

JAMES WAGNER.

Among the present residents of Adams county who can claim to be in reality old residents is James Wagner. Less than half of the last century had been told when he came to Indiana . It is true that he was but a small lad when he came, but that does not invalidate the claim that he was one of the pioneers and is still one of the oldest settlers of this county. He was born in Fairfield county, Ohio , near the town of Lancaster , November 10, 1834. His parents were John N. and Elizabeth (La Clear) Wagner. Both were born in France and migrated to America in 1834. They lived for the first five years after their arrival in this country in Fairfield county, Ohio , and then came to Indiana . In 1845 the elder Wagner purchased land in Adams county, and this land is in possession of James, his son, today. Indiana land was not an attractive proposition to the pioneers of the early decades of the nineteenth century when viewed from the standpoint of physical beauty. The land was a wilderness infested with wild beasts, and the pioneers had a serious problem confronting them. The land secured by John Wagner was not better than any other. It was covered with timber and altogether unimproved. However, he erected the customary log cabin and began to create a farm. His labors were hard and he did not live to see his land the fine tract it is today. He died two years after reaching Adams county, leaving a widow and two boys. The sons were little fellows at the time of their father's death, but they were determined to help their mother and did all they could to improve the place. As they grew to manhood they added from time to time the necessary improvements and erected better buildings than those of their early days. Fences were stretched along the fields and the necessary tiling was laid and ditches constructed to drain the area that was swampy or otherwise too moist for cultivation. The place, which consisted of one hundred and twenty acres, was gradually brought under cultivation and today all is in fine shape. Eight acres of timber land are preserved because of the fine quality of the timber on it.

In 1855 James Wagner was married to Lydia L. Martz, a daughter of Henry and Catherine (Lydic) Martz. Her father was a native of Maryland and her mother was born in Bedford county, Pennsylvania . They came to Indiana and settled in the Adams county wilderness in 1838. They bought land in Monroe township and lived there until their deaths. Mr. Martz died in 1870 and his wife survived him twelve years and died in 1883. Thirteen children came to bless the union of James Wagner and Lydia Martz. Of these children nine are still living. Those living are: Mary, now Mrs. Andrews, of Columbus , Ohio ; Elizabeth, now Mrs. Middleton, resides in Arkansas ; Louisa, now Mrs. Hunter, of Decatur; Nicholas, a farmer in Washington township; Ella, now Mrs. Estell, of Cincinnati , Ohio ; Eva, now Mrs. Dimond, of Hartford, Connecticut; Angie, now Mrs. Peterson, residing on the home farm; Leonard, residing in Fort Wayne ; Jesse, residing in Fort Wayne . Those dead are: Emily, Rena, Frank and Ida.

The entire life of Mr. Wagner has been spent on the family homestead. He has grown up with his township and has witnessed and taken part in many changes that have come about. He is a public-spirited man and enjoys the esteem and fullest confidence of his fellow men. He has served his neighbors in public capacities several years and has been a supervisor. He is an enthusiastic member of the Horse Thief Detective Association and other bodies devoted to the improvement and protection of the district. He votes an independent ticket, favoring the man rather than the party. With the members of his family he is a religious man and a supporter of churches. His home is pleasant and most comfortable.