

■ Royalty decides to mix blood with plebeians.

A DUTCH PRINCESS MARRIES A COMMONER

Princess Margriet of Holland, 23, married a Dutch commoner with the blessings of her countrymen as well as the royal family on January 10, 1967.

The widespread popular approval of her choice of 28-year-old Pieter van Vollehoven was in sharp contrast to the turbulence surrounding the recent weddings of two of her sisters.

Princess Irene aroused criticism in 1964 by her conversion to Roman Catholicism and her marriage to French-born Prince Carlos de 'Borbon-Parma, Carlist pretender to the Spanish throne.

Both decisions angered Holland's Protestant majority. Even the country's Roman Catholics — 40 per cent of the population — while expressing approval of her conversion, did not approve her choice of a husband.

Many Dutchmen — including government officials —

condemned the Carlists as fascists. There were demands that Irene relinquish her rights to the throne if she did marry the prince.

Irene did surrender her claim even though her parents, Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard, gave last-minute approval of the match, but not a single member of the royal family attended the wedding ceremony.

Opposition to Irene's marriage was minor compared to the enraged popular outcry when Crown Princess Beatrix announced her intention to marry German diplomat Claus von Amsberg.

Holland still feels the sting of World War II and the destruction wrought by the Nazi forces as they swept across the tiny country to the sea.

German tourists to this day meet at best stiffly formal, correct welcome in Dutch cities. Feeling against Germany still runs remarkably high among an older

generation of Dutchmen slow to forget.

When newsmen digging into Amsberg's past revealed that he had been a member of the Hitler youth while at military academy — membership was compulsory — and had served in a wartime tank unit whose emblem bore a striking resemblance to that of the dreaded SS, seething public enmity erupted in violent censure of Beatrix for her seeming "incontinence."

Overlooked in the resultant furor were Amsberg's clearance in 1946 by an allied de-Nazification court, the fact he had never seen any combat, and his distinguished record in the foreign service of the West German republic.

No factual proof was ever found linking Amsberg to any Nazi activity. But for the great part of the populace he was a former German soldier and Hitler youth member. That was enough.

Beatrix refused to back down. The debates and angry charge-and-counter-charge raged on right up to the actual day of the wedding, March 10, 1965.

Even then the wedding cortege ran a gauntlet of smoke bombs thrown by "Provos," Holland's self-styled young rebels with — or without — a cause.

By contrast, young Van Vollehoven seems destined to win a lasting place in the hearts of his countrymen. Born April 30, 1939, he comes of a prosperous Dutch business family.

Before turning to the study of law at Leyden university, the slender, bespectacled youth won nationwide acclaim as pianist-leader of a highly successful Dixieland jazz band. The group won a prize at a Dutch jazz competition in 1959.

His extra-curricular accomplishments range from jazz to sports of all descriptions, including judo, in which he holds the coveted green belt. His favorite pastime is auto racing.

He was victor in the 1964 Sheveningen-Luxembourg rally in the 1000-cubic-centimeter class, driving a Volkswagen.

As president of the National Dutch Students' Sports organization he represented Holland at the 1963 Brazil "Universiade" and the 1964

winter games in Czechoslovakia.

He was employed as a lawyer by the council of state in February of last year. Less than two months later he was drafted into the airforce,

eventually being assigned to a legal branch with the rank of ensign.

Margriet's marriage leaves only Princess Christina, 19, unwed. — *U. P. I.*

THE BIBLE AS HISTORY

The 66 books which comprise the Holy Scripture represent the finest labors of the greatest minds of antiquity. To this has been added the work of literally thousands of translators, editors and compilers. The poetic books — for instance, the *Song of Solomon* and portions of the *Psalms* — are more accurately esteemed as magnificent fragments of the poetry of ancient peoples than as religious doctrine. Much of the great sagas of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, of Moses, of Samuel, Saul, David and Solomon was first revered mainly as history — the story of the beginnings of the Israelite nation.

With the birth of Christianity the Bible, the racial library of the Jews, became no longer theirs alone. It became the spiritual wealth of the Greeks, the Romans, the Egyptians and eventually of the entire civilization of the West.

The Old Testament was 2000 and more years in the making. The New Testament represents the work of a mere hundred years. The Gospels — the recollections and biographies of Christ — were written within the century of His lifetime. And these magnificent accounts of the Master, as well as the histories of the Apostles and the letters of instruction to the churches, were at first not considered a part of the Bible. — *A. N. Williams.*