

# Among editors in Washburn, here's a look at who was who

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Washburn's first weekly newspaper, the Washburn Itemizer, published its inaugural issue on Oct. 16 1884, one year after the community was founded.

The Itemizer was followed by other newspapers, including the Washburn News, Washburn Bee, Washburn Bulletin and Washburn Times. The most enduring of these was the Times, which published its first issue on April 10, 1895, serving as the community's local news organ for 80 years until its final issue on May 13, 1976.

The Times, along with the Bayfield County Press and the Iron River Pioneer Press, were absorbed by the County Journal, which published its first issue on May 3, 1989. The owners and editors — usually the same person — of these weekly newspapers were leading figures in Washburn's community life.

Frederick Thomas Yates was born in Wales, United Kingdom, on April 28, 1867. In 1871 the family immigrated to the United States, settling in Chicago, where the father established a jewelry business. In 1881 the family moved to River Falls, where at the age of 14 he began work in a newspaper office.

In 1885 he moved to Bayfield, where he worked on the Bayfield County Press until September 1887. Yates then moved to Washburn, where he established the Washburn News, the first issue appearing on Oct. 1, 1887.

In December 1896 the Washburn News and Washburn Itemizer were combined under his editorship. In January 1908 he sold the News and Itemizer, moving to Minneapolis, where he operated a print shop until his death on Aug. 27, 1934.

Richard A. Hering was born on Aug. 28, 1874, in Chippewa Falls. He learned the printing trade and came to Washburn in 1895 to work as a printer at the Washburn Times.



**Lars  
Larson**

■ has been a guest columnist for The County Journal for many years.

188  
With the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in April 1898 he joined Washburn's volunteer Company K. While the company was stationed at Camp Douglas he married Josie Vanderbilt. After he was mustered out of the army in January 1899 he returned to Washburn and in 1903 was elected clerk of the Town of Washburn.

When Washburn was incorporated in 1904 he was elected city clerk. Prior to World War I he returned to newspaper work, managing the Washburn News and Itemizer during the war in the absence of its owner, H.H. Peavey.

In 1921 Hering returned to the Times until March 1932, when he was appointed acting postmaster on the death of postmaster William A. Robinson. During these years he also served as a member of the city council and chairman of the Bayfield County Board of Supervisors. He was especially interested in log-rolling and was the secretary and manager of the World's Championship Log Rolling Association for several years. He was a member of the Knights of Pythias fraternal lodge. In about 1936 he moved to Minneapolis and died there on Oct. 16, 1956.

William Arthur Robinson was born on April 17, 1883, in Edson, Wis. In 1887 the family moved to Washburn, where he attended school until he was 14 years old, then began work as a "printer's devil" and learned the printing trade at the Washburn Times.

He became foreman of the print shop, then manager and editor. In 1918 Robinson purchased the Times from a group of local businessmen, expressing his strong Republican views in its columns.

In July 1924 he purchased the Washburn News and Itemizer and consolidated it with the Times. He was active in city and county affairs, serving as an alderman from 1914 to 1916 and as acting postmaster from 1929 to 1932. He was a member of the Masonic and Knights of Pythias fraternal lodges. He died on Feb. 17, 1932.

Paul Leslie Robinson was born on July 29, 1906, in Washburn. As a young boy he worked part time as a "printer's devil" for his father, owner and editor of the Washburn Times. After graduating from high school in 1924 he began a 45-year career with the Times, taking over ownership when his father died in February 1932.

As editor he maintained a neutral position on political questions, although he occasionally offered strong but reasoned views regarding the conduct of city government and on other community issues.

Robinson refused to publish rumor or gossip, or information about minor infractions of the traffic or game laws.

The Times was not only an important voice in community affairs but was read by the widely dispersed population of former Washburn residents who were eager for news from their hometown.

During World War II the paper was read by servicemen around the world (a Marine on a remote Pacific island came across a copy, blown against a tree).

He was a member of the Pythias fraternal lodge. He married Lillian Scantland on Feb. 14, 1927. He died on Feb. 27, 1969.