It is with sadness and regret that we speak of the passing of Dr. Frank Randall Teachenor who died suddenly November the twenty-eighth in Kansas City, Missouri at sixty-five years of age. He not only was one of the Middle West’s first citizens, but his achievements were well known throughout Canada and the United States. His awards and honors were many, but they were always unsought by Doctor Teachenor, who was a quiet, retiring and kindly man. His only ambition in his work was to help his fellow man, and he was always reluctant to accept any degree of fame for carrying out his appointed task. His great understanding of human nature
OBITUARY

and his endless devotion to his patients endeared him to the public and to the medical profession as well. To Doctor Teachenor each patient was a person and not a case history, and he was always deeply affected by their problems and by their suffering and sympathetically gave much of his own personal life towards the alleviation of the pain of those stricken and their families. He firmly believed in the principle of the Golden Rule, and at all times he practiced it and lived by it. This, in itself, is greatness.

Doctor Teachenor attended the University of Kansas School of Medicine, and following his graduation there in 1911, served for five years in training with Dr. Jabez Jackson. At this point his career was interrupted by the advent of the first World War, and he went into service with the Army and was stationed at Carlisle Barracks where he began his training in neurological surgery. While he was there he attended courses conducted by many of the country’s leading neurosurgeons before being shipped overseas to serve with the Army in France. Upon his return to this country he was assigned to duty at Camp Dodge where he spent six months on peripheral nerve surgery. In 1920 he returned to Kansas City, Missouri, to establish the first practice of neurological surgery in an area extending between St. Louis, Missouri and the West Coast. In addition to his own practice, Doctor Teachenor undertook the difficult task of educating and training other men in this comparatively new field. His vision and efforts resulted in the establishment of facilities for teaching and research, and after years of unceasing work he had firmly integrated his specialty into the medical and surgical needs of the area. Much of what Doctor Teachenor learned had to be done the hard way by his own initiative in self-teaching and home study, and it was by this means and without formal training that he acquired an excellent knowledge of organic neurology. He was also a great believer in visiting other clinics to study the newer techniques developed by his colleagues elsewhere. All of this was not easy, and his perseverance and his wholehearted devotion to the goal he had set for himself were commendable. Certainly his community and the neighboring states have always been grateful for the tremendous vitality and generosity of this great pioneer.

He was a past President of the Jackson County Medical Society, the Western Surgical Society, and the Harvey Cushing Society. He was also a member of the Society of Neurological Surgeons and the Southern Medical Society and was the Professor Emeritus of Neurological Surgery at the University of Kansas School of Medicine. At the time of his death he was serving as the Vice-President of the Missouri State Medical Association. In the last World War he served in an advisory capacity on the committee for Selective Service for physicians, dentists and veterinarians in Jackson County. Among his many awards were the American Legion Award in 1939 honoring his professional and community usefulness and the 1953 Award of Merit from the Jackson County Medical Society. He was a Diplomate of the American Board of Neurological Surgery, a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, and a member of Nu Sigma Nu and Alpha Omega Alpha medical fraternities.

All of these things Doctor Teachenor had accomplished under many difficulties and adverse circumstances. His personal life was one that was beset with tragedy and suffering. For a number of years he was the victim of one serious illness after another, but at no time would he consider leaving his work permanently, and as soon as his health permitted he would return to his patients, surgery and teaching. His often expressed wish was that he would never live beyond his work, and we are grateful that this was so for him. He was also a lonely man as he had been preceded in death
by his immediate family, his wife, Ethel Heath Teachenor, and his son, Richard Heath Teachenor. His own losses, instead of turning him to bitterness and self-pity, seemed only to increase his depth of compassion for those who sought his help.

Some of us were privileged to have worked with Frank Teachenor, some of us were privileged to have known him as a personal friend, and all of us are privileged to have had him as a member of the medical profession. Through the years that lie ahead, there will be numbers of unfortunate individuals handicapped by illness and disease whose lives will always be a little more privileged because this man’s life was given in the fullness of its time to his fellow men.

This is enduring greatness.

DONALD F. COBURN, M.D.