

Who Was Who In Washburn—Ministers And Missionaries—1

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Washburn was the home base of two families of dedicated ministers and missionaries, the Chattersons and Christiansens. Joseph Henry Chatterson was born on March 15 1870, near Sparta. About 1882 the family moved to Eau Claire, and when he was old enough he worked in the sawmills, studying in the evenings. On June 28 1894 he married Emily A. Hadley. In 1898 he took an "academy course" at Lawrence College, later working his way through the college while supporting his family. He graduated in 1904 with a degree in the classical languages. He joined the West Wisconsin Methodist Conference, with his first pastorate in Frederic. In 1907 the family moved to Cumberland and then to Washburn in 1909, remaining until 1912. From then until 1927 he served among other locations at Prairie Farm, where he was elected four years as chairman of the Barron County Board of Education; at Medford, where he accepted the post of surveyor for Taylor County so he could spend time out-of-doors for his health; and at Glenwood City, where he served as St. Croix County surveyor. During World War I he was employed as an engineer by the Clark and Jackson County drainage districts (it is not clear if he also served as a pastor during these years). When he retired in 1938, he and his wife moved back to Washburn. He continued to be an active participant in community and civic affairs, serving as city assessor, administrator of estates for the county welfare department, instructor in woodworking at the Garfield School, and a member of the price and ration board during World War II, while also taking an active part in the work of the Warren Methodist Church. In 1945, at the age of 75 years, he temporarily assumed the pastorate of the church because of a shortage of ministers. His wife was killed in an automobile accident on February 9 1949; he died on February 2 1959.

Leonard Hadley Chatterson was born on July 14 1902, in Appleton, the son of Reverend Joseph Henry and Emily Hadley Chatterson. From 1909 to 1912 the family lived in Washburn, where the father served as pastor of the Methodist Church, then moved around to various pastoral assignments in northern Wisconsin. He attended Lawrence College and the University of Minnesota, graduating from Taylor University. He paid his way through college by working in printing shops. Although not ordained he was appointed minister of the Presbyterian Church in Abbotsford in July 1927. On June 7 1927 he married Ida Margaret Pratt, and the following December he was appointed by the Presbyterian Board of Missionaries as a missionary to French Cameroon, West Africa. In April 1928 he and his wife departed for France, where they spent a year learning French. He was then assigned to Ebolowa, French Cameroon, where he managed the Halsey Memorial Press, which published religious and educational materials for the missions. He also preached while his wife served as a missionary teacher. In 1939 they returned to Washburn after an 8,000 mile trip from Cameroon to spend a year's furlough with his parents (who had returned to live in Washburn). They planned to return to Africa on May 5 1940, but the trip was cancelled when the Germans invaded France and the Low Countries. He was finally able to return to Ebolowa, departing New York for Capetown on November 4 1940 and arriving at Ebolowa on January 25 1941, after a circuitous trip of thousands of miles by railroad, river steamer, and truck—over nearly three months. His wife and small son remained in Wisconsin because of the risks of wartime travel. He returned to the United States in April 1944, and he and his wife went back to Ebolowa in January 1945. Thereafter they returned to the United States every three years on furlough. Their journeys to and from their mission at Ebolowa by ship and rail were lengthy, always uncomfortable, usually adventuresome, and occasionally hazardous. On one occasion they were passengers on a French ship carrying 200 tons of explosives, while on another they were briefly trapped by rioting in Genoa, Italy, while visiting that country on their way back to Africa. Their missionary service ended in 1960 and they returned to New York, where he worked as an accountant for the church until retiring in 1967.

They then moved to a home for retired missionaries in Duarte, California. His wife died there on October 8 1967 and was buried in Beaver Dam. He moved to Waukesha, where he lived in a retirement home and was active in various philanthropic and civic activities. He died in Waukesha on September 11 1986 and was buried with his wife.