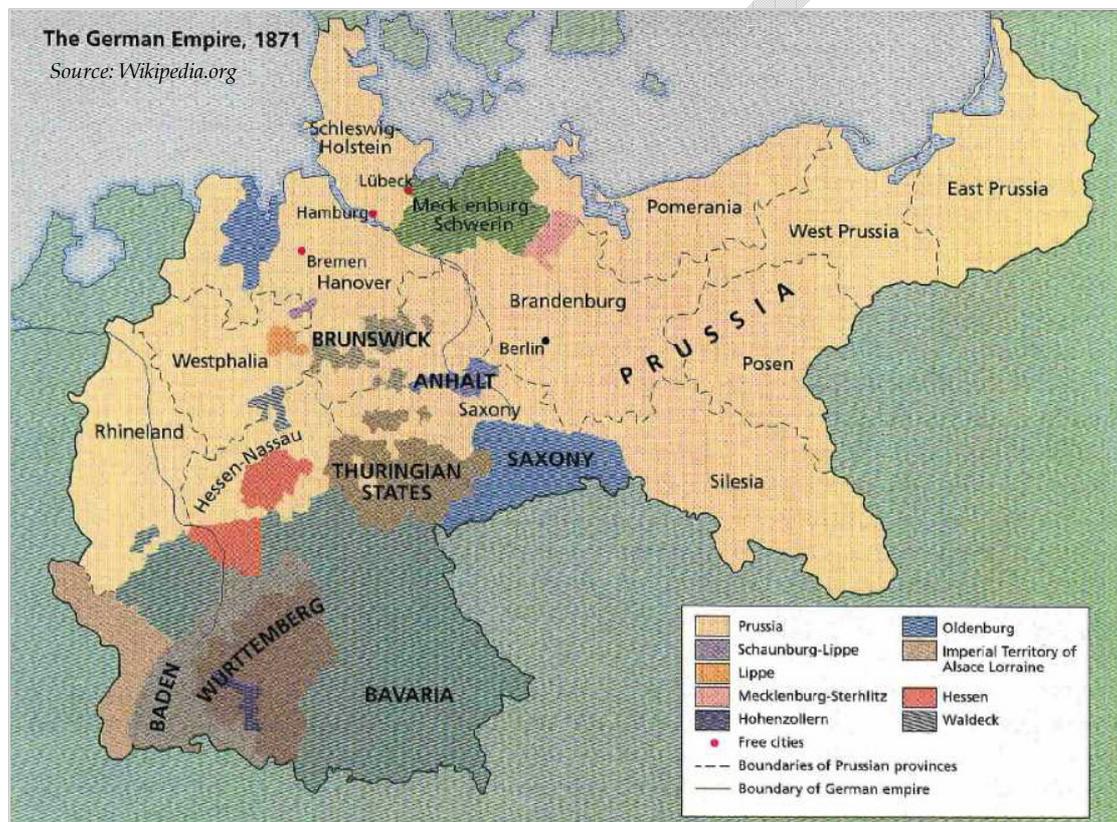


II: THE ROAD TO LEIPZIG: 1871-1878

The advent of the 'Deutsches Reich' in January 1871 brought together a large number of German speaking peoples and saw the advent of the incubation of a new 'nation'; German identity. It now encompassed states or principalities that stretched from Schleswig-Holstein in the north to Bavaria (Bayern) in the south and from the Rhineland in the west to Königsberg in East Prussia.



Yet it still excluded many German-speaking territories, for instance those within the new dual monarchy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (founded in 1867), including the *Sudeten* Germans within the Kingdom of Bohemia. For these reasons, some contemporaries labeled the Empire "incomplete" (a problem some say eventually placed a heavy burden on its further development¹).

The Reich's founding was greeted with enthusiasm by the great majority.² Prussia's population within it accounted for 60 percent (or 25 million of a total of 41). Bismarck became its chancellor, while Prussia's King Wilhelm I became its Kaiser. Both men would serve in their respective positions for almost twenty years.

¹ Questions on German History, pg. 166

² However, pride in German unification looked very different depending on where you were in the *Kaiserreich* (and how you got there). Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933. J. N. Retallack. Pg. 6.

The new Reich spurred an already present economic upswing, which encouraged a period of speculation and a 51 percent increase in banknote and metallic currency circulation. As many as a thousand new companies and large enterprises sprang up in urban locations, almost as rapidly as small, technically antiquated firms in rural areas folded. Not surprisingly, these years were nick-named the *Grunderzeit* or 'foundation era.' (O&O, pg. 131)

The rapidly expanding railways (see textbox 1.1 in the previous chapter) furthered the development of towns and cities, which swelled with young mobile people leaving the land in search of new opportunities, underpinned by the expansion of jobs in the industrial sector. Rural and small town areas like Marie's Querfurt were forced to alter their economic functions, as they gradually lost their labour force and stagnated. They responded by finding specialist niches, supplying the growing towns with various foodstuffs³ – wine and sugar in Querfurt's case. In Schleswig-Holstein, thousands of opportunity seekers (including a considerable number of Hirsch's) headed off across the open seas to the United States.⁴

Friedrich Hirsch was on the move too, or more precisely, his career was. To qualify a tailor, he had to spend between one and three years as a *Lehrling*, learning the tailor's profession with a master of the craft.⁵ My best estimate is that he formally began this period of learning, known as an apprenticeship, shortly after returning from the Franco-Prussian war, in mid-1871.

The apprenticeship is a system used the world over to train new generations of practitioners, a skill. Still common today in Germany (see text box opposite), it involves living and learning within a master craftsman's household. For a master, apprentices were an inexpensive form of labour that only required food and lodging.

The period will have been a gruelling one. To begin with, the hours were long. The city of Leipzig's own guild regulations (1854) for example, decreed apprentices were expected to labour up to fifteen hours per day (typically six days a week). In the summer that meant starting at five in the morning and working until eight in the evening and in winter starting just one hour later. For those who ignored the rules, fines and even prison punishments were administered (*ibid*).

Typically the apprentice remained close to (if not at) home for this part of his study. This implies Friedrich would have stayed local,⁶ and as remarked in Chapter I, Bad Oldesloe and Hamburg were neither beyond reach (especially were it the case that a soldier or officer with whom he served during the war became his host and master).

³ Breuilley, pg. 207

⁴ According to: www.rootdigger.de/Emi.htm, an estimated 250,000 people left Schleswig-Holstein between 1830 and 1930, mainly to avoid military conscription. During 1850-1890 there were ten Hirsch emigrants. However, ancestry.com's 2007 publication, *The Hirsch name in History* suggests hundreds, 11 percent of whom were farmers with homes in Ohio and New York state by 1880, while 18 percent 'kept house.'

⁵ According to Leipzig's guild rules, as detailed in *Leipziger Zünfte* by Jutta and Rainer Duclaud, Berlin: Verl. d. Nation, 1990 within the sub-section entitled: '*Schneider*' from pg. 128.

⁶ According to Klaus Struve ('the rootdigger'), a tailor named Claus Hinrich Hirsch lived about 20km northeast of Sülfeld in the village of Steinbek. His wife was Maria Catharina (note the similarity to Friedrich's sisters' names). They had a daughter in 1841 which puts their dates of birth around 1820, the same as Friedrich's father. Were the two Claus's cousins? And if so, could Friedrich have undertaken his apprenticeship there? Twenty kilometres in those days was walking distance after all, adds Klaus Struve.

2.1: Apprenticeships and Journeymen in Germany Today

Apprenticeships are still popular in Germany today. In 2001, two thirds of young people under 22 began an apprenticeship, with 78 percent of them being completed. In other words, some 50 percent or so of all young people under 22 undertook an apprenticeship.

According to an article published by Stephen Evans on the BBC's website in July 2011, apprentices are at the core of its economy today. A visit to the website of the country's Economy and Technology Ministry reveals page after page of advice on every conceivable occupation from A to Z: *Anlagenmechaniker* (plant mechanic) to *Zweiradmechaniker* (bike mechanic) via *Holzspielzeugmacher* (wooden toy maker), *Manufakturporzellaner* (porcelain maker) and *Schuhmacher* (shoemaker). Employers and government pay for these apprenticeships with a wage roughly one third of that they would receive once qualified.



After the apprenticeship has been completed (usually at between two and three and a half years, depending on the specific trade), the *Lehrling* heads out on the road (if mastership is his/her goal) to diversify his experience with different masters. Because many professions have converted to the costume of the carpenter, most Germans believe it is only they who go journeying. This is not the case, however. It may also surprise the reader to know the terms *jack* and *knave* are sometimes used as informal names for journeymen. Hence the saying: '*jack of all trades, master of none*' – meaning someone who is educated in several fields of trade, but is not yet skilled enough in any to set up their own workshop as a master.

Some interesting examples of apprentices and journeymen can be found online within that trade dealing with furs, including one family practice which is still based in Bad Oldesloe today (despite the trade's huge decline, Schleswig-Holstein remains home to a number of Germany's fur farms). The *von Schachtmeyer* family began their trade way back in 1894 in Breslau, southeast Prussia. In 1919 the son of Rudolf von Schachtmeyer decided to follow in his father's footsteps, and began an apprenticeship. Three years later he became a *Kürschmergeselle* (a journeyman) and in 1929 he became a *Kürschnermeister*, re-founding the family business in Breslau after *Franz*, his father perished in World War I. Twenty four years later, in 1953, Rudolf's son Martin followed a similar path, serving an apprenticeship at the firm Otto Berger in Hamburg (after moving to Bad Oldesloe in 1945). Three years later, in 1956 he passed his journeyman examination in Hamburg (as best in the state) and by 1961 had completed his studies with distinction at Hamburg's Master School for Fashion. The "[Pelz-Mode Design von Schachtmeyer](#)" business has been booming ever since, just nine kilometers east in fact of where Friedrich Hirsch would himself begin his career. [Martin](#) is now the chief master of the Schleswig-Holstein branch of the [German Furriers Trade Association](#).

What is interesting in both furriers' cases is the long period of learning from start to finish - approximately ten years. In an indication of the close relationship between the fur trade and the tailor's, one can see how Martin combined his knowledge of furs with tailoring and fashion.

Sources: www.bbc.co.uk/news/14185334#story and en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apprenticeship#Germany

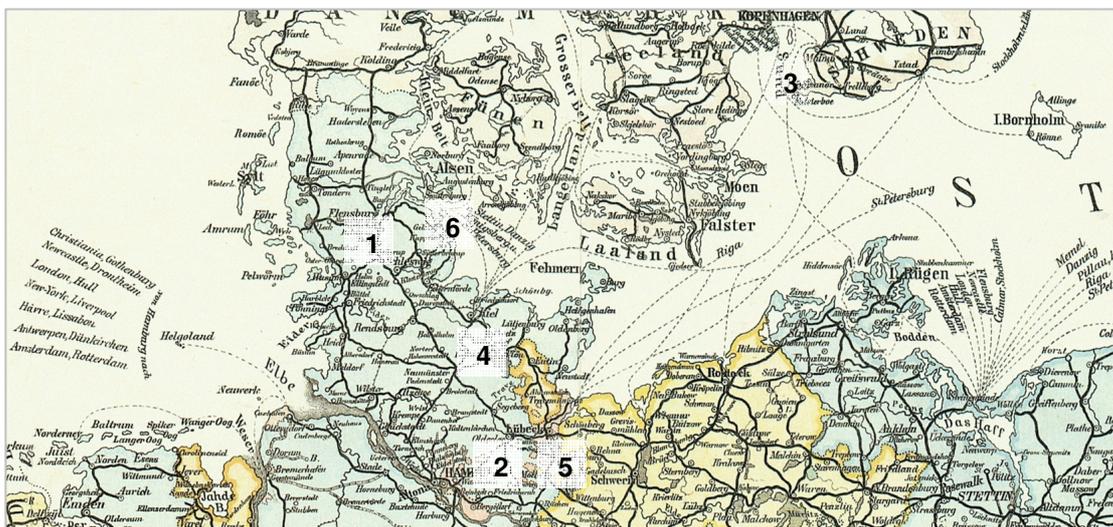
Because Friedrich had accumulated several years artisanal experience prior to the war, I suspect he may have needed just one year's further training in order to qualify. But before he could move onto the next level, he had to complete his military service. Despite the fact he had likely already served in the Prussian Army, its male citizens were still liable to perform military duty (*Dienstzeit*) between the age of 17 and 40.⁷ This lasted between two and three years.⁸ According to www.genealoger.com, military service was far from popular.⁹

⁷ Winfried Brandes, military historian in Harislee, Schleswig-Holstein, contributed to my research and confirmed many assumptions via personal correspondence in July, 2011. See also: [de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landwehr_\(Militär\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landwehr_(Militär))

⁸ Personal correspondence with Dr. [Heiner Bröckermann](#), Lieutenant Colonel and Branch Head AIF III - *Anfragen und Fachstudien, Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt*, Zeppelinstr. 127/128, 14471 Potsdam. Feb. 15, 2011.

⁹ See: http://www.genealoger.com/german/ger_emigration_records.htm, where it notes: Many young men emigrated from Germany without permission, in order to avoid military service. It has been estimated that more than fifty percent of young men of military age emigrated illegally.

According to his residence record, Friedrich performed his service in Flensburg (see '1' on the map below).¹⁰ The town lies about 120 kilometres north of Oldesloe (see '2') as the crow flies. It also lay conveniently along a new stretch of railway line, which allowed him relatively direct passage to and from home. Assuming Friedrich served three full years, he should have started his service around mid-1872.



Until 1864, Flensburg had been the second largest port in the Kingdom of Denmark after Copenhagen ('3'). Ships sailed from here to all the main German Baltic Sea (*Ost See*) ports, e.g. Danzig, Königsberg and Stettin, besides Russia's St. Petersburg. However, in 1865 its administration – as part of the Duchy of Schleswig – passed to the Kingdom of Prussia (see Chapter I). Thereafter the German language, that of the upper classes and the learned, prevailed.

Around the time Friedrich arrived in 1872, the town claimed 26,500 residents, with some two thirds of them still Danes. It was rapidly growing too. Its population was already twice that of its 1835 figure. Today it still is one of the largest towns in the region, second only to Kiel ('4') and Lübeck ('5') and retains its considerable Danish community, sitting just 7 km south of the Danish border within the German state of Schleswig-Holstein.¹¹

Above top: Germany's rail network in 1899.

Above: Flensburg's harbour around 1875

Source:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_the_first_German_railways_to_1870 and
www.flensburg-online.de/altflensburg/

¹⁰ Einwohner Der Stadt [Leipzig]. 1876 BIS 1889: (POA Nr 166/Bl.37).

¹¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flensburg>

The 18th Division of the Prussian Army was headquartered in Flensburg from October 1866.¹² The port therefore served as a garrison town, where it hosted *Infanterie-Regiment Nr. 86* (a year later becoming the *Schleswig-Holsteinsches Füsilier-Regiment*). In his uniform, Friedrich, now aged 20 probably looked much like the 86th regiment soldier, pictured right at the time.



We don't know Friedrich's specific position within the regiment, however, we know it was made up of three infantry battalions, the first of which was based at the *Duburg Kaserne* or barracks (shown right), on the outskirts of Flensburg. The second was located at *Schloss Augustenburg*, while the third was at *Schloss Sonderburgat*. Both of these lay on the island of *Alsen*, in North Schleswig (see '6' on the map on the previous page).¹³



The military barracks at Flensburg
Source: <http://slesvigske.dk/1914-18/86.htm>

According to his residence record, Friedrich was released on 30th September 1875 together with his *Militär Pass*. This served as a kind of passport and functioned as an identity document. Issued by the district offices of the military recruiting authorities, it included data on conscripts and their course of duty. An 86th regiment's soldier's pass is shown right and reveals his date and place of birth, trade, children, the company served and the date of completion of his service.¹⁴



The 86th regiment's *Militär Pass* (1890 and 1908)
Source: <http://slesvigske.dk/1914-18/86.htm>

Before he continued with his study, Friedrich surely returned to his family, namely his father, mother and two sisters in Sülfeld. It may not have been for long, because the next stage of his education meant becoming a *Geselle* – or journeyman. During this time he would wander (or 'waltz' as it was typically nicknamed) from one town to another. In this way he gained experience from a variety of masters. Traditionally he was not allowed to return to within a 50km perimeter of his home town!

¹² In peacetime it was subordinated to the IX Army Corps. See: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/18th_Division_\(German_Empire\)#Pre-World_War_I_organization](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/18th_Division_(German_Empire)#Pre-World_War_I_organization)

¹³ http://wiki-de.genealogy.net/FR_86

¹⁴ <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wehrpass>

While an apprenticeship already entitled him to work as a tailor, becoming a journeyman was necessary in order to progress to the level of a master. For Friedrich this stage would last nine arduous years! “That a journeyman should have to spend so long qualifying was not an isolated case,” according to Jutta and Rainer Duclaud when writing about Leipzig’s own rules, “but also was neither so typical within this trade.”¹⁵

What is especially interesting, however, is that this period, which effectively incorporated three stages were by decree closely intertwined with his private life. In other words, the would-be master was supposed to get engaged (between the first and second stage), and married before the third. Only in that respectable status, would he finally qualify and obtain the master's certificate (*ibid*)!

Reaching these milestones illustrates how competitive becoming a tailor at the highest level was in a place like Leipzig. But when Friedrich set out from Sülfeld in late 1875, this central German city may not have been where he initially set his sights. Within Prussia, Hannover, Stettin, Berlin, Potsdam, Magdeburg, Merseburg or even Frankfurt an der Oder lay closer to home and may have been among the first places he visited as a journeyman. Some of these are shown on the map at the beginning of this chapter. I suspect he visited two or three of these towns during his first 18 months.



Aspirant masters could easily be recognised “*auf der Waltz*” by their clothing. For instance the carpenter wore a black hat with a broad brim, while other professions relied on a black stovepipe or a cocked hat (see picture on pg. 25). Black bell-bottomed trousers, a waistcoat and a *Stenz* (a traditional curled hiking pole) were also intrinsic to the outfit that over time was adopted by other trades as the best known and well received. This helped ensure wanderers were not mistaken for tramps or vagabonds! Normally the journeyman was unmarried, childless and debt-free – so as to avoid being seen as running from social obligations. Although he would be employed by a master, he typically lived apart, for instance in a special journeyman’s hostel.

A travelling book (*Wanderbuch*) was given to the journeyman and in each new town he would go to the town office asking for a stamp – *now that would make for a fine souvenir!* This qualified as both a record of his journey and also replaced the residence registration that was otherwise required.

During this period Friedrich will have forged new relations with artisans of diverse backgrounds, including furriers, tanners, tailors, bag-makers and saddlers, besides cobblers, upholsterers and clothes manufacturers. As a result, he will have also grown part of semi-secret (and ultimately quite powerful) occupational associations or brotherhoods (*Schächte*), groups that could even organise labour strikes if they

¹⁵ Pg. 133, then pg. 130. *Leipziger Zünfte* by Jutta and Rainer Duclaud, Berlin: Verl. d. Nation, 1990.

wished.¹⁶ Jutta and Rainer Duclaud remarked upon the growing self-consciousness of journeymen and apprentices within Leipzig at this time despite the severity of its 1854 guild regulations, based on their movements.¹⁷

Although the economic bubble that followed German unification had burst in 1873, and resulted in a prolonged period of economic uncertainty “in which a pessimistic outlook on life dominated the spirit of age” (noted one famous lawyer of the time), come 1875, Friedrich had perhaps found himself in the right trade at the right time. The fur and fashion industry was desperate for skilled workers to operate their sewing machines, and the demand for journeymen was high, particularly for those from across central and eastern Europe.

Furs might have especially interested Friedrich. During the period of his training, that profession began to undergo a major transformation, thanks to industrialization. First, the two main processes associated with a furrier's work separated: the 'tan' furrier prepared the skins while the 'needle' furrier stitched the pelts into finished fur garments for wholesale. Then in 1872, Joseph Kurschner revolutionized the needle furrier's work by inventing the 'fur sewing machine' (see picture inset right) which dramatically reduced stitching time - and thus the cost. And in tandem with the rapid growth of the textile industry and an emerging fashion trade, fur then began to find a market among an emerging middle class, who found it an affordable luxury.



Above: German postage stamp showing the evolution of the Furriers trade
Source: de.wikipedia.org/Kurschner
Below: The Battle of Nations at Leipzig's Augustus Platz
Source: *Questions on German History*

Friedrich had been on the road just 18 months when he arrived in Leipzig, a city of 130,000 people, on April 15th 1877, just short of his 25th birthday. A city that almost 65 years earlier, in October 1813, became a battleground when the Prussian army and its allies wrestled it from the French at the Battle of Nations, thereby ending Napoleon's run of conquest in Europe.



Leipzig, like its neighbours Chemnitz, Plauen and Zwickau within the Kingdom of Saxony (towns that may have been more popular for journeying tailors¹⁸) would all have been considered 'foreign soil' to Friedrich. Conversely, that might well have been part of the attraction. Especially since as Robert A. Willingham notes in *Jews in Leipzig: nationality and community in the 20th century*, Prussian 'occupation' of Saxony occurred in the wake of the Napoleonic wars.¹⁹

¹⁶ O&O, pg. 200

¹⁷ Pg. 133. *Leipziger Zünfte* by Jutta and Rainer Duclaud, Berlin: Verl. d. Nation, 1990.

¹⁸ Oddly, all but Leipzig offered opportunity until 1909, according to www.zeno.org/Meyers-1905/A/Schneiderschulen or <http://de.academic.ru/dic.nsf/meyers/125702/Schneiderschulen>.

¹⁹ *Jews in Leipzig: nationality and community in the 20th century*. RA Willingham. University of Texas. 2005. Pg.25

But there were more specific reasons too. For a start, Leipzig was rapidly becoming a focal point for the textile industry and at the same time was a well-known centre for fur and tobacco processing. This was aided by its being one of the world's premier trading points. Thanks to the advent of railways, their expansion across Germany had helped make Leipzig a major hub of central European railway traffic (as early as the mid-1850s it was connected to all major German and most European cities). Then there was the city's industrial expansion, which was aided during the 1860s by its position within one of Europe's three richest deposits of brown coal. This in turn attracted many migrants.²⁰ All these things combined to make Leipzig one of new Germany's most rapidly growing urban (and socialist) centres in 1877.

But even back in the 17th century, the city was a well-known trading point besides a major European centre of learning and culture, as the text box below shows. Through this, it had already begun to excel in music, astronomy and optics.

2.2: Leipzig since the Middle Ages

One of the main trade routes in medieval central Europe had been the so-called Bernstein or amber route, running from the eastern Baltic through Silesia, Bohemia and Nuremberg to Italy. Leipzig benefited from this, while its ruler, the then Elector of Saxony interfered relatively little in the city's affairs. In 1670, he tried excluding Jews from Leipzig. However, the local merchants persuaded him not to because of their enormous importance to the city and Prussian provinces to the east, and Leipzig for them. Many a village in Posen, Pomerania and eastern Germany (see map on pg. 23) depended entirely on the Jewish peddler for household goods, cloth and threads. Suppliers from Lyons for instance would send their goods to Leipzig instead of Danzig, because from here they could be sold onto the Russians, wrote Eda Sagarra in her 1977 work, *A Social History of Germany, 1648-1914*.

Besides household goods, Leipzig was also renowned for its books. When Frankfurt's book censorship became too rigorous in the 1690's, many booksellers relocated to Leipzig, making it also the centre of the book trade. According to Sagarra, Leipzig was a mecca for the innumerable men of education in provincial towns and villages. Only by visiting its book fairs, could they hear of or purchase new books. Very few German towns had bookshops until the second half of the 18th century but it was Leipzig that started the vogue for public lending libraries. By the early 18th century it had established its supremacy over Frankfurt as the venue of all the most important fairs in Germany.

Leipzig's prosperity was reflected in the civic amenities and the homes of its merchants. It had the distinction of being the only inland town in 18th century Germany where there were decent inns. Its centre was paved and lit with oil-fueled lamps from the early 1700's, while other towns were still served by muddy thoroughfares. The coffee houses (a new phenomenon of the time) were made famous by a composer called Johann Sebastian Bach, who would give concerts between 1723-1750 for and on their behalf to attract more customers. He also made infamous the *Thomaskirche*, making in the process Leipzig the music capital of Europe.

Despite the declining political fortunes of the kingdom on the Elbe, by 1815, Leipzig was an emerging centre of manufacture besides trade: it had become the capital of the German publishing, printing and paper-making industry, and was now *the* major focus for the exchange of goods between east and west Europe, above all at its great fairs (Evans, 1990). The arrival of the railways, including the first German line between Leipzig and Dresden in 1839 introduced the process of capitalist industrialisation and engendered the growth of the coal, iron, metals and textile industries (Carr, 1991). This helped boost the volume of trade that passed through the city, which brought currency, making Leipzig a significant banking centre too (Dobson, 2001). By the founding of the German Reich in 1871 it hosted 55 diverse companies and industries. By 1877 it had its first water works and by 1897 its first water tower that combined to assure water supply and sanitation infrastructure and services.



The image is from an antique postcard and shows Leipzig's Markt in 1850

²⁰ Pg. 11-12. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig: The Story of a Relationship*. Sean Dobson, 2001.

The tailor's trade though was neither new to the city. In fact, its guild was one of Leipzig's oldest whose tradition dated back as early as 1310, when *Schneiders* occupied local authority positions as town councilors. However, rivalry with them was rife, for example among the furriers. In one 16th century petition to the council, the following was noted: "It is well known that the tailors in Leipzig have a plentiful livelihood... there is hardly a home for sale, before they have snapped it up."

But as within other guilds, master tailors were under increasing economic pressure. In response, they forbade competition from rural masters and apprentices. However, in 1555 (under the so-called Grimmaische Treaty), their guild initiated the first provincial system, linking Leipzig with thirty-two other towns in a sort of network. This opened Leipzig up and allowed the rural lords to enroll one or two of their own tailors as masters within the city's guild. But despite this concession, their tailors were still only allowed to do business with customers outside of Leipzig.

This in turn made the city even more of a magnet for (would-be) master tailors, whose number doubled to 82 between 1545 and 1594. By the beginning of the next century, more than one hundred journeymen were found to be employed in their workshops. To maintain their property and reputation and expand (as well as protect) their business, Leipzig's masters tightened the trade's regulations again.

2.3: The Schneider and His-story

A *Schneider* (or tailor) is a person who makes, repairs, or alters clothing professionally, especially suits and men's clothing.

During the Middle Ages clothing had been regarded as a means of concealing the body. But with the Renaissance (14th- 17th century), the human form came to be accentuated. The loose robe, that standard uniform of the medieval period so easily constructed from a single piece or two of cloth, was shortened and tightened, and eventually cut, pieced, and sewn together in attempts to bring into prominence the contours of the human form. This was the birth of tailoring and, in fact, of fashion.

Attempts at re-constructing the human body in fabric called for a growing expert skill and division of labour. By the late 18th century the cutter (the one who makes the pattern) and the tailor (the one who does the sewing) joined other craftsmen as important members of the community.

Until this time, the cloth had been the distinguishing feature of garments, and the wearer took most of the responsibility for the design ~ and, in most cases, the actual production ~ of his own clothes. But little by little, the tailor took on equal importance with the weaver, and gradually came to overshadow him. Master tailors in the growing towns eventually became responsible for the clothing needs of society, and the art and science of tailoring became a highly specialized, complex, and jealously guarded craft.

There have been tremendous innovations in the past hundred years in fashion and the art of tailoring: sewing machines now do the work on straight seams better than could be done by hand; new fabric technology has produced more comfortable clothes; fashions have adapted to more leisurely, climate-controlled lifestyles. But tailoring is still, and likely to remain so, an art that has not been brought down to the level of a science. The tailor still believes in making personalized clothing, statements of fashion for the individual, whether those be men or women's suits, coats, trousers or similar garments, made from wool, linen, silk – or fur.



Summarised from a text posted by G. Bruce Boyer, February 1996 and online at:
<http://www.lone-star.net/mall/literature/tailor4.htm>

Detailed dress codes were introduced in 1595 and enforced by Leipzig's artisans and their families (including cobblers and furriers too). Clothes had to correspond to social status so that *Aldermen* (councilors) and merchants, artisans, and house-servants differed from one another in appearance.

However, because the city received so many visitors (owing to its rich trade), not only did this bring great affluence and prosperity (its lush feasts and entertainment within the social sphere helped reinforce the need for pomp and luxury) but also led to visitors' widespread disregard of the dress codes. This also brought tailors increasing profits, helping the profession prosper well into the 18th century.

Increasing economic pressure led to the continued exploitation of local apprentices and journeymen. But in 1861, the Kingdom of Saxony abolished all its tradesmen's guilds²¹ (see the text box below to learn why), after which it became easier for Prussian journeymen like Friedrich to come to Leipzig, and thus exploit its masters' know-how to their own ends.

2.4: The *Innung* – a new kind of Guild

During the early part of the 19th century, Prussia had done its best to abolish guilds: associations of craftsmen. This was because they monopolised town politics and trade and had generally been against the wave of liberalisation introduced at the time. However, they were not completely eradicated in all its territories until the foundation of the German Empire in 1871. Yet even then, they continued – albeit in a new guise.

Corporative traditions survived well in craft circles and this favoured the spread of the *Innung*: a new corporate group of master craftsmen (the term itself was one of an already used group of German terms for 'guild'). After their establishment, membership steadily grew, such that by 1907 almost 500,000 craft masters had been organized into *Innungen*. Come 1926 and over 70 percent of all German craft masters belonged to one.

In this way, nineteenth century German craftsmen succeeded in creating a form of interest group representation, which has continued to issue certificates of mastership, journeymanhood and apprenticeship in Germany to this day.

Interestingly, craftsmen were more successful than shopkeepers of the time, who generally struggled to maintain their position on chambers of commerce, which were dominated by large merchants and overseas traders.

Summarised from pg 302 of Ogilvie & Overy's "A New Social and Economic History of Germany"



Within Leipzig, Friedrich will have appreciated the importance of fur to the city. In fact, it was rapidly becoming the centre of the European fur trade. Russia at the time was the largest supplier of the world's fur, trading (alongside Bohemia and Poland) with central Europe through the southeastern Prussian cities of *Breslau* and *Glogau* (*Wrocław* and *Głogów* today) in the Province of Silesia. However, the railway's development had helped Leipzig become the main hub of international exchange over *Frankfurt* and *Braunschweig*. The industry too had specialised and thanks to the fur sewing machine, Leipzig's traders, including those handling cloth and clothing, found they could now succeed in business and prosper outside of the periods of the traditional Leipzig fairs. Slowly the traders' inns gave way to furrier's workshops, stores and offices.

²¹ Personal correspondence with Martina Wermes, Referentin at the Sächsisches Staatsarchiv. Leipzig, 17th June, 2011

Fur dealers' offices and homes were typically found along the 'Brühl,' a thoroughfare, so-called because of its concentration of handicrafts. One of Leipzig's oldest, it lay just within the limits of the former city wall to the north, having earlier formed part of the city's former Jewish quarter. *Brühl* in fact was an emblem of Jewish economic activity in Leipzig, and of the city as a whole: while a little over four percent of Leipzigers worked in the fur industry, almost nine percent of Jewish Leipzigers did.²²



Brühl, 1874 Source: Wikipedia/Brühl

During Friedrich's residence and in between his long hours, he probably mingled with the likes of entrepreneurs, industrialists, merchants and bankers too – peers who may have encouraged him to establish a *Schneiderstube* (tailor's studio). Perhaps Friedrich saw real opportunity in the summer of 1877 and decided to gamble on the kingdom.

Despite what is generally described as a twenty-three year 'Great Depression' that began in 1873, Leipzig was plush with banks ready to loan to small industry and handicrafts. One such institution was *Bankhaus A. Lieberoth*, which was founded in late 1861 by a former director of the *Anhalt-Dessau Landesbank*.²³ The location August Lieberoth chose to headquarter his business was Brühl, which meant his services will have especially targeted furriers, cloth handlers and tailors.

The picture in the text box overleaf shows Brühl, 7-9, the premises from which *Bankhaus A. Lieberoth* was known to have operated. As its contents reveal, private banks occupied an important niche in the German banking system. They supplied credit, managed assets (deposits, property) and gave advice to people like Friedrich. Unlike your average bank manager, it was their personal availability and contact with their clients that set them apart, which in turn contributed to their flexibility when it came to servicing them.

Friedrich may not have approached *Herr Lieberoth* as a would-be investor or creditor of a small business development loan. Rather, their paths may have more simply crossed while he undertook a bespoke tailoring job for him or a special delivery, or maybe even when August paid a visit as creditor to Friedrich's master.

But a friendship struck up between them and until the autumn of 1877, they met often to exchange views about business and the economy, politics, German unity and culture, in a region so opposed to Prussia. But rather than a beer hall (which was anyway more suited to the working class), August invited Friedrich to the increasingly popular coffee houses.

²² Reference required, not least to date the statistic (Willingham puts this in the Weimar period)

²³ See: http://www.archiv.sachsen.de/archive/leipzig/4183_3231303131.htm



Kaffee Drei Könige (www.kaffeetraditionsverein.de)

The *Kaffeehaus Drei Könige* lay just south of the Markt in Peter Strasse, and since the middle of the 19th century had been a fashionable meeting point for civil servants, bankers, doctors, teachers and the like, probably because as Pine notes, such places “distinguished them from the town’s other inhabitants” and where menfolk “of professional practices, dress, housing, and cultural norms” came to pass the time, while their women remained at home.²⁴

2.5: Leipzig: Not just a MesseStadt – a Banking Centre too!

As with commerce, Leipzig had also been an important banking center for centuries. Until 1945 it had the largest concentration of public and private banks after Berlin. This tradition began back in the 18th century when the town lay on the main German trading routes. Trading houses would be present at the Leipzig trade fairs and also functioned as financial institutions, taking responsibility for banking transactions and underwriting loans. With the increasing development of the capital and financial markets, the banking business gradually expanded and eventually surpassed Leipzig’s trading business. Many private banks were developed as far back as the mid-18th Century, while their rise in the 19th century was closely connected with the process of industrialization.



In general, the banks saw their role not only in services, but as financial companies that promoted industry and economic policy. During the first half of the 19th century, private bankers were the most important sources of credit until the arrival of the joint-stock banks during the second half of the 19th century. Thereafter the latter grew spectacularly, 857 being formed across Germany in the five years between 1870 and 1874 alone. At the same time credit-cooperatives emerged that originated from the notion of self-help and invested in artisans, small traders and farmers. This was coupled with the growth of savings banks networks, as well as the first commercial insurance companies.

However, almost as quickly as the joint-stock banks appeared they went bankrupt in the *Gründerkrach* of 1873. The private banks meanwhile continued to play a prominent role, regarding the activities of joint-stock banks an extension of their own business. Private bankers mainly supplied credit, asset management, trustee work and property advice, but also issued both industrial paper and shares in the construction of transportation infrastructure. In fact, it is estimated that joint-stock banks had at their disposal total assets amounting to just 10 percent of those held by the private bankers. Suffice to say that the economic importance of the private bankers in Germany was still high.

However, during the years between 1871 and 1899, the private banking sector declined, with as many as 200 being taken over by so-called universal banks. Nevertheless many private bankers continued to occupy a niche in providing loans to small industry and handicrafts, thanks to their personal contacts with their clientele, which enabled them to offer greater flexibility in issuing loans.

Summarised from Wellhöner and Wixforth, O&O, pg.156 and information available at: http://www.archiv.sachsen.de/archive/leipzig/4183_3231303131.htm

²⁴ O&O, Pg 359. Pine.

With this, Friedrich made the acquaintance of a centuries-old family of artisans and traders. Good credit underpinned the success of any banking business, combined with reputation and an ability to make sound judgments, and so it may come only as mild surprise that the Lieberoth's also managed a freight shipping concern (utilized regularly for instance by the circus and entertainment industry). In Friedrich, August will have identified a like-minded and ambitious fellow, himself at the vanguard of a rapidly growing industry.

The Lieberoth's hailed from the Province of Saxony, on the Prussian side of the Kingdom's border (see pg. 15 within Chapter I to briefly recap its history). During one of Friedrich's meetings with August, he had slipped word about *Fraülein Marie*. A well brought-up, primed for marital subservience 18 year old, she was of course the youngest grandchild of a distant relative and acquaintance: a successful master craftsman and carpenter in his own right: Johann Christian Gottlob Lieberoth.

Mindful that becoming a master tailor in Leipzig required Friedrich become engaged while still a journeyman, and encouraged by August's good words about Marie, in spring 1878 he bade Herr Lieberoth and Leipzig farewell, making his next port of call Merseburg: one of three regional centres in the province of Saxony (alongside Magdeburg and Erfurt), and also well-known among those on the *Schneider's Waltz*.

Merseburg had a great tradition. It was first mentioned in 850, and in 933 its King defeated the Hungarians in a battle nearby the town. Before Leipzig had taken over as the main venue of the famous trade fairs, it was Merseburg that hosted them during the Middle Ages. However, in the 15th and 16th centuries, the town suffered severely from two wars. When Friedrich arrived, its population was just 14,000 residents (today it numbers barely double).²⁵



Merseburg in 1901

With his employ secured at a local master, Friedrich ventured on his free day to the rural district of Querfurt; Marie's small town of barely 4,500 inhabitants.²⁶ Lying 29km east of Merseburg, it was easily reached within about 3 hours by stagecoach, as it ran along an important trade route (see also the text box overleaf). Having been forewarned about Friedrich's visit, when he finally wandered up to *Kirchplan*, the Lieberoth's were more than ready to welcome him.

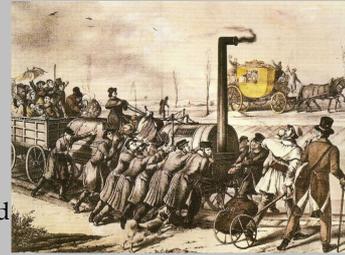
According to her granddaughter, Marie's disposition was that of a gentle and kindly soul, tempered by severity and discipline! So we can well imagine she'll have done her utmost to make our dapper Holsatian feel welcome and comfortable in her family's company. Of course she was already used to being surrounded by and looking after older men, considering her father Gottlieb was now 75 and mother Johanne was 63. Invariably she'll have been pre-disposed to serving as homemaker and wife. The future was looked bright for Friedrich...

²⁵ <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merseburg>

²⁶ <http://www.geschichte-on-demand.de/querfurt.html>

2.6: Stand and Deliver – The Rise and Fall of Stagecoaches

Since the Napoleonic period, an efficient network of high-ways had developed that enabled not only people to be effectively transported but also large volumes of goods. The stagecoach was a four-wheeled closed coach for passengers and goods, strongly sprung and drawn by two or four horses. From the 16th and 17th centuries they had been widely used before the introduction of railway transport, and made regular trips between *stages* or stations (places of rest provided for stagecoach travelers). Stagecoaches could compete with canal boats, but became obsolete as the rail network expanded in the 19th century. Despite advances that saw them eventually carry up to 15 passengers, the train was cheaper and faster (see for example the 1835 political satire top right; the railway vs the stagecoach. Still, as an early example of inter-modality, they remained in use between railway stations and post offices or rural areas until about 1900, when engined vehicles came into use. The average horse and cart could manage around 10km/hour in 1850 and therefore could easily notch up one hundred kilometers or more in a day. Stagecoaches saw a brief resurgence during world war one, servicing bus routes when fuel supplies grew limited, but shortly after were consigned to museums or scrapyards.



Source: de.wikipedia.org/Postkutsche

Over the course of the next year, the pair grew closer. Sometimes Marie would join her elder brother, Christian on his trade and market day visits to Merseburg and steal quiet moments with Friedrich. On other occasions, Friedrich would travel to Querfurt and visit the local upholsterers to exchange materials, goods and know-how, in between stopping at the Lieberoth's for lunch and supper.

During these times he would share with her and her family his dreams for setting up shop and how the era of industrialization was providing opportunity, together with credit - in other words: he had his career firmly on track. A year or so later Marie had some exciting news of her own to share: come spring 1879 she would give birth to a child! Was that more than Friedrich had bargained for, or even a sly ruse on his side (recalling Leipzig's guild rules decreed he should be married in order to graduate a master).

Children were frequently born illegitimate at this time. Places like Leipzig and Bavaria had seen illegitimacy levels rise from between 1 and 3 percent in the early nineteenth century to almost 24 by the 1850s and 1860's. In Munich for instance, of 100 births as many as thirty were found to be illegitimate between 1879 and 1888²⁷. Friedrich and Marie were hardly bucking the trends therefore.

In fact, the Kingdoms of Saxony and Bavaria were two of several European zones where births to unmarried women were a typical feature of demographic patterns while German levels overall were more than twice those of France or England²⁸. Hardly surprisingly then that some scholars consider a 'sexual revolution' took place in 19th century Germany. However, abortion too was forbidden and according to the

²⁷ Note, however, that predominantly Catholic and conservative Bavaria awarded 'political permission to marry' until 1916. This meant that those who were refused simply co-habited and bore 'illegitimate' children. Prussia conversely adopted 'freedom of marriage' in 1794 and this became typical throughout the North German Federation by 1866.

²⁸ Note that extramarital births were actually never more than 9 percent of the total in Prussia between 1826 and 1869! Guinane, O&O, pg.41

Reich's penal code of 1872, both the individual seeking the abortion and the provider were subject to imprisonment! Surely the pair acted consciously.

According to cultural norms, the common penalty for the rape of an unmarried woman was the male party's provision of her dowry – that is a 'downpayment' from his side, not hers, on her future well-being. Therefore Friedrich was obliged to wed Marie (and thus take his social obligations seriously).²⁹

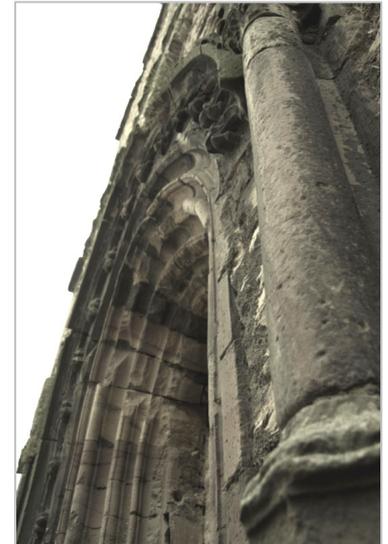
And so Friedrich's ambitions advanced. Marrying Marie and staying 'local' made perfect sense. With her agreement that the young family would best be off settled in Leipzig, and the proximity of the railways ensuring Querfurt remained less than a day away, Marie gave Friedrich her hand in marriage.

Friedrich was 26 while Marie was just shy of her 20th birthday. Theirs was a fairly typical age match of the period³⁰ and in view of the Lieberoth's wealth, they surely made a substantial financial contribution to the marital arrangement.

Before the wedding, which occurred at the end of December, the friends and relatives of the betrothed couple will have enacted a custom called *Federschleiffen*, the making of feather beds from goose down. Another important custom was the *Polterabend*, where the friends of the couple gathered in front of the house of the bride's parents on the evening before the wedding and made lots of noise with pots and pans and the like. Later in the evening they were all invited into the house for a drink and something to eat. Often people played pranks on the groom, for example they set his horse loose or something similarly inconvenient.³¹

The marriage itself will have consisted of a compulsory civil marriage and a religious ceremony, the latter being an important opportunity to publicly take the marriage vows before the local congregation (and God). This likely took place in Marie's local Evangelical-Lutheran church, ie. the *Hallenkirche* which lay opposite the family home and is pictured right!³²

The wedding will have been planned at least a month in advance, because according to the 1875 Civil Code their intent to marry had first to be publicly announced. If after three weeks there were no local objections (for instance because one party was already married or because either was involved in another close relationship), they could be legally married by the state registrar. As for the precise date (ie. on Sunday 29th December 1878), the only reason I can give for this is that both families probably had working obligations in the run up to Christmas.



²⁹ Historically the word 'Wedding' comes from the Anglo-Saxon 'wedd' which meant when a man married a woman he paid the Bride's father.

³⁰ O&O, pg. 39

³¹ <http://www.teachers.ash.org.au/dnutting/germanaustralia/e/traditions-01.htm>

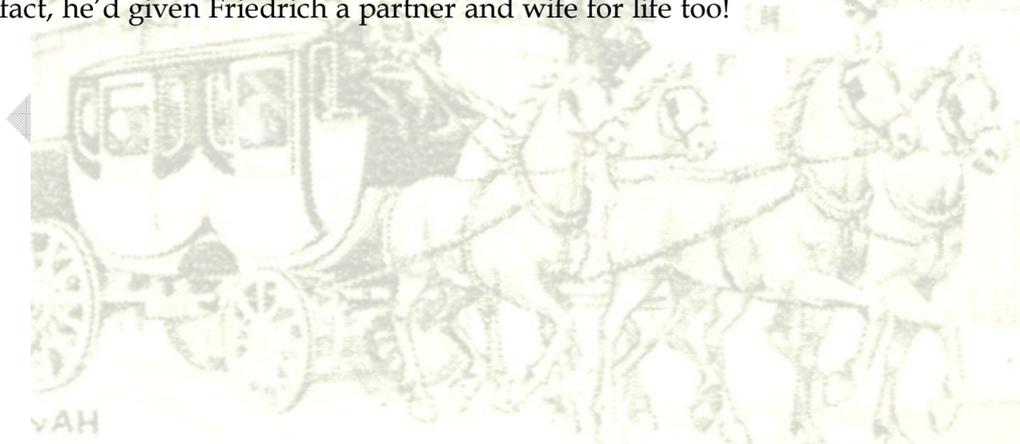
³² The only reason I can determine for the couple not to have been married in the Protestant church would be if both parties were *not* members of the local evangelical church community. In fact, according to <http://www.geschichte-on-demand.de/querfurt.html>, ten years after the couple was married, in 1890, of Querfurt's 5,280 residents, there were 86 Catholics and 26 Jews. Ten years earlier, in 1880, there appears to have been only Evangelical Lutherans.

Research shows the public ceremony will have been much the same as today's,³³ with a simple sermon led by the parish priest, followed by marriage vows, song and prayer. Historically, the wedding ring was rather connected to the exchange of valuables at the moment of the wedding rather than a symbol of eternal love and devotion. It is a relic of the times when marriage was a contract between families, not individual lovers and both families were eager to ensure the economic safety of the young couple. Sometimes it went as far as being a conditional exchange as this old German formula from cca. 1734 shows: "I give you this ring as a sign of the marriage which has been promised between us, provided your father gives with you a marriage portion of 1000 Reichsthalers."^{34 35}

To their attire, brides in 19th century Germany did not wear a white wedding dress, but a black one, with a white veil (the tradition of white bridal colors only grew popular after their introduction between 1905 and 1920).³⁶ During the wedding ceremony, the groom may also have kneeled on the hem of the bride's dress to symbolize his control over her. Not to be outdone, the Bride may step on the groom's foot when she rises to symbolize her power over him!³⁷

For wedding gifts, German porcelain was popular – a mark of traditional Teutonic craftsmanship – while another favourite was finely crafted cutlery, such as *Messermeister* knives, a practical choice that would easily see the newlyweds through their first 25 years of gourmet marital bliss!³⁸ After the wedding, Friedrich and Marie will have left the church on a traditional German-style stagecoach (or maybe not as 'home' lay opposite while it was also mid-winter³⁹)!

The occasion tied Friedrich for the rest of his life to Saxony – both the Province and that kingdom on the Elbe. Little could he have known when he became acquainted with August Lieberoth that his banker would serve as matchmaker of *Wandervögels*. In fact, he'd given Friedrich a partner and wife for life too!



³³ [Verliebt – Verlobt – Verheiratet](#): Wandel der Hochzeit im 20. Jahrhundert. V. Jüttemann, Münster, Sept. 2009.

³⁴ History of Marriage in Western Civilization, online at: http://www2.hu-berlin.de/sexology/ATLAS_EN/html/history_of_marriage_in_western.html

³⁵ That makes me wonder: did Friedrich's parents or sisters travel the long way down from Holstein for his special occasion?

³⁶ Verified by three sources: a [webpage](#) on German emigrants to Australia, [another](#) on Bessarabian emigrants to the US and photographs adorning the study referenced under footnote 17 above.

³⁷ <http://www.pibweddings.com/traditionsorigins.html>

³⁸ http://www.ehow.com/list_6012631_traditional-german-wedding-gifts.html

³⁹ According to <http://www.1ocean-1climate.com/the-three-years-cold-package-and-the-war.php> Germany has twice suffered three severe winters in a row: 1878/79, 1879/80 and 1880/81, besides 1939/40, 1940/41 and 1941/42.