

**Horace D. Taft Alumni Medal  
and  
Citation of Merit  
1966 Recipient**



**Francis Oliver Ayres '27  
1908-1968**

Son of a classmate of the King, your own son went to school under the King's two successors, and you yourself have taught Bible classes at Taft. You are surely a part of Taft's "family." Erstwhile dilettante and banker, rector and teacher, fisherman and Jazzophile, author and farmer, your tastes are catholic and your vision far from parochial. Your independent spirit and questing mind have led you to avoid the conventional path and at key moments in your career first as a young banker and later a parish minister—you have made the difficult decision to follow "the road less travelled by." As co-founder of Parishfield Community, you have made the phrase "renewal of the church" and "ministry of the laity" meaningful to people in many walks of life and gained the interest of Christian leaders at home and abroad. You and your associates have heartened the discouraged, stimulated the young and awakened the dormant. Those qualities that Parishfield has sought to nurture—integrity and modesty, strength and stability, humor and deep compassion for the downtrodden—seem woven into the fabric of your own life. You have served faithfully your flock, your family, and your friends and daily exemplify the motto of your school, which through its alumni, takes pride in conferring on you its Citation of Merit.