

Long Files Suit Asking Separation From Wife

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — Louisiana Gov. Earl Long, battling for freedom from a state mental hospital, Thursday filed a court suit asking separation from his wife.

The suit, filed by Attorney J. B. Nesom, charged cruelty, desertion, abandonment and slander.

Mrs. Long twice signed papers committing the governor to psychiatric wards at Galveston, Texas, and Mandeville, La.

Mrs. Long, who filed the application asking the governor's confinement to the Southeast Louisiana (mental) Hospital last week, slipped out of the state Tuesday night for parts unknown.

The 63-year-old governor goes into court at Covington, La., Friday at 10 a.m., asking release from the hospital on grounds he was illegally committed.

Long and his wife recently celebrated their 26th wedding anniversary.

Nesom said the suit, filed before Family Court Judge Joe Sanders was "the first step toward a divorce."

The suit asking the separation has the effect of temporarily suspending Mrs. Long's status as the governor's wife, and also suspended her right to ask further commitment to any hospital should the governor be released from the hospital Friday.

Mrs. Long was part of the family faction that asked commitment of the governor to the mental hospital in Galveston May 29. Long contended he was forcibly removed from his mansion at Baton Rouge for the plane trip to Galveston.

Long contended earlier his wife was "the most jealous woman in Louisiana."

Earlier in the day, Long summoned the state hospital board into a special and secretive meeting Friday morning before the court hearing opens.

Board members, however, said they had not been informed of any such meeting.
