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JOHN HALL

It is with sadness that we record the death of John Hall on 1 May 1992. He was a Fellow of St. John's College from 1955 (Senior Tutor from 1972 to 1983), a Lecturer in the Faculty of Law from 1956 to 1988, and had a long association with this Journal, serving on the Editorial Committee from 1962 to 1972 and again from 1983, for both periods as Note Editor. For several years *primus inter pares* as convenor of Note Editors he organised this important part of our work and set the highest standards for the Journal's case notes, while being most helpful with advice and encouragement to younger contributors.

Of the six articles contributed to this Journal by John Hall the best-known must surely be the timeless "Gift of Part of a Debt" [1959] C.L.J. 99, which begins disarmingly, "One can conceive of more exciting presents than part of a debt . . ." The well-worn pages of this article in volume 17 of the Journal in any library testify to the lasting value and attractiveness of John Hall's writing. He contributed over 50 case notes to the Journal covering an extraordinarily wide range of subject-matter, including contract, tort, criminal law, hire-purchase, land law, succession and conflict of laws. These case notes are a model for any contributor; concise and to the point and skilfully encapsulated within the prescribed word-limit. From 1970 he concentrated on family law, the study of which he pioneered in Cambridge: "Common Law Marriage" [1987] C.L.J. 106 was a recent article by him which attracted much interest, and the present volume includes two case notes (pp. 32, 37) and a book review (p. 386), the latest of his many contributions on this subject.

After his graduation and National Service (during which he was awarded the Stick of Honour as the first in his Officer Cadet class and served with the Royal Horse Guards in Germany), John Hall

qualified as a solicitor. He was proud to be a solicitor academic at a time when very few academics were solicitors and he did much to keep the Law Faculty in touch with the Law Society and its requirements. In 1970 he was appointed a Justice of the Peace on the Cambridge City bench (later merged into South Cambridgeshire); he took particular interest in the work of the Domestic Court, over which he presided enthusiastically for some years. Practitioners remember with apprehension that he, always *au fait* with the very latest decisions in family law, would refer from the bench to a recently reported case and feign shock that they did not know it. His magisterial work led to his appointment first as an assistant Recorder and then, last year, to be a full Recorder.

John Hall was a man of exemplary unselfishness and unstinted loyalty to the Law Faculty, his College, his pupils and his friends. As a don without family responsibilities he had an acute conscience about occupying a University Lectureship at a time when there seemed to be a shortage of academic posts for younger people, and this feeling increased when he was Senior Tutor of his College. He first assigned part of his salary to the Faculty and then wanted to retire from his lectureship to make room for a younger person, but was persuaded to delay doing so until he had reached the age of sixty. He then immediately gave up his University post, retaining his College lectureship.

John Hall's life was not untouched by tragedy but was illumined by the pleasure he took in his teaching and in his work in the Cambridge community, and also by his delight in the outdoors (he was a keen bird watcher and hill walker). We remember him with warm affection.