

Schaffhauserland : portrait of a small Canton

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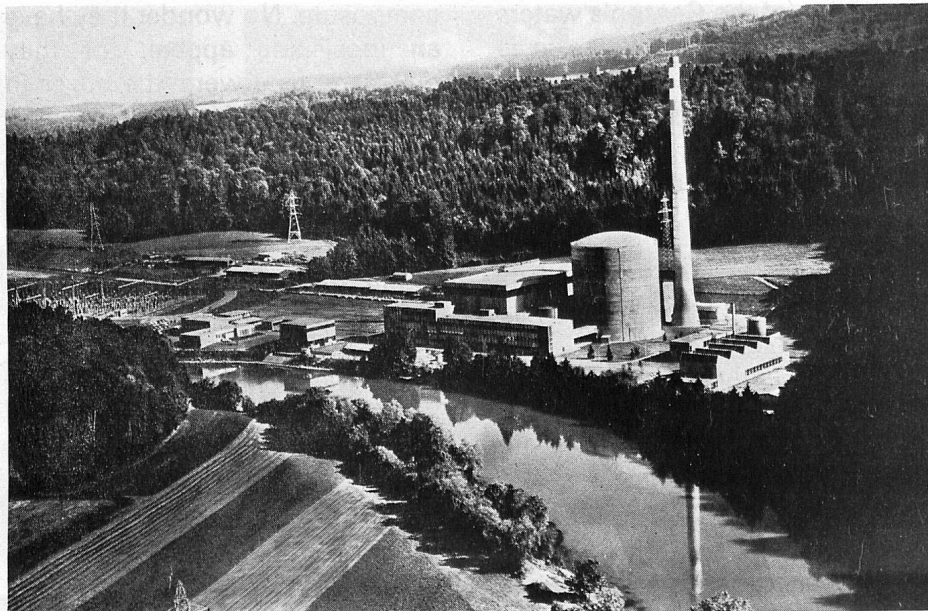
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also be found in comparing it with other countries. Firstly in this connection, one has to point out the great dependence on imports from abroad which Switzerland's energy supplies are subjected to as compared with other countries. Since practically only water power and wood are domestic energy sources, our dependence on imports from abroad reaches around 85% of the whole energy supply. This fact provides problems not only with regard to energy provisioning, but is also important with regard to the balance of payments. To summarize, it can be stated that Swiss energy provisioning, simplifying grossly, is marked by the following characteristics:

- the turbulent increase in energy consumption since 1950
- the preponderant share of fuel oil in the total energy supplies
- the prevalent share of warmth in energy used
- the high proportion of individual consumption
- a strong dependance on fuel imports from abroad
- the predominance of the private sector with regard to energy forms suitable for easy storage such as mineral oil, coal and wood, as well as preponder-



Nuclear works of Mühleberg BE.

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ance of public enterprise concerning energy supplies tied to wires and ducts, i.e. electricity and gas

- rather low *per capita* consumption as compared to other industrial countries.

It is on these characteristics that our present main problems of energy supplies rest to a large extent. The vast growth of energy consumption since 1950 has led to increasing dependance on imports and vulnerability of energy

provisioning. It has also reached the brink line when further claims on the environment by energy production, distribution and consumption have become controversial.

Only if the quantity of energy necessary for the public good and in ecologically justifiable forms is secure and energy provisioning functions reliably, can energy contribute its share properly towards the welfare and improvement of the quality of life.

Schaffhauserland

Portrait of a Small Canton

Biographical Notes

Fritz Senft was born at Wettingen (Aargau) on 11th May, 1922. He was educated at the training college of Schiers and became a primary teacher. He studied German philology and history at Zurich University. He has been teaching since 1946, first in a commune in the Aargau and then for 16 years in Schaffhausen. In 1971, he returned to the Limmat valley and has been teaching at the primary school of Geroldswil since then. He is also active as a writer and has published a number of poems, tales and essays. As chairman of a commission of the Teachers' Association, he is actively engaged on work connected with youth literature and has many other cultural interests.

Without any difficulty, a native of Schaffhausen will be able to outline the position of his Canton on a blank map. It corresponds to a promontory jutting out furthest North, reminding one of many things, amongst them the crusty end-bit of a loaf, much sought after by experts and children. Again looking at the map, one might think of a kind of geographical collage, for the various Schaffhausen zones meet in a most unpredictable way. The

Rhine is their support, even though only on one side, but showing in an unmistakable way that it alone knows the world. All the other waters are rills, small tributaries which rarely, mostly only after heavy downpours, swell into prominence. Under modest names, often marked only as brooks or rivulets, they amble through woods and meadows or meander through scattered villages.

Thus, on the whole, the power of

expression of the Canton's waters remains modest, all the more so as they collect nowhere to lakes, either natural or artificial. But in the main region as well as in the two appertaining parts, one is «on the Rhine»; it is its course which determines an upper and lower part of the Canton; it is its individuality which causes many far-reaching relationships. However, it does not yet play the part of the European river of fate here, but, having tasted the breath of the wide world in the Lake of Constance, it quite likes to return to provincialism. It hardly seems aware even of the sensation of its foaming precipitous hurl; for Schaffhausen, though, and its history, the Rhine Fall means more than just a much-visited spectacle, immortalized again and again in film and picture.

Small Cantons depend on propping up their self-assurance by many things in order to enhance a uniformity not naturally accorded them geographically. A compact mountain valley may have it easier in this respect, but in a composite region there is always the danger of patch-work, as if nature were against any boundaries fixed in an arbitrary manner. Human life relations, however, create their own laws which cannot be undermined; for they are conditional on many things: the wide sky, the reluctant soil, the wind and the frost, the economic value, too, which lies behind material beauties.

The many vantage points on Schaffhausen soil offer opportunity for a structural survey. Much of the enchantment which their horizon reveals is already inherent in their names. Whatever they are called, Herrentisch, Wolkenstein, Kerzenstuebli, Hagen, Radegg, Hurbig or else, they impress one with the up and down of hill lines, fields or tree tops and show a world resting largely in itself, definable pictures of peaceful

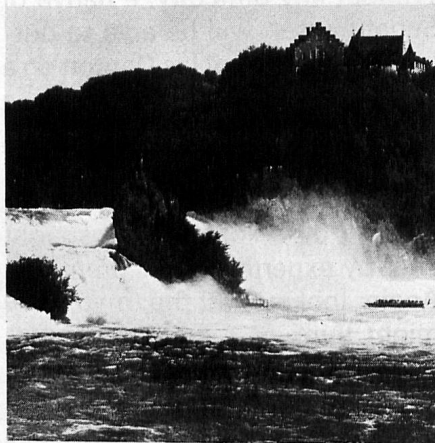
composure. No wonder they have an irresistible appeal, for they represent, as it were, the boxes in spacious recreation halls.

In particular, this applies to the Randen which, with its limestone, forms a last vigorous Jura wave. Like terraces, it rises from the Rhine groove and becomes an extensive wooded isle. Between its high uplands the valleys are marked like engravings, and berries grow on the dry earth and in early summer the rare lady's slipper. Dreams whirled up by swarms of moths, celebrate their return in winter in the dance of the snowflakes, when deer and hare are anxious to find the fodder crib, or when wild boar packs move over from the legendary «Schwedenschanze».

For how many Schaffhausen men and women the Randen district means the true landscape dear to their hearts! Perhaps this is because nowhere else are they able to discover wide horizons as is possible here, horizons which foster pioneering dreams. They gather invigorating strength from the wondrous play of light and shadow, sunshine and mist, and the many tortuous paths, even if they have walked them hundreds of times already, put a spell on them and stimulate them to adventure.

Other parts, too, are marked by equally characteristic fascination,

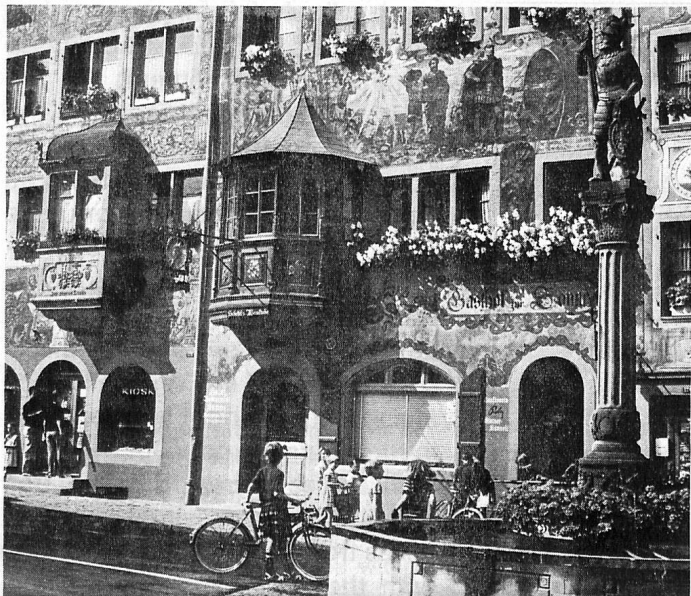
The Rhine Fall (ONST).



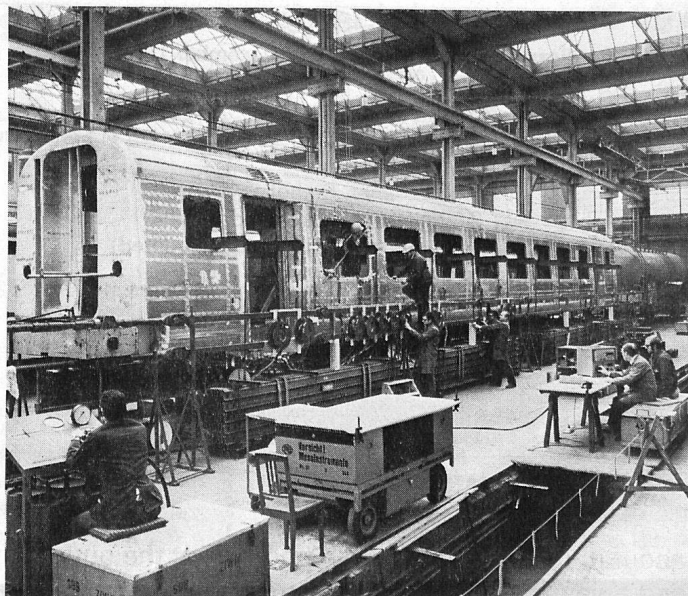
so for instance the Reiat which lies opposite the Randen, but is divided by a North/South valley with wider slopes. With its stony fields the Reiat gives one a more austere impression. In many parts it has preserved the character of *terra incognita*. But in spite of that, modern inroads have been made in the mainly peasant settlements of yesteryear, small housing estates of people who are in search of regeneration away from city noise. That is by no means the same as retreating into solitude, it simply denotes a certain reserve, keeping some distance, for which one is prepared to put up with certain things: the hard rule of winter, the biting, cutting North wind, the often severe drops in temperature. The villages further back on the Reiat are close to, in fact almost touch the Hegau district of Germany's Baden, where ancient volcanoes dominate the scene like so many forges grown cold.

They were already quite extinct, already cold, when hunters of the stone age left their traces evidenced by discoveries near Thayngen in the Kesslerloch and in the Weier. In this boundary zone, topographical curiosities and prehistoric mementoes counterbalance each other. Yet at the same time, at the back of the scientist who makes his research, industrial chimneys smoke away, and the German Railways let their railbuses dash elegantly along the bends.

Modern traffic has woken up Thayngen and other frontier places from their sleeping beauty slumber and given their development a strong stimulus. But then, aren't there also imputations in the fact that Schaffhausen, due to its position has become a transit region? From the experiences of generations one knows that one is rather exposed, in good as in threatening matters. The many anecdotes in this connection do



The main street without traffic at Stein am Rhein (ONST).



Erection of a CFF wagon at Neuhausen (SIG).

perhaps not quite correspond to the realities. The pace-makers of a peace which one could trust wholeheartedly, have not many difficulties today. One lives in neighbourly accord with them, though they wear a different cap of office and speak a slightly alien vernacular. And very often, it is the small frontier traffic which balances the problems of the large relationships across the frontiers.

Thanks to the versatility inspired by diversity, one has learnt to give breathing space to the limited environment. It is not by accident that the centres of gravity of commerce and trade are situated on the periphery. This applies above all to the town which one loves to call the *Munotstadt* after the peculiar fortress, the Munot. With equal justification, Schaffhausen is called the town of the beautiful oriel windows. In this, incidentally, lies a certain ambiguity; for with the surrounding countryside the town itself has become something of an inquisitive bay window of Switzerland as a whole. Consequently a further comparison which may sound rather old-fashioned, but which is confirmed

by Schaffhausen's ability to mirror its past most attractively and happily in its present.

History has dealt gently with Schaffhausen's original market and storehouse centre. Progress was based on sound sense of moderation, and anything which looked like rashness was avoided. In fact, the transition from the artisan's world to modern industry came to pass in quite a discreet manner. The old character of the town has hardly been impaired, and the quarters added in the course of time show that continuity which induced the historian Johannes von Mueller (1752-1809) to call Schaffhausen a model of a free Small State, ruled with wisdom and justice.

Of course, the town has remained the chief town - so well expressed in the figure of speech «the people behind the Randen»! Yet, for a long time already, these people have lived no longer as simple folk from beyond the city's boundary, whether they come from Schleithem or from one of the villages in the fertile Klettgau. On the contrary, their origin has given them strength of character. It is they, too, who know how to

keep up their pithy dialect. Their way of life is documented by the heraldry of many commune crests, and in addition the ever recurring vine-cutting knife indicates widespread viniculture.

A drive across the Hallauerberg, a ramble on the heights near Wilchingen provide some unforgettable memories. It seems as if the landscape itself were trying to move away from its confined space and to compete with the shifting clouds in an endeavour to be set in motion. And yet the land, coloured by the various seasons, succumbs to a wondrous static state. An epic splendour lies over it when summer delights in spreading corn fields, when October triumphs in the vineyards, or when frost sprinkles the lowlands with wintry jewellery. Neunkirch, the only townlet amongst numerous villages, preens itself in a haze of valour. It is marked by an almost sober and severe main street which, in harmony with the still preserved gate-tower, cuts across the domain.

Here, too, one may say that the Canton reserves most of its beauty to quiet hedonists and connoisseurs. One can't make a lot of fuss

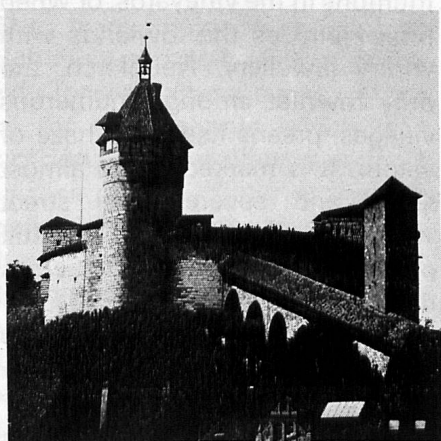
A few figures (after the census of December 1970)

Surface area: 298 km²
Population: 72,854 (in 34 communes; the town of Schaffhausen 38,151)
Denomination: 46,772 Protestants
23,277 Roman Catholics
2,805 other denominations
Language: German (foreign inhabitants not counted)
Agricultural estates: 1,794
Tourism: 900–1,000 beds
Industrial undertakings: 107 (10,893 employees). Basis 1974
Individual firms: 938
Limited companies: 234
Income per head: Fr. 12,620.— (Swiss average: Fr. 13,000.—)

about it; it lies off the beaten track and away from the tourist centres eager for new fields. It wants to be explored in a quiet, contemplating way, including hospitable inns which often lie on old pilgrims' paths.

Tourist traffic is spelt with capital letters, though, near the already mentioned Rhine Fall, which has resulted in Neuhausen acquiring urban status and reputation. Goethe and Moerike as well as eminent painters and engravers paid homage to one of nature's wonders. Only Stein am Rhein, the townlet in the upper part of the Canton, could possibly bear comparison. Not for nothing one likes to call it the «visitors' room», for its position at the foot of Castle Hohenklingen and near the islets

The Munot fortress in Schaffhausen, built from 1564 to 1585 (ONST).



at the outlet of the Untersee of the Lake of Constance is unique. Its artistically painted facades are a treasure for old and young visitors and are well suited to crown an enchanting boat trip up the Rhine. The Steiner Zipfel protrudes into German territory like a wild sucker. A wag once called the district *zipfelsinnig*, tip-minded. And indeed the historic development of the Steiner Zipfel has left many peculiarities. Amongst them a hamlet near Ramsen called Moscow, presumably a memory of the Russo-Napoleonic wars. Customs posts are in abundance, grey frontier-stones even more plentiful. They surround, too, like a witches' circle, Buesingen, a German enclave completely embedded in Schaffhausen territory, but which one has long been able to visit without identity papers and formalities.

Thus a whimsical past becomes alive almost at every step. It impressed the hallmark of early and earliest cultures on the landscape, it reveals many an error and makes us contemplate at the same time that right in the end lies on the side of trust rather than of brute force. At times a higher artistic sense seems to be involved; what would the human spirit be if it could not be kept in suspense by existing problems! Even the lower, the Southern part of the Canton is proof of this; for although it is not

much talked of, it forms nevertheless a stubbornly constructed and picturesque complement.

Is it indicated to consider the Land of Schaffhausen as a consequence of blind chance, or should one not make a series of fortunate providential circumstances responsible for its origins and development? If one stops to think how much has grown from diversity to a way of life, one cannot be at a loss for the right answer. That, in turn, puts the concept of homeland to the correct denominator, namely on the reverence which arises from any tested relationship with the world and any genuine emotion.

*Fritz Senft
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Oriel adorning a house in the old quarter of Schaffhausen, a town which is outstanding for its fine old residential buildings, right in the heart of the city. The «Oberstadt» boasts some particularly impressive specimens adorned with well-preserved, artistically treated façades and picturesque oriels. The stamp picture of the new 2-franc stamp shows the oriel on the house «Zum Buchsbaum» built in 1657. Different characteristics point to the sculptor Lorenz Schreiber as the designer of the oriel, although no written attestation subsists.