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Boston College Law School

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This is the eighth of a series of articles on Catholic law schools in America.

BOSTON COLLEGE LAW SCHOOL

THE MOVE to St. Thomas More Hall in September 1954 on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Boston College Law School can quite fittingly be called the "Second Spring" of the school. An edifice ideally suited for the study of law with a library seating 240 and shelf capacity for a quarter of a million volumes supplies incentive for many new activities on the part of the faculty, students and alumni.

Ranking as the fourth largest Catholic law school in the country with 500 students, the Boston College Law School is New England's only Catholic law school and has the only fully approved law evening division in Northern New England.

The infant law school, launched in 1929 by Very Reverend James H. Dolan, S.J., then President of Boston College, secured accreditation from the American Bar Association upon the graduation of its first class in 1932 and membership in the Association of American Law Schools five years later. The school continued to develop during the thirties under the guidance of the late Father John B. Creeden, S.J., past president of Georgetown University, and Dean Dennis A. Dooléy, now state librarian of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Boston College Law School grew from infancy to maturity during the vigorous deanship between 1939 and 1956 of Father William J. Kenealy, S.J., now professor of law at Loyola University Law School, New Orleans, Louisiana. It was during Father Kenealy's deanship and due to his leadership that the school moved from rented quarters in downtown Boston to its present functional and beautiful location on the campus of Boston College.

The highest academic standards have characterized the Boston College Law School from the beginning. Careful screening and rigorous grading have produced for the school a widespread reputation as an institution with the strictest scholastic standards. A dedicated full-time faculty that has remained faithfully with the school throughout



Dean Robert F. Drinan, S.J.

the period of its growth is responsible for the remarkable bar examination results regularly achieved in all states, and for the rapid success of the graduates of the law school who, though very young as a body, number 26 members of the judiciary.

No account of the Boston College Law School could be written without mentioning two of the pillars of its strength — Professor William J. O’Keefe and Professor Cornelius J. Moynihan. Mr. O’Keefe taught the opening class in 1929 and still continues to teach with unabated energy. He has also taught and written widely on educational law, a subject on which he is a recognized expert. Professor Moynihan, who joined the faculty in 1932, is widely known for his volume, *Preliminary Survey of the Law of Real*

Property, and for his masterly contribution on community property to *The American Law of Property*. The quarter century of service of both of these men to the Boston College Law School can properly be called the twin foundation stones of its existence and its reputation.

In 1955 the law school issued the first volume of the *Annual Survey of Massachusetts Law*, a critical commentary on local developments in the Commonwealth, authored by members of the faculty with the aid of other outside experts, and published by Little, Brown and Company. This annual has been well received by the bench and bar and has brought widespread recognition of the research talents of the faculty and students of the Boston College Law School.

The full time faculty of the school has grown in numbers and quality since the school entered its “Second Spring.” In 1958-1959 there will be 14 full-time members (exclusive of the Dean), eight of whom will have done graduate work in law. The presence of the distinguished Professor Warren A. Seavey has been a special privilege.

One of the traditions of the Boston College Law School has been the participation of the full faculty in all policy decisions affecting the academic standards of the school. Five faculty committees, however, work and report to the full faculty at regular intervals; these committees work on appointments and promotions, on publications, on standards and admissions, on curriculum and on relations with the Bar. Contributions by the faculty to community projects connected with law and service on committees of legal associations have also been a tradition of the Boston College Law School, but these activities have been pursued only to an extent compatible with full-time dedi-



Boston College Law School Faculty. Front, left to right: Warren A. Seavey, Richard S. Sullivan, Cornelius J. Moynihan, Dean Robert F. Drinan, S.J., William J. O'Keefe, John D. O'Reilly, Jr., and Reverend John A. Tobin, S.J., Student Counselor. Rear, left to right: Emil Slizewski, Kenneth B. Hughes, Stephen G. Morrison, Wendell F. Grimes, Joseph F. McCarthy, Richard G. Huber and J. Edward Collins.

cated teaching. This dedication to the classroom and to hours of consultation with students has been the distinguishing mark and the "genius" of the spirited faculty of the Boston College Law School.

Students have likewise expanded their activities since the "Second Spring" of the law school. An intensely active Student Bar Association conducts the moot court program under a faculty advisor, arranges social functions and generally coordinates all student activities. A student newspaper *Sui Juris* and a well conducted forum for the public discussion of controversial issues have recently been especially successful. An energetic Law Wives Club and a legal sorority, Kappa Beta Pi, contribute greatly to

the life of the school.

A residence hall for law school students near St. Thomas More Hall adds greatly to the intensity of student academic life. Each year the Student Bar Association cooperates with the school in conducting a Pre-Legal Institute, an event designed to assist college upperclassmen in their choice of a career. Each year the quality of the students improves as is evidenced by a higher average and median score on the Law School Admission Test. To assist pre-legal directors in their task of guiding students interested in law, the Boston College Law School recently conducted an Institute for all college professors who direct pre-legal students. This Institute was successful in communicating

facts about legal education and the legal profession to college guidance personnel which would benefit them in their student counseling activities.

A regular spiritual program conducted by the student St. Thomas More Society includes an annual retreat, periodic talks and the daily rosary under the guidance of Father John A. Tobin, S.J.

Many proposals have been suggested concerning an expansion of the commitments of the Boston College Law School. Among them is the idea of a graduate program, which, it is hoped, will come when the school feels it is in a position to move into post-professional studies without sacrificing the very high quality of its present day and evening courses. Another proposal is to have the school serve as a law center for

New England where research, institutes and seminars would be conducted for the benefit of the bench and bar of the region. Courses in a program of continuing legal education would certainly follow from being a law center. The publication of the *Annual Survey of Massachusetts Law* has already made the Boston College Law School a law center to an extent.

The dean of the law school since June 1956, Father Robert F. Drinan, S.J., LL.M., is giving deep consideration to these proposals as are the faculty and university officials. With a dedicated faculty, a rapidly expanding library, a student body of ever greater promise and a magnificent building uniquely suited for the study of law, the future of the Boston College Law School is bright.



The Thomas J. Kenney Memorial Library.