

Chaplain O'Neil Risks Life for Yanks in France

**Southtown Priest Serving
in Hospital After Five
Months at Front.**

Chaplain Edward T. O'Neill, son of Mrs. Lucy O'Neill, 9506 Winchester ave., now calls on his experiences with combat troops to counsel battle-wounded soldiers convalescing in a hospital in France where he has returned after five months with the fighting men at the battlefronts, according to word received here from the headquarters of the army's communications zone somewhere in the European theater.

Arriving at Utah Beach, Normandy, just five days after D-Day, Chaplain O'Neill went at once to the front which at that time was near Monteburg. Without definite assignment he came alone to give spiritual help where it was most needed—up front with the infantry. Patients at the hospital who knew him in combat say that Father O'Neill might easily have stayed behind the armor and artillery, but instead was always up where the infantry was breaking through.

Had Close Calls.

"I've never known a man like him," one of the wounded soldiers said of the chaplain. "In his shoes any of us would have played it safe, but he was right there with us all the time and had plenty of close calls, I remember one time a German plane was strafing our lines and stopped just before it reached the Chaplain and us, and then it started again on the other side. I guess it was some sort of a miracle."

Never long with one organization, Chaplain O'Neill went where he was needed. From the beachhead he went to a field artillery group, then with the infantry to Cherbourg and after the St. Lo break-through sped across Brittany to Brest. He was the first to enter captured German prison hospitals, where he cheered Allied

Should Be Up Front.

"I believe the army chaplain should give his service where it is most needed," said Father O'Neill. "In combat it is most needed where the infantryman is face to face with the enemy."

Chaplain O'Neill entered the chaplain's corps in March, 1942. From Fort Eustice, Va., he joined the 106th infantry division at Fort Jackson, S.C. Last February he left for England to take part in pre-invasion maneuvers.

A graduate of St. Victor's college, Bourbonais, in 1929, Father O'Neill was educated for the priesthood at Catholic university in Washington, D.C. Before entering the service he was an assistant pastor at St. Patrick's church, Wakee.