

HALL, Emmett

The Honourable Justice Emmett Hall was born in Saint Columban, Quebec, on November 9, 1898, and came to Saskatoon with his family in 1910.

His adult life was dedicated to the service to the people of Saskatoon, the Province of Saskatchewan and, truly, all of Canada.

The following is from his obituary in the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, dated November 14, 1995:

"Graduating from the College of Law at the University of Saskatchewan in 1919, he practiced Law in Saskatoon and was appointed Chief Justice of the Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench in 1957. In 1961 he was appointed Chief Justice of the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal and in 1962 was appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada where he served until his retirement in 1973. He went on to chair numerous Commissions (including the Royal Commission on Health Services which led to Canada's system of Medicare) as well as many Federal and Provincial Government inquiries and arbitrations. He was a Companion of the Order of Canada and received numerous awards, distinctions and honorary degrees, as well as serving as Chancellor of the University of Guelph and Chancellor of the University of Saskatchewan."



Emmett Hall is known for many achievements, but what he may be best known for is his study of Canada's health care system. Appointed by John Diefenbaker, the royal commission was charged with determining whether Canada should follow Saskatchewan in setting up a health care system funded by the government. It was his report on the issue that called for a universal medical care insurance system in Canada.

Another important issue that Justice Hall dealt with during his career was a judgement in the 1970s regarding a Nisga'a aboriginal claim, which opened the door to the official recognition of aboriginal land claims.

Emmett Hall died at his residence, Lutheran Sunset Home, on Sunday, November 12, 1995. His funeral was held at St. Paul's Roman Catholic Cathedral on Wednesday, November 15. The church was filled with those who had come to honour this fine gentleman. In his homily, Father Len Morand said that Emmett Hall "*served state and church without compromise*".

Hall's wife, Isabelle Mary, died in 1981. She and Emmett Hall are buried in the Roman Catholic Section of Woodlawn Cemetery, Block 1RA, Lot 25.

Material for this article taken from the *Saskatoon StarPhoenix*, November 14 and 16, 1995