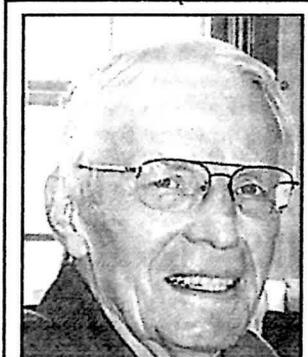


Who Was Who In Washburn: The Founders—2

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The founders of Washburn, that is the shareholders in the Bay Land and Improvement Company, included, in addition to the local men noted in the first article, three executives of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railroad, John A. Humbird, superintendent of construction; William Henry Phipps, land commissioner; and John Coit Spooner, general solicitor; and also Frank Hutchinson Peavey, a businessman; and Charles H. Pratt, a lumber man. The biographies of Humbird, Pratt, and Peavey illustrate the varied backgrounds of these men. Also of interest is Cadwallader Colden Washburn, for whom the townsite was named.

John A. Humbird was born on July 18 1836 in Ligonier, Pennsylvania, the son of Jacob Humbird. When he was 18 months old the family moved to Cumberland, Maryland, where he completed his education. In 1850 he and his father went to Brazil to build railroads for the government, remaining there until 1866. He then purchased a farm in West Virginia, where he remained for a time, then moved to Hudson. Humbird was the superintendent of construction for the northern division of the Omaha Railroad, which constructed the line to Washburn, Bayfield and Ashland. He owned large tracts of timberland in northern Wisconsin, constructing sawmills at Clayton, White River and Mason. In the early 1900s



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he disposed of his Wisconsin mills and moved his lumbering operations to the west, acquiring timberlands and establishing large sawmills in British Columbia and Idaho. He married Caroline Stalnaker on August 31 1860. He died in Spokane on August 4 1911.

Charles H. Pratt was born on May 17 1837, in Providence, Rhode Island. He attended the College of the City of New York, graduating in 1856 as the valedictorian on his class, receiving a master's degree in 1859. In 1861 he graduated from Andover Theological Seminary, then served as pastor of Congregational Churches at Lisbon, Illinois and Brookfield, Missouri. In 1869 poor health forced him to abandon the ministry for an outdoor life. Pratt moved to Ashland, remaining there until 1878, when he moved to the Twin Cities. There he went into the lumber business, purchasing large tracts of timberland in northern Wisconsin,

eventually accumulating a large fortune. His special interest was Christian education, and he was instrumental in founding Northland Academy, now Northland College, in Ashland. He died in Forest Grove, Oregon, on December 1 1915.

Frank Hutchinson Peavey was born on January 20 1850, in Eastport, Maine, the son of Albert D. and Mary Drew Peavey. He attended school in Eastport, where his father conducted lumber and shipping businesses. When he was 15 years old, he went to Chicago, where he was employed as a bookkeeper in a bank. Two years later Peavey moved to Sioux City, Iowa where he purchased a 6,000 bushel elevator. From that small beginning he built an immense grain handling business that controlled interior elevators on the Omaha and other railroads, and he constructed terminal elevators in Minneapolis, Chicago, Superior, Duluth, and other locations. In 1900 Peavey established a steamship company that operated four large grain carriers on the Great Lakes. When the Omaha Railroad reached Washburn in the summer of 1883, he constructed a large terminal elevator there. He married Mary Dibble Wright in 1872. He died on December 30 1901.

Cadwallader Colden Washburn was born on April 22 1818, in Livermore, Maine, the son of Israel and Martha Washburn. His

father was a farmer and storekeeper. In 1839, at the age of 21, he moved to Davenport, Iowa and then to Rock Island, Illinois, where he read law and entered politics. In 1842 he moved to Mineral Point, where he was admitted to the Wisconsin bar and practiced law. He and a partner owned 60,000 acres of timberland in northern Wisconsin. He was elected to Congress in 1854 serving until 1861, when he moved to La Crosse. During the Civil War, he was a colonel in the 2nd Wisconsin Volunteer Cavalry, eventually advancing to major general. He resigned from the army in May 1865 and returned to La Crosse. Washburn was elected to Congress for two terms and in 1871 was elected governor of Wisconsin. Defeated in his bid for reelection in 1873 and for a U.S. Senate seat in 1875, he retired from politics to manage his business interests. He expanded his milling operations and by 1881 he was one of the largest flour producers in the Midwest, operating three mills in Minneapolis. He accumulated a substantial fortune, donating funds for the construction of the Washburn Observatory at the University of Wisconsin. He married Jeanette Garr on January 1 1849. He died on May 14 1882 in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The townsite was named after him, although he was not a founder and probably never visited the location.