

Citizens – W. C. Cotes

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White Lake Area Historical Society



1914 – C. C. Pitkin & Co. Drugs – W. C. Cotes Hardware – A. M. Leighton Grocery

William Chandler Cotes was a resident of Whitehall for 78 years. He was born in Berlin Township, Ionia County on 11 February 1864, to Chandler Cotes and Arphilia Stevens. He moved with his family to Blue Lake Township when he was 3 years old.

He married Josephine Cornelius Klett in Whitehall on 1 August 1894. She was born in VanBuren County 28 Oct 1871 to Christopher and Ann Klett. She came to the area with her parents and siblings as a young girl. William and Josephine had no children.

In January 1911 William was elected one of the County Coroners, a position he would hold for a number of years.

W. C. was associated with Gee and Carr in their undertaking department for 12 years before establishing his own business in December 1911. His hardware and undertaking business was located in the building next to C. G. Pitkin which was later referred to as the Annex and is now part of Pitkin's drug store.

Around 1916 he purchased the Linderman building on the corner of Mears & Colby and relocated where Northland Insurance Services is now.

He was elected President of the Village in 1922 and served until 1925.

In January 1930 W. C. Cotes announced his that he had sold his hardware store to Gordon Meinert. In November 1934, W. C. Cotes Hardware Company was holding a liquidation closeout sale and the building was for sale or rent.

Cotes was active in Whitehall community affairs and served several terms as village president. He was a life member of the Odd Fellows lodge.

After his retirement in 1935, Cotes and his wife would winter in Florida and spend the summers in Whitehall.

W. C. Cotes died in Whitehall 26 April 1945. His wife Josephine continued to live in Whitehall until her death 31 December 1960. They are both buried in Oakhurst Cemetery along with other Cotes family members.