

Marie Thérèse of France

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Marie Thérèse de France ^{[1][2][3][4]} (Marie Thérèse Charlotte; 19 December 1778 – 19 October 1851) was the eldest child of King Louis XVI of France and his wife, Queen Marie Antoinette. As the daughter of the king, she was a *Fille de France*, and as the eldest daughter of the king, she was given the traditional honorific *Madame Royale* at birth.

She married her cousin, Louis Antoine, Duke of Angoulême, the eldest son of the future Charles X. Once married, she assumed her husband's title and was known as the Duchess of Angoulême. She became the Dauphine of France upon the accession of her father-in-law to the throne of France in 1824. Technically she was Queen of France for twenty minutes, in 1830, between the time her father-in-law signed the instrument of abdication and the time her husband, reluctantly, signed the same document.

Contents

- 1 Biography
- 2 Life during the Revolution
 - 2.1 Move to the Tuileries
 - 2.2 The Temple
- 3 Exile
 - 3.1 In Britain
- 4 The Bourbon Restoration
 - 4.1 Madame la Dauphine
- 5 Final exile
 - 5.1 After death
- 6 In fiction
- 7 References and notes
- 8 Ancestry
- 9 External links
 - 9.1 Primary sources
 - 9.2 Further reading
 - 9.3 Other material

Biography

Marie Thérèse was born at the Palace of Versailles, first child and eldest daughter of King Louis XVI of France and Queen Marie Antoinette, on 19 December 1778, eight years and a half after their marriage, and, as was the custom in France, in the presence of members of both the Royal Family and the Court. The birth of *Madame Royale* was followed by an ordeal where her mother almost died from suffocation and had to be bled by the attending surgeon.^[5] In order to let fresh air in the room in the attempt to revive her, the draught-proofed windows had to be torn open.^{[6][7]} As a result of this harrowing experience, Louis XVI banned public viewing, allowing only close family members and a handful of trusted courtiers to witness the birth of the next royal children.

Although her husband might have been disappointed with the birth of a girl rather than the long-awaited male heir, when she was revived, the Queen greeted her daughter (whom she later nicknamed *Mousseline*^[8]), with delight:

Poor little thing; you are not what they wanted, but we will love you nonetheless. A son would have belonged to the State; you shall be mine, and have all my care; you shall share in my happiness and soften my sorrows.

The Princess was baptised the same day, shortly after her birth, and named after the Queen's mother, Empress Maria Theresa of Austria.

Madame Royale's household was headed by her governess, the *princesse de Guéméné*, who later had to resign due to her husband's bankruptcy and was replaced by one of the queen's closest friends, the *duchesse de Polignac*. Louis XVI was an affectionate father, who delighted in spoiling his daughter, while her mother was stricter.

Marie Antoinette was determined that her daughter should not grow up to be as haughty as her husband's unmarried aunts. She often invited children of lower rank ^[citation needed] to come and dine with Marie-Thérèse and encouraged the child to give her toys to the poor. In contrast to her image as a materialistic queen who ignored the plight of the poor, Marie Antoinette attempted to teach her daughter about the sufferings of others. On New Year's Day in 1784, after having some beautiful toys brought to Marie-Thérèse's apartment, she told her:

I should have liked to have given you all these as New Year's gifts, but the winter is very hard, there is a crowd of unhappy people who have no bread to eat, no clothes to wear, no wood to make a fire. I have given them all my money; I have none left to buy you presents, so there will be none this year.

[[]*citation needed*[]]

Marie Thérèse of France



Marie Thérèse by Antoine-Jean Gros

Queen consort of France and Navarre
(disputed)

Tenure 2 August 1830 for 20 minutes

Spouse Louis Antoine, Duke of Angoulême

Full name

Marie Thérèse Charlotte de France

House House of Bourbon

Father Louis XVI of France

Mother Marie Antoinette

Born 19 December 1778
Château de Versailles, France

Died 19 October 1851 (aged 72)
Frohsdorf, Austria

Burial Kostanjevica Monastery, Nova Gorica,
Slovenia

Religion Roman Catholic