

# readers' letters

## Father and son team in B&C service

CLANSMAN has been seeking the stories of families with father and son both serving in B&C vessels. We were surprised at the frequency with which this happens. Here, with a letter from Good Hope Castle, we publish what we hope will be the first of a series.

Sir,

Regarding fathers and sons serving with the B&C fleet, I regret I am unable to send you any photographs of my son and myself taken together as our paths do not seem to cross too frequently at the moment. However, I am enclosing a recent photograph of my son in uniform, and one or two odd snaps of myself and Mrs. Galbraith taken on her recent and first voyage abroad on the *Good Hope Castle*.

The following is a brief account of my career. I am a native of the Island of Barra, in the Hebrides. The desire to go to sea was always with me despite any plans my parents had to the contrary. The war disrupted any idea of my going to university and instead I happily went to the Wireless College in Glasgow to hasten my entry into the Merchant Navy as a radio operator. The waiting lists for new entrant radio operators were so dreadfully long at the time that I honestly thought the war would be over before I could take part, and so I joined the army and the Royal Corps of Signals, later volunteering for parachuting.

Service with the 6th Airborne Division took me from Normandy to the Baltic, and the eventual link up with the Russian army at Wismar. This was followed up by a completely contrasting period of service in Palestine during the terrorist activities of 1945 and 46.

On demobilisation and after five years I decided to follow up my earlier desire, and after further training at the James Watt College, Greenock, joined the Merchant Navy. A varied career followed, including service on a rescue tug, tankers, and a four-year period of freelance employment on foreign flag supertankers until I joined the Clan Line in 1959. The Scottishness of the ships' names and the trim smartness of the ships I often passed down the Red Sea attracted me to join the company.

The *Clan Macchiellan* was my first permanent appointment, followed by service on the *Clans Macgillivray*, *Robertson* and *Alpine*, all of which I joined on their

maiden voyages. I am currently serving on the *Good Hope Castle*.

My son Angus took an interest in ships from an early age, when he and his mother would visit the various tankers I served on during their brief discharge periods in the UK. Later when I joined the Clan Line and lived in Glasgow, he would take every opportunity to accompany me to visit the ships lying at Shieldhall, and his one wish was that when he was old enough, he would himself go to sea.

He was accepted by the company as a navigating cadet in August 1971, and after pre-sea training at Warsash, joined the cadet ship *Clan Malcolm*.

My wife accompanied me on her first overseas voyage recently on the *Good Hope Castle* to South Africa, but although she will never pretend to love the sea, she enjoyed the voyage immensely and now spends a good deal of her time relating her experiences to the school of which she is headmistress in Newton Stewart. The school has its own ship's corner where projects on the family's world travels are keenly followed. Our young son aged nine has so far shown no desire to go to sea, being at the stage when he is more interested in what is brought him from abroad than going there to fetch it himself.

Incidentally, two cousins of mine also from the Island of Barra are serving as stewardettes with the company. They are the Campbell sisters, serving on the *SA Vaal* and *Edinburgh Castle*.

DONALD A. P. GALBRAITH,  
Radio Officer,  
*Good Hope Castle*.

## Deplores surname without mister

Sir,

CLANSMAN magazine: I deplore this growing tendency to quote surnames without courtesy titles. This can only lead to disrespect when junior members of the company, after reading these articles, start addressing or thinking of their managers and directors in this manner.

In the present day when newspapers, television programmes and the like are continually bemoaning the lack of manners in the youth of today, surely a journal of this description should be used as an educational example whereby everyone may learn the correct method of addressing others no matter what their station.

EDITH M. PEARCE (nee Watson),  
133 Ingebourne Gardens,  
Upminster, Essex.



■ D. A. P. Galbraith, radio officer, with his wife aboard *Good Hope Castle* at Ascension.

## Stand up and shout? This reader says Yes

Sir,

I refer to your leader in issue No. 16 of *CLANSMAN*—"Don't Rock the Boat" etc.

I can understand the reluctance of your readers to accept your invitation to "stand up and shout". It is one thing to have some wild and woolly ideas in one's mind but quite another matter to see those ideas in cold print, and it is with some trepidation that I now put pen to paper and accept your challenge. Surely there must be many among your readers who have said "If only I had the power".

I have chosen as my subject unofficial strikes—a most controversial subject if you like, but is there anything wrong with a little controversy if it stimulates the mind and promotes healthy discussion?

If I had the power, I would tackle the problem of unofficial strikes in this way: I would ban all unofficial strikes, make them illegal and prosecute anyone taking part in such a strike. The only strike I would recognise as legal would be an official strike. When a strike is declared official, the union or unions concerned are required to pay strike pay to their members (say at the rate of £5 per man per week).

In spite of what might be said to the contrary, I don't think there is a union in the country who would willingly stand up to that drain upon their resources for long. The bigger the union, the bigger the drain.

You might say "Why not ban all strikes?" But for decades workers have had the right of withdrawing their labour if they felt they had justification in so doing, and in this day and age and in our democracy I don't think