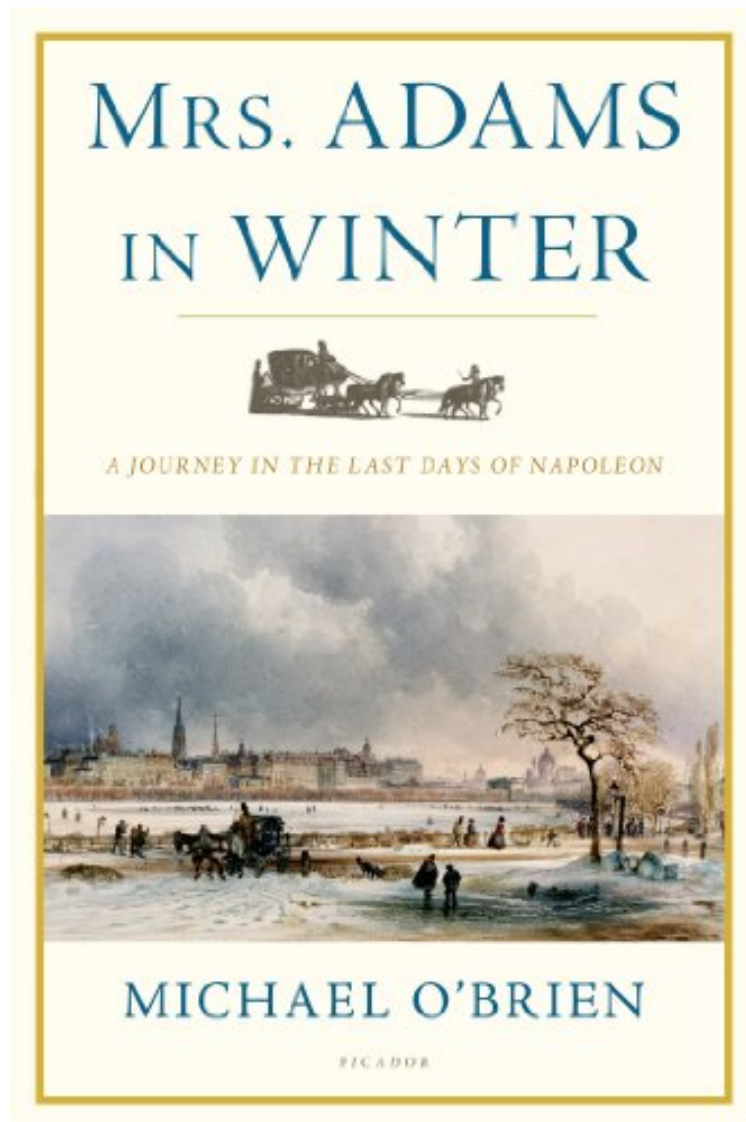


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## Mrs. Adams in Winter: A Journey in the Last Days of Napoleon

Von Michael O'Brien

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**Von Michael O'Brien : Mrs. Adams in Winter: A Journey in the Last Days of Napoleon** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mrs. Adams in Winter: A Journey in the Last Days of Napoleon:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Interesting Story, Minute DetailsVon James Gallen"Mrs. Adams in Winter" tells the story of Louisa Adams' overland journey from St. Petersburg, Russia to rejoin her husband, John Quincy Adams, at his new diplomatic post in Paris. The story is based on Louisa's own writings of her passage across a continent recently devastated by years of

Napoleonic wars and shuddering as news of his return from Elba and restoration to the Imperial throne circulated. This is a tale of hardship and courtly luxury, terrifying encounters and clever deliverance. It explains the background of Louisa, the daughter of an English mother and an American merchant, who remains the only first lady not born in America and examines her complex and difficult relationship with America's most prominent political family. Although this book contains some unique insights into the Adams family and conditions in the wake of the Napoleonic invasions, I found it to be a bit disappointing. For my tastes it focuses too much on details of life in minor European courts and the minutiae of her journey. Perhaps for someone with a greater interest in those details this book would have more attraction.

**Kurzbeschreibung** Early in 1815, Louisa Catherine Adams and her young son left St. Petersburg in a heavy Russian carriage and set out on a difficult journey to meet her husband, John Quincy Adams, in Paris. She traveled through the snows of eastern Europe, down the Baltic coast to Prussia, across the battlefields of Germany, and into a France then experiencing the tumultuous events of Napoleon's return from Elba. Along the way, she learned what the long years of Napoleon's wars had done to Europe, what her old friends in the royal court in Berlin had experienced during the French occupation, how it felt to have her life threatened by reckless soldiers, and how to manage fear. The journey was a metaphor for a life spent crossing borders: born in London in 1775, she had grown up partly in France, and in 1797 had married into the most famous of American political dynasties and become the daughter-in-law of John and Abigail Adams. The prizewinning historian Michael O'Brien reconstructs for the first time Louisa Adams's extraordinary passage. An evocative history of the experience of travel in the days of carriages and kings, Mrs. Adams in Winter offers a moving portrait of a lady, her difficult marriage, and her conflicted sense of what it meant to be a woman caught between worlds.

**Pressestimmen** Praise for Mrs. Adams in Winter Into this chronological narrative of life on the road, O'Brien skillfully weaves a series of telling anecdotes from Louisa Catherine Adams's experience as a wife, mother, and American expatriate in Europe . . . In Mrs. Adams in Winter, Michael O'Brien takes up her challenge, and succeeds commendably in bringing to light her story a story that might otherwise have remained in the shadow of the family into which she never truly fit. Grace E. Jackson, The Harvard Crimson This enthralling, vividly written book tells the story of an amazing journey in extraordinary times undertaken by a most uncommon woman . . . [O'Brien] displays admirable psychological insight into Mrs. Adams usually complex personality and general gestalt . . . Mr. O'Brien has done a superb job of really understanding one of our lesser known first ladies. Martin Rubin, The Washington Times A splendid success . . . In addition to his vivid portrait of the European countryside, its history, and its notable personalities, O'Brien includes well-placed and often lengthy digressions that combine to form a sort of biography of Mrs. Adams . . . Mrs. Adams in Winter contains the best biography yet published of Louisa Adams . . . O'Brien's elaborate description of Europe's post-road system as it existed 200 years ago helps make his book such a pleasure to read. Paul C. Nagel, The American Scholar O'Brien's subtle and sinuously original book provides a detailed reconstruction of the journey and what it meant to make it . . . It was daring of O'Brien to find the core of Louisa's journey in the notion of a woman raising her head in a society that had no place for the elevation. Daring, but his brilliantly argued portraits of Adams versus Adams make it convincing. Richard Eder, The Boston Globe O'Brien's narrative is richly contextual, encompassing not only the great personalities of the age, whom Mrs. Adams met, but penetrating the secrets of a complicated marriage . . . A wide-sweeping historical survey and original intellectual journey. Kirkus s This innovative and creatively told personal history of a forgotten figure bound by marriage to an ambitious American statesman bristles with insight into the era. Witty, informed, sophisticated, and moving; essential reading. Stewart Desmond, Library Journal Louisa Catherine Johnson Adams, a woman who spent her life in voyages both literal and metaphorical, above all longed to leave her mark on the landscape of the life she passed through. The noted historian Michael O'Brien gives Louisa her voice, assuring her place in history as a woman who was, as she put it. Take these twin journeys, rendered with precision and grace by a master across the dramatic frozen landscape of Napoleon's Europe, and deep within the mind and heart of one of the most compelling characters in American history. Catherine Allgor, Presidential Chair and Professor of History, University of California at Riverside Louisa Catherine Adams is an unjustly forgotten figure in American history, a formidable woman with a keen eye for the smallest details of political life. Now comes Michael O'Brien with a fresh, engaging account of Mrs. Adams's 1815 journey from St. Petersburg to Paris. It is a brilliant conceit, beautifully executed, and O'Brien succeeds admirably in capturing the complexities of the woman and her times. Jon Meacham, author of American Lion O'Brien creates a brilliant portrait of a complex woman. When we find a book like Mrs. Adams in Winter, we can't sing enough praises . . . The book is written in a wonderful style . . . This unique book is home run. Booklegion.com Marvelous . . . O'Brien . . . demonstrates an enviable mastery of the historian's craft. Alan Cate, Cleveland.com O'Brien's compelling [and] . . . splendidly researched work . . . makes for the best of reading. Phyllis Meras, The Providence Journal O'Brien creates a brilliant portrait of a complex woman. The Week