

DEBORAH O'TOOLE

Autumn Newsletter, 2022

TOPICS:

[In the Shadow of the King](#) / [In Progress](#) / [Nod to Mary M. Luke](#) /
[Logos & Such](#) / [Feline Antics](#) / [Leisure Activities](#) / [Until Next Time](#)

Hello dear readers,

The summer of 2022 was the longest and hottest I've experienced to date. Sizzling temperatures broke standing records in my area by several degrees. It wasn't until mid-September that the weather began to cool down, much to my relief. With it comes the long-awaited season of autumn, which is my favorite time of year.



Many years ago, I wrote culinary articles for [Food Fare](#) about the food and culture of different countries across the globe, holidays and food-specific topics. The pieces also contained history, food traditions, lifestyle and dishes native to various countries, as well as authentic recipes, words and phrases in the native tongue of the subject, along with food terms.

One of my favorites, to this day, remains [The Pumpkin Patch](#):

Pumpkins are fruits used widely as a Halloween decoration, but there are many other uses for the plump little Jack O'Lantern. Just about every part of the pumpkin is edible (apart from the stem), including the hollow shell which can be used as a serving dish. Recipes associated with pumpkins are also wide and varied: one can make pies, cakes, breads, tarts, Crème Brule, pudding, cookies, soup, butter, dips, pancakes, cheesecake, ice cream, risotto

and sauces. Pumpkins can even be baked like squash as a side dish. The pumpkin seeds (to be found inside amongst the spaghetti-like innards) can also be salted, roasted and served as a snack. While I don't claim to be an expert on pumpkin-lore, my brief article will attempt to shed some light on the edible pumpkin, along with bits of history, planting and growing, varieties, methods of cooking, health benefits, trivia, links and pumpkin-based recipes.

People are on the fence about pumpkins. They either hate the taste, or love it. I fall into the latter category. Roasted and salted pumpkin seeds, pumpkin yogurt, pumpkin pancakes, pumpkin pudding, pumpkin cheesecake, pumpkin hot cocoa, pumpkin pie, pumpkin cookies, and even pumpkin-scented candles - I love it all. To honor the versatile pumpkin, I'd like to share the following recipe:

ROASTED PUMPKIN SEEDS

- 1 large pumpkin
- 1 quart water
- 2 TBS salt
- 1 TBS vegetable oil or unsalted butter (*melted*)

Pull seeds from the pumpkin, separating them from as many of the "spaghetti" strings as possible. Pick through the seeds and remove any cut or marred seeds. Preheat the oven to 250-degrees F. In a large pot, bring the water and salt to a boil. Add the seeds and boil for ten minutes. Drain, and then spread seeds on a kitchen towel or paper towel. Pat dry. Place the seeds in a bowl and toss with oil or melted butter, and then spread evenly on a large cookie or baking sheet. Place pan in the preheated oven and roast for thirty to forty minutes (stirring about every ten minutes), until crisp and golden brown. Cool the seeds. Shell the seeds before eating. Note: If you want to keep the seeds until ready to eat, store in air-tight containers or zip seal plastic bags and refrigerate.



Enjoy the season! 🍂:)

~ IN THE SHADOW OF THE KING ~

As of this writing, In the Shadow of the King is being presented in ten parts, along with a prologue and an epilogue. As with all of my books in progress, content and layout might be subject to change.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE KING

Deborah O'Toole

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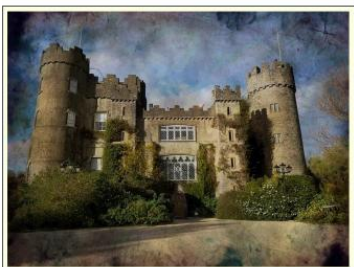
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PROLOGUE:

Clonmel, Ireland (October 2001)



PART ONE:

Sheila Bryan (2001)



*Speak thou and speed where will or power
 ought helpeth*

*Where power doth want, will must be
 won by wealth:*

*For need will speed, where will works not his kind;
 And gain thy foes thy friends shall cause thee find:
 For, suit and gold, what do not they obtain?
 Of good and bad the tryers are these twain.*

~ Sir Thomas Wyatt (*That Speaking or Proffering Brings Alway Speeding*)

PART TWO:

Sir Francis Bryan (1509-1517)



... sacred Bryan (whom the Muses kept,
And in his cradle rockt him while he slept)
~ Michael Drayton (Heroicall Epistle)

PART THREE:

Sheila Bryan (2001)



*Alas, what shall I do for love?
For love, alas, what shall I do?
Since now so kind
I do you find
To keep you me unto
Alas!*

~ King Henry VIII (*Alas! What Shall I Do for Love?*)

PART FOUR:

Sir Francis Bryan (1518-1522)



*A wreathèd garland of deservèd praise,
Of praise deservèd, unto Thee I give,
I give to Thee, who knowest all my ways,
My crooked winding ways, wherein I live ...*
~ George Herbert (A Wreath)

PART FIVE:

Sheila Bryan (2001)



*I fear and hope, I burn, and freeze like ice;
I fly aloft, yet can I not arise;
And nought I have, and all the world I seize on,
That locks nor loseth, boldeth me in prison,
And holds me not, yet can I scape no wise:
Nor letteth me live, nor die, at my devise,
And yet of death it giveth me occasion.
Without eye I see; without tongue I plain:
I wish to perish, yet I ask for health;
I love another, and I hate myself;
I feed me in sorrow, and laugh in all my pain.
Lo, thus displeaseth me both death and life,
And my delight is causer of this strife.*
~ Sir Thomas Wyatt (*Passions in a Lover*)

PART SIX:

Sir Francis Bryan (1523-1533)



Nephew of Norfolk, first cousin of Anne Boleyn. One would think that with this background, he could not fail to advance, and for a time he was considered the emerging favorite, but he could not support his position. He loved drinking and had a talent for mistruth.
~ J. Le Grand (*Histoire du Divorce de Henri VIII*)

PART SEVEN:

Sheila Bryan (2001)



*Stand whoso list upon the slipper top
Of court's estates, and let me here rejoice;
And use me quiet without let or stop,
Unknown in court, that bath such brackish joys:
In bidden place, so let my days forth pass,
That when my years be done, withouten noise,
I may die agèd after the common trace,
For him death gripeth right hard by the crope
That is much known of other; and of himself alas,
Doth die unknown, dazed with dreadful face.*
~ Sir Thomas Wyatt (*Stand Whoso List*)

PART EIGHT:

Sir Francis Bryan (1534-1547)



*Bryan . . . who knows how great a grace
In writing is to counsel man the right,
To thee . . . that trots still up and down
And never rests, but running day and night
From realm to realm, from city, street and town,
Why dost thou wear thy body to the bones?
- Sir Thomas Wyatt
(How to Use the Court and Himself Therein)*

PART NINE:

Sheila Bryan (2002)



*As when with downcast eyes we muse and brood,
And ebb into former life, or seem
To lapse far back in some confused dream
To states of mystical similitude;
If one but speaks or hems or stirs his chair,
Ever the wonder waxeth more and more,
So that we say, "All this hath been before,
All this hath been, I know not when or where."
So, friend, when first I look'd upon your face,
Our thought gave answer each to each, so true -
Opposed mirrors each reflecting each -
That tho' I knew not in what time or place,
Methought that I had often met with you,
And either lived in either's heart and speech.
- Alfred Tennyson (As When with Downcast Eyes)*

PART TEN:

Sir Francis Bryan (1547-1550)



*Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.
- John Donne (Death Be Not Proud)*

EPILOGUE:

Clonmel, Ireland (2002)






*"Je Tiens Grace
("I Hope for Salvation")*

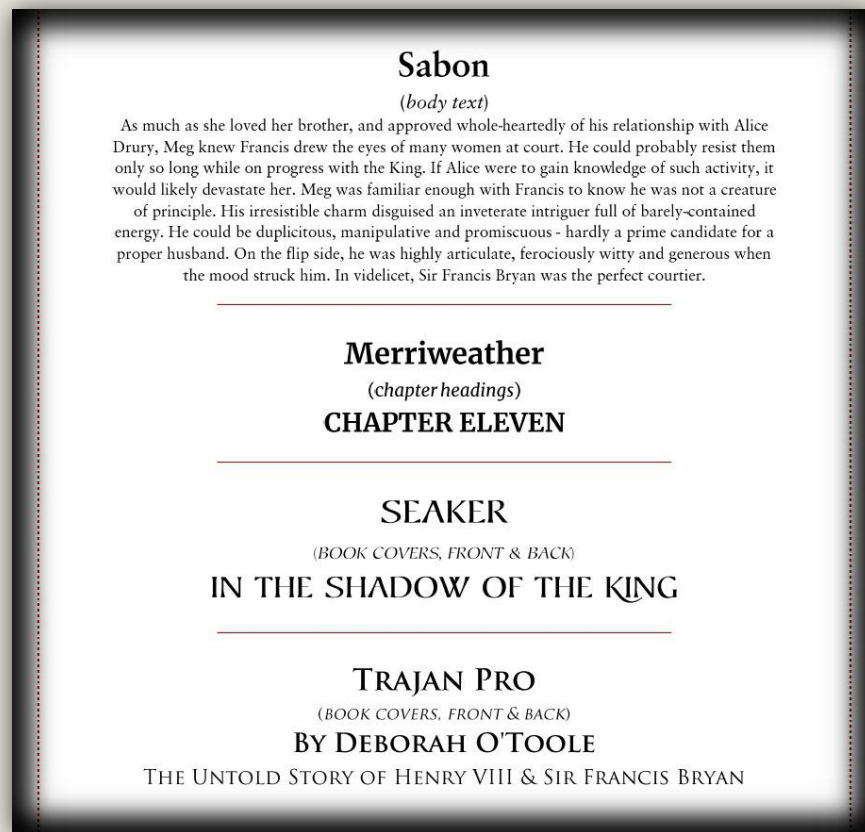
I can predict with certainty that In the Shadow of the King will be a lengthy book. At the moment, I'm 196 pages in (with a current file size of 2.80 MB and 79,702 words), but only to the year 1513 in the storyline. As Sir Francis Bryan lived until 1550, I still have quite a few miles to travel in order to reach the end.

In addition, my character spreadsheet for In the Shadow of the King keeps getting larger (24 pages currently).

CHARACTER SPREADSHEET In the Shadow of the King

Name	DOB	DOD	Physical	Characteristics	Personal	Other Info	Misc.
Bryan, Edmund 	November 1522	1559	Tall, dark hair and eyes, resembles his father.	Educated but likes to drink and gamble.	Son of Phillipa "Pippa" Spice and Sir Francis Bryan.		
Bryan, Elizabeth Lady Carew 	1499-1500 Beddington, Surrey, England	July 17, 1546 London	Light red hair with blue eyes. She was petite, almost elfin-like. Francis sometimes compared her to a "porcelain doll."		Younger sister of Sir Francis Bryan. One-time mistress of Henry VIII.	Wife of Sir Nicholas Carew, KG, Master of the Horse (m. April 1514). Mother of Mary Darcy; Anne Stokes; Elizabeth Carew; Sir Francis Carew, MP and Isabel Carew.	
Bryan, Sir Francis 	June 1, 1490 Cheddington, Aylesbury Vale District, Buckinghamshire, England	February 2 (12th?), 1550 Clonmel, Ireland Old St. Mary's Churchyard Clonmel, County Tipperary, Ireland	Tall, slender, dark hair & dark, piercing eyes. Olive-tinted skin, aquiline nose, bottom lip fuller than the top. 6'2" (height).	Hair is dark hair was unruly on top, often falling to one side of face. Brushes stray hair off face, a habit that would linger throughout his life.	Parents: Margaret Bourchier (mother), Thomas Bryan (father).	Wives: Phillipa Spice (m 1522) and Lady Joan Fitzgerald (m August 1548). Mistress: Abigail Elwell (1517-1518).	Children: John Bryan Elwell (1518-1548), Edmund Bryan (1522-1559) and Francis Bryan (1549-1640).

I'm also particular about the fonts I select for books, as evidenced below.



I typically decide which typeface(s) to use even before I start writing. For In the Shadow of the King, I'm using **Sabon** for the body text, **Merriweather** for chapter headings, and **SEAKER** and **TRAJAN PRO** for front and back book covers.

Fonts are easy to come by, and 99.9% of the time can be found online for free. In all the years I've done web design, I've only paid for a font twice. About a decade ago, I purchased **TRAJAN** and then obtained **SEAKER** last July. Both fonts are perfect as headers and for embedding on website navigation buttons.



Then there is the subject matter itself. Although not much is truly known about Sir Francis Bryan's persona as a whole, I found an intriguing description of it referenced in the *General Biographical Dictionary* by Alexander Chalmers. The volume was first published in 1761, more than 200 years after Bryan's death.

No portrait survives so we know nothing of his appearance. Bryan was a typical Renaissance courtier, a poet and man of letters who was also to distinguish himself as a soldier, sailor and diplomat. His irresistible charm disguised an incorrigible intriguer who was two-faced, manipulative and promiscuous; once, on a trip to Calais, he demanded "a soft bed then a hard harlot." He was full of pent-up energy; highly articulate and viciously

witty. Observers were astonished at the familiarity he used towards the King, both in speaking his mind and telling jokes. Bryan was no creature of principle; by altering his loyalties and opinions to conform to the King's changes of policy, he managed to remain in favor throughout the reign.

In writing a semi-fictional account of Bryan's life with [In the Shadow of the King](#), the bit of personality illumination has come in handy while creating dialog and various scenes. But who was Alexander Chalmers, and on which facts did he base his opinion? He was born more than two centuries after Bryan's death, so how could he know?

According to Wikipedia, the full title of the work was *The General Biographical Dictionary: Containing an Historical and Critical Account of the Lives and Writings of the Most Eminent Persons in Every Nation, Particularly the British and Irish, From the Earliest Accounts to the Present Time*. "Saxii's Onomasticon" is the most commonly cited source.

My research goes on, and I still find the process utterly fascinating.

~ IN PROGRESS ~

I've had to push back release dates for my historical essays about [Lizzie Borden](#) and [Michael Collins](#) yet again. I've shifted both essays for conclusion sometime in 2024. The reason being? I'm completely immersed in the writing of two books, which are currently in progress:

- ❖ [In the Shadow of the King](#) (*Christmas 2023*)
- ❖ [Limb of Iniquity](#) (*2023-24*)

I'm estimating it will take me at least one year - or maybe more - to finish both books, therefore leaving me little time to work on the half-completed essays until 2024.

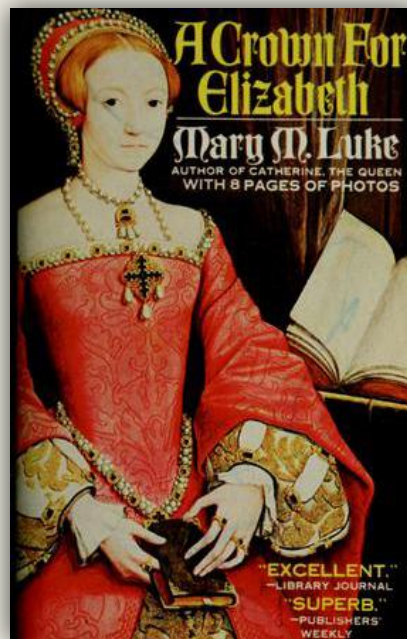
My significant other recently asked me: "How do you keep two different books straight in your head? Does it ever get confusing?"

The answer is no, at least for me. The two books have vastly different storylines, and are in truth nothing alike. While Limb of Iniquity is a continuation of the Collective Obsessions Saga in the modern day, In the Shadow of the King is a trip back in time to the Tudor era of history (roughly 1509 up to 1550). The research alone takes up quite a bit of time as I'm keen to get historical facts in order, even though the book is a semi-fictional account of Sir Francis Bryan.

As per my usual notation, storylines, estimated release dates and book cover designs may be subject to change.

~ NOD TO MARY M. LUKE ~

In keeping with the Tudor theme of my current writing project, I decided to share a book review of *A Crown for Elizabeth* by Mary M. Luke, which I penned several years ago.



The following is my review of the novel:

Book Review by Deborah O'Toole:

"A CROWN FOR ELIZABETH"

A Crown for Elizabeth by Mary M. Luke is one of the better books written about the Tudor era of history, especially if one is partial to Elizabeth I, the last Tudor monarch. While *A Crown for Elizabeth* begins as if the story is about the Tudor children in general (Mary, Elizabeth and Edward), the chapters describing Mary and Edward are actually pieces that intertwine with the Elizabeth puzzle. Each chapter effectively leads up to the life Elizabeth led before she became Queen of England in 1558.

And that brilliant life was fraught with tension, mistrust, paranoia, shrewdness, judgment, discretion and daunting courage. I certainly would not have wanted to be one of the children of Henry VIII. He had the gumption to behead two of his wives - what would have prevented him from doing the same to one of his children? Although Henry VIII did not do this, the fear of that reality certainly must have been in the minds of his offspring. To watch Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard go to the block, as well as old friends, relatives and servants, had to leave an indelible impression on the Tudor children. If blessed with common sense and a sharp mind - as Elizabeth was - each incident taught a lesson of perseverance, sound judgment for the most part, and of extreme caution. As this was normal behavior in the reign of Henry VIII, the resulting personality formations surely went unnoticed as a general rule.

Mary M. Luke portrays the true story of Elizabeth I with a vividness that clearly evokes the Tudor era. The history has been meticulously researched, and brings the characters to life in many dimensions. Some of the letters are faithfully reproduced in their entirety, and there is an example of Elizabeth's famous signature. There are also accurate records of Elizabeth's few "mistakes" - one of which was her flirtation with Sir Thomas Seymour, and the scandal it created at the time. You will read about the desperation of Henry's Queens, the brutal way in which Henry treated Princess Mary after he had become consumed with Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth's uncertain childhood, and the sad and sickly Prince Edward who was to become the last Tudor King.

A Crown for Elizabeth interweaves the destinies of each Tudor child, and tells their stories in riveting detail. Without Mary and Edward, Elizabeth would never have fulfilled her own destiny. All of the events in the story lead ultimately to one compelling moment: the

day Elizabeth Tudor ascended the throne of England, thus beginning the magical Elizabethan age.



Pictured above: Elizabeth I's signature.

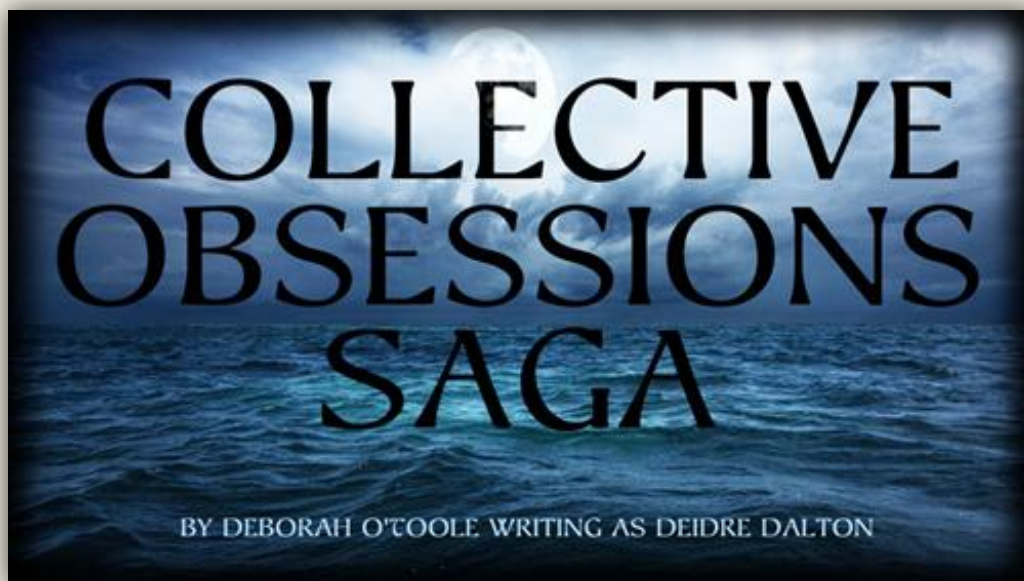
The story never gets old for me.

Mary M. Luke passed away in 1993 at the age of seventy-four. Her other works include *Catherine, the Queen*; *The Nine Days Queen: A Portrait of Lady Jane Grey*, *The Nonsuch Lure*, and *The Ivy Crown: A Biographical Novel of Queen Katherine Parr*.

~ LOGOS & SUCH ~

When I need a break from writing, I tend to either play computer games or go about messing with new graphics for my books.

Graphics won out for this go-round. The possible new logo for the Collective Obsessions Saga:



Another button with the book covers included:



Let me know what *you* think by sending a comment via my [Contact page](#).

~ FELINE ANTICS ~

Our cats Hissy and Dusty now have their very own Facebook pages, much to their mutual delight. ;)



<https://www.facebook.com/Hissy-Dalton-102627225885269>



<https://www.facebook.com/Dusty-OToole-Dalton-100710382746819>

They would both be thrilled if you came by their pages for a visit. :)

~ LEISURE ACTIVITIES ~

The amount of meticulous research required to assemble [In the Shadow of the King](#) in proper fashion sometimes leaves me longing for a quick, simple read in order to relax. So, where do I turn? I escape back into my youth and [Nancy Drew](#). The storylines are entertaining without being complicated. I can usually finish one book in just over an hour.



It is somewhat comforting to return to a familiar character from the past, as if visiting with an old friend.

I also take breaks by playing the *Delicious Emily* and *Incredible Dracula* series' of PC games. They are mostly time management games, which typically would cause me stress but doesn't in this case. Either that, or I'm a glutton for punishment. ;)

~ UNTIL NEXT TIME ~

Another newsletter will be coming your way in late spring/early summer 2023, so keep your eyes peeled.

Meanwhile, visit my [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages for updates, or go to my blog [Irish Eyes](#) to view recent posts.

Until next time - *happy reading* . . .

Deborah O'Toole 🍀

Sunday, 2nd October 2022

