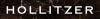
Leigh Bailey EDUARD STRAUSS THE THIRD MAN OF THE STRAUSS FAMILY





Hofballmusik-Director Eduard Straufs

Leigh Bailey

EDUARD STRAUSS: THE THIRD MAN OF THE STRAUSS FAMILY

HOLLITZER

To the memory of my mother

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FOREWORD

Here it is, at long last, what Strauss enthusiasts all over the world have been eagerly awaiting: the first comprehensive biography of my great-grandfather, Eduard Strauss I (1835–1916). And, as expected, it shows 'handsome Edi' in a new light, in a way that does him justice.

The family he was born into was probably already 'broken'. It is no surprise that he became a 'difficult gentleman', as his famous brother Johann Strauss II put it. As the last of the three sons of Johann Strauss I, a genius who died young, he had, at the bidding of his mother Anna, to enter the 'family business'. Always overshadowed by his brother Johann, ten years older than him, after the early death of his other brother Josef, eight years his elder, Eduard took sole charge of the Strauss Orchestra, an outstanding ensemble. As a result he was the one who was also responsible for spreading the family's music – as far as the USA.

Both brother Johann and the Viennese press tended to dismiss Eduard as the mere 'also ran' of the family, regarding him as a 'nonentity'. He preferred to perform abroad rather than at home, and grew into an embittered old man with some pedantic traits.

Having himself grown up with little in the way of love, he was apparently incapable of providing love, care and a feeling of security in his own family. His sons – my great-uncle and my grandfather – developed into happy-go-lucky, self-centred spendthrifts, who deprived their father of a fortune and caused him quite serious financial problems when he was already in his sixties. Johann Strauss II reacted in a cool, wait-and-see manner, and did not help his brother Eduard. However, Eduard Strauss I was able to build up a second fortune, which he then tried to ensure would be kept safe by means of a will of over one hundred pages and with the most detailed and precise stipulations. For reasons which I do not know he made no provision for the children of his younger son Josef – that is to say my uncle, my aunt and my father. In 1907 Eduard burned the entire musical archive of the Strauss Orchestra; this took two visits each lasting several hours to furnaces in Vienna. Why he did this has remained a mystery, which the present author now tries to explain on a factual basis.

On behalf of my family I would like to thank Leigh Bailey warmly for his years of meticulous research on Eduard Strauss I, which have now culminated in the appearance of this impressive work. It is certainly rewarding to read this book, even if you are not a Strauss specialist.

Vienna, November 2016

Dr. Eduard Strauss

PREFACE

It may seem self-evident that the music and the composers of the Strauss dynasty are known throughout the world. Nevertheless, despite their enduring popularity, at the same time they actually remain largely unknown. A small number of compositions by the Strausses are played time and time again, but the vast majority of their dances are hardly ever performed or listened or danced to. Everyone knows the name Johann Strauss, but how many music lovers are aware that there were three musicians with this name in the family? Or could say how many Josefs and Eduards there were in the dynasty, and whether Richard Strauss has a place in its family tree? There are so many stories and anecdotes about the Strauss family, many of them spread by the Strausses themselves, that often a considerable amount of research is required to separate fact from fiction. But, as is so often the case, truth is stranger and even more fascinating than fiction.

By far the most famous member of the Strauss dynasty is the Johann Strauss who composed The Blue Danube waltz. His father, also Johann Strauss, founded the family business and made the name 'Strauss' a worldwide brand, but the only composition of his that is still played at all frequently is the Radetzky March. His nephew, also Johann Strauss, tried to establish himself as a composer and conductor of Viennese dance music and operetta in the years around 1900, but today it is only devoted Strauss enthusiasts and specialists who are even aware of his existence. So the Johann Strauss the world knows (or thinks it knows) best needs to be referred to as Johann Strauss II to avoid any confusion. And he had two brothers, Josef and Eduard, who were important composers and conductors in their own right and made an invaluable contribution to the family business. But they too have been completely overshadowed by their brother. Ironically, Josef's best known composition is probably the piece that he wrote jointly with Johann, the Pizzicato Polka. But at least the story of his life has been told in two full-length biographies. Amazingly, the story of Eduard's life has up to now been told only piecemeal in individual chapters of books basically concerned with the biography of eldest brother Johann. And yet Eduard was the longest lived of the family, the most widely travelled, and was in sole charge of the Strauss Orchestra for thirty of the seventy-four years of its existence. So this book is intended to fill this gap a full century after the death of Eduard, the 'third man' of the Strauss family. At the same time, to tell the story of his life is also to tell the story of the family from a new perspective and thus to throw new light not only on the relationship between the 'third man' and the 'first man' of the trio of Strauss brothers but in doing so also to provide a new view of Johann Strauss II, the star of the dynasty.

There is no lack of primary material on the Strauss family. The Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, the Vienna municipal library, has a vast collection not just of their music but also of their letters and other documents relating to them. Thanks to decades of work by Franz Mailer, much of this material, as well as material from other sources, is now conveniently available in printed form in the ten-volume collection Johann Strauss (Sohn): Leben und Werk in Briefen und Dokumente, published between 1983 and 2007 under the auspices of the Johann Strauss Society of Vienna. All the material which Mailer collected on the members of the Strauss dynasty, including Eduard Strauss, has now been entrusted to the Music Department of the Danube University in Krems, Austria, where it is kept in the university library and was made freely available to me by the chair of the department, Dr Eva Maria Stöckler, and her colleagues. My thanks therefore go to them and above all – albeit, unfortunately, posthumously, to Franz Mailer, without whose work it would have taken much, much longer for me to write this biography. My thanks also go to the Wienbibliothek, and especially to Norbert Rubey, the official Strauss specialist of the City of Vienna, with whom I have had long and fruitful discussions and who has provided a wealth of invaluable advice and detailed information, as well as making many practical suggestions. Dr Eduard Strauss, the great-grandson of my 'biographee', the current head of the Strauss family and president of the Vienna Institute for Strauss Research, has provided invaluable support, taking a great interest in my work, reading my manuscript with great care, correcting mistakes and making many suggestions for improvements. His wife Susanne is a pharmacist, and has made a meticulous transcription and analysis of the book of prescriptions which Eduard Strauss kept in the last thirty years of his life and which is now in the Wienbibliothek. To them both go my thanks not only for many stimulating discussions but also for their hospitality on numerous occasions.

Interest in the music and lives of the Strauss family is of course worldwide, and this is reflected in the Strauss societies which have been established in many countries. A former chairman and now Honorary Life President of The Johann Strauss Society of Great Britain, Peter Kemp, the author of the standard history of the Strauss dynasty, has followed the progress of the biography, reading the manuscript and making detailed comments. I am extremely grateful to him for having taken such trouble. I should also like to thank the society's current chairman, John Diamond, for providing valuable material on Carl Michael Ziehrer. My thanks also go the chairman of the German Johann Strauss Society, Ingolf Rossberg, for providing important material from the society's journal and archive, especially the material painstakingly collected by Alfred Dreher on Eduard Strauss's tours of Germany. I am also indebted to Friedhelm Kuhlmann, a member of the society's committee, who has made available to me the results of his research on Oscar Fetrás, a fellow director of music and trusted friend of Eduard Strauss. On the other side of the Atlantic, the former Johann Strauss Society of New York collected a wealth of material on Eduard Strauss's two American tours,

Preface

and I am extremely grateful to its erstwhile president, Jeroen H.C. Tempelman, for making available to me the results of his members' researches.

I have also been encouraged throughout the project by the interest taken in the biography by colleagues and friends. Some of them have also provided valuable advice and material on specific aspects, and in this connection I would like to thank especially Helmut Reichenauer for his help and advice in selecting illustrations, Ian Magadera for the benefit of his expertise in biographies, Kerry Tattersall for important background information on the Habsburg dynasty and court, and Waldemar Zacharasiewicz for material on Vienna and the Strausses from his own field of research, imagology.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this book to my mother. She loved the music of the Strausses and took a keen interest in the progress of this biography. Unfortunately she did not live to see it completed.

Vienna, November 2016

Leigh Bailey

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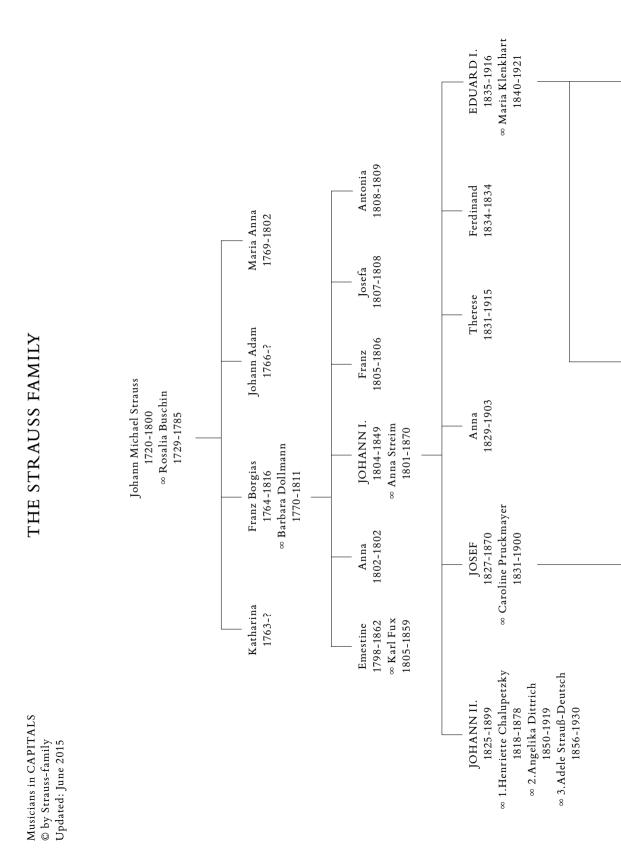
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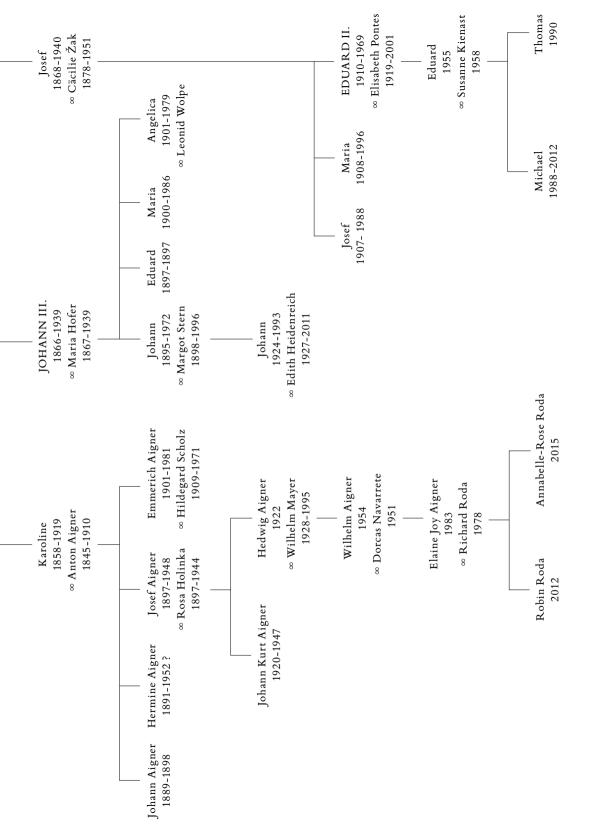
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Genealogical tree of the Strauss family (Dr. Eduard Strauss)

PRELUDE: EDUARD STRAUSS'S VIENNA (1835–1916)

At nearly eighty-two years, Eduard Strauss's life was the longest among the musicians of the Strauss dynasty. He outlived his eldest brother Johann (1825–1899), the undoubted star of the family, by several years, while the lives of his father Johann (1804–1849) and his elder brother Josef (1827–1870) were cut short by illness, acute in the case of the former, chronic in the case of the latter. Nor could the two professional musicians of the family in subsequent generations, Eduard Strauss's son Johann (1866–1939) and grandson Eduard (1910–1969), match his longevity.¹

Eduard Strauss was born in Vienna on 15 March 1835 and died there on 28 December 1916. For more than forty years of his life he held the honorary title of Imperial-Royal Director of Music for Court Balls, and for nearly thirty of those years actually performed at these events, much longer than the total time during which the three other holders of the title – his father, his brother Johann, and Carl Michael Ziehrer – were active in this role. As if to stress his link with the Habsburg dynasty, the span of Eduard Strauss's life coincides almost exactly with the reigns of two emperors: Ferdinand, who came to the throne just two weeks before he was born, and his nephew, Franz Joseph, who died just over one month before Eduard did. Unlike eldest brother Johann, who became a German citizen in order to divorce his second and marry his third wife, Eduard remained an Austrian citizen throughout his life. However, the state he was born in was called the Austrian Empire, founded by Ferdinand's father, Franz, in the course of the Napoleonic Wars when it became clear that the Holy Roman Empire was about to disappear and his imperial title with it; the state in which he died was called the Austro-Hungarian Empire, founded by Franz Joseph in 1867 in an attempt to keep his realm together by placating the powerful Hungarian minority with a considerable degree of autonomy in the wake of Austria's defeat at the hands of Prussia the year before. As a teenager Eduard Strauss experienced the revolution of 1848, as an old man the outbreak of the First World War - although not its end and the political turmoil that accompanied it, so that he was spared witnessing the break-up of the Habsburg Monarchy and the end of Austria as he knew it. The eight decades he lived through were of course also a period of rapid technological development: his early years saw the opening of Austria's first railways, a form of transport without which the extensive concert tours he made in Europe and North America would have been virtually impossible. Later came the harnessing of electrical energy and inventions such as the telephone and the phonograph, all of them commemorated in the titles and music of some of Eduard's dance compositions.

What did not change in the course of Eduard Strauss's long life was the status of Vienna: it was the Imperial-Royal Capital City of the Empire and Residence of the Emperor.² It was the presence of the imperial court and government that gave the city its characteristic atmosphere; it was a place very much aware of its own importance, teeming with aristocrats, civil servants and soldiers, together with the host of tradesmen and servants who catered for their needs. In the course of the nineteenth century the Austrian capital also became an important centre of industry and finance. This concentration of the corridors of power meant that it was a city where intrigue flourished, but Vienna was above all a city of music. The Habsburgs, many of whom were themselves practising musicians, were well aware of the political value of culture, but suspicious of forms of art that could be used as a vehicle for subversive ideas, with the result that anything that could be regarded as a national Austrian literature was a very late arrival on the cultural scene. Music was much safer, and the fact that it was not dependent on language was a major advantage for both performers and listeners in a multilingual empire. Because of the dominant position of the court and the aristocracy in the musical life of Vienna, regular public concerts and permanent concert halls were not provided until well into the nineteenth century. However, by then balls and dance music had established themselves as a distinctive feature of Viennese life. Interestingly, the typical Viennese ball owes its existence to a ban imposed by Empress Maria Theresa on the masked Carnival processions traditionally held in the streets; she was afraid that such events could serve as a cover for immoral or politically subversive behaviour.³ So the music and the dancing moved indoors, and everything became more orderly and more elegant - worthy, in fact, of an imperial capital. There even evolved a dance form and the music to go with it which seemed to epitomize the atmosphere of these balls and indeed that of the whole city: the Viennese waltz.

The most famous of the four hundred or so waltzes that the Strauss dynasty composed is undoubtedly *The Blue Danube* by Eduard's eldest brother Johann. But it is worth noting that the river that the Strauss brothers grew up with was very different from the one that flows past Vienna today. In the early nineteenth century the Danube split into a maze of meandering channels after rounding the hills of the Vienna Woods to the north of the city. The suburb where Eduard lived was between the *Donaukanal* (Danube Channel), the arm of the Danube that flowed beside the old city centre, and the labyrinth of islands and inlets surrounding the main stream of the river. It was an area that was liable to be flooded, and after two such catastrophic floods in 1830 and 1862 the decision was taken to regulate the river by digging a new, straight channel for it and leaving a flat strip of undeveloped land on the far side where floodwater could spread without causing damage. The project was carried out in the 1870s, several years after the famous waltz was first performed.

It was not only the Danube and the area around it that underwent considerable change during Eduard Strauss's long life: the size and appearance of the whole of Vienna was transformed. When he was born Vienna had a population of around 400,000; at the time he died it was over 2,200,000. While he was growing up the old city centre was still surrounded by walls and could only be entered through narrow gated archways; these defensive works were surrounded on three sides by an open space, the Glacis, most of which was used as a recreation area by the Viennese, while some parts were used as drill and parade grounds by the military. The Donaukanal flowed past the fourth side, and it was in a house in the suburb on its far bank that Eduard Strauss was born and lived for the first fifty years of his life. This suburb was one of a ring of such settlements around the old city and its ring of defences. These suburbs, known as the Vorstädte, were in turn surrounded by a defensive rampart, the Linienwall, originally built in the early eighteenth century as protection against raids by Hungarian insurgents; in the nineteenth century it was used as a customs barrier, with the so-called 'consumption tax' being levied on goods passing through the gateways in it. Outside this rampart there was another ring of suburbs, the *Vororte*; for most of the nineteenth century these were still villages with a distinctly rural atmosphere, many of them popular with the Viennese – including Eduard Strauss – as places to stay in the summer. The inner ring of suburbs was incorporated into the City of Vienna in the 1850s, the outer ring in the 1890s. The result was Greater Vienna, the capital city of an empire of fifty million people.

Throughout his long life Eduard Strauss was a resident of Vienna and moved house only once.⁴ His first address was both the family home of the Strausses and the headquarters of their music business. He was the last of them to leave it, in 1886. The house itself, whose history could be traced back at least to the seventeenth century, was demolished in 1911 to make way for much grander buildings; it was a fate that befell hundreds of houses in Vienna as the city grew. As turn-of-the-century satirist Karl Kraus put it, 'Vienna is being demolished into a metropolis.'5 There were, though, plenty of areas that offered greenfield sites, the most prestigious of which was the open ground between the old city, whose walls were pulled down between 1858 and 1864, and the inner suburbs. In the centre of this a spacious tree-lined boulevard, the Ringstrasse, was laid out, flanked by grandiose buildings to house the city's and the empire's most important political, cultural and economic institutions. On it and the new streets laid out alongside it luxurious town palaces for the wealthiest bankers and industrialists and elegant apartment houses for the not quite so wealthy were built, and it was to an apartment in one such building, situated behind the Parliament and one block away from the Town Hall, that Eduard Strauss and his family moved. He stayed there even after breaking completely with his wife and sons in the wake of a family scandal in the late 1890s. For the remaining years of his life he lived there with his housekeeper who, assisted by a cook, looked after him in his old age and nursed him on the frequent occasions when he fell seriously ill.

1 THE STRAUSS FAMILY (1835)

Vienna, 1835. The first weeks of the year were marked, as usual, by the balls and festivities of the Carnival season. With several such events taking place every evening, the musical directors and their orchestras were kept more than busy. Johann Strauss was no exception. On 2 March, the last Monday of Carnival, he would, according to an announcement in the Wiener Zeitung, the official gazette, be in charge of the music for third and last grand festive Flora Ball at Dommayer's Casino in Hietzing, then still a village just beyond Schönbrunn Palace and its extensive park. On the same evening he was also due to appear at Sperl's establishment on the other side of town in the Leopoldstadt suburb, where he was to conduct a performance of his latest waltz. By this time the carnival atmosphere was, however, somewhat subdued by the news that the emperor, Franz I, was seriously ill. He had already received the last sacrament and thus, in line with established procedure, the two court theatres, the Burgtheater and the Kärntnertortheater - for plays and operas respectively, remained closed. On Tuesday 3 March the first column of the front page of the Wiener Zeitung carried the announcement that 'It has pleased God the Almighty to call from this world His Imperial-Royal Majesty the Emperor and King Franz the First, the most dearly beloved father of our country.' The announcement was signed by Ferdinand, his son and successor, as was the letter printed below it, which was addressed to Prince Colloredo, the Lord High Chamberlain, and ended by commanding him 'to take appropriate measures to ensure that every form of entertainment incompatible with the general state of mourning be called off in all provinces'.¹

The imperial court went into mourning for six months, but with the end of Lent and the celebration of Easter – and the new emperor's birthday, which in that year fell on Easter Sunday, cultural and musical life in Vienna began to get back to normal. On Easter Monday the two court theatres resumed their daily performances, and on the same day one of Vienna's most popular establishments, the Tivoli pleasure grounds next to Schönbrunn park, opened for the summer season. Johann Strauss conducted his orchestra there on the following Thursday, while the next weekend saw his first appearance at Dommayer's Casino. Over the following weeks the Wiener Zeitung carried frequent advertisements for his concerts at various venues, as well as for his two latest waltzes, available in a number of arrangements from piano solo to full orchestra. They could even be had in an arrangement for the czakan, a walking stick whose upper section could be detached and played like a recorder and which was a fashionable accessory in early nineteenth-century Vienna. That shows just how popular Strauss's music was, as does the fact that all advertisements for his appearances and his compositions invariably printed his name in large, bold typeface. The name 'Strauss' had already become a valuable brand.

The spring of 1835 also saw two important events in Johann Strauss's family life. On 15 March, just one day after his own thirty-first birthday, his wife Anna,

then thirty-two years old, gave birth to a son, the sixth and last of the children the couple had together. He was named Eduard, and baptized in St Josef's, the local parish church just across the street from the house where the Strausses lived, with Ferdinand Dommayer, the proprietor of the establishment in Hietzing where Strauss performed regularly, acting as godfather. Little more than two months later, on 18 May, Johann Strauss again became a father, this time of a daughter, Emilie. Her mother, Emilie Trambusch, was just twenty years old and a milliner. Strauss had probably got to know her a year or two earlier, and he was to have at least a further six children with her over the following nine years.²

The house where Eduard Strauss was born, and where he was to live for more than fifty years, was situated in the Leopoldstadt suburb of Vienna. Today it forms the city's second district, and it is located just across the Donaukanal, the arm of the Danube which marks the river's original course, from the first district, the old city centre. The suburb developed in the Middle Ages on a group of islands between the arms of the Danube. In the seventeenth century a Jewish ghetto had been set up there, and in the second half of the nineteenth century the district again became known as the Jewish quarter of Vienna – the 'matzo island', as the Viennese called it. However, in 1669 the Jews had been expelled, and two years later the suburb was named Leopoldstadt after the reigning emperor, Leopold I – until then it had been known simply as Unterer Werd, the 'Lower Island'. Its location meant that it was where the men working on the boats and rafts that plied the Danube landed and stayed when they were in Vienna, so that it was also home to the inns that catered for them. The dances they brought with them and played in the inns were one of the most important influences in the development of the Viennese waltz. On the other side of the suburb, on the islands towards the main stream of the Danube, there were the Augarten palace and park and the Prater, an imperial hunting reserve. They were opened up to the public in 1766 and 1775 respectively by Joseph II, the reforming emperor, and soon became popular recreation areas for the Viennese. They also attracted restaurants, cafés and inns, which were soon offering various forms of musical entertainment for their patrons.

Johann Strauss's father, Franz Borgias Strauss, had tried to make a living as the landlord of an inn in a street leading off the Donaukanal, just a few minutes' walk from the house where Eduard was born. His business had its good years and its bad years, but it was the time of the Napoleonic wars with all the political and financial turbulence that they caused: the French army occupied Vienna twice, in 1805 and 1809, and two years later the Austrian state went bankrupt. When peace finally came in 1815, one of the measures the government took to stimulate the economy was to open up the brewing trade to anyone with sufficient capital, irrespective of whether they had been served an apprenticeship as a brewer. The beer price slumped and Franz Strauss's hope of running his business profitably and being able to pay off his debts collapsed with it. On 5 April 1816 his body was found, washed up by one of the many arms of the Danube.

When Eduard Strauss wrote his memoirs, he commented that 'all that the family knows about Johann Strauss's childhood is that as a boy, when musicians played in the larger of the inn's two rooms, Johann would crawl under a table to be able to listen to the musicians without his father seeing him.'3 Johann was just twelve years old when his father died, his only surviving relatives being his sister Ernestine and his stepmother. As Eduard put it, his father 'had to make his own start from the lowest rung of the ladder'.⁴ He was fortunate, though, in having a guardian who took good care of him and ensured that he learned a trade. He served an apprenticeship as a bookbinder, working so well that he qualified in less time than usual, on 13 January 1822, two months before his eighteenth birthday. But it is likely that by then he had already decided to make music his profession. By 1825 he was playing the violin and, when required, the viola in the orchestra of his friend – and later rival – Joseph Lanner, and would have liked to branch out on his own.⁵ He made plans to go to Graz, but by this time Anna Maria Streim, the daughter of the landlord of an inn near one of the venues where it is likely that Strauss played, had informed him that she was expecting a child by him. Her father and Strauss's guardian made sure that the young man stayed in Vienna and married her, and that he took up the respectable profession of a music teacher to provide for his family. It was not until the spring of 1827 that Johann Strauss could at last found his own orchestra and begin his musical career in earnest.

The child born to the young couple on 25 October 1825 was to become the most famous of all the Strausses. He was christened Johann Baptist Strauss, just as his father had been. A second son, Josef, was born in 1827. During these years the family moved several times, living first in the suburbs to the west of the city centre and then returning to the Leopoldstadt district, where two daughters were born, Anna in 1829 and Therese in 1831. The reason for the move was probably not to get back to the part of Vienna where the family had its roots but to be near to the fashionable Sperl establishment, where Johann Strauss had been appointed director of music in 1829; in fact the family's first apartment in the district was in a house owned by its proprietor, Johann Georg Scherzer. Together, Strauss and Scherzer made Sperl, a veritable pleasure palace of restaurants, ballrooms and gardens, a byword for what over the next few years people not just in Austria but throughout Europe came to regard as the typical atmosphere of Vienna, its music and its way of life. As Johann Strauss's fame grew and spread, he had in effect to set up a family business to ensure that his music was produced and his orchestra organised and marketed in the best possible way. The firm needed suitable headquarters, and by 1834 these had been set up on the first floor of a large apartment house in the heart of Leopoldstadt, just around the corner from Sperl.

Eduard Strauss: The Third Man of the Strauss Family

When Eduard Strauss was born his father was thus an established musician and a well-known personality in Vienna, but the months before his birth were a turbulent and not particularly happy time for Johann and Anna Strauss. Their fifth child, Ferdinand, who was born in January 1834, was a frail and sickly infant; he died in the November of that year. A few days earlier Johann had left Vienna for Berlin. This tour of Germany, which also took him and his orchestra to Dresden and Leipzig, was the first time Strauss had performed outside the Austrian Empire, and it laid the foundation of his international fame. A year earlier he had made his very first concert tour, down the Danube to Budapest in Hungary. He made just two appearances there, playing at two specially organized balls, but the visit was a triumph for Strauss, then twenty-nine years old, and this may have prompted him to think about venturing further afield. Although he had dedicated a waltz he composed earlier in the year to Crown Princess Elisabeth Luise of Prussia, which suggests that Strauss was already interested in establishing contacts with Berlin, this second tour seems to have been begun rather precipitously. Curiously, he had also been in trouble with the police in Vienna, and eventually had to pay a hefty fine for illegal gambling in a room in Sperl as well as for setting off fireworks he had placed on a nearby roof. But a more likely reason for his leaving Vienna in a hurry is that, just as before his marriage in 1825, he wanted to get away from family problems: after all, in the autumn of 1834 he must have been aware that not only his wife but also his recently acquired mistress was expecting a child by him. He seems to have been in no hurry to let Anna Strauss know how he was getting on in Germany. He did not write to her until 19 November, and when he did, he forgot to include an address where she could contact him.⁶ How she reacted when he returned to Vienna is not documented, but when Johann Strauss gave his first performances there on 14 December, at Dommayer in the afternoon and Sperl in the evening, he was greeted by his Viennese fans more enthusiastically than ever. His next appearance was announced in the Wiener Zeitung for 11 January in Dommayer's Casino; how much time he spent at home with his family in the Hirschenhaus in the intervening weeks is not known.⁶