ASTUTE LEGAL MIND States Item 3/23/67

Haggerty Has Long Court Experience

The judge who will preside over the historic trial of Clay L. Shaw is a man who has had considerable experience as a prosecutor in criminal cases.

Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr., a jovial man who permits no nonsense in the courtroom, spent 11 years as an assistant district attorney under five DAs before he was elected to the Criminal Court bench in 1956.

During those 11 years, Haggerty was frequently in the various sections of the court as a prosecutor for the state. He is perhaps best known as the chief prosecutor in the famous Diddie Woolfolk Cooper murder trial in 1954.

AS A PROSECUTOR he was considered as tough as he is now regarded as a jurist.

His associates consider him an astute legal mind who is a stickler for order and decorum in the courtroom. It is safe to say that the trial of Shaw, indicted for conspiring to kill President Kennedy, will be conducted according to the same, strict guidelines set down by Judge Bernard J. Bagert in the preliminary hearing of Shaw.

Judge Haggerty got the Shaw trial by pure chance and the public allotment, ironically, was decided in the office of his father, chief clerk of the court Edward A. Haggerty Sr.

A set of paper "pills" was made up by the switchboard operators in the clerk's office representing the various cases accepted for trial yesterday and indictments returned by the grand jury.

These were divided into four classifications, according to the seriousness of the offense. Shaw's was a "Class 2" case, punishable by one to 20 years in the state penitentiary.

The "pills" were spilled out of an envelope and opened by the clerk and the order in which they were opened determined the section to which the case was allotted.

WATCHING THIS procedure this morning were four of Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's assistants — Alvin V. Oser, James L. Alcock, John Volz and Michael Karamazin. Two of Shaw's attorneys, F. Irvin Dymond and Salvadore Panzeca, also were on hand, as well as Judge Frank Shea, one of the eight Criminal Court judges who could have received the case.

When the allotment to Judge Haggerty was revealed, Judge Shea breathed a sigh of relief.

Judge Haggerty's Section "C" courtroom is a normal-sized courtroom and will present none of the seating problems encountered in Judge Shea's courtroom for the recent arraignment of Dean A. Andrews, who was indicted for perjury.

OUTSIDE his courtroom, the stockily built Judge Haggerty is a person who loves parties and will demonstrate his Irish tenor voice with little urging.

With the map of Ireland written all over his face, the judge normally takes an active role in St. Patrick's Day festivities and is usually seen marching in the annual parade.

Every year he hosts a Christmas party in his chambers for his staff and friends in the court building. Those who attend cannot remember a year when he has not sung "Danny Boy" at the party.

A NATIVE of New Orleans, Judge Haggerty was born in 1913 and graduated from St. Aloysius High School in 1932. He received his law degree from Loyola University in 1940 and two years later was appointed an assistant district attorney under the then DA J. Bernard Cocke by Attorney General Eugene Stanley.

He served under Cocke and four subsequent DAs, Leon D. Hubert, Severn T. Darden, Herve Racivitch and James O'Connor.

He left the district attorney's office in February, 1942, and served with the U.S. Navy for four years, then returned to the DA's office in January, 1946. While overseas with the Navy he participated in the invasions of Saipan and Tinian in the Pacific.

In 1956 he ran for judge of the Criminal District Court and won the vacancy caused by the retirement of Judge Fred Oser. In 1960 he was re-elected to a full term.

Judge Haggerty is married to the former Miss Yolande Millet.