

# Pillsbury Family



The Pillsbury family in the United States dates back to 1630 when William Pillsbury came from England and landed in Newbury, Massachusetts. This was during the tyranny of Charles I. William married Dorothy Crosby in 1641 and they became the common ancestors of the Pillsbury family in America.

The father of Dr. Edward A. Pillsbury of Frankenmuth was Dr. William H.H. Pillsbury (1839-1895), a ninth generation American. He was born in South Bewick, Maine and was an ordained Methodist minister having acquired both an MA and DD degree from Boston Theological University, after having fought in the Civil War. Dr. William and his wife Eliza C. Bowers, a school teacher, had seven children. The children were: Walter, Susan, William, Paul, Hannah, Marguerita, and Edward A. After Dr. William H.H. Pillsbury died, Eliza moved to Lincoln where she taught school until she accomplished her desire of giving each of her seven children a college education.

A cousin of Dr. William, Charles A.B. Pillsbury, Warner, N.H. (1842), began the now famous Pillsbury Flour Mill in Minnesota.

After serving in the Spanish American War and in the Philippines, Edward A. Pillsbury attended the University of Michigan Medical School where his brother was a professor of Psychology. Even though he was a man of English ancestry, Dr. Pillsbury became an important and integral part in the history of Frankenmuth. He was a strong proponent of its Bavarian culture, possibly because he married Kunigunda Rodammer in 1915, the granddaughter of Lorenz and Margaret Loesel, members of the first group of settlers in Frankenmuth. However, he also respected and admired the industriousness of the hard-working people of the community and often referred to the area as "God's Country".

Dr. Pillsbury came to Frankenmuth in 1903, so that the town's only physician, Dr. Speckhard, could take a vacation. Dr. Speckhard urged Dr. Pillsbury to take over his practice, which he did in 1905, remaining in Frankenmuth until his death in 1951.

When better appointments were offered to him, one at the University Hospital at Ann Arbor to head the Diagnostic Division, he refused them, preferring his work with the people in Frankenmuth. His skill and ability as a diagnostician, his research on genetic heart disease, and his study of the comparatively low incidence of polio in the area when the disease was rampant elsewhere during an epidemic, earned him recognition by the entire medical profession. He received many honors and was included in Who's Important In Medicine, 1952.

On September 1, 1949, the community of Frankenmuth honored Dr. Pillsbury by setting this date aside for a "Pillsbury Day". There was a parade and the entire community gathered at the St. Lorenz Church Grove to honor him, followed later in the day by a testimonial dinner at the Zehnder Hotel.

Dr. Pillsbury died in October 1951. He was survived by his wife and two children: Eugene Pillsbury and Rosella Pillsbury Schmitt.

The late Rev. Emil Voss, then Pastor at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Saginaw, and a very close friend of Dr. Pillsbury, gave the funeral address at the then Nuechterlein-Wendt Funeral Chapel. In his sermon Pastor Voss eulogized the doctor, praising him as being an outstanding public servant and a man of sterling character. He mentioned that one of the last prayers spoken with him was the well-known hymn, "*Just as I am Without One Plea*". The last words heard from Dr. Pillsbury's dying lips were the beautiful words of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, "*The Lord is My Shepherd, I Shall Not Want*".



*Researched & Compiled by Bavarian Inn Lodge*  
*For copies of Family Histories go to [www.bavarianinn.com/familyhistory](http://www.bavarianinn.com/familyhistory)*