JAPAN FOCUSES WORLD GAZE ON 'UNSUNG TOILERS' BY DECORATING QUIET AMERICAN WOMAN TYPIST

Land of Rising Sun Singles Out Mrs. Lillian Wenz, Who for 17 Years Has Been Stenographer at Embassy in Washington

IS FIRST NATION TO SHOW APPRECIATION FOR SIMPLE LABOR DONE DURING PEACE

Value of Usually Submerged Cogs in Great Machine Is Stressed-Wrote Speeches for Envoys to Arms Parley

A FTER entering virtually all other fields of masculine endeavor women A are now coming into their own in the field of foreign decorations. And in peacetime.

Few, indeed, are the men who give such distinguished service during peacetime that foreign nations feel called upon to honor them by special wards. But for a woman to receive such an award is unprecedented.

For royalty, presidents of republics, statesmen, soldiers and diplomats it is always more or less open season for foreign decorations.

For ordinary clerical workers, hidden away in the vast machinery of governmental offices, however, it is not.

And for that reason official Washington, the center of the Nation's bureaucracy, sat up and gasped a week or so ago when it was officially announced that Mrs. Lillian Wenz, American citizen, stenographer, had been awarded the Japanese Imperial Order of the Sacred Treasure. ceived by Ulysses S. Grant on his

Who is Mrs. Wenz? Official Washington knew little of tour of the world. her despite her seventeen years of Then in private life there are the faithful service as an employe at the men who have been honored for dis-Japanese Embassy. In fact, it knew tinguished service. her better as one of the vast number of quiet, efficient workers who toiled of the telephone, who died recently, endlessly through the Arms Con- received from the French Governference.

Kingdom of Rising Sun Pays Honor to Fair Sex

Far more significance than the American public has had cause to realize is attached to the Imperial Japanese award, because Japan is one of the few nations that have a special award for women.

In most countries the same type of decoration does for both men and women. The incident was all the more notable because the object of this honor was a foreigner to Japan and because her performance was neither spectacular nor heroic.

Even during the war foreign decorations were rare and strictly of a military character, especially authorized by Congress to be received



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HONOR TO MRS. WENZ ALL MORE NOTABLE BECAUSE SHE IS A FOREIGNER TO JAPAN

"Mine Is Just a Modest Place, and I Cannot Talk About My Work," Explains Stenographer Diplomatically; Perhaps That Touch Impressed Peace Delegates

guage," Mrs. Wenz said. "I can ceive an annuity upon retirement, and Army at the front. count in Japanese. That is about

all." This action of the Japanese Government toward one of its employes is so ment confers no special mark of disunusual that it is causing Congressmen tinction. and other officials at Washington to think. It has emphasized that Uncle Sam's Government does little enough toward recognizing long and distin-

guished service of its employes.

then it is 30 per cent of the average annual salary for ten years. The other Army toward winning the war is congrades range to those who have served spicuous," her citation reads, "and the

During the World War and since, Uncle Sam has decorated but thirtcen women of this country for the part they played in it. It is said that some twenty

men foreigners have been decorated.

None was for service of the typist-ste-

"I can't read or talk the lan- been in the service fifteen years to re-] the part she played with the Salvation "The contribution of the Salvation

thirty years or more. But the Govern- results obtained were due in marked degree to the great executive ability of its commander.

> Dr. Anna Shaw Given Medal for War Work The late Dr. Anna Howard Shaw was

awarded the medal for meritorious and conspicuous services as chairman of the Woman's Committee of the Council of National Defense.

"She co-ordinated the mobilization and organization of women throughout the country," it is stated. "in every phase of war work, including the se-curing of women for some of the va-rious branches of the army."

Then there is the case of Mrs. James S. Cushman, 600 Lexington avenue, New York, "for exceptionally merito-rious and conspicuous service as chair-man of the War Work Council of the Y. W. C. A."

In the work of the Red Cross the D. S. M. was awarded to Miss Julia Stinson, of New York, for exceptional devoto duty while she was chief nurse of the American Red Cross in France,



as provided by the Constitution. Though rare, considered in respect to total numbers engaged, they were many compared to what this country had known before.

While military men were the ones chiefly rewarded, some of the officials visiting Europe after the war, and some of those who during the war organized the forces and munitions in America, were singled out for tokens of esteem.

Many remember how former Secretary of the Navy Daniels dodged the British officials who were seek-

work of the American Navy. Foreign royal decorations have never been publicly popular in the United States. When our forefathers left behind for all time.

stitution says:

any present, emolument, office or ernment of Japan. title of any kind whatever from any Only her case is so different-so

princely tokens from abroad. They United States. have always been men of note, however; men who had distinguished themselves as officers in the public service or as private citizens who,

of the people. Gifts Usually Were Given

to Smithsonian Institution

swords, jewels, medals and badges as to warrant the decoration.

seum and other public places. the Orient to the New World. muvenirs of swords and medals re- ployed.

Eva Booth, given D. S. M. for war work

Alexander Graham Bell, inventor

ment the Volta prize of 50,000 francs (\$10,000) for discovering the princiing to express through a decoration ple of electric transmission of upon him their appreciation of the speech. Later he was decorated as an officer of the Legion of Honor of

France. Thomas Alva Edison, years ago, launched the new order of things was made a Chevalier of the Legion they decided that the country would of Honor of France and later a be better off if regal splendor were Commander. He was also the recipient of the insignia of a grand

Section 9 of Article I of the Con- officer of the Crown of Italy. Such honors as these do not fall "No title of nobility shall be within the inhibition of the Consti-

granted by the United States; and tution, for they were not officials of no person holding any office of profit the Government. And this is true or trust under them shall, without of the decoration for Mrs. Wenz, the consent of Congress, accept of whose employment is by the Gov-

king, prince or foreign state." vastly different-from those of Bell A rigid observance of this man- and Edison. The Japanese Governdate explains the absence of marks ment might have found scientists of royal patronage. On a very few and other distinguished men upon occasions, before the World War, whom to confer honors had it been "Americans have been recognized by seeking to bolster its prestige in the

Prepared English Speeches for Japanese Delegates

Instead, a woman typist and ste- America. It has been in this knowlthrough invention or discovery, have nographer was chosen. Her work, of edge that she has been of greatest tion far ahead of the main advance acter. It has been steadfastly en- have come here to take up with the quests. gaged in for seventeen years, and United States weighty problems of Is a Real Diplomat

has been of great assistance to the immigration, commerce and dis-Japanese diplomats and officials in armament. the Embassy. The dispatches from

Officials who have received gifts Tokio said she had helped them in or decorations by consent of Con- the preparation of their English gress usually have turned them over speeches and correspondence-yet to the public, treating them as hav- she does not talk their languagecluding some of the most powerful ing been presented to the people in- and that after the Washington Arms stead of their individual representa- Conference her services were contives personally. Thus will be found sidered to have been so meritorious done

of sundry descriptions in the Smith- Mrs. Wenz is extremely modest Monian Institution, the National Mu- about discussing her honors. Her sometimes called Sanctified Treas-

the Japanese Government to Com- were brought to an end. It was at as a great distinction. mander Perry, who, in 1854, opened the suggestion of Durham White It- is not surprising that Mrs. Stevens, then American counselor Wenz does not care to discuss it or ington and received her schooling in for her as for any other citizen of

years of service. She feels that her that to hold the place of confidence her word for it.



Madame Curie, discoverer of radium, honored by French Government after years of disregard for her achievements

Her work has been such as would relations with the Embassy always naturally draw her into an intimate have been those of confidence and knowledge with Japanese affairs, that the special recognition does not warrant her departure therefrom, and in particular their relation to even to the extent of talking about the diplomats she has met and her planted the standards of civiliza- course, has been of an unusual char- usefulness to the diplomats who experiences in carrying out their re-

in Discussing Work

"Mine is just a modest place, and In the Arms Conference she was I cannot talk about my work," she able to help assemble data and or- explained diplomatically when revanize the work in such a way as to quested to tell something of the last impress the visiting diplomats, in- seventeen years.

Perhaps it was that touch of men of Japan. When they returned diplomacy that impressed itself upon home they remembered what she had the grizzled diplomats who came to and distinction she has just received The Order of the Sacred Treasure, ence.

"It was the bigness of the Jap-



Mrs. James S. Cushman, given D. S. M. for her war activities

Washington for the Arms Confer- would require a thorough familiarity trations. with the language of Nippon.

about discussing her honors. Her ure, is one of the few Japanese anese Government," continued Mrs. doesn't know a thing about the Jap-The contrary is true-that the At the institute, for instance, may bassy began in 1905, the year hos- orders that provide for women's Wenz, "that made it possible. It is anguage, unless it be a few be found a token of the esteem of tilities between Russia and Japan recognition. It is regarded in Japan so big and I am so small that there words she has picked up here and forty years. Their only hope is that is really nothing for me to say." there. To carry on a conversation Mrs. Wenz is a native of Wash- in Japanese would be about as hard Among public collections are the to the Embassy, that she was em- the experiences of her seventeen this country. One would suppose the United States if one is to take



commissioned and given medal for her war work



Miss Hannah Patterson, another woman decorated by U. S.

and to Miss Mary Vall Andress, 1072 Park place, Brooklyn, for organizing Red Cross work at Toul, France. The Distinguished Service Medal for similar reasons was given to Miss Edna

M. Coughlin, Miss Dora E. Thompson, Miss Jane A. Delano, Miss Maud Clevenographer character, such as rendered land and Miss Hannah J. Patterson, by Mr.J. Wenz. ten in all.

The nearest approach to it was the The Distinguished Service Cross was award of a Distinguished Service Medal awarded to three members of the army to Grace D. Banker, Signal Corps, of nurse corps: Miss Helen G. McClel-227 Van Houten avenue, Passaie, N. land, Miss Beatrice MacDonald and J. She had charge of the telephone Miss Isabella Stanbaugh, for "bravery system of the American Expeditionary in action." Force in France. Her citation records Congress has never authorized any

medal or decoration distinctly for "By untiring devotion to her exact. women. Those authorized for men have about the failure of the Government to ing duties under trying conditions she been conferred on both. Great Britain, provide sufficient salaries for exports did much to assure the success of the France, Germany, Japan and some other and officials who have performed long telephone service during the operations countries all have orders especially for

salient and to the north of Verdun." whim or policy of changing adminis-trations. Women of the country will appress trations. Women of the country will appress ate the recognition of Japan to Mrs. Wenz, in the belief of Alice Paul, head of the National Woman's Party. "I think it was perfectly splendid," in line at the headquarters of the First was her comment "I think it was perfectly splendid,"

Ariny in the German city of Cobienz

Senator Sheppard, of Texas, believes and received from Lieutenant General the action of the Japanese Government

they may draw money to keep body and soul together in their old age. There are six grades of those who may receive annuities. One must have

Grace D. Banker, chief telephone operator for A. E. F., who was awarded D. S. M.

this :

Much has been said in recent years

scores, if not hundreds, of employestypists and stenographers-who have been in the service twenty, thirty or forty years. Their only hope is that if they can fight it out to the retire-more than a year of oversens service as "It would be well," he said, "to look"