

A Nazi in the Family: The Hidden Story of an SS Family in Wartime Germany by Derek Niemann. Short Books Limited, 2018

ISBN 1780723717, 9781780723716

“Don’t distance yourself from this. The people who did this are like me. And like you”. These are the honest words of Derek Niemann, born and raised in Scotland, who had to come to terms with the revelation that his Grandfather was an S.S officer during the Holocaust. Derek Niemann is able to objectively tell the story of a loving husband and father who led a contradictory double life.

The book gives a personal account of Karl Niemann’s rise into the ranks of the Nazi Party discussing the social, political and economic climate that brought a young bank clerk from Hameln to the notorious Dachau concentration camp in Bavaria. Derek Niemann is able to give a fascinating insight into the inner workings of the camp system under the Nazis and the bureaucracy needed to organise the Holocaust. This story deals with not only the role that his grandfather played in the Holocaust but the impact on his family in particular the conflict between Karl and wife Minna. A Nazi in the Family goes much further than just recalling the work of the SS during the war but gives valuable insight into the process of denazification and the emotional trauma this left on Karl Niemann’s family who had to come to terms with the fact that their father was a Nazi war criminal. It is easy to paint the picture of the perpetrators of the Holocaust being blood-thirsty fanatical Aryans who wanted to see the destruction of the Jewish race but instead A Nazi in the family captures a complex story of an ordinary man who is involved in the greatest crime against humanity.