

RESERVE POLICEMEN

Phone Call, Note Halt OK for Juror

Viewers of Perry Mason, the television courtroom drama, would have felt right at home in Judge Joe B. Brown's courtroom Wednesday.

Defense attorney Melvin Belli was examining potential juror Jimmie Braswell, an Irving man who is an engineer for a trucking company.

Belli ran Braswell over the gamut of questions concerning his opinions, his knowledge of emotional and psychiatric problems and asked if the juror was familiar with psychomotor epilepsy, the disease with which Belli claims Ruby suffers.

"I'm familiar with some kinds of epilepsy, but not the kind you mention, Braswell replied.

"GOOD," SAID Belli as his questions got warmer and warmer.

"You would wait until you heard what the doctors said about Jack Ruby's state of insanity, would you not?" Belli asked.

"Right," said Braswell.

Big Joe Tonahill, Belli's assistant who had been missing throughout Braswell's testimony, lumbered back and handed Belli a yellow note (a la Perry Mason). Belli asked for a moment to read it.

Belli appeared surprised, and he asked Braswell if he had any law enforcement background.

Braswell said he had been a member of the Irving reserve police force since last July. And he had, in fact, guarded the Irving home of Mrs. Ruth Paine (where Marina Oswald and her children lived) the night after President Kennedy's assassination.

Braswell said he sat in a car across the street from 11 p.m. until 7 a.m. "It was no more stimulating than working traffic at a football game," he said.

Seven minutes later, after some perfunctory additional queries, Judge Brown dismissed Braswell.

TONAHILL SAID he had slipped out to telephone Braswell's cousin, Bob Braswell, in Jasper. "I had no idea what I'd find out," Tonahill said, "but you can say I'm glad I called."

Belli said, "We would have accepted him. I'm glad Joe came in at the right moment."

Dist. Atty. Henry Wade said he would have accepted Braswell, also.

The second witness after Braswell was Mrs. Gwen L. English, a 45-year-old bookkeeper who said "Perry Mason's one of my favorites."

Oddly enough, the third juror picked Wednesday also was a reserve policeman, at Grand Prairie.

The defense said J. G. Holton Jr., a 31-year-old mailman, was acceptable.

Belli and mates found out that Holton did more fishing than policing and he didn't even know where the Paine house was.

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-Dallas News Staff Photo by Jack Beers.

Visitor to the Jack Ruby murder trial gets once over thoroughy.

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