

medical expert to help him with a debilitating disease (it was throat cancer) we moved first to Königsberg in East Prussia, where after a short treatment, the doctor advised him to consult a specialist in Dresden in Saxony. This Dr Boluminski was a friend of my father's, and was to play an important part in my young life. We travelled to Dresden. So now I had to forget the Viennese dialect I had learnt so avidly and turn to the Saxon way of speaking. You cannot imagine two more disparate dialects and I was the source of much hilarity.

In Dresden, we found accommodation with a family who ran a theatrical costumiers out of their apartment. Their son, who was around my age – we were both about seven - led me into this fantasy world of costumes piled high to the ceiling: uniforms, helmets, lances, weapons, horses made of papier-mâché and all kinds of theatrical paraphernalia. It was pure joy for us boys to let our imagination run riot. We disguised ourselves, mounted imaginary horses and fought battles with the lances and shields.

My other hobby was roller-skating. I spent a lot of time outside skating on the streets until I could do wonderful turns. One day an elderly gentleman came walking by in uniform. He must have been a general. He stopped in front of our apartment block and watched me appreciatively. "You're skating really well", he said. At which I began to do dramatic turns left and right in an exaggerated fashion. He smiled at me and walked on. As he turned into the main street, the Prager Strasse, I noticed that the men were lifting their hats and then I realised the