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Tobin Armstrong, the Ambassador's husband, has his own office at the Embassy

Mrs. Ambassador's Mr. at Ease in Role

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LONDON, May 28—The windows look out on busy Grosvenor Square. Inside the spare, uncluttered office, one question hangs in the air: Can an active, wealthy cattle rancher find happiness as the husband of the American Ambassador in London?

The answer seems to be yes.

"I've had no difficulty at all in accepting the role," said Tobin Armstrong, a lanky Texan with a startling resemblance to Gary Cooper. "You make up your mind to do a thing like this before you start. I would expect my wife to help me in every situation without reservations, and I would do the same for her. I'm not worrying about my own status."

Since the Armstrongs arrived in London three months ago, Ambassador Anne Armstrong has become one of America's most valuable exports to Britain. A busy, highly visible envoy, she is much in demand. In contrast to many of today's Foreign Service wives, who are re-examining their traditional helpmate role, Tobin Armstrong has tried to assist her wherever possible.

He has traveled with her on official visits to Manchester and Wales. He has repre-

sented her at exhibitions and official dinner parties she was unable to attend. He has accompanied her to the many dinners at the Admiralty, and the lunch with the Lord and Lady Mayor of Westminster that form an inevitable part of the duties and pleasures of the American Ambassador.

Mr. Armstrong seems totally at ease with his unusual situation. "Once it was evident my responsibilities at home could be covered, I had no reluctance about coming," he said. "We made it clear from the start that unless I could find a way to come, she wouldn't accept the post."

Family Is Used to Shifts

Mr. Armstrong's responsibilities "at home" center on a 55,000-acre family ranch in Kennedy County on the Texas Gulf Coast. During the Armstrongs' stay in London, their 24-year-old son, Barclay, a graduate of Washington and Lee, is supervising the ranch. "As long as he's sitting on the nest, I feel comfortable," said Mr. Armstrong.

Rearranging their life style to Mrs. Armstrong's talents and professional responsibilities is not new to the family. In 1971 when she became co-chairman of the Republican National Committee, and la-

ter when she became a Presidential counselor in the Nixon Administration, she had to live in Washington.

"We just saw each other on weekends then," said Mr. Armstrong. "This time I'd had enough of that. I wasn't about to commute to London. When there are justifications, you make adjustments."

What of the future, and the considerable possibility that Mrs. Armstrong will someday be urged to run for elective office?

"We'll view each situation in its own light," Mr. Armstrong said. "We'll analyze the advantages and the disadvantages, and make our judgment on future issues the same way we always have in the past—together."