

ROBERT S. BEAN

Judge Robert Sharp Bean was the second native son of Oregon to attain to the office of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He was Chief Justice from 1892 to 1896.

He was born in Yamhill county on November 28, 1854, his father, Hon. O. R. Bean, having crossed the plains to Oregon in the year 1852. In the year 1855 the family removed to Lane county, settling on a farm near the town of Eugene. On this farm Judge Bean passed his boyhood, attending common public schools and performing the ordinary duties of farm life until the year 1869, when he was sent to Christian College at Monmouth, where for four years he was the pupil of Prof. T. F. Campbell, one of Oregon's most noted pioneer educators. After graduating in 1873 he worked at the carpenter's trade for one year, when in 1874 he began the study of law under Attorney J. M. Thompson at Eugene. By diligent application he was qualified to be admitted to the bar in 1876 and immediately formed a partnership for the practice of law with Mr. Thompson. After practicing the law for a year he decided to supplement his miscellaneous education with a course at the new state university at Eugene, and accordingly entered that institution in the fall of 1877 and graduated in the year 1878, receiving degree of B. S. and LL.D., with the first class to receive diplomas from Oregon's state university. During the four succeeding years he devoted himself to the practice of the law.

In 1882 he received the nomination of the republican party for circuit judge in the second judicial district to fill the unexpired term of Judge J. F. Watson, who had become United States District Attorney. His first term of office expired in 1886, when he was renominated and reelected. In 1890, while having yet two years to serve as Circuit Judge, he was nominated and elected Justice of the Supreme Court. In 1894 he succeeded in regular rotation to the office of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, serving until 1896, when he was reelected for another term of six years. He was married in 1880 to the second daughter of the well known geologist, Prof. Thomas Condon, and five bright, energetic sons is the issue of the marriage.

In Judge Bean, the young men of Oregon had a constant example of what has been attained by earnest application, temperate habits, industry, honesty and steadfastness of purpose, supplemented perhaps in his case by special aptitude for acquiring legal knowledge -- an example of which his native state is deservedly proud.

In 1898 he was appointed regent of the state university at Eugene. In April 1909, he was appointed United States District Judge.

Judge Bean died January 7, 1931.