Doctor Nosratollah Ameli, M. B., CH.B. (Hons), CH.M. (Birm), F. I.C.S., F. R. C. S. (E) died on May 23, 2010 a few days before his 97th birthday, predeceased by his wife, Doris.

A renowned neurosurgeon with a solid training and many decades of service to his country of birth. He was born in 1913 in Gorgan, Northeast of Iran near the Caspian Sea, and could trace his ancestry to the famed 17th century scientist Sheikh Bahai of the court of Shah Abbas of the Safavid Dynasty. As a young man, the future doyen of Iranian neurosurgery, was among the few Iranians who availed himself of the limited educational opportunities available in his time by finishing the Dar-al-Fonoon School founded by the illustrious prime minister, Amir Kabir of mid nineteenth century. Ranking first in a highly competitive national examination under the auspices of the National Iranian Oil Company, he received a scholarship to study in England. He proved his academic mettle at Birmingham University by being awarded the Queen’s Scholarship for having achieved the highest average marks in the final examination in medicine.

Dr. Ameli received his medical degree in 1937 and promptly returned to Iran with Doris, his beloved British wife, to practice surgery in Tehran. He was appointed as surgeon and director of one of the first children’s hospitals established in Tehran. In due course Professor Ameli became a prominent member of academic and social circles of Iran. Prescient as he was, he saw not only the opportunities for academic surgery in Iran, but also the dire need for surgical specialties, in particular neurosurgery. He returned to England for specialty training in neurosurgery in 1950 at Queen Elizabeth Hospital of the University of Birmingham, under Mr. Brodie Hughes, the eminent professor of neurosurgery, and a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England (E). Upon returning to Tehran he was appoint-
ed as associate professor of neurosurgery at Tehran University School of Medicine, and subsequently full professorship in 1957. He soon realized that the existing administrative structure of Tehran University, initiated in the early 1930s and based on pre-World War French system, did not meet demands of modern medical education. Against all obstacles and entrenched resistance, he set out to launch a new type of medical educational system, based partially on British precepts. The result was that the Dariush Kabir Medical School as part of Tehran University was inaugurated in 1974 and Professor Ameli was appointed its Dean.

Professor Ameli’s wide ranging clinical and academic activities had started long before his deanship. He slowly began to be recognized nationally and internationally as a skilful neurosurgeon, and founder of academic neurosurgery in Iran. He pioneered hemispherectomy in the management of epilepsy and behavioral problem, acquiring international reputation in this field. This led to invitations as visiting professor in Europe and North America. He had already become a member of the Society of British Neurological Surgeons, the German Neurological Society, fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, American Society of Neurological Surgeons, Scandinavian Neurological Society, Egyptian Neurosurgical Society and a senior member of the Canadian Neurological Society. All this served as an impetus for establishing the Neurosurgical Society of Iran in 1965 and joining the world Federation of Neurosurgical societies in the same year, becoming its honorary vice president for a number of years thereafter.

Amongst his many scientific publications is a textbook on Hydatid Disease of the Nervous System in 1995, published in collaboration with Dr. K. Abbassioun, a prominent neurosurgeon in Iran.

Dr. Ameli and his wife preferred to live in Canada upon retirement, to be closer to his family, pursuing his wide ranging interests in non-surgical activities focusing in particular upon Middle Eastern history and archeology.

He is survived by his three children, Dr. F. Michael Ameli, Richard B. Ameli and Dr. Barbara C. Alexander, eight grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Professor N. Ameli was clearly a pioneer neurosurgeon of Iran, introducing this specialty into his native country, and perpetuating its principles and practice by training large number of neurosurgeons in Iran who continue to cherish his contributions and the setting of standards of his discipline in this part of the world.

Memorial Services were held in his honor at the Granite Club in Toronto, Canada on Friday, May 28th, 2010, where it was decided that contributions, if desired, could be made to the University of Birmingham Fund for Nosratt Ameli Neurosurgical Scholarship, and sent to 42 Hi Mount Drive, Willowdale, Ontario, Canada, M2K 1X5.

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462 Archives of Iranian Medicine, Volume 13, Number 5, September 2010