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Judge John C. Bell

Dicta Editorial Board

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long unsettled question would seem finally to be at rest, had not the Colorado Supreme Court said in *Ahearn vs. Goble*, 90 Colorado 173, "such an action against a corporate officer (failure to file a report) is for a debt." Seymour D. Thompson's theory seems thereby fully vindicated in this state.

Justice Buller's badinage, by reason of his high station, inspired awe as it grew older and what was originally a jest finally acquired the aspects of profound wisdom. Had a Justice of the Peace given such a construction to a statute it would have seemed irresistibly funny.

JUDGE JOHN C. BELL

One of Colorado's pioneer lawyers, Judge John C. Bell, a former congressman and said to be the father of the National Reclamation Bureau, died at Montrose on August 12 at the age of eighty-one years. He had been failing since suffering a stroke of paralysis some three weeks prior to his death.

Judge Bell came to Colorado in 1874 and became the first county attorney of Saguache County, then moved to Lake City, where he was twice mayor. Later he moved to Montrose and was elected in 1888 as judge of the seventh judicial district. He resigned that post in 1892 after being elected to congress from the old second district.

During his five terms in congress, Bell secured appropriations for the Colorado Springs federal building, opening of the southern Ute reservation for settlement, and also appropriations for the Uncompaghre reclamation project, the latter coming some years before the reclamation bureau was formed. The present reclamation law was copied from his bill.

In 1913, Judge Bell was appointed to the Colorado Court of Appeals, which later was abolished. He served for some years on the state board of agriculture, retiring at the expiration of his term this year.

He is survived by his widow; a brother, John Bell, and two daughters, Susan Bell Nickell and Mrs. John T. Stivers, all of Montrose.