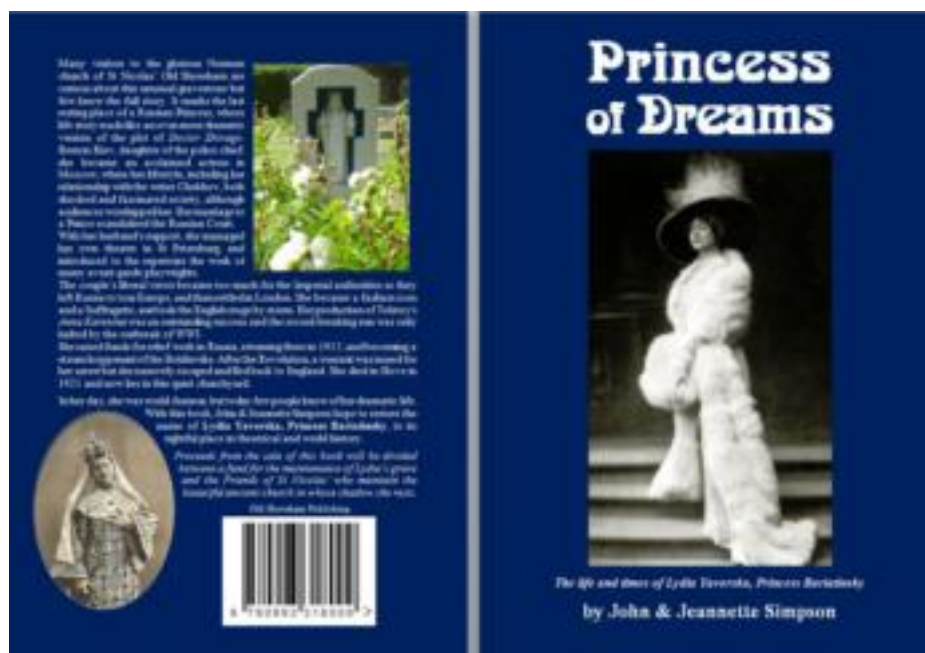


Princess of Dreams

The life and times of Lydia Yavorska, Princess Bariatinsky

A new book by John & Jeannette Simpson



Many visitors to the glorious Norman church of St Nicolas' Old Shoreham are curious about an unusual gravestone there but few know the full story. It marks the last resting place of Princess Bariatinsky, whose own life story was even more dramatic than the plays in which she appeared.

Born in Kiev, daughter of a police chief, she became an acclaimed actress in Moscow under the name of Lydia Yavorska, where her lifestyle, including her relationship with the writer Chekhov, both shocked and fascinated society, although audiences worshipped her. Her marriage to a Prince scandalised the Russian Court.

With her husband's support, she managed her own theatre in St Petersburg and introduced to the repertoire the work of many avant-garde playwrights. The couple's liberal views became too much for the

Imperial authorities so they left Russia to tour Europe and then settled in London.

Lydia became a fashion icon and a Suffragette and took the English stage by storm. Her production of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* was an outstanding success, and the record-breaking run was only halted by the outbreak of WWI.

She raised funds for relief work in Russia and returned there in 1915 and became a staunch opponent of the Bolsheviks. After the Revolution, a warrant was issued for Lydia's arrest, but she narrowly escaped and fled back to England.

She died in Hove in 1921 and now lies in this quiet churchyard. In her time, Lydia was world-famous, but today few people know of her dramatic life. This book seeks to restore her name to its rightful place in theatre and world history.

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ABOUT THE BOOK

Everything about Russia is big – vast distances and huge populations. And to do justice to Lydia and her world, this is a big book. A4 in format (8¼ x 11½”, 21 x 29.7cm), it comprises nearly 350 pages with over 650 illustrations. It is a serious biography and reference work, and can also serve as a ‘coffee table’ book, which you can dip into for a flavour of the times.

The title of the book is taken from the play *La Princesse Lointaine* by Rostand. It was translated into Russian as *Princess of Dreams* and became an enormous success for Lydia.

Our Princess rests far from her native land, with no family to care for the grave. This book has the dual aim of ensuring that the grave is properly maintained and that Lydia's contribution to the English and Russian stage is not forgotten.

The recommended retail price is £30, but if you order direct you can benefit from the
special price of £15 per copy.

Any profits from the sale of this book will be divided between a fund for the maintenance of Lydia's grave and the Friends of St Nicolas' who maintain the beautiful ancient church in whose shadow she rests.

John & Jeannette Simpson

WEBSITE: www.aprincessinshoreham.org EMAIL: princess@simpson.uk.com

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