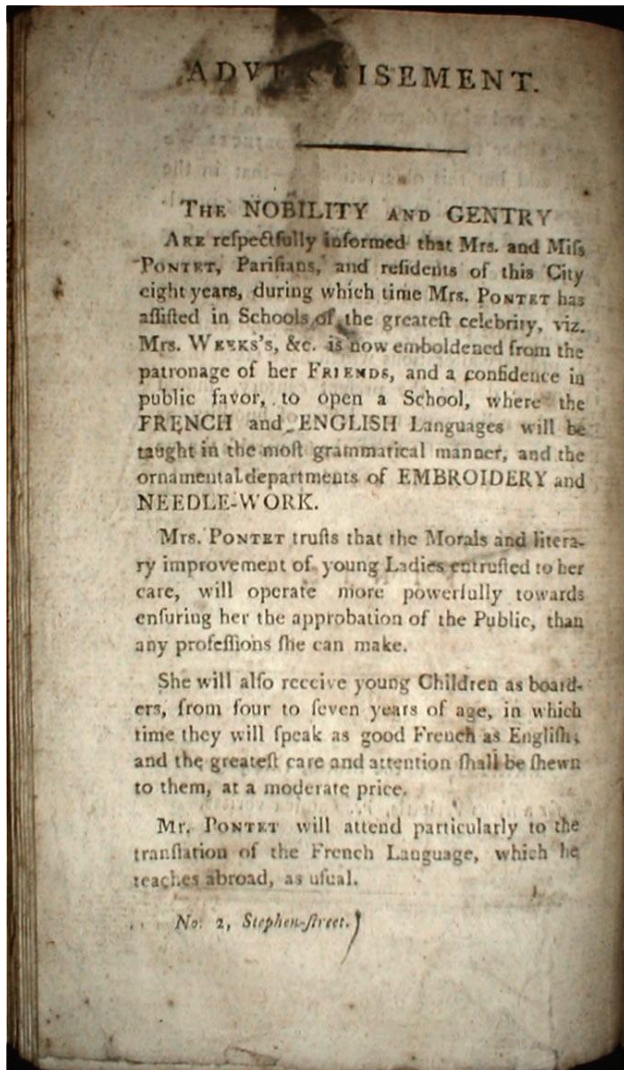


Louisa Antoinette PONTET

(1770 - 1834)

Born c1770 Paris, she was daughter of jeweller, Charles Henry PONTET, and his second wife Anne Geneviève BAILLY. Her year of birth is taken from her age of 64 at death in 1834, and it is most probable she was born at the family home in Rue St Honoré, in what is now the 1st arrondissement, Sometime in 1787 Charles and Geneviève, and most probably Louisa and possibly others, moved from Paris to Dublin. This is evidenced from a rare book titled "*Short Sketch of the Life of Louis XVI*", translated from the French into English by Charles Henry PONTET, printed by Alex Stewart of 86 Bride Street, Dublin in 1795 (held in Marsh's Library, Dublin). In an advertisement at the back of the book, it states that Charles, Mrs and Miss PONTET, had resided in that city for eight years, therefore since 1787. Their address is given (in 1795) as No 2 Stephens Street, the eastern end of which corners on to William Street where Charles is recorded in a judicial deed as leasing a property from May 1791 to October 1800.



A short sketch of the life of Louis XVI

Translated from the French
by Charles Henry Pontet
Dublin

Printed by Alex Stewart, No 86 Bride Street 1795

ADVERTISEMENT

THE NOBILITY AND GENTRY

are respectfully informed that Mrs. and Miss PONTET, Parisians, and residents of this City eight years, during which time Mrs. PONTET has assisted in Schools of the greatest celebrity, viz. Mrs. Week's etc. is now emboldened from the patronage of her Friends, and a confidence in public favour, to open a School, where the FRENCH and ENGLISH languages will be taught in the most grammatical manner, and the ornamental departments of EMBROIDERY and NEEDLE-WORK.

Mrs. PONTET trusts that the Morals and literary improvement of young ladies entrusted to her care, will operate more powerfully towards ensuring her approbation of the Public, than any professions she can make.

She will also receive young Children as boarders, from four to seven years of age, in which time they will speak as good French as English, and the greatest care and attention shall be shewn to them, at a moderate price.

Mr. PONTET will attend particularly to the translations of the French Language, which he teaches abroad, as usual.

No 2, Stephens-Street.

The history of Pontet

In the Dublin Directory for 1815 Louisa is shown living at 3 Upper Fitzwilliam Street – at No 14 lived her nephew, Désiré François Napoléon PONTET from 1818. Louisa continues to be shown in subsequent Post Office directories still living at 3 Upper Baggot Street, but in 1834, as well as Upper Fitzwilliam Street, she is listed at 3 Upper Baggot Street, Dublin, French Boarding School. This was the earliest listing found for this address, but no doubt earlier directories might be discovered and reveal she was at the property from much earlier. Quite possibly Louisa continued the school set up by her parents – her father didn't return to Dublin after a visit to Paris pre-1803 and vanishes from all records so far consulted in both Paris and Dublin, and her mother died in Dublin on 26 March 1812 and buried in the Hoguet vault in St Anne's Church of Ireland.



Left: Upper Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin, as it was in the 1980s. At No 3 was the home of Louisa Antoinette Pontet from at least 1815 until her death in 1834 - only a short distance from her French Boarding School in Upper Baggot Street. No 3 Upper Fitzwilliam Street is today the home of the United Arts Club.

Right: Upper Baggot Street, Dublin, where Louise Pontet ran her French Boarding School at No3 (taken from irish-architecture.com website). Below is a photo taken in 1980 – No 3 is the red-framed shop to the right of AA Scally & Co Ltd





Maps taken courtesy of Google – above Baggot Street; below Upper Fitzwilliam Street



The National Portrait Gallery in London has references to two “Pontet” portraits which appear in the sitters book of an Irish artist, John COMERFORD (1770-1832). These were of a “Mlle Pontet”, November 1811 and a “Mrs Pontet”, July 1820. Unfortunately, neither the National Portrait Gallery, London, nor the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, have images of these or details of their whereabouts. On the advice of the NGI the author of “*John Comerford & The Portrait Miniature in Ireland 1620-1850*”, and lecturer at the Irish National College of Art and Design, Dr Paul Caffrey, was contacted, but he too had no idea of their whereabouts, but undertook to bear the author of this history in mind should further information come to his attention. Just who these two “Pontet” ladies were remains a mystery: the only “Mlle Pontet” living in Dublin in 1811 was, as far as is presently known, Louisa, and possibly a Julia, daughters of Charles; and the only “Mrs Pontet” living in Dublin in July 1820 would either be Désiré’s wife, Anna Maria née MAGUIRE (they married 1818), or Anne Teresa née GLOTTER, wife of Désiré’s brother Auguste (they married in April 1820).

The history of Pontet

There is, otherwise, little else known about Louisa until her death on 4 April 1834 in Dublin (exact location not given) and buried on the 8th in the cemetery of St Brigid's Church of Ireland, Stillorgan, Co Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, aged 64. It does seem strange she was buried in Stillorgan, given her place of residence being in Upper Fitzwilliam Street, in Dublin city.

Scan from "Extracts from Registers of Parish of Stillorgan, Co Dublin (The Parochial Returns open 1783; the Parish registers open 1820)". At the bottom of the page is the entry for Louisa Antoinette.

Below is a photo of the headstone kindly taken on behalf of the author by June Bow (09/01/2013) who is involved in a project associated with the celebration of the 300th birthday of St Brigid's taking place on 1 February (St Brigid's Day).

1816-7		Robert Guinness, Churchwarden.
1820 Aug. 18	Bur.	Mr. Thomas Dixon, Roshestown.
1821 Apl. 8	"	Old Patrick McGuinness, Stillorgan.
1823 Oct. 17	Bap.	Mary Catherine, dau. Robert and Mary Anne Guinness of Waltersland; by Mr. Seymour.
1824 Aug. 9	Bur.	Benjamin Clarke, Esq., Blackrock.
" Sep. 16	Bap.	Mary, dau. Thomas Joseph and Frances Kane, Stillorgan.
" " 23	Bur.	Frances Jane, dau. Robert and Mary Anne Guinness of Waltersland.
1825 Dec. 5	"	Mrs. McGuinness, Moor Street, Dublin; aged 75.
1826 Feb. 6	"	Mrs. Mary Clarke, Blackrock, Widow, aged 80.
" June 8	Bap.	Richard Seymour, son, Robert and Mary Anne Guinness, Stillorgan.
" "	"	Cecilia, dau. Thomas and Jane Dixon of Shrewsbury, England; born July, 1825.
1827 Dec. 18	Marr.	William Livingston, Esq., and Miss Henrietta Guinness by Rev. Hoses Guinness, son lic.
1829 May 12	Bap.	Henry, son, Robert R. and Mary Anne Guinness, Stillorgan.
" Sep. 14	Bur.	Richard Guinness, Esq., Mercer Street, Dublin, aged 74 (died 10 Sept.).
1830 " 19	Bap.	Henry, son, William and Henrietta Livingston, Westport; born 19 August.
1832 " 11	Bur.	Henry Grattan Guinness, Sidney Avenue, Black rock, aged 3 weeks.
1834 Jan. 26	Bap.	Olivia Elizabeth, dau. Henry and Maria Louisa Darley, Beaufield, Stillorgan, born 22 Nov. 1833.
1834 Apl. 8	Bur.	Louisa Antoinette Pontet, Dublin, aged 64.



Transcription:

Louisa Antoinette Pontet
aged 64 years
died the 4th of April 1834
Deeply regretted & highly respected
by a numerous circle of friends
& acquaintance whose interest & welfare
was always her endeavour to promote
& to whom she constantly proved a warm
hearted sincere & affectionate friend

Amongst other records checked, the Index to Prerogative Wills in Dublin for that year simply gives the Executor of the Will as a 'D. LANGOIS, Upper Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin'. The Will was lost in the big fire in 1922, and the Inland Revenue transcripts for Wills 1829-1839 does not include it.

