

## Rev. Eugene V. Bronson

The following is the story of one of Northwest Bible Institute's early professors', Rev. E. V. Bronson, who taught from 1937 – 1952, and after whom Bronson Hall is named. Most of the information has been gleaned from a nine page biography of his life written by his wife entitled "I Married A Preacher".

She wrote "When this tall, slender, fine-looking young preacher asked me to be his wife, I said, "Yes" in a hurry, before he could change his mind." He was tall but I have a hard time imagining him being slender! He looked like Santa Claus and when something really funny was said, his face would get red and he'd start to shake "like a bowl full of jelly!"

He graduated from Garrett Biblical Institute in Illinois. They belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Their first church was the Belmont Circuit in Hood River Valley, Oregon composed of 3 churches. Her story of their life in the different pastorates is full of little anecdotes of life as a pastor... some funny, some sad and some, of the hard lessons they learned from God. For instance "One time my husband had to make a train trip to an out appointment. He did not have any money of his own, and, instead of asking God to supply, he borrowed from the tithe. He paid it back, but what a hard time he had doing it." He never did that again!

Their second move was to a church in a sawmill town called Harrison, in N. Idaho. There he had 3 preaching places, 3 ½ miles away and he walked it in rain, mud, heat and cold and once in snow a foot deep. And sometimes no one showed up thinking the weather was so bad that he wouldn't show up... but he was always there! It was here that their first son was born, Harold Eugene, in 1911. "A gift from God, we felt, but he was only loaned to us, for, at the age of 14 months, he left us to go back to God."

They had two more sons, Richard, who became a missionary in eastern Europe, and Robert.

The bottom fell out of the shingle market while they were pastoring a church in Edmonds, Wa, They went through their hardest financial struggle there. They received \$254 from the church for the whole year (that's about \$4.75 a week! That had to cover their rent of \$10 a month and all expenses for themselves and their two children! They were always promised more but never received any. "Many a meal we had on a ten cent can of tomato soup, or a ten cent box of vermicelli... Somehow God saw us through. It did not stop the boys' growth, as they are each over six feet tall."

When World War I came along they were in Stanwood, Wa. Bro. Bronson signed up as an Army Chaplain. He was the first Chaplain in Camp Lewis (now called Fort Lewis).

He went to France and Belgium with the 91st Division, and was under shellfire most of the time, as he followed up the lines burying the dead, but he was never wounded.

After the war they spent some years in Marysville and Bremerton, in Washington State and three years in San Leandro, Ca. Then they were sent to Gardnerville, Nevada. It was like being sent to the 'backside of the desert.' This was punishment for becoming too interested in the Pentecostal way but they enjoyed being there as much as any place during their 18 years with the Methodist Episcopal Church.

After hearing Rev Charles Price and Aimee Semple McPherson, he left the Methodist Episcopal Church and joined the Assemblies of God.

Rev Bronson was a teacher in Glad Tidings Bible Institute, San Francisco for 3 months in 1925. Then he pastured in Watsonville, Ca. for 3 years and Glendale, Ca for 16 months. He became Principal of Berean Bible institute, San Diego, for four years (1930 – 1934). Then he taught in the Southern California Bible School, Pasadena two years (1934-1936) and finally came to Northwest Bible Institute in Seattle, Wa for fifteen years (1937-1952).

He loved being a Bible School teacher. He loved young people, and they loved him. He quoted many times. "If you want to keep young, associate with young people, but if you want to die young, try to keep up with them."

Mrs. Bronson ended their story with "We have not done anything startling. We have never had hundreds saved in one service, as some have. We have not built large church buildings. We have just plodded along year after year, trying to be faithful, and use what little talent we had."

One memory I have of Bro. Bronson is of the papers required for his classes over 60 years ago. They would come back with all those little red ink notations correcting grammar, spelling, punctuation etc. He was a "stickler" for perfect papers! He was a great teacher. I wonder how many red ink notations I would have on this story of his life!

(I would be glad to forward, by email, a copy of "I Married a Preacher" by Mrs. Bronson. Just email [evawangen@uptime.org](mailto:evawangen@uptime.org).)