

# Johann Friedrich Daniel "Max" Wendt

Snippets, Speculations, and Comments  
How the Wendt Family met the Toeneboehn Family

---

## Introduction

We know quite a lot about Max and Minnie Wendt after they settle, by 1870, first in Moberly, MO, then St. Louis, MO, finally Kansas City, KS. Before that; before they emigrated from Germany, we only have scattered information about their whereabouts and lives. Here, we will present what is known and unknown with a few theories and speculations about this important Wendt family.

Greg Rieke (the author's 3rd cousin) has a unique perspective. He connects with the Wendt's paternally and maternally. His dual Wendt great-grandparents were Max Edward (paternal side) and Margaretha Wendt (maternal side). These two, formally named, Carl Friedrich Daniel "Max Edward" Wendt (1861-1930) and Margarethe Wendt (1864-1904), were siblings, children of Johann Friedrich Daniel "Max" Wendt and Wilhelmine "Minnie" Härtling-Wendt.

Greg, stated that he, *"...had a heavy dose of Wendt during my childhood. It was like a Venn diagram with much, but by no means all overlap. But my two Wendt grandmothers had mostly similar memories of their mutual grandparents."*

These grandmothers were: 1) Alma Lucia Wendt, daughter of Carl Friedrich Daniel "Max Edward" and Maud Ashwell-Wendt and 2) Marguerite Widdicombe Wendt, daughter of Robert Widdicombe and Margarethe Wendt.

So, with a nod to Greg Rieke, let's examine the life of Johann Friedrich Daniel "Max" Wendt before 1875. And, we will add a few relevant post 1875 observations.

---

## Principals

Johann Friedrich Daniel "Max" Wendt

BIRTH 27 OCT 1827 • Halle an der Saale, Halle, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany

DEATH 23 FEB 1920 • Kansas City, Wyandotte, Kansas

married: May 12, 1856

Wilhelmine "Minnie" Härtling

BIRTH 2 FEB 1829 • Bennstedt, Saalekreis, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany

DEATH 27 JAN 1922 • Turner, Wyandotte, Kansas

---

## Early Life

The Wendt and Hartling branches emerged from small farming villages just north of Halle (Giebichenstein), north of Leipzig, Germany. We know that Max Wendt was the 5th of at least 13 children. Six of those children died as infants, five after the 1834 birth of Johann Louis Wendt. Greg speculates that perhaps the high mortality was caused by a genetic problem. This theory merits further research and DNA testing.

Greg's recollections of conversations with two of the grandchildren of Max and Minnie (see above) and several Wendt cousins, led him to believe that Johann Friedrich Daniel "Max" Wendt was a career soldier in the Prussian Army, enlisting in 1848 at the age of 18. Some recollections seem to suggest Max was a senior Prussian Army officer, perhaps a general. The author's Mother, a grand-daughter of Wilhelmina Wendt (daughter of Max and Minnie) told me on more than one occasion that we were descended from German aristocracy through Max Wendt. So, maybe.

Possibly, Max fought in the First Schleswig War (1848-1852), in southern Denmark and northern Germany. This war was rooted in the Schleswig-Holstein question: Who should control the Duchies of Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg. At the time they were ruled by the king of Denmark. The Wendt's may have had a stake in this conflict. Greg's grandmother, Alma Wendt, recalled her father, Max Edward (son of Johann Friedrich Daniel "Max" Wendt) telling stories of his childhood, living near the Danish border as goat herders.

It's thought that Johann Friedrich Daniel "Max" Wendt may also have fought in the second Second Schleswig War which began in Feb. 1864 - shortly before the Wendt's emigrated out of Germany.

Greg stated: *"...Max was motivated to leave Germany simply to stop serving the Kaiser in the many wars he generated (via Bismarck). I can't say he was a deserter, but that may be the case. Likely just tired. His two eldest kids likely were born and died early in the midst of the long, protracted wars in Schlezwig-Holstein, where he most likely fought for some years. From 1848 on until 1864 it was nonstop fighting and dying."*

In 1865, Johann Friedrich Daniel "Max" Wendt may have deserted, or retired, or was discharged after enlistment. What we do know is that in Sep. 1865 the Wendt family of five immigrated to the United States. They would never return to their home country.

The Hamburg Passenger manifest (see below) records the departure of Daniel "Max" Wendt and his family from Hamburg, Germany, on September 22, 1865. Daniel, listed as a 39-year-old merchant, traveled on the steamship "Lord Cardigan," which was flagged under England. The family departed for Hull, England with an onward connection to New York via Liverpool.

The manifest lists two children, Max (age 4) and Wilhelmina (age 3, the author's great grandmother), but a third child, Margaretha, is missing. Margaretha was born Nov.

N<sup>o</sup> 10 Datum der Abfahrt 22. September 1865

**Verzeichniss** der Personen, welche mit dem engl. Dampf-Schiffe *Lord Cardigan* Capitain *W. Symant* nach New-York via Hull und Liverpool zur Auswanderung durch Unterzeichneten engagirt sind. 421

N <sup>o</sup>	Zu- und Vorname und Familie.	Geburts- und Wohnort.	Landes.	Gewerbe.	Alter	Geschlecht		Total	Recapitulation.		
						männl.	weibl.		Erwachsene u. Kinder über 14 Jahr.	Kinder unter 14 Jahr.	unter 1 Jahr.
1	Carl Brandenburg	Altona	Holstein	Offenmaier	29	1			1		
2	Anna Ahrent	"	"	"	30		1		1		
3	Gustav Lachse	Schwerin	Mecklenburg	Landwirt	31	1			1		
4	Daniel Wendt	Giebichenstein	Preuss.	Bauherr	39	1			1		
5	Wilhelmine	"	"	"	35		1		1		
6	Max	"	"	"	4		1			1	
7	Wilhelmine	"	"	"	3		1				1

1864. She would have been about ten months old in Sep. 1865. Perhaps the shipping company did not count infants under the age one. And, there were two children not included, Auguste Amalie and Otto. They both died as infants in Giebichenstein.

Years later, Greg's grandmother Marguerite, who lived in a home with her grandparents, recalled them singing an old German song: "Hamburg ist ein schönes Städtchen" or "Hamburg is a beautiful town". [YouTube - Hamburg ist ein schönes Städtchen](#)

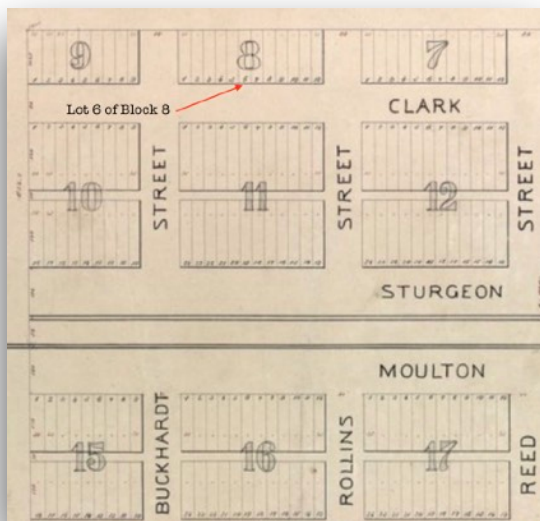
Why sing a song about Hamburg, Germany when your hometown was many miles away? I speculate that Hamburg represented their exit from Germany and this was their way of celebrating that momentous, life changing, event.

After landing in New York City in late Sep. or early Oct. 1865, the Wendt's made their way west, to St. Louis, Missouri, where there were a great many German Immigrants in residence. They could have traveled via steamboat along the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri Rivers. But, more likely, they traveled by train. Rail lines were rapidly being installed throughout the midwest in this post civil-war period, including Moberly, MO in north-central Missouri.

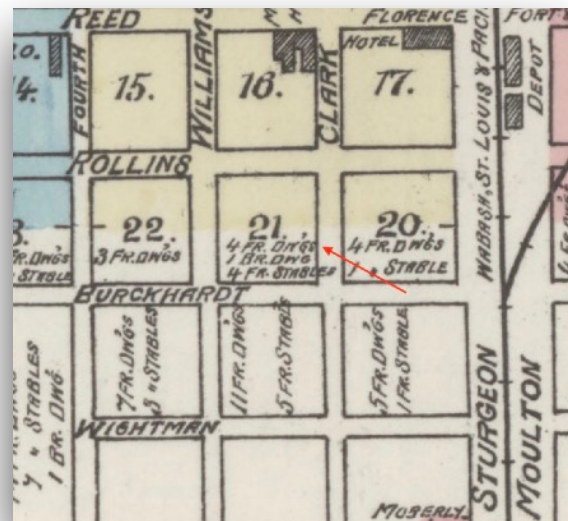
By 1870, based on federal census records, the Wendt's had settled in Moberly, MO. Moberly is a small town northwest of St. Louis, platted by the North Missouri Railroad in 1866. The rail line connected directly to Saint Louis, southwest of Moberly. Max's occupation was listed as Merchant Maker - not farmer. In the late summer, 1870, Max and Minnie bought a lot in Moberly, presumably to build a home, for \$50.

Here is the location of Lot 6 of Block 8 in Moberly - 1866 and 1884. Likely, Max and Minnie bought the lot directly from the North Missouri RR - who owned the lots of the

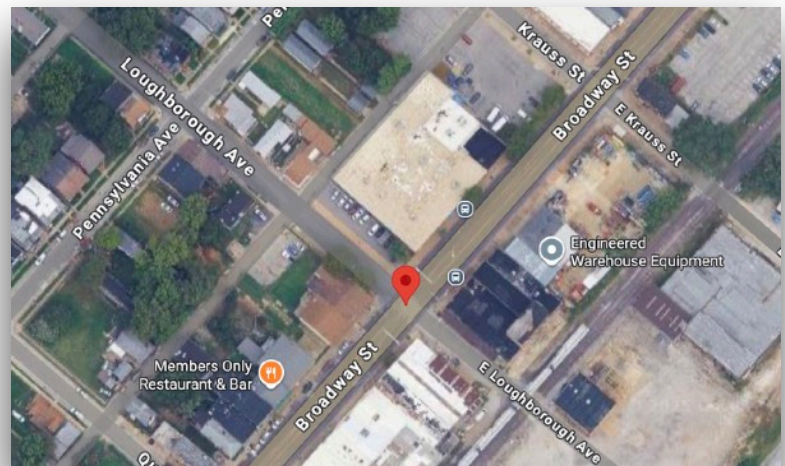
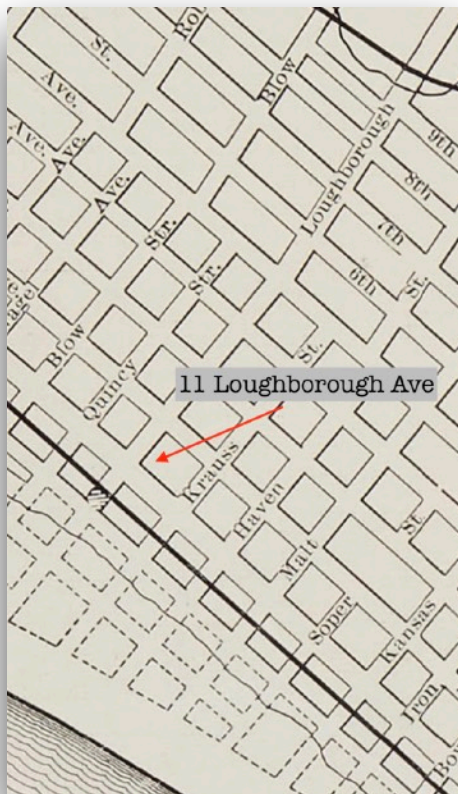
new town. The rail lines of the North Missouri railroad run through the middle of Moberly. It's not known if the Wendt's actually built on the lot.



**MOBERLY, 1866**



**MOBERLY, 1884**



By 1880 and probably before, the Wendt's abandoned Moberly, relocating to Saint Louis, living at 11 E Loughborough Ave in the Carondelet district, blocks from the Mississippi River, in the far southeast part of St. Louis. There, Max was a gardener.

Here is the location of 11 E Carondelet in St. Louis - 1885 and current.



*Lizzie Hendt*

*Mr. Leebach*  
*Tennessee or*  
*and Virginia 60 90*

*St. Louis*  
*First Street*  
*Schuyler Dry-Heck*  
*64*

ECLECTIC EDUCATIONAL SERIES

McGUFFEY'S

FOURTH

ECLECTIC READER.

REVISED EDITION.

Grand

Arkansas

Tennessee

Louisiana

AV

AV

AV

AV

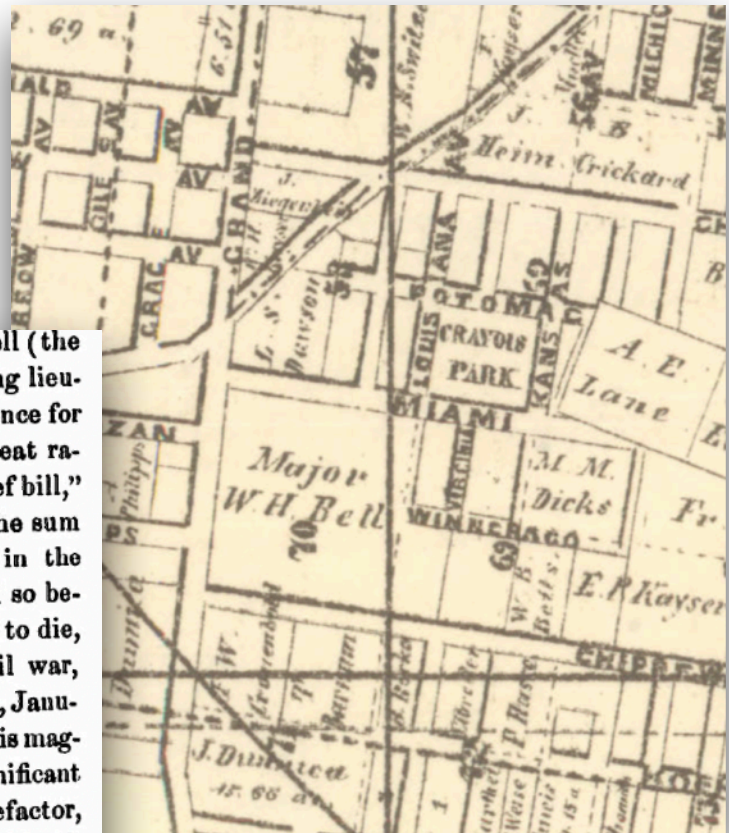
Polong

[illegible]

Before we expand on that fact, let's take a brief look at the history of the property at Tennessee St. between Miami St and Winnebago St.

Originally, the property was part of a large estate owned by a Major William H. Bell (1800-1865). Major Bell has his own story, not told here. However, he became instantly wealthy with an invention, detailed below.

of Egbert Osborne. Captain William Bell (the protege of Col. Shepperd,) whilst a young lieutenant in the army, invented a contrivance for turning round heavy ordnance with great rapidity; for this invention, under a "relief bill," the Government appropriated to him the sum of \$25,000, which money he invested in the growing city of St. Louis, Missouri, and so became immensely wealthy. When about to die, immediately after the close of our civil war, Captain Bell added a codicil to his will, January 11, 1866, distributing one-eighth of his magnificent fortune, in the following significant words: "To the descendants of my benefactor, William Shepperd, of Orange County, North Carolina."



\$25,000 in today's dollar equivalent is about \$500,000. With that money he bought land south and west of St. Louis. When he died in 1865, his estate was auctioned off in parcels. 22 lots of the W.H. Bell Estate were bought by Adam Konz (Kons) in 1871.

Who was Adam Konz? He was the husband of Caroline Toeneboehn-Konz (1815-1896), the author's maternal great great grandmother. Caroline and her first husband, Christian Toeneboehn (1809-1860), the author's maternal great great grandfather, emigrated from Germany about 1855. Christian Toeneboehn died suddenly in 1860, in St. Louis. Caroline remarried in 1861 to Adam Konz (1827-1915). He was 34. She was 46. Adam was a market gardener.

In Oct. 1871, Adam bought 22 lots of the W.H. Bell Estate for \$5530 (see below), about \$137,000 in today's dollars. Where did Adam Konz obtain that considerable sum of money? We think Christian and Caroline Toeneboehn were wealthy by 19th century standards. The wealth was, perhaps, carried with them when they emigrated. Thus, when Christian Toeneboehn died, Caroline took control of the substantial family finances. It's likely that Adam's money for the lots was sourced from Caroline's inheritance.



Total.....	\$59,469
Oct. 19, 1871.	
W P Fenn to M Muller, lot 1 of Fenn's subd. in U S sur 102 t 45 n, r. 3 e, 53 29-100 acres, near Missouri river .....	\$2,771.
E Fowler to M A Tower, lots 8, 9, 10, 11 and 19 in block 10 of Compton Hill.....	10,000
C A Pohl to A Eitert, lot 5 in block 19 of Hebert tract, 24 ft on Nineteenth st. by 100 ft .....	500
J Roth to M A Lilly, 26 ft one line of Ninth st by 150 ft, beginning 24 ft south of Angelrodt street .....	1,100
W H Bell and heirs to Adam Konz, lots 1 to 22 in block 1 of subd of block 70 St. Louis common—common deed .....	5,530
B Ruffner to H H Marmaduke et al, lot in city block 332, 60 ft on Ninth st by 140 ft.....	22,000
M O Sullivan to P Sullivan, 25 ft on O'Fallon st, by 84 ft, 3 in. bounded north by sur 1,478, being lot 10 in subd of tract 3, Ann Biddle's estate .....	1,700
J S Thomas to T Bartholow, 55 ft on Locust st, by 115 ft 5½ in. beginning 110 ft east of Compton av .....	22,000
C Lewis, jr. to J L Ferguson et al, lot in sec frac ¼ of sec 17 and ½ of sec 20, t 46, r 6, e containing 49 14-100 acres—also 2 036-1000 acres in U. S. survey 1,905 .....	8,955
J Stuhr to H Richter, lot 12 in block 4 Grand avenue add, 25 ft on Jasmin st, by 120 ft. ....	256
M A Kelso to M O. Hickman, lot 9 in Collins' Western add, 25 ft on e line of St. Charles Way or Brooklyn st, by 76 ft—quit claim..	1,700

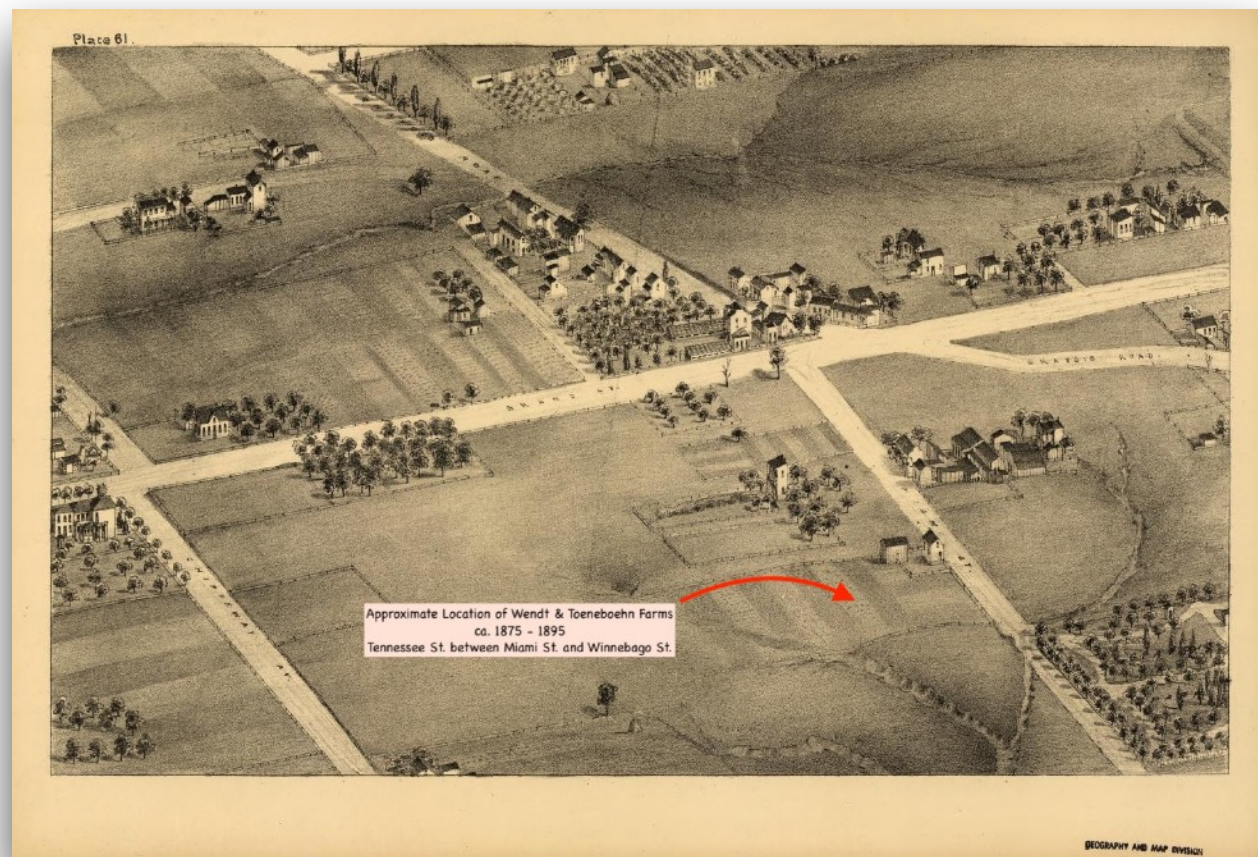
#### THE ST. LOUIS REPUBLIC, OCT. 19, 1871

Caroline and Adam were market gardeners on their property. It's not known how or exactly when Max and Minnie Wendt came to live and work on the Tennessee St property. However that happened, the Wendt's and the Toeneboehn's were market garden farmers, possibly business partners, and most certainly, close friends. This friendship would extend to their descendants and last to present day.

The son of Frank Toeneboehn Sr (1856-1927), a son of Christian and Caroline Toehnboehn, married Minnie Wendt (1862-1944), daughter of Max and Minnie Wendt in April, 1883. Frank Toeneboehn Jr was a market gardener. He and Minnie farmed alongside their parents and in-laws for several years on the Tennessee St. property.

The Tennessee St property and other assets became contentious issues when Caroline Toeneboehn-Konz died in 1896. Her will was challenged by several Toeneboehn family members and was contested for ten years, ending up in the Missouri Supreme Court. Adam Konz eventually prevailed in the battle.

Here's what the Tennessee St. property looked like in the middle 1870's. Possibly, the house depicted near the arrow pointer was the home of Adam and Caroline Toeneboehn, 3428 Miami St.



#### PICTORIAL ST. LOUIS, 1876, PLATE 61

By the middle of the 1880's the Wendt's had relocated to Kansas City, Kansas, initially at 20th and Shawnee Rd, where Max was a self-employed market gardener. The Wendt's and the Toeneboehn's, by 1910, were living close by to each other in the West Bottoms area of Kansas City, KS.

From here, the Wendt family is well represented in public records. So, we will end our story here. However, Greg Rieke had a few more recollections about Max and Minnie Wendt, which we will share.

"... my two Wendt grandmothers had mostly similar memories of their mutual grandparents. They were also supplemented with recollections of cousin Matilda (Tilly) who lived with them along with Maggie after the Widdicombe family split. A few stand out:

- both remember Minnie as kind and quiet. Tilly remembers her being quite intelligent (perhaps a one time school teacher).



- Old Max was a true Prussian who had served several years in Bismarck's army, likely as an officer (Tilly remembered as a general, but I am doubtful).
- Max had a small keg of beer delivered daily to his (son, Fred Wendt's) house; he always reeked of beer and the unseemly habit of kissing the granddaughters on the lips (Alma)
- Max often gathered the grandsons together at family occasions and had them march the goose step with broomstick rifles on their shoulders.
- he loved talking about his days as a soldier. If he enlisted in 1848, he likely fought in the war either Denmark and other subsequent wars near Hamburg. I'm quite sure he spent time there, with his family given conversations with both grandmothers. They all memorized German lyrics of a song about Hamburg (see above).
- Tilly remembered hearing them both talk about their cosmopolitan city life in (she said) Berlin, however I suspect it was actually Halle.
- Alma remembered her father Max Edward talking about his father's drunken rages as a young boy, forcing Minnie and the children to flee to nearby cornfields until the storm calmed.
- Alma also remembered grandpa Max's mother having a similarly volcanic temperament.

---

## Addendum - Why the moniker "Max" Wendt?

I asked Greg Rieke the following question:

"Daniel Wendt seems to be the name that he used in formal documents. Where did the 'Max' come from? It doesn't seem to be part of his name."

Greg Answered:

"Like you I have often wondered why old Max gradually assumed the name Max, mostly after he arrived in the US. All of the references to Daniel in Germany excluded the name Max, even though it is clear that was his family near Halle (as has been affirmed many times by his grand- daughters). This led me to question if he was deliberately attempting to blur or obscure his "Daniel" name on official documents. I first got wind of this birth identity (Johann Friedrich Daniel Wendt), born 1929 when I visited with the rector of the Giebichenstein church (St. Barthomew's church near the very old Giebichenstein Fort on the Saale River) the Wendts regularly attended, when I was there in 1996. The church birth record for son Max in 1861 that he was called Carl Max (not Max Edward). So this must have been a later accretion. I believe they actually lived in both Krollwitz and Fienstedt, just across a very old and substantial bridge which would have connected them with that old church. BTW, that same church was where the composer (George Frideric) Handel's parents attended and who likely knew the Wendts at that time.

Max Sr. did use "Daniel" in the Moberly (1870) census record so perhaps he had not transitioned fully yet to the new name. Thereafter, in St. Louis, he became Max. Fred is also mentioned at the same address in St. Louis city directories. Again it may have

been some strategy not to be found by the name Daniel, for whatever reason. Another question is about his eldest son, Max Jr. (who eventually became known as Max Edward - where did that come from?!). By the time of his marriage in Affton, in 1884) he officially signed as Max Edward. I have not found it elsewhere before that time. Even in that dreadful Enemy Aliens registration, in 1918, he signed as Max E. Wendt. Curiously in a 1922 land map of Shawnee the land they owned in northeast of Shawnee is shown as being owned by Maud E. Wendt (not in his name) which was rather unusual, again hinting that he didn't want to be named (or perhaps could not be named) in a legal document. This and other documents are among my Max Edward documents on Ancestry. I suspect that neither he nor his father became official US citizens, which may have been required for real estate ownership then. Old Max always lived with son Fred, who was an American citizen (born in St. Louis). I searched the name Max Wendt on several Ancestry searches in Halle, Berlin and Hamburg and found only Max's that were either unrelated to ours or were much later than our Wendts came to the US in 1865. Maybe he just wanted to begin his life in America with a fresh start, and a new name. So it remains a mystery.

- My great aunt Elizabeth Wendt Holmes told me (I think I have it on tape) once that they had received a letter from Germany inquiring of the Wendt family here. It was probably sent to the Wendt daughters' parents. She said that one of the German cousins, I believe it was from an attorney for a Ferdinand Koenig's estate. He had become very wealthy as a wine merchant or vintner and wanted the family here to disclaim any inheritance from his estate. He had made most of his money in South Africa. They all talked about it and decided not to reply, mostly inspired by Maude Stark Wendt, Elizabeth and Alma's sister, who lived in Spring Hill near their parents, Max and Maude Wendt in their retirement., She/ they may have wanted not to be "discovered" by the German authorities; but who knows."

---

## Historic Anecdote - The Wendt's and Ulysses S. Grant Connection

Greg Reike provided this fascinating story about the area in southwest St. Louis where the Wendt and Toeneboehn families farmed:

This part of south St. Louis gained added distinction from its proximity to "White Haven," the farm of U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant, only seven miles from where the Wendts and Toeneboehns lived. Grant had met his future wife, Julia Dent, there; her father owned the property off Gravois Road. Before Grant's distinguished service in the Civil War, he had worked alongside the Dent family's enslaved laborers until he joined the Union Army in 1859. Years later, as president, he would sign the Fifteenth Amendment, securing voting rights for millions of formerly enslaved people—including those once held by the Dent family. He was president from 1869 through 1877, after the abysmal presidency of Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Lincoln after his assassination just days from the end of the war.

When young Max (Edward) Wendt Jr. traveled to court Maude Ashwell in nearby Affton, he would have regularly passed the Grant farm by horse and buggy. By their marriage in July of 1884, Grant had long since retired from Washington DC to rural New York. Though he left office a wealthy man, he had been ruined by a Ponzi scheme that collapsed that same year, leaving him fearful of destitution for Julia and their children. Two events then shaped his final months: a diagnosis of throat cancer and the intervention of Mark Twain, who became his literary agent and urged him to complete his memoirs. Grant labored through searing pain, whispering his final pages just days before his death on July 23, 1885. Twain's promotion of the work led to remarkable success—300,000 copies sold—(far more than Twain's own royalties of the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn), earning for Julia Grant royalties of \$450,000, the equivalent of roughly \$12 million today.

The Grant farm later sold to August Busch, the brewing magnate, who preserved the property, securing Grant's legacy, and also built his own mansion there. By the time of the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904 the Busch breweries, one of St. Louis's major employers, was producing 6000 barrels of beer daily. The World's Fair would also provide the first opportunity for the Max Edward Wendt family to visit their St. Louis relatives in Affton, a reunion and event which left a strong impression on them thereafter.

While these national dramas unfolded, Max and Maude Wendt had already begun their own new lives further west. They left St. Louis for Westport, MO (just outside Kansas City) in early 1885, where their first son, Frank, was born in May. Unaware of the tumult surrounding Grant's final months, they soon settled in nearby Shawnee and expanded their family in a new home there. By the 1900 Census, the remainder of the Wendt family had moved west too, all living together in the home of Fred Wendt in Shawnee Township, Wyandotte County, Kansas, thus ending the St. Louis chapter of their long and challenging American saga.

---

## Further Reading

If you liked this story, there are more stories about the Wendt and Toeneboehn pioneering families. Please check the Blog - **Family Stories I've Found** (AllKinConsidered.blog) for the following stories:

### RUTH ALTA WENDT MEYN – A FORTUITOUS LIFE

Little was known of the wife of Fred Wendt Jr (1892-1957). All trees had her listed only as "Alta" with no maiden name and only a smattering of public information. I set about to see if I could find more details about her life. What I found was an extraordinary story.

### MAX AND FRED WENDT AND THE HORSE THIEF – HORSE THIEVERY AND EXTRAJUDICIAL REMEDIES IN KANSAS, 1850-1900

"He is caught in a barn under suspicious circumstances, shot at, chased down, drubbed, and tied to the hind wheel of a wagon."



#### THE WILL OF CAROLINE TÖNEBÖN-KONZ – A TEN YEAR PROBATE BATTLE

Probate on her Will lasted ten years with numerous challenges and court cases. The case book, 120+ pages in length, is noteworthy with several oddities.

#### HENRY T ZIMMER – POLICE CHIEF, STATE SENATOR, HUMANITARIAN, FORGOTTEN

Henry T Zimmer is long forgotten. Which is a shame, because for 40+ years in the early 20th century he was a prominent presence in the lives of Kansas City citizens.

#### WILHELMINA “MINNIE” TOENEBOEHN – PIONEER WOMAN OF THE KANSAS PRAIRIE

To the best of my knowledge, Minnie never had a telephone, never had a driver license, never owned a car, never traveled on public transportation, never had a job outside the home, and never had a TV. Yet, she had a most extraordinary life.

#### TOENEBOEHN GARDENING/URBAN FARMING HISTORY – ST. LOUIS AND KANSAS CITY

The Toeneboehn's / Tonebon's immigrated from Germany to St. Louis in the 1850's. By the 1870's, the family were established urban farmers in St. Louis.

#### TOENEBOEHN IMMIGRATION STORY – OVERLAND BY WAGON TRAIN

Family lore is that the Toeneboehn's / Tonebon's traveled from New Orleans to Minnesota to join a wagon train. The wagon train was ambushed by Indians resulting in the deaths of some family members.

#### THE WIDDICOMBE CHILDREN'S ODYSSEY – ABANDONED BY THEIR FATHER IN 1904

In 1904, following the untimely death of his wife, Robert Widdicombe and 10 children began a journey from Kansas City, KS to Galveston, TX. Along the way, Robert abandoned the children and left them to find their way back home.

© John R Baldwin and AllKinConsidered.Blog. Unauthorized use and/or duplication of this material without express and written permission from this site's author and/or owner is strictly prohibited. Excerpts and links may be used, provided that full and clear credit is given to John R Baldwin and AllKinConsidered.Blog with appropriate and specific direction to the original content.