

Unidentified, 3: I call them “Emma” and “Wilhelm”



I came across this beautiful album of cabinet cards on German ebay. Little did I know that it would document one family's history over the course of some 50 years. Unfortunately, none of the photos were labelled, so I have absolutely no idea who this beautiful family was. The photos are glued on the album pages which makes it impossible to check if anything had been written on the back of the photos once.

The family had a connection to Kassel, Hannover and Berlin in Germany, taken from where the photo studios of the family photos were located.

I asked my Instagram followers to suggest names for the children of the family, so that we'd have something to call them by. We decided to name them “**Emma**” and “**Wilhelm**”. I believe Emma was probably born around 1895. Looking at her outfits, it's safe to say her family lived comfortably.



Wilhelm was perhaps 3-5 years older. Here are the siblings in their late teens.



I believe the oldest photo in the album dates back to the 1880s, probably before the birth of the children. This photo of the siblings' parents was taken in Hannover, Germany.



Just look how gorgeous the siblings' mother was! Emma certainly has a lot of resemblance to her mother.



Emma and Wilhelm's father was an old school man who loved his moustache from young till old.



I think "Emma" might have attended an all-girls school in Arnsberg, Germany, and this might have been her clique. She is the tallest girl standing at the back in huge mutton sleeves.



Emma's favourite past time activities included tennis and hiking. I can't imagine doing either in those clothes...



Wilhelm apparently served in the WWI (here on the right). Since I don't know his real name, I can't check the military records about his service or if he came back from the war unharmed.



This photo shows him in the company of tennis-appreciating ladies and children. His sister is not in the photograph. The photo was taken in the 1910s, perhaps just before he was drafted.



Because the photos in this found photo album span over several decades, it was fun to put together the young and now comparisons.

Here's Emma through the years:



And Emma's parents:



Emma's father rocking his moustache through the years:



I can't be sure but I think this might have been Emma and Wilhelm's aunt, sitting here together with the siblings' father. She featured in the siblings' life for at least 50 years. Look at that comparison of the same lady in the 1910s, 1900s and in 1949.



Here's perhaps the childhood home of Emma & Wilhelm? It deserved a place in the found photo album, so it must have been important for the family. Unfortunately, I identify the location of this house.



I have a feeling that Emma's mother perhaps passed away before her father. In the photos from the 1920s, his father seems to be without her in the photographs. Here he stands on the very left. I don't recognize anyone else in the crowd.



I can't be sure but could this man be Wilhelm in his later years? If so, perhaps this is him with his grandchild in the 1950s/60s.



The newest photo in the photo album is of this unidentified child. I wish I knew who he was and what became of him, and if he is missing this family photo album. If you recognize yourself in the photo or know who he is, please do let me know.



This is what I love about this found photo album – it takes you on a journey through several decades in one family's life and makes you feel like you know them and were part of that journey, too.

Photos Without Families, originally shared on www.photoswithoutfamilies.blog