

Vessels - M. B. Covell

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Steambarge Mark B. Covell in Chicago – Date unknown

The Mark B. Covell was built for the White Lake Transportation Co. in 1888 to replace the A. D. Hayward. She was built for the lumber trade and carrying some passengers. She ran from White Lake to Chicago.

Built in Manitowac, Wisconsin by Burger and Burger, the wooden hulled vessel was 130.9' in length with a 26.8' beam. The engine was built by the Montague Iron Works. She had the capacity to handle 250,000 feet of lumber.

In March 1889 the Captain and his crew were announced. Captain Horace Sanders was in charge with assistance from Billy Ingles and Elisha Stevens. Derrick Hall was assigned to turn the throttle assisted by Frank Coleman, and John Straney was to furnish the fuel. Jonah Cotton and Cash Braggs attended the culinary department and staterooms.

On Friday morning, April 11, 1890, the steamer Covell succeeded in plowing her way out of the channel, and as she swung about in the high seas to take a header to Chicago, she struck an unknown bar about

500 feet from the south pier. She was in imminent danger of disaster, and undoubtedly would have gone to pieces had she not been such a staunch boat.

Captain Lysaght's lifesaving crew immediately sent a boat out to her, and all hands turned in to jettison her cargo. About 1500 oak ties were thrown overboard and the boat kept hard at work. She finally cleared the bar and immediately brought it back into the harbor again. Most of the jettisoned cargo went on the beach and was afterwards picked up, so that the damage was not so great. The Captain, however, made a public protest as to the need for the harbor to be made safe and accessible, an issue that was not a new one.

In March 1891, the M. B. Covell was sold to Smith & Kitzinger of Manistee and operated by Manistee & Milwaukee Transportation Co.