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Gordon Chapman

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IV.

VALASIANS ALL

Gordon Chapman

Like seeds blown on winds of change
These trees are evidence,
People, ideas, some piece of the ancient soul
Of this place, this valley, this passageway
Produced these trees across mountains, oceans,
Strange and unsettled lands,
And yet are rooted here like Romans, Etruscans,
Celts, Gauls, Germans, Neolithic bones;
Valasians all
Born here from ancient seeds
Even as we are.

Valasians are known for their warmhearted hospitality. In 1991, they demonstrated this by inviting descendants of those who emigrated back to learn about and renew their ties to the Valais in celebration of the 700th anniversary of the Swiss Confederation. In reciprocation, descendants from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, and the United States presented trees native to their countries to the canton to commemorate these ties of ancestry. Reflections on the symbolic meaning of the trees are presented in the poem "Valasians All" written by Gordon Chapman for the occasion. The trees have been planted in a grove in Sion.