

# The connection between a Swiss monument and a Swiss-Kiwi

Autor(en): [s.n.]

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand**

Band (Jahr): **69 (2003)**

Heft [9]

PDF erstellt am: **22.07.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-945630>

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## This and That Corner

### Canton Appenzell

The Appenzellerland is a green, hilly region which follows the line of the Alps through Eastern Switzerland, and its alternating ridges and ravines, forests and meadows are comparable with those of the Emmental in Canton Berne. Both regions produce world famous cheese. Appenzell, just south of Lake Constance, reaching its highest point in Santis (2504m) in the Alpstein range, is the only Swiss canton which is completely surrounded by another canton (St Gallen). It is subdivided into two independent half cantons, established in 1597 following democratic votes in the two religious communities, Appenzell-Ausserrhoden being Protestant and Appenzell-Innerrhoden Roman Catholic. The division also reflects a geographical difference: Innerrhoden consists mainly of the Alpstein and Santis massifs, while Ausserrhoden takes in the upland region to the north of the Santis range.

Many ancient customs have survived and are carefully nurtured in the more mountainous areas of Eastern Switzerland, in Toggenburg and Appenzell. Folk art is deeply rooted in Appenzell tradition. Folk music played by string bands (violins, cellos, double basses, dulcimers) and the handsome local costumes also play an important part in the ancient traditions.

There are numerous jokes on the lack of height of the people from the canton of Appenzell. For example :

People from Appenzell have no fleas, but fleas might well have Appenzellers.

Why are there so many small Appenzellers and so few tall ones? The small ones are the result of domestic relations and the tall ones of foreign relations.

### Kasesalat nach Appenzeller Art (cheese salad)

300gr Appenzeller cheese (tasty cheese)

1 onion

chives

3 tbsp oil

vinegar

pepper

Cut cheese in thin slices, and onion and chives finely. Mix oil, vinegar and pepper and add to cheese. Leave for one hour, mixing regularly. Enjoy this salad with a piece of homemade bread.

### Appenzell Chas-Chuechli (cheese savoury)

This recipe is very quick to make and delicious if eaten fresh and crispy.

150gr Appenzell cheese (tasty cheese)

20mls milk

250gr flour

1 tbsp baking powder

salt

20mls beer

4 eggs

Grate cheese. Bring milk to the boil and add cheese until melted. Let cool and add sifted flour and baking powder. Add beer and one egg yolk at a time while stirring mixture. Beat egg whites and salt until stiff, and mix with cheese. Place teaspoon-fuls of mixture in deep fryer (at 180C) until golden brown.

*Bon Appetit  
Lisette*

## The connection between a Swiss monument and a Swiss-Kiwi

Yes, there is such a connection! **Hans Iten of Auckland** has become aware in recent years of his Grandfather's part in the creation of the 'William Tell monument' of Altdorf/ Switzerland. Hans says that the fact that his grandfather Dominik Iten-Zumbach (1850-1929) posed as a model for William Tell was never really talked about in earlier years in his family. Looking back now and knowing what an attraction this monument has been to people from all walks of life for over a century, it is only natural that 'our Hans Iten' is deservedly proud of his grandfather. After all, the monument's creator, Richard Kissling, must have been happy with his model, as he was able to create the image of Tell as a freedom loving, awe-inspiring and self assured man reflecting the attributes of a common but proud peasant farmer of his time. It is said



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that the artist Kissling frequented many a combined dairy farmer get-together with cattle market in Altdorf, Buerglen or Schattdorf until he found the perfect model for his 'William Tell' in Dominik Iten. According to a historic document by Dr. Ernst Zurnbach of Altdorf (a distant relative of the late Dominik Iten), it was on the occasion of a visit by Kissling, that he (the artist) saw Iten walking

along with the scythe on his shoulder and leading one of his sons on his left hand back from cutting grass to the stable on his farm. Dr. Zurnbach also mentions that Iten's trouble for "posing as a model" was rewarded by Kissling with a (Zabig), an evening meal .... ! In this connection it is interesting to note that the legend of William Tell is much older than the monument in his



**Das Modell**

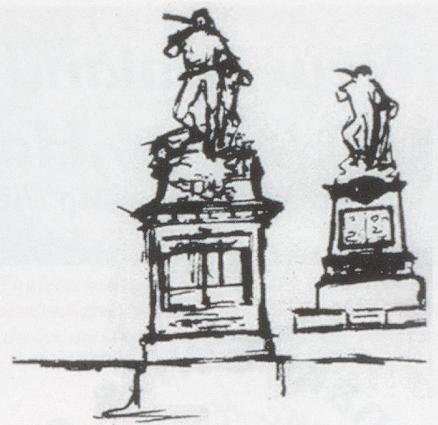
honour at Altdorf. In the history book of Canton Uri we find the statement that the story of William Tell was first mentioned in an entry of 1470 in the 'white book' (Das weisse Buch) of Sarnen. It is a fact that it matters little to the Swiss people that Tell probably never existed. The story in itself was and is revered as an expression of love for freedom from all foreign oppression. And so it is for most Swiss Kiwis. We like to believe that William Tell was born in Buerglen, we love the frescoed shrines of Altdorf where he is said to have shot the apple from his son's head. We believe according to the School history lesson of yesteryear,

that Tell escaped near Fluellen from an Austrian boat, and that he ambushed and shot the villainous Gessler in the 'hollow lane' (Hohle Gasse) near Kuessnacht.

Looking at the Tell monument we see in our imagination a 'down-to-earth' mountain farmer leading his son in a 'fatherly manner' from the alps to the valley below. For me the monument not only reflects the understanding of freedom from overlords, it also depicts the childlike trust from the son to the father, a natural understanding born in the ruggedness of the mountains.

We could say that Richard Kissling the artist, by creating the monument of William Tell transformed the legendary hero into a monument of strength and reliability of a whole nation. Richard Kissling was born in 1848 in Wolfwil, Canton of Solothurn. He wanted to become a sculptor and absolved an apprenticeship in 1863 followed by a time of professional fulfilment becoming a world-class sculptor in Rome, the centre of the art in those days. In Switzerland, his country of birth, Kissling found fame first as the creator of the 'Alfred Escher' monument in front of the railway station of Zurich. (Escher was the instigator of the Gotthard- Railway

- 1863) 30 different models for the William Tell monument were submitted



*Richard Kissling's model that found favour with the Jury of the sculptor's commission.*

by various sculptors and in 1892 Kissling was awarded first prize and duly charged with the creation of 'our William Tell monument', as we know and love it. In 1895 the monument was officially welcomed at Altdorf and soon became a national symbol reflecting the countrywide and unified patriotism of the day. It is a reflection of our time that it takes a great deal more than a monument of yesteryear to summon patriotic feelings for the average Swiss in 2003, but the fact remains that the Tell monument in Altdorf is one of the most loved attractions for tourists and locals alike and according to statistics there is not a day when no cameras go 'click' in front of our hero with his son.

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