

The Influence of John Joseph Martin and His Family on the Landscape of Los Angeles

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The pursuit of genealogy is often embarked upon to prove connections with someone great; A President, Royalty, or a world-renowned artist or scientist -someone to whom we can, in our own mind, attach our self worth. To the average seeker, John Joseph Martin, was no such man. He was a simple Irish born furniture dealer who raised his family in the small town of LaSalle, Illinois. The average historian does not know him. Though successful, he was not exceptionally wealthy; he was not a war hero or even a college graduate. His influence, however, can be seen in the development of Los Angeles, California as his children involved themselves in pursuits that made landmark changes throughout the County.

Fig. A John Joseph Martin¹

1. **JOHN JOSEPH MARTIN** was the youngest son of Irish immigrants Matthew Martin and Jane Mullen². He was born 9 Jul 1853³ in County Longford, Ireland⁴ and he died 4 Oct 1930 in Los Angeles, California.⁵ John married Margaret A. Carey, born in New York City in Apr 1854⁶ and died 12 Jan 1925 in Los Angeles, California.⁷ She was the daughter of Irish immigrants John Carey and Margaret Duffy.⁸ They married 10 Aug 1873 at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in LaSalle, Illinois.⁹

How and when the Martins came to live at LaSalle, Illinois is unknown. His elderly parents were living there in 1870.¹⁰ John first appeared in LaSalle records when he married Margaret in 1873. The family was undeniably Catholic. His sister, Jane was a nun and went by the name Sister Mary Kasper¹¹ and his son John Joseph Martin Jr. entered the Priesthood. In 1880, John

¹ Photograph of John Joseph Martin, Sr.; Martin family papers, 2015, privately held by Patricia L. Duro 17804 Santa Gertrudes Cir. Fountain Valley, CA. Was previously held by great granddaughter, Mary Catherine (Ouellet) Williams, and given to its current owner in 1998.

² LaSalle County, Illinois, probate case files, box 353, file 5, Matthew Martin (1899), court testimony of Ann Quinn and Frank Martin; LaSalle County Genealogy Guild, Ottawa.

³ Los Angeles County, California, death certificate no. 10793, John Martin; Los Angeles County Clerk recorder, Norwalk.

⁴ Los Angeles County, California, death certificate no. 15638, Emmet Giles Martin; Los Angeles County Clerk recorder, Norwalk.

⁵ Los Angeles Co., Ca, death certificate no. 10793, John Martin.

⁶ 1900 U.S. census, LaSalle County, Illinois, population schedule, LaSalle Township, p. 2 (penned) B (stamped), dwelling 32, family 36, line 65, Margaret A. Martin; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://ancestry.com> : accessed 14 Jun 2015), FHL microfilm 1240316, roll 316; citing NARA microfilm publication T623.

⁷ Los Angeles County, California, death certificate, Local Registered no. 434, Margaret A. Martin; Los Angeles County Clerk recorder, Norwalk.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ LaSalle County, Illinois, St. Patrick's Church Records, Marriages, John Martin and Margaret A Carey, 10 Aug 1873, LaSalle County Genealogy Guild, Ottawa.

¹⁰ 1870 U.S. census, LaSalle County, Illinois, population schedule, LaSalle, p. 65 (penned), dwelling 533, family 503, Mathew Martin; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://ancestry.com> : accessed 14 Jun 2015), FHL microfilm 545742; citing NARA microfilm publication M593, roll 243.

¹¹ LaSalle County, Ill., probate case files, box 353, file 5, Matthew Martin (1899), court testimony of Ann Quinn and Frank Martin, 8 Feb 1906.

was a grocer.¹² He often carried out his Catholic faith by providing for the poor, although he was diligent to make claims to the city pauper's fund for providing the poor with groceries¹³ and for taking them in.¹⁴ By 1887, John J. Martin had partnered with his father in law, John J. Carey, a casket maker and undertaker. Together they formed "Carey & Martin, dealers in Furniture and Carpets, and undertakers."¹⁵

John and Margaret had 9 children. He grew up and raised his family in LaSalle, Illinois until the early 1900s. His eldest son, Vincent Matthew did not appear in any records after the 1880 census. The 1900 census, however, stated that Margaret Martin was the mother of 9 children, and 9 were living.¹⁶ What became of Vincent is unknown. John's oldest brother, Matthew died 9 Apr 1899.¹⁷ John was the undertaker¹⁸ and he petitioned the probate court regarding his brother's property.¹⁹ By this time, John's children were beginning to set out on their own. His son John Joseph Jr. went off to Seminary in Missouri.²⁰ Albert Carey went to college in Chicago to study architectural engineering,²¹ while Frank helped with his father's business.²² In the late 1800's, While LaSalle maintained itself as a small town, oil was discovered in Los Angeles and the rapidly growing city became a draw for John's children, and eventually the rest of the family. John's father-in-law, John Carey died in January 1905.²³ The same year, although his Company remained in the LaSalle City directory, John J. Martin had moved to Los Angeles, where his sons John Jr. and Albert were beginning their careers.²⁴ He continued to make his living there as a furniture salesman. In 1910, he owned a home in Los Angeles,²⁵ providing a stable place for his family to come and go. He lived in Los Angeles for the rest of his life and shared his home with one or another of his adult children and other members of his family, at various different times. John's wife, Margaret died in 1925 at age 70.²⁶ He followed her in death 5 years later at the age of 77.²⁷

This unpretentious furniture dealer I am sure did not make much of a personal dent in Los Angeles. He was just one in the sea of merchants that made the city go; but his children left a lasting impression. Four of his sons were involved in building, design, and engineering in some

¹² 1880 U.S. census, LaSalle County, Illinois, population schedule, City of LaSalle, p. 29 (penned) A (stamped), dwelling 258, family 265, John Martin; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://ancestry.com> : accessed 14 Jun 2015), FHL microfilm 1254223, roll 223; citing NARA microfilm publication T9.

¹³ Ottawa, Illinois, *The Ottawa Free Trader*, 29 Jul 1882, p.6, col. 4, LaSalle; digital images, *Chronicling America* (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov> : accessed 6 Jun 2015).

¹⁴ "Recapitulation of Pauper Expenses," *The Ottawa Free Trader*, 30 Jul 1887, unpaginated, image 6, col. 6, LaSalle; digital images, *Chronicling America* (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov> : accessed 6 Jun 2015).

¹⁵ LaSalle County, Illinois, probate case files, box 353, file 5, Matthew Martin (1899), bill of sale, 29 Sep 1899; LaSalle County Genealogy Guild, Ottawa.

¹⁶ 1900 U.S. census, LaSalle County, Illinois, population schedule, LaSalle Township, p. 2 (penned) B (stamped), dwelling 32, family 36, line 65 Margaret A. Martin.

¹⁷ LaSalle County, Illinois, probate case files, box 353, file 5, Matthew Martin (1899), petition, 9 Apr 1899; LaSalle County Genealogy Guild, Ottawa.

¹⁸ LaSalle Co., Ill., probate case files, box 353, file 5, Matthew Martin (1899), bill of sale, 29 Sep 1899.

¹⁹ LaSalle Co., Ill., probate case files, box 353, file 5, Matthew Martin (1899), petition, 9 Apr 1899.

²⁰ "Rev J.J. Martin Chosen as head of University," *Los Angeles Herald* (Los Angeles, Ca.), 2 Aug 1910, page 2, col. 5; digital images, *Chronicling America* (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov> : accessed 20 Jun 2015).

²¹ Linda Arntzenius, "Building Los Angeles," *USC Trojan Family Magazine* (Autumn 1997), online magazine, (<http://tfm.usc.edu/autumn-1997/building-los-angeles> : accessed 25 Jun 2015), par. 5.

²² W. H. McCoy, compiler, *McCoy's LaSalle and Peru City Directory 1905-1906* (Keokuk, Iowa: McCoy Directory Company); digital images, *US City Directories, 1821-1989, Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 9 Jun 2014), p. 117, "Martin, John."

²³ LaSalle County, Illinois, personal and statistical particulars and medical certificate of death, John Carey [signed by P.M. Burke 28 Jan 1905, [not dated or signed by county clerk]; LaSalle County Genealogy Guild, Ottawa.

²⁴ McCoy, *McCoy's LaSalle and Peru City Directory 1905-1906*, Keokuk, Iowa; p. 117, "Martin, John."

²⁵ 1910 U.S. census, Los Angeles County, California, population schedule, Los Angeles Township precinct 1721, Sheet 7 (penned) A (stamped), dwelling 195, family 197, John Martin; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://ancestry.com> : accessed 14 Jun 2015), FHL microfilm 1374093; citing NARA microfilm publication T624, roll 80.

²⁶ Los Angeles Co., Ca., death certificate, Local Registered no. 434, Margaret A. Martin.

²⁷ Los Angeles Co., Ca, death certificate no. 10793, John Martin.

way. His son, Rev. John Joseph Martin Jr. was a Catholic Priest; but he also invented a streetcar railway track,²⁸ and held a patent on its design.²⁹ Rev. Martin studied at St. Vincent's college in Los Angeles and later became its vice rector before he moved on to oversee St. Vincent de Paul University, Chicago, then St Vincent de Paul University, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and several other appointments that followed.³⁰

John Sr.'s third son, Albert Carey Martin became a prominent Los Angeles architect, designing buildings such as Los Angeles City Hall, Grauman's Million Dollar Theater, and St. Vincent de Paul Cathedral, all of which stand today as Los Angeles Landmarks. Albert's children took over his Architectural firm and his grandsons Christopher C. Martin and David C. Martin still run his firm, AC Martin Partners today.³¹ His fourth son, Frank E. Martin became a structural engineer, specializing in concrete and cement. He worked on the Los Angeles Aqueduct during the controversial Owens River project,³² which was instrumental in changing both the physical and the political landscape of Los Angeles County. John's youngest son, Emmet served in World War I and was also a structural engineer.³³ Exactly what it was that John J Martin Sr. did to inspire his children is unknown. Perhaps it was his Catholic faith, perhaps he instilled a sense of industry; maybe he pushed his boys to go to college and make something of themselves. Maybe it was all of those things. Whatever it was, it is clear that his influence inspired confidence and industry in his descendants. Without him, the landscape of Los Angeles would look undoubtedly different today.



Fig. C St Vincent de Paul Cathedral, Los Angeles³⁵



Fig. B Los Angeles City Hall dedication 1928³⁴

²⁸ "Priest is Inventor of New Rail System," *Los Angeles Herald*, 2 May 1909, page 9, col. 2; digital images, *Chronicling America* (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov> : accessed 29 Jun 2015).

²⁹ "US Patent Full-Page Images," digital images, *United States Patent and Trademark Office* (<http://patft.uspto.gov/netathtml/PTO/pating.htm> : accessed 10 Jun 2015), John J. Martin, Railway, patent no. 910,559 (1909); original file location not provided.

³⁰ "Rev J.J. Martin Chosen as head of University," *Los Angeles Herald*, 2 Aug 1910, page 2, col. 5.

³¹ Arntzenius, "Building Los Angeles," par. 5.

³² Mary Catherine (Ouellet) Williams, granddaughter of Frank E. Martin, (17804 Santa Gertrudes Cir Fountain Valley, CA 92708), interview by Patricia L. Duro, 20 Jun 2015, transcript privately held by interviewer, 17804 Santa Gertrudes Cir Fountain Valley, CA 92708, 2015.

³³ 1930 U.S. census, Los Angeles County, California, population schedule, Los Angeles City, Sheet 5 (penned) A (stamped), dwelling 57, family 74, John Martin; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://ancestry.com> : accessed 14 Jun 2015), FHL microfilm 2339877; citing NARA microfilm publication T626, roll 142.

³⁴ Photograph of Los Angeles City Hall on it's dedication, 1928; digital image, *ACMartin.com* (<http://www.acmartin.com/portfolio/los-angeles-city-hall> : accessed 29 Jun 2015).

³⁵ Photograph of St. Vincent de Paul Cathedral, Los Angeles; digital image, *bigorangelandmarks.blogspot.com* (<http://bigorangelandmarks.blogspot.com/2007/11/no-90-st-vincent-de-paul-church.html> : accessed 29 Jun 2015).

Children of John J. Martin and Margaret A. Carey

- i. VINCENT MATTHEW MARTIN baptized 22 Apr 1874 at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in LaSalle, Illinois.³⁶
- ii. JOHN JOSEPH MARTIN was born 25 May 1877,³⁷ La Salle, Illinois and died. 6 Jan 1957, St. Louis, Missouri.³⁸ He did not marry and had no children.

Rev. Martin attended Seminary in Perryville, Missouri and St. Vincent's College in Los Angeles, California. He was ordained a member of the Vincentian order in June 1900 at Kendrick Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. He was vice rector at St. Vincent's college in Los Angeles, president of De Paul University, Chicago, and in August 1910 he was appointed President of de Paul University and Pastor of St. Vincent's church in Cape Girardeau, Missouri.³⁹
2. iii. ALBERT CAREY MARTIN was born 16 Sep 1879 in La Salle, Illinois⁴⁰ and he died 9 Apr 1960 in Los Angeles, CA.⁴¹ Albert married 15 Oct 1907 in Oxnard, Ventura, California, Carolyn Elizabeth Borchard, daughter of John Edward and Maria (Kaufman) Borchard,⁴² born 21 Feb 1883, and died 9 Jun 1959, in Los Angeles, California⁴³

Albert C. Martin graduated from the University of Illinois in 1902, and arrived in Los Angeles in 1904. By 1906, he had started his own architectural firm. His work included the Los Angeles City hall, St. Vincent de Paul Cathedral, and Grauman's Million Dollar Theater, all of which are Los Angeles Landmarks. His wife was the daughter of prominent Ventura County Landowner, Edward Borchard. Albert and Caroline had 6 children. His two sons studied Architecture and Structural Engineering and took over his architectural firm.⁴⁴
3. iv. FRANCES EDMUND MARTIN was born 15 Nov 1881 in La Salle, Illinois⁴⁵ and he died 19 Sep 1970 Tarzana, Los Angeles, California.⁴⁶ He married 26 Jun 1912 in Los Angeles, California, May Catherine Smith.⁴⁷ She was born 21 Mar 1884 in St. Louis, Missouri⁴⁸ and

³⁶ LaSalle County, Illinois, St Patrick's Church Records, Baptisms, p. 364, 22 Apr 1874, Vincent Matthew Martin; LaSalle County Genealogy Guild, Ottawa.

³⁷ LaSalle County, Illinois, St Patrick's Church Records, Baptisms, p. 435, 3 Jun 1877, Jno Joseph Martin; LaSalle County Genealogy Guild, Ottawa.

³⁸ Missouri, "Missouri Death Certificates, 1910-1964," digital images, *Missouri Digital Heritage* (http://www.sos.mo.gov/images/archives/deathcerts/1957/1957_00007125.PDF : accessed 22 Jun 2015), John J. Martin, death certificate no. 7125, 6 Jan 1957.

³⁹ "Rev J.J. Martin Chosen as head of University," *Los Angeles Herald*(Los Angeles, Ca.), 2 Aug 1910, page 2, col. 5.

⁴⁰ U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 28 Jun 2015), card for Albert Carey Martin, serial no. 1899 (penned), Local Draft Board Division no. 12, Los Angeles City, California; citing "World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., M1509, 4,582 rolls.

⁴¹ State of California, Department of Health Services, Center for Health Statistics, Sacramento, "California Death Index, 1940-1997;" database online, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 29 Jun 2015) Albert C. Martin, 9 Apr 1960.

⁴² "Wedding Bells Reign Supreme," *Oxnard Courier* (Oxnard, California), 18 Oct 1907, unpaginated, image 2, col. 3; digital images, *Newspapers.com* (<http://www.newspapers.com/image/7798976> : accessed 29 Jun 2015).

⁴³ State of California, Department of Health Services, Center for Health Statistics, Sacramento, "California Death Index, 1940-1997;" database online, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 29 Jun 2015) Carolyn Elizabeth Martin, 9 Jun 1959.

⁴⁴ Franklin Harper, editor, *Who's Who on the Pacific Coast* (Los Angeles, California: Harper Publishing Co., 1913); digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 29 Jun 2015), p. 384, Albert C. Martin.

⁴⁵ U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 28 Jun 2015), card for Frank Edmund Martin, serial no. 610 (stamped), Local Board for Division no. 3, County of Los Angeles, Santa Monica, California; citing "World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., M1509, 4,582 rolls.

⁴⁶ Los Angeles County, California, death certificate, no. 38215, Frank E. Martin; Los Angeles County Clerk recorder, Norwalk.

⁴⁷ Wedding invitation of Mr. Frank Edmund Martin and May Catherine Smith on 26 Jun 1912; Smith family papers, 2015, privately held by Patricia L. Duro 17804 Santa Gertrudes Cir. Fountain Valley, CA. This off white, slightly yellowing 5 3/4 x 7 1/4" printed invitation was discovered in the personal papers of Mary Elizabeth (Martin) Ouellet (1914-1969), daughter of Frank Edmund Martin and May Catherine Smith, by her daughter Mary Catherine (Ouellet) Williams, and given to its current owner in 1998.

she died 16 May 1971, Los Angeles, California.⁴⁹ She was the daughter of James Henry and Mary Jane (Smith) Smith.⁵⁰

Frank E. Martin was a structural engineer, and worked in the concrete business. His granddaughter, Mary Catherine (Ouellet) Williams remembers him talking about working on the Owens Valley Project;⁵¹ a controversial project at the time, but one that changed the county's water source, allowing Los Angeles to continue its rapid growth. Frank and May Martin had two daughters.

4. v. ESTELLE MARIA MARTIN was born 20 Jan 1883 LaSalle, Illinois⁵² and she died 18 Jan 1973 Los Angeles, California.⁵³ She married 5 Aug 1908 in Los Angeles, California, William F. Marion Vaughney.⁵⁴ Estelle and William had one son.
- vi. MARGARET MARY MARTIN was born 5 Jun 1886 in LaSalle, Illinois⁵⁵ and she died 5 Dec 1970 in Los Angeles, California.⁵⁶ She married Constantine Christian Ganahl.⁵⁷ They had no children.
- vii. EMMET GILES STEPHEN MARTIN was born 9 Oct 1888 in LaSalle, Illinois⁵⁸ and he died 6 Nov 1937 in Los Angeles, California.⁵⁹ He never married and had no children.
2. viii. VIRGINIA L MARTIN was born 9 Feb 1891 in LaSalle, Illinois⁶⁰ and she died 29 Mar 1973 in Los Angeles, California.⁶¹ She married Luke John McNamee.⁶² Virginia and Luke had four children.
- ix. MARY VIRGINIA MARTIN was born 27 Nov 1893 in LaSalle, Illinois.⁶³ As of 1940, she had not married and had no children.⁶⁴

⁴⁸ Los Angeles County, California, death certificate, no. 20853, May K. Martin; Los Angeles County Clerk recorder, Norwalk.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Williams, Mary Catherine (Ouellet), interview by Patricia L. Duro, 20 Jun 2015.

⁵² "U.S. Passport Applications, 1795-1925," digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com>) : accessed 23 Jun 2015), certificate no. 386298, Estelle M. Vaughney; citing NARA Series: *Passport Applications, January 2, 1906 - March 31, 1925*; Roll 2457.

⁵³ State of California, Department of Health Services, Center for Health Statistics, Sacramento, "California Death Index, 1940-1997;" database online, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com>) : accessed 29 Jun 2015) Estelle Marie Vaughney, 18 Jan 1973.

⁵⁴ "Society: Vaughen-Martin," *Los Angeles Herald* (Los Angeles, California), 6 Aug 1908, p.5, col. 3; digital images, *Newspapers.com* (<http://www.newspapers.com/image/46368131>) : accessed 29 Jun 2015).

⁵⁵ "New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957," digital images, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com) : accessed 30 Jun 2015), List of United States Citizens, S.S. *Resolute*, 15 Jul 1925, p. 9 (stamped), line 18, Margaret M. Ganahl, age 39.

⁵⁶ Los Angeles County, California, death certificate, no. 50209, Margaret M. Ganahl, 5 Dec 1970, Los Angeles County Clerk recorder, Norwalk.

⁵⁷ 1940 U.S. census, Los Angeles County, California, population schedule, Los Angeles City, Sheet 14 (penned) B (stamped), dwelling 232, family 411, line 44, Margaret M Ganahl; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://ancestry.com>) : accessed 14 Jun 2015), NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 401.

⁵⁸ Los Angeles Co., Ca., death certificate no. 15638, Emmet Giles Martin.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Los Angeles County, California, death certificate, no. 13917, Virginia N McNamee, 29 Mar 1973, Los Angeles County Clerk recorder, Norwalk.

⁶¹ Los Angeles Co., Ca., death certificate, no. 13917, Virginia N McNamee, 29 Mar 1973.

⁶² "U.S., World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942 [Fourth Draft; 'Old Man's Registration']" digital images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com>) : accessed 28 Jun 2015), card for Luke John McNamee, serial no. 2044 (penned), Los Angeles City, Los Angeles, Ca.; citing *World War II Draft Cards (4th Registration) for the State of California*; State Headquarters: California; Microfilm Roll: 603155, Records of the Selective Service System, Record Group Number 147, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

⁶³ 1900 U.S. census, LaSalle County, Illinois, population schedule, LaSalle Township, p. 2 (penned) B (stamped), dwelling 32, family 36, line 71 Mary Martin.

⁶⁴ 1940 U.S. census, Los Angeles County, California, population schedule, Los Angeles City, Sheet 14 (penned) B (stamped), dwelling 232, family 411, line 45, Mary V. Martin; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://ancestry.com>) : accessed 14 Jun 2015), NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 401.