

Shaw a Witness In City Court

By KENNETH GROSS

The lawyers fuss through the salmon-colored folders spread across the 15 foot table in the third floor courtroom of Manhattan Supreme Court, while the judge stifles a yawn and a man with silver-gray hair laboriously takes a stenographic record in longhand.

A single guard slumps in the vacant jury box and an attendant opens a window to let in some fresh air.

Behind an oaken guard rail, a massive figure—the witness—waits his turn in absolute silence, his eyes sometimes straying to the raised inscription behind the judge, "In God We Trust."

The witness has come from New Orleans at some inconvenience and expense and as he waits his turn, Clay Shaw remarks: "I guess I believe in justice."

Shaw is a witness in a suit against Tra-Mar, Inc., in which a realty company is suing to recover \$28,000 in brokerage fees. The brokerage firm was not licensed in New Orleans and it is the contention of the defendants that they are absolved from the agreement.

"But when you give your word," said Shaw, who was manager of the New Orleans Trade Mart at the time, "it ought to be kept."

Shaw was acquitted of conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy on March 1 after a 34-day trial in New Orleans. The charges brought by Dist. Atty. James Garrison claimed Shaw joined Lee-Harvey Oswald and others in a plot to murder the President in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963. The 12-man jury was out only 50 minutes.

Shaw is 56 years old. He stands 6 foot 4 and betrays no excess weight. He carries himself with enormous dignity and it is only after two martinis that he reveals the damage done by Dist. Atty. Garrison's attack.

"I'm looking for a job," said Shaw. "My savings, all my possessions, were eaten up by legal fees."

A few passersby recognize



Post Photo by Stein
CLAY SHAW

Leaving N.Y. Supreme Court.

Shaw's face and wish him luck or made some other friendly gesture.

"It's nice to be in New York where I'm not so easily recognized," he said. "Every one knows me in New Orleans."

And he guessed that Jim Garrison would win re-election come November.

"I don't hate him," he said. "Hate is a very corrosive emotion. It doesn't hurt the guy you hate much, but it sure can hurt you."

Shaw returned to the courtroom after lunch limping slightly, the result of a cracked vertebra during World War II. He chatted with the attorneys, then stared over past the guard rail to the witness chair, the judge's platform and jury box.

It was the first time he been in a courtroom since his own trial.

"You get flashbacks," he said in his soft southern drawl. "I can't help remembering when I was on the other side of that rail and how it felt. And now I wonder how many others. I knew there were individual cases in which there was a miscarriage of justice but now I wonder how many."

Shaw smoked his cigaret down to its mentholated filter. He smokes 40 of them a day. His suit is slightly out of style and the pride which he wears like armour wavered only when he asked if anyone knew about a job for a talented executive.

NY Post 5/27/69 p 8 C4

10/26/69

Dear Jerry,

The New York Post 5/27/69 clipping on Clay Shaw at the New York trial is like all the others in saying absolutely nothing about the litigation, even the litigants.

Apparently the suits was against Tra-Mer. This sounds as though it could be an abbreviation of Trade Mart, in which event Shaw might be a little less altruistic than he poses. There is no listing for Tra-Mer in the New Orleans phone book I have.

What interests me most about this suit is that it seems to be over a real-estate agent's claim of having rented space. For this, \$28,000 is a rather large sum. I also know that it is in this area that Shaw also committed perjury during his own trial.

So, I am interested in all I can learn about the NYC suit. Your own heavy schedule does not permit a trip to the court to check the records. But perhaps you know someone you could get to do this. What I'd like to know is the exact issue(s) in the suit, the full and proper names of the litigants on both sides, the period of time covered, the decision, etc. If the litigants are both corporations, whatever names connected with those corporations could be of value, as could the names and addresses of the witnesses on both side, and counsel. For example, if there is New Orleans counsel, I'd like to know his name, too.

This is a relatively simple matter. It will take more time to go to the court and find the records than abstracting this simple, basic information.

Oh, yes, if the suit specifies the space rented, I'd like to know to whom - the names of the occupants.

Enjoyed lunch with you and Trent. From then on I didn't have a ~~free~~ free moment. I just did make the train on returning. There were things I should have done that I didn't get to. Again thanks.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg