

*my Mother's brother*

SERGE BALLIF BENSON, beloved husband and father, devoted son and brother and friend to all mankind, was born and spent many years of his life in the Logan Fourth Ward. In 1877 his family moved to a farm in Whitney, Idaho. He received his schooling at Whitney and at the old Lindquist Hall in Logan. Later he attended the Onside Stake Academy in Preston where he met Linda Nelson, who later became his bride.

As a boy he presided successively over his Deacon, Teacher, and Priest quorums. Apostle John Henry Smith set him apart for a mission to the Northern States Mission. During that mission he was instrumental in bringing many fine people into the Church.

He returned to Whitney where he and Linda purchased a merchandise business from his sister Elise Alder and her husband. Brother Benson spent many years of fruitful service in Whitney. It was here he earned the compliment later given him by Apostle Ezra Taft Benson the Secretary of Agriculture, of being one of the "greatest of boy's men" and one of the most profound influences in his life and the lives of many other young men.

In the Whitney Ward Brother Benson served in many capacities. He was President of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association, Superintendent of the Sunday School, Ward Clerk, President of the 18th Quorum of Seventies, and he served for sixteen years as Director of the Whitney Choir, a position he termed the hardest, but most satisfying of his experiences. His own sweet voice and the faithfulness and support of his co-workers made this choir a most important part of the life of Southern Idaho. His love for good music never diminished and under his direction as Bishop of this, the Fourth Ward, the wonderful instruments in this building were chosen. Many musicians and musical organizations received his encouragement and financial support.

Brother Benson was active in civic affairs, serving as Republican Party Chairman in his county and as a State Legislator, and he was instrumental in promoting many county improvements. He was a close friend of former United States Senator Borah, of Idaho, and accompanied him on state-wide campaign trips. This interest in state and national government stayed with him throughout his life and was passed on to his children.

Whitney had no high school and when the Benson children needed this type of schooling their devoted parents looked for new opportunities. Resusing a position offered by Idaho's Governor, Brother Benson purchased a business in Logan and moved here in 1919.

In Logan he soon became active in civic and community affairs. He was a charter member of Logan's Kiwanis Club, an active member of the Chamber of Commerce, and Chairman of the Red Cross, a position he held for 12 years. He was the sponsor and builder of the Logana Plunge.

Brother Benson maintained his activity in the Church and was Ordained as Bishop of the Logan Fourth Ward in 1920. He served in this capacity for a period of about ten years with humility, dignity, and honor.

The years 1930 and 1931 were spent in California, where he served as a member of the High Council of the Los Angeles Stake under the Presidency of Leo J. Muir. Brother and Sister Benson returned to Logan in 1932 and he entered the coal business, where he worked until ill health forced his retirement.

He served as President of the High Priests of the Cache Stake and then, in 1944 he and his good wife accepted a call to serve as missionaries for the Church in California. After his return to Logan he was called to work in the Temple here and was set apart by President George Albert Smith to do sealing work. He gave seven years to this wonderful work before his health failed.

The home and family life of Brother and Sister Benson typifies the ideals of the Church. Their eight children are all college graduates and ardent Church and Community workers. Their grandchildren are unquestionably following their worthy tradition. "By their fruits shall ye know them". Sarge Benson's was a truly successful life. His prime ambition was to rear a good family, to educate them and give them a good home. He surely attained his goal. His loving kindness and consideration were showered on everyone who needed help. Like the sweet perfume of the old-fashioned bouquets he has picked for so many of his friends, his memory will linger on.