

# Central Switzerland

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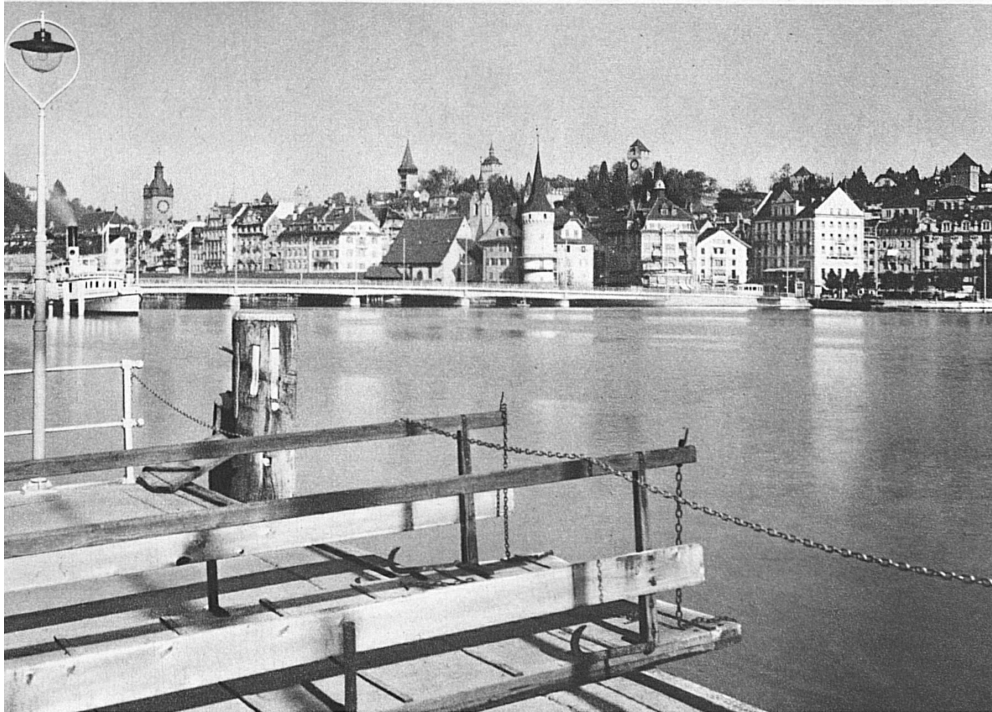
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# Central



Springtime in the region of Brunnen, Morschach, Axenstein, Axenfels. The Urirotstock — Dans la région de Brunnen, Morschach, Axenstein, Axenfels. L'Urirotstock — Frühling am Vierwaldstättersee. Der Urirotstock



Old-Lucerne — Le vieux-Lucerne — Alt Luzern



Switzerland might be said to lead a double life. On the one hand she has equipped her beauty-spots with up-to-date hotels, transformed secluded Alpine regions into holiday resorts possessing every modern amenity; on the other, below the surface which the visitor seldom penetrates, she retains her inherent forms and ancient traditions.

Of nowhere can this be said with greater truth than of Central Switzerland, that mountainous, wooded region surrounding the Lake of Lucerne. Poets and publicists have called it « The Home of Thell », « The Birthplace of the Swiss Confederation », which indeed it is. But though verse and prose may describe the history, the legends and romance, the loveliness and old-world quaintness of Central Switzerland, only personal and sympathetic observation can convey the deeper lying beauty of a life and people who today are as firmly rooted in the soil that gives them sap as were their forefathers a thousand years ago. They have changed as little as the countryside has changed — as the tree that grows to old age, to be shattered one day by a storm and replaced by a sturdy sapling; as the glaciers that flow with infinite slowness but are ever renewed from their inexhaustible source.

Nowadays the traveller no longer visits foreign countries as a mere tourist or sight-seer. Literature, film and wireless have robbed travelling of many of the surprises and unexpected incidents that made it so fascinating in earlier days. But the longing for the unknown still remains and draws us irresistibly away from our homes. Yet the modern traveller is actually but little different from the original « discoverer » of Switzerland about a hundred years ago, though he does not seek sights — he is looking for men and their homes, wishing to compare his own ideas and check up his own conceptions with those of other people. And for this purpose Switzerland is a most interesting experiment and Central Switzerland a sheer revelation.

The peasant population of the region around the picturesque Lake of Lucerne do not lead an easy life. Nature, although lavish when it distributed scenic beauty, was less generous as regards the necessities of every-

Peaceful landscape on the Rigi — Vision de paix sur le Rigi — Stille Rigilandschaft



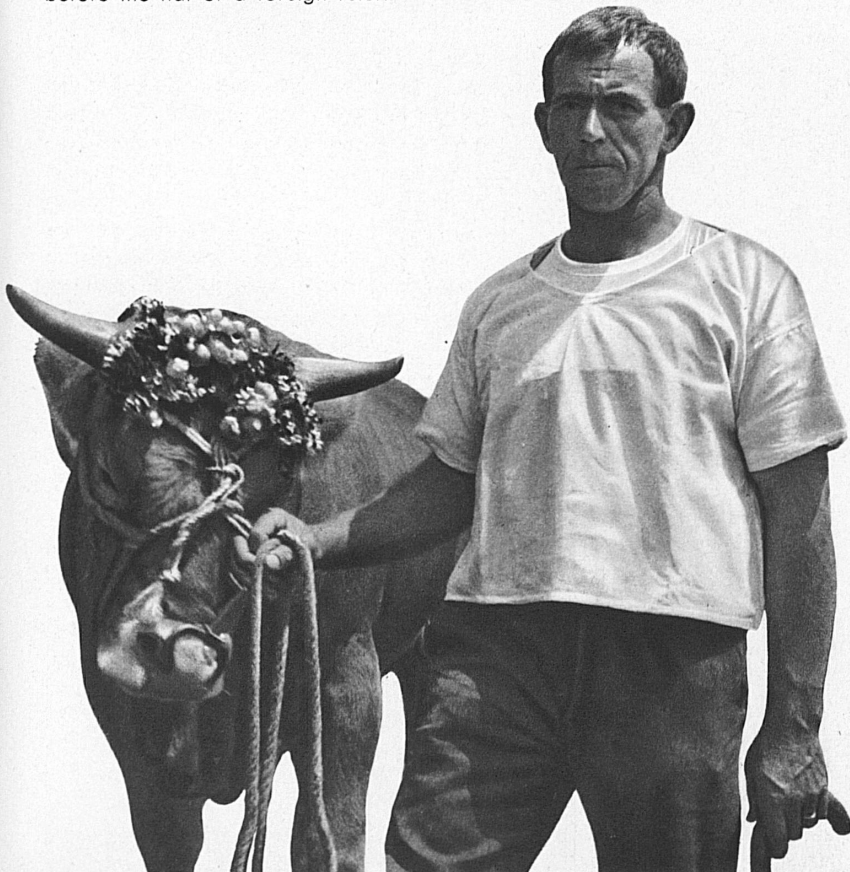
# Switzerland

day life. Life in Central Switzerland needs strong hearts and hard fists. It is an eternal fight against nature, against the ruthless forces of the mountains. Gathering the sparse hay on steep slopes, felling fir-trees above breath-taking precipices and gorges — these are dangerous occupations. Neither man's own precautions nor the help of his patron saints suffice to protect him and his belongings from nature's vindictiveness. Strange, perhaps, that one clings to one's patch of earth and the calling of one's forefathers; that men go on exposing themselves to unavoidable disasters, re-building their homesteads whenever they have been destroyed. Visitors often ask why these people do not look for easier and less dangerous occupations and dwellings. But there is no why. It was not they who chose their home and livelihood — they were born and have grown into the rocks and soil; they love it with the natural, unquestioning love of a child for its mother.

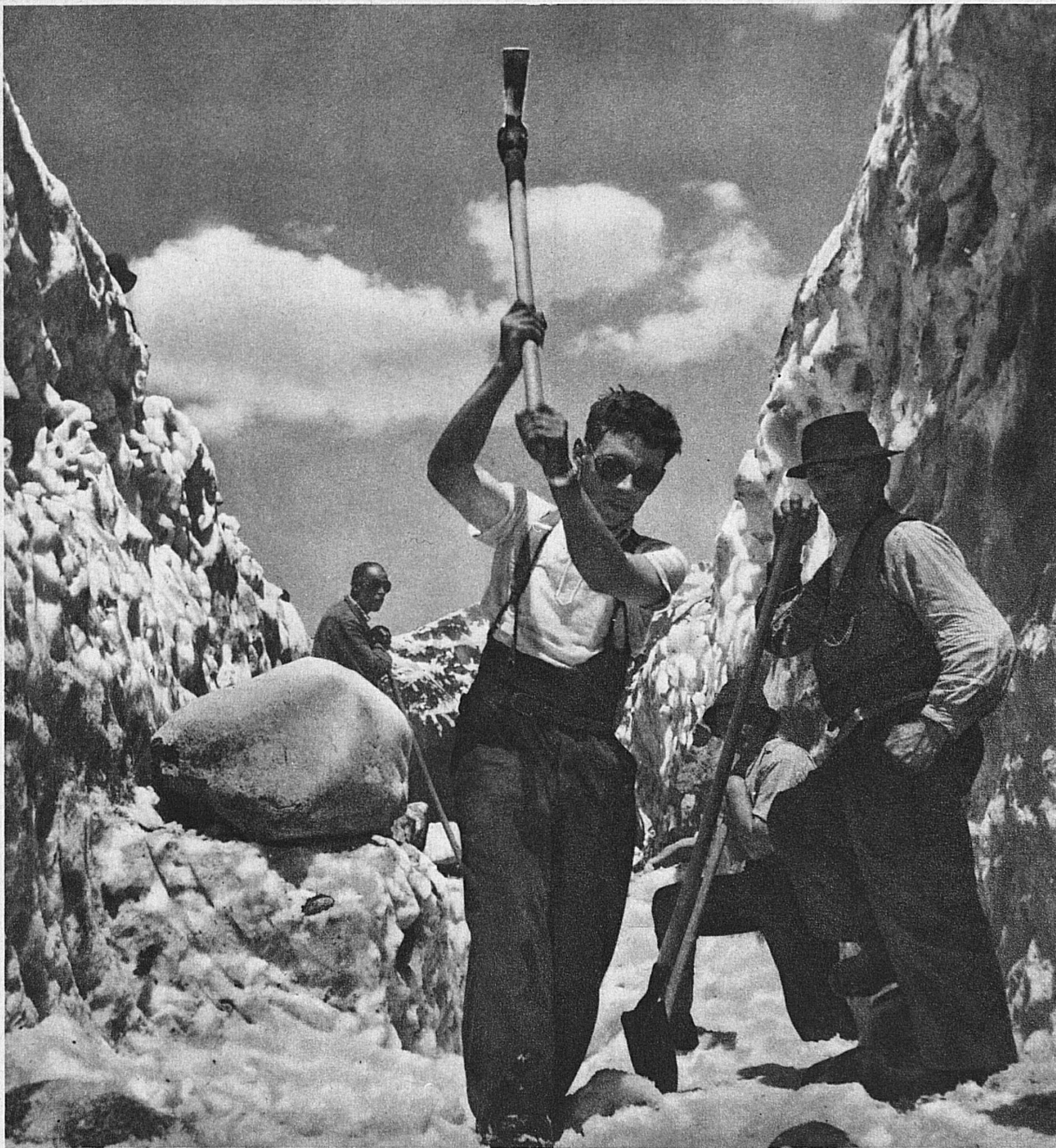
Home — mountain home of Switzerland! In spite of passing centuries simple life and character of its inhabitants have remained as unchanged as its rocks, its mountain streams and waterfalls, since Tell of Uri refused to bow his head and bend his knee before the hat of a foreign ruler.



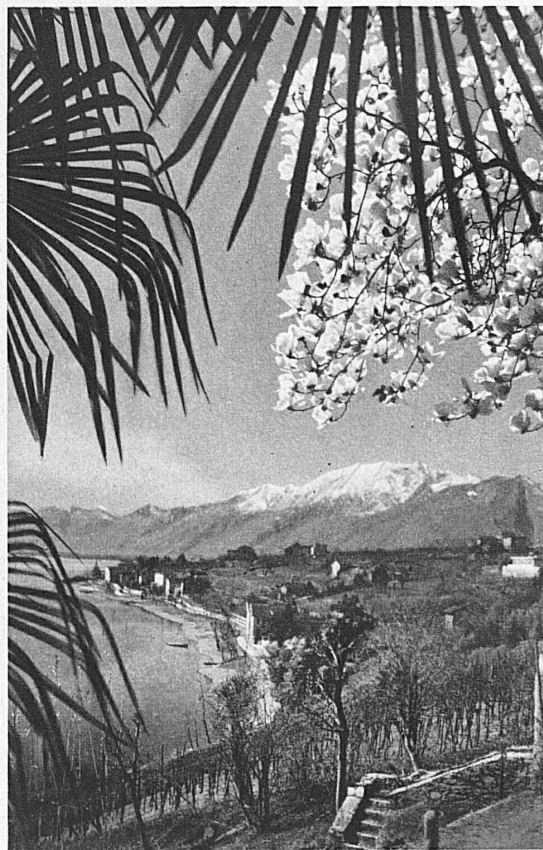
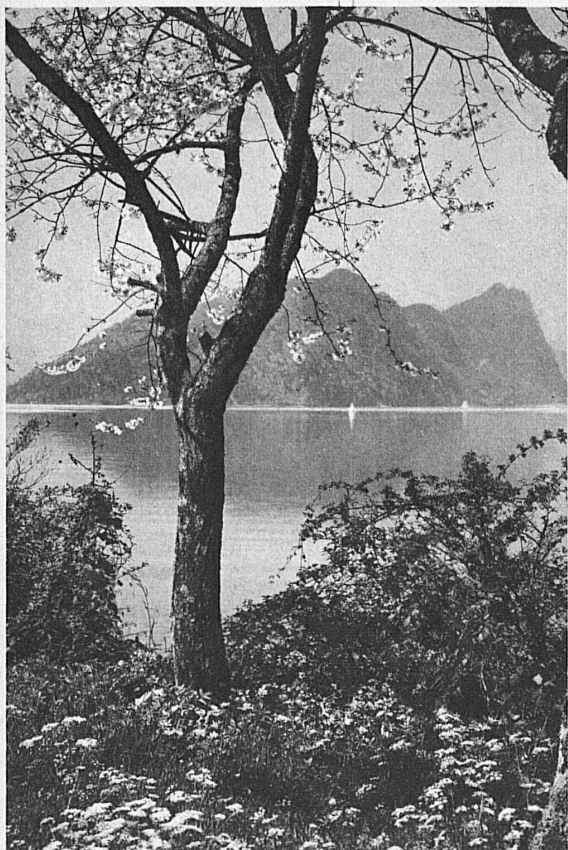
Costumes of Schwyz — Costumes de Schwyz — Schwyzer Trachten







Öffnung der Gotthardstrasse, die Zentral-  
schweiz und Tessin miteinander verbindet  
— Ouverture de la route du St-Gothard  
qui relie la Suisse centrale au Tessin  
— Opening of the St. Gothard-road,  
connecting Central Switzerland with the  
Ticino



Links: Der Bürgenstock und der Vierwald-  
stättersee — A gauche: Le Bürgenstock  
et le Lac des Quatre-Cantons en Suisse  
centrale — Left: The Bürgenstock in Central  
Switzerland, Lake of Lucerne

Rechts: Locarno im Frühling — A droite:  
Locarno (Tessin) au premier printemps —  
Right: Locarno in springtime