

# It happened in north-eastern Switzerland

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# IT HAPPENED IN NORTH-EASTERN SWITZERLAND

## THURGAU

At the end of October, the Federal Office for Statistics published the twenty-second volume on the results of the census of December 1960, dealing with the Canton of Thurgau. Between 1950 and 1960, the population of the 204 Communes increased by 11.1% from nearly 150,000 to 166,420. No fewer than 118 mostly smaller Communes showed a decrease in population, as much as 22.6% at Wilen/Neunform. On the other hand, nine Communes registered an increase of 20% and more. At Bettwiesen it came to 38.1%, Frauenfeld 32.3% and Arbon 29.5%. If the increase between 1950 and 1960 amounted to some 16,000, that from 1850 to the end of the century was from 88,908 to 113,221. The number of foreigners resident in the Thurgau on 1st December 1960 was 11.6%, nearly twice the number for 1950. As in most other Cantons, the Italians were in the majority amongst the foreign residents, and still are.

The Protestants show an increase from 97,515 to 101,436, and the Roman Catholics from 51,245 to 64,083. The total percentage of the former has gone down by 5% to 60.9%, the latter has gone up by 4% to 38.5%. The number of Old Catholics is slightly up, but still 0.2%, members of the Jewish faith have become slightly fewer, but still 0.1% as in 1950.

The accounts for 1963 were accepted by the Cantonal Parliament in September. There was a surplus of 5.73 million francs, with an income of 77.98 million francs. A month later the budget was published for 1965, which should be balanced somewhere around eighty million francs. This should be the case in spite of a new tax law which the electorate accepted on 27th September, which will bring relief to the tax payer and will cost the Canton nearly five million francs. A loan of twenty million francs was asked for in August partly in order to increase the capital of the Cantonal Bank (10m.).

Parliament, under the new President Dr. Charles Wuehrich (Bischofszell), dealt with a great many items at their meetings in Frauenfeld and Weinfelden. There were questions of power and water supplies, a new law regarding game and bird protection and a game shooting licence, road construction and building of schools and hospitals. The Cantonal School in Frauenfeld is to have three new classroom pavilions; the teachers' training college which is being rebuilt after the fire is costing nearly five million francs, including a future extension. A training college for needlework and domestic science teachers is planned. Fr.390,000.— are required for the Cantonal Hospital at Münsterlingen and nearly twice that amount as contribution to the new building of the nurses' training college Lindenhof in Berne. The revision of the old law concerning road planning, construction and administration has been drafted. Traffic accidents for the first six months of the year have gone up considerably and give rise to concern. The whole problem of education is to be studied anew, and an advisory commission has been formed by the Church Council for the renovation and construction of church buildings.

**Amriswil** electors voted a credit of one million francs for the purchase of land. They also accepted the water purifying plant proposal Aachtal, which will include another ten small Communes. **Arbon's** electorate rejected proposed increases in teachers' and functionaries' salaries, although all Parties had recommended acceptance. Arbon is now able to boast the most modern hotel in the Lake

of Constance region: the Metropole. The Castle of Hagenwil celebrated its seventh centenary. The new R.C. Bruderklausekirche at **Eschlikon** was blessed by the Bishop of Basle and Lugano in June. **Frauenfeld** is to have an eight-storey old age settlement (2.1m.). The same electors, for the third time, rejected the new proposals regarding the pay of school authorities.

The Marcel Benoist Trust, at their meeting at **Gottlieben** on 9th November, awarded the 1963 prize for the furtherance of scientific research to Dr. Geraold Schwarzenbach, Professor of inorganic chemistry at the ETH in Zurich. The Commune of **Kreuzlingen** counted 2,367 inhabitants in 1850, though at that time without Emmishofen and Kurzrickenbach. Twenty years later it was not even five hundred more. In 1900, the population was 6,290, and in 1947, Kreuzlingen became a township with 10,285 inhabitants. In 1960 the population had grown to 12,740, 1962 to 13,786 and in September last year already to 14,237. The Church of St. Ulrich, destroyed by fire in July 1963, is being renovated successfully, and it is hoped to have it ready for the Christmas services. Kreuzlingen is to have new swimming baths "Hörnli" at the cost of over two million francs. In June, there was an exhibition of trade and commerce "GEHA 1964", an annual regional show of the Bodensee district. **Mannbach** opened a new landing stage in September, the old one dating to 1870 being no longer serviceable. At **Romanshorn** for the third time in thirty-one years, the Protestant voters rejected the proposals to give women the vote in church matters.

## ST. GALL

The twenty-second volume on the findings of the federal census of 1960 was published in August: St. Gall. In the previous ten years, the population in the 91 Communes increased by 9.8% from 309,106 to 339,489. The decrease which was registered in 38 Communes amounted to as much as 20% at Rieden. The increase was over 20% in as many as 13 Communes: Goldach 61.9, Jona 41.7, Au 39.9 and Rapperswil 35.5%. The population of the town of St. Gall has gone up by 12.2% to 76,279, Rorschach follows next in size with 12,759. There are still a dozen Communes which have fewer than one thousand inhabitants; the smallest are Krinau with 294 (-8.1%), Rieden with 361 (-20%), Berg with 471 (-7.6%) and Stein with 530 (-9.9%) inhabitants. Out of the fourteen districts, only Alltogggenburg shows a decline in the size of the population.

On 1st December 1960, the population of the Canton was 90.3% Swiss, a reduction of 3.3%. Over half of the 33,000 foreigners were Italians. The Roman Catholics increased from 184,087 to 210,024 in ten years, the Protestants from 122,039 to 126,356 members. The total, however, shows a slight decrease of Protestants percent-wise.

At the end of October, the Grand Council, the Canton's Parliament, accepted the accounts for 1963, which showed a deficit of 0.6 instead of the budgeted 9.9 million francs. The budget for next year estimates a deficit of nearly three million francs, and there is a proposal of a tax increase by 5%. An even bigger deficit is visualised for the Municipality of St. Gall, and similar steps are proposed, as well as a revision of water and gas tariffs.

On 4th October, the Commune elections for 65/68 took place. The number of seats in the Commune Council have been increased from 57 to 63, and all Parties, except the Social Democrats, gained from the increase.

Building is in full swing in this Canton as in all others. More money is needed for the new building of the University in St. Gall and for the Mittelschule Sargans. The extension of the Cantonal School was opened in June, and a grant of 3.2 million francs has been voted for a new primary school "in Winkeln". The Gemeindekrankenhaus Flawil is being extended, and a project costing over six million francs has been proposed for an additional building for the Heil- und Pflegeanstalt Wil.

The number of traffic accidents are increasing to an alarming degree, it was stated by the police. During the first nine months of this year, 1,886 (1,741) accidents took place on cantonal territory, which resulted in 1,265 (1,147) injured victims and 83 (55) deaths.

An action committee "Pro Rheintal" was formed with the aim of enlightening the population about the proposed thermal power works and refinery. The first mountain village of Switzerland has solved the waste water question in an exemplary way. It is Wildhaus at an altitude of 1,100m. The neighbouring Communes are studying similar projects. 360 boys of the secondary school Bürgli took part in a scheme to clean up the bay of Lake Constance at Altenheim in August. It was not only a successful example to other Communes, but also of educational benefit to the boys.

The Diplomatic Corps visited St. Gall in September, and on 8th October, the famous OLMA, the annual agricultural show of Eastern Switzerland was opened by Federal Councillor Schaffner. 333,000 visitors saw it in the ten days of its duration, a new record in attendance.

A novel idea to make new arrivals welcome in the town is the "St. Galler Party" which is held every Friday evening (6-8 p.m.) at the Hotel Hecht. It is attended by prominent personalities from the political and cultural life of the town.

**Amden** was host to a UNESCO course on India early in October. A study foundation in favour of the planned technical college was formed at **Buchs**. The village of **Burgau** in the Toggenburg celebrated its millenium in July, and the cristal cave of **Kobelwald** between Oberriet and Rüthi has been preserved. A million francs has been left to several institutions by the late Hans Keusch, resident of **Rapperswil**. The children's zoo opened in 1962 by the Swiss National Circus Knie at Rapperswil has had over half a million visitors already. The municipal library at **Rorschach** has been re-opened, so has the new secondary school building. The teachers' training college celebrated its centenary by opening the recently built extension. **St. Peterszell's** new Protestant church was inaugurated this summer. The St. Gall Secondary Teachers' Conference celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary at their annual meeting at **Walenstadt** in September, and the holiday resort **Weesen**, called the "Nice of St. Gall", started its bicentenary by a culinary week.

#### APPENZELL AUSSERRHODEN

At the first meeting of the Cantonal Council early in June, additional grants were voted for the completion of the offices at the Zellwegerhaus at Trogen and the new telephone station in the Rathaus. The cost of extending three bridges was also granted. At an extraordinary autumn session at the end of October, the Council debated the draft of the new health law. It will include stricter regulations about unqualified doctors. The final proposal will be put before the Landsgemeinde.

**Heiden** is to be the home of the new district hospital (9.2m.). The citizens of **Herisau** granted higher salaries for their civil servants (12-15%). **Reute** has elected a new

Commune Clerk of only 19. Walter Baenziger will not be able to sign documents until he comes of age; the "Gemeindehauptmann" will perform this duty as long as the young man is a minor. A new planning and building law was accepted by the electorate of **Speicher**, and **Teufen** granted the necessary credit of 4½ million francs for a Commune waste water plant. An anonymous donor has given **Urnaesch** the sum of Fr.84,000.— for the partial repayment of the debt due to the building of the Realschule. **Walzenhausen** has been the home of a private nursing home for rheumatics since spring.

After the couple Buerki-Gmuenden at Spiecher celebrated their iron wedding early in the year, a second 65th wedding anniversary could be celebrated in Appenzell by Mr. and Mrs. Rutz-Diem at Herisau in the summer.

#### APPENZELL INNERRHODEN

Very little news has reached us from this Half-Canton, and that dates back to the spring. The Grand Council voted a credit of nearly one million francs towards the construction of a civil defence post at Appenzell. In April, the accounts for 1963 were published. There was a deficit of Fr.270,527.— in the ordinary accounts, which is a little worse than estimated in the budget. Income was nearly 5¼ million francs. The administration accounts showed a surplus of Fr.8,000.— with an income of nearly two million francs. (*Basel on news received by courtesy of the Agence Télégraphique Suisse and the Tourist Office of North-Eastern Switzerland.*)

#### SWITZERLAND TO BAN EX-NAZIS

Switzerland is to stop former Nazis from taking up residence in Switzerland, Mr. Ludwig von Moos, the President, said in the National Council. He was replying to a question concerning "former Nazi war criminals who have sought or found refuge" in the country, and the "prejudicial activities of an Egyptian armaments dealer".

Mr. von Moos emphasized that the Federal authorities were determined to avoid situations which could have a harmful effect on good relations with other countries. Among persons now banned from Switzerland, he said, were Hans Walter Zech-Nenntwich, a former S.S. officer who escaped from a west German prison last April and passed through Switzerland on his way to the United Arab Republic (he has since returned to west Germany and given himself up); and Dr. Hans Globke, a former member of the Adenauer Government, who was sentenced *in absentia* by an east German court to life imprisonment for war crimes, and who stayed last July at a villa in Lausanne belonging to his wife. Mr. von Moos said that Dr. Globke subsequently provided an assurance that he would not return to Switzerland.

The President made the point that it was no responsibility of the Government to pass judgment on particular individuals two decades after the end of the Second World War.

On the second part of the question, he said investigations showed that Hassan Sayed Kamal, the Egyptian owner of a Zurich engineering business, had purchased military material abroad for shipment to the United Arab Republic, but it had not passed through Switzerland.

Mr. von Moos referred to the practical difficulties of extending the ban on exports of war materials from Switzerland to cover also machine tools which might subsequently be used for armaments manufacture. He recommended that exporters should exercise discretion.

(*"The Times"*, 9th October 1964.)