

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

REFERENCE SERIES

PETER SONNA

November 22, 1835-July 9, 1907

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Peter Sonna was born November 22, 1835, in New York City. He went west to California in about 1849, then traveled to Lewiston and the northern Idaho mines. In 1862 he went to Boise Basin and in 1863 to the new Boise City where, with a partner, he opened a hardware and general merchandise store at Ninth and Main streets. About 1870, he sold his interest in the store and returned to New York. However, two years later he took the business back along with property across Main Street. He later sold his store to John Broadbent and built the Sonna Block--with a store and opera house--across the street.

Sonna joined the board of directors of the First National Bank of Idaho in 1876. He was elected vice-president in 1890 and continued in that position until his death. He was one of the investors in the Artesian Hot and Cold Water Company, and he built the system to bring water to Fort Boise and the Sonna Block. He served on the Capitol Building Commission and was instrumental in getting a railroad line to Boise and in moving the railroad station north of the river in 1893. He was elected mayor that same year, serving until July 1895.

Sonna married Mary Anderson in 1870. They had six children: Anne, Amelia, Mary Agatha, Susan Laurina, and Peter. Sonna died July 9, 1907, in Boise.

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