

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

September 30, 1959

### **Honor Historian**

The Henry R. Wagner Memorial Award for outstanding achievement in historical scholarship was presented by the California Historical Society at the first annual Wagner Memorial Award Dinner held Monday evening in the ballroom of the Society's Mansion, 2090 Jackson St., San Francisco.

Henry R. Wagner, in whose honor the award is appropriately named, was one of the West's eminent historians, the author of the famous "Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast of America," and the exhaustive "Cartography of the Northwest Coast of America." He founded the California Historical Society Quarterly and was a key member of the group which revived and reorganized the Society in 1922. The Royal Geographical Society of London made Wagner a Fellow, and he was the recipient of honorary degrees from Yale University, Pomona College, and the University of California.

The award is to be made annually to the author of the work published within the preceding two calendar years in the field of California history, cartography, or bibliography, which the Awards Committee shall deem most worthy of recognition. Judges for this year's award, were: George P. Hammond, director of the Bancroft Library, University of California; Glen S. Dumke, president of San Francisco State College; and Thomas W. Streeter, famous collector and bibliographer, of Morristown, New Jersey.

Carl Irving Wheat, born in Massachusetts, was graduated from Pomona College and after receiving his law degree from Harvard was admitted to the bar in California in 1920. He has had a distinguished career in the legal profession in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, D. C. He has been a trustee of Pomona College since 1951 and was awarded an honorary degree by that institution last June. Mr. Wheat has, nevertheless, taken time to write numerous historical works on the Western United States, to edit learned journals and collections of historical material and to contribute articles of historical subjects to various periodicals.

The medal which Mr. Wheat received is the work of Sculptor William O. Huff of Alamo, California, and bears a profile likeness of Henry R. Wagner.

In addition to the presentation award, Dr. George Hammond gave a brief talk on Mr. Wheat and the importance of his contributions; and Dr. Charles L. Camp discussed the life and work of Henry R. Wagner.

The distinction of the recipient of this first Wagner award would indicate that the annual event will become one of the most important marks of recognition in the field of western history and certainly a significant contribution on the part of the California Historical Society in furthering the highest historical scholarship

The American Association of State and Local history and the Society of American Archivists are holding their joint convention in one of the most historic cities in the nation. It is hoped that members from each organization not only will participate freely in the scheduled events but enjoy the numerous historic shrines close by.

There will be an unusual opportunity on the afternoon of Oct. 8 to visit the National Park renovation of Independence Hall and Society Hill area of historic Philadelphia. The staff of National Park Service will conduct a tour of these places for the historians and archivists. The Monterey History and Art Assn. holds membership in the American Assn. of State and Local History but the organization will not be represented at the Philadelphia meeting.