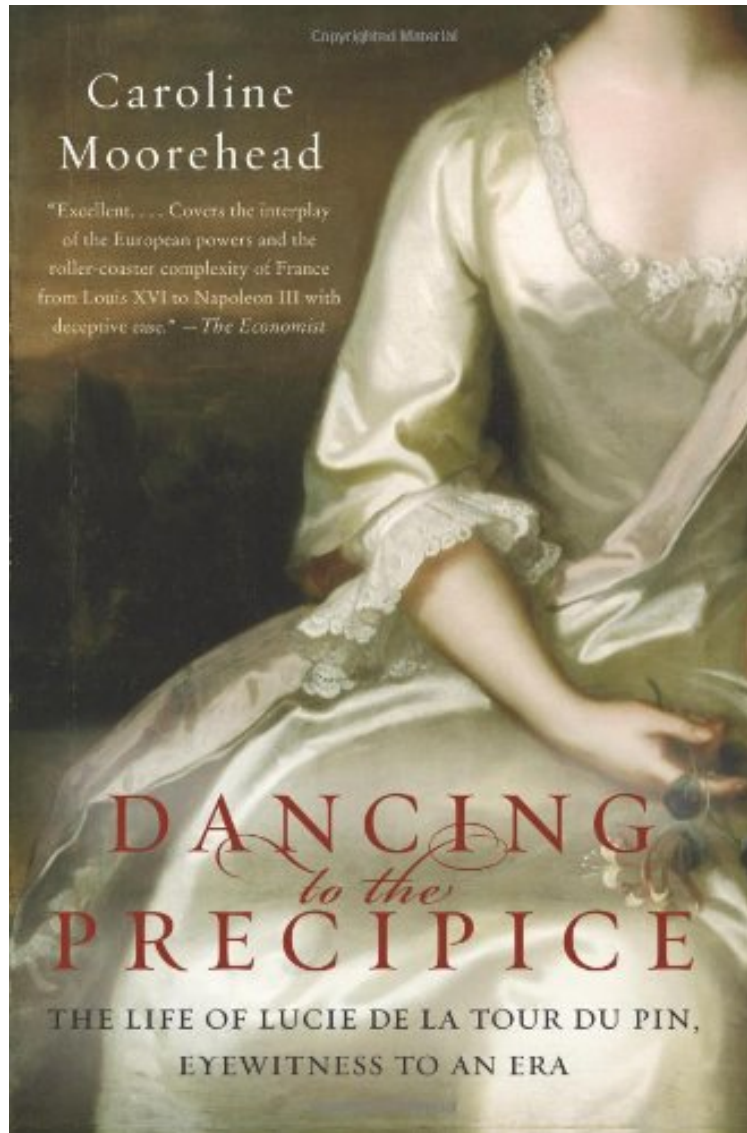


Dancing to the Precipice: The Life of Lucie de la Tour du Pin, Eyewitness to an Era

Caroline Moorehead

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Caroline Moorehead : Dancing to the Precipice: The Life of Lucie de la Tour du Pin, Eyewitness to an Era before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dancing to the Precipice: The Life of Lucie de la Tour du Pin, Eyewitness to an Era:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Perceiving French History (1770-1853) Through the Prism of a

Remarkable Woman
By John Mccarthy
This is the story of a uniquely placed woman who lived through a uniquely tempestuous time. Bright, resilient, and courageous, her life spanned the Revolution, and the Restoration. Situated within the aristocracy so that at different times in her life she was directly involved with Napoleon, Talleyrand, Josephine, and Marie Antoinette - to mention just a few - she was a mother who experienced the deaths of five of her six children and, for 51 years, was the devoted and loving wife of Frederic-Seraphim, whose military and diplomatic career in service of the Bourbon monarchy necessitated two exiles (one to upstate NY and one to England)) as well as extended service stays in Holland, Belgium and Italy. Though born within the highest reaches of pre-revolutionary French society, she was able to flourish in any situation, no matter how dire or deprived. And though scores of her friends and relatives, including her own father and her husband's father, were victims of the guillotine, she and her husband - without treachery or compromise - were survivors. A loving mother and devoted wife, she had the uncanny ability and good fortune to pass through the very gates of hell without succumbing to disaster. Based on Lucie de la Tour du Pin's own memoir, as well as hundred of her letters, Caroline Moorehead has given us a harrowing, yet warm tale of an incredible woman who lived through incredibly difficult and dangerous times. 26 of 27 people found the following review helpful. Very good read. I am glad that I bought it.
By Man in the West
I am currently reading about the era of the revolution in France: wanting to understand it better. I'd just finished a book about the Duc D'Orleans, a contemporary, called Godfather of the Revolution. I felt that this book would be another good resource as it is a personal account of that time. It seems that Lucie de la tour du Pin and her husband either knew or were acquainted with many of the movers and shakers of their day. I admire them both for their devotion to one another and for their resourcefulness. They adapted to setbacks and tragedy and moved on. Lucie went from attending to Marie Antoinette at Versailles to making butter in the New World and back again to a very changed France. I liked this book; I never got bored while reading it. THE END or finis!
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book
By Customer
Books was in excellent condition and received in a timely manner. Great book about a French aristocrat's personal experience during the French Revolution. Her resilience, fortitude and love for her family is very uplifting. A different perspective of chaotic and paranoid times caused by the revolution from the view point of a survivor.

Her canvases were the court of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette; the Great Terror; America at the time of Washington and Jefferson; Paris under the Directoire and then under Napoleon; Regency London; the battle of Waterloo; and, for the last years of her life, the Italian ducal courts. She witnessed firsthand the demise of the French monarchy, the wave of the Revolution and the Reign of Terror, and the precipitous rise and fall of Napoleon. Lucie Dillon daughter of French and British nobility known in France by her married name, Lucie de la Tour du Pin was the chronicler of her age. In this compelling biography, Caroline Moorehead illuminates the extraordinary life and remarkable achievements of this strong, witty, elegant, opinionated, and dynamic woman who survived personal tragedy and the devastation wrought by momentous historic events.

From Publishers Weekly
Educated to wait on Marie Antoinette, the marquise Lucie de la Tour du Pin (1770-1853) instead precariously survived a devastating revolution, an emperor, two restorations and a republic. Drawing on Lucie's memoirs and those of her contemporaries, Moorehead (Gellhorn) uses Lucie's descriptions of both personal events and the ever-changing French political atmosphere to portray the nobility's awkward shifts with each new event and the impact they have on Lucie and her diplomat husband, Frdric. A woman with both court-honed aristocratic manners and rough farm skills (earned in the Revolution's wake during her rural New York exile), Lucie benefited from passing platonic relationships with Napoleon and Wellington, Talleyrand, and countless salon personalities. Lucie's terror during the anarchy of the Revolution remains palpable in her memoirs centuries later. Moorehead obviously admires Lucie, but she gives a convincing and entertaining portrait of an intelligent, shrewd, unpretentious woman and the turbulent times she lived through and testified to in her memoirs. 16 pages of bw photos, 19 illus. throughout. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.
From The New Yorker
In 1820, at the age of forty-nine, Lucie Dillon, the Marquise de la Tour du Pin, started writing her memoirs, an endeavor that went on for thirty years and produced one of the great monuments of French history. Lucie began life as an aristocrat, dbuting at Versailles at the age of eleven; at the beginning of the Terror, as friends and relatives fell to the guillotine, she fled France with her husband and children. Resilient and resourceful, the family thrived on a farm in upstate New York, where Lucie churned butter, traded with Indians, and played hostess to Talleyrand. A return to France brought Lucie and her husband into Napoleons inner circle; in later years, following an exile in London, they found favor with the restored Bourbon monarchy. Mooreheads biography, drawing on a trove of previously unpublished correspondence, captures the rhythm of the radical contrasts in her subjects life. "Utterly captivating... brings to life both Lucie and the glorious and terrible years through which she lived with a novelistic vividness, full of sights and sounds and flavours" * Sunday Times * "A scintillating biography... Moorehead succeeds triumphantly [and] brings an assured grip on contemporary politics and a colourful sense of place" * Daily Telegraph * "A rich and satisfying book which not only adds to our appreciation of Madame de la Tour du Pin's story but brings the whole

tumultuous period and its characters to life" * Spectator * "Lucie de la Tour de Pin has found a biographer worthy of her own storytelling skills. With a light-handed touch, Moorehead sets Lucie's story in its wider social and historical context, sketching the complicated political twists and turns in a way that makes them memorable without ever dumbing down" -- Kathryn Hughes * Mail on Sunday * "Never less than a gripping story of an extraordinary life" * Literary *