

William and Catherine were making their first visit to Wales since becoming the Prince and Princess of Wales-vaunted titles bestowed by King Charles III upon Queen Elizabeth's death—and the people of Swansea, on the Welsh coast,

made sure the Sept. 27 occasion felt more like a homecoming than a royal engagement. At St. Thomas Church, "God Save the King" rang from the belfry as locals took selfies with the future King (a protocol breach that royals normally don't agree to). "It's brilliant they're here," gushed Pauline Bushrod, 80, of the couple, who, as newlyweds, made their home in Wales. "Our future King and Queen. It could not be better that it's them."

William and Catherine's visit to a place of personal meaning came just one day after the royal mourning period for Elizabeth ended and seemed a promising start to a modern royal era. But it was followed the next week by a reminder that the couple's new roles bring an even hotter spotlight. As William and Cather-

ine, both 40, shook hands with a mostly friendly crowd in Northern Ireland on Oct. 6, Catherine made close contact with anti-imperialist opposition when one woman took the princess's hand and told her bluntly, "Nice to meet you, but it would be better if it was in your own country." Her smile unflinching, Catherine moved on as the woman called out, "Ireland belongs to the Irish!"

It's a time of transition and testing as the Prince and Princess of Wales pivot from the personal grieving and global pomp over the Sept. 8 death of William's grandmother, whom Kate affectionately called Grannie, and step into new landscapes at work and at home. With their three children-George, 9, Charlotte, 7, and Louis, 4—the family are freshly





Palace to Adelaide Cottage, a modest (by royal standards) four-bedroom home in Windsor's Home Park, the private 5,000 acres surrounding Windsor Castle. The children are settling into a new school, Lambrook, where they began classes on the day the Queen died. A source close to the family acknowledges it has been a stressful time, especially for Catherine, the first Princess of Wales since William's mother, Diana, held the title. "Things were very tense that week: it was not exactly the settling-in period they had hoped for," says the source. But the couple, following the lead of William's father and Queen Camilla, are intent on showcasing stability and unity. As if to prove the point, Buckingham Palace released a portrait on Oct. 1 of the foursome. "That was a very important image of what the modern monarchy and reign of King Charles will look like," says Katie Nicholl, author of The New Royals. "They represent the future House of Windsor."

relocated from London's Kensington

While Catherine's popularity soared in the transition, she now faces inevitable comparisons with Diana, the bestloved royal in modern history. Like the woman whose iconic sapphire engagement ring she wears every day, the new Princess of Wales has undertaken ambitious projects throughout the United Kingdom on child development, mental health and family well-being. As for Diana's legacy, palace sources say that Catherine "appreciates the history associated with this role but will understandably want to look to the future as she creates her own path." Adds Jamie Lowther-Pinkerton, William's former private secretary: "She will do so with humility and by acknowledging

Their SWEET HISTORY in WALES

The couple made their first family home in Anglesey in 2011



First Royal Duty In February 2011—two months before they wed-Kate "did the fun bit," as William said, as she christened a new lifeboat in Anglesev.



Seaside Treats At Joe's Ice Cream Parlour in the South Wales resort of Mumbles in February 2020, William declared himself a "chocolate man."



Holiday Memories On a Royal Train tour of the U.K. during the pandemic in December 2020, they toasted marshmallows with students in Cardiff.

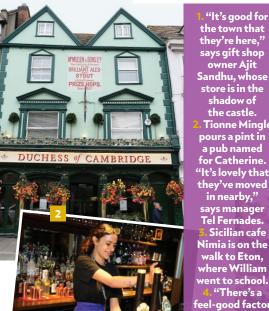
Surprise Family Outing Echoing William's first official trip to Wales at age 8, the couple brought Prince George and Princess Charlotte to Cardiff in June.

and what it needs' -DIANA AWARD CEO TESSY OJO ON WILLIAM AND KATE

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CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: CHRIS JACKSON/GETTY IMAGES(2); HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES; **People** October 24, 2022 43





"It's good for the town that they're here," It's lovely that Sicilian cafe





the past but in her own way."

For William, the new title and standing come with the vast \$1.3 billion Duchy of Cornwall estate he has inherited along with the \$25 million in income that the estate generates through property rents and farming. (The estate's earnings will fund William and Catherine's working life as royals.) Those close to the new Prince of Wales say he's ready for the bigger job. "This isn't 'off the edge of a cliff' stuff," says Lowther-Pinkerton. "He's been working closely with his father in support of her late Majesty for

a while ... and doing well."

William has proved a calming influence for the new King. When Charles, in his televised accession ceremony after the Queen's death, showed an impatient side by pushing aside a pen tray and glaring at an aide, he continued to vent his irritation behind the scenes. It was William who helped soothe his father, "defusing the situation," says a royal insider. As plans begin to form for Charles's

spring coronation, which is expected to be scaled down in comparison with Queen Elizabeth's 1953 ceremony, a source who knows both father and son says they are tighter than ever: "Talking about the future of the country and their future roles has strengthened their bond." What's more, the tensions over Prince Harry and Meghan,



Duchess of Sussex, leaving royal life to raise their family in California "brought [William and Charles] closer," says the source. Harry's promised memoir, with an uncertain publishing date, hangs like a cloud over his father and older brother's new chapter, but those who know William well say he doesn't fixate on the painful estrangement. "First, there isn't time to dwell on it," says a source. "And second, there's nothing like having a new horizon to exorcise some of those ghosts."

But there are some appreciative looks to the past, including William and Catherine's visit to the place where they began their life together in 2011 in an old farmhouse and welcomed their firstborn, George. Already, the palace says William and Catherine will be back in Wales before year's end as they continue their work on the environment, mental health and the early years. And, despite the splashy Prince of Wales investiture ceremony that William's father had, palace sources tell People that an investiture "is not on the table right now. They are focused on deepening the trust of the Welsh people." Adds Lowther-Pinkerton: "They spent some of their happiest times in Wales."

Windsor promises much the same. At Adelaide Cottage the family relish the open parkland and countryside where the children can play. "They love that the kids can go out on their bikes and cycle around the estate, and they are all really excited to meet everyone," says

a friend. "It's a real little community." And for the first time, nanny Maria Turrion Borrallo is not living in. Catherine wants her children to have as normal an upbringing as possible under

far bucking royal tradition by keeping George at home rather than boarding school. With Lambrook a 15-minute drive from home, William and Catherine try to do the school drop-off and pickup most days. And although insiders say they will eventually live in the 1,000-year-old Windsor Castle itself, for now cottage life is much like it is at their country retreat Amner Hall, in Norfolk, where the kids and their friends are in and out of the swimming pool. George will flop onto the sofa beside his father, while Charlotte makes a beeline for familiar guests. Theirs is a life of a "modern royal family doing normal things," as one close family friend puts it.

Whatever awaits them-and the monarchy—William will face it with Catherine. "She is a matriarch. Not in the sense of an older woman in a twin set and pearls, but she guides the family and advises [William] when he wants it," says Lowther-Pinkerton. It's all what William's grannie would have wished, adds Majesty magazine's Joe Little: "She would expect them to carry on with a stiff upper lip and do so with grace."

With reporting by MONIQUE JESSEN

PRINCESS of WALES STYLE THEN & NOW: DIANA and KATE











