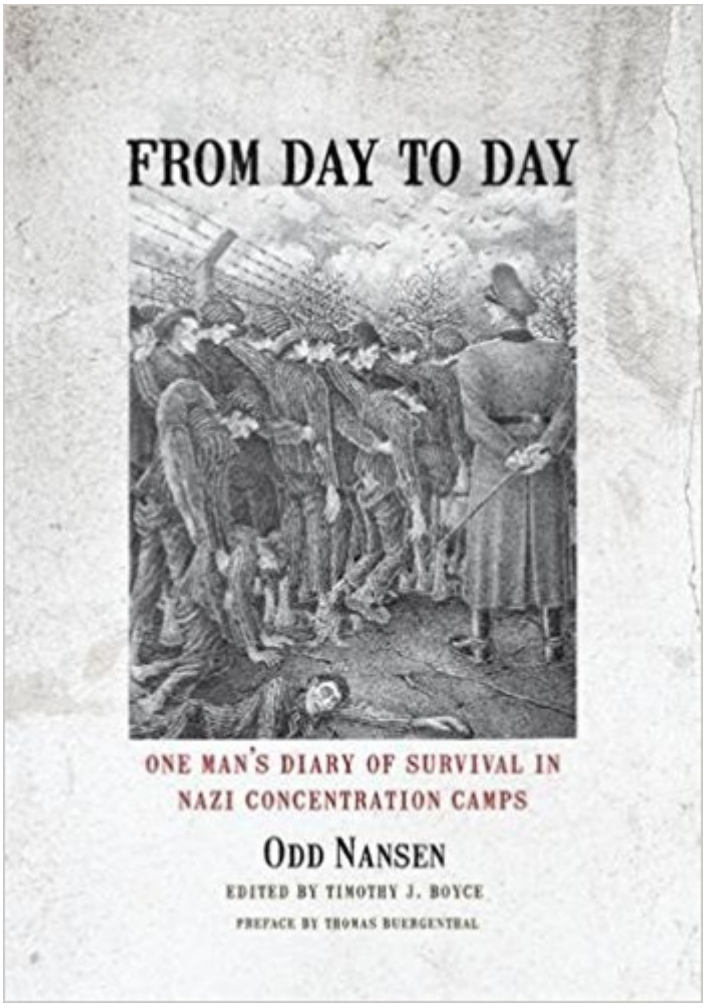
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From Day To Day: One Man's Diary Of Survival In Nazi Concentration Camps



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Synopsis

In 1942 Norwegian Odd Nansen was arrested by the Nazis, and he spent the remainder of World War II in concentration campsÃ¢â ¬â ¢Grini in Oslo, Veidal above the Arctic Circle, and Sachsenhausen in Germany. For three and a half years, Nansen kept a secret diary on tissue-paper-thin pages later smuggled out by various means, including inside the prisoners' hollowed-out breadboards.Unlike writers of retrospective Holocaust memoirs, Nansen recorded the mundane and horrific details of camp life as they happened, "from day to day." With an unsparing eye, Nansen described the casual brutality and random terror that was the fate of a camp prisoner. His entries reveal his constantly frustrated hopes for an early end to the war, his longing for his wife and children, his horror at the especially barbaric treatment reserved for Jews, and his disgust at the anti-Semitism of some of his fellow Norwegians. Nansen often confronted his German jailors with unusual outspokenness and sometimes with a sense of humor and absurdity that was not appreciated by his captors.After the Putnam's edition received rave reviews in 1949, the book fell into obscurity. In 1956, in response to a poll about the "most undeservedly neglected" book of the preceding quarter-century, Carl Sandburg singled out From Day to Day, calling it "an epic narrative," which took "its place among the great affirmations of the power of the human spirit to rise above terror, torture, and death." Indeed, Nansen witnessed all the horrors of the camps, yet still saw hope for the future. He sought reconciliation with the German people, even donating the proceeds of the German edition of his book to German refugee relief work. Nansen was following in the footsteps of his father, Fridtjof, an Arctic explorer and humanitarian who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1922 for his work on behalf of World War I refugees. (Fridtjof also created the "Nansen passport" for stateless persons.)This new edition, the first in over sixty-five years, contains extensive annotations and new diary selections never before translated into English. Forty sketches of camp life and death by Nansen, an architect and talented draftsman, provide a sense of immediacy and acute observation matched by the diary entries. The preface is written by Thomas Buergenthal, who was "Tommy," the ten-year-old survivor of the Auschwitz Death March, whom Nansen met at Sachsenhausen and saved using his extra food rations. Buergenthal, who later served as a judge on the International Court of Justice at The Hague, is a recipient of the 2015 Elie Wiesel Award from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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Customer Reviews

"A long-forgotten masterpiece. In his secret diary, written inside the Nazi camps, the Norwegian prisoner Odd Nansen paints a deeply affecting picture of everyday terror, sketching the inmates' lives and deaths with exceptional clarity and compassion. Rarely has the inhumanity of the camps been captured with such humanity. An invaluable document for anyone interested in the Nazi camps."Ã¢â ¬â ¢Nikolaus Wachsmann, author of KL: A History of the Nazi Concentration Camps"This extraordinary diary by a non-Jewish victim of the Nazi regime and its collaborators is a rich historical document. Nansen's stunning illustrations provide a pictorial narrative into the concentration camp world he endured. Superbly translated by Katherine John, his text renders his experience in clear, muscular prose. We see through his eyes and imagine what he describes. We follow him, day by day, as his diary traverses three and a half yearsÃ¢â ¬â ¢an eternity at that timeÃ¢â ¬â ¢and moves with him from the Norwegian camp system, the Norwegian regime, and occupied Norway to his perspective on the German camp of Sachsenhausen, the Nazi regime in Germany, and the final disintegration of the Third Reich.Timothy Boyce's introduction frames the diary beautifully, setting the diary years into the larger picture of Nansen's life with just the right balance between the private and the public. And his extensive editorial notes provide guideposts along the way."Ã¢â ¬â ¢DebÃƒÂ rah Dwork, Rose Professor of Holocaust History, Director, Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, and author of Flight from the Reich: Refugee Jews, 1933Ã¢â ¬â œ1946"This is one of the most searing contemporaneous accounts of the Holocaust, but also one of the best written of the great documents of World War II. It is a profound indictment of evil, a daily diary of torment and torture, yet also somehow a deeply moving love letter. It should find a place on the bookshelf of every home, be taught in every school, made into a movie, and feted for what it says about man's capacity for humanity in the face of satanic loathsomeness.

Mr. Nansen’s decency and courage in the most vicious of circumstances shines through on every page; he personifies the civilization for which the Allies fought."Ã¢â ¬â ¢Andrew Roberts, author of The Storm of War: A New History of the Second World War; Masters and Commanders: How Four Titans Won the War in the West, 1941Ã¢â ¬â œ1945; and Napoleon: A LifeFrom reviews of the 1949 edition: "From Day to Day is unlike any other record of personal war experience which has yet appeared. There have been plenty of other accounts of imprisonment and concentration camps but none by a man like Mr. Nansen. Writing with no thought of publication, merely to keep a record for his wife and to express his own boiling emotions, Mr. Nansen somehow created a remarkable book. Using stolen paper and stolen time, always in fear of being caught, he described each day’s adventures with stark simplicity and intimate authority. His book, although immensely long, is a continuously engrossing narrative. It is filled with vivid, concrete details, sharp character sketches, unspeakable horrors."Ã¢â ¬â ¢Orville Prescott, New York TimesFrom reviews of the 1949 edition: "Most citizens, one hears, are fed up with books about the atrocities of the Nazi concentration camps. But this book is different from all the others this reviewer has read. True, it does not slur over the unspeakable barbarities. But it rises above them and reminds us in never-to-be-forgotten pages how noble and generous the human spirit can be in the face of terrible adversity."Ã¢â ¬â ¢William L. Shirer, New York Herald-TribuneFrom reviews of the 1949 edition: "The first two-thirds of Day after Day can only be compared with Dostoevsky’s House of the Dead; but compared with the last third of Hr. Nansen’s book, The House of the Dead reads like Jane Austen. . . . It is a masterpiece. . . . The number of men who have successfully exploited the unique character of the diary as an art-form can still be counted on the fingers of one hand."Ã¢â ¬â ¢Times Literary Supplement

Odd Nansen, a Norwegian architect, organized relief efforts for Jews and other refugees beginning in 1936, and was imprisoned by the Nazis in a series of concentration camps. After the war, he remained active in humanitarian work until his death in 1973.Timothy J. Boyce practiced law for thirty-five years, most recently as the managing partner of the Charlotte office of Dechert LLP, an international law firm.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Tim Boyce and Vanderbilt University Press for bringing this remarkable work back into print. The thoughtful historical annotations underscore NansenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s credibility and validate the images and events portrayed in the secret diary. As the child of Holocaust survivors, I recognize the importance of first-hand witnesses in

Holocaust education. Holocaust survivors are nearly gone, dying of old age and leaving a vacuum that threatens to be filled by Holocaust deniers. This book is an antidote. Odd Nansen had a gift for translating both mundane and horrific observations with an uncanny lilt and unwavering candor. His words seem to flow with other-worldly clarity and his sardonic style can also be appreciated in his documentary sketches. By telling his own experiences and recounting reports he elicited from newly arriving prisoners, he has provided a singular personal account of the progress of World War II. The result is a remarkably readable epic that should be passed on to future generations.

If you think you understand the horror of the holocaust, you must read this book. It is a diary written inside the camps The author was held for almost five years in a series of German concentration camps. Although as a Norwegian he was spared the worst of the atrocities, he was up close with all of it. In an almost miraculous way he was able to keep his daily diary and successfully smuggle it out. This book collects his writings just as they were written. As you read it you watch the increasing horror and brutality of the camps; watch his moods rise and fall; and witness his vain hopes for an early end to the war or for his early release. Nanson is an incredible writer and artist. The book has both text and illustrations. It is very readable and the occasional drawing (done in real time) extraordinary. The book has hundreds of notes explaining who his prison mates were, what happened to them, and what was going on in the war at the time he was writing. This is an unusual and timeless book.

Extraordinary. Mesmerizing. Belongs in every history syllabus. This is much more than a diary about a man’s survival in various concentration camps. This is a historical record of life experienced in Grini, Veidal, & Sachsenhausen. From the very first diary entry, you are hooked. Nansen’s masterful use of language was intoxicating: some entries so jubilant, his love for wife Kari so profound, that he never seemed to repeat a verb or an adjective! Your heart soars when Odd’s heart soars. But, more than that, it’s Nansen’s clinging-to-humanity, his steadfast belief in the just and fair treatment of ALL prisoners, his immutable sense of humor that made From Day to Day: One Man’s Diary of Survival so beloved by me, the Reader. Timothy Boyce’s fine, illuminating footnotes provide context and clarity throughout this remarkable book.

This is an incredibly powerful book. Most people are familiar with the Holocaust, but Mr. Nansen brings the gamut of emotions to everyday events in the camp, from pain to shock and yes, even to humor.No one - not even the incredibly causal reader - should be intimidated by its length. Each

reader can decide how much he or she wants to read at each setting - because they are relatively short diary entries, you can choose to read just one and not be overwhelmed. Likewise, each reader doesn't have to read the book chronologically - it is a simple matter to just flip to any page, and you will be instantly moved by Mr. Nansen's observations.

This book should become a classic of world literature. It may be from inside a Nazi concentration camp, but the author is a world class humanitarian with serious literary talent. He has a unique voice -- one of eternal optimism and rare insight into what it is to be a human being. The optimism was consciously cultivated as a survival technique in the face of unbelievable cruelty by the petty thugs of the Third Reich. By virtue of this optimism Nansen was enabled to retain successfully the hope of regaining his life with his courageous wife and young children. Tim Boyce showed his own considerable humanitarianism in seizing upon the necessity to bring this book back to life again now. In doing so he edited it with great facility and grace ensuring that it will survive another generation within the broad context that his brilliant introduction and notes describe with real discernment. While the subject matter gets tougher with each page, the reader will find great reward in the clarion voices of both Nansen and Boyce. An unforgettable book. Bravo!

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