



Chilton Crane



Chilton Crane ('38) died on August 2, 1999, after a protracted illness. Born in Richmond, Massachusetts in 1912, the son of a Congregational minister, Dr. Crane's elementary education was carried out at home by his parents. He attended boarding school at Fessendon and Phillips Andover Academy. After graduating from Yale ('34) and Harvard Medical School ('38) with an Internship at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Chilton immediately enlisted in the Harvard Medical School Unit, that was later divided into two sections, one of them, of which Dr. Crane was a member, serving in the South Pacific.

Dr. Crane's wartime service was long, arduous, and dangerous. He served for 33 months in the Southwest Pacific. He was promoted to the rank of Major, was awarded two Bronze Stars, and took command of the Fifth Portable Surgical Hospital. This hospital was attached to various battalions and regiments of the 32nd and 41st Infantry Divisions which were in active combat in Northern New Guinea and the Islands of Morotai and Layte.

After the war, he returned to Harvard and the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, where he served until his retirement.

Chilton Crane was the quintessence of the careful, competent surgeon and teacher of surgery. He dealt largely with disorders of the blood vessels. His principal satisfactions were in the welfare of his patients, and in assisting interns and residents with their early learning process in the operating room. The many generations of surgeons that came under his sway held him in their highest esteem as a teacher of the precise manual skills and detailed anatomic rearrangements that characterize surgery of the blood vessels. In 1948 he was appointed Director of the Vascular Division.

Over the next half-century Dr. Crane conducted a large practice in general and vascular surgery, and was very active in teaching students, interns, and residents, both in the operating room and on rounds and in seminars. He was the senior editor of the second edition of Warren's "Atlas of Procedures in Vascular Surgery."

He was also active in surgery and teaching at the West Roxbury Veterans Administration Hospital, where he was appointed Chief of the General Surgical Service. He guided young persons in their clinical work and assisted with the teaching of physical diagnosis. While many of his students were entering fields other than surgery they were inspired by his attention to both the medical and emotional needs of his patients.

Chilton Crane married Louise Penhallow in 1947. They had six children, five of whom survive him: Nathaniel Sherburne Crane of Tuftonboro, NH, Mary Chilton Crane of Dover, MA, Elizabeth Warner Crane of Scottsdale, AZ, Anne Crane Kirby of Brookline, MA, Sarah Crane Chandler of Sterling, MA. Their son, William Merriam Crane, II, died in 1982. They had six grandchildren. The Crane home in Dover was a hospitable rallying place for students and residents on many occasions.

Many memories of Chilton Crane will persist, including his careful and gentle manner with patients, his self-effacing modesty, his never-failing wry humor, his gentlemanly ways, and above all, his personal teaching of the skills of surgery. He placed a certain stamp of friendly excellence on everything he did. He leaves behind many surgeons in practice over the face of this country who are more expert, gentle, and effective in dealing with the intricacies of medical and surgical care, because of their tutelage under Chilton Crane.

Respectfully submitted,

Francis D. Moore, *Chairperson*

Ernest M. Barsamian

Nathan P. Couch

Nicholas L. Tilney

Leroy D. Vandam

H. Brownell Wheeler

Anthony D. Whittimore