

Wendel House



24. Wendel House,
5288 Main

The Richard F. Wendel family built this Craftsman bungalow immediately after their buildings for Wendel's Hardware and the Bank





At Right in This Early Main Street Scene
Are Bank and Hardware Buildings That
Burned in 1925

of Onkama on the northwest corner of Main and Fourth Streets burned in 1925. Wendel was born in 1858 in Demmin, Germany, and learned tinsmithing before coming to the United States in 1879. Besides more conventional items like pans for baking and the metalwork for wooden water coolers that allowed artesian well water to preserve food, Wendel produced lighting fixtures, lamps, candlesticks, bowls, lanterns, birdhouses, picture frames, plant stands, signs, and birdcages.





Especially after his hardware business burned in 1925, he crafted the more whimsical items in tin, such as this metal castle with a drawbridge on the crest of craggy metal stones that was in the fountain on his lawn. From the metal dragon that spouted water beneath the castle to the decorative chainwork around the pool that formed the moat, the nature of Wendel is evident in the creation of this piece of folk art.



R. F. Wendel with Pipe in His Tin Room

In the February 4, 1927, *Arcadia Argus* is mention of Wendel finishing his tin room, which is the rathskeller in the basement. The room has walls of tin embossed by him to resemble stone. Many of his items were also crafted of tin to resemble wood; and with his special painting or graining, they have the texture of wood. In 1937, the Wendels moved from Onekama; the home later was occupied by the F. W. Briskes.