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300 CITY HALL

CITY OFFICIALS

Rees, Samuel

NAME Rees, Samuel (deceased October 24, 1914)

PUBLIC OFFICES HELD

(DATE)

CITY:

City Council	1891-1892
Board of Public Works	1891-1892

COUNTY:

STATE

FEDERAL:

CIVIC ACTIVITIES:

Innovator of business reforms
Pioneer real estate and community developer
Founder of the Hollenbeck Heights Methodist Church
Chamber of Commerce activities
Civic and welfare promotional activities

BUSINESS OR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Business man
Clerk and accountant
City official
Community builder
Merchant and manufacturer

PORTRAIT:

2 cuts,
ATTACHED OR ENCLOSED IN ENVELOPE: attached

PORTRAITS APPEARING ELSEWHERE (DATES)

Guinn's History of California, Los Angeles
and Environs, p 102

ANECDOTES AND PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS:

In 1874 when Samuel Rees arrived in Los Angeles the city's population was 6500 persons. From that day to the time of his death forty years later Mr. Rees was an enthusiastic believer in the future of Los Angeles as a great metropolis.

He pioneered in business, real estate, and civic development, all toward this end, and remained progressive minded throughout his career.

When he built his home on his unimproved land in Brooklyn Heights there were no roads, streets, sewers, or improvements of any sort; water for domestic purposes had to be carted to the premises in barrels.

A clever and facile rhymster, with a flair for the caustic, Mr. Rees is said to have enlivened numerous council and business meetings with verse about his associates and subjects before the board.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

BOOKS:

Guinn's History of California, Los Angeles and
Environs, vol 11, page 103

NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS:

PERSONAL INTERVIEW: With daughter, Mrs. Elliott

INTERVIEWED BY: Luella Sawyer

DATE OF INTERVIEW Fall of 1934

Rewritten by: Clare Wallace
December 1, 1936

The Los Angeles Public Library
Local History Collection
Biography

NAME Rees, Samuel (deceased October 24,
1914)

Occupation Business man and realtor

Address _____

Birth (Date and Place) October 3, 1846, Staffordshire,
England

FATHER William Rees

Birth (Date and Place) England

If Deceased, When In the late seventies

MOTHER Jane Stanton

Birth (Date and Place) England

If Deceased, When About 1852

IF MARRIED, TO WHOM Lydia Dangerfield

Birth of Same (Date and Place) Jan. 30, 1844, Staffordshire,
England

If Deceased, When November 28, 1913, Los Angeles

When Married 1869

CHILDREN (Married Names of Daughters)

Lillie S.: Mrs. E.A. Guest

Rosa F.: Mrs. A.I. Smith

Mimmie E.: Mrs. F.C. Elliott

Ethel R.: Mrs. Searle

Harry S. (deceased)

Walter H.

Samuel C.

TITLES OF BOOKS, ARTICLES, MUSIC, OR OTHER CREATIVE WORK

(In the case of printed matter, please give date and publisher; of periodical publications also name of magazine and date.)

Author of articles concerning the Columbian
Exposition at Chicago, in 1893, and civic and wel-
fare issues of Los Angeles, for the local press.

REVIEWS, CRITICISMS, AND OTHER BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES

(Please note printed matter concerning yourself or your work. We would appreciate any such material you may send, clippings, reviews, portrait.)

SKETCH

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

Samuel Rees was born October 3, 1846, in Staffordshire, England. He received very little formal education as the necessity of earning a livelihood obliged him to leave school at an early age. At twenty-one years of age he left the shires and emigrated to America to seek his fortune.

Before pioneering to Los Angeles in 1874 he clerked for the Pennsylvania railroad in Panhandle division 4, in Pittsburg about seven years.

In Los Angeles Mr. Rees served as bookkeeper for a firm of blacksmiths and wheelwrights until he had sufficient money saved to enter business for himself, which he later did with Robert E. Wirsching as partner. This pioneer firm, which was one of the first business houses in Southern California to order goods directly from the east, engaged in general blacksmithing and manufacture of wagons in a large shop on Aliso street.

The firm, though sustaining losses of \$15,000 in the great floods of 1884, prospered, and later purchased the business of another large firm and after adding a stock of modern agricultural implements established headquarters on Los Angeles street.

During these years, while engaging in business, Mr. Rees backed up his faith in the future of Los Angeles by purchasing unimproved land remote from the business and residential centers of the city. He bought seventeen acres, at \$20 per acre, on the east side in what later became Brooklyn Heights, which he improved and developed, and upon which he built his home. He also pioneered in real estate ventures in other unpopulated sections of Los Angeles.

In 1891 Mr. Rees was elected to the City Council from the 9th ward, serving two years. While a member of the Council he served as chairman of the Finance Committee, and on the Zanja, and Gas and Light committees. At the same time he served on

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R92
R328
VP

Rees, Samuel

City Council...1891-1892

Board of Public Works...1891-1892



Samuel Rees

the Board of Public Works, which at that period was composed of five members from the City Council.

Mr. Rees was largely responsible for the establishment of Hollenbeck Park as it is today. Through his efforts he increased the original gift of three and one-half acres of land from Mrs. Hollenbeck and ex-Mayor Workman to about thirty acres, and succeeded in having the gift accepted and sufficient amount appropriated for its development and maintenance during his councilmanic days.

Mr. Rees died October 24, 1914, at his home in Los Angeles.

HOBBIES: Mr. Rees' interests were civic and welfare development and the affairs of the pioneer societies.



Samuel Rees