

Ex-state Justice Gallagher dies at 87

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Associate Justice Thomas F. Gallagher, 87, died early Sunday morning of natural causes at Abbott Northwestern Hospital. He had been hospitalized for one week with heart problems.

Gallagher served in the Minnesota Supreme Court for 24 years and ran for governor in 1938. Before retiring from the court in 1966, he participated in more than 4,000 decisions and wrote 600 opinions.

The late professor Brainerd Currie of Duke University Law School designated Gallagher, Harian Stone, Robert Jackson and Roger Trainor as among the modern justices whose work contributed to the enlightenment and the cause of justice and reason in the conflict of laws. Walter Mondale was one of Gallagher's law clerks while Mondale was in law school.

Gallagher was born Nov. 24, 1897, in Faribault, Minn., to Patrick James and Helene McCall Gallagher. He was graduated from Faribault High School in 1915 and received a B.A. from the University of Minnesota in 1919. In 1918 he left the university to enter the Army, serving in the artillery. After the Armistice he returned to the university and in June of 1921 earned a degree in Bachelor of Law Juris Doctor.

In 1921 he was admitted to practice in the Minnesota courts and later to all federal courts. He was a member of Alpha Sigma Phi, Phi Delta Phi legal and Scabbard and Blade military fraternity at the university.

Between 1921 and 1942, he practiced law in Minneapolis with John E. Tappan, founder of Investor Syndicate, now Investors Diversified Services, and on his own.

In the 1938 Minnesota primary election, he was nominated for the Democratic Party's candidate for governor.

Between 1939 and 1940, when Minnesota operated under a three-party system—Democratic, Farm Labor, and Republican—Gallagher led a drive for the merger of the Democratic and Farm Labor parties.

In 1940 he served as Minnesota delegate at large at the Democratic national convention in Chicago. He was elected associate justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court in 1942 and was reelected in 1948, 1954 and 1960. In the latter year, he received more than 1.1 million votes, than a record.

Gallagher was a member of the American, Minnesota and Hennepin County bar associations, the American Judicature Society and the Minnesota Trial Lawyers Association. In 1962 he served as president and director of the University of Minnesota Law School Alumni Association.

Gallagher is survived by his daughter, Sharon Walsh, and his sons, Thomas P. Gallagher and Michael J. Gallagher, both practicing lawyers, and Robert R. Gallagher, a specialist in herbal remedies, and 12 grandchildren. His wife, Elizabeth Jane, died in 1976. He

also is survived by a sister, Helen Traugher, and a brother, Robert Gallagher.

His funeral will be held at 10 a.m. Wednesday at St. Olaf Catholic Church in downtown Minneapolis. Visitation will be at 7 p.m. Tuesday night at Fill Brothers Funeral Home at 5801 Lyndale Av. S.