

This Week in Eden History

April 23 | Orville L. “Pop” Elbring



Orville L. “Pop” Elbring. Photo probably taken in 1968 | Eden Seminary Archives

Orville L. Elbring, long-time bursar at Eden Theological Seminary, was born on April 23, 1897, in Marine, Ill., to Otto and Ida Elbring. He graduated from Elmhurst College, and, after completing his studies, cum laude, at Eden in 1927, he served as pastor of the Friedens Evangelical Church congregation in Farina, Ill., 1928-30.

In 1930, his intentions to remain a parish minister were redirected when President S. D. Press asked him to become Eden’s bursar. The position of bursar usually involves having responsibility for an institution’s money as the business manager. At Eden, at that time, the bursar’s responsibilities included office manager, purchasing agent, accountant, assigner of rooms, collector of fees, as well as business manager—all activities that were not considered aca-

ademic. He and his wife, Eleonore, moved onto campus where they endeared themselves to the students and took on their unofficial positions as “Mom” and “Pop” Elbring. He retained his broad portfolio of responsibilities until 1963, when, after a reorganization of the staff, he continued as Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds until 1968. He and Eleonore continued to live on campus until failing health necessitated that they move into Mayflower Home, Grinnell, Iowa. He died in Ames, Iowa, during a visit with his daughter, Arlene Jutting, on Dec. 13, 1975. Eleonore died on Feb. 15, 1983, in Grinnell, Iowa.



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