

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THOMAS CARDINAL WOLSEY

---

A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS  
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE  
TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

BY

VIRGINIA CARMICAL OUBRE, B.A.

---

DENTON, TEXAS

AUGUST, 1979

The Graduate School  
Texas Woman's University

Denton, Texas

July 16, 1979

We hereby recommend that the thesis prepared under  
our supervision by Virginia Carmical Oubre  
entitled The Decline and Fall of Thomas Cardinal Wolsey

be accepted as fulfilling this part of the requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts.

Committee:

Stanley E. Jandry  
Chairman  
Val Seltill  
Temp f. Kanherough

Accepted:

Margaret J. Farrell  
Dean of The Graduate School

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE. . . . .	iv
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION. . . . .	1
II. THE RISE TO POWER . . . . .	5
III. THE KING'S GREAT MATTER . . . . .	35
IV. WOLSEY'S ROLE IN THE DIVORCE PROCEEDINGS. . . . .	54
V. THE LEGATINE COURT AT BLACKFRIARS . . . . .	82
VI. THE LOSS OF OFFICES AND PALACES . . . . .	101
VII. TO YORK . . . . .	117
VIII. THE DEATH OF THE CARDINAL . . . . .	132
IX. CONCLUSION. . . . .	159
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . .	165

## PREFACE

My first interest in Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey began as I read Garrett Mattingly's biography of Henry VIII's first queen, Catherine of Aragon, while I pursued an ever growing interest in the Reformation. The contrast between the moral character of these two figures who stood so close to the throne and vied so competitively for supremacy with the king was an interesting element combined with the events, personalities, and ideas that lead to the ultimate separation of the English Church from the papacy.

Additional reading impressed me further with the power and influence wielded by a man of such common lineage as Thomas Wolsey, and I was so intrigued by the violence of his fall from power over so trivial a matter as the riding by a monarch of one queen in order to take a second that I relished the opportunity to research further the events which brought about the fall of England's alter rex.

In the pursuance of this research I would like to extend my thanks to the Dallas Theological Seminary and the Texas Woman's University for the use of their excellent facilities, and especially my appreciation is given to the Southern Methodist University for the opportunity to utilize

the wealth of resources available in their outstanding libraries. In addition, particular appreciation is offered to the members of my thesis committee, Dr. Valentine J. Belfiglio, Dr. Kemp P. Yarborough, and especially to Dr. Harral E. Landry for his interest, inspiration, patience, and most helpful suggestions. Finally, I would be remiss if I did not extend my gratitude to my family for whom I perservered because they believed in me.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey, Lord Chancellor of England and legate a latere, was a formidable figure in England from 1515 to 1529. In his person he embodied in England the power of the Catholic Church, as well as the authority of temporal powers, second only to the king of England. His power and might in England, as well as the tremendous influence he had in the affairs of continental Europe, caused men of noble birth to seek his company and princes of Europe to court his favor. He lived a life of opulence and extravagance, pride and vanity. He sought no man's good will, but the king's, and to the king he gave his undying devotion. He was totally committed to making England the arbiter of the affairs of Europe, and in this commitment it has been said that his efforts to keep a balance of power among European nations was the beginning of modern foreign policy.

There had been serious failures of the cardinal's policy during the years he served the king, and yet the cardinal had not only continued in the king's service but had remained the resourceful and confident lord chancellor of a king whose demonstrations of affection and confidence in his chief minister remained unshaken. But at the pinnacle

of Wolsey's power, the king, whom he had served so faithfully, demanded a service from his cardinal that the faithful servant was unable to accomplish. Wolsey, who had so expertly labored to draw unto Henry the power and the glory of an all powerful monarchy and who had so skillfully drawn the princes of Europe into the sphere of English influence, was powerless to gratify that the king's lust for Anne Boleyn be satisfied in a legal manner by the setting aside of Henry's marriage to his brother's wife. And, therein, the mighty fell.

The purpose and intent, therefore, of this paper is to deal with the decline and fall of the lord chancellor of England, Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey. To this end this paper will attempt to detail the initial currents whose growing violence would sweep away the special privileges of the Catholic Church, including its hold on the highest positions in English government. Toward this effort, therefore, this paper will include the first whispers of the king's "great matter" and proceed to Wolsey's private, diplomatic efforts to win the approval of Clement VII to set aside the marriage of Catherine of Aragon and Henry VIII. Finally, a last desperate effort to obtain his sovereign's wishes by legitimate church means finds its culmination and ultimate failure in the trial at Blackfriars.

Even in this failure it is possible the cardinal might have survived had he been willing to submit himself to retirement from the great offices of temporal power and withdraw to those offices of a spiritual nature to which he had first pledged his devotion. But, Thomas Wolsey, the son of a butcher, had feasted at the banquet of the mighty of this world, and he could not content himself to eat at the table of those who serve God alone. In spite of numerous warnings the cardinal continued his efforts to restore himself to Henry's favor by means of covert appeals to foreign intervention on his behalf which led to his arrest for high treason.

In an effort to draw some conclusions to the underlying reasons for the cardinal's illogical behavior of this final period, heavy reliance has been made on the work of George Cavendish, gentleman usher to the cardinal. Cavendish's work in setting out the career of the man he served has been of inestimable value, for it is the effort of a faithful eyewitness of events who records the life of his master with sincerity and with an impartial adherence to the truth. It is a work undertaken with love and affection for the man he served, but with a greater love and devotion to the truth as he saw it.

Although there is a chapter on the early life of the cardinal, it is not the purpose of this paper to detail the birth and early years of Thomas Wolsey, but rather to relate such events as they become necessary to reflect the cardinal's character. Furthermore, it is not the intent of this paper to catalogue the incidents and achievements of Wolsey's long career, or to deal with the many friends and numerous enemies the cardinal necessarily attracted in high places, except as they are woven into the biography of his decline and fall from power.

## CHAPTER II

### THE RISE TO POWER

Thomas Wolsey was born sometime around the year 1473 to Robert and Joan Wolsey of Ipswich, a little town some seventy miles northeast of London. Although the wealth of England was mainly agricultural and still was centered largely in the hands of the great lords of the manor, there was a growing middle class of small landowners and small businessmen. Robert Wolsey was an enterprising and relatively prosperous man who by careful planning and good business had risen from the rank of a butcher to a position of local eminence in the town. The parents of young Thomas had been careful to see that their son received an education, since statutes were in force binding a child to manual labor unless he had been given the opportunity of an education or had become apprenticed before the age of twelve.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas had proven to be an unusually intelligent boy, and by the time he was eleven, he had completed the educational opportunities available at Ipswich. His schoolmaster had earnestly recommended additional education for the

---

<sup>1</sup>Charles W. Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1958), p. 17.

young boy, and with his assistance and encouragement from his parents, Wolsey entered Magdalen College, Oxford, at eleven years of age, which was at least three years ahead of the age usually chosen to send boys there.<sup>2</sup>

The regimen of the colleges of the fifteenth century was terribly severe. Lectures began at six in the morning and lasted nearly three hours. The students could attend a maximum of three lectures a day. Dinner (breakfast) was at ten in the morning and was followed by a "disputation" which dealt with morals or ethics.<sup>3</sup> The entire dispute was carried on in Latin. Regular schoolwork resumed at noon, and the student applied himself to his studies or to lectures until supper at five. After this the student was free again until eight or nine o'clock in the evening. Generally, four years were required to gain a Bachelor of Arts at Oxford, but Thomas Wolsey earned his degree at the age of fifteen. The usual age was not less than seventeen, and Wolsey later confided to George Cavendish, his man servant, that the early degree was ". . . a rare thing and seldom seen."<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>4</sup>George Cavendish, The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, 2nd ed. Edited by Samuel Weller Singer. (London: Harding and Lepard, 1827), p. 66.

The ceremony by which the degree was conferred was rigorous and hazardous. The candidate was required to demonstrate his knowledge for nine full days between the hours of nine to twelve in the morning and from one to five in the afternoon. During this time he was required to take on all challengers.

From 1485 to 1497 there is no record of Thomas Wolsey. It is generally surmised that he continued at Oxford to pursue his studies in greater depth. In the autumn of 1497 Wolsey's name appears on the college role as receiving the degree of Master of Magdalen College. This degree presupposes previous teaching experience since the university would not bestow that degree on anyone who had not already assumed the duties of a teacher in the schools.<sup>5</sup>

By careful planning and good business the elder Wolsey had continued to rise in prominence in the area of Ipswich. He had purchased a house in a most desirable location, and he had become a churchwarden in the parish of St. Nicholas. At his death he had bequeathed funds for the church as well as money to provide that a mass be sung for

---

<sup>5</sup>H. C. Maxwell Lyte, A History of the University of Oxford from the Earliest Times to the Year 1530, p. 213. Cited by Charles W. Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1958), p. 50.

him and his friends for the space of one year. He had decreed in his will that the fee for this service was to go to his son provided Thomas had been ordained a priest within a year of the death of the father.

However, Wolsey was not a priest in the prescribed time, for he was busy with college affairs. He had become third bursar, a position of responsibility in the management of money and property of Magdalen College. The college was engaged in an extensive building program and by 1499, Thomas Wolsey became first bursar, assuming far reaching responsibilities in the maintenance and well being of the building program. At the same time Wolsey was also connected with the grammar school of the college. During the course of his teaching, he had under his care three of the sons of Thomas Grey, Marquis of Dorset, a man of considerable wealth and a friend of the king.

As a convenience, the marquis invited Thomas Wolsey to accompany his three sons home for the Christmas holidays and to enjoy the hospitality of the family during this holiday season. Thomas Wolsey made good use of his time with the marquis, who became impressed with Wolsey's eloquence and with the solid learning he had instilled in his sons. Within a short time after that visit, the marquis bestowed Wolsey the rectorship of a parish church at Limington, Somerset. This was an important step in the

direction of financial security for Father Wolsey, as well as an opportunity for advancement in church affairs. Furthermore, since it was not necessary for a man to minister in the parish to which he was named rector, he could be relieved from the duties and responsibilities of such office to pursue other interests while still receiving an income from the parish revenues.

For the next year and a half Wolsey began a collection of appointments which brought with them various monetary remunerations. In 1501 he left Limington to become chaplain to Henry Deane, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, and Keeper of the Great Seal. The chaplaincy was an influential post and was regarded as a stepping stone to higher positions. As a domestic chaplain at Lambeth Palace, Wolsey would come in touch with the greatest in the land and would be given opportunities to demonstrate his skill as an administrator. The arch episcopal province of Canterbury contained sixteen dioceses in all, whereas York contained only three. Traditionally, the archbishop of Canterbury served ex-officio as lord chancellor of England, keeper of the great seal, and in his person encompassed both church and state. Thus, one serving on the staff of such a man would have every chance to learn the business of the church and the kingdom, and if he were alert and ambitious, he

could easily become a student in the realm of the acquisition and wielding of power.

Wolsey served Deane so skillfully and efficiently that before the archbishop's death in 1503, he recommended Wolsey to Sir Richard Nonfan, Deputy Governor of Calais. Before the end of 1503, Thomas Wolsey had assumed the post as chaplain to Nonfan at Calais. This position proved to be an important post for Wolsey, for it is doubtful that he could have so masterfully planned the 1513 campaign without his experience at Calais. Nonfan was as impressed with Wolsey's services as Deane had been, and before Nonfan retired from his position in 1506 he recommended Wolsey to the king.

Within a short time Thomas Wolsey was one of Henry VII's chaplains. Here, Thomas set about in his new environment to make himself known to the men who were able directly to influence Henry, for although the king scrupulously followed his religious devotions, it was unlikely that the king would find opportunity during his religious duties to notice the administrative and political abilities of one of his chaplains. Therefore, it was Wolsey's goal to impress his talents upon men whom the king would notice.

Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester, and Sir Thomas Lovell, trusted advisors of the king, were among the first

to recommend Father Wolsey to the king to be Henry's messenger on a particularly delicate mission to the emperor. During the time that written correspondence was being prepared for the mission and while he was receiving instructions from the king, Wolsey prepared meticulously for the speedy execution of his assignment. He made careful plans to have ships waiting for his trip to the continent and to have post horses standing by at various points on his route. As a result, the whole mission took less than seventy hours. This accomplishment surprised and delighted the king to the extent that Wolsey in later years related to Cavendish that Henry himself thanked him ". . . for your good and speedy exploit."<sup>6</sup> As a result of this and other services to the king, honors, as well as financial rewards, came quickly. By November 3, 1508, in addition to certain offices in the church, Wolsey was made royal almoner at court.<sup>7</sup>

But then Henry VII died, and it appeared for a time that the ascendancy of Wolsey's career had come to an abrupt halt. He was not reappointed to the post of royal almoner, nor did he remain as chaplain to the new king. However,

---

<sup>6</sup>Cavendish, The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 75.

<sup>7</sup>Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, p. 77.

within a month of his appointment, the newly appointed almoner to Henry VIII was dead, and once again, Wolsey was reappointed to that post as well as being made a member of the privy council on the same day. In his post as almoner, Wolsey swiftly won his sovereign's confidence. Thomas Wolsey was long accustomed to advancement by the unfailing but simple means of doing the work of his superiors. It was this method that made him a perfect minister for the young Henry VIII, who quickly won the reputation as a king who would rather hunt and play than tend to the tedious matters of the kingdom. Cavendish writes that the king quickly gained for Wolsey "a loving fancy, especially for that he was most earnest and readiest among all the council to advance the king's only will and pleasure."<sup>8</sup>

Wolsey's persuasive and eloquent tongue, combined with his diligent and eager pursuit of details, continued to impress his sovereign with the almoner's worth. Furthermore, as older members of the council urged Henry to give up his pleasures and to attend more directly to matters pertaining to the kingdom, Wolsey encouraged the king to continue to fulfill his pleasures and assured him that "he shall not

---

<sup>8</sup>Cavendish, The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 80.

need to spare any time of his pleasure, for any business that should necessarily happen in the council, as long as he, being there and having the king's authority and commandment, doubted not to see all things sufficiently furnished and perfected."<sup>9</sup>

Cavendish relates that the king was not pleased with the majority advice of his counsellors since "he loved nothing worse than to be constrained to do any thing contrary to his royal will and pleasure."<sup>10</sup> The perceptive Wolsey understood this and Cavendish continues, "so fast as the other counselors advised the king to leave his pleasure, and to attend to the affairs of his realm, so busily did the almoner persuade him to the contrary; which delighted him much, and caused him to have the greater affection and love to the almoner."<sup>11</sup>

By 1512 the pope had left the League of Cambrai and formed a Holy League primarily allied against the Most Christian King of France. The almoner added his voice to others to persuade the king to ally himself with the church. Not long afterward Henry signed a treaty with Ferdinand of Spain to attack France with the combined forces of their respective

---

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

countries. Ten thousand English soldiers were sent to the Spanish coast where they were to be met by an equal number of Spanish soldiers, one half of which were to be mounted. It was, however, an illfated expedition. The English landed according to plan, but the promised transportation and reinforcements from Ferdinand never came. The English troops waited three long summer months, oppressed by boredom, lack of rations, stifling heat and dysentery. Eighteen hundred soldiers died. There was every indication of a forthcoming rebellion, and when a herald from Wolsey arrived to inform the troops that they must winter in Spain, he was met with shouts of defiance. According to Mattingly, the men "crowded around their leaders, crying 'Home! Home!'"<sup>12</sup>

And home they went over the loud protests of Ferdinand and Henry. The whole shabbily planned affair had cost two thousand ducats, nearly two thousand English lives, and had not struck a single organized military blow to its enemy. The novice king of England had been made a laughing stock to the older and wiser crowned heads of Europe. The war had been a political blunder of such magnitude that it seems impossible that Wolsey, as a young junior counsellor, survived it.

---

<sup>12</sup>Garrett Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1941), p. 151.

However, the almoner's glib tongue, keen intellect, and organizational abilities had already begun to work to remedy the effects of the first campaign. It would be necessary to continue the war if for no other reason than to restore England's monarch to a position of respect and prestige on the continent. The army had returned in October, and by November plans were being made for another campaign. This time 40,000 men would be transported to the continent, and Henry himself would lead the army. The responsibility for equipping and feeding the army and transporting it safely across the Channel was placed upon Wolsey's willing shoulders. The king's almoner determined that this time there would be no failure to maintain, care for, and equip the troops. Wolsey personally handled the entire operation arranging for supplies, troops, transportation to the continent, and the defense of the Scottish border while the king was away.

By all accounts the new campaign in June, 1513, was a tremendous success although there were few actual battles and very little territory gained. The army disembarked at Calais with pomp and circumstance, and they were maintained in the field with ample supplies and certain luxuries that had been virtually unknown in a war encampment to that point. The Earl of Northumberland had brought a feather bed and mattress for his convenience and for his tent ". . .cushions

of silk, hangings of worsted, twelve dishes, six saucers, twelve silver spoons, two or three folding stools, a folding table, a close carriage with seven horses, two chariots each with eight horses, four carts each with seven horses, not to speak of a steward, a chamberlain, and a treasurer of the household, a treasurer of ward, two chaplains, a gentleman usher of the chamber, a master of the house, carvers and cup-bearers, a herald and a pursuivant."<sup>13</sup> The common soldiers had not been forgotten, for Mr. Almoner had seen to it that tents were provided so that each one slept under cover.

Wolsey's efforts to make Henry's war a clean and courtly affair and to provide for the king's pleasure and comfort did not go unnoticed. The almoner was always at the king's right hand and while Henry ostensibly received credit for the victories of the English over Therouanne and Tournai, it was Thomas Wolsey who received the credit with the king. Henry understood that Wolsey had made it possible for England's king to be considered a monarch to be reckoned with among the older nations of Europe.

Wolsey's rise to power was rapid after the successful invasion of France. The first direct and open acknowledgment

---

<sup>13</sup> H. A. L. Fisher, The History of England from the Accession of Henry VII to the Death of Henry VIII, (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), p. 181.

of his part in the successful conduct of the French was was his receipt of the French bishopric of Tournai. Within a short while the diocese of Lincoln became vacant and Wolsey, already dean of the cathedral there, was elevated to the bishopric of Lincoln. Several months later, Cardinal Bainbridge, England's ambassador to Rome, died, and Thomas Wolsey succeeded him as archbishop of York. From this point, Wolsey wasted no time in sending Polydore Vergil to Rome to pay his respects to Cardinal Hadrian, and to remind him that in 1511 when it appeared that Julius II was dying, it had been Wolsey who had recommended him to the papacy.

From this point Vergil was tactfully to broach the matter of Wolsey's own election to the college of cardinals. Even before Wolsey had been made a cardinal, he was scheming how he might add to his title that of papal legate. In Wolsey's long range plans that authority would be necessary, for as Archbishop of York, he would still be subordinate in England to the Archbishop of Canterbury who was likewise Primate of All England. To be the king's right hand would necessitate that Wolsey also function in the highest capacity for the church universal. It would be necessary not only to be papal legate, but legate a latere--for life. Such a position would make him the pope's permanent representative in England, provide him with the right to reform the Church,

and gave him the right to make judicial decisions on religious problems without constantly referring matters by slow correspondence to the Holy See.

Negotiations continued with Rome for over a year. Henry himself wrote a letter indicating that as Wolsey was a counsellor honored and supported by the king, the church should see fit to bestow its honor and respect upon one of their own who had been so elevated by England's king. Still Pope Leo X procrastinated, and it was not until 1515 Francis I decided to regain Milan by force of arms that Leo concluded that any reservations he might have retained regarding Wolsey's qualifications to wear the cardinal's hat were insignificant in light of his pressing need to form a close alliance with England's king.

In the meantime Wolsey continued to prove his worth to the king and to demonstrate to others that he had great powers with the king. In 1514 when Louis XII had been widowed by the death of Queen Anne, Wolsey was instrumental in arranging extremely advantageous terms for the marriage of Henry's younger sister, Mary, to the king of France. Although the marriage had been a feather in the crown of England, it was not long lived for the aging king of France died within the year, leaving Mary's status in France uncertain. Her position as the widowed queen of France had

to be considered carefully by both nations to secure their interests to the best advantage of each. To complicate matters, though, shortly after Louis' death, Mary secretly married Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, whom Henry had sent to Paris to offer Francis I formal congratulations at the beginning of his reign. Henry was furious that his companion on many hunts had dealt him such a treacherous blow, for now the beautiful Mary could not be used as a pawn in international affairs. Without Wolsey's intercession, it is doubtful that Henry would have ever forgiven the two lovers.

Before the arrival of the cardinal's hat on English soil, Thomas Wolsey made plans to have it received with elaborate ceremonies. The new cardinal was determined to receive the honor and deference due him, for this church rank now placed the commoner from Ipswich above all the nobility of the realm. Under instructions from Wolsey, when the hat reached the gates of the city of London, the mayor and aldermen, as well as other city officials, ". . . were turned out to do reverence as it was borne through the city. . ." <sup>14</sup>

From the gates of the city, it was piously, but elaborately,

---

<sup>14</sup>Edward Hall, Hall's Chronicle: Containing the History of England, During the Reign of Henry the Fourth, and the Succeeding Monarchs, To The End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth, (New York: AMS Press, 1965), p. 583.

removed to Westminster Abbey and placed on the high altar. On Sunday morning, a procession formed at Wolsey's palace, York Place, to conduct the cardinal to Westminster. Two other archbishops, from the sees of Armagh and Dublin, came to pay their homage, and a high mass was sung by the archbishop of Canterbury. All the high born of the land were arrayed in magnificent regalia, displaying the symbols of their stations and offices, to witness the elevation of Thomas Wolsey to the rank of cardinal of Rome and prince of the church. Cavendish remarks that the occasion was such ". . . as I have not seen the like unless it had been at the coronation of a mighty prince or king."<sup>15</sup>

After the ceremony the cardinal was conducted back to York Place by eighteen temporal lords, and the stately procession was led by the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk. Within a month, the new cardinal became Lord Chancellor of England and Keeper of the Great Seal after the resignation of Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury.

The office of lord chancellor implied both judicial and legislative responsibilities. Theoretically, the cardinal had little connection with the law courts except that he was entitled to name the justices of the peace. While this

---

<sup>15</sup> Cavendish, The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 92.

authority allowed the cardinal some indirect influence on the courts of common justice, it could not be used to satisfy his goal to make the king the center of life in England. The council itself sat in the Court of Star Chamber and by virtue of his office as chancellor, Wolsey came to preside over this court. The original intention of the court had been to ". . . seek out offenders among the barons, to summon those to trial and to punish those whom they found guilty."<sup>16</sup> The activities of the new tribunal had been gradually extended so that by 1515 it was handling cases involving perjury, criminal appeals, usury, enclosures, and quarrels between merchants involved in overseas dealings.

With Wolsey at its head, the jurisdiction of the court was expanded even further. The court over which the lord cardinal presided was to be a court of equity and a court of conscience. The fact that the cardinal had no training in legal procedures or judicial training did not lessen his power, for he determined to cut through the tedious legal processes to arrive at a decision of justice based primarily on conscience. It was the cardinal's contention that the common man could not obtain justice in his dealings with the landed and the rich in the common law courts. It

---

<sup>16</sup>Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, p. 146.

was certainly true that the courts of the day had been designed for the nobles and the gentry. Results of a jury trial were very often determined by which suitor before the law could perjure himself in the most believable manner. Furthermore, bribery was very much a part of community life. In fact, the payment of bribes was considered to be a customary method of defraying judicial costs.<sup>17</sup> Thus it became possible for cases to be removed from the common bench to the Star Chamber simply on the grounds that one suitor was unable to adequately present his case against that of a more powerful or rich antagonist. Once the poor man came before Wolsey in the Star Chamber, it was the lord or gentleman who was on the defensive, for the cardinal weighed his judgment heavily on the side of the poor.

The cardinal's use of his spiritual powers were as flagrant as the use he made of his temporal powers. His efforts at the reform of the clergy and the monasteries appeared to be little more than harassment and thinly disguised excuses for seizing property which could be channeled into the support of his educational schemes. With

---

<sup>17</sup> Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, vol. 3, p. 608, cited by Charles W. Ferguson, *Naked to Mine Enemies*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1958), p. 150.

characteristic zeal he superseded the powers of abbots, bishops, and archbishops. As cardinal legate a latere, Wolsey used his papal powers to ignore existing church courts and to create his own legatine court which exceeded in its authority the other church courts. He successfully diverted fees for the probate of wills to his own court coffers, rather than to the lawful episcopal jurisdiction. He permitted long vacancies to remain after the deaths of bishops and reserved the profits of their diocese to himself. Frequently he arranged for the appointment of foreigners in their places, and since their presence was not possible in England, Wolsey arranged to pay them a fixed fee while he administered their temporalities to his own advantage. The cardinal ostensibly sought wide powers from the church to achieve a thorough reform of the English Church, but once he had been granted the authority, he had used his power to feed his own vanity and to further his own aims, so that after his death reform was possible only through revolution.

For Wolsey himself was a glaring example of the worst abuses of the church. The cardinal always held at least one other bishopric in addition to York, and though a secular priest, he was also the abbot of St. Albans. Furthermore, he never visited the site of many of his spiritual holdings, and until his fall he never made any attempt to deal personally with their affairs. In addition, no priest could claim

more worldly possessions than the great cardinal, and his income from bribes and patronage was as large as it was notorious. The self-proclaimed reformer of church affairs had several daughters and at least one son whom he promoted to some lucrative benefices even though the child was still a minor.

Hostility toward the lord chancellor on the part of the nobility grew with every nail driven in his platform of power and influence with the king. Furthermore, the cardinal's pride and vanity and arrogant display of his station and his wealth rankled the nobility. For Wolsey could not do anything simply. His comings and goings were an ostentatious display of grandeur. Four days a week the cardinal found time to sit in judgment in the Star Chamber. Cavendish describes the cardinal's attire and his procedures in making his way from his palace to his duties:

His upper garment was of either fine scarlet, or taffety, but most commonly of fine crimson satin engrained; his pillion of fine scarlet, with a neck set in the inner side with black velvet and a tippet of sables about his neck; holding in his hand an orange whereof the meat or substance within was taken out, and filled up again with part of a sponge, wherein was vinegar and other confections against the pestilent airs; the which he most commonly smelt into, passing among the press, or else when he was pestered with many suitors.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup>Cavendish, The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 105.

There was also borne before him first, the great seal of England, and then his cardinal's hat, by a nobleman or some worthy gentleman, right solemnly, bare-headed. And as soon as he was entered into his chamber of presence, where there was attending his coming to await upon him to Westminster Hall, as well noblemen and other worthy gentlemen, as noblemen and gentlemen of his own family; thus passing forth with two great crosses of silver borne before him; with also two great pillars of silver, and his pursuivant at arms with a great mace of silver gilt. Then his gentlemen ushers cried, and said: 'On, my lords and masters, on before; make way for my Lord's Grace!'<sup>19</sup>

He rode on a mule, a symbol of humility, yet the mule was covered over with crimson velvet, and the saddle he bore was fashioned of the same material, and the stirrups for the cardinal's feet were made of gold.

For the fourteen years he served the king he never forgot to play his part as the king's chief minister with elaborate ceremony and insistence that none forget to honor him for the high offices which he held. While he left no stone unturned to bring about the fulfillment of Henry's wishes, likewise he would suffer no one to forget that he alone of all the ministers stood in England next to the king. Even Fox remarked, "We shall have to deal with the Cardinal, who is not Cardinal, but King; and no one in the realm dares attempt aught in opposition to his interests."<sup>20</sup> In 1520

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 105, 106.

<sup>20</sup> A. F. Pollard, *Wolsey*, (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1929), p.78.

during a visit of the emperor of England, "Wolsey alone sat down to dinner with the royal party, while peers like the Dukes of Suffolk and Buckingham performed menial duties for the cardinal, as well as for the emperor, King and Queen."<sup>21</sup> A year after the meeting at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, Wolsey met the emperor at Bruges, and "he treated the Emperor as an equal. He did not dismount from his mule but merely doffed his cap, and embraced as a brother the temporal head of Christendom."<sup>22</sup>

It was incumbent upon the cardinal's honor to reside in edifices meet to hold one of his station. As the archbishop of York he had only three dioceses and the seat of each diocese was more remote from London and the king than Wolsey intended to be. The Archbishop of Canterbury resided at Lambeth Palace, close to Westminster, the royal court, and the king. On the other hand, York Palace, where the archbishop of York officially stayed when he came to London, was farther down the river at Battersea. For a man who was excessively concerned with rank and position, this was a place well below the salt. He must have a house in a more

---

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>22</sup>A. G. Pollard, Henry VIII, (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1905), p. 88.

desireable location to befit his station in life and particularly to place himself in the minds of all in a position surpassing that of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

With this as his goal he began to build a place near the king's palace at Westminster. The new house was built on a grandeur fit for a king. It contained vast libraries and picture galleries, and its walls were hung with gold cloth and the tables were covered with "velvets, satins, damasks of various hues."<sup>23</sup> Thus York Place, due to its location and its splendor, became a far better and a more desireable abode than that of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lambeth Palace. But even this showplace did not satisfy the insatiable appetite of the cardinal for a lavish and graceful living style that could be seen and coveted by the great and the mighty of the realm. Although he also owned a palace known as The More near Harrow, and he occupied occasionally the official palace of the abbot of the Abbey of St. Albans, Tittenhanger, the lord chancellor felt the need of some more impressive place.

He wanted a place that would be close by London, and yet remote enough from the city to offer him some privacy from suitors and respite from his official duties. As a

---

<sup>23</sup>John Heneage Jessee, London: Its Celebrated Characters and Remarkable Places, (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1903), p. 2.

result he began the construction of Hampton Court, which was to be primarily a suburban home, a haven of withdrawal, but also a place of prestige and a showplace of affluent living. Everything was done on a grandiose scale. The palace covered at least eight acres and contained at least a thousand rooms.<sup>24</sup> Fresh water was brought to the palace from springs three miles away by means of lead pipes. The water system was so well constructed that it continued ". . . to supply the needs of the palace for over three hundred and twenty-five years after his death."<sup>25</sup> Drainage for refuse at Hampton Court was remarkably advanced for the day, for the cardinal had brick sewers constructed with arrangements in various parts of the palace so that bath and toilet facilities were available in all of the major apartments of the palace.

The kitchen itself was forty-eight feet long and the galleries were designed with windows on both sides which looked out on gardens or rivers and provided access from one part of the palace to another without crossing open courtyards or going through other rooms. In addition, his long halls provided a space for indoor exercise and a protection

---

<sup>24</sup>Ernest Law, The History of Hampton Court Palace in Tudor Times, p. 72 quoted in Charles W. Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, p. 226.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 514.

from the English weather. Surrounding the manor itself were two thousand acres of pasture which the cardinal converted into two parks and partially enclosed with a red brick wall. At intervals within the walls black bricks were inserted and arranged to form crosses at various intervals to indicate to passersby the ecclesiastical dignity of the lord of the estate.

Significant to the purpose of impressing his guests was the lavish hospitality the cardinal could offer. One French ambassador reported that there ". . . were two hundred and four score beds, the furniture to most of them being silk, and all for the entertainment of strangers only." He continued that ". . . the very bed chambers had hangings of wonderful value, and every place did glitter with innumerable vessels of gold and silver."<sup>26</sup> The sheets were of silk and the blankets were soft and of lamb's wool.

To run the cardinal's household a staff of at least five hundred was employed. The cardinal would spare no expense to properly clothe his servants in accordance to their master's high position. The servants of his chamber were dressed in crimson velvet with golden letters monogrammed TC. His master cook was dressed in velvet and satin,

---

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 72.

and wore a gold chain around his neck.<sup>27</sup> The cardinal even had a private choir of fifty-four men whose abilities were envied even by Henry himself. On one occasion the king devised a competition between the royal chapel choir and the Hampton Court choir, and afterward decided himself that the choir of Hampton Court was superior to his own.

Wolsey revelled in the powers and responsibilities of his authority, and not even his building programs or phobias regarding the careful recognition of the high honors due his person could distract the cardinal from the king's business. Even during the frequent and mysterious recurrence of the sweating sickness when all England, including the king, fled before its onslaught, the cardinal remained at his post. So fearful was the king of this disease that the government of England might well have stood still had it not been for the lord chancellor. When courts and other official bodies were forbidden to meet in an effort to stay the spread of the disease, the cardinal wielding the great seal of England continued the business of the kingdom. And Wolsey did not escape the sweat. At least three times the cardinal was struck by the fearful disease, and even during these periods he continued to see that the pressing matters

---

<sup>27</sup>Cavendish, The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 97.

of state did not suffer. And Wolsey's faithfulness did not escape the notice and gratitude of Henry, for the king wrote in his own hand, "Mine own good Cardinal, I recommend me unto you with all my heart, and thank you for the great pain and labour that you do daily take in my business and matters, desiring you that when you have well established them to take some pastime and comfort, to the intent you may the longer endure to serve us; for always pain can not be endured."<sup>28</sup>

As lord chancellor Wolsey determined that the king's affairs would be conducted with administrative efficiency, and, in the cardinal's mind, practically everything that occurred in the kingdom was the king's affair. With the authority of the king, Wolsey set about to create a strong central government, and with Henry's approval the lord chancellor regulated wages and prices, supervised coinage, investigated the granting of export licenses, instituted the system of graduated taxes, and even monitored the dress and diet of his subjects. Furthermore, the lord chancellor convinced the king that accurately kept records were an essential part of an orderly government and this extended

---

<sup>28</sup>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, vol. 2, p. 4125, quoted in J. S. Brewer, The Reign of Henry VIII from His Accession to the Death of Wolsey, (London: reprint ed., New York: AMS Press, 1968), vol. 1, p. 243.

even as far as the king's treasury. Everyone who was entrusted with a portion of the state revenue was subject to strict audit. In addition, the lord chancellor stepped directly and decisively into the matter of enclosures. Efforts had been made in the past to prevent the abuses and excesses of enclosure, but in practice laws were not enforced and problems went unsolved. But Wolsey began a national campaign to defend the farmer, and to do so he would side step local authorities and instead invoke the power of the king. As in all his undertakings, Wolsey spared neither friend nor foe, great or small, and since most of his efforts reached into the lives of the landed and the titled, the cardinal accumulated life long enemies as fast as he accumulated powers.

But my lord cardinal was the king's true and faithful servant. Did the king desire more time to hawk and hunt? Wolsey would see to it that affairs of state were handled while the king was attending to his pleasures. Did the king find it tiresome and exacting to read and answer letters sent to him by various heads of state or their appointed ambassadors? My lord cardinal would read the letters and digest their contents sending the king significant extracts. Did necessity dictate that the king himself answer personally a letter? Wolsey would send the king a

draft for him merely to sign, or, if he desired, to recopy in his own hand. If the king wanted war with France, Wolsey would oversee its conduct, sparing Henry its problems and assuring the king's its glories. In return, my lord cardinal found that for long periods he could be left to pursue his own inclinations--to make England's king and the king's chief minister arbiters of the affairs of Europe. So carefully did the king's lord chancellor handle the affairs of the realm and so closely did my lord cardinal monitor the king's inclinations that the master had little cause to be displeased with his servant until that fateful period when Henry asked something of his minister that my lord chancellor was unable to perform. And then those qualities which had made the cardinal endeared to his master became inexcusable flaws in his character. Those diligent efforts of the servant to assure himself that the glory reflected by his august person would carefully mirror the splendor and elegance of the king he served, then served to whet the fires of suspicion and jealousy within the king himself.

Now may this be a good example and precedent to men in authority, which will sometimes work their will without wit, to remember in their authority, how authority may decay; and those whom they punish of will more than justice, may after be advanced in the public weal to high dignities and governance, and they based as low, who will then seek the means to be revenged on old wrongs sustained wrongfully before. . . . These be wonderful works of God, and fortune. Therefore I would wish all men in

authority and dignity to know and fear God in all their triumphs and glory; considering in all their doings, that authorities be not permanent, but may slide and vanish, as princes' pleasures do alter and change.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup>Cavendish, The Life of Wolsey, p. 69.

## CHAPTER III

### "THE KING'S GREAT MATTER"

Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon was a popular match with the English people, and when on New Year's Day, 1511, the queen was delivered of a male child the country came alive with joy. A tournament had been planned in honor of the occasion and the entourage had been decorated with golden "Hs" and "Ks". During the procession excited and jubilant subjects had actually mobbed Henry and his company and ripped off these ornaments, but so great was the joy at the birth of the first male heir of the new king and queen that it was all taken in good spirit.<sup>1</sup> Seven weeks later, this son, Henry, Prince of Wales, died.

The newly married couple weathered this tragedy; their expectations continued high and their optimism undaunted for many years. But the inability of this marriage to produce a male heir to carry on the Tudor dynasty would eventually bring about the destruction of their

---

<sup>1</sup>Edward Hall, Hall's Chronicle: Containing the History of England, During the Reign of Henry the Fourth, And the Succeeding Monarchs, To the End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth, (New York: AMS Press, 1965), p. 519.

marriage. In turn, that crisis would be the ember which would ignite the smoldering resentment against the church, epitomized in the august person of Thomas Cardinal Wolsey, and it would consume Wolsey as well as England's ties to the Catholic Church.

Although Henry sat securely on the throne, as early as 1518 he became increasingly anxious that his progeny would continue to wield the scepter after his death. The older Catherine became the more of a problem this thwarted ambition presented. The queen had seemingly failed in her first duty to secure the succession. Numerous pregnancies had led to continued disappointment. She had lost three infants who were either stillborn or who died immediately after birth. Two of these had been males. She had given birth to two infants who had died within a few weeks of birth, one of them a boy. She had produced one surviving child, a girl, Princess Mary. But a daughter was the same as no heir at all to the king of England. By 1527 Henry was in his mid-thirties and Catherine was over forty. The necessity of providing some male successor to Henry was of vital importance, for lacking that there loomed the distinct likelihood of civil war.

Certainly there was the possibility of claimants to the throne should Henry die without a son. The Earl of

Buckingham had been a definite prospect, but in 1521 Henry had seen to it that this rival was put to death. The Duke of Norfolk might claim succession rights through his ancestor Edward IV. The Duke of Suffolk, Charles Brandon, had married Mary, Henry's sister and could legitimately claim succession through her. Lurking in the wings was James V of Scotland, Henry's nephew. With the inherent rivalry between Scotland and England there was sure to be a war if James tried to press his claims. Under these conditions, France would definitely ally with Scotland, which would make either victory or defeat a costly price for the English. There had been, of course, concerted efforts made to find a suitable husband for Princess Mary, but these efforts had been doomed to failure.

In a frenzy of desperation Henry took steps to groom his illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy, for the throne by creating him Duke of Richmond, the title held by Henry VII before he had become King of England. In addition, Bessie Blount's son was also named Lord High Admiral of England, given the revenues of large tracts of land, and placed over all other nobility, including the Princess Mary. There had even been consideration given to marrying Henry's bastard son to his half-sister in order to secure the Tudor line. Overtures had been made to Rome, and apparently

neither Cardinal Campeggio nor the pope saw any objections to this solution as a means of establishing the succession if Henry would abandon efforts to obtain his divorce from Catherine.<sup>2</sup>

Henry had always considered himself as one of God's particular favorites. Certainly he could find abundant evidence of the Almighty's special grace and provision. The king enjoyed great wealth because of his father's habits of thrift, and Henry's people took great pride in their magnificent king. Furthermore, his people had prospered, and England under the guidance of the expert hands of Cardinal Wolsey was becoming a power to be reckoned with among the great powers of the time. And Henry had given God His due. The Vicar of Christ had provided ample testimony to Henry's faithfulness by bestowing on him the title Defender of the Faith for his efforts against the Lutheran heresy. Why then, when God bestowed such favor had Henry been denied this vital element, a male heir? The more Henry pondered this question, the more he leaned toward the conclusion that God must be punishing him for marrying his brother's widow.

---

<sup>2</sup>A. F. Pollard, Henry VIII, (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1905), pp. 184, 185.

However ponderous these difficulties there were other problems requiring the attention of England's king. Among these was the vacancy of the earldom of Ormond. The candidates for this vacancy were two faithful and useful servants of the king, Sir Piers Butler and Sir Thomas Boleyn. According to the customs of the day, one of the easiest ways to resolve such problems was to use children as pawns. Therefore it had been proposed that Sir Thomas's daughter, newly returned from the French court, would marry Sir Piers Butler's son.

Anne Boleyn had returned to England in 1522 when she was about fifteen or sixteen. She was an immediate success at court and soon became part of Queen Catherine's household, where, according to Cavendish, "for her excellent gesture and behavior, she did excel all others."<sup>3</sup> Anne was a reasonably attractive young lady with a good intellect, a ready wit, and a passionate interest in music. Although Anne had many admirers at court, she fell in love with Lord Henry Percy, the Earl of Northumberland's son, who was completing his education as a member of Wolsey's household. It was not long before Anne and Percy decided to marry. When this news reached Henry's ears he wasted no

---

<sup>3</sup>George Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, ed. by Richard S. Sylvester (Oxford University Press: London, 1959), p. 29.

time in calling Wolsey into his presence where the king issued his chancellor strict orders to prevent their marriage. Cavendish indicates that the king's reasons went deeper than simply losing Anne as a ploy in settling disputes through a matrimonial alliance, and that he was by this time attracted to Anne himself. When news of the proposed marriage reached Henry, writes Cavendish, he was "much offended; wherefore he could hide no longer his secret affection, but revealed his secret intendment unto my Lord Cardinal in that behalf, and consulted with him to infringe the precontract between them."<sup>4</sup>

Wolsey wasted no time catering to Henry's wishes. He had always been able to find ways and means to bring about the desires of Henry and when necessary to take the blame for unpopular policies from the king's shoulders. Wolsey summoned Lord Percy and there in the presence of Wolsey's chamber servants the Cardinal rebuked young Percy. "I marvel not a little at thy peevish folly that thou would tangle thyself with a foolish girl yonder in the court. I mean Anne Boleyn."<sup>5</sup> He warned Percy that he was endangering his inheritance as well as being in danger of incurring

---

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

the king's wrath. In addition, Wolsey implied that Anne was not of worthy lineage to be the wife of one who would one day inherit his father's position. Furthermore, Wolsey continued, the king had already been negotiating to marry Anne to someone else. To Percy's protest that he loved Anne, Wolsey raged,

Lo, sirs ye may see what conformity or wisdom is in this wilful boy's head! I thought that when thou heardest me declare the king's intended pleasure. . . thou wouldst have relented and wholly submitted thyself. . . to the king's royal will. . .<sup>6</sup>

Wolsey then sent immediately for the Earl of Northumberland after forbidding Percy in the king's name "not once to resort into her company."<sup>7</sup>

To assure that Anne would not see Lord Percy again before he left court with his father she was sent away from the court to her father's country house at Hever in Kent. Anne blamed this humiliation on Wolsey, not in the least suspecting Henry's involvement, saying "that if it ever lay in her power she would work the cardinal as much displeasure."<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

In time Anne returned to court and shortly she was again the subject of court gossip as numerous residents at the court vied for her favor. Anne enjoyed these flirtations, but while she encouraged their pursuit she was careful to keep her suitors at arm's length. Henry himself was one of Ann's admirers, but he, like the others, found her appealing but elusive. To a man of Henry's position there was a strangely satisfying and tantalizing effect to a quarry that always seemed to be close within his grasp, and yet elusive enough to avoid capture. From 1525 and onward Henry became increasingly infatuated with Ann Boleyn. One marvels that she was able to continually fan the fire of Henry's passion while she denied him the actual possession of her body. Perhaps her success, as G. R. Elton points out, was due in large measure to her skill in reminding Henry of his need for a legitimate male heir, rather than simply another illegitimate child.<sup>9</sup>

As long as Henry VIII sat on the throne of England there was little, if any, chance for rebellion. For Henry, as his father before him, was a popular and well-loved monarch. After all, it was Henry VII who had succeeded

---

<sup>9</sup>G. R. Elton, Reform & Reformation, England, 1509-1558, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1977) p. 105.

in bringing peace to the civil strife that had been a matter of course for almost thirty years. During his reign the small businessman had begun to prosper and the countryside had enjoyed great peace and relative prosperity. Not only had Henry VII put an end to war within his country, but England had not been engaged in devastating foreign wars during his reign, which meant to both the nobility and the commons alike that no new taxes were levied to support a king's honor or territorial ambitions. In addition, Henry VII had been a particularly parsimonious king, saving, rather than spending, and this trait appealed to the growing middle class in England.

When Henry VIII ascended the throne it was not long before he too captured the hearts of his subjects, for Henry's youth, vigor and exuberance provided a welcomed compliment to the somber and conservative characteristics of his father. In addition he was admired for both his physical and intellectual attributes. As one of his subjects wrote,

His Majesty is the handsomest potentate I ever set eyes on; above the usual height, with an extremely fine calf to his leg. . . . He speaks French, English, Latin, and a little Italian; plays well on the lute and harpsichord, sings from the book

at sight, draws the bow with greater strength than any man in England and jousts marvellously.<sup>10</sup>

Even a foreign resident wrote of Henry in 1519,

Nature could not have done more for him. He is much handsomer than any other sovereign in Christendom; a great deal handsomer than the King of France; very fair and his whole frame admirably proportioned. . . . He is very fond of hunting, and never takes his diversion without tiring eight or ten hours which he causes to be stationed beforehand along the line of country he means to take, and when one is tired he mounts another, and before he gets home they are all exhausted.<sup>11</sup>

As Henry watched his wife growing older he was forced to realize that he would not always sit on the throne to receive the praise and admiration of his subjects. He must have legitimate male issue to secure the survival of the Tudor house. As early as 1518 Henry had considered the possibility of divorce but with Catherine's subsequent pregnancy he had allowed the subject to rest.<sup>12</sup> But now, the more deeply enamored of Anne that Henry became the more urgently he pressed his councilors and the church about the absolute necessity of obtaining a divorce. In fact, Henry became more and more convinced in his own mind that he had

---

<sup>10</sup>Pollard, Henry VIII, p. 39., quoting Letters and Papers, vol. 2, n. 395.

<sup>11</sup>Epistles of Erasmus, vol. 1, p. 457, quoted in Pollard, Henry VIII, p. 243.

<sup>12</sup>Charles W. Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies: The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1958), p. 311.

never really been married to Catherine in the eyes of God. Many would accuse Wolsey with having first planted this seed of doubt in Henry's mind through Henry's confessor, John Longland, Bishop of Lincoln.

Wolsey would deny that he was the prime instigator of the doubt in Henry's mind and in later years the cardinal told Cavendish that he had tried to persuade the king from proceeding with his intentions to divorce Catherine. Wolsey said, according to Cavendish, ". . . I assure you I have often kneeled before him. . . on my knees the space of an hour or two to persuade him from his will and appetite; but I could never bring to pass to dissuade him therefro."<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, Henry denied publicly at Blackfriars that Wolsey instilled the first doubts in this area. Most probably the truth will never be known concerning how the first doubts were planted in Henry's mind, but if, in fact, Wolsey was the instigator of the divorce it was surely the biggest blunder of his career.

Notwithstanding, whatever or whoever caused the first question to be raised in the king's mind, the fact was that it had now grown to enormous proportions. Other

---

<sup>13</sup>Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 179.

than his lust for Anne Boleyn, Henry could see at least three reasons why he must be free of Catherine. First, it was necessary to assure the succession of the Tudor line and to prevent the possibility of civil strife over the succession of a woman to the throne. Secondly, the divorce was diplomatically expedient. Charles V had refused to exploit his victory at Pavia and join with Henry to invade and partition France. With Francis in the hands of the emperor, Charles saw no need to be bound by the hard bargain that Wolsey had virtually forced upon him to ally England to the emperor with the hand of Henry's young daughter, Mary. Since Charles no longer needed the backing of England to hold France at bay and since Charles was always desperately in need of harsh cash, he had rejected Mary's hand for that of Isabella of Portugal, and in so doing he had thrown Henry's plans for the succession into turmoil.

But the case would not be fought on the basis of either of these reasons but on that of a third. Henry said he had come to the conclusion that it was theologically necessary that his marriage be annulled since it violated two famous texts from the book of Leviticus that forbade the marriage into which the king had entered. Therefore, he concluded, his marriage was not and never had been lawful. The miscarriages, the stillbirths, the denial of a son were

clearly divine punishment for his transgression of divine law. Henry's marriage to Catherine had been accorded by a papal dispensation of the impediment of affinity which her earlier marriage to his brother, Arthur, had set up between them. Divine injunctions clearly stated in Leviticus 20:21 prohibited this marriage. In addition, another passage from Leviticus 18:16 states, "If a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an impurity: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless."

The Defender of the Faith was convinced that God's wrath at the sin had manifested itself in the deaths of his children by Catherine. It did not matter to Henry now that the obstacle of affinity had been circumvented by a special dispensation issued by Pop Julius II. Henry argued that this dispensation was invalid since the impediment of affinity of the first degree collateral rests squarely on canon law and therefore could not be overridden by any human authority. Julius's bull was invalid and therefore so was his marriage. In addition to the above arguments there was a dangerous amount of righteous indignation. After all, Henry had always been a true servant of

the church. H. A. L. Fisher succinctly described Henry's dilemma.

To a man so prosperous, so splendid, so conscious of nobility, of rectitude, of special services to God and the church, there seemed to be some mysterious paradox in the strange succession of calamities which had overcome the children of this dubious marriage. . . . There must be some meaning in the riddle, and the meaning could only be that the marriage with Catherine was looked upon with disfavor from above, that it was no marriage, that it had never been a marriage, that the king had for 18 years been living in sin.<sup>14</sup>

Initially it was assumed that the whole procedure could be concluded with little difficulty. There were many precedents for such an annulment. The Duke of Suffolk had contracted in his younger days to marry a woman named Ann Browne, but for some reason the match was broken off. Later he married Margaret Mortimer to whom he was related "in the second and third degrees of consanguinity, but armed with a dispensation from Rome he was able to complete the marriage."<sup>15</sup> Later, the duke decided that the dispensation had been invalid and that he was therefore living in sin. The Archdeacon of London was agreeable and rendered

---

<sup>14</sup>William Hunt and Reginald L. Poole, gen. ed., *The Political History of England*, 12 vols. (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1924), vol. 5: The History of England From the Accession of Henry VII to the Death of Henry VIII, by H. A. L. Fisher, p. 14.

<sup>15</sup>Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, p. 339.

such a verdict; thus Suffolk left Margaret and married Ann Browne. About a year later Clement VII issued a bull that confirmed Suffolk's divorce. Furthermore, Henry's own sister, Margaret, Queen of Scotland, was granted an annulment when she appealed to a precontract on the part of her husband, Angus, and though she was living with the man she wished to marry the pope still granted the annulment. Furthermore, Henry had a cardinal who was also legate a latere and thus capable of substituting for the pope.

As usual Henry turned to Wolsey to see that correct procedures were implimented to deal with what was not being referred to as "the king's great matter." In 1526, Wolsey had made the first approach to Rome through John Clerk, England's ambassador in Rome, to determine what Clement's reaction to granting Henry a divorce might be. Actually nothing had come of this inquiry for matters in the Holy See were in a state of flux after the French defeat at Pavia and the subsequent imprisonment of Francis. Clerk had notified Wolsey that the Pope had said that he would not have the time to handle the matter at that time. Henry had not pressed for the settlement of the matter then, probably because Catherine was seriously ill and there was every indication she might die. Furthermore,

both Henry and Wolsey were immersed in efforts to secure the release of Francis. By 1527 negotiations were completed and an alliance was ready to be signed between the two nations. The Bishop of Tarbes came to handle the concluding binding element of the alliance, the betrothal of Princess Mary to Prince Henri, second son of Francis.

In the meantime the king and his lord chancellor had determined that the settlement of the king's great matter might well be handled within England. The cardinal had been sent before the king's council to inform these gentlemen that for many months their monarch had lived with a troubled conscience, fearing that he had lived with his brother's wife in an illegal union for almost eighteen years. The relative unfruitfulness of this marriage was a definite indication of God's displeasure. The members of the council agreed that they were not competent judges and that the matter should be placed before men more learned in the matters of canon law.

On May 17, 1527 a secret court convened at York House, Westminster. Warham, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Wolsey, the Cardinal Legate of England, along with a few lawyers and doctors would hear the charges presented against their sovereign that he had been living in sin with his brother's wife. Wolsey gravely declared that as

cardinal legate he was concerned with His Majesty's spiritual welfare but that he also realized that as one of the king's subjects he was not fit to call his sovereign in question, so "he begged to hear from the King's own lips whether he consented to these proceedings."<sup>16</sup> Henry piously gave his consent and asked the court's permission to appoint a proctor since it would be impossible for the king to appear in person at every session. Dr. John Bell was appointed to defend the king and Dr. Richard Wolman was to act as the court's prosecutor. All legal etiquette was to be carefully observed though the final decision of the court had already been determined by the cardinal. As papal legate he would declare invalid the dispensation of Julius II and, consequently, the marriage to Catherine of Aragon and Henry VIII.

The court continued to meet in May while Dr. Bell and Dr. Wolman argued the case. But in spite of the care taken to insure the secrecy of the proceedings, word had leaked out. The Emperor had been privy to the plot for quite some time. Pollard, quoting information from the Spanish Calendar, cites documents that Mendoza had written to Charles the very day Wolsey's court had convened stating

---

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 346.

that Wolsey ". . . as the finishing stroke to all his iniquities, had been scheming to bring about the Queen's divorce."<sup>17</sup> Charles wasted no time in dispatching Cardinal Quignon to Rome to act on the queen's behalf and to persuade Clement to revoke Wolsey's legatine powers.<sup>18</sup>

Catherine herself had been informed by Mendoza of the proceedings against her though she pretended for over a month that she knew nothing. To further complicate matters, within a few days of the opening of the court, John Fisher's brother had carried the story to Rochester and soon the countryside was rampant with rumours that the king intended to put away the queen.

Wolsey found that it was not as easy as it had first seemed to dissolve an eighteen year old marriage. Catherine had powerful friends and advocates both at home and abroad who were now aware of the proceedings against her. Furthermore, both Wolsey and Warham felt there would be grave repercussions should sentence be rendered against the

---

<sup>17</sup>Pascual De. Gayangos, ed., Calendar of Letters, Despatches and State Papers Relating to the Negotiations Between England and Spain, vol. 3 part 2, (London: Draus-Thomson Organization Limited, 1877; reprint ed., London: Leichtenstein, 1969.) pp. 276, 300.

<sup>18</sup>Letters and Papers, vol. 4, p. 3312, quoted in Pollard, Henry VIII, p. 202.

marriage before Catherine had been informed of the charges against her. Therefore the court adjourned without a verdict on May 31. The matter was so serious and complex, the Cardinal stated, that it was decided that the court must seek the help of other theologians and canonists of note, specifically the bishops of Rochester, Lincoln and London.<sup>19</sup> Although the court had rendered no verdict there was still no unconquerable obstacle foreseen by Henry and Wolsey to prevent the marriage from being declared invalid. The arguments presented in Wolsey's court, followed by the opinions of English theologians, would give sufficient legal grounds for the whole question to be submitted to Clement. There was every reason to expect that the Pope would decide in Henry's favor. Rulers of nations supporting the church were generally accommodated in such personal matters.

But unknown to the participants at the adjourning of the court, a matter of vital importance had taken place three weeks before that would have grave effects on the king's great matter. The unpaid army troops of Charles, led by the Duke of Bourbon, had overrun and sacked Rome. The Pope had escaped to his castle at San Angelo, but he was still at the mercy of the Emperor.

---

<sup>19</sup>Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, p. 346.

## CHAPTER IV

### WOLSEY'S ROLE IN THE DIVORCE PROCEEDINGS

The object of the secret court had been to render a verdict from the legate's court in England which would then be confirmed by the pope without right of appeal. But as soon as news reached England that Rome had been sacked and the pope was a virtual prisoner of Charles V, it became useless to continue, since it was now obvious that Clement VII would be unable to comply with the wishes of the king and his cardinal. Furthermore, English public opinion could not be influenced in the king's favor by a court sitting in secret, and thus Wolsey proposed soliciting the opinions of the English bishops as a means of educating public opinion.

In addition, Henry's council had long urged, for the sake of legality, that Catherine be informed about the proceeding against her. Previously, Henry had not the moral fortitude to confront the queen with the charges being made against their marriage, but now it became imperative. Henry expected Catherine to be hurt, but throughout their marriage the queen had always put Henry's interests and welfare before her own, and therefore he expected her

docilely and obediently to conform herself to his wishes. Having these expectations it is understandable that the king was totally unprepared to deal with the bitterness of her answer amid a torrent of tears. Catherine reminded him that he of all people knew that she had come as a virgin to his bed. She reminded Henry that what he required of her was to declare their daughter a bastard and she, herself, a harlot. She reminded Henry that her father, a king of Spain, had sent her to marry a prince of England. She had bowed to her father's wishes and became England's queen, and queen she would remain.<sup>1</sup>

On every hand the king was meeting unexpected frustrations and obstacles in his efforts to obtain quickly and with minimum difficulty an annulment of his marriage. Efforts would have to be made to prevent Catherine from sending word to Charles concerning the proceedings, and particularly, it would be important to enlist allies abroad for the king. The new alliance with France became of extreme importance, and urged by members of his council and friends of the Boleyn faction, Henry decided to send Wolsey to France, ostensibly to complete final work on the

---

<sup>1</sup>Mary M. Luke, Catherine The Queen, (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1967), p. 302.

the French treaty. The real purpose of the trip, however, was to obtain the release of Clement from Charles's forces, and failing this, to call a council of cardinals over which Wolsey would preside to act in the pope's behalf during his internment. The lords of the council flattered Wolsey by saying,

that it were more meet for his high discretion, wit and authority, to compass and bring to pass a perfect peace among these most mighty princes of the world than any other within this realm or elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

But, Cavendish viewed their motives in a different light,

Their intent and purpose was only but to get him out of the king's daily presence, and to convey him out of the realm, that they might have convenient leisure and opportunity to adventure their long desired enterprise, and by the aid of their chief mistress, my Lady Anne, to deprave him so unto the king in his absence, that he should be rather in his high displeasure than in his accustomed favor . . .<sup>3</sup>

For years the cardinal's many enemies had lurked in the background, waiting for the opportunity to undermine Henry's confidence in his trusted councilor. Now the opportunity seemed to be presenting itself and they would take full advantage. After all, Henry's hopes at a quick judgment from his cardinal and legate a latere had been

---

<sup>2</sup>Mandell Creighton, Cardinal Wolsey, (London: MacMillan and Co., 1921), p. 155.

<sup>3</sup>George Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, ed. by Richard S. Sylvester (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 44.

quashed when the secret court had failed to come to a decision. Activities in France would keep the cardinal away from court for at least a month and this at a time when it would be imperative for Wolsey to continue to bolster Henry's confidence in the unpopular French alliance of which Wolsey was the instigator and author. In addition to diplomatic complaints that might be lodged against the cardinal while he was away, there was the growing influence of Anne Boleyn who carried word of the court gossip to Henry's ears that the cardinal "lacked enthusiasm for the King's cause."<sup>4</sup>

Although Cavendish writes that Wolsey was "fain to take upon him"<sup>5</sup> the journey to France, he was so ordered by the king from whose point of view the trip was of utmost importance. And so, after making the arrangements, Cardinal Wolsey set out as the king's lieutenant, to act for the king in all matters. As Creighton points out, the pomp and circumstance in which Wolsey rode indicated to all outward appearances that he was at the height of his authority and power.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup>Creighton, Cardinal Wolsey, p. 158.

<sup>5</sup>Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 44.

<sup>6</sup>Creighton, Cardinal Wolsey, p. 155.

He had in attendance to him a great number of lords and bishops as well as a number of gentlemen,

. . . in black velvet livery coats, and the most part of them had great chains of gold about their necks. (His yeomen wore) . . . French tawny livery coats; having embroidered upon their backs and breasts of the same coats and letters, T and C, under the cardinal's hat. His sumpter mules, which were 20 in number and more, with his carts and other carriages of his train, were passed on before, conducted and guarded with a great number of bows and spears. He rode like a Cardinal, very sumptuously on a mule, trapped with crimson and velvet upon velvet, and his stirrups of copper and gilt. . . . And before him he had his two great crosses of silver, two great pillars of silver, the Great Seal of England, his Cardinal's hat. . . .<sup>7</sup>

There was one task which had to be completed before Wolsey left for Calais. It was imperative that Bishop Fisher be prevented from aiding Catherine, and, if possible, that he be made sympathetic to the king's cause. John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, had led a strict and devout life from the days of his early youth when he had been the confessor and chaplain of Margaret Beaufort, Henry's grandmother. He was perhaps the most respected member of the clergy in England among both the commoners and members of the nobility and clergy alike. Wolsey and Henry had conspired as to exactly what information was to be given the old bishop and what impression must be left with him.

---

<sup>7</sup>Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, pp. 44-45.

Wolsey began by asking Fisher carefully how much he knew about matters which had recently transpired between the king and queen. Fisher replied, according to Wolsey in his report to the king,

That of late one was sent unto him by the Queen's Grace, who brought him a message only by mouth, without any disclosure of any particularity, that certain matters there were between your Grace and her lately changed, wherein she would be glad to have his counsel.<sup>8</sup>

Fisher had sent word to her that in matters touching the king and the queen he would not counsel her without the king's pleasure and express commandment. Under further questioning Fisher did admit that he had been informed about the king's secret matter by his brother. From this point on Wolsey bombarded Fisher with deliberate misrepresentation of the truth as well as outright lies. He told Fisher that the king had merely been troubled in his conscience and had asked the views of learned men with respect to the validity of his marriage. The queen on the other hand,

being suspicious and casting further doubts that was meant or intended had reprimanded the King and by her manner, behaviour, words, and messages,

---

<sup>8</sup>J. S. Brewer, The Reign of Henry VIII from His Accession to the Death of Wolsey, 2 vols. (London: 1884; reprint ed., New York: AMS Press, 1968), vol. 2, p. 194.

sent to divers, hath published, divulged and opened the same. . .<sup>9</sup>

From this point on Wolsey urged Fisher not to communicate with Catherine on the matter unless under strict orders from the king.

Now Wolsey could cross the channel to Calais and from there proceed to Amiens. On August 4, he entered Amiens and was received with royal honours. The English alliance was accepted and Mary was betrothed again, this time to Francis' son, the Duke of Orleans. The allies agreed that they should demand from Charles V that he restore the Pope's independence and failing that they would summon the cardinals to meet at Avignon, where under Wolsey's leadership they would declare themselves trustees of the Pope's powers and authority until such time as the Pope's release from captivity was procured. But Wolsey had failed to realize how much the Italian cardinals disliked him, and in spite of offers of safe conduct and bribes, only four cardinals attended the meeting and they were French.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., vol. 2, p. 196.

<sup>10</sup> Ethelred L. Taunton, Thomas Wolsey: Legate and Reformer, (London: John Lane, 1902), p. 161.

However, in spite of the failure of his original plans, Wolsey, as usual, had an alternate plan with which he hoped to secure the same authority, a general commission to "execute plenary jurisdiction of the King's suit during the Pope's captivity." And in the event of an appeal from Catherine following the verdict the commission was to specify that such appeal was to come before Wolsey and that "his decision as papal vice-regent should be final."<sup>11</sup> It had become increasingly difficult with the Pope's confinement in the Castle of St. Angelo to obtain an audience. Charles's forces watched both English and Italian agents carefully. It was Wolsey's contention that one man in England might be able to get through the maze of the Emperor's watch guards. That man was himself an Italian, Ghinucci, who held the bishopric of Worcester in England but who was at that time ambassador to the court of the Emperor. Wolsey had requested Henry to dispatch Ghinucci to Rome immediately.

While Wolsey was so occupied in France things were going badly for him in England. Wolsey's treasurer, Sir William Fitzwilliam, wrote that the king was eating privately

---

<sup>11</sup> Brewer, The Reign of Henry VIII from His Accession to the Death of Wolsey, vol. 2., p. 236.

with the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, the Marquis of Exeter, and the Lord of Rochford. Henry had been hearing of Wolsey's enemies at court that Wolsey was not giving his full energy to the divorce and he had decided to send his own secretary, William Knight, behind Wolsey's back, to appeal directly to Clement for the solution of the king's great matter.

Knight was to attempt to gain two things from Clement - a dispensation for him to marry again even if his first marriage had not been annulled, and secondly, a dispensation for a new marriage even though it came within the first degree of affinity. It has been pointed out by Pollard and others that since Mary Boleyn had been Henry's mistress he was related to Anne Boleyn in the same degree of affinity as he was related to Catherine because of her first marriage to Arthur. Therefore, if divine law forbade his marriage to Catherine, the same law would also forbid his marriage to Anne. Knight was to stop by and see Wolsey, but he was not to reveal the real purpose of his trip. Rather he was to pretend that he was going to Rome to proceed with Wolsey's suggestions to obtain a caretaker government for the church.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup>James Gairdner, "New Lights on the Divorce of Henry VIII," English Historical Review 45 (January-October 1897), p. 685.

Wolsey had learned of the real purpose of Knight's mission shortly before he had his first audience with Knight at Compiègne. The tremendous implications implicit in this effort by Henry to act independently of Wolsey and behind his back evoked grave fears. Wolsey attempted in vain to get Henry to recall Knight, warning the king that Knight ". . . hath no colour or acquaintance with what he was about. . ." and that if he failed, it would allow the king's secret to be known to the ambassadors of Europe.<sup>13</sup> In addition Wolsey wrote to try to assure Henry of his own faithfulness to the king's cause.

God I take to be my judge that whatsoever opinion . . . your grace hath or might conceive, I never intended to set for the expedition of the said commission for any authority, ambition, commodity, private profit or lucre, but only for the advancement of your grace's secret affair . . . . Assuring your highness that I shall never be found but as your most humble, loyal and faithful, obedient servant. . . enduring the travails and pains which I daily and hourly sustain without any regard to the continuance of my life or health, which is only preserved by the assured trust of your gracious love and favour.<sup>14</sup>

Eight days later, September 21, Wolsey hurried to London only to find he could not see Henry apart from Anne.

---

<sup>13</sup>Charles W. Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies: The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1958) p. 365.

<sup>14</sup>Gairdner, English Historical Review, p. 686.

To compound his difficulties, shortly after he returned to court from France, a joint formal defiance of the Emperor was made by the heralds of England and France. By February, 1528, trade with the Netherlands dwindled to virtually nothing and England's merchants refused to buy cloth and dismissed their workmen, complaining that it was the Cardinal's fault. Furthermore, Wolsey was blamed for the bad harvest of the previous year which had left shortages of meat and grain. In addition to the economic problems which the commoners blamed on the Cardinal, they charged that he had closed many of the monasteries to build his colleges and to compound his iniquities he was succeeding in bringing about the separation of the king from the queen.

Wolsey knew that Knight's mission was doomed to failure and in November he had sent Sir Gregory Casale from Venice to Rome. Casale's mission was to secure from Clement a commission authorizing Wolsey to decide the case in England. He was instructed in detail as to the manner in which he was to approach the pope and the points and arguments he was to bring out in the king's favor. Specifically he was to assure the pope that this was a matter of the king's conscience and that it was the king's contention that his lack of male issue was a direct result of God's

displeasure of Henry's living in sin with his brother's wife. Furthermore, he was to imply that the king's divorce and remarriage in order to obtain legitimate male issue was the fervent desire of the entire nation. In addition he would remind the pope of all the difficulties and perils with which the church was now confronted and to inform Clement that his authority would be ruined forever in England if the king's demand was not met.<sup>15</sup>

The day following these instructions to Casale, Wolsey wrote another letter detailing his own fears and frustrations should Casale not be successful.

If the Pope is not compliant my own life will be shortened, and I dread to anticipate the consequences. I am the more urgent as the King is absolutely resolved to satisfy his conscience; and if this cannot be done, he will of two evils choose the least, and disregard of the Papacy must grow daily, especially in these dangerous times . . . I am a humble suitor to the Pope to grant this request, not so much as an English subject, as one who has certain knowledge of what the result must be.<sup>16</sup>

In the meantime the pope had escaped from St. Angelo and had established a shabby Vatican in a bishop's palace at Orvieto. Knight reached the pope a few days after the

---

<sup>15</sup>Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, p. 370.

<sup>16</sup>Brewer, The Reign of Henry VIII for his Accession to the Death of Cardinal Wolsey, vol. 2, p. 229.

escape, bringing with him a request for a commission to permit the annulment to be decided in England. After some hesitation Clement agreed to provide such a commission but stated that it would have to be redrawn by one of his aides who was an expert in such matters. In late December the commission was given to Knight who proceeded toward England with great haste. Knight was overjoyed to be able to present the commission to Henry, believing that he had succeeded in securing in a relatively brief time everything the king had desired without help of the so called experts. When Wolsey examined the brief he saw immediately that it had been so carefully worded as to mean nothing and as Wolsey had predicted, Knight's mission was a total failure.

Casale had not yet reached Orvieto, and after Knight's failure Wolsey amended his instructions to Casale. By this time Wolsey had decided that it would be best that responsibility for the annulment of the king's marriage should be shared by another cardinal from Rome. Wolsey had become increasingly aware of the unpopularity of his role in the matter and of the clamor of his many enemies. He could not risk a reversal of his verdict should the queen appeal on the grounds of prejudice. Therefore, Sir Gregory Casale was instructed to ask the Pope for another cardinal

so that ". . . all objections which might be urged by the Queen against me as the King's subject, and all evil surmises, might be avoided."<sup>17</sup> Clement granted a bull giving two cardinals the right to try the case in England, but in spite of Casale's expertise he was unable to obtain from the Pope the decretal commission so desperately desired by Wolsey. Clement did grant a general commission but he urged more than once that Henry simply obtain a sentence from the courts in England and marry his second wife. In this way the case could come before him and would entail only the legitimacy of his second marriage.

Eight months had passed since Cardinal Wolsey and Archbishop Warham had held their secret court and still Henry was no nerer his annulment than he had been then. Neither Knight nor Casale had been able to secure the decretal commission Wolsey wanted. In February, 1528, the cardinal sent Stephen Gardiner, his able secretary, and Edward Foxe, the king's Almoner, to attempt to obtain more effective powers. They arrived in Orvieto in March and by April 8 they had wrangled from Clement some additional powers to enable Wolsey and Lorenzo Cardinal Campeggio to

---

<sup>17</sup>Letters and Papers, vol. 4, p. 3751, quoted in Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, p. 374.

try the case in England. The commission stated that even if one of the cardinals was unwilling to render a verdict, the other might act by himself and all appeals from their jurisdiction were forbidden.

But this arrangement was not the decretal commission Wolsey had wanted. The best the emissaries had been to get was still a general commission which did not bind the Pope nor prevent him from revoking the case.<sup>18</sup> They had succeeded in obtaining an oral promise from Clement that he would confirm the sentence rendered, but he steadfastly refused to commit this promise to writing.

However, at first Wolsey and Henry were both happy with this bull; but after several days reflection, Wolsey decided that Gardiner must return to Orvieto to try again for a decretal commission. Here the law would be set out and the duty of the legates would be only to find the facts of the case and then apply the law. Under a general commission the law was not defined and therefore any decision by the judges could be appealed to Rome on the basis of their interpretation of the law. Clement refused again to grant such a commission, but he was prevailed upon by the emissaries to give Wolsey a personal written promise to confirm the

---

<sup>18</sup>English Historical Review, 44, p. 8.

judges' verdict. At this point three bulls had been issued under the Papal seal - a dispensation for Henry to marry Anne; a general commission to Wolsey, with Warham or any other English bishop as assistant; and a general commission to Wolsey and another legate from Rome, granting them the authority to determine the validity of Henry's marriage and to pass sentence. Should the marriage be found void both Henry and Catherine would be free to contract a new marriage. But from Wolsey's standpoint, the documents were insufficient - there was no definitive statement of the law, the pope did not agree to confirm judgment, and appeal was not prohibited on the grounds of the partiality of the judges.

As Wolsey viewed the case the original dispensation had been obtained under false pretenses since it stated that Henry VIII had desired it when actually Henry had only been twelve years old at the time and therefore unable to understand fully the implications of such a dispensation. Secondly, the original dispensation stated that its purpose was to prevent war between England and Spain, but at the time the two nations were on friendly terms. Next, Julius had granted the dispensation out of concern for Henry VII and Isabella of Castile, but in fact they were both dead before the marriage took place and therefore the reason for

the dispensation no longer existed. Last, at fourteen Henry VIII had publicly protested against such a marriage and thereby he had forfeited any privilege the bull contained.<sup>19</sup>

By early June things began to look a little brighter for the cardinal in his efforts to secure an annulment for the king. The French forces under the command of Lautrec were marching through Italy toward Naples, and since it appeared that the Imperialists would be forced to surrender, Clement granted the decretal commission Wolsey desired, and in addition he signed and swore to a promise not to reverse the decision rendered in England. However, Clement had chosen the wrong side before and this time he preferred to cover as many eventualities as possible. Therefore, he would not allow Henry's agents in Rome to carry the commission but entrusted it only to Campeggio.

Furthermore he was careful to instruct Campeggio that the commission was to be shown only to Wolsey and the king and, in addition it was not to be published nor to leave Campeggio's hand at any time. The Italian cardinal received explicit instructions to delay all he could and to leave no stone unturned in an effort to reconcile the

---

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., vol. 45, p. 689.

parties or to arrange some compromise between them. Most important, Campeggio was commanded to take no final action should these measures fail without further instructions from Rome. From Clement's point of view it was good that he reacted cautiously to the early French victories, for by mid-September Lautrec was dead and the Imperialists gained Genoa shortly after Doria, the famous Genoese admiral, deserted Francis for Charles.

Frightened by the ascendancy of Charles' forces over the French, Clement more than once pleaded with Campeggio to delay any verdict in the English matter. Sange, the Pope's secretary, advised Campeggio that,

. . . as the Emperor is victorious, the Pope must not give him any pretext for a fresh rupture, lest the Church should be utterly annihilated . . . . Proceed on your journey to England, and there do your utmost to restore mutual affection between the King and Queen. You are not to pronounce any opinion without a new and express commission hence.<sup>20</sup>

A few days later Campeggio received another message from Sange:

Every day stronger reasons are discovered . . . (to delay, since a decision) . . . involves the certain ruin of the Apostolic See and the church,

---

<sup>20</sup> Letters and Papers, vol. 4, pp. 4721-4722, quoted in A. F. Pollard, Henry VIII, (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1905), p. 216.

owing to recent events . . . . You will not therefore, be surprised at my repeating that you are not to proceed to sentence, under any pretext, without express commission; but to protract the matter as long as possible.<sup>21</sup>

Campeggio finally arrived in London in the middle of October. The legate was exhausted and ill from the gout. After several days rest he was still unable to get out of bed, but Wolsey, urged on by the king, came to see him day after day to argue the king's case with him for hours on end. Campeggio tried unsuccessfully to present Clement's position on the necessity of bringing about a reconciliation between the king and queen, but he could not move the English cardinal. Campeggio wrote Clement that Wolsey insisted that if Henry could not obtain the annulment he desired ". . . total ruin would specially ensue of the kingdom, of himself, of the Church's influence."<sup>22</sup> He wrote again to Rome, "Have no more success in persuading the Cardinal than if I had spoken to a rock."<sup>23</sup>

Although Campeggio was still in great pain, by the end of October Henry demanded that Campeggio come for an

---

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, p. 408.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 409.

interview. Henry listened sullenly to the cardinal's exhortation concerning the sanctity of marriage and the scandal that an annulment would bring, not only to Henry's realm, but to the church universal. Furthermore, Henry was not moved by the pope's offer through the legate to make good any defect in the bull of Julius II by issuing a new dispensation. When Campeggio had exhausted his arguments, Henry piously appealed to the qualms of conscience he had been forced to endure since he first understood that he was being subjected to the wrath of God for marrying his brother's wife. Henry continued by subjecting the cardinal to a long discussion concerning his interpretation of the law supported by the texts in Leviticus. Campeggio reported the interview to Rome.

His Majesty has studied this case so diligently that I believe he knows more about it than a great theologian or jurist. He told me briefly that he wished nothing except a declaration whether his marriage was valid or not, always presuming it was not, and I think that an angel descending from heaven could not persuade him otherwise.<sup>24</sup>

Campeggio realized that it would be futile to proceed to attempt a reconciliation between the king and queen and so he proceeded with the second stage of his instructions

---

<sup>24</sup>Garrett Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon, (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1941), p. 77.

from Rome. He found Henry to be quite pleased with his alternative to convince the queen to take religious vows. In fact, Henry authorized Campeggio to inform the queen that if she would voluntarily choose this method of solving his difficulties he would make any arrangements about her dower rights that she desired, and, in addition, he would see that the succession would be settled on their daughter, Mary, provided he failed to have male children by another marriage.<sup>25</sup>

The following day the two legates attempted to persuade Catherine to enter a nunnery. They argued that this was the honorable and righteous course for her to choose under the given set of circumstances. They pleaded with her that by following this alternative the pope would not be put in a hazardous position, Catherine herself would be able to retire gracefully, and Henry would be free to marry again. They had three interviews with the queen, but she proved to be as obstinately immovable in her position as Henry had been in his, even though during one interview Wolsey had fallen to his knees beseeching her to follow the advice she had been given.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 268.

<sup>26</sup> Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, p. 211.

Wolsey could feel a sense of impending disaster. In November, 1528, he wrote a letter to Casale in which he expressed his fears and disappointment. He was certain that unless Clement granted Henry what he wanted the church would be ruined in England. "I close my eyes before such horror . . . I throw myself at the Holy Father's feet . . . I beg him to look on his royal majesty's holy and unchangeable desire . . ." <sup>27</sup>

In the meantime Catherine added fresh fuel to the growing controversy. She presented Campeggio with a copy of a brief alleged to have been found in Spain which bore the same date as the original bull of Julius II, but which corrected the irregularities contained in the first bull. Catherine had been provided with a copy of the brief, but the original brief was to be sent to Rome.

Although this new evidence might later be proved to be spurious, it still created additional problems for Cardinal Wolsey. First, it nullified the decretal commission for which Wolsey had labored so long, since the commission had been issued before this document appeared and therefore the terms of the decretal commission would not be sufficient to deal with this new brief.

---

<sup>27</sup>J. J. Scarisbrick, Henry VIII, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 216.

Secondly, the brief avoided the major flaws found in the original bull. As Mattingly points out, the word forsan (perhaps) had been a part of the original bull of Julius II. This word implies some doubt regarding the consummation of Catherine's marriage to Arthur. The new brief simply assumed that the marriage had been consummated and grants a dispensation for the parties to marry in spite of that fact. Another important difference in the new document was the inclusion of the phrase "and moved by these and other reasons" to describe the pope's grounds for granting the dispensation. Following Wolsey's instructions, Stephen Gardner had attacked the original bull on the ground that the grounds for granting the dispensation had been to confirm the friendship between Spain and England and to prevent the danger of war. Wolsey contended that on this ground the pope had been deceived since there had existed at that time no danger of such a war. Since, therefore, there had been misrepresentation the bull had been obtained under false pretenses and was therefore defective. But with the appearance of the new document stating that the brief had been issued due to "these and other reasons" that were unstated, it became impossible to argue against it since no one knew how much these

other reasons had weighed in the pope's mind when he granted the dispensation.<sup>28</sup>

Now it became necessary again to send envoys to Rome to get Clement to declare the new dispensation a forgery, or failing that, to issue a new decretal commission. However, before emissaries could reach the pope in early February, 1529, news reached England that Clement had died and now forces were mobilized to get Wolsey elected pope. Within a few days, however, it was discovered that Clement was not dead but incapacitated with a fever. It was not until the end of March that he was able to see the English delegation. In spite of the strong efforts by Wolsey, Clement steadfastly refused to declare the brief a forgery, or to require Charles to send the original to England.

Confusion seemed to reign among the English representatives throughout the early months of 1529. Although Wolsey apparently was still directing the strategy, it was becoming increasingly evident that many of the arguments were Henry's. At one time one of the English ambassadors in Rome was required to demand that the pope secure the new brief from

---

<sup>28</sup>Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon, p. 274.

the emperor and send it immediately to England or require the emperor to forward it to England. On another occasion the ambassador attempted to persuade the pope to give the legates in England a commission to declare the new brief a forgery. Precluding that, the pope was urged to declare the document fraudulent himself.

On another occasion there was a lingering hope that Catherine might actually enter a religious house, but it was feared that she might require Henry to also take a vow of chastity. In view of this contingency the ambassadors were instructed to obtain a written document from Clement that he would release Henry from such a vow and allow him to marry again, guaranteeing that the children of such a marriage would be legitimate. Failing to gain this concession, the agents were to obtain a dispensation from the pope that would allow Henry to have two wives likewise granting that the children of his second wife would also be legitimate.<sup>29</sup>

With five separate English ambassadors harrying the pope, along with continual pressure from the emperor's agents, became more and more resentful of the intolerable position into which he was being pushed. Within a short

---

<sup>29</sup>Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, p. 418.

time agents delivered several notes to different persons in England, all of the opinion that further concessions from the pope would be impossible. Sir Gegory Casale wrote to his brother Vincent,

I think his Holiness will do nothing; and you may tell Wolsey so, in the vent of his desiring my opinion . . . . If you remember, one of my reasons for sending you to England was to tell the King and Wolsey that they should make some other arrangement, because, if the Pope's fears were entirely removed, he will never do what we want . . .<sup>30</sup>

Sir Francis Bryan was a personal friend and a cousin of Anne Boleyn who had been sent to Rome directly by Henry. Bryan wrote to Wolsey and confirmed to the king what he had told the cardinal. Henry was told bluntly by Bryan that.

. . . ye shall perceive that plainly the Pope will do nothing for your Grace . . . . There is not one of us but that hath essayed him by fair means and foul, but nothing will serve. And whosoever hath made your Grace believe that he would do for you in this cause, hath not, I think, done your Grace service.<sup>31</sup>

Due to these signs of impending failure, early in 1529 Henry began to shift his position, suggesting that the pope actually had no power to dispense with canon law at all. Henry began to cast about for someone learned in canon law

---

<sup>30</sup>Letters and Papers, vol. 4, p. 2370, Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, p. 419.

<sup>31</sup>Brewer, The Reign of Henry VIII from His Accession to the Death of Wolsey, vol. 2, p. 334.

who could prove that the pope did not have power to dispense with the issues of his marriage to Catherine.<sup>32</sup> Since Henry's conscience told him that his marriage with Catherine was not valid and the pope did not seem to be able to see this viewpoint, then obviously there must be something wrong with the plenitude of papal power.

Wolsey attempted to meet this objection by pointing out that there were two areas the dispensation must cover in order for Henry's marriage to be valid. First, the consummation of Catherine's marriage with Arthur must be settled, and, secondly, although the marriage may not have been consummated, still there was the impediment of public honesty. In other words, Arthur and Catherine's marriage had been celebrated within the auspices of the church and they had held themselves out to be man and wife. Therefore, on this point alone, they had a valid marriage. However, Wolsey pointed out, this impediment was not mentioned in Julius's bull, and therefore it had not been removed by the dispensation.<sup>33</sup> While this argument appears to be the

---

<sup>32</sup>Polard, Henry VIII, p. 219.

<sup>33</sup>Letters and Papers, vol. 4, p. 3217, Pollard, Henry VIII, p. 219.

first substantially strong point raised in Henry's favor, it is interesting that neither Henry nor his advisors pursued it.

Early in May, 1529, Dr. Stephen Gardiner wrote to London that there was imminent danger that the pope would recall the commission of the legates and revoke the case to Rome. In an effort to obtain a judgment by a legatine court in England before Clement could recall the case to Rome, Henry broke off further negotiations with Rome and issued a license under the Great Seal for the two legates to proceed with the court.

## CHAPTER V

### THE LEGATINE COURT AT BLACKFRIARS

After what had seemed to Henry an interminable delay, one of the most ineffectual, but significant, trials in history began. The trial itself was a spectacular extravaganza. It was played out with elaborate pomp and circumstance by all the great persons of the age. The intriguing purpose of the trial was to determine the sacred validity of the marriage of Henry VIII, monarch of a country on the verge of becoming one of the great powers in the history of the world. Notwithstanding the high expectations of the King of England and the hopes of the great Cardinal Wolsey, outside sources had predetermined that no final verdict would be reached, thus rendering the trial ineffectual as to its original purpose.

On the other hand, though the king's "great matter" might be thwarted for an additional season, the inability of the vicar of Christ to make a judicial decision concerning a point of canon law would prove to be highly significant. In fact, the seeming impotence of the Church of Rome served as a catalyst in the thinking of great numbers of Englishmen, solidifying their minds and hearts into support for the coming rebellion against Rome. For although

the summoning of a king and queen to appear before a "foreign" tribunal was no more than formality in the court procedure, it caused all England to wonder at the indignity with which their sovereign could be called to account ". . . to plead before one of his own subjects and a foreign priest."<sup>1</sup>

The trial itself began on May 31, 1529, in the great assembly hall of the Dominican monastery of the Blackfriars. The court had been handsomely furnished and decorated to lend dignity, formality, and legitimacy to the proceedings. On the right side of the court, under a canopy of gold cloth, was a raised dais for the king. The queen's dias was to the left of the court, on a somewhat lower level, under the hanging banners of England and Spain. Thw two papal legates were to sit just below the king in ". . . two chairs covered with cloth of gold and cushions of the same and a dormant table railed before, covered with carpets and tapestry."<sup>2</sup> Below the legates, seated in a semi-circle, were the officers of the court, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and all the bishops of the

---

<sup>1</sup>Mandell Creighton, Cardinal Wolsey, (London: MacMillan and Co., 1921), p. 174.

<sup>2</sup>J. S. Brewer, The Reign of Henry VIII from His Accession to the Death of Wolsey, vol. 2. (London: MacMillan and Co., 1884), p. 338.

realm. On one side of the great hall were grouped the king's counselors and on the other side were the queen and her counsel.

The halls were packed each day for the two months of the trial with as many of the great personages of England as could crowd into the assembly hall. Providing contrast to the solemn proceedings inside the court, outside of the hall at Blackfriars milled large groups of the commoners of England, as well as lesser nobility, all of whom strained to see and hear the direction the proceedings were taking each time a door to the great hall opened.<sup>3</sup>

The first few days of the court were spent in determining procedures and issuing citations. On June 16, Catherine and Henry were cited to appear in court. Since Catherine had been constantly assured by the emperor that her cause would not be tried in England, she was unprepared and she called on Campeggio to explain. Campeggio replied that since the pope had deputed two legates for the process, he could not revoke their commission without grave and serious deliberation. Therefore, he encouraged her to

---

<sup>3</sup>Edward Hall, Hall's Chronicle; Containing the History of England, During the Reign of Henry the Fourth, And the Succeeding Monarchs, To the End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth, (London: MacMillan and Co., 1809), p. 756.

pray for wisdom and guidance to make the expedient decision, namely, to yield and take vows.<sup>4</sup> However, Catherine had become accustomed to grave pressure and she did not intend to accede to that made by Campeggio.

On the 18th of June, Henry appeared by proxy and told the court that he had scruples regarding the validity of his marriage to Catherine, and he required the court to resolve these doubts.<sup>5</sup> The queen answered her citation in person. In a carefully prepared statement she avowed that her appearance before the court was not to be construed as an act of recognition, for her intent and purpose was only to register a protest regarding the jurisdiction of the court. She insisted that her case was pending in Rome and could not therefore be tried in England.<sup>6</sup> In addition, Catherine raised the point that the impartiality of the judges could be questioned since both of the two judges were subjects of her husband. She requested that the legates give their opinion on the points she had raised

---

<sup>4</sup>Garrett Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon, (Boston: 1941), p. 283.

<sup>5</sup>Hall, Hall's Chronicle, p. 757.

<sup>6</sup>Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon, p. 284.

and to make that opinion a matter of the record of the court.<sup>7</sup> The counselor for the king responded by reminding the court that the King of England could not plead in a city where the emperor was in control. The court then adjourned for three days so that the cardinals might consider these petitions and render judgment before the trial might proceed.

The following Monday, June 21, both the king and queen appeared before the legates. The queen entered first and took her place under the royal canopy to the left of the judges. Both Campeggio and Wolsey added to the pomp and formality of the occasion as they next entered the hall with ". . . crosses, pillars, axes, and all ceremonies belonging to their degree."<sup>8</sup> Henry was the last to arrive and took his place on the raised dais to the right of the legates. The great hall teemed with excitement as the two highest personages in the realm sat facing a legatine court.

Henry arose and addressed the court saying that he was determined to live no longer in sin with his wife. He voiced his complaint that the legality of the marriage

---

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 284.

<sup>8</sup>Hall, Hall's Chronicle, p. 757.

which had caused his conscience so much pain must be decided at once.<sup>9</sup> Next, Wolsey spoke and told the assembled dignitaries that he had received many favors of the king, which had caused his ability to render an impartial verdict to be called into question. He went on to remind those assembled that the case had been given to him by the pope and that he would therefore render judgment to the best of his ability and ". . . omit nothing that the justice of the case required."<sup>10</sup>

Then, perhaps the most dramatic moment in the trial occurred when the queen arose. She did not address the court but proceeded around all the tables and benches of everyone assembled until she reached the king. As Cavendish describes ". . . kneeling down at his feet in the sight of all the court and assembly" she began in broken English to pour out to her husband and to those assembled her plea for the confirmation of her rightful place as the king's consort and for the legitimacy of their daughter, Mary.

Sir, I beseech you for all the love that hath been between us, and for the love of God, let me have justice and right, take of me some pity and compassion, for I am a poor woman and a stranger born

---

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 757.

<sup>10</sup>Brewer, *The Reign of Henry VIII from His Accession to the Death of Wolsey*, p. 342.

out of your dominion. I have here no assured friend, and much less indifferent counsel, I flee to you as to the head of justice within the realm.<sup>11</sup>

The king sat immobile as Catherine continued with tears running down her cheeks.

Alas, Sir, where have I offended you, or what occasion have you of displeasure, that you intend to put me from you? I take God and all the world to witness that I have been to you a true, humble and obedient wife. . . I love all those whom ye loved only for your sake, whether I had cause or no; and whether they were my friends or enemies. This twenty years or more, I have been your true wife and by me ye have had divers children, although it hath pleased God to call them from out of this world, which hath been no default in me. . .<sup>12</sup>

Finally, in answer to Henry's chief causes before the court, she continued.

When ye had me at the first, I take God to be my judge, I was a true maid, without touch of man. And whether this be true or no, I put it to your conscience. If there be any just cause by the Law that you can allege against me, either of dishonesty or any other impediment, to put me from you, I am well content to depart, to my great shame and dishonour; if there be none, I must lowly beseech you, let me remain in my former estate. . .<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup>George Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, ed. by Richard S. Sylvester (Oxford University Press: London, 1959), p. 80.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

Should Henry refuse her this plea she then requested that he allow her more time.

Therefore, most humbly do I require you, in the way of charity and for the love of God, who is the just Judge of all, to spare me the sentence of this court until I be advertised what my friends in Spain may advise me to take; and if ye will not extend to me this favour, your pleasure be fulfilled, and to God do I commit my cause.<sup>14</sup>

With these final words, she rose, bowed low to the king and left the court for the last time. She refused to heed the call of the court crier, "Catherine, Queen of England, come into the court!" but continued through the hushed courtroom and out the door. On the outside she was cheered and encouraged by a crowd of women as she entered her coach to be driven back to Bridewell Palace.

The impact the queen had made on the assembled courtroom was evident. Everyone in the hall appeared moved. Her courage and devotion to the king was evident and spectators greatly admired her although they hesitated, unlike those outside the hall, to express their sympathies. Henry rose to counter the impression Catherine had left that she was a wife, unjustly spurned.

Forasmuch as the Queen is gone I will in her absence declare unto you all my lords here presently assembled,

---

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

she hath been to me as true, as obedient and as conformable a wife as I could in my fantasy wish or desire. She has all the virtuous qualities that ought to be in a woman of her dignity, or in any other of baser estate. I have not had any displeasure in the person or age of the Queen, with whom I would be well content, if our marriage stood by the law of God, as with any woman alive.<sup>15</sup>

What a startling contrast those assembled must have witnessed between the black attired figure of their humble queen and the flagrant dishonesty of their sovereign.

Cardinal Wolsey was the first to respond to Henry's charge. "Sire, I most humbly beseech your Highness to declare now before all this audience, whether I have been the chief inventor and first mover of this matter with your Majesty; for I am greatly suspected of all men herein."<sup>16</sup> To which Henry replied that the Cardinal on the contrary had attempted to dissuade him from pursuing the matter, but that the questioning by the Bishop of Tarbes concerning Princess Mary's legitimacy at the time of her betrothal to the French prince so pricked his conscience and so troubled him with respect to the safety of the realm that he could

---

<sup>15</sup>Albert Du Boys, Catherine of Aragon and the Sources of the English Reformation, vol. 2, p. 88, quoted in Mary M. Luke, Catherine, The Queen, (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1967), p. 364.

<sup>16</sup>Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 82.

not ignore the continuing doubts, particularly those relating to the ". . . danger it (the realm) stood in for lack of issue male to succeed me in this imperial dignity."<sup>17</sup>

The court summoned the king and queen to appear the following Friday, June 25. At this time, the king pleaded again that he had not come to court because he wished to discard Catherine, but solely because doubt had been cast upon the validity of his marriage by others. The doubt, once sowed, had caused Henry to wonder if the death of all their male children might be a sign of God's displeasure. He insisted that it was incumbent upon the bishops assembled at Blackfriars to determine the validity of his marriage. In fact, Henry continued, holding up a document, the bishops, on being consulted earlier, had signed a document declaring that in their minds the royal marriage was in doubt. A confirming judgment was quickly attested by the Archbishop of Canterbury that all present would affirm their signature on the document. At this point Warham proceeded to read off the signatures.

However, the packed courtroom was stunned when the name of John Fisher was read. At this point, the aging Bishop of Rochester arose and adamantly proclaimed, "No,

---

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

Sir, not I. You have not my consent thereto."<sup>18</sup> Throughout the realm the gaunt, ascetic Fisher was highly respected for his impeccable character and unimpeachable integrity. In addition, he had been with the king through Henry's childhood and had been the confessor to Henry's grandmother, as well as his father's most trusted advisor. Henry's grandmother had, in fact, on her death bed, made Henry promise always to follow the advise of John Fisher.<sup>19</sup>

Henry turned to Archbishop Warham to confirm Fisher's hand and seal. But in spite of the confirmation, Fisher objected bluntly that the signature was not his. In fact, Fisher continued, Warham had indeed asked him to sign the document, ". . . but then I said to you that I would never consent to no such act, for it were much against my conscience."<sup>20</sup> At this point, Warham found himself forced by the bluntness of the old man to concede that Fisher had spoken such words, but Warham maintained that afterward Fisher agreed that his name could be affixed to the document

---

<sup>18</sup>Marvin H. Albert, The Divorce, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965), p. 143.

<sup>19</sup>Scarbrick, J. J. Henry VIII, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), p. 8.

<sup>20</sup>Marvin H. Albert, The Divorce, p. 144.

for him. Still, Fisher would not be intimidated. "All which words and matter there is no thing more untrue," he retorted.<sup>21</sup>

After the legates rejected Catherine's objections and declared themselves to be a competent court, there were three points the court was anxious to verify in favor of the king. The first concerned the consummation of the marriage between Arthur and Catherine. If this could be substantiated, then Catherine's subsequent marriage to Henry was contrary to law. Secondly, it was incumbent upon the court to demonstrate that the bull obtained by Isabella from Julius II to grant Henry and Catherine the dispensation to marry had been obtained under false pretenses. Thirdly, the brief produced by Catherine which corrected the defects in the first bull was a forgery.

In an effort to substantiate the first point, testimony centered around the sexual exploits of various nobles, all intending to demonstrate that Arthur did know his wife carnally before his death at fifteen. The tedious, but titillating, testimony pleased neither of the legates. Wolsey agonized over the delay while Campeggio complained

---

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 144.

in a letter to Clement that since the queen had refused to appear again in court, her prosecutors had ". . . a wide field for action, and entirely clear, so that they may conduct the trial with all those arts which can influence the results in their favor."<sup>22</sup>

The weeks of the trial dragged on. Campeggio's fears, that since the queen choose to absent herself from the proceedings there would be no forceful protest to the king's arguments, were not groundless. With no more than the bull of Julius II for the basis of the trial, and no opposition made to the king's contentions that the reasons alleged in the bull were not true, and that by law this error invalidated the dispensation granted by the bull, Campeggio feared the case would soon be over. In another of his many dispatches to Rome he wrote that it would be impossible to delay the suit if the facts continued to weigh in favor of the king. Campeggio complained that it appeared he would not be able to work out a compromise in the suit and he would have to fall back on the pope's secret instructions and refuse to give sentence in the case. On the other hand, he reminded Clement that by the terms of

---

<sup>22</sup>Charles W. Ferguson, Naked To Mine Enemies, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1958), p. 430.

the legate's original commission, Wolsey had the power to act alone.

But Campeggio was not alone in his dissatisfaction with the course the trial was taking. Wolsey himself became more and more alarmed with the excessive delays and the repetitious testimony. As Henry pressured Wolsey, Wolsey in turn appealed to both Campeggio and Clement. Campeggio wrote of Wolsey that "He alleged that if the king's desire were not complied with . . . there would follow the speedy and total ruin of the kingdom."<sup>23</sup> Wolsey also express his fears:

I cannot reflect upon it and close my eyes, for I see ruin, infamy and subversion of the whole dignity and estimation of the See Apostolic if this course is persisted in. You see in what dangerous times we are. If the Pope will consider the gravity of this cause, and how much the safety of the nation depends upon it, he will see that the course he now pursues will drive the King to adopt remedies which are injurious to the Pope, and are frequently instilled into the King's mind.<sup>24</sup>

Not only did Wolsey fear the results of a long, drawn out trial, but in the meantime, with the demands of the trial and the pressures brought by Henry, Wolsey had to neglect what to him were more pressing matters. National

---

<sup>23</sup>A. F. Pollard, Henry VIII, (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1925), p. 211.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 211.

affairs were speeding along without Wolsey's direction. In particular, the women's peace at Cambrai which would decide the immediate fate of Europe was in progress. Domestic and personal affairs were impeded by the trial. Enclosures went on unmolested, Wolsey's colleges at Oxford and the school at Ipswich had to be put in the background while Wolsey, at the king's insistence, devoted his full attention to the divorce proceedings. For the first time in fifteen years, a major peace was negotiated without Wolsey's participation. Sir Thomas More was sent to participate at the treaty table at Cambrai. Wolsey knew that his political career would be permanently eclipsed unless he was able to accomplish the divorce Henry so desperately desired before the pope could recall the case to Rome.

But the trial continued. In effect, though the trial was tedious and had gone on much longer than Henry or Wolsey had desired, there had been no formidable opposition until early in July when John Fisher once again rose to address the court. He began his discourse by recalling that

. . . in a former audience he had heard the King's majesty discuss the cause, and testify before all men that his only desire was to have justice done, and to relieve himself of the scruple which he had on his conscience, inviting both the judges and

everybody else to throw light on the investigation of the cause, because he found his mind much troubled and perplexed.<sup>25</sup>

Fisher continued that

. . . after two years of diligent study. . . and to avoid the damnation of his soul, and to show himself not unfaithful to the King or neglectful of the duty which he owed to the truth in a cause of such importance . . . he presented himself . . . to assert and demonstrate with cogent reasons that this marriage of the King and Queen could not be dissolved by any power divine or human.<sup>26</sup>

At this time Fisher produced a book he had written on the subject and declared that in support of his conclusions he "was willing to lay down his life."<sup>27</sup>

Wolsey immediately protested Fisher's audacity, reminding Fisher that the legates had been delegated by the pope to hear the case and to render judgment "in whatever way divine wisdom should inspire them to do."<sup>28</sup>

Wolsey charged that Fisher had audaciously taken it upon himself to usurp the authority of the court and to pronounce judgment himself. In addition, Henry himself penned a violent reply to Fisher's charge to the legates. However,

---

<sup>25</sup> Luke, Catherine, The Queen, p. 367.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 367.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 367.

<sup>28</sup> Ferguson, Naked To Mine Enemies, p. 433.

in spite of these protests, Campeggio seemed to take heart from the Bishop of Rochester's remarks and it appeared to many that Campeggio would not be amenable to the annulment as had been previously expected.<sup>29</sup>

The last sitting of the legatine court was on July 23, 1729. A verdict was expected. Since canon law clearly stated that a man cannot marry his brother's wife, the king still hoped for a favorable verdict. The courtroom was packed when Campeggio stood up and explained that the custom of the court in Rome was to suspend all legal proceedings from the end of July until October. He continued that he "would wade no farther in this matter, unless I have the just opinion and judgment, with the assent of the pope, of such other of his counsel as hath more experience and learning in such doubtful laws as I have."<sup>30</sup>

Henry strode from the courtroom in a fury. As others rose to leave, the Duke of Suffolk gave vent to the pent up frustration with the church, a growing nationalist feeling, and dissatisfaction with the Cardinal's role in the proceedings. He struck the table with his fist and shouted,

---

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 433.

<sup>30</sup> Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 90.

"By the Mass! It never was merry in England whilst we had Cardinals amongst us!"<sup>31</sup> Campeggio pretended not to hear the outburst, but Wolsey turned to Suffolk and replied.

Sir, of all the men in this realm, ye have the least cause to dispraise or be offended with Cardinals, for if I, simple Cardinal, had not been, ye would have had at this moment, no head upon your shoulders, wherein you should have a tongue to make any such report in despite of us, who intended you no manner of displeasure. Ye know best what friendship ye have received at my hands, the which I have never revealed to no person before now, either for my glory, nor to your dishonour.<sup>32</sup>

The failure of the legatine court to grant the king's divorce meant the end of Wolsey's power. Wolsey had cast his lot with the church at Rome, and in the coming struggle of England this decision would result in his downfall. Wolsey had hoped, by insisting upon a legate of the church of Rome, to maintain the union between England and the Catholic Church. But he had forfeited his opportunities to pronounce judgment in the case himself and to grant the relief the king sought. He had now sealed his doom and his fifteen year reign of England would end. Wolsey's earlier forecast that should the case be remanded to Rome, his own

---

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., pp. 90-91.

influence with the king would end and the ties with Rome would be broken was about to come to pass.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Philip Hughes, The Reformation in England, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1951), p. 187.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE LOSS OF OFFICES AND PLACES

The weeks following the trial were exceedingly difficult ones for the cardinal legate and Lord Chancellor of England. Wolsey continued to hold the Great Seal of England, as well as all the other trappings of his high offices, but it was evident that Wolsey was no longer in favor with the king, and his enemies were quick to see an opportunity to attack successfully the cardinal, who had arrogantly displayed his power and prestige among them for so long.

The rapid dissemination of Luther's teachings in England added additional fuel to the resentment Englishmen already felt toward the vices of the clergy. They resented the fact that members of the clergy had exclusive privileges which protected them from the authority of the secular courts while the ecclesiastical courts were much too lenient with the clergy's offenses and extremely severe with offenses, real or imagined, of the laity. In addition, the wealth and corruption of the church officials was a matter of common knowledge in England, as well as throughout Europe. Wolsey's arrogance, wealth, and vanity epitomized all the

evils ascribed to the clergy. He held three great bishoprics, and, in addition, the wealthiest of the abbeys. He had never even entered his bishoprics at York or Durham, although he had visited Winchester during intervals between state business and he did reside occasionally at the Manor of the More belonging to St. Albans. As legate and lord chancellor he was able to dispose of virtually the entire patronage of the realm. In every diocese his officials were busy collecting fees from anyone who needed a license. In addition each and every will that was probated, and every marriage coming under the forbidden degrees had to come under the jurisdiction of his courts. Wolsey's wealth was enormous, and there were many who cast envious eyes on his holdings, not the least of whom was the King of England.

To compound his problems during the last weeks of the trial, the general scheme of European affairs had changed radically, portending failure for all the cardinal's plans to alter the balance of power in Europe with England in the place of arbiter of European affairs. Francis had turned his back on his alliance with England to ally himself with the Emperor. The meeting at Cambray between Louise, the mother of the French king, and Margaret, the regent of the Netherlands, had settled the peace between Francis and Charles without Wolsey having a hand in the

affairs at all. On June 21, Charles' forces won a decisive victory at Landriano which settled once and for all the repeated efforts of France to control Italy. As a result of this Imperialist victory, a treaty was signed at Barcelona on June 29, between Charles and Clement.

Worse still, by July 22, Wolsey learned that the pope had granted the avocation of the case to Rome. The King and the Queen of England were to appear either in person or by proxy before the Roman court. Repeated efforts made by Wolsey to stay this order by the pope came to no avail.

Wolsey could feel the walls closing in upon him. He had incurred for many years the pent up wrath of the nobility of England by his haughty and vain displays of grandeur. He was bitterly hated by the commons of England because of his methods of taxation, as well as the fact that in their minds he represented all the evils that were a part of the church of his day. More recently he had formented great hostility toward himself by allying England with her ancient enemy, France, and drawn the country into a quarrel with their hereditary ally, Spain.

To compound matters, Wolsey had misled Henry as to the facility of obtaining a divorce, with the result that the king now found himself summoned to appear in Rome before

a pope who was decidedly in the hands of the emperor. This position was a humiliating one for the sovereign of England as well as for his proud and independent subjects. Though their sympathies had been with the queen during the legatine court proceedings, they now found themselves, however reluctant, forming a solid phalanx behind their sovereign. They were a part of a proud and independent kingdom which had long been jealous of interference by any foreign power, even though that power be the Catholic Church itself, and the summons to Rome was received by them with anger and dismay.

Wolsey's high standing with Henry had protected the cardinal from his enemies, but now there was growing and evident signs that he stood in disfavor with the king. With the collapse of the legate's commission, Henry announced that he would summon a parliament, and Stephen Gardiner instructed Wolsey to handle the clerical details involved in issuing writs to assemble the parliament for November. If Henry could not obtain satisfaction by going through the proper channels, then he would achieve his ends by means of an English parliament. Wolsey clearly understood the dangers to himself with the calling of parliament.

Although the cardinal had made valiant efforts to obtain a personal interview with Henry, they came to no

avail. When Chapuys arrived in England at the end of August to continue as Charles' ambassador, the imperialist ambassador wrote toward the end of August, 1529, "it is generally and almost publically stated that the affairs of the Cardinal are getting worse and worse every day."<sup>1</sup> It is ironic that it was finally Cardinal Campeggio who secured that interview for Wolsey. He had informed the king that he would be leaving England and requested that Wolsey be allowed to travel with him to Grafton where Campeggio would take his leave of the king.<sup>2</sup> This request was granted provided the cardinals would agree to travel without displaying the credentials of their offices. The legates reached Grafton in Northamptonshire in September 19, "without any sort of pomp or ceremony, without their crosses preceding them as usual, or that arrogant display which the two cardinals were wont to shew in public."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Williams Neville. The Cardinal and the Secretary. (New York: The MacMillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1975), p. 122.

<sup>2</sup>J. A. Froude. The Divorce of Catherine of Aragon. (London: Logmans, Green, and Company, 1891), p. 128.

<sup>3</sup>Spanish Calendar, 1529-1530, pp. 214, 235, 253, 257, quoted in A. F. Pollard, Wolsey, (London: Longsman, Green and Company, 1929), p. 238.

Wolsey's reception at Grafton heralded difficult times for the cardinal, and Cavendish related the incident.

The two prelates being come to the gates alighted from their mules, supposing that they should have been received by the head officers of the house, as they were wont to be; yet, forasmuch as Campeggio was but a stranger in effect, the said officers received them, and conveyed him to his lodging within the court, which was prepared for him only. And after my Lord had brought him to his lodging, he left him there, and departed, supposing to have gone directly likewise to his chamber, as he was accustomed to do. And by the way, as he was going, it was told him that he had no lodging appointed for him in the court. And being therewith astonished, a Sir Henry Norris, groom of the stole to the King, came unto him, and whether it was by the King's commandment, or no, I know not, and most humbly offered him his chamber for the time, until another might be somewhere provided for him. "For, Sir, I assure you" quoth he, "here is very little room in this house, scanty sufficient for the King. However, I beseech your Grace to accept mine for the season."<sup>4</sup>

Wolsey accepted the offer and within a brief time was called with Campeggio into the presence of the king. For a time it appeared Wolsey's enemies had cause for concern as it seemed that fortune would again smile on the cardinal. Cavendish records that the king called Wolsey aside ". . . and led him by the hand to a great window, where he talked with him, and caused him to be covered.

---

<sup>4</sup>George Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, ed. by Richard S. Sylvester, (Oxford University Press: London, 1959), p. 92.

Then to behold the countenance of those who had made their wagers to the contrary, it would have made you to smile . . . ."<sup>5</sup> This apparent restoration of Wolsey to the king's confidence was a terrible blow to the cardinal's enemies and they immediately set to work to undermine this rapport. Wolsey had been ordered by the king to return to Grafton the next morning to resume his talks with Henry, but when he arrived, he was dismayed to find that Henry was preparing to ride out to see land for a new park with Anne Boleyn, and the cardinal was ordered to continue with Campeggio to London. This was the last time Wolsey would see Henry face to face.

As the king had ordered, Wolsey attended a meeting on October 8 of the Council at Westminster, but he went without the usual trappings of his office for ". . . none of the king's servants would go before, as they were wont to do."<sup>6</sup> When Wolsey returned to his house at York Place after that first day in council he was well aware that it would not be long before the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk

---

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 94

<sup>6</sup>Edward Hall, Hall's Chronicle: Containing the History of England, During the Reign of Henry the Fourth, and the Succeeding Monarchs, To The End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth, (New York: AMS Press, 1965), p. 759-760.

would be sent to take from him the Great Seal of England. Within a few weeks a bill of indictment for praemunire was preferred against him by Christopher Hale, the king's attorney, in the Court of the King's Bench, and a short time later, a bill of attainder was passed against him by the House of Lords. Wolsey was given the choice of answering either of these charges, and since conviction of the act of attainder was tantamount to a charge of treason the cardinal chose to answer the charge of praemunire.

Wolsey knew that it did not matter that he had exercised his legatine authority with the king's knowledge and consent, and that it had been used to further the king's personal aims and desires. Recognizing that he was to be used as the scapegoat for Henry's frustrations, he wrote an abject appeal to the king for mercy, hoping to move Henry to pity. He began,

Most gracious and merciful Sovereign Lord, Thou that I, your poor, heavy and wretched priest do daily pursue, cry and call upon Your Royal Majesty for grace, mercy, remission and pardon, yet in most humble wise I beseech Your Highness not to think that it proceedeth of any mistrust that I have in your merciful goodness . . .<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup>J. S. Brewer, The Reign of Henry VIII from His Accession to the Death of Wolsey, 2 vols. (London: 1884; reprint ed., New York: AMS Press, 1968), vol. 3, p. 379.

He continued by reminding Henry that his only interest was the furtherance of the king's interests and pleasures,

. . . the same only cometh of an inward and ardent desire that I have continually to declare unto your Highness, how that, next unto God, I desire nor covet anything in this world but the attaining of your gracious favour and forgiveness of my trespass.<sup>8</sup>

The letter was signed "Your Grace's most prostrate poor chaplain, creature and bedesman. T. Cardinalis Ebor Miserium."<sup>9</sup>

On October 16 the cardinal was ordered to give up the great seal and to retire to Esher. Cavendish relates that the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk made the first demand that Wolsey surrender the seal without producing a written commission, and that the cardinal steadfastly refused to surrender the seal without written warrent explaining,

. . . the great seal of England was delivered unto me by the king's own person, to enjoy during my life, with the ministration of the office and high room of chancellorship of England: for my surety whereof, I have the king's letters patent to show.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 759.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 760.

<sup>10</sup> Charles W. Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1958), p. 450.

The following day the proper documents were presented and Cavendish records that,

. . . after the receipt and reading of the same by my Lord, which was done with much reverence he delivered unto them the great seal, contented to obey the King's high commandment; and seeing that the King's pleasure was to take his house with the contents was well pleased simply to depart to Esher, taking nothing but only some provision for his house.<sup>11</sup>

As Wolsey boarded his barge to leave York House, a great number of Englishmen had turned out in small boats to watch him be taken to the tower. Recalling this incident Cavendish wrote, "I cannot but see that it is the inclination and natural disposition of Englishmen to desire change of men in authority--most of all where such men had have administered justice imparitally."<sup>12</sup>

At Putney the entourage disembarked to travel by land the rest of the way to Esher. They had traveled but a short distance when the party was overtaken by Henry Norris with a message from the king. In light of the humiliation already suffered by Wolsey, and considering the seriousness of the charges against the cardinal, the message was strange and bewildering. However, this would

---

<sup>11</sup>Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 98.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 101.

be only the first of several enigmatic responses Henry would make toward his deposed lord chancellor over the next several months. Norris related the message,

Although the king hath dealt with you unkindly as you suppose he saith that it is for no displeasure he beareth you, but only to satisfy more the minds of some which he knoweth be not your friends than for any indignation, and also ye know right well, that he is able to recompense you with twice as much as your goods amounteth to; and all this he bade me, that I should show you; therefore, Sir, take patience.<sup>13</sup>

Wolsey's joy and relief at the kind and encouraging words from his sovereign immediately revived his sinking spirits, and as Cavendish relates he was so overcome that "he quickly alighted from off his mule all alone, as though he had been the youngest person amongst us, and incontinent kneeled down in the dirt, with both his knees, holding up his hands for joy."<sup>14</sup> The rest of the trip to Esher was taken with some sense of hope, and it would seem that the cardinal, ever the optimist, even entertained visions of at least some partial restoration to favor and to his high offices.

---

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 102.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 102.

A week after the cardinal's arrival at Esher, the new parliament met with Thomas More as the new lord chancellor; the Duke of Norfolk, president of the council; and the Duke of Suffolk as the vice-president. The bill of attainder which had been passed by the lords was sent to the commons, but due to the skillful advocacy of Thomas Cromwell, the articles against Wolsey were tabled. The charges numbered forty-six, and they had been originally drafted by Lord Darcy shortly after the adjournment of the legatine court.

Among the charges included in the list against Wolsey were those of abusing his offices in the church by making unlawful appointments to benefices, pillaging and harrassing monasteries and usurping the jurisdiction of bishops by impeding their efforts to stamp out heresies. In addition he was accused of embezzlement, making treaties with foreign powers without proper authority, and withholding information from the Privy Council on foreign affairs. He was accused of abusing the court's powers by reopening cases that had already been determined, suspending pardons, delaying justice, and denying persons their right to sue the king for pardons. In addition he was further charged with making himself equal to the king by using such phrases as "the king and I," putting his cardinal's

hat on certain coinage of the realm, and strangely enough, with risking the king's health through infection from contagious diseases.<sup>15</sup>

Esher Palace had belonged to the see of Winchester, and technically along with the rest of the cardinal's property it now belonged to Henry. However, the king had consented to let Wolsey occupy it. Before Wolsey left York Palace he had signed an admission to the charges of praemunire and admitted to the penalties thereof, which was the confiscation of all property and goods. The cardinal ordered a full inventory to be drawn up of all the household furnishings of York House, and to be displayed for the king's inspection. It was an awesome sight. Tables of tapestries, silver and gold plate, and richly colored imported cloths gave evidence of abundant wealth and lavish living.

However, the accommodations of Esher Palace were a stark contrast to such a lavish display of luxury. When the cardinal arrived, he found the place had no beds, sheets, tablecloths, cups, or dishes, although it was well stocked with an abundance of food and drink.<sup>16</sup> While

---

<sup>15</sup>A. G. Pollard, Wolsey, (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1929), p. 259.

<sup>16</sup>Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies, p. 456.

the cardinal busied himself with the burrowing of linens and dishes from the bishop of Carlisle and Sir Thomas Arundel, Henry wasted no time in seeking legal means by which he could possess not only the furnishings of York House but the palace and land as well.

Wolsey had bore his diminished circumstances with a certain degree of grace, but when Henry sent Chief Justice Shelley to coerce the cardinal into signing York House over to the king, Wolsey protested. York House, unlike Hampton Court, was not the personal possession of Wolsey, but was the property of the bishopric of York. Wolsey tried to explain repeatedly that he could not sign away property that was not his, but when Shelley produced the royal commission, Wolsey reluctantly signed the document. However, he did extract a promise from the judge to report to Henry that although the cardinal could not disobey the king's commands, "I most humbly desire His Highness to call to his most gracious remembrance that there is both heaven and hell."<sup>17</sup>

By Christmas Wolsey fell ill, and the news of his illness seems to have brought some remorse to Henry, who sent his own physician, Sir William Butts, to attend to

---

<sup>17</sup>Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 119.

Wolsey with instruction not to return until the cardinal was better. Henry even sent Wolsey a token of his love for him embodied in a ruby ring which had been engraved in a likeness of the king. The tokens from the king appeared to restore Wolsey's spirits and his health began to improve. In February, 1530, the king sent four carloads of household material, including beds, kitchen equipment, dishes, and hangings for Wolsey's chapel. Ten days later, Wolsey received a full pardon for exercising legatine authority in England. Two days later, Henry restored to Wolsey the archbishopric of York, except for the house in Westminster with its gardens and three acres of land.

Wolsey, ever the optimist, began to sense a change in his fortune. He appealed to the king for permission to move to Richmond for the air at Esher was damp and not conducive to his health. Henry granted the cardinal permission to move since the king's physician had so informed Henry of this same fact when he had returned to court from attending to Wolsey in December. Henry had given his permission personally and had not gone through the council. Thus, when news reached the council, there was good cause for worry. In just two weeks, Henry had granted Wolsey a full pardon, restored him to the archbishopric of York, delivered goods and furnishing for his house, and now

allowed him to leave Esher for better quarters in Richmond. Furthermore, Richmond was five miles closer to Westminster than Esher, and it was close to the royal palace at Greenwich. It is no wonder that the Duke of Norfolk had loudly sworn that rather than have the cardinal return to the king's favor that ". . . he would eat him up alive."<sup>18</sup> If he were reinstated by the king, there would be every possibility that the council members who had so strongly opposed Wolsey would be in grave danger of losing their estates. Cavendish's opinion was that they ". . . feared him more after his fall than they did before in his prosperity. . ."<sup>19</sup> Therefore, Wolsey's enemies immediately set about to prevent his restoration and to complete the king's alienation.

---

<sup>18</sup>Froude, The Divorce of Catherine of Aragon, p. 132.

<sup>19</sup>Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 122.

## CHAPTER VII

### TO YORK

Encouraged by the change in fortune, Wolsey continued to hope and to scheme for complete restoration of his power. For several months before his removal to Richmond he had been seeking the help of Francis I and the French queen mother, as well as the help of the emperor and Rome. But now, the princes of Europe, rather than courting the cardinal's favor, found that Wolsey was of no value to them. In fact, de Vaux, who had been sent from France to determine the course of French policy with respect to the affairs of the cardinal, determined that England appeared to be friendly enough toward France at this point, and intervention on behalf of the cardinal might cause English resentment.

Wolsey continued his persistent efforts, sending his physician, Agostini, on several occasions to meet with de Vaux to attempt to persuade him to visit the cardinal at Richmond in early February. In fact de Vaux did visit Wolsey before he left for York, and he wrote that Wolsey appeared to be resigned to his alienation from court although the cardinal did appeal to Francis I and Louise

for financial assistance.<sup>1</sup> It does appear that once Wolsey was able to communicate in person with the French representative he realized that any effort on his behalf by the French was highly unlikely, and from this point on he seemed to have concentrated his efforts for outside help on the emperor.

Wolsey remained in the main house at Richmond until the beginning of Lent on March 2. At this time he moved into smaller accommodations at the Charterhouse of Richmond. From these spare rooms, which had been built by Colet for his use until his death, there was a secret gallery which led directly into the Charterhouse church. Cavendish reports that every day Wolsey attended their services, and in the

. . . afternoons he would sit in contemplation with one or other of the most ancient fathers of that house in his cell, who among them by their counsel persuaded him from the vain glory of this world, and give him divers shirts of hair, the which he often wore afterward . . .<sup>2</sup>

In the meantime the cardinal's enemies had recovered from their first shock at hearing the king had

---

<sup>1</sup>A. F. Pollard, Wolsey, (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1929), p. 26.

<sup>2</sup>George Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, ed. by Richard S. Sylvester, (Oxford University Press: London, 1959), p. 206.

given Wolsey permission to move closer to London, and they were busy devising methods to remove him permanently to a more distant location. It was therefore proposed to the king that Wolsey be sent to York to assume his official duties there. In addition, the king was reminded that the cardinal's presence in the north, a troubled part of the kingdom, would have a good influence for law and order. With the king's assent, Thomas Cromwell was sent to inform Wolsey that he should make preparations to go to his benefice and discharge his duties there. Wolsey, ever the optimist, apparently supposed that he was to go to Winchester and instructed Cromwell to advise the lord of Norfolk that he would go immediately. When Cromwell delivered the message, Norfolk made it quiet clear that Wolsey was not to go to Winchester, but to York.

On February 12, Norfolk told Cromwell, "Methinks that the Cardinal, thy master, maketh no haste to go northward. Tell him, if he go not away, but shall tarry, I shall tear him with my teeth."<sup>3</sup> Wolsey realized that he could delay no longer, and sent Cromwell back with the

---

<sup>3</sup>J. A. Froude. The Divorce of Catherine of Aragon. (London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1891), p. 132.

message that he would gladly ". . . go to my benefice at York but for want of money."<sup>4</sup> At this point the council was ready to assist Wolsey financially to secure his removal from ready access to the king, and after some debate they sent him a thousand marks out of his pension from the bishopric of Winchester.<sup>5</sup> To this amount Henry added another one thousand pounds, letters under the privy seal asking the lords and others on Wolsey's route to show hospitality to the cardinal befitting his office, and a personal note bidding Wolsey to be of good cheer.<sup>6</sup> With these funds, along with certain sums Wolsey had borrowed from private sources, the cardinal began to provide for a train of 160 horsemen to ride with him and 300 workmen who were to begin repairs on his residences at York.

On April 5, the beginning of Passion Week, he began his journey to York. All along the way, armed with letters from the king requesting hospitality on Wolsey's behalf, the cardinal was received courteously by the gentry. He was at Peterborough for Holy Week and Easter, and on

---

<sup>4</sup>Mandell Creighton, Cardinal Wolsey, (London: MacMillan and Co., 1921), p. 193.

<sup>5</sup>Letters and Papers, vol. 4, p. 318, quoted in A. F. Pollard, Wolsey, p. 273.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 273.

Maundy Thursday he washed the feet of fifty-nine poor men, giving each of them money, shirts and a new pair of shoes. On Easter he rode in a solemn procession to the cathedral where ". . . he himself sang there the high mass very devoutly; and granted clean remission to all the hearers."<sup>7</sup> He stayed several days at the estate of Sir William Fitzwilliam, who entertained the cardinal and his entourage very graciously. However, before Wolsey left Peterborough he made every effort to see that none of his party defaulted on any debt owed in the village. Cavendish described the departure.

Then every man made all things in such readiness as was convenient, paying in the town for all things as they had taken of any person for their own use, for which cause my lord caused a proclamation to be made in the town, that if any person or persons in the town or country there were offended or grieved against any of my lord's servants, that they should resort to my lord's officers, of whom they should have redress . . .<sup>8</sup>

The cardinal spent four days with Fitzwilliam at Milton manor before proceeding on his journey to York. On April 27 he entered Southwell, which was the first time he had entered his province, although he had been its

---

<sup>7</sup>Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 310.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 311.

archbishop since 1514. Repairs at Southwell were not completed and he wrote Henry VIII,

According to your pleasure I have come into my diocese unfurnished, to my extreme heaviness, of everything that I and my poor folks should be entertained with . . . I have neither corn nor cattle, ne any other thing to keep household with, nor know where to borrow anything in these parts towards the provision of the same.<sup>9</sup>

However, by June, Cavendish wrote that he had worked to create a good home at York.

He kept a noble house, and plenty of both meat and drink for all comers, both for rich and poor, and much alms given at his gates. He used much charity and pity among his poor tenants and other; although the fame thereof was no pleasant sound in the ears of his enemies, and of such as bare him no good will, howbeit the common people will report as they find cause; for he was much more familiar among all persons then he was accustomed, and most gladdest when he had an occasion to do them good. He made many agreements and concords between gentleman and gentleman, and between some gentlemen and their wives that had been long asunder, and in great trouble, and divers other agreements between other persons . . . not sparing for any costs, where he might make a peace and amity; which purchased him much love and friendship in that country.<sup>10</sup>

The cardinal handled his duties of office so well that he became quite popular among the people and won a good reputation for fulfilling his duties as a clergyman and

---

<sup>9</sup>Pollard, Wolsey, p. 277.

<sup>10</sup>Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 310.

faithful servant of the king in the north, that in 1536 a pamphlet came from the office of the king's printer holding Wolsey up as an example,

Who was less beloved in the north than my lord cardinal before he was amongst them? Who better beloved after he had been there a while? He gave bishops a right good example how they might win men's hearts. There were few holy days but he would ride five or six miles from his house, not to this parish church, now to that, and there cause one or other of his doctors to make a sermon unto the people. He sat amongst them and said mass before all the parish; he saw why churches were made; he began to restore them to their right and proper use; he brought his dinner with him, and bade divers of the parish to it. He inquired whether there were any debt or grudge between any of them. If there were, after dinner he sent for the parties to the church and made them all one.<sup>11</sup>

But, while he was successful in his activities among the peasants he still longed for the life of politics, and he continued to consider how he could defeat his enemies and return to power. In April Chapuys wrote the emperor,

. . . he has sent his physician to me on three different occasions to vindicate his past conduct and to offer his services to your majesty, declaring that . . . knowing so thoroughly as he does the nature of men and the condition of things in this country, he thought his advice might be of use. He begged me to intercede that he might be restored to your majesty's favour and grace.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup>Creighton, Cardinal Wolsey, p. 194.

<sup>12</sup>Pascual De Gayangos, ed., Calendar of Letters, Despatches and State Papers Relating to the Negotiations Between England and Spain, vol. 3 part 2, (London: Kraus-Thomson Organization Limited, 1877; reprint ed., London: Liechtenstein, 1969), pp. 392.

Meanwhile, his lavish life style and the continual building caused his friends to write him notes of warning. In May 1530 Cromwell had advised him to more careful in what he wrote since the king knew he was attempting to undercut Norfolk and greatly resented it.

But Wolsey could not content himself to live a simple and uncomplicated life. His fertile mind was constantly scheming how he might regain his position and better his lot. In fact, he had even begun a correspondence with Catherine of Aragon, hoping she might be a means of his achieving a reconciliation with Charles. Chapyus wrote in May that he had a letter from Wolsey's personal physician, Agostini, in which the physician indicated that,

. . . his master not knowing exactly the state of the queen's affairs, cannot give any special advice upon them; that if he could get fuller information, he would give counsel and directions as though paradise were to be gained through it, for his happiness, honour, and repose depended on that, and that it seemed to him that now was the time to take the stronger measures and call in the assistance of the secular arm.<sup>13</sup>

Chapuy's concurred and suggested to Charles that the best thing would be to remove Anne Boelyn from the court, ". . . in which opinion the cardinal also coincides, saying that when that is accomplished, the management of affairs

---

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 600.

may be left to those who know best how to act, by which he means himself."<sup>14</sup> By August, Wolsey was becoming more impatient and Chapuys writes ". . . the cardinal sends daily to inquire how the queen's cause is progressing, and why it is not more energetically pushed. He dislikes delay above all things that, this business once settled, he has a good chance of returning to power."<sup>15</sup>

Wolsey's activities were being closely monitored by the council, and even the cardinal's friends were becoming alarmed. Heneage, a man who had formerly been in Wolsey's service wrote, "Would to God that your grace would content yourself with that you have, and there is no doubt but that the king will be good and gracious to your grace."<sup>16</sup> A former secretary of the cardinal, Peter Vannes, wrote in July that the public news he wrote of was ". . . not from any desire to turn his mind to these things from his present mode of life, and not be agitated by public events, as this is the only means left him of mollifying the temper of the king and the nobles and preserving their affections."<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 600.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 600.

<sup>16</sup>Letters and Papers, vol 4, p. 6335, quoted in Pollard, Wolsey, p. 280.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 6496, quoted in Pollard, Wolsey, p. 280.

Finally, Cromwell wrote again on August 18, advising caution.

You are much bound to God that you have obtained the good wishes of the people in those parts, and the report of it here has augmented the good opinion of many towards you; yet, notwithstanding, your charitable demeanour is misinterpreted here by your enemies. Some allege you keep too great a house and are continually building. I beseech you, as I have often done before, to consider the times and refrain from all building more than necessity requires . . . I think you happy that you are now at liberty to serve God and banish all vain desires of the world which bring men nothing but trouble and anxiety. Wherefore in my opinion, your grace being as you are, I suppose you would not be as you were, to win a hundred times as much as ever you were possessed of.<sup>18</sup>

By the end of the summer, Wolsey moved from Southwell to another manor house at Scrooby. Again, the cardinal should have heeded the warning that he was still on dangerous ground when Henry dissolved the cardinal's college at Ipswich and seized all its lands and possessions. The king did agree to allow the college at Oxford to remain, ". . . but not so great and of such magnificence as my lord cardinal intended to have, for it is not thought meet for the common weal of our realm."<sup>19</sup> In addition, the name was changed from Cardinal College to Christ Church, as Henry attempted to dissociate Wolsey's name from its foundation.

---

<sup>18</sup> Roger Bigelow Merriman, Life and Letters of Thomas Cromwell, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. vol. i, p. p. 331.

<sup>19</sup> Creighton, Cardinal Wolsey, p. 196.

By September he had collected 1500 pounds sterling and set out from Scrooby to York to take possession of the cathedral. On his way he personally conducted confirmations. According to Cavendish, the cardinal confirmed children at St. Oswald's Abbey from eight in the morning until noon, returning after dinner to continue confirmation until four, ". . . where he was at the last constrained for weariness to sit down in a chair. . . ." <sup>20</sup> The next morning before he departed to Cawood, he confirmed a hundred more children. Finally, reaching Ferrybridge he found two hundred more children waiting to be confirmed, and according to Cavendish, the cardinal " . . . never removed his foot until he had confirmed them all." <sup>21</sup>

In September Wolsey reached Cawood Castle, seven miles from York. It was his intention to remain here a short while until the day of his installation in the cathedral at York. Shortly after his arrival, he learned of a serious disagreement between Sir Richard Tempest and Brian Hastings of such an extent that the inhabitants of the town feared that the situation was bearing close to murder. The cardinal, as had been his custom since coming

---

<sup>20</sup>Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 328.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 328.

north, called the two gentlemen to meet with him in an effort to alleviate their difficulties.

The two antagonists answered his summons, but each of the men brought with him a large number of partisans. It is the cardinal's credit that he insisted on the disbursement of the parties involved and allowed the two disagreeing parties to bring into the castle with them only six servants apiece. To the rest, Wolsey spoke personally, and he urged them to go into town to await their masters. Before they left he elicited promises that they would not engage in boastful bragging nor disturb the peace of the town in any manner. The cardinal then turned his attention to conducting a reconciliation between the two antagonists in this longstanding quarrel. From mid-morning until late in the evening, the cardinal counselled with Tempest and Hastings, finally achieving a reconciliation. In fact, the cardinal's arbitration was so effective that the two went arm and arm into the city, to the great relief and surprise of the townspeople.

Now Wolsey turned his full attention upon the plans for his installation. Dean Higden and other church officials of York came to Cawood to welcome him, and he responded to their greeting by informing them that he had not come just to be with them for a brief time but

". . . to spend my life with you as a very father and mutual brother."<sup>22</sup> Dean Higden informed Wolsey that by ancient statutes of the cathedral, an archbishop could not go beyond the choir door of the minister until he had been enthroned.

Accordingly, the cardinal began to make elaborate plans for his enthronement on November 7; in addition, he summoned a convocation of his northern province to meet at York on the same day. Hall writes that he ". . . sent to all the lordes, abbotts, priors, knights, esquiers, and gentlemen of his diocese to be at his manor of Cawood the vi day of November and so to bring him to York with all manner of pomp and solemnitie."<sup>23</sup> Bishop Tunstall, who had been ordered by the king to report on the cardinal's affairs in the north, warned Wolsey about calling a convocation without a royal mandate, but Wolsey had been the recipient of so many personal messages from the king, and he seemed to bask in the glory of his new-found popularity

---

<sup>22</sup>Richard Fiddes, The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, (London: Lambeth-Hill, 1927), p. 522.

<sup>23</sup>Edward Hall, Hall's Chronicle: Containing the History of England, During the Reign of Henry the Fourth, and the Succeeding Monarchs, To the End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth, (New York: AMS Press, 1965), p. 773.

among the people of the north, that he ignored Tunstall's warnings.

In the meantime, the council was growing increasingly uneasy. There had been rumors of Wolsey's entering the city with eight hundred horsemen and repeated reports of the cardinal's growing popularity in his province. Although York was a long journey from London, it was still the second most important city in the kingdom, and in addition, it was the home of the white rose party. To add more fuel to the fire, the king had lost his temper in the council room one day and lashed out at his councilors saying ". . . the Cardinal was a better man than any of them for managing matters."<sup>24</sup> This outburst, coupled with Wolsey's popularity in the north, greatly alarmed Norfolk, who had been watching the cardinal's actions closely. Therefore, Norfolk decided to act. He informed the king that Wolsey ". . . had written to Rome to be reinstated in his possessions and to France for its favour; and was returning to his ancient pomp, and corrupting the people."<sup>25</sup>

However, the most damaging fact was a report from Rome that reached Henry on October 23, which stated that a

---

<sup>24</sup>Williams Neville. The Cardinal and the Secretary. (New York: The MacMillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1975), p. 136.

<sup>25</sup>Creighton, Cardinal Wolsey, p. 199.

papal brief had been issued forbidding the king to marry until the suit with Catherine had been decided. The rumors abounded that Clement planned to excommunicate Henry and order him to send Anne away from court. This news coincided with the reports that Wolsey was summoning a northern convocation and was to be enthroned on November 7. The king's advisors suggested that this assembly might be used as the political occasion to publish the papal excommunication. To prevent this possibility, Henry gave Walter Walsh, a groom of the king's chamber, a joint commission for himself and the earl of Northumberland to arrest the cardinal for high treason.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DEATH OF THE CARDINAL

On All Hallows day the cardinal sat at dinner with his chaplains, other officials of his household, and some of the head officers of the church. The discussion fell upon the means by which the cardinal would be escorted into the cathedral on the day of his coming enthronement. Cavendish reported that it was suggested to Wolsey that he walk upon cloth from the chapel of St. James, which stood outside the gates of the city of York, into the minster of the cathedral and that the cloth then be distributed to the poor. Although Wolsey's predecessors had been installed into the duties of their office at York in this manner, the cardinal declined, reminding his guests that he had given previous instructions that their preparations for the coming installation was to be of relative simplicity. Then he assured them, "I take God to be my very judge that I presume not to go thither for any triumph or vain glory, but only to fulfil the observance and rules of the church."<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>George Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, ed. by Samuel Weller Singer, (London: Harding and Lepard, 1972), p. 336.

The meal proceeded quietly and with stately decorum until the guests began to take their leave.

At this time, according to Cavendish, an event occurred which caused the cardinal great alarm. As the guests left the tables and came to bow before the cardinal before they took their leave, the cardinal's physician, Dr. Augustine, accidentally brushed against the cardinal's great silver cross, which had been placed at one end of the table, leaning against one of the heavy curtains of the dining chamber. The accident dislodged the cross and caused it to fall, striking the head of Dr. Bonner, Wolsey's personal chaplain. It was a minor incident and caused no great harm, although the doctor's head was cut and the blood ran down his face. Wolsey had not seen the accident, and he asked Cavendish what had transpired. The gentleman usher explained the incident to the cardinal, and when the cardinal heard that the accident had drawn blood, he sat in stunned silence for a few moments. Recovering himself, he whispered, "Malum Omen,"<sup>2</sup> said grace, and retired immediately to his chambers. Cavendish relates that several nights later, after the cardinal's arrest, Wolsey explained his interpretation of the incident. The cardinal viewed the accident as a forshadowing of his own fall and betrayal

---

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 341.

by Augustine while the drawing of blood from his chaplain's head betokened the cardinal's death.

The following Friday night before the scheduled installation on Monday, the cardinal was again seated at dinner when the Earl of Northumberland, Thomas Walsh, and a company of officers arrived at Cawood. Northumberland roughly demanded that the keys to the household be delivered to him in the king's name. He stationed his men at the gates and at the stairway leading to the dining chamber. The cardinal might well have been completely surprised had not one of his servants chanced to look down the great hall stairs and seen the unexpected company, and so informed his master. At first, the cardinal had difficulty believing that the earl would have come into the hall unannounced, and so he sent another servant to confirm this information. When that servant also informed the cardinal that the Earl of Northumberland was definitely in the hall, Wolsey rose from the table and went to meet his visitor on the stairs.

The cardinal greeted his former pupil graciously, removing his cardinal's cap and embracing the earl. He led the earl and his servants into the dining chamber, apologizing that he had now been informed of their arrival and was unprepared to offer them the type of hospitality that he would have preferred to show them as a result of

their station. However, the cardinal went around to each of the earl's servants who had crowded into the dining hall and shook their hands, finally commending the earl that he had kept in his service so many of his father's old servants, and assuring him that these servants ". . . will not only serve and love you, but they will also live and die with you, and be true and faithful servants to you, and glad to see you prosper in honour . . ." <sup>3</sup> These words must surely have caused Northumberland at least some momentary chagrin. Although the earl had been publically reprimanded by the cardinal some years ago, he had enjoyed the benefits and trust of those brought up under the guidance and in the household of the cardinal.

Wolsey then took the earl into his bedchamber to allow him to change from his riding apparel. Within the walls of this private room, the two men walked silently to a large window, where the earl laid a trembling hand upon the cardinal's arm and whispered, "My lord, I arrest you of high treason." <sup>4</sup> For a long moment there was a heavy silence. Northumberland had come unbidden into the cardinal's household. When confronted only by the cardinal's

---

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 347.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 348.

servants, he had forcefully taken control. But here, in the presence of his former master, he was shaken and momentarily speechless. Perhaps the earl had envisioned confronting the cardinal and taken some secret gratification in seeing retribution now fall upon the man who had accused him of disloyalty and sent him away from court to prevent his marriage to the young Anne Boleyn, a woman "well below his station."<sup>5</sup> Perhaps he had anticipated the moment when he could humiliate the once proud cardinal as Northumberland had been humiliated so many years before in the presence of his father and his friends. But he had not taken advantage of this opportunity, and now, in the privacy of the bedchamber, he could only with great difficulty bring himself to say the words.

It was the cardinal who broke the silence by requesting to see the commission by which the earl received his authority. Northumberland refused to show his commission, and the cardinal then declined to obey the arrest. The earl seemed to regain some of his composure, and the two men began debating furiously when there was a commotion at the door. Cavendish, who had been keeping the door for his master, opened it to ascertain

---

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 122.

the cause of the clamor, and immediately Dr. Augustine was pushed roughly into the room by Sir Walter Walsh. Walsh confirmed the authority of Northumberland and himself to arrest the cardinal, but he also refused to show his commission saying that there were certain instructions attached to it that could not be made public. However, Wolsey submitted himself to Walsh, inasmuch as he was one of the king's privy chamber, with the words that for ". . . the worst person there is a sufficient warrant to arrest the greatest peer of this realm, by the king's only commandment, without any commission."<sup>6</sup>

Wolsey would remain at Cawood for two more days, but Augustine was sent immediately to London, bound as a traitor under the belly of a horse. Wolsey's arrest would be laid directly to letters and papers written by the physician which had been intercepted. However, since the cardinal was never brought to trial there appears to be some difference of opinion as to the reliability of the evidence attributed to Augustine. The cardinal himself appeared to be confident the day following his arrest that he had done nothing that could be used to convict him of the charges against him, although he did fear that his

---

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 350.

enemies would try other methods to destroy him. He told Cavendish,

If I may come to my answer, I fear no man alive; for he liveth not upon the earth that shall look upon this face and shall be able to accuse me of any untrugh; and that know my enemies full well, which will be an occasion that I shall not have indifferent justice, but they will rather seek some other sinister way to destroy me.<sup>7</sup>

On Sunday, the day before he was to have been installed, he was commanded to prepare to leave Cawood. He was allowed to have five of his own servants to accompany him--Cavendish, a chaplain, his barber, and two grooms.<sup>8</sup> When he was ready to depart, he asked permission to see the rest of his servants, but he was told they had shut up in the chapel of the castle to prevent any disturbance at his departure. The cardinal was insistent, threatening Northumberland that he would not leave the house until he had said his farewells to his household servants. However, the earl was just as adamant that the servants were not to be given the opportunity to create a disturbance. In the meantime, the cardinal's servants apparently realized that they were not going to be allowed to see their master before

---

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 355.

<sup>8</sup>Charles W. Ferguson, Naked to Mine Enemies: The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1958), p. 486.

he was taken away, and they began to set up such a clamor that the commissioners feared greater difficulties might arise. They finally granted the servants the right to personally say their farewells to the cardinal.

Cavendish reports that each one knelt before the cardinal, weeping and ". . . pitifully lamented their master's fall and trouble."<sup>9</sup> The cardinal shook the hand of each one and spoke comfortably to them all. He commended them for their diligent faithfulness toward him, he assured each man that he was a true and faithful servant of the king and that he was not guilty of the treason of which he had been charged.

The long day had drawn to a close and darkness was settling fast over the country side. The cardinal's mule had been brought into the inner court; here, he mounted and rode to the gates of the castle where others were waiting to escort him on the first step of his final earthly journey. As the castle gates were opened, a crowd of at least three thousand persons were waiting noisily outside. Unlike the London crowd who had come out on the Thames in the hope of seeing the cardinal conveyed to the tower, these citizens came to proclaim their loyalty and devotion

---

<sup>9</sup>Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 357.

to the cardinal who had made himself dearly loved in the northern parts. When they caught sight of the cardinal many of them began to chant loudly, "God save your grace, God save your grace! The foul evil take all them that hath thus taken you from us! We pray God that a very vengeance may light upon them!"<sup>10</sup> Cavendish records that the crowd stayed with him all through the town of Cawood, encouraging him and calling down curses upon his enemies.

When the group had passed through Cawood and were but a short distance from the city, Wolsey asked Cavendish if he could obtain permission to send back to Cawood for something he had left behind. The cardinal explained that what he wanted was lying in a red buckram bag and sealed with his own seal. Permission was granted, and before the cardinal fell asleep that night in the abbey at Pomfret, the messenger had returned with the three penitential hair shirts that the cardinal had requested.

The next day the party continued toward Doncaster. The journey had been planned so that they would arrive at night since the cardinal's captors hoped to create as little stir among the town as possible. However, the people of Doncaster came out by torchlight, crying, "God save your

---

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 358.

grace, my good lord cardinal."<sup>11</sup> They ran before him, crying out to him and calling down curses on his tormentors. The following day they rested at Blackfrais before continuing their journey. The next day as the Earl of Northumberland, Master Walsh, along with the rest of the party accompanying the cardinal, approached Sheffield Park the demonstrations continued. As the party approached the lodge where the cardinal would stay for the next eighteen days, the Earl of Shrewsbury, his wife and her gentlewomen, as well as other gentlemen and yeomen, stood outside the gates to welcome the cardinal as an honored guest. Shrewsbury embraced Wolsey and made every effort to comfort him, assuring the cardinal that the king had written letters with his own hand to affirm his own good wishes and to request that the cardinal be entertained hospitable.

At Sheffield Park the cardinal was once again treated as an honored guest while the Earl of Northumberland returned to Cawood to audit Wolsey's financial state. However, in spite of the efforts made by the Earl of Shrewsbury to entertain the cardinal, Wolsey refused to be diverted from contemplating the fate he was certain lay in

---

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 360.

store for him. The earl visited him at least once a day, sitting with him on a bench near a large window. Shrewsbury tried valiently to relieve the cardinal of his distress, assuring him that letters were received daily from the king ". . . commanding me to entertain you as one that he loveth, and highly favoureth."<sup>12</sup> He tried to assure the cardinal that the trial was not to satisfy the king, but rather ". . . more for the satisfying of some persons, than for any mistrust that he hath in your doings."<sup>13</sup>

But Wolsey could not be consoled. His grief stemmed not from fear of the outcome of the trial, for he appeared confident that he could establish his innocence, but rather from the knowledge that the king could have been persuaded to accuse him of treason. Whatever had befallen the cardinal in the past year and whatever fate held for him in the future could not weigh so heavily on the cardinal as the bitterness he felt at being accused of disloyalty by the one person he loved most in all the world. He pleaded with Shrewsbury to prevail upon the king to require that the cardinal's accusers present their

---

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 363.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 363.

accusations against him in the king's presence for ". . . they shall never be able to prove, by any due probations, that ever I offended the king in will, thought, and deed."<sup>14</sup>

But Wolsey feared that his enemies knew that their accusations were without foundation, and that he would never be allowed to come into the king's presence to so defend himself. And this conviction lay heavily upon the cardinal, for he firmly believed that he would be prevented from defending himself before the king and would die apart from the favour of the one person on earth for whom he cared. He told Shrewsbury one day that, "The loss of goods, the slander of my name, nor yet all my trouble grieveth me nothing so much as the loss of the king's favor."<sup>15</sup>

Two weeks passed at Sheffield Park and in spite of the earl's efforts to entertain the cardinal, Wolsey's depression increased. He consistently refused the numerous light diversions offered by his host, but applied himself continually to his prayers. One evening at dinner, Cavendish noticed his lord's color changed several times,

---

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 365.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 366.

and leaning over the table he whispered, "Sir, me seemeth your grace is not well at ease."<sup>16</sup> The cardinal admitted that he did not feel well, saying that he was ". . . suddenly taken about my stomach, with a thing that lieth overthwart my breast as cold as a whetstone."<sup>17</sup> However, the cardinal assured the gentleman usher that it was but wind, and urged him to have his own dinner and then return to him again.

When Cavendish returned he found Wolsey, still sitting where he had left him, talking with his dinner companions, but still very much ill at ease. The cardinal requested that Cavendish go at once to the apothecary to see if ". . . he had anything that would break wind upward . . ."<sup>18</sup> On his way to accomplish this task Cavendish remembered his oath to Walsh, that he would not allow the cardinal any drug by which he might take his own life, and so the gentleman usher went before the Earl of Shrewsbury for permission to get the powder from the apothecary. Approval was granted, and the powder was taken to the cardinal. It relieved the cardinal immediately,

---

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 367.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 367.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 368.

for as soon as he took the mixture, he ". . . voided exceeding much wind upward."<sup>19</sup> Apparently feeling better, Wolsey left the table and went to attend to his prayers. However, while he was praying, he was overcome with a violent dysentery.

In the meantime, Sir William Kingston, Constable of the Tower of London, arrived at Sheffield Park, accompanied by twenty-four yeomen of the guard. The Earl of Shrewsbury called Cavendish to engage his assistance in breaking this news to the cardinal. Cavendish was to tell his master that the earl had written the king at the cardinal's request, asking that the cardinal be allowed to answer the charges against him in the king's presence. Sir William Kingston had brought the answer and had come to Sheffield Park to escort the cardinal personally to London and into the king's presence. The gentleman usher agreed to do what he could, but he truthfully told the earl that ". . . when I shall name Sir William Kingston, he will mistrust that all is not well."<sup>20</sup>

Cavendish found Wolsey sitting at the upper end of the gallery of the lodge, ". . . upon a trussing chest

---

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 368.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 370.

of his own, with his beads and staff in his hands."<sup>21</sup> Seeing Cavendish approaching, he asked what news he brought. Cavendish answered that he brought him the best possible news. His master was going to be allowed to go before the king, and Sir William Kingston, with an honor guard, had come to escort him to London. The cardinal repeated the name once or twice, clapped his hand on his thigh, and sighed. Cavendish continued to try to cheer his master with the long and carefully contrived tale he had promised Shrewsbury he would tell the cardinal. But Wolsey could not be comforted. Perhaps he remembered the tale told him by a fortune teller many years before, that "he would have his end at Kingston."<sup>22</sup> In an effort to ward off that destiny, the cardinal in the past had carefully avoided passing through the town of Kingston. Today he saw the fulfillment of that prophesy in another manner, for after Cavendish had finished, the cardinal answered, "Well, well, I perceive more than ye can imagine or do know. Experience of old hath taught me."<sup>23</sup> With

---

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 371.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 371.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 373.

those words he was forced to remove himself again to his toilet for by now the dysentery was affecting him grievously.

The Earl of Shrewsbury was waiting for him when he returned to the gallery, and the earl valiantly attempted to treat Kingston's arrival lightly, as a great honor the king was bestowing upon his cardinal by sending ". . . worshipful knight Master Kingston, and with him twenty-four of your old servants, who be now of the guard, to defend you against your unknown enemies, to the intent that ye may safely come unto his majesty."<sup>24</sup> But Wolsey only made the comment that Master Kingston was Constable of the Tower.

When Kingston himself was brought into the cardinal's room, the constable knelt before the cardinal and saluted him on the king's behalf. Wolsey attempted to raise Kingston up, but the constable refused. Finally, Wolsey said,

Master Kingston, I pray you stand up, and leave your kneeling unto a very wretch replete with misery, not worthy to be esteemed, but for a vile object utterly cast away, without desert; and therefore, good Master Kingston, stand up, or I will myself kneel down by you.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 375.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 376.

At that point, Kingston stood up and delivered the message to the cardinal which he had brought from the king. The king assured the cardinal that he considered him to be a true and faithful servant. The king thought that certain accusations against Wolsey were untrue, but to avoid the appearance of partiality, he must require Wolsey to stand trial. Kingston assured the cardinal that he had been sent from the king merely to protect the cardinal from harm, and that as further evidence of the king's favor, twenty-four of Wolsey's old servants had been chosen to serve the cardinal along the way. Furthermore, Kingston continued, there was no reason for haste. The cardinal would be escorted to London at his own pleasure.

Wolsey thanked Kingston for his kind words but said, ". . . Master Kingston, all these comfortable words ye have spoken be but for a purpose to bring me into a fool's paradise: I know what is provided for me."<sup>26</sup> He told Kingston that were he able he would ride with the constable at once, but that his illness had brought him much weakness. "Notwithstanding, I thank you for your

---

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 377.

good will and pains taken about me; and I shall with all speed make me ready to ride with you tomorrow."<sup>27</sup> But the following day the cardinal was much worse, and, in fact, one of the doctors in his attendance diagnosed his disease as terminal and informed Cavendish and Shrewsbury that the cardinal would not live more than four or five days.<sup>28</sup> In spite of his weakness, the cardinal insisted upon riding with Kingston, but the earl intervened and Wolsey remained another day at Sheffield Park.

The following day, Wolsey mounted his mule to begin his journey on a cold, damp November day. An unexpected pleasure occurred in the cardinal's bleak life, however, for the twenty-four men sent to accompany Kingston were indeed the cardinal's friends. When they saw their old master, sick and in disgrace they wept openly. The cardinal took each of them by the hands and greeted each one personally. Along the route to Harwick Hall where they would spend the night, Wolsey reminisced with first one and then another of his old servants and friends. The next day he continued his journey to Nottingham, but his physical condition, agitated by an increased emotional

---

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 377

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 378.

strain, had taken its toll. The party spent the night at Nottingham and continued their journey early Saturday morning toward Leicester. Wolsey had spent a miserable night at Nottingham, and he was by this time in such a feeble condition that Cavendish records he ". . . waxed so sick that he was divers times likely to have fallen from his mule."<sup>29</sup>

And so, by difficult stages the cardinal and his guards approached the Abbey of St. Mary of the Meadows, a short distance north of Leicester. As the party approached the gates of the abbey, they could see through the gloom the flickering light of many torches, for the entire convent had turned out to show reverence to the cardinal. Surrounded by the inhabitants of the convent, the cardinal simply said, "Father Abbot, I am come hither to leave my bones among you,"<sup>30</sup>

But a brief time ago, the cardinal had been one of the most powerful men in England. He had sat with kings and princes. He had received accolades from the great of Europe, and, in fact, he had been recipient of suits petitioning his favor. His wealth, his power, and his

---

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 379

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 380.

prestige had been extravagantly displayed, but now, as he approached the end of his life, he had been shorn of all worldly acquisitions. His vast estates had been confiscated by the king, he had been stripped of his worldly power, and his enemies bayed about the heels of the dying man, and none of his former princely suitors would lift a hand to assist him.

The cardinal was too weak to walk even the distance from the gate, and so he rode to the abbey doors. Those in his attendance led his mule into the great hall and to the foot of the stairs. It was left to Kingston to support and carry him up to the chamber that had been reserved for him. He continued to worsen during Saturday night and throughout the day Sunday.

In the meantime, the Earl of Northumberland, who had remained behind to examine Wolsey's papers at Cawood, had discovered a record noting that the cardinal had in his possession fifteen hundred pounds, but the earl had been unable to find the money. As a good officer of the king, Northumberland had reported the matter of Henry. In an effort to discover the money, a groom of Wolsey's privy chamber, David Vincent, had been taken to London and imprisoned in the Tower.<sup>31</sup> After several days Vincent had

---

<sup>31</sup>A. F. Pollard, Wolsey, (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1929), p. 325.

been released and ordered to go to meet the cardinal, find the money, and bring it to the king. Vincent arrived at the Abbey of St. Mary's on Monday afternoon to inform Kingston of the directive from the king.

Near to eight o'clock Monday morning, Cavendish was at the cardinal's bedside. It was dark in the room, but burning candles cast the shadow of the gentleman usher on the wall. The cardinal had asked the time of day, and when Cavendish replied that it was eight o'clock, the cardinal received the news with incredulity. He repeated the words several times, "Eight of the clock, eight of the clock, nay, nay, it cannot be eight of the clock: for by eight of the clock ye shall lose your master: for my time draweth near that I must depart out of this world."<sup>32</sup> At this point, Doctor Palmes, the cardinal's chaplain, asked Cavendish to inquire of the cardinal if he wished to make his confession. The question angered Wolsey, who rebuked Cavendish severely for his presumption, and only the intervention of Doctor Palmes, who spoke calmly to the cardinal in Latin, calmed him.

---

<sup>32</sup>Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, p. 381.

Late Monday evening, Kingston had approached Cavendish concerning the new directive from the king, and asked the gentleman usher's advise on how best to broach the subject to Wolsey. Cavendish suggested that it would be best to present the matter directly to the cardinal because it seemed that his master had little time left on this earth. Furthermore, Cavendish told Kingston that should Wolsey refuse to divulge the requested information there were others who could satisfy the king as to the whereabouts of the sum of money in question.

Although Kingston made every effort to present the matter to the dying man as gently as possible, this final blow from the king must have sorely grieved him, for he replied,

Ah, good lord! how much doth it grieve me that the king should think in me such deceit, wherein I should deceive him of any one penny that I have. Rather than I would, Master Kingston, embezzle, or deceive him if a mite, I would it were moult, and put in my mouth.<sup>33</sup>

He continued that he had always considered any goods he may have had as belonging to the king, and it had always been his intention that at his death they would revert to the king's treasury. He insisted vehemently, however, that the fifteen hundred pounds the king now sought did not belong

---

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 383.

to Wolsey, or to the king, but rather to certain men from whom the cardinal had borrowed the money that he might be able to pay his servants who had remained faithful to their master during his disgrace.

At Kingston's insistence, the cardinal reeled off the names and the amounts borrowed from each, requesting that the king be told that the money belonged to those gentlemen and should not be considered among the cardinal's estate. Kingston assured Wolsey that he would relay this information to the king, but in line with his duty, Kingston continued to press the cardinal for the location of the sum in question. Finally, the cardinal agreed to relate the information to Kingston a little later, telling him that the money was in the keeping of an honest man who would not hold back any of it from the king.

During Monday night the cardinal's condition worsened, and he lapsed into unconsciousness several times. Finally, a little before four o'clock Tuesday morning, he asked Cavendish to get him some meat that he might by means of some nourishment make himself strong enough to say his final confession. While the cook was preparing some soup to take to the cardinal, Cavendish awoke Doctor Palmes and Master Kingston to attend the bedside of his dying master. By the time Cavendish returned to the bedchamber, the soup

had arrived; however, the cardinal received only a few spoonfuls of the liquid when he remembered it was a fast day, and in spite of the efforts of his chaplain, the dying man refused to accept the rest of the chicken broth. He made his confession for about an hour.

Around seven in the morning, Kingston approached the bedside and attempted to offer the cardinal some comfort and encouragement before he again pressed him for the fifteen hundred pounds. Kingston expressed some concern that the cardinal was making himself worse by exaggerating the effects of his illness as well as the effects of his current difficulties with the king. But Wolsey replied,

Well, well, Master Kingston, I see the matter against me how it is framed; but if I had served God as diligently as I have done the king, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs. Howbeit this is the just reward that I must receive for my worldly diligence and pains that I have had to do him service; only to satisfy his vain pleasure, not regarding my godly duty.<sup>34</sup>

The cardinal then went on, in the final minutes remaining him, to enjoin Kingston that he would remember the cardinal's faithful service to the king. He indicated to Kingston that he had tried to persuade the king from his intention

---

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 388.

to divorce Catherine, saying that, ". . . I have often kneeled before him in his privy chamber on my knees, the space of an hour or two, to persuade him from his will and appetite: but I could never bring to pass to dissuade him therefrom."<sup>35</sup>

He went on to tell Kingston that if he should one day become a privy councillor, he must be careful with any idea he put into the king's head, ". . . for ye shall never pull it out again."<sup>36</sup> He urged at some length that the king should rigorously suppress heresies, particularly Lutheranism, which would otherwise destroy his authority. Then he cried out, "Master Kingston, farewell. I can say no more, but wish all thing to have good success. My time draweth on fast, I may not tarry with you."<sup>37</sup> With his last breath he asked his hearers to remember his words. The abbot came to administer extreme unction, and as the clock struck eight, the butcher's son who had stood with princes passed out of this life and into the next.

The cardinal had played out his life as a grand extravagaza. He had planned that his memorial should be

---

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 389.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 389.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 392.

no less grand than his life style. Long ago he had commissioned Benedetto de Rovezzano of Florence to devise a marvelous sarcophagus of black marble on which would recline a bronze statue of the cardinal himself. Four bronze pillars would support the structure and kneeling angels would be in attendance. But the monument had not been completed, and the cardinal had not planned to die in disgrace. Certainly the cardinal had planned for the entire realm to be in mourning at his death, and for the city of London to attend the spectacle of his entombment. But there were few to mourn his departure, and though his corpse was dressed in his vestments with his mitre and cross, it was a simple wooden coffin that bore his body to the Lady Chapel where it lay through the night. At four in the morning on Wednesday, a requiem mass was sung, and the earth closed over the cardinal's body at Leicester Abbey.

Within a few years after the death of Cardinal Wolsey, virtually all monasteries in England had been destroyed by the king. Wolsey's last resting place was so completely destroyed that historians of later centuries, wishing to mark the cardinal's grave with a simple slab, could only guess at the exact location where his bones might lay. And thus, Thomas Cardinal Wolsey fell from pinnacles of worldly glory to the common end of all men.

The words of his loyal and devoted gentleman usher, George Cavendish, provide a suitable commentary on his life:

Here is the end and fall of pride and arrogance of such men, exalted by fortune to honour and high dignities; for I assure you, in his time of authority and glory, he was the haughtiest man in all his proceedings that then lived, having more respect to the worldly honour of his person that he had to his spiritual profession; wherein should be all meekness, humility and charity.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 394.

## CHAPTER IX

### CONCLUSION

The cardinal had been raised to his high position in both the church and state as a result of his service to England's king, and his driving ambition had always been to continue in that service. In the pursuit of this goal his position had brought him power, influence, prestige, honor, and wealth. Wolsey had revelled in the display of the fruits of his high offices. He had enjoyed the power at his disposal, and he was not afraid to use it to achieve his goals.

It was of no consequence to the cardinal who among the nobles was offended, and it was unimportant to him that he was generally despised among the commons. He had interfered with the privileges and patronage of the bishops, infringed upon the jurisdiction of the secular courts, suppressed the power of the nobles, and levied unpopular taxes upon the English people while he plunged into an unpopular foreign policy. The fact that he was equally despised by the nobility, the churchmen, and the commons as a tyrant and an upstart was of no concern to the cardinal as long as he retained the confidence of Henry and the power to represent the papacy in England.

Between 1527 and 1530, however, the cardinal became emmeshed in a series of circumstances which worked together to bring about his final, complete downfall. First, the necessity for the divorce from Catherine became firmly fixed in Henry's mind as a righteous necessity. It was not just a matter of securing the uncontested succession to the throne of England, nor his lust for Anne Boleyn, that required an annulment from Catherine. It was the king's conscience. God was displeased with the defender of the faith and nothing would suffice but that restitution be made. He became so adamant in the justice of his cause that he would allow no counter arguments and no opposition. Not only was his cause just, but to put aside Catherine was his duty before God. From this point on, Wolsey's services were judged on the basis of his success in achieving the divorce.

Secondly, in 1527, when the cardinal appeared at the pinnacle of his power, he began to play a defensive game rather than maintaining his accustomed offensive posture. In the past the cardinal had acted decisively. He had remained sure of himself and his abilities. He acted with the aggression of one who is certain of his powers, his abilities, and his worth. He was not afraid to use whatever resources the situation demanded. Even

failure on one front did not daunt Wolsey. He would attack from a different level. Did the king need money to fight an unpopular war? Wolsey boldly set out to obtain the revenue. Was he warned about imposing additional tax on the realm? The fact that the king's service required such monies was sufficient grounds for Wolsey to collect the funds. Would the papacy refuse to grant the cardinal the powers deemed necessary to support the authority of the king's chief minister? Then Wolsey would see to it that the pope's wishes in England were frustrated until such powers were granted.

Whatever methods were called for, the cardinal unwaveringly met the demands. And such must it ever be with one who wields the power and authority of Wolsey's position and who is subject to virtually no restraints but those of the source from which that power stems. Such a one must be able to act quickly and decisively in the aggressive pursuit of his policies. Those who rule without the consent of the governed must allow no element of weakness, no brief moment of indecision to break through the portals.

But the cardinal hesitated. He appeared to be afraid to make a decision. In the past the lord chancellor had approached his quarry boldly and fearlessly, but now he

played a defensive game. He attempted to maintain a holding pattern when the times called for continued aggression and fearless actions. Perhaps it was the caution of the slowly advancing years, or perhaps, he knew Henry's "conscience" better than most, and he realized the stakes for which he was now playing. Whatever the reason, the cardinal began to lose the slight edge which had always kept his enemies at bay in the past. In May, 1527 when he had presided over a court with Warham to deal with Henry's divorce secretly, he had backed away from a decision and turned to Rome for further powers. In 1528, during negotiations with Rome, the pope had tried unsuccessfully to get Wolsey to make a decision using his legatine powers without involving the papacy, but the cardinal hesitated. When Campeggio came to England, for the first time, the cardinal took a subordinate role in the other legate, and though his position was in grave danger when the court finally convened at Blackfriars and could only be secured by a bold and favorable verdict for the king, Wolsey stood by while Campeggio suspended the proceedings without reaching a verdict, although the cardinal had authority from the pope to act without Campeggio.

The failure of the court was a humiliating public defeat for a king who was not accustomed to failure. The

fact that the case had been revoked to Rome was a further humiliation, and to a man of Henry's virility this in itself was a dangerous thing. The king was not accustomed to accepting blame for anything, and as Catherine had so accurately predicted during the trial at Blackfriars, the cardinal would be the logical person on whom the blame could be placed. And now, as his enemies grew even bolder, the cardinal seemed to have lost his ability to calculate his opponents' moves and to maneuver accordingly.

Finally, after his fall, Wolsey still dreamed of restoration to power, and he was not content to retire gracefully as Fox and Warham had. His ties to this world were too strong and his insatiable appetite for honor and deference to his person proved to be his final undoing. In spite of the pleas of his friends and advisors, the cardinal continued to build and to entertain lavishly. He was not abashed by any contradiction between his private efforts to regain power and his avowed devotion to Henry. He continued his Machiavellian policies by making appeals to Catherine, to Francis, to the emperor, and to the pope. He was oblivious to the contradiction between his efforts to be restored to power by foreign intervention, and his proclaimed loyalty to Henry. He could not forget the authority he had wielded for the king and rather than

retire gracefully, he clung to power and could not refrain from gazing longingly at that which he had lost after he no longer had the qualities necessary to maintain it.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Primary Sources

#### Official State Papers

- Great Britain. Public Record Office. Calendar of Letters Despatches, and State Papers, Relating to the Negotiations Between England and Spain, Preserved in the Archives at Semancas. Edited by G. A. Bergenroth, Pascual de Gayangos and M. A. S. Hume. 13 vols. London: Nendeln, Liechtenstein, 1862. Kraus Reprint, 1969.
- Great Britain. Public Record Office. Letters and Papers, Foreign & Domestic of the Reign of Henry VIII. Edited by John S. Brewer and James Gairdner. 18 vols. Vaduz, Liechtenstein, 1862. Kraus Reprint, 1965.
- Ellis, Sir Henry, ed. Original Letters Illustrative of English History. 11 vols. 1824-1846. Reprint ed., London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1969.
- Galt, John, ed. Letters Between Cardinal Wolsey, King Henry VIII, Emperor Charles V, Queen Kathrine and Others. Appendix II in The Life of Cardinal Wolsey. 3rd ed. London: David Bogue, 1846.
- Singer, Samuel Weller, ed. Original Letters Illustrative of Passages in the Life of Wolsey. Appendix in The Life of Cardinal Wolsey by George Cavendish. 2nd ed. London: printed by Thomas Davison for Harding & Lepard, 1827.
- Hughes, Paul L. and Larken, James F., ed. Tudor Royal Proclamations. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1964.

#### Chronicles

- Hall, Edward. Hall's Chronicle: Containing the History of England, During the Reign of Henry the Fourth,

and the Succeeding Monarchs, To the End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth. London: 1548; reprint ed. New York: AMS Press, 1965.

Wroithesley, Charles. A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors, 1485-1559. 2 vols. Edited by William Douglas Hamilton. Westminster: J. B. Nichols and Sons, 1875.

Cavendish, George. The Life of Cardinal Wolsey. Edited by Samuel Weller Singer. 2nd ed. London: printed by Thomas Davison for Harding and Lepard, Pall Mall East, 1827.

### Secondary Sources

#### Biographies

Belloc, Hilaire. Wolsey. Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippencott Co., 1930.

Ferguson, Charles W. Naked To Mine Enemies. The Life of Cardinal Wolsey. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1958.

Fiddes, Richard. The Life of Cardinal Wolsey. London: Lambeth Hill, 1927.

Friedman, Paul. Anne Boleyn, A Chapter in English History, 1527-1536. 2 vols. London: MacMillan and Co., 1884.

Galt, John. Life of Cardinal Wolsey. 3rd. ed. London: David Gogue, 1846.

Luke, Mary M. Catherine The Queen. New York: Coward-McCann Inc., 1967.

Morley, John, gen. ed., Twelve English Statesmen. 12 vols. London: Macmillan and Co., 1888. Vol 5. Cardinal Wolsey by Mandell Creighton, reprint ed., London: Macmillan and Co., 1921.

- Neville, Williams. The Cardinal and the Secretary. Thomas Wolsey and Thomas Cromwell. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1975.
- Paul, John E. Catherine of Aragon and Her Friends. New York: Fordham University Press, 1966.
- Pollard, A. F. Henry VIII. London: Messrs. Goupil & Co., 1902; reprint ed., London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1925.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Wolsey. London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1929.
- Scarisbrick, J. J. Henry VIII. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968.
- Taunton, Ethelred L. Thomas Wolsey: Legate and Reformer. London: Ballantyn Hanson & Co., 1902.

#### General Histories

- Bright, J. Franck. A History of England 1485-1688. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1927.
- Hunt, William and Poole, Reginald L., gen. ed., The Political History of England. 12 vols. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1924. Vol. 5 The History of England from the Accession of Henry VII to the Death of Henry VIII by H. A. L. Fisher.

#### Monographs and Special Studies

- Albert, Marvin H. The Divorce. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965.
- Brewer, J. S. The Reign of Henry VIII from His Accession to the Death of Wolsey. 2 vols. Edited by James Gairdner. London: 1884; reprint ed., New York: AMS Press, 1968.
- Cutts, Edward L. Parish Priests and Their People in the Middle Ages in England. London: J. B. Young and Co., 1898.

- DuBoys, Alterb. Catherine of Aragon and the Sources of the English Reformation. Translated by C. M. Yonge. 2 vols. London: Hurst and Blackett, 1881.
- Elton, G. R. England Under the Tudors. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1955; reprint ed., New York: Barnes and Noble Inc., 1965.
- Froude, James Anthony. The Divorce of Catherine of Aragon: The Story as Told by the Imperial Ambassadors Resident at the Court of Henry VIII. 2nd ed., London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1891.
- Guy, John Alexander. The Cardinal's Court: The Impact of Thomas Wolsey in Star Chamber. New Jersey: Rowman & Littlefield, 1977.
- Hughes, Philip. The Reformation in England. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1951.
- Hutton, William Holden. Hutton's Hampton Court. London: Bellatyne, Hanson and Company, 1897.
- Jessee, John Heneage. London: Its Celebrated Characters and Remarkable Places. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1903.
- Lacey, Robert. The Life and Times of Henry VIII. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974.
- MacNamara, Francis, ed. Miscellaneous Writings of Henry the Eight, King of England, France and Ireland. London: The Golden Cockerel Press, 1924.
- Merriman, Roger Bigelow. Life and Letters of Thomas Cromwell. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902.
- Muller, James Arthur. Stephen Gardiner and the Tudor Reaction. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1926.
- Salzman, L. F. England in Tudor Times. An Account of Its Social Life and Industries. London: B. T. Batsford, 1926.
- Zeeveld, W. Gordon. Foundations of Tudor Policy. Cambridge, Massachusettes: Harvard University Press, 1948.

Journals

Chambers, D. S. "Cardinal Wolsey and the Papal Tiara,"  
Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research  
28 (1965) : 20-27.

Gairdner, James. "New Lights on the Divorce of Henry VIII."  
English Historical Review 11 (January, 1897) : 673-  
702.

Thesis

Leugoud, Bill. "The Foreign Policy of the Emperor Charles V  
Towards England, 1533-1539." Masters Thesis,  
Southern Methodist University, 1971.