

Provisional: not to be quoted without reference to the author

R. V. ERNEST HOLT

Report for Cruise 1a/1967

Staff: P. G. W. Jones
R. R. Dickson
A. R. Folkard
S. R. Jones
J. W. Read
A. J. Jones

Duration: 6-27 January

Aims

1. To make a hydrographic survey of the area surrounding Rockall Bank and the channel between the bank and the continental shelf. G.E.K. - electrodes to be towed between stations.
2. To collect whole hake fish for the Woods Hole Laboratory.
3. To collect hake blood samples for Dr. Jamieson.

Narrative

ERNEST HOLT sailed from Grimsby at 1330 hrs on the 6th. After spending one hour on compass adjustments in the Humber, the ship proceeded northwards and passed through the Pentland Firth at 2200 hrs on the 7th. The first hydrographic station was reached north of Lewis at 1240 hrs on the 8th. The last station on the first section was reached at 2040 hrs on the 9th off the north west of Rockall Bank. The wind was force 7 to 8 and the station was not worked until 0835 hrs the following day when the weather had moderated. Stations were then worked towards Rockall Bank in borderline working conditions but only making shallow bottle casts. Work was stopped at 1745 hrs when the weather deteriorated further and the ship laid overnight. The section was commenced again at 0830 hrs on the 11th. By 1830 hrs on the 12th work was again stopped due to force 8 winds when the ship was east of the Rockall Bank. By 0845 hrs on the following day the wind had moderated and work restarted. Force 7 to 8 winds stopped work at 2000 hrs on the 14th when the ship was on the north western part of the Rockall-Malin Head section. By the morning of the following day there was no improvement in the weather and the forecast was unfavourable. It was therefore decided to go to Londonderry to refuel and take water, etc. The ship was in Londonderry from 0800 hrs on the 16th to 0900 hrs on the 17th.

Work on the Rockall-Malin Head section started at the southeast end at 1845 hrs on the 17th. Force 8 winds stopped work at 2230 hrs and the ship laid and dodged until 0830 hrs the following day. Two more stations were then completed and renewed force 8 winds again halted work. The ship dodged and laid until 2320 hrs on the 19th when work was resumed. The section was completed at 1300 hrs on the 20th.

There had now been so much delay caused by bad weather that it was impossible to complete the remainder of the hydrographic survey to the south of Rockall Bank as originally proposed. A section was therefore planned from south of the Bank, passing south-eastwards across the deep channel, onto the continental shelf. Adverse weather during the night of the 20th/21st delayed the ship's arrival at the first station until 0930 hrs on the 21st. Squally winds of up to force 9 stopped work at 1630 hrs the same day. By early morning of the following day, the weather had improved and a station was worked at 0730 hrs. The approach of a severe storm was then forecast with winds of up to force 11. It was decided to stop work and to attempt to make shelter in Donegal Bay. However, by 1640 hrs the ship had to dodge before reaching the Bay when winds had increased to force 10. By the morning of the

23rd it was apparent that with the limited time remaining, very little hydrographic work would be possible, even with favourable weather conditions. It was therefore decided to attempt some hake fishing. The ship dodged south-eastwards to a position approximately 54°N 11°30'W where trawling commenced at 0815 hrs on the 24th. A total of 3 hauls were made that day and 9 hake were caught. These fish were deep frozen for the Woods Hole Laboratory. It was then intended to steam approximately 120 miles southwards overnight and to continue fishing the following day with the hope of obtaining hake blood samples. However, by 2330 hrs that night winds had risen to force 9 and the ship was forced to dodge. There was little improvement in the weather until 1600 hrs on the 25th. By now there was no time for any further fishing. The ship therefore set course for Plymouth and docked at 0330 hrs on the 27th.

P. G. W. Jones

1st February, 1967

Seen in Draft: E.A.B.
G.W.A.
H.A.C.

Distribution

Dr. Cole
Mr. Lee
Captain Aldiss
Dr. Cushing
Mr. Bolster
Mr. Burd
Mr. Cattley
Mr. Corlett
Mr. Garrod
Dr. Harden Jones
Mr. Iles
Dr. Jamieson
Mr. Margetts
Mr. Trout
Mr. Bridger
Dr. Purdom
Mr. Mitson
Mr. Tungate
Mr. Williams
Mr. Wood
Mr. Adams
Mr. Mills
Mr. Kay
Mr. Cutler
Miss Conolly
General Lab.
Lab. Registry
Library (2)
Mr. Whiting
ERNEST HOLT file
Mr. Simpson
Dr. Reynolds
Chief Inspector
All District Inspectors
Fisheries Registry
Captain Binnington
Mr. Tector
Skipper Argumont
Mr. Burgess
Mr. Baird, D.A.F.S.

Prin. Inf. Officer, DAFS
Mr. Glover
Dr. Grant
Hydrographic Department
Dr. Lovern
Dr. Lucas
Director, N.I.O.
Dr. Peachey
Mr. Shelbourne
Mr. Steele
W.F.A.
Director, Bergen
Mr. Joensen, Faroes
Director, Reykjavik
Dr. P. G. W. Jones
Mr. Dickson
Mr. Folkard
Mr. S. R. Jones
Mr. Read
Mr. A. J. Jones