

By CHARLOTTE and DENIS PLIMMER

One year ago, the princess and the commoner joined their lives "for better or worse"—and already

MARGARET AND TONY—

PRINCESS MARGARET and Tony Armstrong Jones were coming out of a London theater the other night. Flash bulbs popped. The erstwhile photographer who married into the British royal family turned his face aside, grasped his wife's arm, and hurried her into their waiting Rolls-Royce.

As the door slammed, the man who once pursued the great and glamorous with his own camera was heard to mutter angrily to the Princess, "Why do they keep following us around?"

Tony Armstrong Jones, of all people, is rapidly becoming the most camera-shy person in Britain. The man people thought might bring a new informality to Court circles has assumed an aloofness that would make even Garbo seem chatty.

A year ago, on the day the commoner marched down the aisle at Westminster Abbey beside his blue-blooded bride, a friend said to us, "It's not going to be easy to look up to Mr. Jones, is it?"

Everywhere—in pubs, in clubs, over counters in shops, and over the teacups in fashionable Belgravia drawing rooms—questions were being asked.

Would young Armstrong Jones (please, Tony asks, don't hyphenate that name) flout Palace traditions? Would he introduce an unsuitable circle of friends? Would he put Princess Margaret into tight Capri pants? Would he somehow embarrass the Throne?

But as the months passed, viewers-with-alarm began to see that Tony Armstrong Jones, far from flinging open the windows, has closed them tighter than even the Queen herself would dream of doing.

More is known about the intimate side of Queen Elizabeth's private life—and known with approval through normal Court sources—than is known of Tony's working life.

In February, after months of indecision during which there were rumors that Jones would become everything from a stockbroker to a theatrical producer (he sought no royal advice, received none), he finally took an unpaid job with Britain's Council of Industrial Design, a semipublic body dedicated to bringing greater beauty to everyday things.

The announcement was a prim, buttoned-up affair: Mr. Jones would advise on visual aids and exhibitions, and would be associated with the Council's educational program.

Since then, on Mr. Jones' own strict command, an iron curtain has clamped down. He slips in and out of a side entrance to the Council's offices and

greeted all requests for information as though they were personal affronts.

All this hush-hush is not in any sense the result of a ruling by the Queen. The Court itself is distressed about his astonishing unapproachability.

An intimate in Princess Margaret's household said to us, "Of course, we want him to talk openly about his work. After all, what is there to hide? But I'd hate to tell you the language he uses when people try to convince him to be more forthright!"

Life in a "Glass House"

Yet, before his marriage, Tony Armstrong Jones was known as a happy extrovert. He used to call up his friends at midnight, invite them around to see some new photo prints he'd just made or to try a recipe he'd dreamed up. His new-found reticence must be torture.

Unlike his royal in-laws, who have had years of training and who, as Princess Margaret herself once put it, are "used to being stared at as though we were animals in a zoo," Tony still hasn't learned to accept constant ogling.

Another problem is that Tony is continuously being analyzed as though he were royal—but criticized because he is not.

Their home clearly reflects the built-in contradiction of a marriage which, even on the most informal occasions, sees the wife always introduced as "Her Royal Highness the Princess Margaret" and her husband as plain "Mr. Jones."

Although they live in a genuinely royal building, Kensington Palace, they occupy only a tiny portion of a wing remote from the state apartments.

Its drawing room is so tiny that the Princess' beloved piano half fills it. Its dining room can accommodate only 10 people, which debars entertaining on anything like a royal scale.

The Princess—and this is something royal ladies never do—must share a bathroom with Tony.

There is no private garden, and passers-by in the public park, Kensington Gardens, can watch the comings and goings at the front door and look up at the Princess' second-floor bedroom windows—so the curtains are almost always drawn.

By contrast, the wing of the Palace occupied by Margaret's aunt, the elegant Duchess of Kent, consists of large, well-proportioned rooms, comfortably set back behind a broad private lawn.

This embarrassing situation will be remedied

sometime next year, however, when Tony and Margaret move to an apartment comparable to the Duchess'. The new quarters, No. 1-A, have 20 large rooms and are being renovated at a cost of \$196,000. They were last occupied in 1939 by the late Princess Louise.

However, the Kent family still has a big advantage that the Jones family lacks: its dignified country estate, Coppins, in Buckinghamshire. Country weekends are a staple of upper-class British life. Many of the Joneses' friends enjoy ancestral castles or manor houses.

But Margaret simply can't afford that sort of thing. The result is that, though the Princess and Tony are eager weekenders, they are in the humiliating position of having no place of their own in which to return hospitality.

Most of what they do have is clearly labeled "Hers," not "His." The house was loaned to the Princess by her sister, the Queen. It is run on Margaret's money, largely furnished with furniture she had previously owned, and is staffed through the office of her sister's Lord Chamberlain.

The now-famous "perfect butler," Cronin, whose willingness to trade "intimate revelations" for hard cash shocked even the most cynical of Britons, came to the Lord Chamberlain with the warm recommendation of an unimpeachable previous employer, John Hay "Jock" Whitney, then U.S. ambassador to the Court of St. James. Wrote Whitney: "He is industrious, with a fine and pleasant personality... He is loyal..."

Embarrassment for Breakfast

The "loyal" major-domo showed his "industry" by writing a series of six articles for one of Britain's largest-circulation Sunday papers. On leaving the Princess' employ, he had refused to sign the usual form in which royal servants promise not to reveal any intimacies about their former employers. He reportedly said, "I don't need the Official Secrets Act to remind me of my professional bond."

In the series, Cronin, who later said, "I just wanted to slap down Mr. Armstrong Jones," recorded such items as the fact that Princess Margaret's umbrella once leaked rain all over the Queen, that Jones liked to eat in his shirt sleeves, and that the young groom, inexperienced in Palace ways, took personal charge of the keys to the wine cellar and the family silver.

they've experienced plenty of both

TONY—

For six Sundays, Tony and Princess Margaret faced the butler's printed "revelations" over the breakfast table and fumed helplessly.

On the other hand, Tony gets along well with his wife's family (after all, they chose him as their photographer and liked him long before Margaret loved him), has gratefully allowed Prince Philip to teach him to shoot, and is making a genuine, if not conspicuously successful, attempt to share the family's passion for horseflesh.

Tony's real problem is his own ambiguous social position. The Queen has no intention of straightening this out (at least not in the foreseeable future) by creating a peerage for him.

Even so, he does come in for a certain amount of deference. At banquets where the Princess is the guest of honor, he sits beside the hostess, Margaret beside the host. But he has, naturally, no position whatsoever in that whalebone girdle of protocol.

Tony Must Earn Acceptance

Since her marriage, the Princess has taken on no really big jobs, such as opening a Commonwealth parliament, in which she acts directly for the Queen. If and when she does, the question will be whether Jones, too, is to be accorded royal honors. Margaret wants Tony given the full treatment, and until it is certain that he's going to get it, it is believed she will continue her unofficial boycott.

Tony, of course, has limitless opportunities to win esteem in his own right in the eyes of the nation and the British Commonwealth. Though Prince Philip, through the accident of having been born royal, had a head start on his young brother-in-law long before he even married into the royal family, he still had to work his passage. And work he did—for science, industry, education, and youth—inventing his own jobs as he went along. Tony, too, will have to prove himself a self-starter.

Despite the 12 months that Margaret and Tony have spent dodging the brickbats that are always thrown at the brightest-lighted windows, one salient fact emerges: they are in love.

That was evident to one of Margaret's most intimate staff members, who recently said:

"I used to be terrified to telephone her. I never knew what mood she'd be in. It was torture to ask her a question. But it's a different story now. She's cheerful and buoyant. She's a changed woman if ever I saw one!"



Margaret and Tony have endured snobs, criticism, and unfair gossip. But through it all, friends testify, they are very much in love.

Are They Living Happily Ever After?