

Gallagher Family



he year was 1906. Like the rest of America, Frankenmuth was enjoying truly golden years. The nation, at peace and prosperous, was growing, the pace of life was steady, and the village of some 800 people was the heart of the “gemutlichkeit” their founding fathers had brought over from Bavaria some 60 years earlier. Frankenmuth, with its bustling business places serving a rich farming area, lacked one thing. “We should have a newspaper of our own,” decided a group of civic leaders. They called on E.W. Gallagher of nearby Bridgeport, Michigan to start publishing a newspaper in Frankenmuth.

E.W. Gallagher was the son of William Wallace Gallagher who had come to the Saginaw area from New York State in the early 1860’s. William and his brother John started a mill on the Saginaw River. They bought land from Aaron Penney and platted Salina which is now south Saginaw. The 1866 Salina City directory lists William Gallagher and Charles Hess as druggists on Washington Street. His son, E.W. (1855-1927) was born in Saginaw.

E.W. married Laura Katherine Wilde in 1880. By this time he owned and operated a drugstore in Bridgeport; and to advertise his medicines he issued a small hand-set bulletin in which advertisement was interspersed with news items and comments.

E.W. accepted the request to become a full-time editor and publisher in Frankenmuth. His first issue of four pages was set by hand and was in English rather than German. With this event the town leaders realized that the isolation that Frankenmuth had enjoyed because of the German language spoken there would decrease with time and that, in the future, it was probable that their children would not be able to conduct their affairs entirely in German.

In 1911, E.W.’s son, William R. (born 1889), who had worked with his father in the business from age 17, became co-owner with his father. E.W. and Laura’s other children included: Laura (Weavers) who taught school in Gera, Michigan; Katherine (Mahoney) who taught in Frankenmuth; Myron who worked with his father at the paper and later became a newspaper publisher in Saline, Michigan; and Edward who taught school in San Francisco.

As a young man, William was a good athlete and played on the Frankenmuth baseball teams. Later he became active in civic affairs. At one time he served as village president on the city council and was a charter member of the Rotary Club. He married Martha Hubinger and together they raised four daughters: Martha (Trinklein), Loraine (Rummel), Myra (Abraham), and Lenore (Galsterer); all of whom worked in the News office at one time or another.

The World Wars proved especially challenging to the people of Frankenmuth when all things German were suspect. In World War II, especially, the Frankenmuth News encourages “Frankenmuthers” to be patient and let the world know that its citizens were loyal Americans.

During the war years, the News moved into the former Commercial Hotel (now the site of the Frankenmuth Historical Museum). Early on, the News shared the building with the Family Tavern and achieved the distinction in the newspaper world of being the only paper with three private entrances to a taproom. Their new location was on Hubinger Street and their location as of 2007 is on Franklin Street.

William Gallagher died in 1969, but the Frankenmuth News is still being published to this day in service to the people of the Frankenmuth area.



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