This book is a study of the marrying of Anne of Cleves to King Henry VIII. It contains fascinating material – including ‘demonic’ interference and sexual politics at court – which differs from the usual stereotyped accounts of Anne. It also provides a rich new context of royal courtship rituals, and a startling account of the king’s failure to consummate his marriage.

Henry’s decision to ally himself with this German noblewoman in 1540 was in part a reaction to the Franco-Imperial treaty mediated by Pope Paul III, who renewed a suspended bull of excommunication against Henry in the hope of isolating England diplomatically. The subsequent marriage procedures, from the advent of negotiations and the portrait of Anne by Hans Holbein the Younger to Henry’s Rochester greeting of Anne – in disguise – and the Greenwich nuptials, followed usual royal protocol. However, the king’s sexual incapacity, which prevented the consummation of the marriage, culminated in the fall and subsequent execution of Thomas Cromwell and his client Lord Hungerford, who were both tarred with the brush of sexual heresy.

THE MARRYING OF
ANNE OF CLEVES
Anne of Cleves
CONTENTS

List of plates xi
List of figures x
Acknowledgments xi
Map: Cleves territories xv

1 INTRODUCTION 1
2 ENGLISH NEGOTIATORS 12
3 CANDIDATE POOL 36
4 CLEVES SELECTION 63
5 TRAVELING BRIDE 94
6 ROYAL GREETER 127
7 QUEEN CONSORT 155
8 KING’S SCAPEGOAT 187
9 HENRY’S SISTER 229
10 CONCLUSION 263

Notes 269
Index 326
PLATES

Miniature portrait of Anne of Cleves, 1539. Hans Holbein the Younger. Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London (© V&A Picture Library)

(between pages 80 and 81)

4 Francis I, king of France, Jean Clouet. Musée du Louvre, Paris
5 James V and Mary of Guise, king and queen of Scotland. Unknown artist. The Devonshire Collection, Hardwick Hall (National Trust). Photo: the Courtauld Institute, London
6 Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor. Titian. Museo del Prado, Madrid
8 John of Cleves with his brother Adolph at the wedding of Philip the Good. Miniature from the Remissorium Phillippi. Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague
10 William of Cleves, 1540. Engraving by Heinrich Aldegrever. Stadtmuseum, Düsseldorf
LIST OF PLATES  ix

11 Sybilla of Cleves, duchess of Saxony. Lucas Cranach. Kunstsammlungen, Weimar

(between pages 208 and 209)


13 Capital illumination showing Henry VIII enthroned, from the marriage proclamation of Henry and Anne of Cleves, 5 January 1540. Hauptstaatsarchiv, Düsseldorf

14 William Fitzwilliam, earl of Southampton. Hans Holbein. Royal Collection, by permission of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II


16 Painted oak bedhead, with polychrome decoration with the date 1540 and the initials ‘HA’, probably made in anticipation of Henry and Anne’s wedding. Glasgow Museum, the Burrell Collection

17 The accounts of Wymond Carew, receiver-general for Anne of Cleves, with her signature (“Anne the Quenen”). Public Record Office, London


19 Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester. Artist unknown. The Bodleian Library, Oxford


21 Hever Castle, Kent. By permission of Hever Castle Ltd.

22 Handwritten dedication by Anne of Cleves in Book of Hours printed in Germany in 1533. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC

23 The tomb of Anne of Cleves, Westminster Abbey. By permission of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster.
FIGURES

1  Genealogy of the House of Tudor  
2  Royal genealogy taken from The Gentleman's Magazine, 1829  

page 6  
16
I am grateful for the community of scholars, archivists, librarians, and editors who facilitated the completion of this book. At Arizona State University, I am most especially indebted to Philip Soergel, the early modern German specialist, who located important sources and contacts for me in the United States and in Germany. Other members of the departmental faculty, such as Sally McKee, Andrew Barnes, and Sybil Thornton were supportive as well. I appreciate the splendid work of my graduate student, Mary Egel, on the index. Catherine Marshall in the Languages and Literature Department put me in touch with Kathrin Ross DiPaola, an MA student from Germany now in the Ph.D. program at the University of Maryland at College Park, who completed several translations for me. Her colleague, Claudia Schlee, was also of assistance. Dhira Mahoney in the English Department forwarded evidence from medieval literature about individuals falling in love at first sight with an art form, which is essential to the analyses in Chapters 3 and 6. Finally, at Arizona State University, I am thankful for the friendly and efficient circulation and interlibrary loan staff at Hayden Library, for the assistance of the Art Slide Collection Department, and for a welcome research grant from the Vice-President for Research.

Many others in the United States have encouraged me in this research project. The participants in the Early Modern Graduate Seminar at the Huntington Library, chaired by Lamar Hill, University of California, Irvine, responded positively to a paper I gave on Henry’s greeting of Anne of Cleves at Rochester. Muriel McClendon of University of California, Los Angeles, one of the seminar’s participants, obtained an article for me at her university library. The Early Modern Society and the History Department at the University of Minnesota invited me to lecture on early modern
protocol. Stanford Lehmberg’s Ph.D. students there, Donald Biggs and especially John Currin when he was in England, subsequently forwarded sources on greeting ritual and courtship to me. Joel Harrington of Vanderbilt University advised me about the nature of German marriage contracts. My daughter Margaretha, previously at Carleton College but now at the University of Delaware, and her friend, Stephen Gardiner, at Carleton, were also of assistance.

My husband Ronald and my son Robert and his wife Cynthia, as well as Margaretha, have been consistently supportive. They were as delighted as I when I was able finally to announce that I had completed the manuscript on Anne of Cleves. They are my greatest rooters, but it is somewhat tedious to be queried regularly about how much writing I have accomplished on any given day.

I am thankful for the assistance of individuals outside the United States. Sybil Jack of the University of Sydney offered information about the estates of queens’ consort. Niethard Bulst of the University of Bielefeld ordered important public documents copied for me, and an understanding librarian at Tübingen forwarded an original version of a crucial dissertation that had been accepted at the university in 1907. In the United Kingdom, I am immensely indebted to John Guy who, while on research leave from St. Andrews, agreed to read two drafts of this manuscript during his summer break. I welcomed and value highly his criticisms, recommendations, and guidance on this manuscript as I did on my previous work on Anne Boleyn. Without the skillful assistance of the archivists and librarians at the Public Record Office, the British Library, and the Institute of Historical Research, of course, no book on the Tudor court could ever be completed. Finally, I am grateful for the advice of William Davies, editor of Cambridge University Press, who is also the editor of my book on Anne Boleyn.

That I embarked upon research on the early Tudor court is largely due to the guidance of Sir Geoffrey Elton, Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University, whom I met for the first time in 1984. After reading my book, Women of the English Renaissance and Reformation (Greenwood Press, 1983), and a manuscript on Anne Boleyn’s age (later published in Historical Journal), which emerged from the book on Englishwomen, he suggested that I continue to research the life of Anne Boleyn. I was at once concerned and
pleased. I had not heretofore considered doing further research on her, for I was then pursuing a collaborative effort on Jacobean women’s funeral sermons with Bettie Anne Doebler of the English Department at Arizona State. I was pleased, however, that he considered my scholarly abilities equal to such a task and finally accepted his advice. The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn: Family Politics at the Court of Henry VIII was the result.

This present study grew out of that book. While involved in its research, I became aware of how inaccurately religious and secular rituals had been interpreted. The most obvious example was the ubiquitous speculation on why Henry VIII had failed to attend his daughter Elizabeth’s christening. His absence was dictated by religious protocol, of course, and not by his disappointment that she was a daughter rather than the son he had been expecting. This awareness led me to examine Henry’s greeting of Anne of Cleves at Rochester and then to embark upon a larger study of royal protocol in the courtship and marrying process.

My first findings on this research were offered at a workshop funded by the Arizona State Graduate College and by the Arizona Humanities Council in 1989. Also participating in the workshop were Elton with his former student Norman Jones of Utah State, A. J. Slavin of the University of Louisville and also visiting professor at Arizona State with his former student Joseph Block of California Polytechnic at Pomona, and two of my Ph.D. students, William Penberthy and John Wagner. I recall how attentive Elton was to the papers of the graduate students and how appreciative they were for his interest and helpful comments.

He later read and critiqued a revised version of my paper on Henry’s greeting of Anne of Cleves, which thanks to Michael Moore, appeared in Albion in the winter of 1996. Unfortunately, my term as department chair (1992–98) and some smaller research ventures, including a few additional essays on Anne Boleyn, delayed the completion of The Marrying of Anne of Cleves: Royal Protocol in Early Modern England. Because it was only after his death in December 1994 that I began to examine Anne’s divorce and Cromwell’s fall, I shall never know whether Elton would have been able to validate my version of those tragic events, but I do hope he would have repeated what he said about my “Sexual Heresy” thesis in the book on Anne
xiv ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Boleyn, that it is a “fresh and original approach.” In the last decade of his distinguished career, he had decided that analyses of court politics must take into consideration themes from women’s history, the history of sexuality, and family history. It is to his memory and his deep commitment to the advancement of historical studies that I dedicate this book.
Cleves territories, early seventeenth century