



THE RISE AND FALL OF ANNE BOLEYN

Family politics at the court of Henry VIII

RETHA M. WARNICKE



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PREFACE

While I was engaged in investigating the life and person of Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII's second queen, Professor E. W. Ives' monumental biography of her was published and its appearance would seem to call for a justification of this book. This study of Anne is not a biography but an analysis of the crucial phases of her life and more specifically of her role in the politics of her day, with particular emphasis on the rules and conventions of the society in which she played her part. Great attention has been given here for the first time to her vital place in the family network created by her father, Sir Thomas Boleyn, who was to become the earl of Wiltshire and Ormond, and by her Howard relatives, especially the second and third dukes of Norfolk. Consequently, I have come to conclusions quite different from those put forward by Professor Ives, whose biography builds upon the outlines established by Paul Friedmann in 1884 and asserts that for political reasons Cromwell joined with an Aragonese faction at court to effect the downfall of Anne and her five alleged lovers.

This study draws upon my five articles on Anne Boleyn each of which explored a specific controversial issue in her life. No one chapter is a reproduction of any of these articles although parts of Chapter 8 do follow closely "Sexual Heresy at the Court of Henry VIII," which appeared in the *Historical Journal* in 1987. That journal also published my first article on her childhood, which I wrote in 1983. I wish to thank the journal's editors for their early support of this research and the editors of *Albion*, *History*, and *Parergon* for publishing my other articles on her.

After I completed a rough draft of my first manuscript on Anne, I asked Sir Geoffrey Elton, Regius Professor of History at

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Cambridge University, for a critical review of it. He kindly responded, reading not only that paper but all of my subsequent work on Anne. Indeed, it is due to his encouragement that I embarked upon this book-length study of her role in court politics. I am truly grateful for his many helpful suggestions and for the time he has generously and patiently given to my research efforts. I wish also to thank John Guy, Reader in Modern History in the History Department at Bristol University, for his criticism and help in the last stages of the final draft of this book.

In 1984 I traveled to the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, to become a charter member of the British History Seminar, which was launched under Professor Elton's direction. This seminar was chaired by David Cressy, Professor of History at California State University, Long Beach. I wish to thank all of its members, but particularly Joseph Block of California Polytechnic at Pomona, and Mary Robertson, Archivist at the Huntington, who are both Cromwellian scholars, for supporting and sometimes challenging my research conclusions. As a result of my participation in this seminar, I have had the opportunity to present papers on Queen Anne at sessions in the Pacific Coast Conference on British Studies (two of them), at the Pacific Coast Conference of the American Historical Association, at the North American Conference on British Studies, and at the Western Conference on British Studies. I also gave papers at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, at the Berkshire Conference on Women's History, and at the Rocky Mountain Conference on Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

This research was accomplished at a number of archives and libraries: in the United States at the Huntington and at the Hayden Library, Arizona State University, and in England at the Bodleian, the British Library, the Public Record Office, Lambeth Palace, the Institute of Historical Research, and the Royal College of Music in London. I am grateful for the assistance provided by the staffs of these institutions.

There are still other thanks that must be given. My trips to the Huntington and to England were in part funded by the College of Liberal Arts Grant Program and the University Research fund at Arizona State University. Linda Breedlove of my husband's law firm has been of tremendous and loyal assistance in printing out

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various versions of this manuscript for me. She has been an indispensable link in the chain of research related activities that resulted in this book.

My family, which includes my husband, Ronald, my son Robert, now a junior at Vanderbilt University, and my daughter Margaretha, an eighth grader at Clarendon Elementary school, have formed a powerful cheering section. They have applauded every step of the way in this research project, rejoicing with me when my essays were completed and accepted for publication and finally when this long manuscript was done.

While I was writing this book, my husband and I celebrated our twenty-seventh wedding anniversary. It is ironic that this milestone occurred when I was absorbed in detailing Anne's political struggles. Most modern studies have characterized her as an aggressive woman, who manipulated or bewitched Henry VIII into ending his union with Catherine of Aragon, a marriage that had endured some twenty-four years by the time it was officially dissolved. By linking politics to social customs, I have been able, I believe, to replace this view with a much more reasonable analysis of her role at the Tudor court. Undertaking and completing this work has been the scholarly adventure of my life, and I can do no less than dedicate it to Anne the Queen, whose unsuccessful attempts to raise the Boleyn family permanently into the Tudor dynasty made this research possible.