

Ann's Historical Fiction #13

08/31/25

Writing again!

Finding my muse, again

For the last two newsletters, I've written about my difficulties in getting words on paper. To some degree, those difficulties have gone away.

Part of the reason for this improvement is my writing group, see the article to the right.

Another part of the reason is a comment from a beta reader. This good friend of mine read my book some time ago and gave me helpful comments. We happened to be talking about other things when she took the time to mention how much she enjoyed the book. I was stunned by her gracious comments, completely unsolicited since it had been months since she gave her comments on the read. She also said, though, that she really had trouble keeping track of all the characters in the book, and their relationship with each other. Thus, my new project—creating character reference figures for the front of the book, see the article on the next page.

The last reason for my increased writing is everything that is going on in the U.S. I find I want to get my thoughts on paper, and I don't know if it makes a difference to the world, but I am glad to be writing. I am considering sharing those thoughts in some form that might help have influence, but I have not yet decided on how.

Genre: Historical fiction, with a bit of fantasy thrown in for good measure.



Thanks to my writing friends!

I became overwhelmed with running my nonprofit and decided to leave my writing group months ago. However, we keep in touch and occasionally have writing retreats together.

We just had such a retreat last month, and I am so glad I attended. I got a lot of work done on the character figures for my novel on Duchess Sophie Elisabeth and the Thirty Years War, and I got to catch up with good friends.

If you are a writer and are looking for encouragement and good times, consider a writing group. If you can find an in-person one, all the better.

Happy Writing!

Who is Who?

I mentioned on the first page my friend wanting a who's who at the front of my novel about Duchess Sophie Elisabeth and the Thirty Years War.

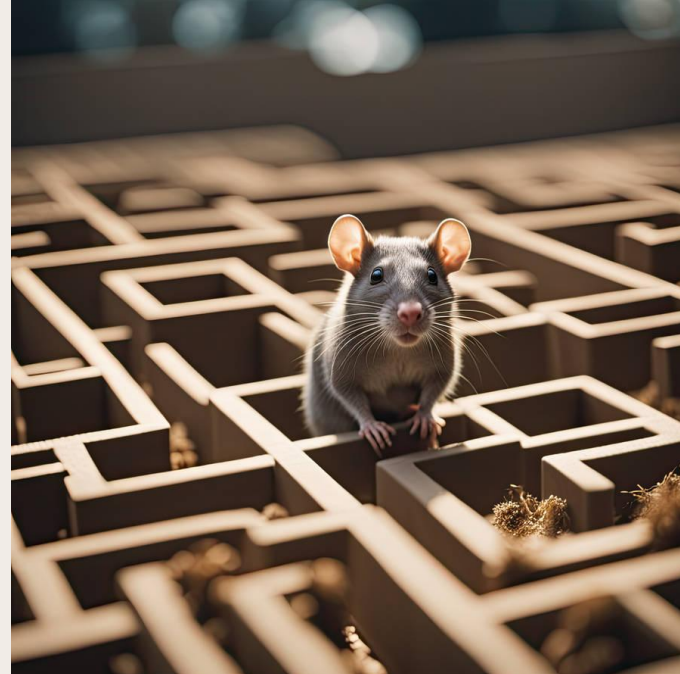
So, I've started to do that. First, I thought, I'll just go through and write down every character. Well, I am about one-quarter through the book and have 34 characters. I will probably drop the unnamed ones.

I thought at first that I could get away with just a Dramatis Personae list, but it seems clear, as I read and search for new characters at the same time, that I will have to have family tree-like figures that show the relationships of characters to each other. So, I will do that, even though it will definitely be complicated.

I also realized that people need a better sense of the geography involved, especially since that part of the world, at that time, is not usually studied, at least in American schools. I am working on getting maps drawn for the front material, but I also decided I needed a list of key locations. That will be my next task after the characters.

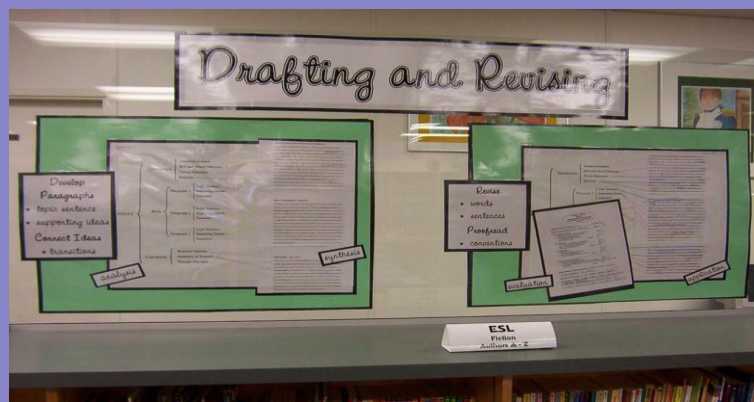
I honestly think this book is close to publication. I am working with a graphic artist on a cover, and I am sure I can find an editor. But these latest, necessary additions will add to the timeline.

Who knows when I will have time for more dedicated writing. Soon, I hope. In the meantime, I'll keep looking for fun ways to address the Reedsy prompts



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Double Stops Again!

Practice helps

I just started a new piece: The ninth duet for two violins in Mozart's Opus #70. It's in the key of C major, which I've played in before. For Mozart, it's not too difficult.

Sort of. The piece starts manageably enough for me, but I quickly find myself in a series of figures requiring double stops. If you recall from a previous newsletter, double stops are when two strings are played at the same time, thereby playing two notes at the same time. I mentioned in that newsletter that I was working on double stop exercises to get better at them.

The ones I am encountering in this piece are just a wee bit harder. They require holding one figure down on one string, while playing a series of different notes on the next string over. This requires physical coordination of the position of the fingers on both strings, with the some of them changing while the other remains static and balancing the pressure of the bow to provide even tone while playing both strings.

My first attempts were not pleasant to listen to. However, I've made some progress in this balancing act and hope to be able to play more smoothly as I continue to practice.



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