
VIII: THE HOME FRONT: 1914-1918

While the Germans dug in on foreign soils, soldiers' families did much the same at home. It didn't take long for the merrymaking to subside, once tales of woe and dismembered men began arriving home in large numbers. By Christmas it was clear the war would not be over, and from here on until its end, there was a battle to be fought on the 'home front' – keeping up the spirit of the nation, in turn to bolster that of the soldiers.

In August 1914, my grandmother, Little Nannj, turned seven years old, her brother Theo was coming up six, while little sister Margot was just three. Among her cousins, Frits Lothar (hereafter Frits) was now eight, Martin was almost seven and Heinz was four and a half. When the war broke out, her aunt Hedwig was still carrying the last of her brood. She was four months pregnant with Hans, the youngest of the Hinsch grandchildren born in January 1915.

The youngsters formed two basic cohorts; Nannj, Theo, Frits and Martin were elementary schoolchildren while Heinz, Margot and Hans spent most of the 1914-1918 period, pre-schoolers. Although all seven middle-class children were part of the 'war youth generation,'¹ this chapter particularly brings Nannj, Theo, Frits and Martin's worlds to life. We will see how their families' lives changed in response to the evolving landscape around them, particularly as the social and political distance between Prussia and Saxony widened against a backdrop of growing class conflict.

The Tjyrallas' world in 1914 was northern Leipzig's *Roon Straße*,² where their home remained until spring 1916. Urban society was then awash with uncertainty, as arguments about education, poor relief and healthcare constantly laid bare its class-based nature. The social democrats, in their nascency in the Kingdom of Saxony, pitched their appeal at all the 'little people' who suffered from high rents, rigged food prices and unfair taxes.³ Despite an economic recession from 1913 that lasted until spring 1915, the unemployment rate rarely rose above six percent in Leipzig.⁴ However, it wasn't long before cracks appeared in the *Burgfrieden*, the domestic truce which had been agreed among political parties at the outset of the war.⁵

The first days of the war had started brightly enough for Germany. Victory in Liege, Belgium on August 16th and then at Tannenberg in East Prussia on August 30th had ensured the war would not be fought on German soil and led to mass parades and

¹ Children born between 1900 and 1914, too young to fight in the Great War.

² *Albrecht von Roon* was a Prussian soldier and statesman who lived between 1803 and 1879. He was a dominating figure in Prussia's government during the key decade of the 1860s, when a series of successful wars against Denmark, Austria and France led to German unification under Prussia's leadership.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albrecht_Graf_von_Roon

³ Breuilly, pg. 215

⁴ Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920. Dobson, pg. 115

⁵ Christophe Nonn. Saxon Politics during the First World War: Modernisation, National Liberal Style in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933. Edited by J. N. Retallack. Pg. 310.

celebrations on Sedan Day, the national holiday on September 2nd.⁶ August's 'feel good' factor came to be known as the 'Spirit of 1914' and all but the most cautious of military experts believed that victory over Russia was imminent, freeing the army in the east to conquer France. Preserving this spirit and the populace's willingness to make fantastic sacrifices in turn became the military government's conscious strategy to win the war.⁷

Pupils too rejoiced at the unity fostered by the war, while expressing grief and fear for the safety of loved ones.⁸ Its outbreak made for a predominantly matriarchal household dominated by thoughts of "the men at the front" recalled Alexander Walker in his biography of Marlene Dietrich.⁹ Dietrich was 13 at the time and spent hours knitting warm garments for the German troops or accompanying the school choir to the railroad station to sing the boys off to battle with patriotic anthem. Yet as another author recalls the story of one boy whose father departed to the front, although at first his family was sad, the lad adds: "We got used to the absence."¹⁰

After the bloody battle of the Marne between September 5th and 12th and the stalemate on the Western Front, the public was no longer celebratory. Although most Germans wanted the benefits of victory, few were enthusiastic about fighting a war in which loved ones were going to die.¹¹

There was also anxiety about day to day concerns with many queuing to withdraw their savings from the bank, buying up and hoarding food and other goods likely to be in short supply over the coming months. Shop owners raised the prices of those products suddenly in great demand, and refused to accept paper money. Civil administration was rapidly taken over by the military, which meant Deputy Commanding Generals were made responsible for army recruitment and labour distribution. They intervened in food-supply, social policy and domestic order.¹²



Leipzig's women on tram duty, 1914/1915.
Source: Wikipedia

As early as August 12th for instance, the recently introduced *Leipziger KraftOmnibus* was put into war service and used for ferrying about soldiers, while women were introduced as *Strassenbahner*.¹³ Hundreds of thousands more women, overwhelmingly upper-middle class, joined the Red Cross, besides the newly founded National Women's Service (*Nationaler Frauendienst*) and various state, municipal and charity welfare organizations.¹⁴

⁶ A semi-official memorial holiday in the German Empire commemorating Prussia's victory in the Battle of Sedan after Napoleon III was taken prisoner on Sept. 1 1870, a major step to eventual victory in the Franco-Prussian War. Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sedantag

⁷ Andrew Donson. *Youth in the Fatherless Land. War Pedagogy, Nationalism, and Authority in Germany, 1914–1918*. Harvard University Press, 2010. Pg.7

⁸ Ibid (Donson). Pg.81

⁹ Alexander Walker. *Dietrich*. Harper and Row. 1984. pg. 12.

¹⁰ Donson. Pg.81

¹¹ Donson. Pg. 7

¹² Richard Bessel: *Germany after the First World War*. 1995. Pg. 2, 4 and 5.

¹³ Martina Güldemann in 1999 in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert in LEIPZIG*.

¹⁴ Donson. Pg. 108

The war confronted Germany with the unprecedented organization of the domestic economy too.¹⁵ Rather than switch in 1914 to high levels of direct taxation, the government opted to fund the war by appealing to a patriotic public to subscribe to semi-annual war bonds (*Kriegsanleihe*).¹⁶ In effect, it sought to borrow from its own subjects, gambling that it would win the war and could compel its enemies to pay for the war through reparations. This borrowing, however, only accelerated inflation in the short term which was “already galloping...resulting from the shortage of goods.”¹⁷



German propaganda poster:
“Subscribe to war bonds!”

Source: Wikipedia.. /War bond#Germanu

Six days after the outbreak of the war, Little Nannÿ Tÿralla celebrated her birthday. I wonder how? Before 1914, most of the toys sold in Germany were non-military items, such as dolls, trains and chemistry sets. But in the months leading up to Christmas 1914, toy displays in department stores were set up with almost exclusively miniature infantry, submarines, zeppelins, planes, guns and other items. In contrast to convention before the war, they bore clear nationalist markers. Playing with toy soldiers was fabulously popular among middle-class male youths in Germany, but I wonder what caught Little Nannÿ’s interest?¹⁸ Military nurses maybe?

The war’s assault on customary food habits began when supplies of wheat for bread ran low by December. Germany depended on imports for half of its wheat and one third of its fodder, but the military and municipal and state governments had not planned for the English food blockade and did not have a contingency plan for a protracted war. In addition, Germany’s federal food system was poorly equipped to coordinate a national food policy; civilian administrations did not readily cooperate with each other.¹⁹

As a highly industrialized state,²⁰ Saxony was hit very early and severely.²¹ As one of Germany’s most densely populated regions, western Saxony had little arable land per resident. In the pre-war era most of Leipzig’s food came from Prussia’s Province of Saxony (where Little Nannÿ’s grandmother’s family, the Lieberoths lived) and Thuringia to the southwest. But when the war broke out, officials in each of Germany’s *Länder* strove for autarchy in order to feed their respective populations. Consequently, Leipzig’s officials obtained shipments from Prussia with difficulty. Leipzig then was probably worse off than most other German cities.²²

¹⁵ Pg. 233 Ogilvie and Overy.

¹⁶ War bonds typically offered a rate of return of 5 percent and were redeemable over a ten year period, in semi-annual payments. Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_bond#Germany

¹⁷ Sean Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. Pg. 136

¹⁸ Donson. Pg.173

¹⁹ Donson. Pg. 126-7

²⁰ Although Saxony had been the earliest and most rigorously industrialized German state, it had a low level of protein production per capita, writes Jörg Baten in his contribution to *Germany Since 1800: A New Social And Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy (pg. 395-9). This led it to have very short military recruits! Similar levels of ‘malnutrition’ occurred in Silesia and the Prussian province of Saxony too, he observes.

²¹ Christophe Nonn. *Saxon Politics during the First World War: Modernisation, National Liberal Style in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933*. Edited by J. N. Retallack. Pg. 310.

²² Sean Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. Pg. 134

In late 1914, the royal prefect (*Kreishauptmann*) in Leipzig attempted to plug the gap in the city's food supply by negotiating the sale of food between the city and the surrounding rural townships. Realising that the price of food would climb as long as the war lasted, estate owners demanded extremely high prices and refused to lock themselves into long-term contracts. "Of interest here" says Sean Dobson "is the fact that the royal prefect neither compelled the farmers to provide foodstuffs at an affordable price, nor requested that *General von Schweinitz* (the Deputy Commanding General of the XIX Army Corps which administered western Saxony during the war) impose a solution."²³ And so Leipzig faced a serious shortage of grain and critical dearth of meat, dairy products and vegetables.²⁴



Turning full circle:
Friedrich Hinsch, accompanied by his wife,
Marie, returns to his roots in the land, 1915

No surprise then that the Hinsch grandparents, Friedrich and Marie (now 63 and 57 respectively) returned to the countryside in early January 1915.

According to Dobson, most farmers around Leipzig were not peasants but substantial landowners,²⁵ and Machern was no exception. Like most of its neighbours, the Hinsch villa was accompanied by a huge swathe of land (see for instance, Chapter V). Farmed, it could support the family's survival until food supplies improved, and, assisted by a gardener or even a tenant, the

Hinsch's could ensure that not only they, their children and their children's children had food to eat, but that they could profit too. Their son's lottery scoop that paid for the villa probably never felt more of a blessing than right now.

Besides the short-term thinking behind the move, returning among one's affluent conservative bourgeois industrialist neighbours and Machern's ploughed fields I imagine also eased access to hard-to-find foodstuffs. Perhaps they were also concerned over the imminent birth of Fritz and Hedwig's last child, Hans, who saw the light of day on January 26th, 1915. His presence in *Salzgäßchen* (where they lived up till that point) would mean another mouth to feed, a little less space, not to mention a fair few sleepless nights! I do muse whether Fritz or Friedrich might have been on personal speaking terms with *von Schweinitz*, recalling that one witness to Fritz's wedding had been the Royal Saxon Army's paymaster? He, like *von Schweinitz*, was also based at the military garrison at Gohlis.²⁶

²³ In other words, he and the deputy commander were prepared to tolerate hunger among the workers in the kingdom's largest city. This underscores the inability of the state to compel elites to sacrifice in the interest of prosecuting the war, says Dobson. Pg. 139.

²⁴ Sean Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. Pg. 138

²⁵ Sean Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. Pg. 153

²⁶ *Hermann von Schweinitz* was born in Dresden in January 1851. A little older than Friedrich Hinsch, he was head-quartered with *Infanterie Regiment 107*, that which he had commanded prior to the war, having been attached to it since the Franco-Prussian war. Later Fritz too served with IR 107. home.comcast.net/~jcviser/akb/schweinitz.htm

While the Hinsch's orchestrated change on their own home front, city officials attempted to deal with the food deficit in Leipzig by institutionalizing a system of food stamps, first for meat, bread and butter, then for fruit and vegetables. Children aged between two and 10 years old (i.e. six of the Hinsch and Tŷralla kids) got two pounds of flour weekly, while those above the age of ten got three pounds.²⁷

Theoretically all food entering the city was to be stored in warehouses and distributed against stamps at central points throughout Leipzig (chiefly the municipal market hall nearby the Hinsch's former home on *Roßplatz*).²⁸ In practice, however, the system functioned very differently and only ever managed to secure control over grain and potatoes. All other foodstuffs remained on the *hamstern* or black market.

The black market was in fact the cause of the problem, since traders were siphoning off large portions of the available food before it could enter the official distribution network. This was compounded by Leipzig's own public servants turning a blind eye while traders, even if caught in the act and banned from doing business in Leipzig, simply relied on another black marketeer to smuggle their contraband into the city.²⁹

The result in terms of food distribution was mounting chaos. By 1915, Germany's imports had already fallen by 55 percent from their pre-war levels and the exports were 53 percent of what they had been in 1914. Apart from the Allied blockade leading to shortages in vital raw materials such as coal and non-ferrous metals,³⁰ it also deprived Germany of supplies of fertiliser which were vital to agriculture. This led to staples such as grain, potatoes, meat, and dairy products becoming so scarce that many people were obliged to consume *ersatz* products by the end of 1916, including *Kriegsbrot* ("war bread") and powdered milk.³¹

Many scholars believe the Allies' blockade made a large contribution to the outcome of the war,³² although others argue that since calories were still available in Germany in sufficient amounts (except in the winter of 1916/1917 and the summer of 1918),³³ Germany's downfall really lay with distribution. According to Christophe Nonn, while the introduction of government controls and rationing in 1914 and 1915 helped mitigate the problem, it did not solve it.³⁴

²⁷ Martina Güldemann in 1999 in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert in LEIPZIG*.

²⁸ Sean Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. Pg. 138

²⁹ It was not until the final year of the war, adds Dobson, that selling on the black market become an offense punishable with prison, although even by its end just 51 individuals were ever chastised. Sean Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. Pg. 139-140

³⁰ In February 1915, Germany's dwindling petrol supplies were allocated to the military. Trolley cars in Berlin for instance would be stopped at random by the police, to save on fuel, leaving the passengers to complete their journey on foot. Beatrice Colin, *The Luminous Life of Lilly Aphrodite*. 2009. Pg.166.

³¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blockade_of_Germany

³² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blockade_of_Germany

³³ Jörg Baten in his contribution to *Germany Since 1800: A New Social And Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overly (pg. 402-3).

³⁴ Christophe Nonn. *Saxon Politics during the First World War: Modernisation, National Liberal Style in Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933*. Edited by J. N. Retallack. Pg. 310.

In April 1915, Little Nannj and her siblings lost their father when he was called to the frontline. In Chapter VII I reflected on what their goodbye might have been like. The following describes the experience of one 13 year old girl:

*"At the farewell he shook our hands and hugged us in his arms. At this moment we shed bitter tears because it was a painful hour. The eyes of my father did not remain dry either...I couldn't look on when my father said goodbye to my mother. It was time that my father had to go. But he continued to hold her tight. Because of the pain she could no longer cry; it was an agonizing farewell. Finally my father tore himself loose, and he went with a heavy heart. I tried with all my strength to comfort my mother. But it wasn't useful. She was sad and cried a lot."*³⁵

Kleine Nannj will have had a little more memory of her father than brother, Theo or sister, Margot. But if it included a farewell like that, it was never spoken of.

Yet the picture painted in history books of father-child relationships up to the war's outbreak is a sad story in itself by today's standards. According to Donson, fathers generally ignored their children and had a reputation for being aloof, uncaring, sometimes tyrannical and even often acted on their legal right to beat their children (particularly if they felt a need to compensate for their lack of authority at the workplace). They took time to be alone undisturbed and typically socialized with male peers (despite the fact that a sign of masculinity in the middle-class included fatherhood)³⁶ As *Handlungsgehilfe*, Nannj's father may have been even more frequently absent from home, since he probably travelled.

A couple of anecdotes illustrate the kind of distance that existed between Little Nannj and her parents. For instance, she and her siblings weren't permitted to eat dinner until their parents had had theirs, while their meals had to be consumed standing up. Conversely, prior to the war the meal at home was held dear by all social classes, because it reinforced family autonomy and belongingness.³⁷ I suppose just because they didn't eat physically together didn't mean there wasn't a sense of occasion but I wonder to what extent Nannj and her siblings missed their father once he departed? Would the outbreak of war mitigate the distance between father and child perhaps?

Lutheran principles³⁸ and Prussian ideology were largely responsible for the eating regime (as opposed to dietary concerns or because they might have been sitting all day). This sort of authoritarianism was rather endemic in Germany society and its families, and was reinforced by pre-war schools and recreational associations too.³⁹

Teachers at all levels of schooling could be tyrants, who treated their pupils like *Untertanen* – worthless, obedient subalterns. According to American professors who observed them prior to 1914, they noted they "always [had] an impression of cheerlessness and lack of color, life and happiness."⁴⁰ School classrooms, with walls bare and grey resembled military barracks.

³⁵ Donson. Pg. 80

³⁶ Donson. Pg. 21-22 and pg. 50

³⁷ Donson. Pg. 143

³⁸ The *Lutheran Innere Mission* (est. 1848), "emphasized the... restoration of strict religious observance, family values and respect for authority and the law, as the prerequisite for the recreation of a wholly Christian society" where "the traditional ethos of punishment as the remedy [was] embodied by the correctional system." O&O, Pg. 228-231

³⁹ Religious instruction constituted around four hours weekly in 1914, according to Donson: pg. 98

⁴⁰ Donson. Pg.5 then 74.

But when school began after the summer holidays in 1914, administrators encouraged teachers to break with the old practices that smothered schoolchildren's individuality and thwarted independent, critical thinking, in favour of *Kriegspädagogik* (war pedagogy) – an improvised curriculum aimed to make pupils enthusiastic about the war.⁴¹ Authoritarianism waned, especially in elementary schools in more intellectually vibrant cities like Leipzig, Hamburg and Berlin that represented centres of the reform pedagogy movement.⁴² According to the Chief of Leipzig's elementary schools, "the teacher's relationship to the pupils became warmer, friendlier, more personal and tender."

Many teachers skipped the pedantic narratives of the *Hohenzollern* dynasty and instead covered the German Empire and the current war. Children's classrooms were adorned with maps of the fronts and photographs of the generals. They celebrated victories by reciting war poems and singing victory songs while the teachers introduced discussions of newspaper articles, read out soldiers' letters in class and encouraged war poems, essays and art that reflected on current affairs.⁴³

Lesson content naturally remained loyal to the nationalist and militarist cause. It celebrated Germany's growing world power, which itself was piqued by the increasingly popular stories written for youths about the colonial and unification wars and which claimed *The Great War* was justified by France's and Great Britain's refusal to recognize Germany's right to be a world power.⁴⁴ Within school textbooks, little space was devoted to Russia, hammering home the point that it was an artificial power constructed by the top-down hierarchy of tsar, bureaucrats, nobility and Orthodox clergy while its vast peasant population was ignorant, backward and passive. Germany by contrast was portrayed as an organic nation-state in which culture (nation) and power (state) were in civilized harmony.⁴⁵

For girls, the school curriculum was replete with stories of women who withheld complaint and made extraordinary sacrifice for their country and families. One female teacher saw their responsibility as being to cultivate a "sensitivity and deepness of heart" in order to "soothe the hardship for men." War was a time to demonstrate the feminine virtues: selflessness, thriftiness and steadfast, cheerful support of men and Germany, whatever the hardship.⁴⁶

In addition to the new methods being used, another feature of schools during 1914 and 1915 was that children enjoyed more leisure time. During the first year of the war, for instance, school was canceled 18 times – on account of victory celebrations.⁴⁷

⁴¹ Donson. Pg.8

⁴² Donson. Pg. 25, 28

⁴³ Donson. Pg.8

⁴⁴ Donson. Pg.4, 19

⁴⁵ Troy Paddock. *Creating the Russian Peril: Education, the Public Sphere and National Identity in Imperial Germany, 1890-1914*. New York: Camden House. 2010.

⁴⁶ Donson. Pg.11 and 85

⁴⁷ Donson. Pg.112

Schools also fostered childrens' self-mobilisation. There was widespread dismissal of pupils for voluntary patriotic projects that included selling war bonds, collecting recyclables to reduce shortages, and going door-to-door asking for money or material.⁴⁸ A conservative estimate is that 6-7 million youths and schoolchildren were volunteering regularly.⁴⁹



Above: Little Nannj, Summer 1915
Below: A Leipzig family prepares
Liebesgaben for soldiers, 1916.
Source: C. Foerster



My grandmother, now eight, played her part too. Youngsters for instance typically brought flowers and sweets to wounded soldiers in the hospitals,⁵⁰ and the photo left (the last of her during the war era) suggests she did just that.⁵¹ Annette Samaras, who assists the *Deutsches Rotes Kreuz* with image digitization and photo research, however, believes Little Nannj "sold flowers to collect money for the Red Cross in order to support the German Army."⁵² Because there are two copies of this photo, I daresay more existed and a third was likely sent to her father at the front.

Another remnant of the era is a postcard with the silhouette of a dog (see overleaf). It wears what appears to be a shoulder-strap that is decorated with the German Iron Cross; the symbol of the German Army between 1871 and early 1918. My guess is that Nannj sold these cards in and around her home in Gohlis.

Dogs were very much in the service of the Red Cross during world war one, as the text box opposite illustrates. According to Leipzig's military historian, Dieter Kürschner: "There were several series of cards [sold] for all sorts of purposes. For example, the Red Cross, prisoners of war, wounded soldiers, bereaved families, etc. Typically the reverse clearly denoted the purpose, together with the consent of the military, i.e. the Deputy Commanding General."⁵³

Inevitably the war accentuated gender roles. Knitting was popular and marked the feminine expression of patriotism. The zeal with which schoolgirls assembled "love-packages" (*Liebesgaben*) of scarves, mittens, socks, earmuffs and sweaters for soldiers in 1914 was so great the Prussian trade and commerce minister feared it was threatening the already precarious jobs in the textile industry!⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Donson. Pg.9

⁴⁹ Donson. Pg. 108

⁵⁰ Donson. Pg.115.

⁵¹ Leipzig had two: *St. Georg's* (Gohlis, 2km from Little Nannj's home) and *St. Jakob's* (Reudnitz) where according to Dobson (pg. 157), doctors shrinking resources meant they tended primarily to patients with the means to pay.

⁵² Personal correspondence of July, 2012

⁵³ During my correspondence with [Dieter Kürschner](#) on 9th July, 2012, he added that while there was also a series of cards with silhouettes, he recalled none with a dog that could have been made for sale. Even Annette Samaras of *Bildarchivare* was at a loss to confirm its origins, which therefore appears to be quite an exclusive souvenir. The only other explanation I can imagine is that Little Nannj's mother bought this card, or came by it through possibly her own voluntary activity, recalling Donson's observation that upper-middle class women volunteered for the Red Cross during the early months of the war.

⁵⁴ Donson. Pg.85

8.1: 'Nelly de Hond van Mama'

Following the experiences of the Franco-German war of 1870-1871, the German army endeavoured to use dogs for military purposes. By 1884 it established the world's very first Military War Dog School, at *Lechernich*, near Berlin, so as to train them as sentries and messengers. However, attempts to educate them to recover the wounded from the battlefield struggled to succeed until 1892, when a German called *Jean Bungartz* published two works through *Twietmeyer* of Leipzig: *Der Kriegshund und seine Dressur* (The War Dog and his Training) and *Der Hund im Dienste des rothen Kreuzes* (The Dog in the Service of the Red Cross). A year later, he founded the *German Ambulance Dogs Association*, thus setting the course for the use of ambulance dogs during the first world war and indeed, the existence of rescue dogs today.

Bungartz bred and trained dogs to search and find the wounded on a field of battle. He developed the first prototype saddlebags that contained medical supplies such as bandages and dressings. Two interconnected side pockets were strapped around the belly through belts which fastened at the collar of the dog, while a dog blanket was placed over the shoulder blade. Carried around the neck was a wooden flask of stimulant. Referred to as sanitary dogs (*Sanitätshunde*); the dogs carried their leash in their mouth if wounded were found or to let it hang loose otherwise.

When hostilities were declared in August 1914, the German army had 6,000 trained dogs ready for action that went straight to the fronts with their regiments. Each army had a kennel from which dogs were issued to the front line troops. They were relied on to make deliveries of medicines, cigarettes, and most importantly messages. Mercy dogs were trained to aid the Red Cross find wounded soldiers out in no-man's land. Countless soldiers owed their lives to the 4,000 or so animals used for this purpose. Naturally dogs became a prime target themselves, and many were killed, especially messenger dogs.

The German Army eventually used as many as 30,000 dogs, including many that were 'recruited' from owners whose pets were approved at trials – like Nannj Tjralla's 'Nelly,' who in turn was immortalised in the card above (see also text box 8.3). Typically such dogs were *Dobermann Pinschers*, named after Louis Doberman, a tax collector, nightwatchman and dog pound owner in Apolda, Thuringia (about 60km southwest of Leipzig). He bred the dog with the aim of having an intimidating dog but which at the same time was not too large to control, while being fearless and easy to train. That is, a guard dog!



Sources: de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Bungartz; www.terrificpets.com
[www.kaninchenzeitung.de/Hahn's_50th AP K-9, Dogs Of All Nations](http://www.kaninchenzeitung.de/Hahn's_50th_AP_K-9_Dogs_Of_All_Nations) (by W. E. Mason, 1915)
and www.gentledoberman.com

Because voluntary activities often went unsupervised, however, schoolchildren also found new opportunities to act independently while earning public admiration for their patriotism. Girls spent more time at home supervising younger siblings⁵⁵ and in effect, began to advertise the war's legitimacy. This in turn made it difficult for them to oppose it and so many became indifferent after 1915.⁵⁶ In turn the new equality and independence of female youths contributed to the 'birth' of the so-called new woman, who flourished post-1918 (and who also became an object of derision).⁵⁷

Mobilising children for war also weakened immediate family ties. Typically women across Germany had less time to spend with their children while many depended on their offspring to help make ends meet - to shop, gather fuel, participate in the housework they took in, and if all else failed, steal.

⁵⁵ Donson, pg.10-12. Sources reveal, however, Nannj Tjralla retained in her employ a female maidservant until as late as January 1916, which implies her daughter won't have been depended upon in the same way other youngsters were.

⁵⁶ Donson, pg.9, 190.

⁵⁷ Donson, pg.13.



Trouping the colour: Kindergarten graduate Theo shows his loyalty to the *Kaiser* in 1915

Judging by the 1915 photograph left, however, the Tŷrallas' bourgeois lifestyle was barely troubled during those times of heightened labour and gradual impoverishment.⁵⁸ Nourished and assured, Little Nannŷ's brother exudes pride, her mother; authority.

Young boys with fathers serving in the German Navy commonly possessed replica uniforms. Perhaps the Tŷrallas' couldn't obtain a soldier's dress which explains why Theo wears a sailor's. The cap's trimming reveals 'S.M.S Hohenzollern.' *Hohenzollern* being the house of the German royal family, SMS stood for *Seiner Majestät Schiff* ('His Majesty's Ship').⁵⁹ Never mind the Imperial German Navy having been immobilized since the outbreak of war, nor the emerging plight of many Saxons, the Tŷrallas' retained their colours – and political orientation toward the monarchy.⁶⁰

Not many months after Paul was drafted, Nannŷ's Uncle Fritz was called up by Saxony's Infantry Regiment 107 too. Even had he been friends with old *von Schweinitz*, there was no avoiding battle!

It was perhaps fortunate he was not enlisted until a year or so after the war's outbreak. His tobacco business first took a knock from the British blockade, Egypt being a 'colony' of Great Britain. That will have meant finding a new supplier, which he probably found in Turkey – Germany's ally since November 1914.⁶¹ But while soldiers might have been among the largest consumers of 'cheap smokes' during the war, non-essential industries like cigarette-rolling had already begun laying off tens of thousands of teenagers by August 1914. During mobilization demand suffered too, as youths refrained from conspicuous consumption as fathers, brothers and uncles marched off to the front.⁶² Amidst the shortages of food and staples I wonder whether Leipzigers even had the means for a luxury like tobacco?

In response, Fritz and his wife's residential records reveal change occurred within their business from as early as January 1915. Smaller among these was its diversification into trading *Rauchutensilien* (or tobacco paraphernalia), while it seems they also put greater responsibility for shopkeeping into Hedwig's hands.⁶³ Tens of thousands of middle-class mothers found work at this time in their husbands' shops or in smaller enterprises,⁶⁴ notes Donson, such that the percentage of women in the wage workforce increased from 30 percent in 1913 to 46 in 1918.⁶⁵ In Leipzig, some three-quarters of these new wage earners found employment in trade, transportation and insurance, the other quarter, in industry.

⁵⁸ The *Atelier* lay in *Thomasgasse* which ran alongside the church in which Nannŷ was married nine years earlier.

⁵⁹ S.M.S. *Hohenzollern* was the *Kaiser's* private imperial yacht: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seiner_Majestät_Schiff

⁶⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blockade_of_Germany

⁶¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottoman_Empire Nevertheless, tastes in Europe and the US shifted away from Turkish towards Virginia tobacco during and after the WWI. Source: [wiki/Egyptian_cigarette_industry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_cigarette_industry)

⁶² Donson, Pg. 146. But by the end of 1915, the increase in real wages gave youth an upper hand in buying tobacco. 16-17 yr olds "flaunted their high wages in displays of conspicuous consumption." Donson, Pg. 158-9

⁶³ The business appeared on Hedy's *Einwohnermeldekarte* together on 8th January, 1915, notwithstanding her bearing Hans just weeks later on 26th Jan., while Fritz' mother and father moved to Machern the week before on Jan. 1st!

⁶⁴ Donson, Pg. 141

⁶⁵ Dobson, Pg. 185.

Actually, women found themselves obliged to work. Regular welfare only included six marks of state family aid weekly per child, while *Kriegsfamilienunterstützung* (war support) meant meagre state assistance at best. There were additional supplements from local municipalities (annual cost of living allowances or 'COLAs') and charities that were routinely decided upon by boards of middle-class 'ladies.' However, these 'extras' were only sufficient during the first months of the war, since inflation quickly eroded their value.⁶⁶

More critically, a family was not entitled to both war support *and* regular welfare unless the soldier's wife went to work (and even then her earnings were docked by up to fifty percent).⁶⁷ On top of this, wives of common soldiers were in the lowest compensation category, which hardly matched the income of the pre-war period (not even 60 percent of the breadwinners' 1913 earnings, according to Dobson).⁶⁸ To pay one's way, some sub-let their own rooms.⁶⁹

Local governments (including Leipzig's) provided supplementary welfare measures as best they could, but these too fell far behind the rate of inflation and did not cover the cost of goods on the black market.⁷⁰ Standards of living sunk, worsened by the drop in the production of consumer goods as the city's civilian economy converted to a war-footing. Money lost its value and was increasingly replaced by barter arrangements.

Fritz Hinsch and Paul Tjyralla were among 'the city's most economically productive residents' called to the front: two among a total of 82,000 Leipzigers drafted between 1914 and 1918, resulting in the city's population shrinking 13 percent.⁷¹ With the departure of so many husbands, brothers, fathers and sons, families lost either their principle breadwinner or a member who contributed to their collective income.



Workplace no more:
Paul Tjyralla's *Pelzlage* on Brühl

If Hedy Hinsch managed their tobacco store following Fritz's departure in July, what was Little Nannj's mother's strategy for coping without Paul's full salary as family savings diminished?⁷² Many women in the lower middle and working class could not bridge the financial gap. Sixteen hour workdays were not infrequent and from 1916 they were increasingly employed in the engineering, chemical and metallurgical industry or in book-keeping.⁷³ However, such vocations were not for 'bourgeois' wives. Nannj Tjyralla had no trade of her own and it's a well-known fact she never worked. In fact, she had the resources to hire a new childminder in late 1915, *Martha Grübe*, when the former left for maternity leave.

⁶⁶ Donson, pg. 138 and 143.

⁶⁷ Dobson, pg. 126. Note this may explain why Hedwig went on her husband's books.

⁶⁸ Dobson, pg. 156

⁶⁹ E. Domansky, Pg. 445

⁷⁰ Dobson, pg. 156

⁷¹ Mainly white collar workers, small business owners, alongside young male workers, notes Dobson. Pg. 134.

⁷² By 1915, at most a few hundred thousand women worked for the war without pay. Donson, pg.108.

⁷³ Lisa Pine in *Germany Since 1800: A New Social And Economic History* edited by Ogilvie and Overy. pg. 362

In addition, extended family filled many of the gaps. Typically mothers forged firmer kinship networks with grandparents, aunts, sisters and cousins and also created informal groups with neighbours and relatives, sharing shopping duties, cooking, and caring for children.⁷⁴ Nannj and Hedwig sent their kids off to Machern after the school year finished in spring 1915, Little Nannj following Margot and Theo after completing her bout of voluntary patriotic assistance in the early summer.

Spending the holidays at the grandparents' *Landhaus* sounds like an adventure too good to be true, but in reality it was not exactly fun and playtime!⁷⁵ As Donson continues, "male kin ... adopted paternal roles like disciplining children" and my grandmother's tales underline the severity of her seniors who expected Nannj, Theo and Margot to work.

For instance, a horse and cart was used for journeys to and from the centre of Machern and it became Little Nannj's responsibility to collect up the manure (for use as fertiliser) from the path leading to the house. Theo and Margot's tasks were to harvest fallen apples. But instead they ate the best of them! Spied upon by Marie from the top window, their punishment was to eat all those they collected!

Little Nannj's cousin, Martin, then seven, recalled only tales of 'woe' through his son, Rüdiger. Namely that the apples (which were stored in the villa's cellar), were not to be eaten until they were rotten, while the better ones were saved for guests and special occasions. His younger brother Heinz (then five) would tell his own daughter, Irene, that Hedwig would often remind them: "*Für die Kinder, sind sie gut genug!*" That is; "they are good enough for the children!"

In light of the scarcity of food, however, we can understand why the fruit was so carefully guarded and the best was saved till last since they could always be traded for fuel, or meat or butter. But Prussian authoritarianism also played its part. Another German growing up in this era recalled a similar tale:

*"I remember, one day we got a barrel of apples, and our governess always made us eat the bad ones first, the wormy ones, so that no apples would be wasted. And since we were only allowed to eat one apple a day, the good apples went bad while we ate the bad ones, and so most of the apples we ate had worms in them. But that was supposed to develop the character."*⁷⁶

Such character building stressed children too and Theo and Margot were no exception. As Little Nannj would later let on, they wet their beds.

Albert Einstein despised the whole German process of education, remarking how "...fear, force and artificial authority... produces ... the submissive subject." Andrew Donson's research showed that such forms of discipline could even make youngsters suicidal, and anecdotal evidence reveals Theo fell into this category not long afterwards.

⁷⁴ Donson, pg. 142 and E. Domansky, pg. 446

⁷⁵ In T.A. Kohut's *A German Generation*, Pg. 22, his 'composite' interviewee recalls "My grandparents' home [in the countryside] was a family focal point. Grandfather had a large villa, and the family would gather there for any sort of birthday... We cousins were close too, like the pipes of an organ." The grandfather kept a vegetable garden and fields, which "had to be tilled, the hay mowed and harvested."

⁷⁶ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972, pg. 221

Throughout her years, Little Nannÿ remained the most timid of the Tÿralla youngsters (and conversely, the best behaved). She was seldom in trouble and would later remind us she was Marie's favourite, while Margot and Theo, hyperactive and uncontrollable, only gave her grey hair! Cousin Martin, who was just a couple of months younger than Theo, despised summers in Machern, and likened his treatment to that of the animals kept there! Several border collies were privileged to live inside the house, but he rather empathised with the guard dog kept outside in the yard and with whom he shared potatoes for dinner.

Despite its downsides, Little Nannÿ loved Machern. Her youngest daughter, Alice reminded me in March 2000, that among "the fondest memories she had were of this country house, being there with her brother and sister and their cousins and the antics they got up to... it was a bit more of a normal homelife situation for her." In essence, she was part of a family. She spoke fondly of her grandmother too, who it was told, kept a set of diamonds in the linen cupboard for her dowry (a payment given by one spouse or his or her family to the other at the time of marriage).



The Hiding Place: the linen cupboard, where Little Nannÿ's dowry once was kept

Dinner was special as well, according to the daughters of both Frits and Heinz. When it was time to sit down, a gong would be sounded in the villa's main hallway. Even after the war's outbreak then, those meals in the country at least still reinforced family autonomy and belongingness.

When the kids weren't undertaking their chores, how did they pass their time? Uniforms and medals were popular as military toys, but demand waned considerably over the course of 1915 as the war grew stalemated. Nevertheless, air powered toy rifles and machine guns sold well throughout (they were even widely available in the same stores that sold school textbooks)! For middle-class children, playing with military toys was one of their main amusements. Tactical board games such as "Hunt for the Emden"⁷⁷ and "U-1000," a submarine adventure was popular among middle class families.⁷⁸

I can just imagine refined grandfather Hinsch demonstrating "a sign of dignity" as he passed over reports from the front and accounts of gains and losses in the newspapers⁷⁹ while rolling the dice or sharing a tale of how to win a battle from the good old days of the 1870-71 Franco-Prussian war.

⁷⁷ The *Emden* was a light cruiser and commerce raider of the Imperial German Navy which preyed upon the hundreds of unescorted British and Allied merchant ships in the Indian Ocean in 1914. It was arguably the most hunted ship in the world. The word 'emden', meaning 'streetmart', entered the Tamil language and today a particularly cunning person is referred to as an *Emdena*: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMS_Emden_\(1908\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMS_Emden_(1908))

⁷⁸ Donson, pg.173

⁷⁹ Foreign newspapers were not available. If they were, writes Bergmann on pg. 16 in *What Will Become of the Children: A Novel of a German Family* (1932), Germans would have questioned similar Allied claims of victory.

War games on the street, however, grew increasingly violent. Aware of the market for playthings, an enterprising dealer in Leipzig produced toy hand grenades, composed of two screws fastened to a long threaded nut. The devices were filled with explosives that detonated upon impact. Enterprising salesman also found a ready market for stink bombs!⁸⁰ Before long secondary schools were reporting that one negative effect of the war was the tendency for younger pupils to engage in "Violence against fellow pupils," particularly if their fathers were conscripted.⁸¹



Above: Cultivating girls as care-givers? Käthe Kruse's dolls cast women as maternal feminists (Source: www.antiquedolls.co.nz)

Below: Winning hearts? A token gesture from Uncle Albert to the Tŷralla kids (Bernburg, 1915)



For girls, dolls had been the most common toy produced in Germany and accounted for one third of sales in 1910. From mid-1915, the Silesian, Käthe Kruse produced hand-crafted models with individual faces whose "bodies, clothing and armament were quite specific and realistic so that there would be no doubt these were German dolls, defending Germany against outsiders."⁸²

Nannŷ Tŷralla and Hedwig Hinsch probably needed more than just their parents' support to their families while their husbands worked the frontlines. One option I mentioned earlier was sub-letting a room, although many wives in garrison cities were limited by their having to quarter one of the hundreds of thousands of returning soldiers. On occasion this brought access to food besides stories of the horrors of war, censored by the press. But in rotating strangers in and out of middle-class households the state undermined the autonomy and privacy families had taken for granted before 1914.⁸³

An anxious wife could object to accommodating any other soldier than her husband, but in doing so ran the risk of being ostracized by her peers and community. The curious appearance of 'Onkel Albert' in mid-1915, however, suggests this is how Nannŷ fulfilled her patriotic duties.⁸⁴ Just two months after husband Paul had left for the front, the well-to-do chap in the adjacent portrait wrote (perhaps audaciously) the following on its reverse:

"In remembrance of Uncle Albert. Leipzig, 22 June, 1915"
("Zur Erinnerung an Onkel Albert. Leipzig, den 22 jun, 1915)."

Who was 'Onkel' Albert? Why was he befriending the Tŷralla kids? And why wasn't he himself at the front? Answers have remained few and far between to this day but the best of what I've learned is presented over the course of the coming pages. In all likelihood, his arrival came at the expense of Theo and Margot, who unlike Little Nannŷ following summer's end, remained at the grandparents indefinitely. In effect, Albert displaced the younger pair. I can only begin to imagine the effect that had on my grandmother.

⁸⁰ Donson, Pg. 155

⁸¹ Andrew Donson. Pg, 171, 174

⁸² [Toys, Consumption, and Middle-class Childhood in Imperial Germany, 1871-1918](#). Bryan Ganaway. Pg. 161, 234.

⁸³ Donson, pg. 142

⁸⁴ During world war two, Nanny Tŷralla's youngest daughter, Margot, would sub-let her room while her husband served in the war. Was she following her mother's example?

In the meantime, the sight of wounded soldiers and black veiled widows were becoming a part of everyday life.⁸⁵ As the number of military casualties reached 2.5 million, civilian morale plummeted between 1915 and 16.⁸⁶ Anxiety turned to dread with the news of more and more war dead, missing person notices around the city and casualty lists in the papers.⁸⁷ By 1915, Leipzig's rates had doubled over those of 1914.⁸⁸

Public enthusiasm for the conflict quickly faded into war weariness and despondency and with hopes of victory fading fast, street demonstrations began to break out in the larger cities, accompanied by demands for "peace and bread."⁸⁹ Not even the inauguration of the new railway station (see text box below) did much for public morale.

8.2: Leipzig - Hauptbahnhof Officially Opens

Following 13 years of construction and an investment of 150 million Marks, *Leipzig's Hauptbahnhof* was inaugurated on 4th December 1915. One of its intents was to impress visitors to the city's trade fairs and as one of the world's largest railway stations (Grand Central Terminal in New York had not long before opened with 44 platforms), its 26 platforms made it the largest in Europe. To cope with the increase in traffic to the town centre, the *Nikolai-Straße* was widened.



As a joint terminal until 1934, platforms 1-13 (the eastern side) belonged to Prussian State Railways, while platforms 14-26 to the sächsisches Staatsbahn (Saxon State Railways). In addition it had another 5 external platforms. Because of this, the building is uniquely designed with two identical domed entrance halls and waiting rooms facing the main thoroughfare outside, one for each company. The head platform is 267m long, 33m wide and 27m high.

Sources: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leipzig_Hauptbahnhof; Martina Guldenmann: *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert in LEIPZIG*; commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Leipzig_-_Hauptbahnhof_1.jpg and Target Leipzig pg. 82, by Alan Cooper.

Saxony, perhaps unsurprisingly, was the first region to witness violent hunger riots. From October 16-17th, 1915, disorders in front of Leipzig food shops were serious enough to prompt the Reich's Supreme Censorship Office in Berlin to forbid publication of stories about the incidents.

During the next two weeks, smaller disturbances broke out. At one meeting to discuss food policy (which took place at the *Zentraltheater*, a short distance from the *Thomaskirche*), two thousand showed up. Afterwards, about 80 spectators marched to the offices of the royal prefect, where another 500 Leipzigers joined in. There they demanded peace and more vigorous policies to combat the food shortage. Police scattered the protesters after about half an hour, but the event also marked the first public demands for peace in the city of Leipzig.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Donson, Pg. 239.

⁸⁶ Germany after the First World War, Richard Bessel, 1995. Pg.44.

⁸⁷ Dr. Dieter Kurschner, according to his military history of Gohlis [here](#).

⁸⁸ Dobson, pg. 133

⁸⁹ S. Dobson, pg. 145

⁹⁰ S. Dobson, pg. 145

Adults' despondency for the war was evident among youngsters too, who both pined and feared for their conscripted fathers. In a 1915 survey, two of the dearest wishes of 470 schoolchildren, after "victory" was "the return of father and relatives," and "the safe return of soldiers."⁹¹

Did Little Nannj see her father once more, when his regiment earned a two week break from fighting between September 17th and October 1st?⁹² If yes, was Paul able to savour the respite? Playing host to a stranger was probably difficult in itself to deal with but a reunion with children was a moment also fraught with anxiety, according to Andrew Donson. A young elementary school girl wrote that when her father returned, "it had been so long and I was so happy that I hid myself behind the sofa – and then came the tears."⁹³

Father's return didn't last long. He was urgently transferred back to the frontline in October 1st, 1915 to support the army's defences in the Second Battle of Champagne and as they dug in against the French offensive, he perished on the battlefield.

Wives were usually completely unaware of the exact moment their husband had been killed although the comrades of those fallen often wrote to their relatives to pass on more specific details.⁹⁴ Formally, news will have reached Nannj via the authorities, since "the death of a soldier was considered an army matter and in death, as in life, the soldier's body belonged to the military."⁹⁵ In Chapter VII I surmise she was informed around December 1915, although the news probably reached her in November considering details published in the *Verlunstungslisten*.



Despite her grief, she was invariably counted on to be restrained, composed and dignified. Mainstream wartime society simply did not tolerate public displays of emotional pain: it was understood as 'incongruous, if not unworthy and suggested weakness, self-indulgence and failure of nerve.'⁹⁶ On the contrary, women like Nannj were supposed to endorse male sacrifice and bear the consequences of their deaths as their contribution to the war effort. As proud mourners, they served to reinforce national unity and consensus,⁹⁷ and this moral code was constantly enforced by the army, the churches and the media, even by members of the women's movement.

A subdued smile from a war-weary widow?
Nannj Tjëralla in her *Trauerjahr*, 1916.

⁹¹ A. Donson, pg. 139

⁹² Paul KNOPPE. *Die Geschichte des Königlich Sächsischen Reserve-Infanterie-Regiments Nr. 241*. Dresden, 1936.

⁹³ A. Donson, pg. 139

⁹⁴ Imagining the Absent Dead: Rituals of Bereavement and the Place of the War Dead in German Women's Art during the First World War. Claudia Siebrecht in *German History: The Journal of the German Historical Society*, Vol. 29, No. 2, June 2011. pg. 217-8.

⁹⁵ Claudia Siebrecht in *The Journal of the German Historical Society*, Vol. 29, No. 2, June 2011. pg. 212

⁹⁶ *ibid*

⁹⁷ *ibid*

Such expectations were underlined within the school system too. When a girl imagined her father or, if he had already died and she described his death, she was expected to suppress her grief and carry on stoically like a good patriot.⁹⁸ In dealing with losses, one Catholic school teacher read to her pupils the poem "Heroine," about a woman who endured the hardship of the war and ultimately the death of her husband, who "sacrificed his life for freedom! / Died in the Father's name for the *Reich* and Throne." In eliciting a response, her class believed the father died in peace, because he knew his wife would devote herself to her children.⁹⁹

8.3: Who's That Girl?

Another of my grandmother's heirlooms is a small sepia-colored card with a silhouette of a well-dressed girl. Cutting portraits from black card, generally in profile, became popular in the mid-18th century, according to Wikipedia. However, the term 'silhouette,' was not applied to the art of portrait-making until the 19th century. It had its heyday in the *Biedermeier* period (an era in central Europe between 1815 and 1848 that witnessed the emergence of the middle-class and where "arts appealed to common sensibilities)."

At the foot of my grandmother's card the words: "cut out of *Martha Schubert-Sachse*, Leipzig (daughter of the deceased and famous silhouetter, Edwin Schubert)" appear. Since 1902, Martha Schubert had lived in Gohlis, not far from Little Nannÿ and her family (although she hailed from *Siebenbrunn* in Saxony's *Vogtland*, about 60km south of Leipzig, where she was born in 1890). Her uncle was a famous sculptor and like her father, Martha made personalized silhouettes imprinted on cards too.

So did this heirloom portray Little Nannÿ? Was it a birthday present – a special treat from her father before he departed for the front? Or was it something from her mother to treasure, once she knew he wasn't coming home? It must have held some significant sentimental value for it to have been kept so long.

To my mind the silhouette shows a child coping with loss. There is no colour in her personality. Even the balloon is hollow emptiness. I wonder then, was it also meant to epitomize a fatherless child?



Sources: www.eule-soc.com/art-2-1-4-0/175.html
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silhouette, and barrynoa.blogspot.hu/2011/04/alte-postkarten-scherenschnitte.html

Nannÿ Tÿralla publicly grieved for a year. According to *Claudia Siebrecht* writing in *'Imagining the Absent Dead,'* the inability of bereaved individuals to engage in conventional burial rites compounded their emotional burden, since there was no body, no ceremony and no grave. The resulting 'void' therefore made reaching any form of closure difficult.¹⁰⁰

Yet contrary to expectation, *Frau Tÿralla* expunged her husband from living memory. He was excised for instance from a photograph where they stood together at a ball, while on the reverse of another (evidencing a once romantic exchange), the text was rendered illegible. Any other photos of her late husband it seems were discarded, leaving us with the handful of diminutive images we have today that only survive because other family members appear with them. Despite cautious interpretation, I can't help but wonder, would a war widow erase her husband, a 'hero' no less, from living memory as a way of overcoming loss? Surely not, unless that 'loss' was superficial alone. My answer came via a most unexpected source...

⁹⁸ A. Donson, pg. 139

⁹⁹ A. Donson, pg. 86

¹⁰⁰ *Claudia Siebrecht* in *The Journal of the German Historical Society*, Vol. 29, No. 2, June 2011. pg. 204, 214

In late January 1916, Nannj Tjralla received the following order from the *Königlichen Amtsgerichts Leipzig* (the Royal Court of Leipzig):¹⁰¹

"We humbly request details on the estate of the merchant Paul Tyralla who fell in France in October 1915, born 4th June 1882 for brief inspection. Tyralla is the father of the 5.10.1915 illegitimately born Johannes Wilhelm Nagler¹⁰², who is in our custody and under our legal guardianship." Pfleg- und Jugendfürsorgeamt Leipzig (The Care and Welfare Office of Leipzig).

As if losing a husband wasn't tough enough, his extra-marital affairs became 'public' knowledge while his widow was asked to disclose her inheritance! Her riposte read as follows: "My late husband left nothing besides a few pieces of clothing and worthless laundry." It was backed by a legalized statement showing liabilities of Mk 8,761, two years worth of unpaid rent and three young children who inherited nothing. The child's mother was of course the family's former childminder.



Above:
Hinsch home
no more:
Salzgässchen,
1915-16
Source: Stadt-
geschichtliches
Museum
Leipzig

The case thereafter appears to have been closed but if this was Faust, in his passing Paul dies happy while his wife is supposedly destroyed. Were it Paul who returned to Leipzig in 1936 (see textbox 7.6), the last laugh over his estranged wife most certainly would have been his. However it was *Frau Tjralla* who survived, and if her attention wasn't already diverted, it soon would be.

#####

It was not only the Tjrallas who experienced profound change during 1915. Five months after departing for the frontline, around mid-December, Fritz Hinsch was home on leave. In what appears a quite unorthodox move, according to property records on December 16th he entrusted his Machern villa not to his wife, but to his mother.¹⁰³ In so doing hadn't he just disenfranchised her and his family as its main heir(s), were he not to return from the frontline? And if so, had Hedwig grown estranged too, and if yes, why?



Below:
New
beginnings:
*Beethoven-
straße 19*

In the busy month that followed, the Hinsch's moved their home across town from *Salzgässchen*. After a brief stop in temporary lodging, they settled in mid-January beyond the old medieval centre in a groundfloor apartment at *Beethovenstraße 19*. Their new home lay in the city's south-west and its modern 'music quarter', opposite the *Königliches Konservatorium der Musik zu Leipzig* and within close proximity of the *Gewandhaus*.¹⁰⁴ The area had rapidly developed since the mid-1880s and now included many palatial villas.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Paul Tjralla's *NachlasseAkte*: 8 NReg. 1494/16 held at the *Sächsisches Staatsarchiv*.

¹⁰² According to *Polizeipräsidium Leipzig* files, his mother, *Rosalie Hildegard*, later *Herberger* of *Leipzig Reudnitz CharlottenStr. 5*, was a children's nurse. In 1949 a *Kaufmann* named *Johannes Nagler* lived at *Rückertstraße 16*, Gohlis.

¹⁰³ *Amtsgericht Grimma. Zweigstelle Wurzen Grundbuchamt*. No. 28. Gr. Akt. 10 Nepperwitz. Bd.II Bl. 149b.

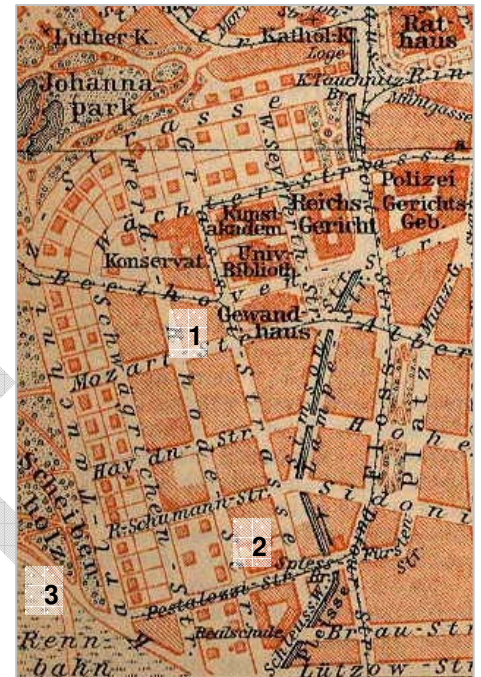
¹⁰⁴ Fritz himself was registered at this address from mid-July 1917, perhaps because he only returned on leave then.

Precise motives for relocating are hard to come by, other than the rent in the city centre being too high as the family's income from tobacco diminished.¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, Hedwig may have struggled to maintain a shop, business and family all at the same time (as much as she will have needed it to succeed) and despite her parents' close proximity. According to Wikipedia, the musicians of the *Gewandhausorchester* were obliged to act as teaching staff, and I just wonder if Fritz's association to it played a part in the Hinsch's move – under its shadow (see map opposite).¹⁰⁷

The childrens' education may well have been a cause too. From autumn 1916, the eldest, Frits ought to have been preparing for *Realschule*, which served "middle-class children preparing for careers in business or the lower grades of the civil service."¹⁰⁸ Did he join the *III. Realschule* (see '2' on the map right), which lay about 500m south of home (see '1')? Since graduates of these schools typically began their careers earlier at the age of 16 or 17,¹⁰⁹ this will have meant Frits may have expected another six or so years of schooling.

At the same time, Heinz will have been getting ready for elementary school, I suspect the *III. Höhere Bürgerschule*, since it lay opposite big brother's (see image below right).¹¹⁰ It's hardly surprisingly his musical interests developed during this period, even less so that he came to be an ardent admirer of Beethoven, Mozart and Bach (considering streets named after these famous composers lined their neighbourhood too)!

But both the Hinsch and Tŷrallas' education was surely disrupted throughout these years. After 1915 the school system functioned poorly at best (and in many cases, not at all). Conscription was partly responsible, since around 80 percent of teaching staff in Germany were male.¹¹¹ This meant some schools responded by amalgamating classes which also helped overcome the lack of buildings that were steadily being turned into soldiers' barracks. However, it soon became clear that bringing 80-100 pupils into a classroom with only 50 seats was implausible. "The children constantly touch each other," a teacher complained, "and the instruction flies over their heads." Most schools therefore held instruction for just a half-day and often only a third.¹¹²



Above:

The Hinsch's environs from early 1916, the so called *Musikviertel*. '1' denotes where their home lay, '2' denotes their sons' likely schools, and '3' the racetrack where cousin Theo eventually trained as a jockey.

Below:

The *III. Realschule* and to its right and opposite, the *III. Höhere Bürgerschule*.
Source: Wieland Zumpfe;
www.l-iz.de/Bildung



¹⁰⁵ Today it is a historical landmark under preservation order: [de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musikviertel_\(Leipzig\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musikviertel_(Leipzig))

¹⁰⁶ Only from 1918 do *Adressbücher* reveal Fritz's occupation was that of a '*Kaufmann*' and no longer at *Salzgässchen*.

¹⁰⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Music_and_Theatre_Leipzig

¹⁰⁸ Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920. Dobson, pg. 41. I doubt he was sent along to a *Gymnasium* or *Oberrealschulen* which was for those university-bound, while the *Volkschule* was rather for the proletariat

¹⁰⁹ Benninghaus, Haupt and Requate, O&O, Pg.288

¹¹⁰ <http://www.l-iz.de/Bildung/Zeitreise/2012/10/Leipzigs-verlorene-Schulstandorte-44466.html>

¹¹¹ Compared with 40 percent in Britain and 25 percent in France. Donson. Pg.129

¹¹² Donson. Pg.129, 10

Whatsmore, in the winters, coal for heating was insufficient and schools had to close for weeks at a time. Pupils arrived cold and hungry, fearing for loved ones on the front, traumatized by the millions of casualties. Many were exhausted from long waits and walks for food and coal too. There is no evidence suggesting this was ever a Tŷralla dilemma, nor Hinsch (lest we forget Hedwig's parents were bakers too), however, regular truancy became part of a survival strategy for many and those who did turn up showed signs of "nervousness, conditions of exhaustion, anemia, and other serious health disturbances."¹¹³

While teachers put their energy into caretaking, state officials denied the unfolding catastrophe and bungled the distribution of food.¹¹⁴ Teachers increasingly sided with the starving urban masses who challenged the authority of the government for its incompetence, "a development that contributed to the declining legitimacy of the state and spun Germany towards revolution," says Andrew Donson.¹¹⁵ Indeed, it was teachers and postal workers in Leipzig who saw to it that a committee was created to monitor food prices in September 1915.

Compounding these problems was the fact that much of Saxony's antipathy for the mismanagement of food distribution was directed towards Berlin and the Prussians.¹¹⁶ Even if this resentment had withered since 1871, it was back with a vengeance, and it's perhaps no great surprise that the Hinsch Seniors remained camped out in the countryside. Not only in Bavaria were tourists compelled to stress they were not Prussian, in order to assure themselves a friendly welcome. In Saxon pubs, too, the locals were likely to fall silent upon the entrance of the strangers "who were said to be from Germany's leading state." On one such occasion, because visitors from the tiny Thuringian principality of *Reuß* did not announce distinctly enough that they were *Reußen*, they were initially mistaken by the Saxon locals to be 'Preußen' (Prussians). The news report adds "Thank God, they had simply misheard" The 'P' in front had to go... And cheerfully they raised their beer mugs together." (*ibid*)

The war's continuance did nothing for the morale of the people, or the soldiers who saw, read and heard about the deteriorating living standards within the *Reich* and who not least longed for home themselves. Many began to call the war a 'swindle,' claiming it was being continued for the profit of the capitalists, as the poem below reveals.¹¹⁷ Even in soldiers' barracks and temporary accommodation, writes Dieter Kürschner, from 1916 their anger began to ferment.¹¹⁸

<i>Es ist alles Shwindel:</i>	<i>It is all a swindle</i>
<i>Der Krieg ist fur die Reichen,</i>	<i>The war is for the wealthy,</i>
<i>Der Mittelstand muß weichen,</i>	<i>The Mittelstand must give way,</i>
<i>Das Volk, das stellt die Leichen.</i>	<i>The people provide the corpses.</i>

¹¹³ Donson, pg. 126

¹¹⁴ The food system was adequate enough when it came to supplying the soliders: Back in Paul Tŷralla's home district of Neustadt, 668,135 hundredweight of potatoes were sent to the German frontline during 1915. *Geschichte der Stadt Zülz in Ober Schlesien*. J.Chrzaszcs. 1926. pg. 76

¹¹⁵ Donson, pg. 126.

¹¹⁶ Christophe Nonn in his contribution to Saxony in Germany History: Culture, Society and Politics, 1830-1933. Edited by James Retallack and published by The University of Michigan Press in 2000. pg. 312-3

¹¹⁷ Richard Bessel: Germany after the First World War. 1995. Pg. 1 and 45

¹¹⁸ Military history of Gohlis [here](#): by Dr. Dieter Kurschner

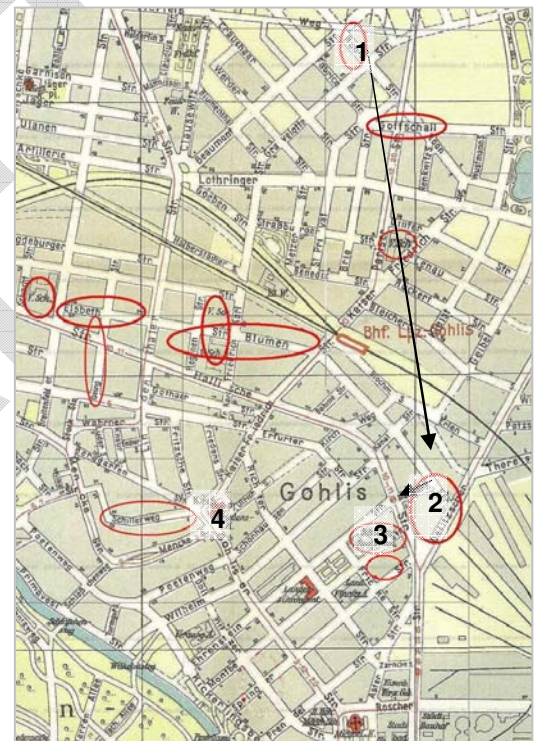
By 1916, food rations had sunk below the minimal nutritional requirements for adults.¹¹⁹ From February potatoes were no longer distributed from the market hall, because the two to three thousand people lining up daily had assumed such a menacing demeanor that officials feared the outbreak of a food riot.¹²⁰ Thereafter potatoes were to be distributed by local shops. The shop owners, however, would try to charge customers more than the allowable maximum. As supplies grew scarcer, sugar beet became widely available and later turnips alone. On March 16th, a column of women marched to the new city hall in protest – only to be dispersed by police shortly before they reached it.¹²¹

Memories of 1916: Food rationing poster
Source: Güldemann



Financially speaking, life won't have gotten much easier for *Frau Týralla* following Paul's loss. Now on a war widow's 'pension,' it was hardly enough to get by,¹²² and after some three and half years in *Roon Straße 1* (see '1' on the map right) in April 1916 she relocated some 2 km south to *Delitzscher Straße 3* ('2'). This brought her household back to the centre of Gohlis and just a few tram stops from the new *Hauptbahnhof*. Turning the corner one block north brought Nanný back to *Blumenstraße*, birthplace of her eldest two. The view towards her flat is shown in the photograph overleaf.

On the whole "Gohlis...remained relatively quiet for the middle-class residents" and "was better for its inhabitants than the working-class neighborhoods."¹²³ So if safety was not a concern, what lay behind her move? For one thing, she probably sought to put greater distance between herself and the memories of her former childminder. However, I can also imagine she had difficulty paying the rent at *Roon Straße* which over the last two years had evidently become an issue.¹²⁴ The third reason, is perhaps the most convincing. According to the address books, *Frau Týralla* now formally shared the apartment with 'Onkel Albert.' In other words, he headed up her household.



¹¹⁹ Elisabeth Domansky, pg. 444

¹²⁰ *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. Sean Dobson, pg. 139.

¹²¹ *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. Sean Dobson, pg. 145.

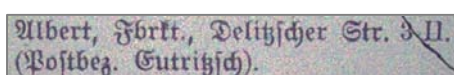
¹²² E. Domansky. Pg. 443-4. Whether this was linked to labour is not known.

¹²³ Military history of Gohlis [here](#): by Dr. Dieter Kurschner

¹²⁴ According to her husband's *NachlassAkte* (8 NReg. 1494/16), the RM1300 debt for two years unpaid rent was eventually settled by her mother.



Above: The Tjyrallas' new home at Delitzscher Straße 3 is the building behind the Restaurant Chauseehaus, which I daresay was one of Nanny Tjyralla's favourite coffee hangouts
Below: Albert's entry in the following year's Adressbuch



Discovering Albert's family name alone was no small feat and the process is described in more detail in the Annex while the textbox opposite explains who he was and where he was from. Like most Germans, he was not one to sit still and my mother and her elder sister later recalled the 'Tweede Mann' was some sort of inventor. A clue to his professional identity lies in the address book entry left, which shows the word 'Fabrik' or *Fabrikant*. This means he was a manufacturer and factory owner. Not on an industrial-scale but rather a petty producer, like an artisan, someone who according to Dobson perhaps did not even use mechanized power.¹²⁵ Was 'cottage industry' the best way to describe his business practice? And if so, what was his trade? Was it chemicals, machines or foodstuffs?

A gnawing problem has been the fact that Albert (whom Nannj Tjyralla went on to spend the next 30 or so years alongside) left little paper trail behind himself: no residential nor company records, neither at his birthplace¹²⁶ nor in Leipzig.¹²⁷ He never became a formal citizen of Saxony's second city despite living there for at least ten years.¹²⁸ Did he deliberately wish to remain unknown and untraceable?

Through Nannj's growing association with him she strengthened her bourgeois status (and in principle her family's odds of survival). "Those who own or control the means of production ... can hide much of their personal consumption as 'company expense...'," wrote Sean Dobson. "Like farmers, they [also] possess real goods that can be exchanged in a barter economy."¹²⁹ Yet despite his long association with Nannj Tjyralla, Albert had little genuine interest in her children.

¹²⁵ Sean Dobson in *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. Pg. 26

¹²⁶ Confirmed on 7 Oct. 2012 by Lutz Blumenthal@lha.mi.sachsen-anhalt.de of Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Magdeburg. She suggests contacting: Stadtarchiv Magdeburg: archiv@magdeburg.de which occurred in 2011 when seeking Albert Petzold's birth certificate – a 6 month-long process!

¹²⁷ Hoping the Handelsregister or company directories maintained by Leipzig's authorities would list Albert's enterprise, Dr. Thoralf Handke, Sachbearbeiter of the Sächsisches Staatsarchiv in Leipzig noted: "there are no records for a company registered in the name of Albert Petzold in Leipzig" (this despite there having been many Petzolds operating as businessmen in and around Leipzig in the years that Albert was there). "Either the company was known by a completely different name or it was registered outside Leipzig," Dr. Handke volunteered by way of an explanation, adding that if it were known what his factory produced, further research might be possible... If only we knew more about the company and its headquarters! Was it based in Magdeburg or Berlin perhaps? Yet searches for Albert Petzold and Carl Friedrich Petzold at the register of companies, cooperatives and partnerships and associations registered in all federal states in Germany here: www.handelsregister.de/rp_web/mask.do?Typ=e but with special attention to Magdeburg and Berlin drew a blank (personal correspondence on 19 Sept. 2012 from Lutz Blumenthal of the Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Magdeburg) confirmed no records existed for Albert Petzold. An enquiry sent to Berlin/Amtsgericht Charlottenburg (email: AGCHVL-Register-Online@ag-ch.berlin.de), Hardenbergstraße 31, 10623 Berlin, resent on 1st May 2013 also drew a blank come May 16th, 2013).

¹²⁸ Personal correspondence from Olaf Hillert of the City Archives of Leipzig, Torgau Str. 74 of Wed. 1st February, 2012, after checking the Namenskarteien zu den Leipziger Bürger-, Heimat- und Staatsangehörigkeitsunterlagen.

¹²⁹ Sean Dobson, pg. 135

8.4: Who Am I? The Mysterious 'Onkel Albert'

Albert Petzold was born on June 22nd, 1882 (just two and a half weeks after Paul Tŷralla). His birthplace was a town called Magdeburg, which lies on the Elbe River, about 130km west of Berlin and 100km northwest of Leipzig.¹ Once one of the most important medieval cities of Europe, it had been the Province of Saxony's capital since 1815.

However, it was not through Magdeburg that Albert came to Leipzig. In his gesture to endear himself to the Tŷralla kids, he left a valuable clue regarding his life prior to his arrival, showing that not only was his photographer based in *Bernburg*, but that the town of some 30,000 plus residents was no mere stepping stone either.



Tiny Bernburg (marked only by a '1' on the map above) sits midway between *Magdeburg* ('2') and *Halle* ('3'). It lies on the river *Saale*, which is a tributary of the *Elbe*.² Today it is an industrial centre renowned for sugar, salt, soda and cement: the four 'white powders,' and much of its economy rested on this in 1912 too.³ So which of these was Albert's business?

Bernburg's *Adreßbücher*⁴ show Albert's parents had lived there since he was four or five years old.⁵ Graduating a *Kaufmann* (merchant)⁶, between 1911 and 1913 he operated a high street store (*Geschäft*) whose nature remains undisclosed. Although he changed his home before moving to Leipzig, he was never more than a few hundred metres from his business's premises.

Albert's father was 44 when he was born and not surprisingly, he was not then the only child of *Oskar* (also a *Kaufmann*) and his wife, *Elizabeth Schubert*. Eighteen month older sister, *Frieda*, was born November, 1880, while younger brother, *Walther* was actually born in Bernburg in March 1887. Their father's 1909 death certificate,⁷ revealed he and his wife hailed from the very Jewish *Halberstadt* ('4') in the Prussian Province of Saxony, renowned in turn for its gloves, cigars and sausages.⁸ What was it that brought the Petzolds to Magdeburg and then to Bernburg (besides the railways)?

From December 1912, Albert owned a department store (*Kaufhaus*) in Berlin. Yet shortly after the war broke out, in October 1914, his business was dissolved.⁹ Had he been called to the front? A couple of photographs from the early 1920s (see Chapter IX) reveal he walked with a cane. While it may simply have been a fashion accessory, something also looks at odds with his stride. Could he have been exempted from military service, perhaps on account of a medical condition or some other special status? Or had he in fact served at the frontline, only to be injured early on and returned with a false limb?¹⁰

According to Sean Donson, men on the home front were typically deemed 'unmanly' for having failed their medical inspection,¹¹ a 'prejudice' which the then 16-year old Marlene Dietrich illustrated by remarking, "the few men we still saw were old or sick and were not real men."¹² Yet stigma or otherwise, Nannŷ Tŷralla attached herself to this undeniably elitist 33-year old (who lest we forget, the 'people' despised – see pg. 198). The question which remains is why did he move to Leipzig? A range of possible explanations are included in the text box overleaf.

Footnotes: Please see the text box at the end of this chapter

The words on the back of another photo reveal more about my grandmother's home life, when Frau Tŷralla wrote in 1916:

"Ihre Liebe Nanny. Zur Erinnerung an deine Mama. Trauerjahr, 1915-1916."
("Beloved Nanny. To remember your mother. Year of mourning. 1915-1916.")

At first glance the text suggests she was open with her daughter about her father's loss, even that Little Nannŷ was somehow expected to share her mother's burden of grief. Yet a closer look reveals her daughter was physically separated from her mother.

Initially that distance might have simply meant short daily spells in the company of do-gooders. That school year for instance teachers regularly supervised youngsters for up to two hours after lessons were over, while from May 1916, youth centres (*Jugendheime*) were opened to elementary school children, with older schoolchildren supervising the younger ones during the afternoon.¹³⁰

8.5: Leipzig's Lure in 1915

When 'Onkel Albert' arrived in Leipzig in 1915, he bucked a trend in which the rate of intra- and inter-urban mobility in Leipzig had declined since 1914.¹ What then was it that brought him to the city – and more specifically to Nannj Tjrralla's front door? Was he a long-term family friend or did he simply respond to an ad for lodgers she had discretely circulated among family and friends?

According to the city's *Adreßbücher*, the name Petzold was far from uncommon in and around the city. In the 1880s and 1890s one even finds them among Friedrich and Marie Hinsch's neighbours: *Bernhard Petzold* was the baker in *Kurprinzstrasse* you may recall, while *Friedrich Petzold* was the butcher in *Bauhofstraße*. Yet despite a wealth of archival research there appears to be no connection between either of these Petzolds and Albert.²

So what brought the fellow to the big city? Could it have had anything to do with the war? Until its outbreak, Leipzig's airfield at Mockau (just across the *Delitzscher* tramline) served commercial interests, mainly those of DELAG, Germany's airship (*Luftschiff*) company (the world's first airline). That saw Zeppelins sail continuously between Leipzig-Mockau, Düsseldorf, Berlin, Frankfurt/Main, Hamburg and Dresden (see also Chapter VI).³ Saxony's *Kaserne* was also nearby.

Following the war's advent, however, Mockau's airport switched to military service. The Bavarian *Luftschifftrupp Nr. 1*, the *Marine-Luftschiffabteilung Nordholz* and the *III. Marine-Luftschiff- Detachment* were all based there, besides aircraft production under the auspices of the *Germania flugzeugwerke* and *Automobil und Aviatik AG* companies (*Deutsche Flugzeug-werke* was based at *Lindenthal's* airfield northwest of Gohlis).⁴ Zeppelins commissioned for military use were based at Mockau too, whilst a Mannheim-based rival airship manufacturer named *Schütte-Lanz*, whose primary customer was the Germany Army, also set up shop. Twenty-four of its airships were designed before the end of the World War I for use in Germany's bombing raids and two; the SL13 and SL18, were built there, with a third, SL19, planned.⁵

But if the war indeed brought *Herr Petzold* to Leipzig (and that would certainly help explain the mystery that surrounds him), what led him to Nannj Tjrralla's front door? Was it the city's rich associational life? Its *Businessmen's Club* had long hosted masked balls and soirees, occasions which Nannj Tjrralla relished and appears to have been the sort of community Albert might have fraternized with. Or was an announcement for her spare room posted at the officers' mess in Gohlis where her and Albert's paths simply crossed at 'the right time'? That still leaves me wondering, were the kind words he wrote to my grandmother the result of a newly made acquaintance, or had her mother in fact met her match years before? I guess I will never know.

Sources

¹ Sean Dobson, pg. 186

² Friedrich Petzold was born about 80km south of Leipzig in Saxony in 1855 in Oberlosa bei Plauen – quite the opposite direction to Albert's father's hometown of Halberstadt. The pair naturally then did not share the same father, which Plauen's *Pfarramt* confirmed on 22nd Feb. 2013. Uncannily, there is a connection between Friedrich and Nannj Tjrralla's mother's birthplace, *Querfurt*, where he married Christiana Busch in early 1882. Not long afterwards they became parents to a son named Carl Friedrich, who was born just three weeks after Nannj, implying the pair probably grew up together. But while this explains Friedrich Petzold and the Hinsch's mutual acquaintance, it doesn't link Nannj with Albert, leading one to conclude her acquaintance to a Petzold was purely coincidental.

³ <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/DELAG>

⁴ http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flughafen_Leipzig-Mockau

⁵ <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schütte-Lanz> and logo: http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deutsche_Flugzeug-Werke (logo)



¹³⁰ Andrew Donson, Pg. 144

Churches too recognized the importance of caring for the young¹³¹ and the Women's Relief Association of the *Gohlis Friedenskirche* lay a hop, skip and a jump away from Little Nanný's home - see '4' on the map on pg. 199). Writes Elisabeth Domansky, the war offered opportunity for many bourgeois women to experiment with their own social vision. They became proactive in church-related, semi-private, and private welfare organisations - which in turn gave them more power vis-a-vis the state.¹³² In my family's case, however, the war appears to have presented *Frau Týralla* with nothing more than an opportunity to pervert that social vision.



Women's Relief Association
of the Gohlis Friedenskirche, Nov. 1918.
Source: Christel Foerster, *Leben in Leipzig, 1900-1970*

Youngsters' (including Little Nanný's) longer term absences occurred against the backdrop of food riots ('*Hungerkrawalle*') that reached Leipzig's suburbs in early summer 1916, barely a month after the eight year old moved into *Delitzscher Straße*. These, writes Dobson, "represented the most serious public discourse in Leipzig during the first two years of the war." Typically the front windows of shops would be smashed and inventory looted. While men often fled the arriving police, women and youngsters often remained, "jeering, whistling and yelling." They could be driven from the street only when the police began making arrests.¹³³

A series of riots which began on May 14th, 1916 were exceptionally violent and began at the western edge of the city in the proletarian neighbourhood of Leipzig-Lindenau. "Women with children stormed the grocery stores," writes Güldemann, "to provide themselves with the essentials." The riot could only be halted with "every available man on the police force... as well as two infantry companies and sixty Ulans, supported by one hundred police officers."¹³⁴

Usually these occurred when women in a queue concluded that a shop owner was holding back goods for sale so as to put them on the black market. In contrast with Güldemann, though, Dobson concludes that it was the perception of unfair distribution, rather than the shortage itself which sparked the disturbances.

The events of mid-May were catalysed the next day by rumours that the potato ration would sink from seven to five pounds per head weekly. As news of the previous day's street battle began to circulate, angry crowds formed in front of Leipzig's *Neue Rathaus* and on *Königsplatz*, just south of the city centre. "Thousands of people, mainly women ... demonstrated peacefully in front of the town hall against the shortage of potatoes."¹³⁵ Yet police broke up the gathering and arrested many, including nine women.

¹³¹ In 1916, close to half of the civilians in Germany were under 18 - Donson, pg.13

¹³² E. Domansky. *Militarisation and Reproduction in World War I Germany. Society, Culture, and the State in Germany, 1870-1930*. University of Michigan Press (30 Nov 1997). Pg. 456. (in Google Books [here](#))

¹³³ Sean Dobson, pg. 145

¹³⁴ Sean Dobson, pg. 146

¹³⁵ Christophe Nonn. Pg. 311

Over the following six days, crowds ransacked 24 stores across the city (how did Hedwig's parents' bakery in *Salzgäßchen* fare at these times, I wonder)? All but two of them were food stores, indicating that hunger after all motivated the plundering and not just the desire for loot. By the time the police finally cleared the streets, hundreds were in police custody.¹³⁶

The riots and demonstrations prompted a remodeling of Leipzig's food committee into a more powerful War Food Office (*Kriegsernährungsamt*).¹³⁷ Set up to address the administrative weakness associated with food distribution and to ration the supply of foodstuffs (it also attempted to dictate agricultural prices and the structure of agricultural production), it was derided as a "sword without edges," issuing numerous decrees, but never ameliorating the shortages and chaotic distribution.¹³⁸

A more "prodigious endeavour" (and rather more effective) was the so-called *Kinderlandverschickung*. Starting in the summer of 1916 until 1918, some one million urban elementary school children (aged 6-10) were evacuated and placed on strangers' farms for stays of one to six months. The aim was to separate youngsters from their families and exchange their small labor to farmers in return for food.

The evacuations were arguably the greatest disruption to the nuclear family. Yet bizarrely, writes Donson, the programme illustrated the absurdity and mismanagement of food policy.¹³⁹ "Germany was able to mobilize enormous resources to send children to the countryside for long stays so they could eat, but it could not bring enough food to the less lucky ones in the cities." Anecdotal evidence confirms Little Nannö experienced this first-hand, despite there having been no great need, given her grandparents and siblings' proximity in Machern.

The measure's success depended entirely on breaking up urban families. Pupils gathered in the schoolyard and marched to the station with their families, while their teachers shepherded them to their final destination. The organizers, namely the municipalities and charities who provided the 50 pfennig per day compensation for the hosts, however, kept parents off the station platform, because they considered goodbye dramas threatened smooth operation. The evacuees did not learn of their destination until after the specially laid on trains departed, while the organizers refrained from telling parents in order to prevent them from visiting their children and inveigling food on the black market from the hosts.¹⁴⁰

With boys and girls riding through the night in the same cars to the unfamiliar destinations, the level of excitement on the rail transports was high. There were reports that the boys created disturbances like pinching the girls. When the trains arrived in the rural outposts, the villagers, often the parish clergy and local aristocrats, welcomed children with ceremonies of drums, trumpets, decorated wagons, and tables laden with eggs and cakes. At other times, however, the trains arrived with neither reception nor fanfare, leaving the chaperone marching from village to village looking for hosts for as many as 95 children.

¹³⁶ Sean Dobson, Pg. 147

¹³⁷ Christophe Nonn, Pg. 313

¹³⁸ Andrew Donson, Pg. 127

¹³⁹ Andrew Donson, Pg. 144

¹⁴⁰ Andrew Donson, Pg. 145

When the children finally settled in, most adapted well, according to the reports. They performed farm labour, sometimes went to school, admired and played with farm animals, and most of all, ate to gain weight. Both letters home and school compositions demonstrated the children were grateful to escape starvation in the cities, writes Donson.¹⁴¹ Organisers reported that the rural hosts felt love toward the children and in turn they wrote poems thanking their hosts, whom they had to address as “father” and “mother” and use the personal pronoun, “Du.”

The experience for most children was sufficiently positive. Little Nannÿ, on the other hand, begged her mother to get her out. She was alone and separated from her siblings. She’d now lost her mother too and longed to leave. Having prepared her ‘SOS,’ upon reaching the letter box she was caught red-handed while mailing it. Her host demanded an explanation and instead of reporting her homesickness (which was neither uncommon among evacuated children), Little Nannÿ did her best to conceal her plea and deny any wrongdoing. Her guardian was so insulted that she got the rough end of a stinging slap across the face. It rang in her ears so hard that the experience lived with her forever. From that moment on until she passed away she was convinced it was responsible for the hearing impairment she thereafter suffered.

Little Nannÿ’s eldest daughter recalled her host was probably a minister or religious figure, owing to the severity of the punishments he dispensed. Ministers remained powerful figures during the war. Many were cozy with the government and supported it in 1914 and 1915. Their sermons showed a genuine belief that the war was just and described a conflict that “cleansed the nation of selfishness, materialism, atheism, socialism and other alleged sores of modernity.” Participation in religious rites (baptism, confirmation, and religious funerals) increased as clerics played a critical role in addressing their congregants’ grief and fears. In addition, a good number of ministers in Prussia and Saxony (almost exclusively politically conservative) served as school inspectors, and despite no training in education, exerted state authority over elementary school teachers.¹⁴² There was no avoiding the cloth, which probably explains why Little Nannÿ continued to revere her Lutheran beliefs later in life.

Within the rural schools (no doubt including Machern’s), children’s academic performance suffered owing to the dearth of teachers. Instruction in geography, natural science, poetry, drawing, singing and gymnastics was eliminated. Accommodating all new urban guests was nearly impossible and the evidence suggests Theo missed out on his elementary school start with a return to *Kindergarten* in autumn 1915, together with Margot. “In school we didn’t learn anything at all,” wrote one pupil in her essay about her experience. “The children blabbed the whole time.” Many pupils did not attend school because their hosts needed their labour on the farms and truancy police were absent or inattentive. Many teachers and organizers even proclaimed the stays in the countryside exacerbated the already loose discipline, both in school and at home.¹⁴³ Perhaps the novel longer evenings neither helped (see the text box overleaf)!

¹⁴¹ *ibid*

¹⁴² Andrew Donson, Pg. 22, 98

¹⁴³ Andrew Donson, Pg. 131



8.6: Daylight Saving Time

To deal with oil and coal shortages “daylight saving” was first introduced in Germany, Austria-Hungary and Ireland on 30th April 1916 (in Great Britain the clocks were advanced by an hour on Sunday, 21st May). On 30th September 1916, the clocks then reverted back to standard time in Germany. After the war the practice was largely abandoned, with some exceptions.

That moniker though accurately describes the intent: namely, to increase the number of usable daylight hours (officially in England it was also intended to serve as a wartime production-boosting technique).

In 1975, the majority of countries of the then European Community decided on the permanent introduction of “European Summer Time.” The change was implemented in 1977 and since 1996 has been fully coordinated across Europe. The intent once more was to make better use of daylight in order to save fuel and energy, a consideration that bore particular importance in the aftermath of the 1973 oil crisis.



Sources: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Summer_Time; and
Güldemann *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert in LEIPZIG*. 1999. Pg. 22

Despite the hardships the Tŷralla kids endured, might Little Nannŷ and her siblings one day have seen value in the distance and discipline they accustomed to once their respective careers took off beyond Leipzig? Those times of adversity brought not only privation but benefits too. At the same time they may have longed for those pre-war days before Uncle Albert arrived on the scene. Little Nannŷ’s heart (not to mention her mother’s) would surely have skipped a beat had she seen the headline (overleaf) in the paper in mid-1916!

With the youngsters separated from each other and their mother, what was the latter so pre-occupied with? Little Nannŷ would often remark later in life that: “Mother rarely seemed to care for us,” when recounting their childhoods, a trait so very contrary to middle-class standards of the time, and in fact the standards mother was raised by herself. At the same time she remained free of the burden to work.

Albert appears to have been the main distraction although I daresay she kept an eye on fashion, notwithstanding the fact that patience for frivolity and tolerance for social transgressions had fallen in August and September, 1914.¹⁴⁴ In the first days of the war, reported Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*, the newspapers complained “about the inappropriate clothes of our women, promenading in skirts with slits and high heels, while their husbands and brothers defended German soil with their blood at the front lines.”¹⁴⁵

Although immediately after Germany’s declaration the most popular amusements, including music halls, cabarets, and *Jargon* theatres were forced to close their doors, the latter were the first to reopen. They quickly adapted to the new public mood, staging patriotic one-act plays – generally centred on the extraordinary effort made by Jewish soldiers at the front and the anxiety and patriotism of their families at home.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Andrew Donson, pg.155

¹⁴⁵ Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. pg. 272

¹⁴⁶ Marline Otte in *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. pg. 167

8.7: Paul Tyralla - Spotted in London?

In July 1916, a notice appeared in the *London Gazette* asking anyone doing business with Paul Tyralla to cease crediting him. As happened with all Germans operating a business in the UK in 1916, their enterprises were compulsorily wound up while they themselves were interned as prisoners of war (PoW) until June 1919. The well-known German company, Faber, for instance, suffered a similar fate.

But hadn't Paul Tyralla died? What if Little Nann's father *had* deserted the *Kaiser*? I followed up this line of enquiry through the UK's National Archives since it holds details of a request Mr. Tyralla submitted for naturalization in 1924. In fact *Paul 'Amandus' Tyralla* was born just nine months earlier than my great grandfather, in Bernstadt, Silesia in October 1881 – that's about 90km north of my forefather's home and about 35km east of Breslau.

In his application (which to access required invoking the Freedom of Information Act since it was sealed until 2025!), one of his referees appealed that because Paul was of "Polish race, extraction and origin" who had been living "a steady and straightforward life" since he first began visiting the UK in August 1903 as a manufacturer's "Commission Agent and Traveler," he recommended he be granted citizenship. At the time he was single and to back this up produced a Polish certificate of nationality that also declared he was a Roman Catholic.

That certificate had been issued in fact to a *Paweł Tyralla* on 11th June, 1919, just weeks after he exited the PoW camp. But because Germans residing in England remained a threat to the country's security after the war, he quickly sought to affirm his Polish identity in order to secure his residency.

The recently established Polish National Committee offered him that chance. Founded in August 1917, it had campaigned for an independent Poland while creating the Polish Army to assist the Allies. By 1918, the British, Americans and French had gone as far as to recognize it as Poland's legitimate government. In 1919 the committee was dissolved, upon the foundation of the new Kingdom of Poland – 123 years after its partitioning by Prussia, Russia and Austria.

Paweł Tyralla first came to England for "business and pleasure" when he was 21, having lived in 'Poland,' Germany and Switzerland beforehand. His parents, *Simon* and *Augusta*, were "technically German (following land acquisition) but were deceased long ago." He claimed not to have seen his sisters and brother for some 15 years (doesn't that sound familiar)? Before being detained he was the Principal of *Tyralla and Co., Importers and Exporters*. His bank manager and company associates vouched for him in his application and confirmed he had money in the bank and national savings certificates. He spoke and wrote fine English too. His citizenship was granted in August 1924 and was openly published in the *London Gazette* on 5th September, by which time he lived in Islington, north London.

Mr. Tyralla's homeland was allegedly Poland. However, the truth is that his small hometown of Bernstadt remained a part of Lower Silesian Germany until after the Second World War, when it became *Bierutów*. Now he had the freedom to stay, I wonder what the 42 year old did next.

This Paul Tyralla could so easily have been my great grandfather. What if he knew he had a namesake who had made a partly similar journey? What if my great grandfather had moved in to London, instead of Leipzig..? What if later he'd escaped there with his newborn son's mother?



P. A. Tyralla

Sources: the UK National Archives, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_Independence_Day, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_National_Committee_\(1917-1919\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_National_Committee_(1917-1919)), wiki: Bernstadt

Germans of all ages adored films too, especially Nann's, and cinemas endured growing popularity as a distraction from the increasingly difficult living conditions.¹⁴⁷ The Chaplin hero had already arrived, releasing his first movie, *Making a Living*, in February, 1914. Westerns too were popular, as were the comedy series films of 'Ton-Tolini.'

¹⁴⁷ P. Stiasny. *Das Kino und das Krieg. Deutschland 1914-1929*. 2009. Reviewed in JGHS, Vol.29, No.4, Pg. 663.

During 1914 and spring 1915, 'soldier kitsch' films dominated the showings, with titles like: "The Watch on the Rhine" (*Die Wacht am Rhein*) and "The Call of the Fatherland" (*Das Vaterland ruft*). These films reproduced the spirit of 1914 and were shown alongside documentary newsreels (*Wochenschauen*) that cheered German victories and displayed soldiers' bravery in sanitized images from the front. Thus cinema theatres were also popular as a source of information about the war. But as popular interest waned by the autumn of 1915, theatres and music halls returned to the pre-war repertoire of comedies, adventures and love stories.¹⁴⁸

According to Otte, death also became the leitmotif within popular entertainment, especially within circus and variety shows: now almost every performance had to feature the newest thrill: the fight for life. Gradually the trauma of total war not only affected the economic and social situations of all segments of the German population but also fundamentally transformed spectators' tastes and sensibilities. "As the reality of violent death shaped everyday life and transformed inner lives...the nightmares of many Germans resonated in circus and variety shows."¹⁴⁹

8.8: The Growth of the German Film Industry

Before 1914, German film companies only controlled about 15 percent of the domestic market; most films were imported from France, Great Britain and the US. The outbreak of the war and the subsequent boycott of, for example, French films left a noticeable gap in the market, while the Allied blockade invigorated the German film industry.



By 1916, there already existed some 2000 fixed venues in Germany for movie performances and initially film screenings had to be supplemented or even replaced by variety turns. But feature films were recognized as a suitable propaganda medium and in 1917 a process of concentration and partial nationalisation of the film industry began with the founding of *Universum Film AG* or UFA, in part a reaction to the very effective use that the Allied Powers had found for the new medium of cinema for the purpose of propaganda.

Under the aegis of the military, so-called *Vaterland* films were produced, which equalled the Allies' films in the matter of propaganda and disparagement of the enemy. The War Press Office was responsible for feature length films from 1917 like *East Prussia and its Hindenburg*, which aided the latter's popularity in being hailed ultimately as one of Germany's all-time greatest leaders and the single most popular figure in biographical and anecdotal articles. Audiences however did not care to swallow the patriotic medicine without the accompanying sugar of the light-entertainment films which, consequently, UFA also promoted.

By the end of the war, the German film industry was the largest in Europe. Henny Porten and Asta Nielsen (the latter originally from Denmark) were among its first major film stars, while Polish star Pola Negri arrived in Berlin in 1917 and went on to film with Ernst Lubitsch, who produced comedies for UFA. In 1918, Lubitsch convinced UFA to let him create a large-scale film with Negri as the main character. The result, *Die Augen der Mumie Ma* (The Eyes of the Mummy Ma), was a popular success and led to a series of Lubitsch/Negri collaborations, each larger in scale than the previous. Huge international success followed which in turn brought down the American embargo on German films. In fact it launched a demand for German films that briefly threatened to dislodge Hollywood's dominance in the international film market – until the latter responded by buying out key German talent, beginning with Lubitsch and Negri – and not only that which appeared on the silver screen!

Sources: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cinema_of_Germany; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pola_Negri;

Andrew Donson's *Youth in the Fatherless Land. War Pedagogy, Nationalism, and Authority in Germany, 1914–1918*. Harvard University Press, 2010, pg.189.

¹⁴⁸ Andrew Donson. Pg. 116 and 158

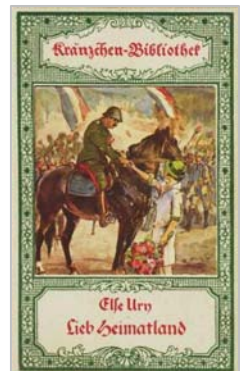
¹⁴⁹ Marlene Otte. *Jewish Identities in German Popular Entertainment, 1890-1933*. 2006. Pg.95.

In terms of entertainment venues, Leipzigers could choose from the *Neues Theater* for high-brow performances and the *Krystallpalast* for opera and variety. For films, old haunts like *Café Bauer* hosted the "*Vaterland-Lichtspiele*" (re-named at the outbreak of the war).¹⁵⁰ Surprisingly, despite the inflation and growing poverty, cinema attendance grew by 50 percent over the course of the war.¹⁵¹ I expect Nannÿ still savoured the city's café society and its racetrack, along with some semblance of high-life through Albert.

While Nannÿ got over her husband's loss, how might Hedwig have related to her sister-in-law in 1916? With sympathy on account of losing Paul I guess, but as Hedwig's own grew estranged and Albert's permanency grew, perhaps she became envious as well. Even if she longed for adult male company, according to Elisabeth Domansky, the state safeguarded men's sexual 'property' at home, which means any sexual activity will have come under close surveillance that will have prevented her from having extra-marital sexual relations.¹⁵²

Amidst the hardship, what popular entertainment was there for children? On the eve of the war, reading had been the most popular leisure activity for youths and was arguably more vibrant than at any other time in history, writes Donson. Books were widely available from public libraries and fairy tales including those of the Grimm brothers were most popular until 'penny dreadfuls' came along. Featuring Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack, they described military adventures and asserted that white Europeans were superior to natives.

Among those books Little Nannÿ likely heard or read, one may count on her mother's favourite, the 1845 classic '*Struwwel Peter*,' whose illustrated and rhymed stories demonstrated the disastrous consequences of youngsters' misbehavior in an exaggerated way. Among the Hinsch boys, Heinz's daughter recalled the popularity of Wilhelm Busch's books, an influential German caricaturist and poet, famed for his satirical picture stories with rhymed texts, besides annual Christmas editions of a boys' newspaper, *Der Gute Kamerad*. For girls, there was *Das Kränzchen* (see inset right).



Lieb Heimatland by Else Ury within *Das Kränzchen*, Vol.28, published 1915/16

After 1914, however, books gradually lost ground to the movies.¹⁵³ Even in 1913, urban school teachers had been taking children to the cinema and filling 500 seat theatres to watch comedies with buffoons or sensationalist dramas about cowboys, criminals, adulterers, alcoholics and the unemployed.¹⁵⁴ Later on, schools in districts without a cinema could apply for funds from the War Ministry to show war films and thanks to the discretion they enjoyed in determining which screened, ran comedies, romances and detective stories alongside those supporting the war. Thus by 1918, film rivaled reading as the most important entertainment medium, particularly for schoolchildren and working youths.¹⁵⁵

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¹⁵⁰ In 1918 it became the "*Universum-Lichtspiele*" according to www.leipzig-lexikon.de/HAUSHOF/c_bauer.htm

¹⁵¹ Donson, pg. 182

¹⁵² Domansky. Pg. 450

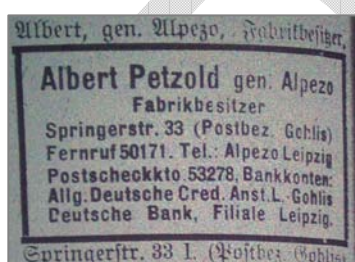
¹⁵³ Andrew Donson, Pg. 48-50

¹⁵⁴ Andrew Donson, Pg. 182

¹⁵⁵ Andrew Donson, Pg. 30

In August 1916, hopes for a quick victory rose when German Chief of Staff, Erich von Falkenhayn was replaced by Field Marshall Paul von Hindenburg along with his deputy, General Erich Ludendorff – a team that had already achieved considerable victory in the east. In due course they became the de facto political leaders.¹⁵⁶ To defeat the enemy in the face of mounting casualties, the Supreme Army Command (*Oberste Heeresleitung* or *OHL*) recognized the only hope for victory lay in breaking out of the war of attrition and decisively engaging the enemy.¹⁵⁷

To do this successfully, Germany would need to diminish the *Entente's* superiority in materiel. The response, the *Hindenburg Program*, stipulated a massive boost in the manufacture of steel, weapons, and munitions by mandating the more efficient use of raw materials and increasing labour productivity (*ibid*). A law on labour mobilization was passed in December, making all males aged 17-60 liable for conscription for work in war-essential industry.¹⁵⁸ The state also reserved the right to close down (or buy up) smaller, less efficient or even idle enterprises, or to starve them of materials and labour. As a result, one third of all artisanal workshops closed and hundreds of thousands drifted towards large-scale enterprise, namely factories.¹⁵⁹



The *Hindenburg Program* appears to have impacted upon Petzold's enterprise, a change which can be seen in the city's *Adreßbuch* a year later¹⁶⁰, since Albert is listed a '*Fabrikbesitzer*' (as opposed to a '*Fabrikant*'). Both terms described factory owners, however, the former represented top managers or executives and constituted Leipzig's elite, according to Sean Dobson.¹⁶¹ This implies Albert was no longer a small-timer and as his portrait suggests, he well looks the part of a company executive.

Owners who were forced to close by the authorities were handsomely compensated. Furthermore, they often obtained high positions in the new amalgamated enterprises which resulted from the closures.¹⁶² Yet despite the apparent 'growth' of Albert's *Fabrik*, the address book entry leaves no further clue as to what his business was and which aspect of war materiel he might have been responsible for.¹⁶³

Moreover, despite disclosing three bank accounts (*Allgemeine Deutsche Creditanstalt*; *Deutsche Bank* and the *Leipzig Postbank*), enquiries vis-à-vis those archives have yielded nothing.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁶ Questions on German History, pg. 199

¹⁵⁷ By now some 800,000 German soldiers had died, with countless more wounded, crippled or psychologically broken. Dobson, Pg. 149.

¹⁵⁸ Friedrich Hinsch will have not been liable, aged 64, but Albert Petzold will.

¹⁵⁹ O&O. Pg. 254, 273. Richard Overly. Economy and State in Germany in the 20th Century.

¹⁶⁰ As noted in footnote 105, the *Adreßbücher* were known to follow reality with delay. This entry extract is from 1918

¹⁶¹ In the pre-war period, this comprised just 5-10 percent of the population, while white collar workers (the group Albert 'left') constituted 10-13 percent of all taxpayers in Leipzig. Sean Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. pg. 26-28.

¹⁶² Sean Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. pg. 163

¹⁶³ No closed/secret lists of company's engaged specifically in producing war materiel exist, acc. to Handke, 8/2/13

¹⁶⁴ According to personal correspondence with Dr. Thoralf Handke of 5th, March, 2012, notwithstanding the fact that two sets of archives held by the *Sächsisches Staatsarchiv* are incomplete (*Allgemeine Deutsche Creditanstalt*: 1940 – 1945; *Deutsche Bank*: 1927-1947), one can only conclude Albert's accounts were no longer open. Records of the former

Sean Dobson, writing in *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*, reminds us that while the state closed down smaller enterprises, those with fewer than ten employees typically fell by just ten percent, while the number of microcompanies with a single owner and no employees actually grew.¹⁶⁵ Conversely that suggests Albert could have been 'promoted' in name alone, rather than actually assuming responsibility for a physically larger *Fabrik*. That in turn implies he'd have had elite acquaintances, e.g. within the war-time administration. Might they even have 'brought' him to Leipzig?

How ever his stature grew, throughout the war, factory owners like Albert continued to be protected by a state which refused to impose an extra income tax or capital levy on them, while at the same time doing little to limit their profits (a 50 percent tax on war profits from 1916 was easily evaded).¹⁶⁶ The resulting shortage of government revenue was exacerbated by a public increasingly unwilling to buy war bonds, thereby 'obliging' the state to borrow more and more from the *Reichsbank*. In effect this meant printing more money which in turn added to an already accelerating inflation rate arising from the shortage of goods.¹⁶⁷

Official prices in Leipzig climbed as much as 150 percent during the course of the war,¹⁶⁸ although that figure overlooks higher black market prices, which pushed the rate well above the German average of 200 percent, suggests Sean Dobson. Soap for instance became so expensive that many people were driven to use substitutes that caused a variety of skin disorders. The high price of clothing led to the wearing of loosely fitting homemade garments and although the price of bread did not outstrip the inflation rate, its quality deteriorated after the authorities decided to save on grain by mixing increasing amounts of filler (*Erstreckungsmittel*) into the dough. Not surprisingly, public anger swelled over the fact that consumers in the surrounding countryside still had access to bread in its unadulterated form.¹⁶⁹



"A soldier on leave's first question:
Have you subscribed to war bonds yet?"
(from a 1916 Postcard) (Source: Gldenmann)

Throughout 1916, isolated demonstrations continued to occur in Saxony on the issue of food shortages, usually with only a few hundred participants at most. When the Saxon ministry of interior received a deputation of Dresden hunger marchers in November, the protestors demanded the more just distribution of food between town and country. However, it was not only the urban-rural divide they complained about. They also demanded a fairer distribution between rich and poor.¹⁷⁰

Leipzig Postbank meanwhile sit with the German Bundespost Postbank (Postbank-Niederlassung Leipzig, Rohrteichstrae 16, 04347 Leipzig). A written request submitted in June 2012 has not been answered.

¹⁶⁵ Sean Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. pg. 163

¹⁶⁶ As a direct producer of war material Albert would no longer have had the right to reduce his workers' wages by almost half. Bergmann. *What Will Become of the Children? A Novel of a German Family* (1932). Pg.16.

¹⁶⁷ Sean Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. pg. 135, 158

¹⁶⁸ According to Gldenmann, by the autumn of 1917 the Leipzig baths had put up their prices 15 percent (over the previous year) and if you didn't bring along your own towels, there was a surcharge of 10-30 pfennigs. Pg.23

¹⁶⁹ Dobson, pg. 158-160

¹⁷⁰ Christophe Nonn, Pg. 311-312

By the time 1916 closed, national authorities had singled out Leipzig as a city in revolutionary mood because of the worsening food shortage, while workers reproached the elites for their “lack of interest in distributing the dwindling supply equitably.” Some large factory owners would respond to workers’ discontent by obtaining food (and sometimes coal and clothing as well) on the black market and then distributing it to employees at or below cost. Although this activity was illegal, owners of large factories could count on the cooperation of the *Kriegsamtstelle* (the local war office). Did Albert do either, I wonder?

Factory owners’ intent was chiefly to retain their workforces rather than ensure an equitable supply of goods. Nevertheless, a state that encourages law breaking, remarks Dobson, toys with its own future. “The failure of elites to manage the war economy” he adds, “damaged their legitimacy and thereby weakened one of the pillars on which their authority rested.”¹⁷¹ The last third of this chapter reflects on Saxony and its elite’s collapse.

From late 1916 until the end of the war, demands for food were increasingly accompanied by calls for peace which citizens believed would mean an end to the allied blockade, renewed food imports and the end of hunger.¹⁷² In December, the German Empire (with the support of its citizens) announced its willingness to negotiate a conditional peace. The offer was rejected by the Allies and in so doing boosted those in Germany who wanted victory at any price and who at the same time had set themselves the goal of preventing any democratic ‘softening’ of the Empire’s internal structure.¹⁷³

The harsh winter months of 1916 and 1917 that followed became known as the notorious *Steckrübenwinter*, where turnips were the only plentiful food. Supplies of dairy, vegetable fats, meat and wheat, the mainstay of the German diet were almost nowhere to be found in the major cities.¹⁷⁴ “Hunger attacked, especially in Leipzig,” writes Dieter Kürschner.¹⁷⁵ “However, when it returned to Germany, it still came as a shock to the population, because the preceding three decades had seen an enormous and unprecedented degree of economic development: food shortages seemed to have banished forever.”¹⁷⁶

An Australian musician stranded in Leipzig describes how desperate the situation had grown by February following a cold snap that began on January 6th.¹⁷⁷

*“Coal has run out. The electric light is cut off in most houses (I have gas, thank Heaven!), the trams are not running, or only in the very early morning, all theatres, schools, the opera, Gewandhaus and concerts and cinematographs are closed – neither potatoes nor turnips are to be had – they were our last resource – there is no fish – and Germany has ceased to trumpet the fact that it can’t be starved out. Added to that, the thermometer outside my kitchen window says 24 deg. Fahrenheit, below zero [i.e. -31°Celsius]. I have never seen that before.”*¹⁷⁸

¹⁷¹ Dobson, pg. 146-7, 153

¹⁷² Christophe Nonn, Pg. 316

¹⁷³ Questions on German History, pg. 198

¹⁷⁴ Andrew Donson, pg. 125

¹⁷⁵ Military history of Gohlis [here](#): by Dr. Dieter Kurschner

¹⁷⁶ O&O. Baten, pg. 402-3.

¹⁷⁷ *Schöner Bayerischer Wald*, Issue 108, 1996 referenced [here](#).

¹⁷⁸ Sean Dobson, pg. 161

From the beginning of that year, a massive campaign was launched to encourage women to work, which saw female labour mobilized for the war economy too. Many married women took up jobs in industry, thanks to high wages for unskilled and semi-skilled labour, while many middle-class women re-engaged in a range of voluntary and social work.¹⁷⁹

With Nannö Törralla obliged to contribute, I suspect she went on Albert's books, albeit on paper alone (she might even conceivably have been on them since June 1915 in order to claim *Kriegsfamilienunterstützung*)! At the same time, I wonder what *Tante Hedy* did? Was there still a tobacco trading post to manage or was she now on the books of her parents' bakery (who by that time had given up their store in *Salzgäßchen* to focus on that based at *Kleine Fleischergasse* a few streets away)?

Within elementary schools, illegal truancy skyrocketed during the frigid winter, with many girls forced to stay at home as their desperate mothers worked or searched for food. Schools closed for weeks at a time and if the kids were not on the streets or at home, they were to be found in youth centres (Nannö included I expect).¹⁸⁰

For those that made it into school, enervated by hunger, fear, traumatized family members, extra work burdens at home, and long searches for food, they were seen to be distracted, oversensitive, sluggish and absent-minded.¹⁸¹ Theo it turns out was no exception. Academic performance plummeted, prompting Leipzig's municipal school board as early as summer 1916 to order teachers to return to prewar lesson plans. This involved forsaking the newfound liberty to innovate, especially in Leipzig where its teachers were leaders in the German pedagogical reform movement. Needless to say, its teachers' association denounced the proposal.¹⁸²

War pedagogy stayed its earlier course, casting youngsters' hardships in patriotic terms, glorifying its tribulations as exemplary of the German people's "joy in sacrificing." Toleration of war misery built character, ensured victory and preserved national unity and greatness, while children like the Törrallas who endured the absence of their fathers were deemed 'heroes.' For a donation to a war welfare fund, teachers let pupils drive nails into doors as a mark of their patriotism.¹⁸³

Little Nannö's siblings fared poorly at best while they spent those desperate months in the 'care' of their grandparents.¹⁸⁴ Instead of bringing love and relief,¹⁸⁵ their time as orphans only brought hardship, and it's thanks to *Wenigmachern's* locals that we know this. In late January 1917, for instance, Hermann Schmidt, who lived opposite the Hinsch's, reported Theo "drained the catbowl at *Frau Glennig's* house and licked his fingers from hunger. Frozen to the bone, he was...shown mercy by those in the *Püchauer Straße* poorhouse (along the main road between Machern and Püchau to the north), whose residents ensured he didn't starve to death from begging."

¹⁷⁹ Lisa Pine in Ogilvie and Overy. Pg. 362-3.

¹⁸⁰ Andrew Donson, Pg. 133

¹⁸¹ Andrew Donson, Pg. 132

¹⁸² Andrew Donson, Pg. 186

¹⁸³ Andrew Donson, Pg. 187-189

¹⁸⁴ Paul Törralla's *Nachlass*Akte: 8 NReg. 1494/16 held at the *Sächsisches Staatsarchiv*.

¹⁸⁵ Notes T.A. Kohut in *A German Generation*, Pg. 22; „As a result of the Allied blockade and the 'turnip winter' children were sent to live with their relatives in the countryside where food was more plentiful." Nevertheless, writes his interviewee: "Even at age six I had to help with the farmwork."

Disturbed by what he had witnessed, in early February *Herr Schmidt*, (who was also the local milk dealer), visited Theo's mother and expressed his concerns. In her view, he "made quite a scene" yet his allegations garnered no sympathy: "My kids might be great eaters, however, they have no need to go begging or eating out of cat bowls!" she retorted.

As many as five years later, Machern's *Pastor Rüling* still lucidly recalled one scene: "During the war Theodor came to [my wife] once saying he does not get enough to eat and that he was starving." He confesses; "The boy was indeed nothing but skin and bone. So she made him a pot of soup and in no time at all it was gone."

Not convinced such incidents wouldn't repeat, Herr Schmidt reported his perceived mistreatment of the Tŷrallas to the *Königlichen Amtsgerichts Leipzig* (the Royal Court of Leipzig), calling for an investigation into their treatment, possible abuse and poor diet, while adding somewhat scornfully that their mother lived at the *Chausseehaus Restaurant* in Gohlis (its address was in fact identical to hers bar the storey). For good measure he listed numerous neighbours ready to serve as witnesses.¹⁸⁶

In his subsequent statement, *Werkmeister* (factory foreman), Max Fleck (who owned land in *WenigMachern*) noted seven and a half year old Theo to have been "poorly dressed in thin *Kniehosen* and light shoes,¹⁸⁷" adding that "in view of his frailty, age and status as a first grader, his care and treatment was unacceptable. Every Sunday, as long as the weather is not too bad, Theo is expected to walk to Dögnitz, about an hour away, to fetch two four-litre jugs of milk (and therefore cart a load of at least 8 lbs)."

He continues; "Too much is expected of the boy. From time to time in the evenings" for instance "he goes with a handcart to Wurzen train station [about 8km away] to pick up his grandmother upon her return from Leipzig. He had to make the journey twice when she missed the 1945 train, and then waited for her until 2115. I have also often seen him with her and the cart around midnight returning from Nepperwitz or Dögnitz" (both about an hour's distance from Machern).

In regards to five year old Margot, Herr Fleck adds he "can not say anything" because "the children are kept fully enclosed by the grandparents in the house and ~~beaten~~ [*sic!*] it is forbidden to talk to anyone, so they are rarely seen." He adds: "The Hinsch's live their lives entirely cut off from their neighbours." He surmises they, "through their unfriendly nature, have made real enemies locally."

The Royal Court of Leipzig reacted by summoning Frau Tŷralla in early February over Herr Schmidt's remarks. It took time to reach her since she was not found "at the known residence of the fallen soldier Paul Tŷralla." Nevertheless, two weeks later she turned up in court and unequivocally refuted Herr Schmidt's claims, stating her children were "well supplied with clothes, [that] they sleep in heated bedrooms ... and get enough to eat, of course, within the restrictions imposed by the war." To underline this, she adds that she visits them, "sometimes weekly" and "unexpectedly" and has never found anything untoward.

¹⁸⁶ Frau Hennig and Frau Fedieser in Machern; besides Frau Krebs, Frau Hoeppner, Herr Fleck, his wife & daughter.

¹⁸⁷ See the photo on pg. 213 for instance, in which the lad pictured sounds a far cry from that described above.

"The whole incident is an act of revenge by Mr. Schmidt, who, like the rest of Machern's inhabitants speak badly of my parents." Attributing this to their reserved nature she recognises they don't interact with the locals.¹⁸⁸ As a result "my children do not mix with the local children" and therefore "are not spoiled." She acknowledges Theo's frozen hands, but adds; "Of frozen feet I am not aware."

While the Royal Court of Leipzig investigated the young Tŷrallas' deprivations and the mother's part in that, a heavy blizzard struck Leipzig on February 8th. It caused untold damage, including the collapse of the airship hangars at Mockau where in the subsequent explosion the two *Schütte-Lanz* airships housed there were destroyed.¹⁸⁹ That same day, Theo was discovered by Max Fleck's daughter-in-law sobbing in a ditch along the road to Dögnitz. She saw him and enquired after his well-being, to which he replied: "I'm freezing and should freeze to death" ("or something like that," added Fleck).

Ten days later it was Herr Fleck's turn to come across Theo on his Sunday milk run. Theo made the journey twice since he'd forgotten to pick up the *Buttermarke*¹⁹⁰ Fleck deducing Theo spent a good four hours on foot that cold winter's day. By way of an improvement, he noted his "clothing was a bit better than before –probably a consequence of Schmidt's intervention."

Schmidt was not done with the Hinschs, however. In what otherwise appears to have been a matter of minor concern, a few days earlier Friedrich had been spotted by Schmidt's 17 year old daughter, Elsa, and her 18 year old neighbour, Lina Krebs hunting. Having heard shots and discovering a wounded hare near their garden, Herr Schmidt, submitted a second written complaint in as many weeks, this one to the *Königlichen Amtsgericht Wurzen* (Royal Court of Wurzen).

In earlier pages it was noted that anger swelled among city dwellers owing to the unfair distribution of food from the country as well as that between rich and poor. However, in this instance conflicts arose between country folk, who should themselves have been relatively well off, given Machern's wealth. The inclement weather and the war's toll might have aggravated tempers, but I suspect this was a case of disgruntled Saxons voicing their resentment towards heartless Prussians.

Although in the first instance concern was raised with regards to the young Tŷrallas, the relative triviality¹⁹¹ of the second incident demonstrates real animosity. Furthermore, Nannŷ Tŷralla's offhand manner further riled Macherners, especially since at the time she was considered to be 'living it up' at the *Chausseehaus*, instead of taking greater care of her youngsters' well-being (NB: in her reply to the *Königlichen Amtsgerichts Leipzig*, she even refers to her late husband's 76 year old mother in Radstein, as if she ought to be shouldering greater responsibility alongside her parents). Obviously Macherners wanted her to more respectably fulfill her role as a mother, a widowed one at that.

¹⁸⁸ T. A. Kohut's interviewee in *A German Generation* considers his bourgeois family was „a closed circle, a bit focused on itself." Pg.21.

¹⁸⁹ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Schütte-Lanz_airships and de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flughafen_Leipzig-Mockau

¹⁹⁰ NB: Leipzig rationed butter in February, 1915 and by the end of 1916 it was heavily reliant on substitutes.

¹⁹¹ NB: Catching free crayfish or trout was forbidden too, notes T.A. Kohut in *A German Generation*. Pg. 22

I suppose The Hinsch's having come by the villa fortuitously may have added to their neighbours' chagrin while their insistence on sending Theo to Dögnitz for milk every week meant Herr Schmidt conceivably lost income. Furthermore, with Marie and Nannÿ making regular trips to and from Leipzig, Nepperwitz and Dögnitz, food was obviously exchanging hands for a good price while the youngsters (read: 'cheap labour'), remained poorly fed and for all intents and purposes, imprisoned.

How did the authorities eventually react? On March 4th, Dögnitz's parish councillor wrote within the case file that *Herr Schmidt's* observations were probably exaggerated, on account of prolonged hostilities between the families, even if he was found during interview to be "a person of great integrity." While he recognised Theo and Margot were "somewhat retarded for their age," he had no reason to believe they were starved or that their clothing and footwear was inadequate. He also recorded that Theo's finger was apparently broken "due to the severe cold." The councillor's underwhelming reaction may at least have saved Theo long walks to Dögnitz after he recorded they "won't happen again since he [Theo] doesn't want to counter Frau Hinsch."

While the councillor was clearly protecting the Hinsch's, the Royal Court of Leipzig took a stricter view, ten days later ordering the Tÿrallas' "custody be refrained from until further notice." With the pair's return to their mother ordered, it is curious that the urban administration forced the hand of a rural town councilor and saw to it that they were returned to a city where food was already in short supply, instead of simply putting the Hinsch's (and Frau Tÿralla) under closer observation. That appears to affirm the Hinsch's were 'playing' the black market and while the rural authority was willing to turn two blind eyes toward the family, the city officials were at least prepared to meet the neighbours' concerns 'halfway,' without restricting the family outright from city smuggling.

Perhaps unnerved by the court of Leipzig's intervention regarding the Tÿralla kids' guardianship, at the end of March the Royal Court of Wurzen sentenced Friedrich Hinsch to four days imprisonment for poaching and ordered him to pay a fine of 40 Marks. Now it seems Herr Schmidt's (daughter's) evidence was being taken seriously, with the Hinsch's subsequent appeal to the state Court (*Königlichen Sächsisches Landgerichts Leipzig*) rejected. Hostilities between the neighbours hardly subsided in subsequent years, but neither did the Hinsch's nor Nannÿ's moot benevolence toward the children.

The day before Herr Hinsch was due in court over the mistreatment of the youngsters, Nannÿ filed a petition to remarry. Whether the two incidents are connected is unclear, however, her intent was never fulfilled. According to city officials Albert got cold feet upon learning Nannÿ was a mother of three,¹⁹² while she denied the paperwork ever came through. Had they wed, it might have brought the family stability, but instead the kids were rather left in limbo as regards the nature of the relationship between their mother and their mysterious lodger.

¹⁹² It sounds almost inconceivable that Frau Tÿralla could have 'hidden' Theo and Margot until August 1917, or the court's verdict that the children should return to their mother was the first time he learned of them. As to the petition, had she ever really intended to marry? As a single mother and war widow, for the time being she was probably financially better off on a day-to-day basis next to Albert than married to him.

Even after the 'Turnip Winter,' shortages continued to create hardships of different kinds for the average person. Discontent ran especially high when the authorities announced a cut in the bread ration in April 1917. During the summer months, the courtyard and garden of Leipzig's *Volkshaus* – the organisational centre of the city's workers' union movement and a symbol of social democracy¹⁹³ – became a vegetable market.¹⁹⁴

Leipzigers meanwhile sought relief in substituting *Hülsenfrüchte* (the legume pea) with *Wicken* (vetches – a flowering plant and pulse used today as forage for ruminant animals) and adding *Peluschken* or *Ackererbse*, the snow or sugar snap pea, to their diet.¹⁹⁵ Hundreds of thousands of youngsters helped out with that year's harvest, even when a good many had no shoes.¹⁹⁶

Not long before, in April, public spirit momentarily lifted with hope of victory following the commencement of unrestricted submarine warfare in February 1917 – at least until the USA entered the war in April.¹⁹⁷ Conversely inspired by the success of the *Bolshevik* workers' revolution in Russia their German counterparts thus set about transforming their own political system. Till that point few workers had walked off the job during the first two years of the war but in April a great anti-war strike broke out. According to Martina Güldemann, it was the biggest so far and involved 30,000 Leipzigers.¹⁹⁸

Police in the leading two Saxon cities reported youths as being at the vanguard of the anti-war movement, but Dobson adds one third of the protesters in Leipzig were women, many of whom worked in the city's textile industry.¹⁹⁹ By its third day, the strike had spread to all trades involved in war production. The demands put forward in Leipzig were more political in nature than those of other cities' movements: an end to the war, political armistice and emancipation.²⁰⁰

Still the military authorities in Leipzig were unnerved by the "growing mistrust of the Kaiser" and by May demanded teachers deliver patriotic lectures.²⁰¹ Despite *Kaiser Wilhelm* offering the prospect of a reform of Prussia's three-class electoral system,²⁰² the Catholic Center Party and the Progressive People's Party joined the socialists in passing a resolution calling on all belligerents to fashion a peace of understanding without annexations or reparations.²⁰³ In response, the *Reichstag* passed the famous 'Peace Resolution' on July 19th – a plea that was subsequently ignored by its High Command and the Allied Powers.²⁰⁴

¹⁹³ Dobson, pg. 287

¹⁹⁴ All Martina Güldemann in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert in LEIPZIG*. 1999. Pg. 23

¹⁹⁵ de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hülsenfrucht; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vicia and de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erbse

¹⁹⁶ Andrew Donson, Pg. 110, 144

¹⁹⁷ Dobson, pg. 167

¹⁹⁸ Martina Güldemann in *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert in LEIPZIG*. 1999. Pg.23, although Dobson claims there were rather 10,000 strikers. See pg. 145 and 167.

¹⁹⁹ Dobson, pg. 168

²⁰⁰ Dobson, pg. 169

²⁰¹ Donson, pg. 184.

²⁰² Questions on German History, pg. 199

²⁰³ Dobson. Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920 pg. 149

²⁰⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reichstag_Peace_Resolution

In early August, Friedrich Geyer, leader of the socialist youth groups in Leipzig and a *Leipziger Volkszeitung* reporter took to the stage and delivered an anti-war speech before a crowd of 5,000 at the city's *Zoologischer Garten* on August 2nd. At its end, the crowd chanted in unison: "We want bread, we want freedom, we want peace."

Anti-war demonstrations and wildcat walkouts in pursuit of 'cost of living allowances' continued to sweep through Leipzig until the end of 1917.²⁰⁵ Food riots were accompanied by ever more crimes against property and the police admitted that compared to the first two years of the war, "respect for law and authority had dwindled to an alarming degree."²⁰⁶ "Great bitterness stems from the rumours that other federal states do not suffer from the same food shortage as does Saxony," wrote *Kriegsamt* officers there in June.²⁰⁷ Yet all the while, soldiers were dying by the hundreds of thousands and returning home wounded and traumatized by the millions.²⁰⁸

That summer Fritz Hinsch returned home too. Soldiers typically returned on furloughs for convalescence, garrison duty or work in factories, and in July he picked up his residency permit for *Beethovenstraße*. The changes institutionalised by the 1916 *Hindenburg Program* will have not helped his business and I wonder whether he in his heart was beginning to realise 'something had to give' as the hope of victory slipped away.

Was he able to see that as long as the elites turned a blind eye toward civilian strife and its back on dialogue, the flames of disquiet would only be fanned? Or was he still holding out for a return to those days of the old world? Perhaps he made the journey out to Machern for a bit of peace and quiet, to momentarily 'reset the clock' and exchange words with his war veteran father. There he was sure to find sympathy. How different the world of 1917 was to that of 1870-1871!

²⁰⁵ During August, strikers within the construction and woodworking trades demanded cost of living allowances (COLAs). On 15 August, about 2,000 workers from a variety of trades abandoned their workplaces and met at the *Volkshaus* to decide how to pressure the authorities to end the war. Posters went up for strikes in September 1917 and on 5 October, a largely female workforce at a printing plant struck for a COLA. At the end of the month there was another antiwar demonstration in Leipzig, attended by several thousand, at which the Kaiser was repeatedly disparaged. The police did not dare break it up. In November, wildcat strikes in a variety of trades again swept across the city. Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920* pg. 171

²⁰⁶ Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920* pg. 167

²⁰⁷ Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920* pg. 170

²⁰⁸ Donson, pg. 126

Nevertheless, many in the middle-class still placed their hopes in the Fatherland Party, with its platform of a victorious peace with territorial gains. Middle-class secondary school boys too remained firm supporters of this policy. Ideologically opposed to the strikes and the mass opposition to the government, they went on to become more politically radicalized than most other social groups.²⁰⁹

While Fritz may have stoked such views among his kids, he probably didn't go as far as elaborating what he saw on the battlefield, something I was particularly keen to find out. According to third son Heinz's daughter, one's traumatic experiences were simply not talked about, neither then nor afterwards, and least of all with children.²¹⁰ According to Donson, the war practically rendered millions of fathers entirely 'absent.'²¹¹

Russia's military collapse in September brought a temporary lift in the public's mood.²¹² Food supply too improved with the harvest, at least until shortages re-appeared in December (though with less severity than the year before).²¹³ But from 1915, the absence of bread and the growing scarcity of meat, fats and dairy had led Germans to suspect the health of schoolchildren was suffering but by the autumn of 1917, the state authorities could no longer deny the alarming problem.²¹⁴

A study in Munich of 800 teenagers and schoolchildren in 1913, 1916 and 1917 concluded they were now on average 2-3 centimetres shorter and 4-8 lbs lighter than before the war. Even those whose weights were normal had become more susceptible to disease and for the first time in Germany's modern history, its population's deaths exceeded births.²¹⁵

By 1918, the value of government rations was just 1,280 calories, half of the pre-war diet and well below the 1,600 calorie threshold that aid organizations today say is the bare minimum to avoid dying from starvation.²¹⁶ Regular physical check-ups were administered for children at school and if it was deemed necessary, they could be temporarily removed from their families and sent to the countryside to improve their health.²¹⁷

²⁰⁹ Donson. Pg. 192/3

²¹⁰ Heinz father-in-law served on the frontline but returned particularly traumatized. Says T.A. Kohut's interviewee in *A German Generation*; "My father came home on leave a few times. He would talk about the war a bit, but I can't remember what he said" Pg. 45.

²¹¹ Donson, Pg. 137

²¹² Dobson, Pg. 171

²¹³ Donson, pg. 125

²¹⁴ Donson, pg. 127

²¹⁵ From 1915-18, famine and cold killed an estimated 700,000 German civilians, mostly from susceptibility to disease. Donson, pg. 125

²¹⁶ Donson, pg. 125-6

²¹⁷ E.Domansky, Pg. 451



Above:
Springerstraße 33,
the Tŷrallas' new home from 1917

Below:
Bad Sachsa: A nationally recognized health resort
since the mid nineteenth century



In early October 1917, Albert Petzold, Nannŷ Tŷralla and her brood moved to *Springerstraŷe* 33 (pictured left and shown as '3' on the map on pg. 191).²¹⁸ No more than a few hundred metres from their old flat, it highlights the importance of the location to Albert, who despite his shock earlier that summer, went on to spend the next eight years with Nannŷ here. Clearly a larger apartment was necessary to accommodate the returning Tŷralla kids (who themselves had to quickly adapt to the presence of a complete stranger in place of their father), while a month earlier Little Nannŷ should have started *Realschule* alongside Theo and Margot kicking off the academic year in new schools too. The fact that the *Schiller Realgymnasium* (built in 1908) lay on her doorstep suggests this could well have been my grandmother's next educational stop.²¹⁹ Theo, almost nine, however, wasn't so fortunate when it came to settling back in. Some time in 1918 he was packed off to *Bad Sachsa*, for what was probably some form of 'convalescence.'²²⁰

The small town of almost 8,000 inhabitants today is situated on the southern flanks of the Harz mountains (*Sŷdharz*) in Prussia's Province of Saxony. It lies about 130km northwest of Leipzig (see '4' on the map on pg. 201).²²¹ Querfurt, the home of his great grandmother, great aunts, uncles and second cousins (including perhaps Oskar Lieberoth, last 'sighted' in Chapter III), lay at the mid-way point from Leipzig.

Bad Sachsa had been a nationally recognized health resort since the mid nineteenth century (the word *Bad* or spa was added to its name in 1905). It hosted a children's convalescent home from 1935 for many decades while two nature reserves nearby offered recreation. When Theo sent his elder sister the picture (opposite), he wrote the following on the back:

"Theo to his dear sister. A reminder. Bad Sachsa in Sŷdharz."

The text was simply dated '1918.'

²¹⁸ According to Dobson (pg. 186-7) Leipzigers who were not drafted usually occupied the same apartments for the length of the conflict. Odd then that the Tŷrallas moved not once but twice!

²¹⁹ It's remotely possible the move was connected with a book trader and music publisher called *Carl Linnemann*, whose business premises lay nearby. He may well have been an acquaintance of Nannŷ's parents, since his villa in *Wenigmachern* lay 2km from the Hinschs and adjacent to the estate of the tobacconist, *Horst Schoettler* (see Ch.V). A company known today as *Kistner & Siegel, Leipzig* lies at the present location. It is managed by *Christel Linnemann*.

²²⁰ *Stadtbibliothek*: 4/1/13: Antje/Uwe Weick: hauptamt@bad-sachsa.de. Was there *Kinderlandverschickung* & harvest?

²²¹ http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bad_Sachsa

Because we know the photo's origins are from around 1915 (see pg.180) we can make several assumptions: first, a more recent photograph was not available (money being in short supply for portrait making I suppose); second (based on the reports from Machern a year earlier) Theo probably looked nowhere near as well in 1918 as he did back then, and third; Theo was physically separated from one – if not both – sisters.



“Theo seiner liebe Schwester.
Zur Erinnerung.
Bad Sachsa in Südharz. 1918.”

Is it possible Theo contracted influenza during the harsh winter of 1917-18? It wouldn't be surprising, while the shortage of coal left apartments cold and little incentive to stay indoors that year. After school, reports Dobson, there was also no place for children to go as sports centres (*Turnhallen*) were often commandeered by the military. Survival necessitated burning up extra calories, while lung diseases and influenza thrived (the latter an epidemic in Leipzig in 1918), contributing to a civilian death rate that was 51 percent higher that year than it had been in 1913.²²²

How did Uncle Albert's business fit in this landscape of mounting tension? By January 1918 there was tacit opposition among millions to the government and the war. Industrial workers across the country began organising the largest strikes to date, demanding democratic reforms such as universal suffrage and peace without annexations.²²³ Amidst this threat, Leipzig's military authorities (who typically favoured factory owners over workers, notes Sean Dobson) instructed all its deputy commanders to suppress strikes in preparation for the *Ludendorff* offensives, the final push on the western front, planned for the spring. In anticipation of a rail worker strike, for instance, military units were kept in reserve and instructed to use live ammunition on their own citizens if necessary.²²⁴

There were very few strikers in Saxony, however.²²⁵ Just 1,000 workers (mostly women) went on strike at the end of January at the *Deutschen Flugzeugwerke* in *Leipzig Lindenthal* (northwest of Gohlis) and were joined by another 4,000 or so across the city, reflecting the determination of the military authorities to suppress anything that might have disrupted production for the final offensive.²²⁶

How key was Albert's enterprise to that final offensive? In spring 1918 it went 'public,' when his name

Petzold, Albert, Leipzig, Springerstr. 33, Fabrikation von Kraft-extrakt, Suppenwürze, Brotaufstrich. Postscheckkonto: Leipzig Nr. 53278. Fernspr. Nr. 50171. Telegr.-Adr.: „Alpezo“. — Meßstand: ZeiBighaus, Neumarkt 18, III. Stock, Std. 252/260.

appeared among firms participating in the *Fruhjars-Muster-Messe Leipzig*.²²⁷ His entry reveals his *Fabrik* produced *Kraftextrakt* (cooking supplements), *Suppenwürze*

²²² The wartime rate in Leipzig was 37% higher than that in the *Reich* as a whole. Typically it only claimed a handful of victims per month throughout most of the war. Yet in July 1918 it levied a toll of 84 Leipzigers. Dobson pg. 160

²²³ Donson, Pg.194

²²⁴ Sean Dobson. *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910-1920*. pg. 155-6

²²⁵ Nonn, pg. 315

²²⁶ Dobson, pg.166.

²²⁷ *Leipziger Messadressbuch*. Spring 1921. Filed under *Firmenliste*. See Pg. 129

(soup seasoning) and *Brotaufstrich* (sweet and savoury spreads). A well circulated anecdote within our family that Albert was a sausage and pâté producer finally bore fruit – so to speak! Recalling his storefront in downtown Bernburg (where salt and sugar were among the city's four 'white powders'), it would appear Albert was a *Delikatessen* of sorts.²²⁸

Given the date of his arrival in Leipzig, his residence close to the military hub on the north side of town, and his title's evolution over the course of the war, he may well have supplied the kitchens that 'nourished' the soldiers at Saxony's military *Kaserne* and Mockau's military establishments. But if so, where was his factory (see footnote 127), and more curiously, why did he only publicly promote his enterprise from 1918? Martina Güldemann notes the city's trade fairs grew in size and popularity during the war, and assuming Albert had myriad profit to invest, those fairs ultimately held appeal.²²⁹

There were grounds for optimism too. With Germany now occupying huge swathes to the east and with the third of Ludendorff's great offensives crashing the five French defense lines and breaking the stalemate on the Western Front to reach a point only 37 miles from Paris, there was every good reason to hold out for a victory that would bring annexations and reparations.²³⁰ Hindenburg had even promised the *Kaiser* he would capture the French capital by April 1st.

Military success led to the near disappearance of strikes, for even the most intransigent pacifist had no desire to undercut the men at the front.²³¹ But then the offensives stalled at the small French town called *Château-Thierry* in July, thanks to two fledgling regiments of the US Marines. Strikes and food riots returned to Leipzig and at the same time, bands of hungry city dwellers began roving the countryside, especially on weekends, in search of food, sometimes forcing farmers to part with it for a 'just price.'²³²

The military authorities intervened to protect them during the final months of the war, posting nine hundred troops across rural western Saxony. They also helped in obtaining raw materials, while turning a blind eye to farmers' black market dealings. Once again, notes Dobson, the imperial state demonstrated its inability to implement policies detrimental to the interests of elites and neither to support those most in need.²³³

As two million fresh American troops poured into France, the Allied counter-offensive began. The German army suffered its 'black day' on August 8th, 1918 when, supported by a new weapon called the tank, the Allies broke through its defences at Amiens. Germany's retreat to its defensive positions along the so-called 'Siegfried line' (*Westwall*) of defensive forts and tank defenses in northern France began.²³⁴

²²⁸ A German loanword in English, possibly derived from *essen* (English: to eat), *delikat* meaning "giving pleasure, delightful, pleasing." See: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delikatessen>

²²⁹ Güldemann. *Das war das 20. Jahrhundert in LEIPZIG*. 1999. Pg. 20-4& C. Foerster. *Leben in Leipzig, 1900-1970*. Pg. 41.

²³⁰ Donson. Pg. 192/3

²³¹ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972, pg. 17

²³² Dobson, Pg. 172

²³³ Dobson, Pg. 153

²³⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siegfried_Line

Hopes of victory in the west had long been replaced by fears of a complete military collapse,²³⁵ something which for many male youths was almost unreal. Yet alongside the worsening situation on the front, the collection drives and voluntary labour persevered through the summer and autumn of 1918,²³⁶ with elementary school children, Margot, now six, and Heinz, eight, perhaps helping out in collecting recyclables and working in agriculture until the end of the war.²³⁷

Under the onslaught of the Allied counteroffensive, Germany's western front began its final stage of collapse in late September. It had run out of troops to sacrifice, and Ludendorff snapped. Its own alliance collapsed and with it, its supply of oil through Romania. Then the demands for democracy came to predominate among the strikers and rioters.²³⁸

On September 28th, Ludendorff raged around his office, cursing the Kaiser and the politicians back in Berlin. The next day, the two commanders summoned the Kaiser and his chief ministers to military headquarters to inform them the war was lost and that an armistice must be signed immediately. The Kaiser assented and the next day announced his intention to form a government responsible to parliament.²³⁹ In October the new chancellor, Prince Max von Baden took a decisive (but all too late) step towards the creation of a truly parliamentary system of government.²⁴⁰

The *Burgfrieden* that was agreed in 1914 remained essentially intact – until now. Like other Germans, Saxons “stuck it out,” postponing serious domestic quarreling for the future as long as there remained some hope of winning the war.²⁴¹ But in the final days of October, the Kaiser was openly and publicly castigated in front of large crowds in Leipzig. The old order was well and truly crumbling²⁴² and at many public gatherings “the talk was openly of revolution.”²⁴³ Although the elites were losing their nerve in the face of the popular and social democrats' challenge, they still could not bring themselves to believe that the old regime was dying. Yet the pace of change during these days left the town fathers of Leipzig equally dumbfounded.²⁴⁴

Adding to public concern was the fact that influenza and lung diseases returned to the city with greater ferocity than before, killing 651 in October, 377 in November and 109 in December.²⁴⁵ The scarcity of food and the resulting influenza epidemic created fertile ground for a coup: any change was a welcome alternative to this desperate situation.²⁴⁶ That the epidemic reached its peak in the autumn added yet another apocalyptic note to the regime's final days, notes Dobson.²⁴⁷

²³⁵ Questions on German History, pg. 197

²³⁶ Donson, pg. 191

²³⁷ Donson, pg. 195

²³⁸ Dobson, pg. 174

²³⁹ Dobson, pg. 174

²⁴⁰ Questions on German History, pg. 198-199.

²⁴¹ Christophe Nonn, pg. 317

²⁴² Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972, pg. 17 and 19

²⁴³ Dobson, pg.175

²⁴⁴ Dobson, pg.176

²⁴⁵ Dobson, pg.160

²⁴⁶ Nonn, pg. 318/9

²⁴⁷ Dobson, pg.160

On October 29th, Admiral *Franz von Hipper* passed an order to break the Allied blockade of the Jutland peninsula. His men, refusing to set sail on the “death ride,” quenched the fires in the boiler rooms of the *Helgoland* and *Thüringen* by turning hoses on them. The mutinous sailors started singing revolutionary songs, then raised the red flag of revolt over their idled ships. They then marched into Kiel – near Flensburg, that city where Friedrich Hinsch had once done his military service – and seized control of the city.²⁴⁸

By November 3rd they controlled the northern ports and demanded Germany be transformed into a democratic republic. Over the following days, their emissaries converted to revolution workers and soldiers in ever more big cities across Germany. Revolutionary sailors had not quite reached Leipzig when, on the morning of November 8th, about three hundred soldiers marooned in the city’s train station found themselves in highly irritated mood. Ordered to the front to fight in a war now lost, they could find no food to still the gnawing hunger while they waited for a connection already several hours late. The men resolved to take action and under a hastily fashioned red flag, formed a column and marched off towards Leipzig’s *Volkshaus*, seemingly without a specific plan of action.²⁴⁹

They arrived at about 1pm and hoisted their flag. Quickly the unrest spread to the barracks in the north of the city close to Gohlis and by 1600, revolutionary soldiers had occupied the post office, the train station and invaded the central police station, liberating the political prisoners. Banners with a big red eight (the call for the eight hour day) and pictures of *Karl Liebknecht* and *August Bebel* (socialist visionaries) bobbed on an ocean of red flags, red clothes and the red paper flowers worn by many female strikers.²⁵⁰

As news of the revolution spread, the city centre filled with thousands of Leipzigers, the vast majority of them workers (and among these a high percentage of women and teenagers). Smiling and laughing, crowds of workers and soldiers destroyed symbols of the old regime, such as the coat of arms of the *Hohenzollerns* and *Wettiner* (the Saxon king) displayed on shops that delivered to the imperial and royal courts, respectively. The National Liberal newspaper *Leipziger Tagesblatt* urged “female readers to stay indoors since nothing prevented drunken soldiers from molesting them,” and although the police were nowhere to be seen, neither violence against persons nor serious damage to property occurred.

News of the revolution sparked rebellion in Saxony’s other big cities, Dresden and Chemnitz, as well as a host of smaller towns and by the following day, King Frederick August II fled with his family to Silesia.²⁵¹

²⁴⁸ Otto Friedrich. *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972, pg. 20

²⁴⁹ Dobson, pg. 178

²⁵⁰ Leipzigers typically worked 63hr/6-day weeks during the war, up from 56 at its outbreak. Dobson, pg. 159, 181

²⁵¹ Dobson, pg. 180-1

With its losses becoming unstemmable and following revolution in Berlin, on November 9th Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated. The Hohenzollerns had fallen, thus ending the dynasty's five-century rule.²⁵² Germany became a republic with social democrat leader, Friedrich Ebert as its chancellor. With that the *Vaterland* known as the Second *Reich* came to an end. Throughout November 10th, the streets and squares of Leipzig remained full of jubilant crowds. On November 11th, Germany capitulated and on November 13th, the King of Saxony followed the Kaiser into abdication.



Crowds on Leipzig's Augustusplatz celebrate change on Nov. 10th, 1918.
(Source: Bundesarchiv)

The old political relationship between workers and *Burger* in Leipzig had come to an end.²⁵³ According to Sean Dobson, the revolution represented the culmination of increasingly bitter protests against the authoritarian state and its bias against the workers.²⁵⁴ The *Burgfrieden* had finally collapsed.

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What were some of the consequences of the war?

The army had conscripted some 13 million Germans including four to six million fathers.²⁵⁵ The bid for *Siegfrieden* or a victorious peace in the second half of 1917 had seen the death toll rise to 1.7 million of its soldiers, equalling a mortality rate of 2.63 for every hundred citizens. In Leipzig, the corresponding numbers were 17,263 total dead and 2.78 per hundred citizens.²⁵⁶ In Paul Tŷralla's home district (*Kreis Neustadt*), of 1600 soldiers sent to the front, no more than 500 returned.²⁵⁷ In addition, more than four million were wounded,²⁵⁸ while on the home front, a high estimate is that 700,000 German civilians died from the resulting food shortages.²⁵⁹

Germany's defeat left the state riddled with debt – in excess of 150 billion marks.²⁶⁰ Because public enthusiasm for war loans had waned in 1917 the state had resorted to using short-term floating debt, intending to pay this off through financial reparations imposed on the defeated enemy. Its loss, however, meant there were no financial rewards. Worse, it would be obliged to pay its own indemnities, while its citizens would receive little return on the war bonds they had blindly invested in.

²⁵² The *Hohenzollerns* fled via train to the neutral Netherlands, later purchasing a country house in the municipality of Doorn, a small town near Utrecht, where he lived until he died, aged 82 in June 1941, having also learnt the Dutch language. Wilhelm's asylum in the Netherlands was based on family ties with the Dutch Queen Wilhelmina. Huis Doorn, has since become a place of pilgrimage for German monarchists.

²⁵³ Dobson, pg. 184

²⁵⁴ Dobson, pg. 187

²⁵⁵ Donson, pg. 227

²⁵⁶ Dobson pg. 149

²⁵⁷ *Geschichte der Stadt Zŷlŷ in Ober Schlesien*. J.Chrzaszcs. 1926. pg. 79

²⁵⁸ Otto Friedrich in *Before the Deluge: A Portrait of Berlin in the 1920s* from 1972, pg. 15

²⁵⁹ In *German History*, Vol.30, No.3, September 2012 in a review of H.Jones by A.Donson, Univ. Mass. Amherst

²⁶⁰ O&O. Pg. 253. Overŷ.

On a more positive note, the war acted as a catalyst for social and economic change. Its modernizing impact was felt throughout society as it brought significant upheaval in family life and created substantial transformation in traditional attitudes and values. Women were increasingly integrated into the labour market and recognised for their work, while the national catastrophe gave them the opportunity to assert themselves in efforts on behalf of their nation and made them more visible in society.²⁶¹

At the same time, paternal authority over youths declined. The cohort of youngsters born from 1900 to 1908 indisputably had a youth and childhood fundamentally different to those just a few years older. The latter belonged to the so-called 'war youth' generation whose experiences in turn created memories and a consciousness specific to a single generation.²⁶²

To many Germans, the defeat itself was shattering, sudden and inexplicable. The events of November 1918 stoked many male youths' hatred of the workers and socialists, whom they believed robbed Germany of victory by seeking a cowardly negotiated peace. In the last year and a half of the war, right wing middle-class boys in the youth movements developed an intense hatred of internationalists and pacifists. Donson considers it doubtful they would have maintained their anger had Germany won the war. But defeat and revolution crystallized their hatred, turning a broad cohort of Allied victory onlookers into right-wing radicals.

For middle-class secondary schoolboys, October and November of 1918 marked their political awakening, setting the scene for the decades ahead.²⁶³ Many children became crucial figures in the Weimar and Nazi eras, although many more did not become fascists or radical communists - most of the war youth generation actually eschewed violence, bellicose nationalism and extreme political ideologies both during and after it.²⁶⁴

For the Hinsch's and Tjyrallas, among their soldier folk one lay unceremoniously buried in France while the other would be denied a victorious welcome (unlike his father after the Franco-Prussian War). Between their wives, Nannj was now a war widow while Hedwig grew maligned. Among their offspring, seven rather disrupted childhoods lacked paternal authority and among the Tjyrallas, the available maternal love even fell far short of expectations. The elder cohort would retain memories of a conflict that beside casualty, privilege and poverty saw their Hinsch grandparents retire to the countryside. All of them 'sacrificed' but Theo in particular fared poorly, almost to the extent he was left suicidal. Little Nannj on the other hand, was fortunate to spend longer periods at home.

Most historians recognise that the family had practically ceased to exist as a unit come the war's end, which in turn would have a major long term effect on society. The world those seven children were being primed for had fallen apart, their education disrupted in the process. But what impact had that in turn on their identities and sense of belonging, toward one another, Saxony and Germany?

²⁶¹ Pg. 362. Pine in Overy

²⁶² Donson, pg. 222-224

²⁶³ Donson, pg. 238

²⁶⁴ German History, Vol.29, No.2, June 2011. Patrick Houlihan, Univ. Chicago

The Machern villa and its grounds helped ensure the Hinsch's avoided some of the hardships the many city dwellers experienced during the war, while adding to Saxony's plight by trading food on the black market - more of which really ought to have been fed to the Tjyralla kids. Hedwig and her parents too likely played an important role in ensuring the Hinsch kids suffered less from bread shortages.

Aside from immediate family, perhaps the most important turning point was the appearance of *Onkel Albert* who appears to have become *Frau Tjyralla's* love interest too. In her eyes he may have more aptly matched her social status than her late husband. But in the end it fell to the courts to reunite her family and end her privileged city existence which occurred at her kids' expense - a stance not at all in line with bourgeois traits at the time according to Thomas A. Kohut's survey of 62 born within the Hinsch grandchildren's generation.

Prussian characteristics encompass austerity, industry and frugality, their motto being; "To each his own." These traits the Hinsch's couldn't have exhibited more clearly while highlighting at the same time the continuing importance of land to well-being (and profit-making), in contrast to the city. As their Saxon hosts' and neighbours' resentment grew, my forefathers remained a microcosm of Prussian hegemony I'm saddened to say, safeguarding their pockets first.

When revolution came, writes Christophe Nonn, it was because the Saxon population was tired of war, food shortages and injustice.²⁶⁵ There can have been little surprise for it among the authorities whose legitimacy, argues Dobson, had been lost during the course of it. What future then, lay ahead for the Hinsch's and the Tjyrallas whose own loyalty was to a leadership that no longer existed? Could they risk showing their colours or nationality again, especially after those incidents with the neighbours in Machern? Or had their legitimacy vanished too?

Opportunity besides threat lay ahead for their children. Looking at the photos of Little Nannj (pg. 178) and Theo (pg. 180), I can't help but sense they were little more than accessories to their mother for whom only vanity mattered. Perhaps their late father had seen enough and by the time he returned to the frontline in October 1915 had already decided where his future lay. Despite just missing the birth of his second son, Johannes, cruelly, the war called an early end to any such ideals.

For the Hinsch boys further surprise lay in store. Their 39 year old father was due to return from a frontline that in the end served little more purpose than to undermine Germany's European dominance, its citizens' material wealth and the lives of countless - a humbling end given its audacious start after the Kaiser's call.

How their mother treated him once he got back, how he carried the Hinsch's 'Prussian' mantle forward in Saxony and what of his business interests he managed to resurrect we shall see in the next chapter, a time when both he and his family had to come face-to-face with issues that in all likelihood pre-dated the outbreak of the war, as in Nannj and Paul's case.

²⁶⁵ Christophe Nonn, pg. 318-9

Sources Accompanying Textbox 8.4: Who Am I? The Mysterious 'Onkel Albert'

¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magdeburg>

² At the time it was one of five districts constituting the Duchy of Anhalt, of which Bernburg was the most populated, while Dessau served as its capital. Its inhabitants were mainly Saxon, and were (like Albert and his family) largely members of the Evangelical (Union) Church. Sources: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bernburg> and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anhalt>

³ en.wikisource.org/wiki/1911_Encyclopædia_Britannica/Anhalt and en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Köthen_Aschersleben_railway

⁴ Received courtesy of Christian Brenk of the Stadtarchiv in Bernburg via archiv.stadt@bernburg.de on 14th Oct. 2012 & 26th Feb. 2013

⁵ Additionally, information courtesy of [Thomas Brünnler](#) of the local branch of the Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt who on 25th Oct. 2012 searched the Handelsregister des Amtsgerichts Bernburg (company register) and found within an old archive guide referencing 'die Akten des Amtsgerichts Bernburg' a reference to the 'Testament of the Kaufmann Oskar Petzold and his wife Elizabeth, nee Schubert, in Bernburg.' The records (Akten) spanned the period 1889-1909 and Brünnler believes the will (Testament) stemmed from documents dating back to as early as 1889 or thereabouts. Unfortunately Oskar's testament was destroyed during an early 1980s clean up of Bernburg's company archives because they were not considered of significant enough historical value.

⁶ A Kaufmann is involved in wholesaling, trading, manufacturing and merchandising. It includes being a firm's executive (like Fritz Hinsch), and like Paul Tyralla, Albert was probably considered a lower white-collar worker.

⁷ Oskar Petzold's death certificate, No.32 of 23rd Jan 1909 received March 4th 2013 from Christian Brenk, StadtArchivar of the Bernburg Stadtarchiv.

⁸ See: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halberstadt>; <http://www.halberstadt.de/de/index.php?cid=109002002253>;

[http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_American_Cyclopædia_\(1879\)/Halberstadt](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_American_Cyclopædia_(1879)/Halberstadt) and

http://www.halberstadt.de/media/pdf/kultur/stadtchronik/804_bis_1990_chronologie_halberstadt.pdf

⁹ Personal correspondence on August 28th 2012 from [Thomas Brünnler](#) of the Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Dessau (for Bernburg) at: Heidestraße 21, 06842 Dessau-Roßlau Email: dessau@lha.mi.sachsen-anhalt.de

¹⁰ An email on 15 Oct. 2012 to the [Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt](#) in Zeppelinstr in Potsdam only yielded: "Due to the large number of enquiries and a lack of personnel resources, we unfortunately are not able to give you a specific answer to your enquiry." A similar enquiry was sent on 19 Nov 2012 to the Deutsche Dienststelle (WASt) in Berlin (which albeit deals with notifications of the next-of-kin of members of Germans killed in action or that were taken prisoners of war) who responded they have no record of him, rendering it impossible to draw a conclusion as to whether he was conscripted and if yes, wounded. A last resort are muster lists, however, according to [StadtArchiv Bernburg](#) (Christian Brenk) they hold none.

¹¹ Donson. Pg. 138

¹² According to Donson, pg. 138, most men left behind were typically older than 45