

# The 1930s & 1940s:

## A PLACE ON CAMPUS & WAR-TIME MINISTRY

The 1930s saw Father T. Lawrason Riggs '10 beginning a capital campaign to build a Catholic Chapel on Yale's campus. The funds were acquired by the late 30s and ground was broken on October 13, 1937. The Chapel was finished the summer of 1938.

The Chapel was designed by William Douglas of William Douglas Orr & Associates and reflected the architectural tastes of the day. Its exterior was Colonial Revival and its interior was decorated in the Art Deco style—a balance between tradition and modernity. Through the equally weighted presence of these two styles, Fr. Riggs '10 hoped that Yale students would notice how their Catholic faith and their secular studies informed each other.

The Chapel was finished in 1938 and dedicated on October 9th of that year. The original dedication date was September 25, 1938. This was postponed a month due to the highly destructive 1938 New England Hurricane. The October service was attended by members of both Yale University and the Archdiocese of Hartford.

The 1940s brought World War II and STM leadership began shifting their attention to war-time needs—like converting the Chapel's boiler to meet war ration standards. Fr. Riggs '10 continued to teach, offering religion courses each semester for both Yale students and the general public. Fr. Riggs '10 died unexpectedly of a heart attack in his home on April 26, 1943 and Father Edwin O'Brien '31, a product of Yale's Catholic Club under Riggs in the late 20s, became Yale's second Catholic Chaplain.

As Yale men went off to fight in the war, Yale opened its buildings to Army Air Force, Navy and Marine cadets stationed in New Haven for training. Because of this influx of servicemen, the Military Ordinariate appointed Fr. O'Brien '31 an Auxiliary Chaplain and the Chapel opened its doors to servicemen who would briefly call New Haven their home.



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS  
OF CATHOLIC CHAPLAINCY AT YALE

## November 18, 1936:

The *New York Times* announces the forthcoming building of a Catholic chapel and clubhouse at Yale University.

### CATHOLICS AT YALE TO HAVE OWN CHAPEL

*Building Will Also Include a Clubhouse for 500 of the Religion in Student Body.*

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

NEW HAVEN, Conn., Nov. 17.—The Rev. T. Lawrason Riggs, for fourteen years spiritual director and chaplain to the Catholic students at Yale University, announced today plans for a new chapel and clubhouse. Joining in the plans are the 500 Catholics in the student body.

While the project is in its formative stage, Father Riggs said, it has received the endorsement of the ecclesiastical authorities of the diocese and prominent Connecticut Catholic laymen. The building will be close to the campus and a site near the corner of Park and Elm Streets has been considered.

Father Riggs celebrates masses for Yale men daily in St. Mary's Church and conducts group meetings for Catholic instruction and retreats.

**The New York Times**

Published: November 18, 1936  
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## 1937-1938:

A cutting from the Dwight Hall activities pamphlet with Fr. Riggs's '10 handwriting describing the activities of Yale's Catholic Club for interested Yale students.

### THE CATHOLIC CLUB

The Catholic Club exists for the religious needs of all students who are members of the Roman Catholic Church. Its activities are in the charge of Rev. T. Lawrason Riggs (Yale, 1910). For attendance at mass and the sacraments, students are expected to avail themselves of one of the parish churches of which St. Mary's, Hillhouse Avenue, is the most convenient for undergraduates. Instruction classes are held regularly at the chaplain's house, 135 Whitney Avenue, Tel. 5-7646. These classes aim at an informal survey of Catholic doctrine, while more advanced groups will be arranged upon request. There will be several corporate communions during the year. Students are most welcome at the home of the chaplain at any time.

The construction of a Chapel and Centre, dedicated to St. Thomas More, will start this fall, and should be completed by the opening of College in September, 1938. The group will be situated on Park Street, opposite Davenport College. The existence of such a religious home for worship, meeting, and study, will mark a new and vital development for Catholics at Yale.

Dwight Hall <sup>13</sup> pamphlet  
1937-1938

## Summer 1938:

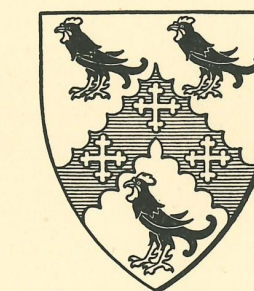
Invitation to attend the Solemn Blessing of the Chapel of Saint Thomas More with the original September date. Due to the 1938 New England Hurricane, the service was moved to October 9, 1938.

THE REVEREND T. LAWRASON RIGGS  
REQUESTS THE HONOR OF YOUR PRESENCE AT  
THE SOLEMN BLESSING OF THE CHAPEL OF  
SAINT THOMAS MORE ON PARK STREET NEAR  
ELM STREET NEW HAVEN CONNECTICUT BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY THE MOST REVEREND  
MAURICE F. McAULIFFE, D.D., ON SUNDAY  
MORNING THE TWENTY-FIFTH OF SEPTEMBER  
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHT AT  
TEN-THIRTY O'CLOCK EASTERN STANDARD TIME

JOHN LEE GILSON  
REQUESTS THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY  
AT A BUFFET LUNCHEON AFTER THE CEREMONY  
IN THE ASSEMBLY HALL OF MORE HOUSE UNDER  
THE CHAPEL ON SUNDAY THE TWENTY-FIFTH OF  
SEPTEMBER NINETEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHT  
AT TWELVE O'CLOCK

SEATS FOR THE CEREMONY WILL BE RESERVED  
YOU ARE REQUESTED TO REPLY TO BOTH INVITATIONS  
TO REV. T. LAWRASON RIGGS 135 WHITNEY AVENUE  
NEW HAVEN CONNECTICUT

SOLEMN BLESSING OF THE CHAPEL OF  
SAINT THOMAS MORE  
AT YALE UNIVERSITY BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY THE MOST REVEREND  
MAURICE FRANCIS McAULIFFE D.D.  
BISHOP OF HARTFORD



AT TEN-THIRTY O'CLOCK  
SUNDAY OCTOBER NINTH  
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHT

## October 9, 1938:

Worship booklet for the Chapel's Solemn Blessing.

### COURSE IN RELIGION

In response to numerous requests the Reverend T. Lawrason Riggs is giving a Lecture-Discussion course in Religion this year. It is being given in conjunction with the course for Catholic students at Yale and is open to the general public.

There will be ten lectures, given as follows:

- October 9—Faith: Reason.
- October 10—Christianity.
- October 30—God.
- November 6—Creation.
- November 13—The Blessed Trinity.
- November 20—The Incarnation. The Redemption.

- December 4—Grace.
  - December 11—The Sacraments.
  - January 8—The Mass.
  - January 15—The Last Thing.
- Time: Wednesday evenings, 8:15.  
Fee: Ten dollars.

October 14, 1940

## October 14, 1940:

A listing of classes taught by Fr. Riggs '10 for both Yale students and the general public.

# Catholic Graduates Club

## bulletin

VOL. IX      New Haven, Conn., May 12, 1943      NO. 5

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**CATHOLIC GRADUATES CLUB MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN FINAL RITES FOR REV. T. L. RIGGS**

The personnel of the congregation at the funeral services for our former chaplain, Rev. T. L. Riggs, was indicative of Father's diversified activities and the catholic appeal of his personality. Civic leaders, officials, alumni, and students of Yale University, Ministers of every faith, former parishioners at Foxon, members of the St. Thomas More Association, representatives of religious orders and various clubs, and friends of all classes, united with more than one hundred Roman Catholic clergy, to pay final tribute to an outstanding scholar, teacher, and priest. It was fitting and proper that Catholic Graduates Club members participate in the final rites for Father, since from our earliest day, he was our spiritual director and loyal sponsor.

On Wednesday afternoon from noon until 4 P.M., eight of our members maintained a vigil at Father's residence on Whitney Avenue. These people were Ellen Reynolds Johnson, Ruth Cobey, Peg McKay, Frances Madden, Margaret Kelleher, and Emily Zernitz. After Father's body was removed to St. Thomas More Chapel

individual members paid their respects and attended the chanting of the Office of the Dead Wednesday evening. From midnight Wednesday until dawn Thursday, William P. Lyons, Don Cobey, Fred Mignone, and James Valente joined undergraduates in standing guard in the Chapel.

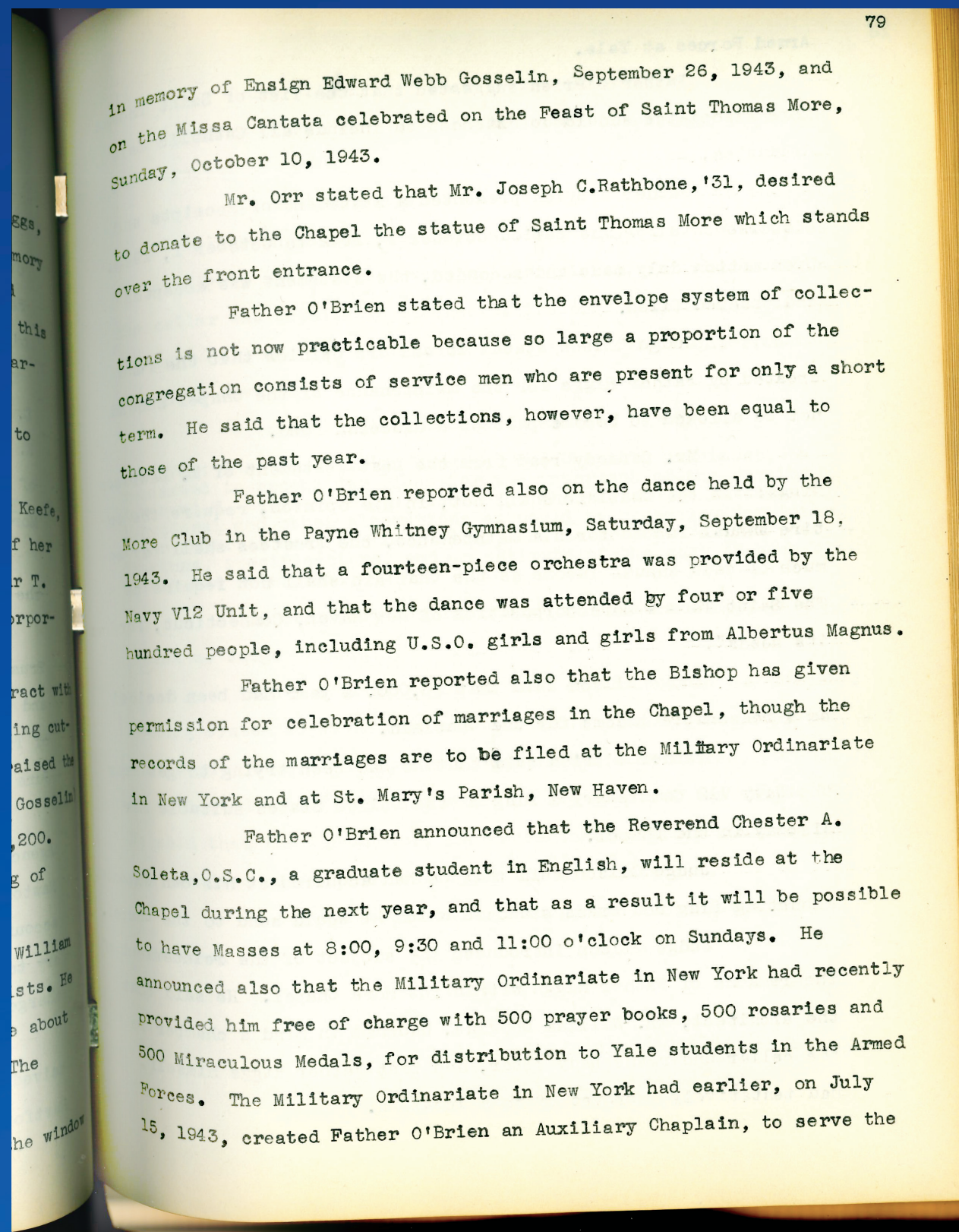
At 10:30 Thursday morning Rt. Rev. Henry O'Brien, auxiliary bishop of the Hartford Diocese, was celebrant of a pontifical high mass at St. Thomas More Chapel. Other officiators of the Mass were: Deacons, Rev. Edwin O'Brien of Bridgeport, Rev. Ralph Kelly of New Haven; arch-priest, Rt. Rev. William Flynn, Chancellor of the Hartford diocese; masters of ceremonies, Rev. William Kearney, assistant chancellor, and Rev. John Casey, secretary to Bishop McAuliffe; Thurifer, Rev. William Motbey, O.P. of St. Mary's Parish; acolytes, Rev. William Daly and Rev. James Glynn. A eulogy, which had the qualities of sincerity, literary beauty, and perfect diction was pronounced by Rev. John Middleton, of St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, N.Y. The music for the mass was by a priests' choir under the direction of Rev. Thomas Demmely of St. Thomas Seminary, Bloomfield.

The honorary bearers were: Arthur T. Keefe, of New Haven, chairman of the

(Continued on page 5)

## May 12, 1943:

The Catholic Graduates Club Bulletin reports on the Final Rites for Father T. Lawrason Riggs '10.



## October 11, 1943:

Fr. O'Brien '31 reports to Board of Trustees on his wartime ministry.

## July 3, 1943:

The Yale Daily News Reports on the appointment of Father Edwin B. O'Brien '31 as Yale University's second Catholic Chaplain. Fr. O'Brien was an active member of Fr. Riggs's Catholic Club in the late 1920s.

# YALE NEWS DIGEST

Vol. I, No. 1      NEW HAVEN, CONN., SATURDAY, JULY 3, 1943      Price 5 Cents

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## Yale Has Largest Combined Enrollment In History

### 1500 Naval V-12 Students Register For First Stay At Yale In Uniform

**Half Of Those Registered From Other Universities; Under Strict Discipline**

Fifteen hundred Naval V-12 students deluged the Sterling Memorial Library last Thursday to register and receive first orders for their stay at Yale in uniform. So great was the number to be enrolled that the announced hours of registration, 9 A.M. to 3 P.M., were totally disregarded. All this was the first step in the instruction of these officer candidates in the Naval and Marine Corps reserves, a step which continues a tradition begun at Yale with the foundation of the Naval R.O.T.C. unit here in 1927. The program is officially designated *The Navy V-12 College Training Program*, and the greater part of its personnel has been enlisted in either the Navy or Marine Corps, on inactive duty, for over a year.

**Half From Other Colleges**

The Navy men stationed at Yale in the V-12 program include former N.R.O.T.C. students, those formerly enlisted in the various V-1 and V-7 Naval reserves, those inactively enrolled in the Marine Corps, and freshmen students entering college in uniform. There are some students transferred from other, non-Navy colleges and universities, but about half of the upperclassmen are from Yale.

All V-12 students will be housed in Branford, Davenport, Saybrook, and Pierson colleges, doubled up in rooms, and messing in shifts. Each Marine enlisted man in residence to maintain discipline and relay orders. The Masters and Fellows of the various Navy colleges will keep their old rooms and offices as a reminder that students are here for learning as well as training.

The "learning" side will be under the supervision of the various deans and instructors and all classes, save those in Naval Science and Tactics, will be conducted by the faculty of (See Naval V-12, Page Three)

**Yale Population Reaches All Time High of 7,100**

Yale's student population, despite the war, rather than because of it, this summer will reach an all-time high with an estimated 7,155 men housed in Yale buildings on its various undergraduate and graduate campuses. In peace time the average enrollment rarely exceeded 5,200.

The population breakdown is as follows:

Army Air Force Technical Training Command (approximate)	3,000
Navy V-12	1,500
Army Specialized Training Program (approximate)	800
Civilian undergraduates	1,375
Graduate and Professional Schools	480
Total	7,155

**"Yale News Digest" Enters Campus Life**

With this issue, the YALE NEWS DIGEST formally makes its entrance into life at Yale—student, faculty, military, and otherwise. The Digest will be published three times a week by the University News Bureau—on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays—to take the place of the *Yale Daily News*, undergraduate daily publication which has suspended for the duration.

The Digest is the only medium to report University News and to publish official announcements of the University and the Yale units of the Army and Navy College Training program. On each Saturday it also incorporates the material formerly published by the weekly edition of the *Yale University Bulletin*.

Subscription rates in Yale Station are \$3 per year. Complete subscription information can be obtained in any one of the colleges or in the Digest offices, 254 York Street.

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## Rev. E. B. O'Brien Yale '31, Named Catholic Chaplain

**Successor to Rev. Riggs, Who Died April 26; New Chaplain a New Havener**

The Rev. Edwin B. O'Brien, '31, former assistant pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Bridgeport, is the new Catholic Chaplain for Yale University. His appointment was announced May 27 by the Most Rev. Bishop Maurice F. McAuliffe, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hartford.

Father O'Brien succeeds the late Rev. T. Lawrason Riggs, first chaplain to Catholic students at Yale and founder of the St. Thomas More House, 268 Park Street, who died last April 26.

**Awarded Yale Scholarship**

Father O'Brien is a native New Havener. Born in this city in 1910, he attended grammar school here and was graduated from Hillhouse High School in 1927 with high honors. While a student at this school, he was an editor of the school paper and member of Alpha Iota Epsilon fraternity. He was awarded a four-year scholarship to Yale upon graduation.

While at Yale, he was associated with Father Riggs in his religious work with Yale undergraduates. He was also secretary of the Yale Catholic Club and a member of the Yale Literary Society.

Following his graduation from Yale (See Rev. O'Brien, Page Two)

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## A.S.T.P. Activated At Yale, All Enlisted Trainees, All Enlisted Men, Are Quartered In South Berkeley, Calhoun

The Army Specialized Training Program was inaugurated at Yale University on June 10, with the activation of the Service Command Unit No. 1149. The nucleus of the unit was the personnel on duty with the Yale R.O.T.C., and Colonel Dean Hudnutt, Field Artillery, was designated by the Commanding General, First Service Command, as Commandant.

Under an agreement with the University, a program of two courses was agreed upon—a Basic Course for men under 22 years of age with a high school training, and an Advanced Course for older men with some college experience to be devoted to Area and Language Study. The University agreed to accept advanced contingents of these men and to supply them with refresher courses of instruction prior to the beginning of the term on July 12.

**Quartered in Berkeley, Calhoun**

The first trainee reported on the evening of June 14 and from that time on a constant stream of non-commissioned officers and privates has poured in. Under the arrangement with the University, they occupy quarters in South Berkeley and Calhoun Colleges and are messed in the Dining Halls of those colleges. With the start of the term on July 12th, the students in these courses will pursue a strict daily program of instruction and exercise. The weekly program consists of 59 hours, of which 24 are class room work, 24 study, 6 physical training, and 5 military instruction.

The program of the Basic Course includes American History, English, (See A.S.T.P., Page Two)

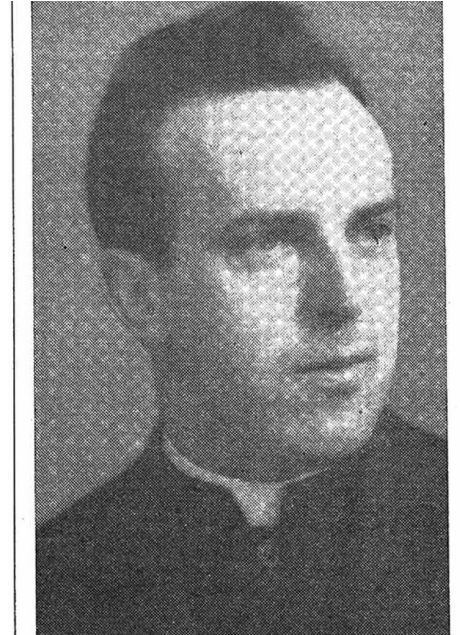
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## Over 7,000 Men Will Be Quartered On Campuses, Including Air Corps

President Seymour Issues Statement Of Welcome; University Assembly Tomorrow In Woolsey Hall

In the 243rd year of her existence Yale University is opening the new term with a larger combined enrollment of students and trainees than at any other time in her history. Including cadets of the Army Air Force Technical Training Command already stationed here since January, there will be well over 7,000 men studying this summer on Yale's several campuses.

President Seymour, in a welcoming statement, the text of which is published on Page 4 of today's Digest, revealed that the University wishes to regard the incoming men, not only as soldiers, sailors,



FATHER EDWIN B. O'BRIEN... the new Catholic Chaplain at Yale, who succeeds the late Rev. T. Lawrason Riggs, founder of the St. Thomas More House, 268 Park Street.

### Rev. O'Brien

(Continued from Page One)

in 1931, he studied for the priesthood at St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, and received the Master of Arts degree from the Catholic University in Washington.

### Schedule of Masses

The schedule of Masses at the St. Thomas More House, 268 Park Street, is as follows:

- Daily Mass . . . . . 7:15 A.M.
- Sunday Masses . . . . . 9:00 A.M. 10:00 and 11:00 A.M.
- Confessions 7:30 to 8:30 P.M. (Saturday evenings)

Due to the increase in the student body at Yale, with the consequent changes in the schedules of students in the armed forces, in all likelihood additions to the schedules of Masses will be announced shortly.

### Ordained in 1936

He was ordained to the priesthood May 21, 1936, in St. Joseph's Cathedral, Hartford by Bishop McAuliffe. Father Riggs served as deacon at the first mass celebrated by Father O'Brien after the latter was ordained. Since his ordination, Father O'Brien has served as assistant in Litchfield for two years before being transferred to the Church of the Sacred Heart in Bridgeport.

Since the foundation of St. Thomas More House, Father O'Brien has been assistant to Father Riggs in all church functions—in the dedication of the chapel, and in all celebrations. At the funeral of Father Riggs, he served as deacon.

pite of your "and drill" "you will get some taste which binds experience and lity thousands ut the world.

### ably arrow

Yale, military an, will be the Univers; at 11 at in Woolsey officers of ers of the rine Corps e in charge e President Lieut. Com. Mendell, ss of 1904, mal address the Ralph tion. Comer dean of resent Dun-at Yale, on is stationed at Informa- Point, R. I.

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