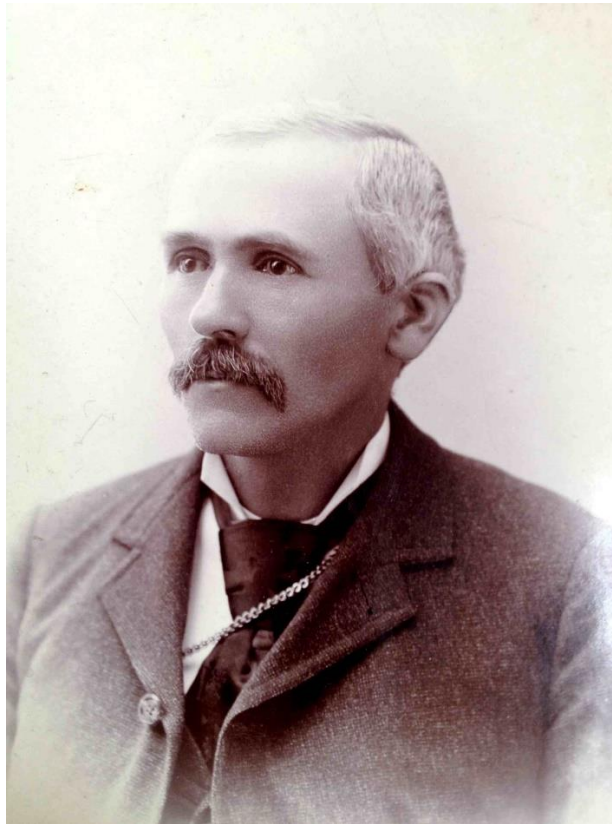


Citizens - Mark B. Covell

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When Mark Bertram Covell died on 21 April 1933 he closed the chapters of life for the pioneer Covell family, who for many years were among the leaders in lumbering activities in the White Lake area. Mark was the last to arrive and the last to survive, passing away 48 years after the death of Covell pioneer, A. J. who died 21 April 1885. For more than 63 years he had been prominent in the business life of this entire White Lake area. He was first a mill employee, then the operator of a general store, shingle mill, lumber mill, lumber barges and later became a dealer in real estate and a banker.

Mark B. Covell was born to Calvin T. and Elizabeth (ne Coleman) Covell in Ridgebury township, Bradford county, Pennsylvania on 26 June 1849. He was one of 12 children, eight of whom came to Whitehall and had much to do with the building up of this area. He came here on 21 October 1870. The first month of his arrival was devoted to work around the old Staples & Covell mill and then he went up into the woods to help at the logging camp during the winter. In the Spring he found his way back to White Lake acting as foreman in the mill for the summer and when winter came, he again returned to the woods to scale and buy logs for the firm.

In 1873 he purchased an interest in the general supply store owned by T. Bennett & Co. The business continued under this name for a short time and then Mr. Bennett sold out to Mr. Covell's brother-in-law, Joseph Hinchman, and the firm name changed to Hinchman & Covell. The store was located near the

tunnel and was burned in the fire on 30 July 1880. Not to be discouraged, he built a brick block on the corner where the former State Bank, now Fetch Brewing Co., would later be built. That building was destroyed in the devastating fire of 18 September 1890.

On 11 February 1875 Mark married Mary Myhra of Norway. She died suddenly on 9 July 1891 and is buried in Oakhurst Cemetery.

Mark became interested in the shingle and lumbering business. He was with the Covell Bros., organization, then a member of the Ocobock and Covell company, followed by a partnership with his brother, Charles E., in the operation of a lumber mill and later in the dealing in real estate. This firm, known as C. E. & M. B. Covell, continued until the death of C. E. in 1924. This last partnership held vast amounts of acreage around the White River, most of which was disposed of after the timber had been cut.

In the early 1880's, with his brothers A. J. and C. E. Covell, and Captain P. D. Campbell, he purchased the propeller R. C. Brittain which they ran as a lumber barge until 1887 when the company, White Lake Transportation Co. built the propeller Hayward. In 1888 they built the propeller M. B. Covell. These vessels handled much of the product of the mills on the lake.

The C. E. and M. B. Covell mill was the last to make a cut on White Lake, and the last to remain standing on White Lake, being destroyed by fire in 1917.

When Mark's eldest brother Andrew died in 1885, the mill business was continued under the name of the estate until 1891 when Mark bought the interest of the heirs in the sawmill property and the firm of C. E. & M. B. Covell was organized.

Mr. Covell married Miss Mary Wilson of Montague on 3 January 1893. They had three children: Emiline "Emma" (1893-1985); Mary Elizabeth (1895-1975); and Mark B. Jr. (1901-1986).

Following the collapse of Whitehall's bank early in the century, Mr. Covell was the leading figure in the organization of a new bank in 1901. He was named its president and ever since that time held a position of trust. Under his direction the State Bank of Whitehall became known as one of the safest and best conducted in Michigan.

Mr. Covell's reputation as a thorough businessman was so well known that he was often asked to take on the administration of certain estates. Following the death of John C. Lewis in 1894, Covell spent most of his time for the next two years handling the affairs of that estate. With the affairs of Mr. Lewis closed by 1900 he was then able to take charge of Mrs. Lewis's interest. Incidentally, Mrs. Lewis was the former Augusta Covell, sister of Mark B. Covell.