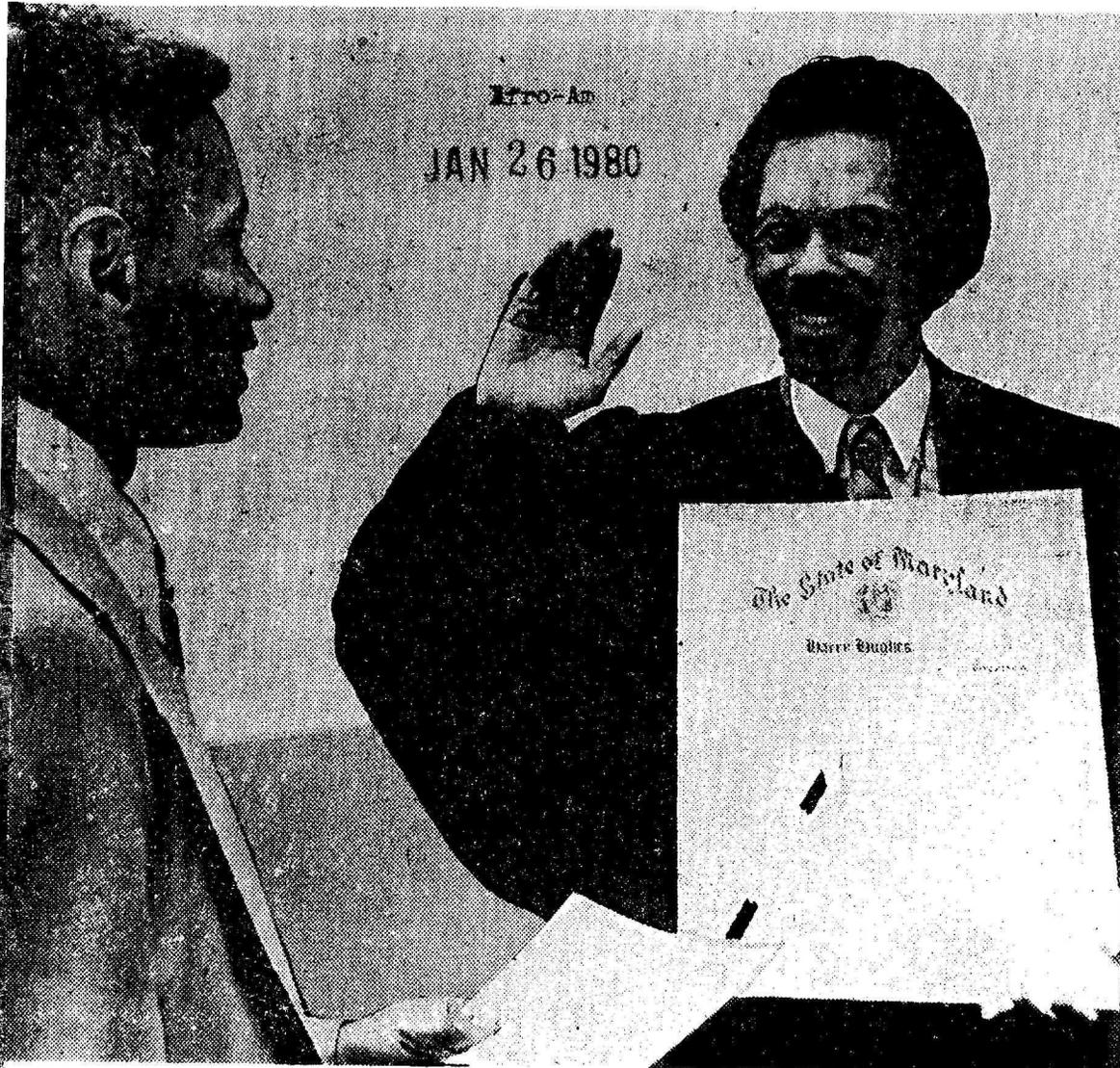


Youngest Supreme Bench judge ever sworn in



Superior Court Clerk William Allen administers oath of office to Judge Robert Bell.

Standing-room-only as Robert Bell dons new judicial robes

In January 1975, Judge Robert Mack Bell became the youngest lawyer in Maryland, ever to be appointed to a court in Maryland. At noon Tuesday, Jan. 22, the 36-year-old judge became the second youngest person to be appointed to the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City.

The 60 minute induction ceremony for Judge Bell was held in room 400 of the Criminal Court Building with a standing room

only host of friends and associates on hand. His seat on the bench was created by the Maryland General Assembly when it added an additional judgeship to the bench on July 1, 1979. After being administered the oath, by William Allen, clerk of the Superior Court, Judge Bell was robed by District Court Judge William H. Murphy Sr., and Mrs. Juanita Jackson Mitchell. He was escorted to the

bench by Judge Murphy, Mrs. Mitchell and his two brothers, Joe L. and Ellison Bell. Seated to the left of Chief Judge J. Harold Grady, Judge Bell first introduced his mother, Mrs. Rosa Lee Bell to the guests and said, "Without my mother, I would not be here. She has pushed, and pushed and pushed me. She is one strong black woman." He also spoke of Mrs. Mitchell and Robert B.

Watts, now a member of the Supreme Bench, who defended him when he was arrested at a sit-in protest at a restaurant almost 20 years ago.

Speaking of his years with the District Court Judge Bell said, "It is the court I cut my teeth on. While on that court, I learned a good deal about myself. I will miss the people who served in District Court, all of whom were so helpful.

"I am happy to have taken the oath today and I look forward to the challenge and opportunities the move presents. I expect the work will be challenging and I am aware of the increasing case load. I expect it to increase more in the eighties."

Judge Bell says his biggest challenge would be meeting the standards he has set for himself. "I've also tried to remember the purpose of any court is the achievement of absolute justice. I pledge myself to continue to serve the best way I know how."

Former Supreme Bench Judge Joseph C. Howard, who is now a Federal judge for Maryland and sponsor of Judge Bell stated, "Judge Bell is both popular and held in high esteem in the city. He will be leaving a position on District Court of Maryland and his colleagues will miss his services. Their loss, of course, is your gain. He brings a combination of commitment, capacity, courage seldom seen in a man of his years."

Judge Howard said he first met Judge Bell when he was a lawyer with Piper-Marbury's Neighborhood Law Office on Wolf and Monument Streets.

The Federal Court judge then shared some of the new Supreme Bench member's history and accomplishments with the audience.

Judge Bell graduated second in a class of 450 from Morgan State College in 1966. He

received his law school training at Harvard and graduated in 1969 with a B average. He is a member of the Junior Bar Association, Baltimore City Bar Association, Maryland State Bar Association, American Bar Association, Monumental City Bar Association and the National Bar Association.

Supreme Bench Judge Solomon Baylor welcome Judge Bell formerly one of his colleagues on the District Court bench, stating that "It is a rare occasion to find blended into one man, the natural brilliance, the degree of refinement, the congeniality, the capacity for hard work and the jovial attitude, such as exists in Judge Bell."

Judge Bell has been active in bar association activities and is a former board member of the AFRO - AMERICAN Newspapers, board member of Provident Hospital and several other boards.

Speaking on behalf of the Monumental Bar Association was Edward Smith, its president, who

said, "Every man and woman of the Monumental City Bar Association believes that Judge Bell exemplifies the highest traditions of compassion and humanity as a man and that he has an acute knowledge of the law coupled with consistency of purpose as a judge.

"It is totally fitting that a system of justice that denied him his own personal rights as an American citizen to sit at a lunch counter almost 20 years ago, now accepts him as an equal in one of its most esteemed positions. It is now totally correct that a community that he has served and loved will have the benefit of his compassion for his fellow man and his love of fairness for the parties in the legal arena."

The commission was read by Mrs. Harry R. Hughes, wife of the governor. Chief Judge J. Harold Grady stated Judge Bell is the 102nd judge to join the bench in its 113 years history. The chief judge also commented that Judge Bell despite his young years has already established a distinguished record of judicial service on the District Court of Maryland.

On behalf of the members of the Supreme Bench and the entire court house staff,

JAN 26 1980

1100-1a

ARDENT SUPPORTER — Judge William H. Murphy Sr. (R) has been long - time friend and supporter of Judge Robert Bell and was on hand for

ceremonies at Provident Hospital honoring the young judge. Judge Murphy is a member of the Provident board of directors.



BEST WISHES — Marilyn Brice and Veronica Transou extend will wishes to Judge Bell and his mother. Mrs.

Rosalee Bell at reception in his honor.