Charles Wagner ranks as one of Frackville’s foremost and most entertaining characters. Born in Altena, Germany, France, Aug. 2, 1843, he is a son of Henry and Sophia (Kline) Wagner, the former of whom was a native of Germany. In 1844 Henry Wagner removed to Austin, France, where he was superintendent of a distillery until 1849, when he returned to Prussia and with his brother-in-law, Jacob Snyder, conducted a stone quarry which furnished the stone for the building of the famous bridge over the Saar river at Saarbrucken. This business was continued until the fall of 1860, when Mr. Wagner immigrated with his family to the United States and located at Tumbling Run, Schuylkill county, where he was engaged in superintending the Schuylkill Valley railroad between Anthony and Tuscannia until 1872. While engaged in this work he purchased a farm of seventy-two acres at Tumbling Run, and this was operated by his children while he was engaged in his railway duties.

In 1872 he removed to Frackville and purchased a number of town lots, on which he erected substantial buildings. He continued to reside there until his death, in July, 1911, at the age of eighty-four. He was a man of great business acumen and was a zealous worker in and an ardent member of the Lutheran church, in which organization he had at various times held all the executive offices.

Mr. Wagner was twice married, his first wife having been Margaret, a daughter of Conrad Kline, of Gueltingen, Germany, who bore him two children—Catherine, who married Engelbert Saner, and Henry C., both of whom were born in Prussia. She died in 1840, at the age of twenty-seven years, and Mr. Wagner led to the altar his second wife, Sophia Kline, and they became the parents of these children—Charles C., the immediate subject of this review, and William C., Caroline, Reinhart A., and Augustine.

Charles C. Wagner was reared in Schuylkill county from the age of five years and was educated in the public schools of the day. At the age of thirteen he lost three fingers of his left hand while employed about the mines, and later he served as an apprentice in three and one-half years at the tailor’s trade, in the shop of Charles Bensinger, of Middletown. When the comber class of war broke out, Charles enlisted in the Union, our subject was one of the gallant boys who donned a suit of blue and went forth to the fray, bearing the name of Wagner, a name which is forever memorable in civil wars, the war between the states. Sept. 11, 1861, he enlisted in Company B, 19th infantry, and he was honorably discharged at the expiration of his three months’ service, Feb. 22, 1863, he re-enlisted in Company I, 4th Pennsylvania, and served until the close of the war, he took part in many of the severe engagements of the war, among which may be mentioned the battle of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania Court House, Cold Harbor, White Oak Swamp, and the siege of Petersburg. He was wounded in the right leg at Fort Hill, on April 2, 1863, and was honorable discharged from the service at Harrisburg in June, 1863.

On his return home he took up the peaceful battle of life with the same characteristic courage which had dominated his actions in the nervous wreacking of time. He entered the tailoring business at Mahanoy City where he remained until 1876, after which, with his brother, William C., he was engaged for two years in conducting a butcher shop at Gilberton. They then returned to Mahanoy City, where they were engaged in the same business until 1881, when they located in Frackville and conducted the business under the firm name of Wagner Bros. until 1894, when the subject of this sketch became the sole proprietor, and he conducted the business most successfully until Sept., 1926, when he disposed of it to his sons, who have since continued it under the name of Wagner’s Sons. This is the largest concern of the kind in the county outside of the city of Pottsville.

Mr. Wagner maintains a deep interest in his old comrades in arms, as is vouched for by his membership in John S. Meredith Post, No. 486, Grand Army of the Republic of Frackville. He is a firm supporter of the principles of the Republican party, in whose ranks he is an active worker, having served as a member of the borough council of Frackville for nine years, and as a member of the school board for three consecutive terms. He is a man of sterling worth and integrity and is always to be found among the foremost in promoting matters that pertain to the public welfare.

He is interested in many business and financial industries, being connected with the Pennsylvania Lumber Company of Bellmesterville, the C. C. the Chinen and Bellmesterville railroad of South Carolina, and is a stockholder in and a director of the First National Bank of Frackville. Both he and his family are members of the Lutheran church, and in 1910, Mr. Wagner married Susannah, a daughter of John and Adalina (Harter) Osterh, of Malvern, Pennsylvania, and of the Altena, Lorraine, France, and her mother of Schuylkill county. This union has been blessed with seven children—Claude (deceased), Edith, Henry A., Eveline, William C., Mary and Carl.