

## Miklos Bence



Me as a boy. I was born in 1913. My father was called up for the army in Transylvania in 1914. He was there for 53 months. He was a captain, the commander of the railway in Transylvania. So the whole family went together to Brasso, because at that time, officers were allowed to take their families with them. (Brasso is now Brasov, Romania.) My mother managed to look after the three children practically alone throughout World War One. We went to Gyimesbukk afterwards ? which was the former Romanian border ? and from there, we escaped when the invasion came. It was a mess there, explosions and other things. I can remember only the trenches because I was quite young at the time. We came back to Budapest in 1917. My father had six war medals, and had been wounded twice. That is why he received thirty forints disability pension for a while, plus one forint as child support. That was my monthly pocket money. When we came back to Budapest, we lived in a big apartment building in Lonyai Street up until 1935. The flat was a two-room apartment overlooking the courtyard. The building had two courtyards and we lived on the fourth floor of the second courtyard. The children were in one of the rooms and the adults in the other. For a while we

had a servant. It is interesting that we lived in an apartment building where there was a mixed crowd. Jews who were at the same financial level as us had servants, while Christians didn't. It's interesting. I always did a lot of sports. I swam and I played table tennis, I was good at skating, and I also played water polo. I used to go to Uncle Komjadi, to whom Hungary owes a debt of thanks for all he did for the sport of swimming. He was always wet?always around the water. Uncle Komi was a very good soul. Then there was hiking, which we often did with our father. We'd get up at dawn, at two or three in the morning, and leave?we didn't take the tram or anything like that?and by 9 or 10 o'clock we'd be in the mountains. We also used to go to the open-air pool in Csillaghegy in the summer.