History 101

Marie Antoinette

*Ah, poor Marie!...*Marie Antoinette was born Maria Antonia Josepha Johanna (2 November 1755 – 16 October 1793) and was the last Queen of France before the French Revolution. She was born an Archduchess of Austria, and was the fifteenth and second youngest child of Empress Maria Theresa and Francis I, Holy Roman Emperor.

In April 1770, upon her marriage to Louis-Auguste, heir apparent to the French throne, she became Dauphine of France. On 10 May 1774, when her husband ascended the throne as Louis XVI, she assumed the title Queen of France and Navarre, which she held until September 1791, when, as the French Revolution proceeded, she became Queen of the French, a title she held until 21 September 1792.

After eight years of marriage, Marie Antoinette gave birth to a daughter, Marie-Thérèse Charlotte, the first of her four children. Despite her initial popularity, a growing number of the population eventually came to dislike her, accusing her of being profligate, promiscuous, and of harboring sympathies for France's enemies, particularly her native Austria. The Diamond Necklace affair damaged her reputation further.

During the Revolution, she became known as Madame Déficit because the country's financial crisis was blamed on her lavish spending and her opposition to the social and financial reforms of Turgot and Necker.

During the Revolution, after the government had placed the royal family under house arrest in the Tuileries Palace in October 1789, several events linked to Marie Antoinette, in particular the June 1791 attempted flight to Varennes and her role in the War of the First Coalition, had disastrous effects on French popular opinion. On 10 August 1792, the attack on the Tuileries forced the royal family to take refuge at the Assembly, and on 13 August the family was imprisoned in the Temple. On 21 September 1792, the monarchy was abolished.

After a two-day trial begun on 14 October 1793, Marie Antoinette was convicted by the Revolutionary Tribunal of high treason and executed by guillotine on the Place de la Révolution on 16 October 1793. *[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie_Antoinette]*