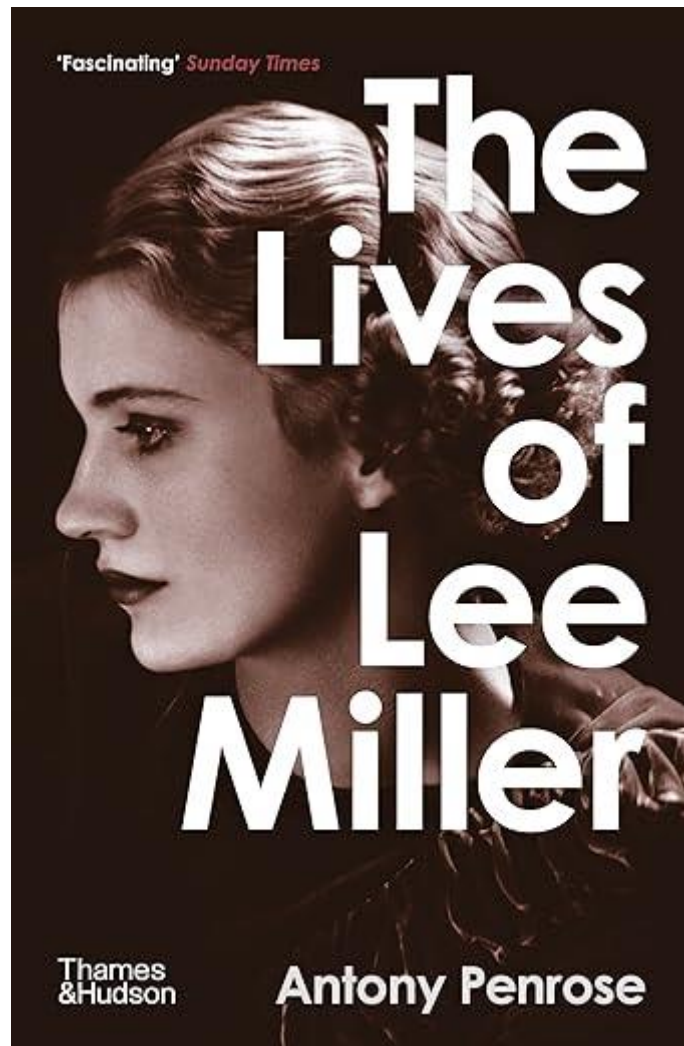


THE LIVES OF LEE MILLER



ANTONY PENROSE

The Lives of
lee miller

About the Author

Antony Penrose is a writer, photographer, sculptor and film maker. The son of Lee Miller and Sir Roland Penrose, he is founder and co-director of the Lee Miller Archives and The Penrose Collection at Farleys House and Gallery Ltd., his parents' former home, now a historic artists' house. He has written a number of books, including *Lee Miller's War*, also published by Thames & Hudson.

Contents

[1 Early Years](#)

[1907–1929](#)

[2 Photography in Surrealist Paris](#)

[1929–1932](#)

[3 Photography in Fashionable New York](#)

[1932–1934](#)

[5 Escape from Egypt](#)

[1937–1939](#)

[6 ‘Grim Glory’: Wartime London](#)

[1939–1944](#)

[7 Lee’s War](#)

[1944–1945](#)

[8 Spinning It Out: Austria](#)

[1945](#)

[Chapter One](#)

[Early Years](#)

[1907–1929](#)

Lee Miller, fashion model. Lee Miller, photographer. Lee Miller, war correspondent. Lee Miller, writer. Lee Miller, aficionado of classical music. Lee Miller, *haute cuisine* cook. Lee Miller, traveller. In all her different worlds she moved with freedom. In all her roles she was her own bold self.

As soon as he was well enough to stand the journey he returned to the United States. Career opportunities caused him to shelve his travel plans and he first took a job as foreman with the Mergenthaler Linotype Company in Brooklyn, New York, and then moved on to the Utica Drop Forge and Tool Company where he was rapidly appointed General Manager. Adding to the attractions of Utica was a Canadian nurse at Saint Luke's Hospital – Florence MacDonald. A kindly and industrious person, she was the daughter of Scottish-Irish settlers from Ontario. Their courtship was a long one, because Theodore refused to consider marriage until he was in a sufficiently advanced position to offer his wife-to-be a secure home. To help while away the years of waiting, he persuaded her to indulge his most cherished hobby – photography. Posing nude for him in a discreet but self-assured manner, she became

Chapter Two

Photography in Surrealist Paris

1929–1932

Lee and Tanja halted briefly in Paris, then boarded the train for Florence. Under the tutelage of an elderly art dealer they toured the city and the nearby hill towns. Lee's research assignment, which could hardly be called significant in itself, was by chance a vital catalyst.

In many ways there were striking similarities between Man Ray and Lee's father, quite apart from their both being devotees of engineering and science. As Henry Miller says in 'Recollections of Man Ray in Hollywood', 'He had a way of making everything new and, if not important, certainly worth considering, worth pondering.... He had no difficulty in understanding what was alien because nothing was or is alien to him.... His curiosity was unquenchable, and often led him far afield. He was never just a painter or a photographer, he was an adventurer and explorer.'² These words exactly describe Theodore and, of course, Lee.

1 Lee, aged 3 years 5 months, posing for her father at 40 South Clinton Street, Poughkeepsie, New York. 1910. (Theodore Miller)

