

## ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

### Liebig Explodes Heppenheim's Apothecary Shop ... or Did He?



After his chemical tinkering exploded, schoolboy Justus Liebig (1803–1873) was expelled from his hometown's "gymnasium" in Darmstadt, Germany. Relocating 19 miles south from 1819–20, Justus apprenticed in an apothecary shop (*left*) run by Gottfried Pirsch of Heppenheim. Growing bored with his apothecary mentor, Justus resumed his previous experiments with unstable chemicals. His pharmacy apprenticeship terminated abruptly, after only 10 months, due to a violent explosion (*right*) and/or his family's inability to keep paying Pirsch. The mischievous young Liebig would grow up to become a founder of organic chemistry and a codiscoverer of chloroform. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc.)

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