross, always something nice to say to the patients, keeping their spirits up, and some needed it badly. Helping everybody who came, Japs, Europeans, Chinese, Americans.

Would Tell World

"If I could only get the truth in your country's papers. The STATES should know his name.

"The other ships' doctors worked hard, too, but it's quite something else working safe on board of your ship, than in that raging hell-fire. And always those horrible quakes. Doctor nearly lost a little Jap boy with an awful scalp wound which he was sewing, in one of the cracks of the earth. It started to quake again and the little Jap slid down, but "Mike" grabbed him by the scruff of the neck and pulled him to safety again.

"Do you know I was nearly finished? You know Holland never goes wiggle, waggle, wiggle under your feet, and I sure hate the feeling. But seeing dear old Doctor so cool at work I simply couldn't funk. We could do so little—we are only sailors and all we could do was bring the doctor bad cases, and the boys worked him hard enough.

"I have never seen so many bones set as Doctor Crane set that first night. How many I don't know. Only I wondered where in H—— does he get all the splints from. And bad cases he had, too. For instance, a lady with a broken collar bone, a broken arm, two broken legs and two smashed feet. And she pulled through. Do you know it was glorious to live and see "Doc" work. For five days he worked constantly and then we had about a thousand refugees, so until we reached Kobe he had no rest.

Many Wounded

"Lots of them were wounded, too. Love "Mike"? Just adore him, I do. He is a Man. And his sons may be proud of having such a father. The Chinese refugees on board just love him too. We had not a single death on board, but one baby born.

"I can't very well describe the scene. I saw too much. But the first quake lasted three minutes and every house came tumbling down. The clouds were about 300 feet high and it was blowing a storm—then Hell broke loose over Yokohama. I told "Doc" to make ready to go ashore, while I made the ship safe. I was afraid of a tidal wave and we were anchored so close to the breakwater that I moved the ship out farther. At two o'clock we started ashore in our motor boat. It blew very hard and we shipped many a sea before we got inside the breakwater. First it seemed to me the drydock was the only place to land, but people said we couldn't get into town that way so we went back. Trying to get to the Bunt, we found burning oil on the water and a lot of burning wreckage. I asked "Doc" if he was game to go through that. My! I never saw him so disgusted with me before. So through we went. It luckily didn't last long. I was afraid of our gasoline tank, you know.

Swims to Ships

"The first man we met was an American swimming out to the ships. He didn't want to come in the boat but told us to go to the Bunt and get there quick. When we arrived everybody was breast high in the water. The Bunt has a high wall and the wind blew the smoke and flames over it, so the people had just a little place where they could breathe back of the wall. If you were "plugged" (you see my American language improves already) and you had to breathe through your mouth—it was like sucking in fire. In less than no time we had our boat filled with women, cripples and children, and then for the nearest steamer, "Doc" doing dressings all the way. Mr Barnes, fourth officer, stayed in the water with the crowd to gather the women, children and cripples together and to give the people confidence of our return. And thus the work began.

"After the third trip we got help from the British steamer, the Bengloe. They lowered a lifeboat under command of their First Officer Drummond, as white a man as I ever saw. We towed that boat all day and night and it made the saving go much quicker. There were times we had seventy aboard each boat. It was glorious work and it made me real glad to live.

Terrible Sight

"Conditions on land were horrible. I went ashore as soon as I could to search for our agent and our consul. To breathe through your mouth was agony. Where there was an open space, people sat crowded. The churchyard saved many. Every building was down and burning and hundreds of people electrocuted by the fallen wires. Oh, the horrible stench of burning flesh! And the poor kiddies! Do you know what a railroad accident is like to the people with broken limbs when the cars start burning? There it was a whole city with half its population under the debris and they saw the fire coming.

What struck me most was the behavior of the woman. The one word SPLENDID! No crying; resigned; helping wherever they could. And many had seen their own children burn before their eyes. And that is all I can tell you—a beautiful city laid low.

"I wish I was back in San Francisco sitting in my cabin with the doctor and a few other friends. That might help to forget it all for a time at least. Am glad we were spared to do our part.

"Best wishes until I come to America.

"CAPTAIN 'FLIP,'
"(Van Schermbeck.)"

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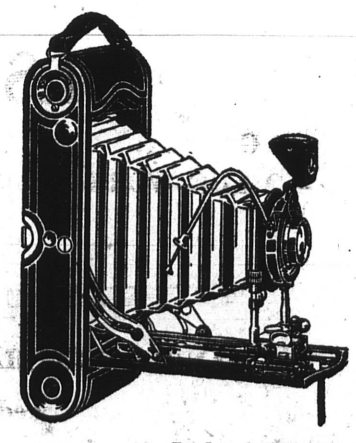

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