

RUBY CASE BAILIFF

Moving Right Veniremen To Court His Problem

Bo Mabray, bailiff in Judge Joe B. Brown's court, is proving himself an expert in logistics in handling prospective jurors for the Jack Ruby case.

His problem—getting the right venireman into the courtroom without delay from the sixth floor to the second floor and through the crush of reporters and photographers without mishap.

While Judge Brown holds court, the members of the jury panel spend their time in the Court of Civil Appeals on the sixth floor of the Records Bldg.

Flows of metal folding chairs are set up for their "comfort" as was done for the change of venue hearing for Ruby last week, when 17 witnesses occupied the same room.

To bring each prospective juror called for questioning to the second-floor court room, Mr. Mabray uses a field telephone to ring a sheriff's deputy assigned to duty on the sixth floor.

Members of the jury panel are assigned numbers for their order of appearance and Mr. Mabray calls the number he wants, and the deputy escorts the wanted veniremen by elevator to the second floor and through the

Photographers have been strongly cautioned not to photograph the prospective jurors on their way into court and reporters, under threat of being banished from the court house, have been told not to attempt to talk to members of the jury panel.

To avoid any delay in getting veniremen into the court room, Mr. Mabray keeps a backlog of about five waiting just outside the court room.

He has the first ones brought down before Judge Brown convenes court at 9 a.m.

Tuesday the bailiff placed two of the prospective jurors on a bench near the court room entrance with a deputy sheriff to watch over them. Three others were seated outside Judge Brown's regular court room, where the change of venue hearing was held.

The basic problem of Mr. Mabray is a matter of timing. He must judge by the way questioning is proceeding in the court room just how many veniremen he must keep on hand.

More than half of the veniremen who reported to the court of civil appeals Tuesday morning were released shortly after 10 a.m. with instructions to return in the afternoon. Following a lunch recess called by Judge Brown, some 50 of the panel were asked to remain and the rest were sent home to return at 9 a.m. Wednesday.