



When he was somewhere between 30 and 40 years old, Eustace Chapuys became the Holy Roman Emperor's ambassador to the Tudor Court of King Henry VIII. Arriving in 1529, he replaced Don Inigo de Mendoza.

Unlike de Mendoza—who was known to be fiery tempered—Chapuys was a legal scholar and humanist-enthusiast who also had strong opinions about things.

Knowing that Charles V, the Emperor, was the nephew of Catherine of Aragon, Chapuys was a reporter of court events to Charles. Scholars think that he was not always accurate, however, in his observations.

Among other things, Chapuys had a bit of bias. While greatly favoring Queen Catherine, he expressed utter disdain regarding Anne Boleyn.

A prolific writer, Chapuys sent lots of letters to Charles V. Many of those letters survive. They help to paint a picture of Tudor goings-on, not just of Henry VIII and his soon-to-be Queen Consort, Anne Boleyn, but also of other people and events.

Let's examine excerpts from a few of Chapuys' letters (translated into English). Before we look at his words, though, we need to consider how Chapuys sometimes referred to Anne Boleyn (with terms like "the Concubine" or "The Lady"). He used even worse descriptions when describing Princess Elizabeth, after she was born.

On the 10th of April, 1533—the year Henry VIII married Anne—Chapuys encourages the Emperor to send troops to Britain:

Englishmen, high and low, desire your majesty to send an army to destroy the venomous influence of the Lady and her adherents, and reform the realm ...When this accursed Anne has her foot in the stirrup, she will do the Queen [Catherine] and the Princess [Mary] all the harm she can. She boasts that she will have the Princess in her own train; one day, perhaps, she will poison her, or will marry her to some varlet [a male attendant or servant], while the realm itself will be made over to heresy.

When Henry decided to send Catherine away from the Tudor court, Chapuys let the Emperor know about his Aunt's predicament. On the 30th of July, 1533, he describes the events:

All the neighborhood assembled to see her [Catherine] and pay her honor; and it is incredible what affection has been shown to her along the whole route. Notwithstanding that it has been forbidden on pain of death to call her Queen, they shouted it out at the top of their voices, wishing her joy, repose, and prosperity, and confusion to her enemies. They begged her with hot tears to set them to work and employ them in her service, as they were ready to die for the love of her.

On the same date, Chapuys effectively disrespects Henry VIII by making it seem as though he carries-out whatever his new Queen orders:

It is she who now rules over, and governs the nation; the King dares not contradict her.

When Anne's circumstances changed, at the court, Chapuys did not express any sadness for the short-lived Queen Consort.

Chapuys remained in England, as the Emperor's ambassador to the Tudor court, until 1545.

The image, seen at the top of this page, is believed to be a contemporary portrait of Chapuys at [Annecy, France](#) (where he was born).

Credits:

Image depicting Eustace Chapuys, online via Wikimedia Commons.

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