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Benedict von Tscherner, *Soldaten. Vielf alt der Schicksale in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. Preface by Anselm Zufluh

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at the barren and sun-scorched hills of Santa Clara and complained, "Oh these red hills! This roily [muddy] water!" (p. 32) The family lived first in a willow shanty, then in a dugout in the ground, and finally in an adobe house. When the crops failed, the Stücki family went hungry, and they also had to make almost everything by hand. Mary Ann's story is one of remarkable pioneer courage and perseverance.

The Stückis moved to Bunkerville, Nevada, which had an even dryer and hotter climate. Mary Ann married John George Hafen in 1873 as his second wife, following the Mormon doctrine of polygamy. Having other families to support, he offered her little financial aid, and he was mostly remembered as the father of their seven children. Mary Ann's youngest child, LeRoy Hafen (1893-1985), became a university professor and was one of the most distinguished and prolific historians of the American West.

Mary Ann enjoyed a long life, and she died in 1946 in her ninety-second year. During that time, she witnessed the transition of southern Utah and Nevada from challenging wildernesses to a part of the modern American technological marvel. For example, she walked to Salt Lake City to get married, a journey that took ten days. Over forty-five years later, in 1920, she drove there in an automobile. Mary Ann Stücki Hafen's book is a highly respected account of how some Swiss Americans came to a new country and prospered despite all hardships.

- Kurt Winkler

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Benedict von Tscharnar, *Soldaten. Vielfalt der Schicksale in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. Preface by Anselm Zurfluh. (Infolio éditions & Éditions de Penthes: Gollion and Geneva, 2010).

This volume, available also in French, is part of the de Penthes series *Schweizer in der Welt–Suisses dans le monde–Svizzeri nel mondo–The Swiss Abroad*. It offers 26 brief biographical sketches that begin with an entry about the knight, commander, imperial bailiff and minnesinger Werner von Homburg (1284–1320) and conclude with Basil Eugster (1914–1984), Lieutenant-General in the British Army and Commander of the Irish Guard. The reader gains an impressive chronologically ar-

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ranged glimpse of Swiss men serving in armies abroad, among them people such as François Le Fort (1655–1699) in the service of Russia as Admiral, Vice Roy of Novgorod, and friend of Czar Peter I. the Great. As his educator Le Fort was influential in promoting the Czar's intent of modernizing Russia in the image of Western European nations, especially by the Czar's westward journey of 1697–1698. Premature death prevented Le Fort from witnessing the creation of St. Petersburg, one of his important projects, that became home to many West Europeans, among them the family of Dorothea Maria Merian, the daughter of the famous Maria Sibylla Merian (1647–1717) of Basel origin, the founder of German entomology, that is, the scientific study of insects.

Three Swiss Americans are included in the work: Henry Bouquet (1714–1765) of the Royal American Regiment in British service in the American colonies, a theoretician of backwoods warfare, and victor of the battle of Bushy Run that opened the Ohio valley to the white invasion; Heinrich Hartmann Wirz (1823–1865) who late in the American Civil War was appointed commander of the Andersonville Prison in Georgia, was held responsible for the near famine conditions the Northern army's scorched earth policy had inflicted on Georgia with especially disastrous effects on the prison camp, and after a show trial in Washington was hanged in 1865; and Emil Frey (1838–1922) who fought on the side of the North, was captured by the South, and held hostage for a southern captain the North had condemned to death; Frey returned after the war to Switzerland and was active in Swiss politics and diplomacy.—Among 20th century personalities are featured Karl Lennart Oesch (1892–1978), Chief of Staff of the Finnish Army in World War Two; Hans Hutter (1913–2006), volunteer in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) on the Republican side; and Franz von Werra (1914–1941), a daring pilot in the German Air Force who hailed from a family in the Wallis. Many of the entries list one or more reference titles at the end, and a pen drawing of each individual is added to a biographical sketch.

In the book's "Preface" the historian Anselm Zurfluh, the director of the Musée de Penthes, outlines its approach to the story of the Swiss abroad. "No people, no country," he declares, "lives by itself. All claim their place in the world, have neighbors, partners, maintain ties with them or need to reckon with them" (7). Furthermore, "homo sapiens, homo mobilis," that is, humans are by nature beings on the move. Any

country, therefore, has an inside and an outside dimension. The outer aspect centers on numerous individuals who are widely dispersed over the globe where they represent their country and create institutions with features of their land of origin. Thus the goal of the Musée de Penthes and of its undertakings is to present "a dynamic profile of the country as it is outside of its national borders," that is, as it is shaped by Switzerland's military, diplomatic, economic, religio-cultural and settler presence abroad (9). Zurfluh prefers the German term "Weltschweizer" to "Auslandschweizer" because the latter seems to imply "foreignness, distance, being not quite acceptable." "Weltschweizer," "Swiss in the World," would therefore be a proper name for people with Swiss roots, but who spent or are spending their active lives permanently or for a significant time outside of the home country somewhere in the world.

The book *Soldaten* also presents an extended essay by Benedikt von Tscharnern, the author of the biographical sketches, who served as ambassador of Switzerland to the European Union, the Organization of Security and Co-operation in Europe, and to France. Since his retirement he serves as president of the Foundation for the History of the Swiss Abroad that is domiciled at the Musée de Penthes in Geneva. Von Tscharnern explains that military service abroad was [until the American and French Revolutions] a profession dedicated to the protection of rulers and their countries as well as to the pursuit of the rulers' goals, but generally was not viewed as a patriotic duty. Foreign military service provided the wealthy with investment possibilities since the service of a regiment they established could be "sold" to an interested buyer and provide a major source of revenue, a system of which also Swiss cantonal elites made extensive use. As officers in military service abroad sons of the upper classes could gain experience in leadership and military affairs while the rank and file could find employment that for some was attractive.

In a "Postscript" the author of *Soldaten* attempts to present a "Gesamtbild," a general view, of the historical "Swiss soldier in the world, [or] at least some general traits" (181). The soldier may have been imbued by a yearning for adventure and by "Streitbarkeit," a proclivity to fight; he may have excelled in the skillful use of arms, in physical prowess, tenacity, minimal demands, and disciplined attack. Benedikt von Tscharnern considers the Swiss soldier's often mentioned attitude of "Treue," of fidelity to the regiment and its officers, as a kind of dis-

tancing himself from the strategic and political goals of a ruler. He was marked by the mentality of professional engagement, not by a commitment to the political goals of the overlord. The widely reported suffering of soldiers from homesickness reflected their deep roots in the Swiss region they hailed from; at times it could drive them to desertion and, if captured, result in severe penalties. Besides positive traits the author also mentions negative forces at work in military service abroad such as the inclination to physical violence, destructiveness, and cruelty. "Here good and evil dwell closely together," he observes. (182).

In the conclusion of his "Postscript" Benedikt von Tschärner also ponders Switzerland's present-day prohibition of foreign military service. He considers it as derived from the fear of a potential loss of much needed manpower in time of crisis; from the ideal of neutrality that forbids involvement in "Fremde Händel," that is, in foreign disputes, thereby minimizing the possible involvement of a foreign power in the internal affairs of Switzerland; and from the fear of uncontrollable recruitment of young people by foreign agents unconcerned about the well being of recruits and whose decision to serve in a military abroad might lead to disaster. Although the author recognizes these reasons as valid, he nevertheless holds "that here the State dares to limit the personal freedom of its citizens" (183). In his view "that "Bevormundung," that guardianship, is in our time not appropriate anymore" (ibid.). Today military service abroad should be left to personal decision, while prohibitions and regulations are "improper, superfluous" (ibid.). Von Tschärner holds that "in the conflicts of today's world a country like Switzerland may not stand aside uninvolved and with inaction" (183). Neutral states have a duty to help "preserve, maintain, and safeguard peace, to support the United Nations, to promote human rights and the rights of peoples, and to contribute to the possibility of enduring development" (183–184). Service in a framework of global unity rendered by soldiers, experts, teams or whole units of the Swiss Army should not be disallowed but applauded. Pupils and students should be taught about Switzerland's global responsibility because global conflicts, although apparently far removed from daily Swiss life, are nonetheless real and affect everyone.

To the book *Soldaten*, de Penthes has added one with the title *Frauen*, that is, about Swiss women abroad, and a volume *Inter Gentes* about Swiss diplomats and others involved in global affairs. The general

reader as well as the expert will profit from reading these volumes and from the rich historical perspective they provide. They deserve a wide readership and genuine recognition.

- Leo Schelbert

David Birmingham, *Switzerland: A Village History* (Swallow Press / Ohio University Press, 2004). New edition. 256pp. \$19.95 paper. ISBN 0-8040-1065-X.

This vividly interesting book is both a history of Switzerland and an intensive case study of one village. Of the nation's many boroughs, the author understandably selected Château-d'Oex, his childhood home. Château-d'Oex, 2010 population 3,231, is in the Canton of Vaud in the upper Saane valley, roughly 32km./20 miles east of Lake Geneva. While the author does not claim the village to be scientifically typical, its trials and victories are Swiss and fairly serve as a national microcosm. The author's supple prose is well served by sixteen pages of excellent pictures and illustrations.

The author lived in Château-d'Oex from 1947 to 1954 as a child, spent his teen years in Ghana, and returned to Switzerland in the 1990's as a visiting historian. From 1980 to 2001 he held the chair of Modern History in the University of Kent at Canterbury (England), where he is now an Emeritus Professor of History. His many books include *Portugal and Africa* (2004), *The Decolonization of Africa* (1996), and "The 1848 Unification of Switzerland" (in *History Today* 45, 1995). Birmingham recently gave a speech at the Library of Congress on Angola (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGh6U-aQrLo>).

Throughout the book, Birmingham interweaves very good descriptions of the major political, economic, and religious events affecting the village and the nation. In a classic village history approach, he provides details of the daily lives of the people that enhance our understanding and appreciation. These include—literally—"butchers, bakers, and candlestick-makers" chapter 7), Bern's military dominance, education, courting rituals and marriage patterns, dairy farmers (pp. 57-80), politics, religion, etc. Many of these are strikingly interesting, and lively prose communicates it well. For instance, included in the courting ritu-

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