

Market House Museum's TRAGIC HISTORY OF THE HABSBURGS*

History Trivia Game

(Answers are on bottom of page four)

The Habsburgs ruled Austria for many years, and many members of their family married into other royal houses in Europe. The dynasty was haunted by tragic events, and though many times they were heart-breaking, they are of an interesting nature to historians and royalists alike. Have fun and see how well you score! (This game is not recommended for the very young because of its traumatic subject matter.)



1. Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria was born into one of the most historic dynasties on the European continent, on Wednesday, August 18th, 1830. The House of Habsburg had provided Germany with twenty emperors and gave rulers to Spain, the Netherlands, and much of the Italian peninsula. Francis Joseph would rule his country for 68 years, and see much historic change during that time. He would be sibling to a sister and three other brothers, one of which would become Emperor of Mexico for a short time. What was his name? A) Ferdinand B) Maximillian C) Leopold.



2. Francis Joseph grew up with the Army as a passion. He was Emperor at a very early age; slim and handsome in his Hussar uniform. His mother Sophie doted on him, but realized as he grew older he was quite stiff at public gatherings and wondered how, if ever, he would be able to unbend a bit to find a bride when he appeared so wooden at social gatherings. She talked to her sister, who came to visit and brought two of her daughters, 'Nene' (Helen) and 'Sisi' (Elizabeth), who was the younger of the two. Which sister did Francis Joseph fall headlong in love with, after only a few hours? A) Helen B) Elizabeth C) Neither of the sisters.



3. Francis decided Nene was dull and just a little tongue-tied, and married the captivating 'Sisi' (Elizabeth) instead. She was beautiful; but very young and not really trained for the activities of being an Empress. (It would have taken great discipline of anyone to be able to fulfil all the duties asked of the position.) Elizabeth had long, thick flowing auburn hair, which fell to her ankles; she had rosy cheeks and red lips. She always watched her weight to the point of being overly thin. She would travel constantly; and for occupation, she rented, renovated or built private villas for seclusion as she hated crowds. What was one of her favorite pastimes? A) riding horses in foxhunts B) writing melancholy poetry C) both of the preceding.



4. Empress Elizabeth had three daughters and a son, Rudolf, who was the Crown Prince (that meant he would be the next Emperor after his father passed.) One of Elizabeth's young daughters travelled with the Emperor and herself in the first years of their marriage and became very sick. The child, little Sophie, named after Francis' mother, died at age two from her weakened state. Elizabeth mourned incessantly for over a year, as she blamed herself for taking the tiny child abroad and exposing her to germs. What year did the little Archduchess Sophie die? A) 1857 B) 1862 C) 1865.



5. Empress Elizabeth and Emperor Francis had a cousin, who was Ludwig, King of Bavaria. He built castles that back then, bankrupted Bavaria, but today, bring in many tourist dollars yearly ! He was madly infatuated with the music and operatic scenery of the German composer Richard Wagner. In his castle, Ludwig built a darkened indoor grotto with a lake, and a boat that floated round and round (similar to rides at today's Disney World) with a mechanical moon that would rise and set over the grotto, within the Palace! He was later declared insane and died a mysterious drowning death in a lake near Berg. What was one of the strangest things Ludwig was known to have done? A) hid from his valet in the lavatory when in the throes of a nightmare B) rode all night and all day in his riding stadium, marking the miles he rode, imitating a ride to Innsbruck, C) dyed all of his clothes and underwear purple to symbolize his royal birth.



6. Crown Prince Rudolf did not agree with his Emperor father on matters concerning Austria's government and political situation. He married a Belgian princess, Stephanie. They had one child, and then grew apart both emotionally and physically. He ended up by having affairs with other ladies, and he went to Mayerling, a hunting lodge, where a great tragedy took place when he committed suicide after shooting his young mistress, Marie Vetsera. What was built open the site, by orders of Emperor Francis, after the hunting lodge was torn down? A) a convent for Carmelite nuns B) a park, complete with skating rink and hockey court C) a hotel for tourists to enjoy the beautiful scenery.



7. With the Crown Prince dead, Emperor Francis decreed that his nephew, Francis Ferdinand, who was born in 1863, would succeed him as Emperor some day. Ferdinand had marriedmorganatically (a lady of unequal birth) whose name was Sophie Chotek. He was a hard headed man, and disliked almost anything and everything that was ever presented to him. In 1914, while he and his wife were riding in an open car in Sarajevo, they were shot from less than five feet away and died quickly. His last words, were, "Sophie! Live for our three children!" and "It is nothing." What was prompted by this act of terrorism? A) WW I was declared shortly thereafter B) Austria became a Democracy C) Francis Joseph died of a broken heart after years of trials.

8. Elizabeth's sister, Sophie, who was married to the Duke of Alencon, met a terrible, tragic fate while she was assisting in raising money for a charity at a bazaar at the Rue Jean-Gujon in Paris, France. A fire swept through the market, killing 2000 people who were trapped and unable to escape. Sophie would not leave until all her young ladies had been assisted to safety; and that resulted in her own death. It must have been a horrible end, for Queen Victoria of England wrote to her daughter in Germany that she had been identified only by 'the head.' Once more Empress Elizabeth was brokenhearted; she cried for weeks and wrote letters to her mother regretting that Sophie was forever gone. Elizabeth and Francis stayed together for two weeks at their palace at Ischl. Then they parted, he to go back to the Hofburg, and she, to a spa in Bad Nauheim. When would they meet again? A) A month later B) Six months later C) Never again.



9. Elizabeth never really recovered from her son Rudolf's, or her sister's horrible death. She dressed all in black for the remainder of her life. She travelled incessantly; her lady in waiting said that she went from place to place trying to run away from her unhappiness and her heartache. The old Emperor, her husband, wrote affectionate letters to her each day, and she replied thanking him for his concern while she wandered from place to place. He never fell out of love with her, and she was always his loving 'Sisi.' But a terrible thing befell her, when she least expected it. She was stabbed in the chest with a stiletto knife, so thin that at first, no one noticed what had happened, by an anarchist as she boarded a boat. She sank quickly and died. What did the old emperor say when he received the telegram? A) So I am to be spared nothing in this world? B) Call my carriage right away C) I think I am going to faint, please help me to get to the sofa!



10. The Austrians had many palaces that were used throughout the year by the royal families. Some were more formal and ornate, while others were fanciful summer residences with beautiful gardens. There were hunting lodges and palaces that were used strictly for quiet family living and that had office spaces for the Emperor and his staff. Which were the two favorite residences of both Francis and Sisi? A. Laxenburg & Schonbrunn, B) Ischl & the Hofburg, C) The Kaiservilla at Ischl & Godollo.



11. Francis Joseph was an avid sportsman and loved to hunt. He was very fit all his life, and hardly ever experienced illness. He loved to hike and climb mountains, and that was fortunate, for Austria has some of the most scenic mountains in Europe. When the cares of government would allow, he would form a hunting party of 15-20 companions and have day long hunts with an outdoor picnic to 'break up the day' as he called it. He wore a hunting jacket with many pockets, a felt hat with a feather, and lederhosen! He also carried a big walking stick and had stalkers that carried his guns. A) True B) False





12. Empress Elizabeth loved horses and was one of the finest horsewomen in Europe. She rode like the wind, jumped high hurdles while on a fox hunt (as high as seven feet!) and had her riding habits custom designed and created just for her. She had a tiny waist and did not like buttons, so she would be sewn into her bodice each day, for a slimmer and more becoming silhouette. She also loved dogs, and always had at least five or six in her kennels at any time. What kind of dogs did she like best? A) Tiny dogs, like Yorkshire Terriers B) Huge dogs, like Mastiffs and Great Danes C) just plain mutts of any size.



13. Archduke Maximilian, younger brother of Francis Joseph, married the only daughter of King Leopold of the Belgians. Her name was Charlotte (or Carlotta). She was pretty and deeply religious. Later, Maximilian was offered the position of sovereign of Mexico. He thought about it for a month or so, then accepted, as he knew he would always be the younger, lesser royal if he resided in Austria as a junior grand duke. Napoleon was involved in the arranging of the invitation to reign in Mexico. After Max and Charlotte settled in an exquisite palace things went sour fast. Max lost the support he so desperately needed to rule. Napoleon removed the expeditionary force he had left to instill peace in Mexico, and withdrew them back to France. Maximilian was executed by the rebels; Charlotte lost all reason and was confined to a castle/sanatorium. She never again had contact with her family except for very infrequent visits as her mental situation caused delirium. During WWI a sign at the end of the castle drive stated that it was off limits to troops and visitation by the enemy as the former 'Empress Carlotta' was interned there! She was confined until her death. When did she die? A) 1872 B) 1927 C) 1901.



14. Francis Joseph was a simple man, wore a simple uniform every day, and rose at 4:30 am to start his day's work. He slept in a simple camp bed, similar to an army cot. He washed with cold water every morning, rather than bathe in a warm bath. He felt this invigorated himself. In 1916, the old Emperor was starting to slow down, and his health started to give concern to his staff and family. Still he worked incessantly every day, wading through the piles of papers on his desk that required his attention. Late fall in Austria could be very cold and damp, and winter always followed with even colder temperatures. He had persistent bronchitis and it went into pneumonia. In those days, there were no medicines such as we use today, to combat the infection in his lungs. His temperature began to climb. He sat upright in bed, as he coughed less in that position, so sleep was denied him. Painful coughing went on and on until he died. What day in 1916 did he die? A) Oct 21 B) Oct 6 C) Oct 15.

ANSWERS: 1-B, 2-B, 3-C, 4-A, 5-B, 6-A, 7-A, 8-C, 9-A, 10-C, 11-A, 12-B, 13-B, 14-A.

***Please note: We have used the "English" version of spellings. 'Francis Joseph' would have been 'Franz Josef' in its original spelling in Austria. Also please note that 'Habsburg' has often been spelled 'Hapsburg.'**