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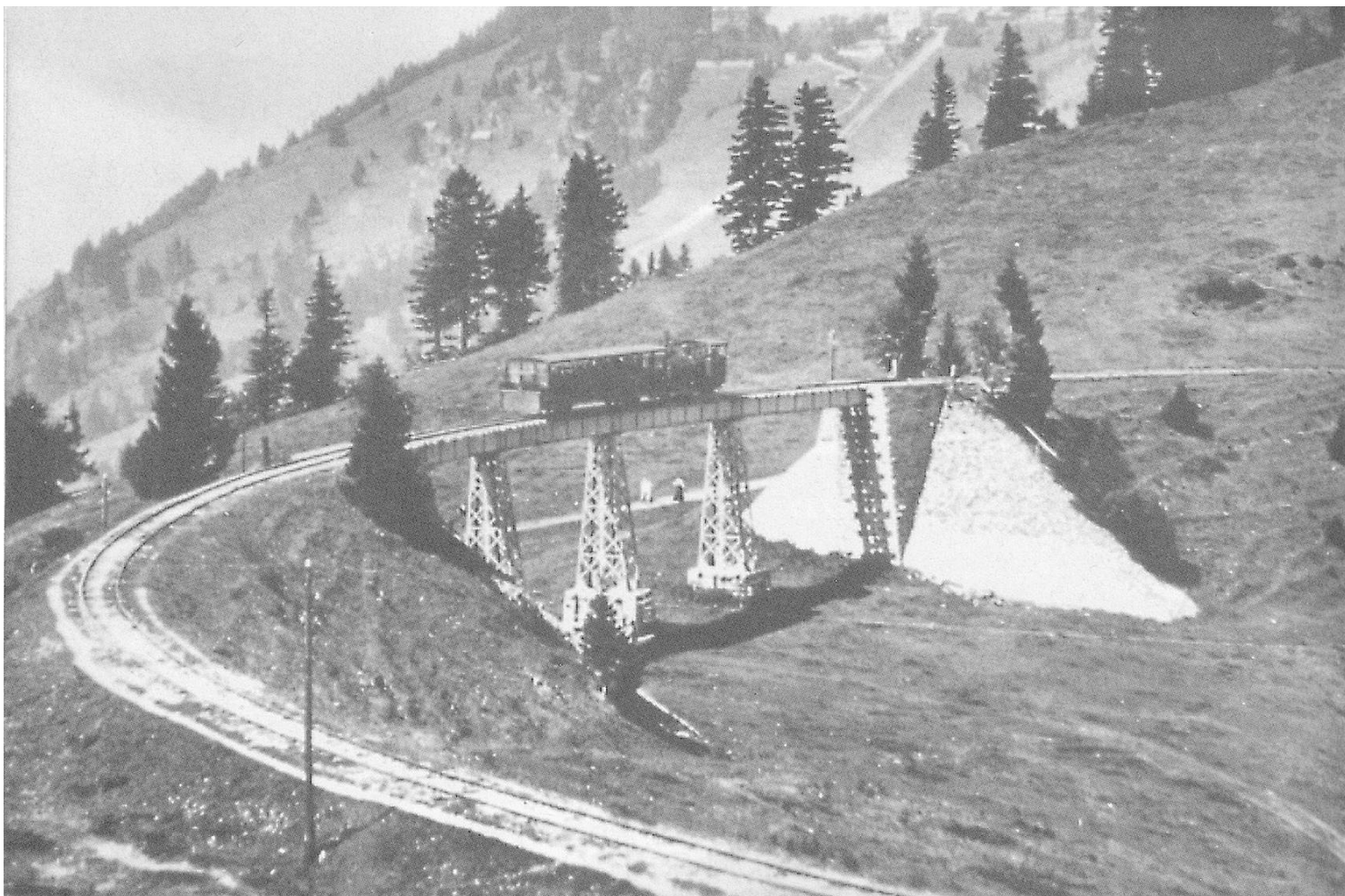
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Rigi-Kaltbad-Scheidegg-Bahn

by Brian Hemming

Above: RSB G3/3 No. 1 "Scheideck"
with B 4 on the viaduct in 1925

Photos: RCTS/J.E.Cull Collection

Featured in the last issue of Swiss Express was an article about a walk on the trackbed of a now closed and lifted railway on the Rigi. This railway was the RSB - the Rigi Kaltbad-Scheidegg-Bahn.

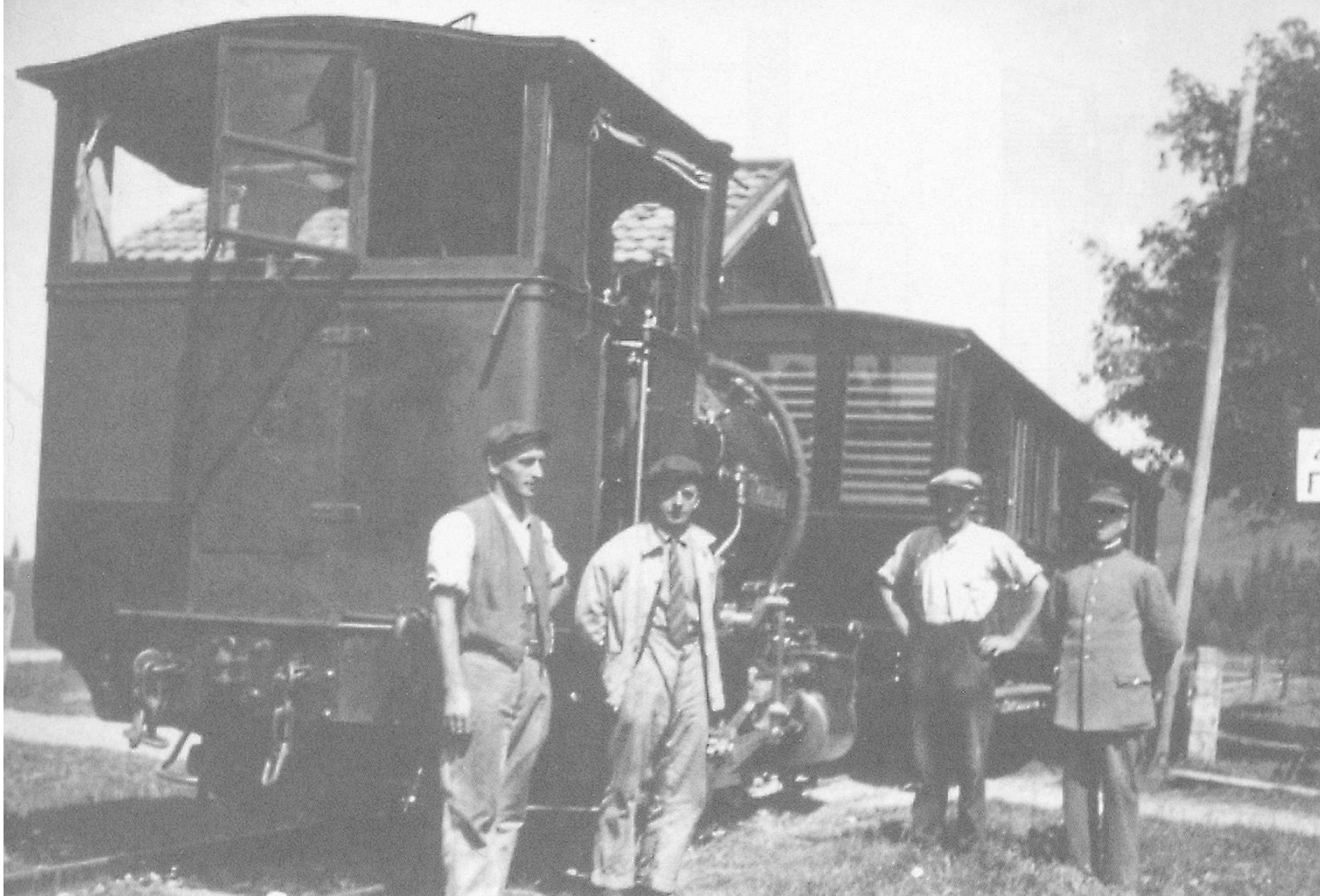
In 1871 Riggensbach had built the first public rack railway in Europe, the Vitznau-Rigi-Bahn (VRB) from Vitznau to Rigi Staffelhöhe which was extended on leased land to Rigi Kulm in 1873. Meanwhile the Arth-Rigi-Bahn (ARB) was being constructed from Arth (on the Zugersee) to Rigi Kulm and was opened in 1875. There were already a number of residential clinics and hotels on the Rigi and the coming of the railways greatly increased their popularity and brought about new developments. It was to connect Rigi Kaltbad with the Palace Hotel at Rigi First and the Hotel Rigi-Scheidegg that the 6747 metre long RSB was built in the period 1874-5.

The RSB was the second metre gauge railway

built in Switzerland with the first section being opened a little over a month after the complete opening of the Chemin de fer Lausanne-Echallens (LE). The RSB opened in two sections; the first from Rigi Kaltbad to Rigi Unterstetten on 14/7/1874 and the extension onward to Rigi Scheidegg on 1/6/1875. It was built to metre gauge and the overall height difference from end to end was only 200 metres. The maximum gradient of 50‰ meant that the line was adhesion operated throughout.

The service operated only in the summer and was in the hands of 3 steam locomotives built by SLM in 1874 (G3/3 Nos.1-3). Coaching stock consisted of 1 closed and 2 open coaches. In the final years 6 return trains operated daily during the peak season; the fare being 2.70F single, 4F return.

The ravages of the world-wide depression of the late 1920's severely affected the patronage



Above: The caption on the back of this picture says 'more personnel than passengers' 1933.

of the hotels and in turn the railway suffered from greatly reduced passenger loadings with the result that the service was temporarily discontinued on 21/9/1931. Occasional trains ran up to 1933 when all traffic ceased completely. The track was lifted in 1942 and the locomotives and rolling stock scrapped. The trackbed is now a footpath but the main items of civil engineering remain.

The Society is fortunate through the kindness of the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society to have been entrusted with the care of the photographic and postcard collection of the late John E. Cull. It is from this collection that we are pleased to publish photographs of the RSB, and particularly one of the viaduct which was more recently photographed by Fred Marriott and was published in the last issue of Swiss Express

Swiss Model Shops

Dave Howsam & Andy Micklethwaite intend to produce, through Swiss Express, a booklet listing model shops to visit in Switzerland. In addition to the name and address of the shop the vital information on how to reach it will be given. Main model lines stocked, year visited and any comments, ie speaks English, large stocks, discounted models etc. will be included. They would very much welcome contributions from members and these, giving the information outlined above, should be sent to Dave Howsam, 3 Balmain Road, Davyhulme, Manchester M41 5TR or Andy Micklethwaite, 15 Crabtree Avenue, Disley, Stockport SK12 2DD.

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