

school. The teacher was fanatical and I was terrified of him and his strictness. He would walk from bench to bench, stopping at random to ask a question. The awful moment arrived when he turned towards me and stopped right in front of me to ask his question. I could not find my voice at all. He waited a moment, and once he realised that I did not know the answer to his question, he boxed my ears so hard that I could neither see nor hear for a few moments. I simply dared not tell him that I was of the Jewish faith.

After six weeks, my treatment came to an end and I was sent home fully recovered. I was given a wig to wear to cover the baldness caused by the treatment. The landlady took me in. I was delighted to have my freedom back and went to play with the other children, who had now been joined by a pretty girl. We were running back and forth and suddenly I tripped – my wig flew off in a huge arc and exposed my bald head to all the children. When they saw me, they ran away laughing. Not a very heartening feeling for a sensitive young boy.

However it was all about to change again, and I was not quite thirteen years old.