

# Darkness Over Germany: A Warning From History

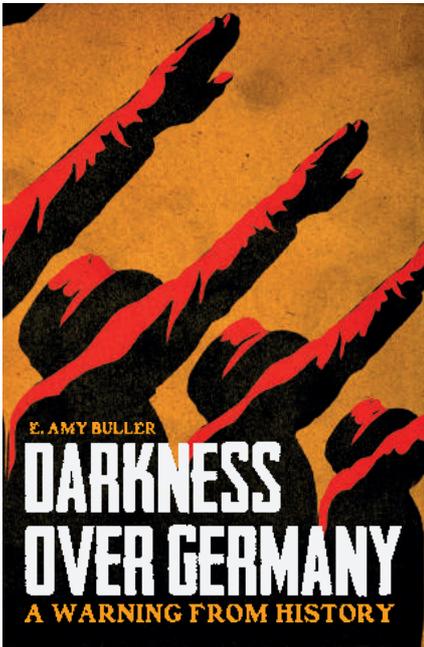
By E. Amy Buller

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**A timely reminder of how a message of hate  
once fuelled a nation to unite**

**New edition has a foreword by Kurt Barling,  
Professor of Journalism, Middlesex University  
London, and an afterword by Edmund Newell,  
Principal of the educational foundation,  
Cumberland Lodge**

**Originally published in 1943**



*Darkness Over Germany* delivers a stark warning from history of how a man with little political experience rose up as a voice of the people, a voice for the disenfranchised who were suffering the injustices of social inequality and unemployment. The hate and support grew until every problem the nation had was the fault of others. Then the nationalism became militarised and the hate led to a devastating war and genocide. All this came from an anger at the failures of politicians and a burning desire for change.

In this powerful book, a pioneering young woman, Amy Buller, recounts the hopes and fears of Germans engulfed in the rise of fascism during the 1930s. During the years leading up to the outbreak of war, Buller defied her critics and social norms by leading delegations of British intelligentsia to Germany to learn about and confront the appeal of the Nazis. She met some of the party's leading figures, including Rosenberg and von Ribbentrop. Privately, Buller also uncovered the stories of people from all walks of life, some who were embracing the National Socialism, others fearful of what it might lead to.

The book speaks of how Hitler and the Nazis stripped the German people of their freedoms and oppressed them, and how young people were swept along with the tide of hate. It tells the stories of the Germans whom Buller met, including their positivity about the forces uniting the country, and their terror that Hitler was the man at the helm. Some secretly denounced the regime but many felt it was their duty to embrace the changes taking place, a necessary evil for creating a better nation, regardless of the likely consequences - including war. They sought advice from Buller on the ethical quandary of whether to fight and protest against the Nazis, risking imprisonment and thereby the ability to protect their families and friends.

*Darkness Over Germany* is Amy Buller's recollection of these unlikely encounters and her analysis of how National Socialism took hold. It tells a remarkable and largely forgotten story of British-German relations in the 1930s. The book speaks resonantly of the need to stay vigilant and maintain dialogue in times of change and discord.

*"I have been thinking about the youth of this country. I took from my bookshelf a very remarkable book written by a godmother of mine, Amy Buller. It is called *Darkness Over Germany* and it was written during the war. It explains the almost religious grip that Nazism had over the youth of Germany... Of course, we are dealing with different fundamental spiritual needs, but if we are to play our part in trying to provide the answers that our youth require to today's problems, it is vital that we understand and repair our national strengths and weaknesses with regard to the protection and projection of the values that we as a country maintain."*

**'Soft Power & Conflict Prevention' Debate in the House of Lords, Friday 5th December 2014  
- Lord Ramsbotham**

#### **About the authors:**

**E. Amy Buller** studied German at Birkbeck College in London and had a lifelong association with Germany. After graduating she worked for the Student Christian Movement and at Liverpool University where she ran a hall of residence, gaining a reputation as a formidable organiser, networker and intellectual. Her close friends included the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple, and the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, A.D. Lindsay, who encouraged her ambitions to lead delegations of British intellectuals to Germany in the 1930s. Shortly after the publication of *Darkness Over Germany* in 1943 she was invited to Buckingham Palace to meet Queen Elizabeth. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth had been so impressed by the book that they offered to help her establish an educational foundation of her own at Cumberland Lodge, a former royal residence in Windsor Great Park.

Today the patron of **Cumberland Lodge** is Her Majesty The Queen and the charity adheres closely to its founding principles, tackling social divisions by equipping and inspiring people to exchange views and engage in constructive dialogue, to build more tolerant, peaceful and inclusive societies. It fosters learning and critical thinking through: subsidised study retreats for students; conferences, lectures and seminars involving leading figures in public life; mentoring schemes and scholarships for international students and early career researchers; and educational and cultural events for the local community. Cumberland Lodge celebrates its 70th anniversary in 2017.

Find out more at [cumberlandlodge.ac.uk](http://cumberlandlodge.ac.uk)

**Professor Kurt Barling** is an award-winning BBC investigative journalist and documentary-maker who since 2014 also teaches at Middlesex University London. He began his career at LSE after gaining a PhD there in International Relations. Professor Barling rediscovered Amy Buller's book on a lecturing visit to Cumberland Lodge. His foreword outlines the background to the writing of *Darkness over Germany* and highlights its resonance in current times. He is the author of three previous books including the well-received *The R Word: Racism* (2015) and *Abu Hamza: Guilty* (2014). His current book project looks at the importance of machine intelligence for the future of journalism.

**Edmund Newell** is Principal of Cumberland Lodge. A priest in the Church of England, he was previously Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral and founding Director of the St Paul's Institute, and Sub-Dean of Christ Church, Oxford. Before ordination he was a Research Fellow in Economic History at Nuffield College, Oxford. His publications include (with John Reynolds) *Ethics in Investment Banking* (London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).



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