

# Lagniappe

By THOMAS GRIFFIN

RECESSES occur intermittently at the Clay Shaw trial and it's then the out-of-town press (newspaper, TV and and magazine writers) huddle in the corridors and ask each other the burning question, "What do you think?"

You'd be surprised what many of them think — which can't be published here because of trial guidelines. But they compare notes and exchange opinions in alternate serious and amusing miens. It's also obvious that new friendships are being formed among representatives of the rival media who are now in their fourth week in town. And would you believe how many out - of - town press people are covering the trial? I asked security officer "Chick" Moore to count the credentials for me. He did—and came up with 43.

Among that number is an old friend, Jerry Cohen, former city editor of The Item, now with The Los Angeles Times; and a new acquaintance, novelist Jim Kirkwood, who wrote the recent piece on Clay Shaw in Esquire and currently is covering for Playboy.



TOMMY GRIFFIN

JIM HAS a theatrical background; his mother was actress Lila Lee, his father was actor James Kirkwood Sr. His new novel, "Good Times, Bad Times" (Simon and Schuster), has been out only a month or two and he tells me it has been selected as an alternate choice for Book of the Month Club in March. It's also been sold to the movies.

Coincidentally, it concerns a murder case—and the protagonist's best friend in it is a New Orleans boy named "Jordan Legier." (How does that grab you?) But the story concerns boarding students in a prep school in New England and events leading up to the murder of the headmaster by one of the boys.

In the courtroom Jim laboriously makes notes of the testimony in longhand while many of the others jot down shorthand hieroglyphics in quick order. There are also a number of artists drawing sketches of the principals in the case, including the jury. One young fellow sitting next to me seemed to be quite adept at the task. I asked where he was from, and he said, "CBS St. Louis."

COURTROOM DRAMA, naturally, touches a bit on the

## Out-of-Town Media Is Well Represented

theatrical. Security is tight. Before entering the courtroom, one is frisked by a deputy, all the way down to his shoes, for weapons. Two deputies stand at the rail with their backs to Judge Haggerty's bench, eyes on the crowded courtroom. Two more deputies take observation posts along the walls of the side aisles and two more are at the back door.

There are microphones for all principals. One for the prosecution table, one for the defense, one for the witness stand and one for the judge. Amplifiers along the walls carry their voices clearly to the scribes. This is a great convenience in catching all the testimony and Judge Haggerty should be congratulated for permitting it.

JIM KIRKWOOD, in addition to covering for Playboy, has a commitment to expand the trial into a book for Simon and Schuster "if the testimony warrants it."

HITHER AND YON—Elva and Seymour Weiss dining in Pittari's Wild Game room after cocktailing at one of the festive parties of the season. (Seymour, ex-owner of the Roosevelt Hotel, commented, "I like to come here because I see so many of my former employes.") . . . Marion Crawford Adams, a transplanted Virginian, importing a Smithfield ham from the old country to entertain a couple of cousins, the Douglas Browns of Norfolk, and the David Potters of Palo Alto, at brunch. . . . Gretna attorney Bob Edwards, freshly appointed assistant DA in Jeff Parish, declaring it to be "a lifelong ambition of mine." . . . Josephine and Tom Pittari (the restaurateur) deciding to motor rather than fly on their current holiday "because we don't want to end up in Cuba." . . . Nine-year-old Bonnie Hess, the little queen of Carrollton (from Charity Hospital's children's ward), feted by a queen's luncheon at Delmonico, during which she was showered by gifts from every member of the krewe.

POTPOURRI—Phil Crosby, one of Bing's twins, here on a convention, dropped into Pete Fountain's and obliged the clientele with a couple of songs. . . . Actor Richard Lupino is lording it over the rest of the resident company of the Rep theater; he got the key to the city from Mayor Vic when he spoke at a Friends of the Library luncheon. . . . Miss Elizabeth Smith, who still holds a typographical union card, will be 99 years old in her wheelchair tomorrow; has a broken hip. . . . Bob Burkhalter bagged a Carrollton doubloon the easy way; one fell into his drink while he was watching the parade. . . . Actress Wilma Francis, due in from Hollywood tomorrow for the Big Windup; her nephew Al Salzer, producer of "House of Blood," checked in over the weekend.