

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 25 (1962)
Heft: [8]

Vorwort: Thoughts on first August
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THOUGHTS ON FIRST AUGUST

THE BIGGEST DRAWCARD for any Swiss all over the world and at home is a gathering to celebrate the country's National Day.

However, gay parties are only too often allowed to distract from the solemn thoughts that should be fostered for the occasion.

The tradition of the League of the Ruetli on the 1st August 1291, which represents a culmination of events that happened between the years 1247 and 1315, is providing us with a picture of the founders of the Swiss Confederation—a picture as beautiful as ever a people could desire of the originators of its Government. Six hundred and seventy-one years have passed since that historic event and yet the qualities which led that tiny confederation to succeed are still as valid today, for the individual as well as for leaders of big nations, as they were then.

Unshaken steadfastness in persevering towards the aim once selected; courage that suffered no abatement in spite of numerous disappointments; clear understanding of the necessary unification of the elements of political life; wisdom that chose an alternation in the use of prudent moderation and active resoluteness—these are the characteristics that brought into unity the country people of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden.

—W.R.