

MUNICIPAL REFERENCE LIBRARY

300 CITY HALL

CITY OFFICIALS

**NAME**      Bonsall, Major William Hartshorn      (deceased July  
20, 1905)

**PUBLIC OFFICES HELD**

**(DATE)**

**CITY:**

City Council	1891-1895
President	1893-1895

**COUNTY:**

**STATE**

**FEDERAL:**

**CIVIC ACTIVITIES:**

**BUSINESS OR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

Army officer  
City official  
Insurance executive  
Publisher

**PORTRAIT:**

**ATTACHED OR ENCLOSED IN ENVELOPE:**

**PORTRAITS APPEARING ELSEWHERE (DATES)**

The Los Angeles Public Library  
Local History Collection  
Biography

NAME Bonsall, William Hartshorn (deceased July 20, 1905)

Occupation Insurance and Publisher

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Birth (Date and Place) February 10, 1846, Cincinnati, Ohio

FATHER Samuel Bonsall

Birth (Date and Place) \_\_\_\_\_

If Deceased, When \_\_\_\_\_

MOTHER Mary Mills

Birth (Date and Place) \_\_\_\_\_

If Deceased, When \_\_\_\_\_

IF MARRIED, TO WHOM Ellen Doddridge McFarland

Birth of Same (Date and Place) \_\_\_\_\_

If Deceased, When Dec. 6, 1924, Los Angeles

When Married October 2, 1871, Portsmouth, Ohio

CHILDREN (Married Names of Daughters)

Jennie; Mrs. Thomas P. Newton

Elisa; Mrs. Samuel Haskins

Bessie, Mrs. Ernest C. Hamilton

Samuel N.

Albert M.



ANCESTORS OF DISTINCTION OR LOCAL INTEREST

(Please include names of local interest as "forty-niners," or any one connected with the affairs or development of the state or city, as officials, professional men, merchants, etc.)

Multiple horizontal lines for handwritten entries.

EDUCATION (Schools, Colleges, Degrees, Etc.)

Public schools, Cincinnati, Ohio, and Ironton, Ohio

CLUBS, LEARNED SOCIETIES, ETC.

Loyal Legion

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION Christian Scientist

POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS Republican

RESIDENCE IN CALIFORNIA SINCE 1886

## SKETCH

(Please make this as full as possible, giving business affiliations, positions of honor or trust with dates if possible.)

William Hartshorn Bonsall was born at Cincinnati, Ohio on February 10, 1846, the son of Samuel and Mary (Mills) Bonsall. He received his education in Cincinnati and at Ironton, Ohio. In August of 1862 he entered the Union Army as a private in the One Hundred and Seventeenth Ohio Infantry, which soon afterwards was reorganized and became the First Ohio Heavy Artillery. He served throughout the remaining period of the Civil War, being promoted to regimental commissary sergeant in January of 1863 to Lieutenant of Company G in August of the same year, and to regimental quartermaster in December of 1864. At the close of the War he was tendered the rank of Major in the regular Army but was forced to forego an Army career by the death of his father, which occurring at the time, placed upon him the support of the family. He was mustered out of the service July 25, 1865. At the time of his death he was a member of the Loyal Legion.

In the latter part of 1865 Major Bonsall removed to Portsmouth, Ohio and engaged in the insurance business. In that city on October 2, 1871 he married Ellen Doddridge McFarland, eldest daughter of Albert McFarland of Los Angeles, treasurer of the Times-Mirror Company. Leaving the insurance business, Major Bonsall entered the newspaper field, becoming one of the editors and publishers of the Portsmouth Ohio Tribune, positions which he filled successfully for two years. He then removed with his family to Elizabeth, N.J. where he resumed the insurance business and became the publisher of an insurance journal until November of 1886, when with his wife and children he came to Los Angeles to make his home.

He at once engaged in the real estate business, having an office at the corner of Main and Court Streets, and later left this profession to become traveling adjuster for one of the large insurance companies. In the latter work he remained until his death.

continued

SKETCH: Bonsall, Major William Hartshorn

In 1891 Major Bonsall was elected on the Republican ticket to the City Council from the Third Ward, and two years later was reelected and served as president of that body.

In 1897 President McKinley appointed Major Bonsall a member of the Board of Managers of National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers and by virtue of his residence in Los Angeles the Soldiers Home in Los Angeles came under his control to a degree as local manager. He served in this post for six years being succeeded at the expiration of his term by ex-Governor Markham of Pasadena.

Major Bonsall died at his home in Los Angeles on July 20, 1905.

**I ANECDOTES AND PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS:**



**SOURCES OF INFORMATION:**

**BOOKS:**

**NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS:**

**Los Angeles Times**

**PERSONAL INTERVIEW:** Telephone interview with  
Samuel N. Bonsall (son)

**INTERVIEWED BY:**

**DATE OF INTERVIEW** November 13, 1937  
**Written by:** Florence H. Goddard