Despite its position at the heart of Europe and its quintessentially European nature, Switzerland’s history is often overlooked within the English-speaking world. This comprehensive and engaging history of Switzerland traces the historical and cultural development of this fascinating but neglected European country from the end of the Dark Ages up to the present. The authors focus on the initial Confederacy of the Middle Ages; the religious divisions which threatened it after 1500 and its surprising survival amongst Europe’s monarchies; the turmoil following the French Revolution and conquest, which continued until the Federal Constitution of 1848; the testing of the Swiss nation through the late nineteenth century and then two World Wars and the Depression of the 1930s; and the unparalleled economic and social growth and political success of the post-war era. The book concludes with a discussion of the contemporary challenges, often shared with neighbours, that shape the country today.

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A Concise History of Switzerland

CLIVE H. CHURCH

RANDOLPH C. HEAD
In memory of Margaret Ann Church, wife, friend and facilitator of studies of Switzerland
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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS  Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
AHV/AVS  Old Age and Survivors’ pension system
ASUAG  General Swiss Watch Industry Company Limited
        (Allgemeine Schweizer Uhrenindustrie AG)
AUNS/ASIN  Action for an Independent and Neutral Switzerland
BGB/PAB  Burghers, Artisans and Peasants Party
COCOM  [US] Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls
COMCO  Swiss Federal Competition Commission
EFTA  European Free Trade Association
EC  European Community, later EU (European Union)
ECHR  European Convention (or Court) on Human Rights
EEA  European Economic Area
FDP  Free Democratic Party (Radicals)
FINMA  Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority
GATT  General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP  Gross Domestic Product
HSBC  Hong-Kong and Shanghai Bank Corporation
MP  Member of Parliament
NA  Nationale Aktion gegen die Überfremdung von Volk und Heimat
NATO  North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSDAP  German National Socialist Workers party (Nazi Party)
OECD  Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECE  Organization of European Economic Cooperation
PBD  Conservative Democratic Party
SMH  Swiss Corporation for Microelectronics and Watchmaking Industries Ltd (Société de Microélectronique et d’Horlogerie)
SPS  Swiss Social Democratic Party
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<td>SVP/UDC</td>
<td>Swiss People’s Party</td>
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<td>UBS</td>
<td>formerly Union Bank of Switzerland; known simply as UBS after its 1998 merger with Schweizerische Bankgesellschaft</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
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<td>UNRRA</td>
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<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</td>
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