

## JOHN WAGNER

John Wagner, a widely known and highly respected citizen of Los Angeles, has here resided since the middle '80s and is now living retired in the enjoyment of well earned ease. He was born on a farm in Ozaukee county, Wisconsin, April 30, 1862, his parents being Michael and Margaret (Hittinger) Wagner, whose family numbered three sons and two daughters. One son and one daughter still survive. In the year 1884 Michael Wagner came west to California and purchased two tracts of land embracing three hundred and twenty acres each, or six hundred and forty acres in all, at that time outside the limits of Los Angeles. His wife and children joined him here in 1886 and subsequently he acquired an additional tract of land comprising two hundred and eighty acres. Michael Wagner erected a home on what is now Manchester avenue and with the aid of his sons developed and improved his property, which he devoted to the cultivation of hay, grain and beans. Practically all of the land now lies within the corporate limits of Los Angeles. Mr. Wagner departed this life in January, 1893, being for a quarter of a century survived by his wife, whose death occurred in 1916.

Spending his early years in Wisconsin, John Wagner was afforded the opportunity of attending school only a few months in the winter seasons. He was twenty-four years old when his parents established their home in Los Angeles county, California, and he assisted in the improvement and cultivation of his father's land, which was largely in a wild state. At the time of his marriage his father gave him ninety acres, to which he added one hundred and sixty acres by

purchase in 1892, and after the death of his father he acquired still more land. In 1922 he disposed of the greater part of his holdings, which, together with other of his father's lands, have been subdivided, and a region that only a few years ago was the haunt of the jack rabbit and the ground squirrel is now solidly built with fine homes, business blocks, schools, churches, etc. Mr. Wagner was formerly identified with the State Bank but has retired from active business affairs, enjoying the evening of life in his comfortable California home at 1100 West Eighty-fifth street, Los Angeles, surrounded by his children and grandchildren.

On November 19, 1889, Mr. Wagner was united in marriage to Anna Mary Herberger, who was born in St. Cloud, Minnesota, and in 1887 made the journey from Minnesota to California in company with her parents, both of whom passed away in Los Angeles. Mr. and Mrs. Wagner are the parents of twelve children, as follows: Amanda, who is Mrs. Edward Ronk and the mother of two children, Mary Ann and Theresa; Margaret Ann, who is Sister Vibiana of the Dominican order; Otto, who married Margaret Rupp of Hannibal, Missouri and has three children, John, Richard and Mary Lou; Irene, who married John Homan; Joseph, who married Eleanor Sher and has four children, Dorothy, Philip, Donald and Kenneth; Anna, who is the wife of Clarence Casper and the mother of four children, Clarence, Virginia, Dolores and Robert; Peter; Martha, who is Mrs. John Funk and has a son, John; Cecelia, who is Mrs. Grady Gullledge and has two children, Franklin and Elaine; Leo G.; John A. who married Dorothy Holcomb and has a daughter, Patricia; and Adelaide. All are native sons and daughters of the Golden state. The Wagner children, together with others, first attended the Hyde Park school and afterward went to St. Joseph's school, both a long distance away from their homes. John Wagner, our subject, assisted by his brother Michael, and brother-in-law Michael Mertens, built the first schoolhouse. At the request of Mrs. Michael Wagner

the school was named St. Michael in honor of her husband and Mass was said in it by the Bishop. Later they also helped to erect St. Michael's Church at Manchester Heights. There were then thirty-five children in the locality. The present schoolhouse and St. Michael's Church are the result of the pioneering of the Wagner family, who have been generous donors to all worthy public projects. The Wagner family are communicants of the Catholic Church and fraternally John Wagner is affiliated with the Knights of Columbus of the third degree. He is a loyal Californian, devoted to the advancement of Los Angeles and its citizens, and his varied interests keep him refreshingly young in spirit.