

6702

Provisional: Not to be quoted without reference to the writer

R. V. ERNEST HOLT

Report of Cruise 2/1967

Staff: B. W. Jones                      Duration: 14 February - 14 March  
         J. G. K. Harris  
         J. H. Prime  
         P. W. Sadler (Gy)  
         R. Tucker  
         S. Flatman

Aims

1. To make a trawl survey of Faroe Plateau and Faroe Bank to assess the abundance of pre-recruit haddock.
2. To tag cod on the spawning grounds on Faroe Plateau and Faroe Bank.
3. To obtain further data on the effect of the 'Polish' type topside chafer on the selectivity of trawl cod-ends.
4. To bring back alive lemon soles for Mr. Arnold.
5. To collect blood samples and eyes from Faroe cod from the spawning grounds for immunogenetic studies.
6. To sample and tag coalfish on the spawning grounds in the northern North Sea en route to Faroe, weather permitting.
7. To obtain hake specimens for Dr. Edwards of the Woods Hole Laboratory, Massachusetts.

Narrative

ERNEST HOLT sailed from Grimsby at 2030 hrs on 15th March, sailing having been delayed 24 hours for lack of a full crew. Progress northwards through the North Sea was slow owing to gale and storm force winds. Conditions were not suitable for fishing for coalfish and with no prospect of an early moderation in the weather Aim 6 was abandoned. The ship called briefly at Lerwick on the evening of the 17th to land two of the crew, one of whom was unsatisfactory and the other was sick. The ship then continued to Faroe and work commenced on the evening of the 18th. A visit was made to Midvaag on 21st for medical attention for one of the crew. Work continued, fishing during the dark hours in a heavy swell until 24th when gales prevented a continuation and ERNEST HOLT put into Torshavn for fuel and water. After two more nights work a storm caused the ship to seek shelter in Vestmanhavn on 27th where she remained until the afternoon of 1st March. On the morning of 3rd a hole was discovered in a plate in the main deck and the ship put into Thorshavn for repairs, sailing again in the afternoon of the following day. Fishing continued with frequent interruptions due to weather until 11th when the ship set course for Muckle Flugga where one haul was made for hake on 12th. Deterioration in the weather made any further hauls impossible and the ship set course for Grimsby arriving at 0700 hrs/14th.

Results

Aim 1. Continuous bad weather affected the work throughout the cruise and although the ship was able to keep fishing for much of the cruise, most of it was limited to areas where there was some shelter from the land. This resulted in six survey stations being unworked by the end of the cruise. The remaining twenty-seven were successfully completed. Catches of pre-recruit haddock were very small at the majority of stations. All survey stations were fished between dusk and dawn.

Aim 2. 2,671 cod were tagged on Faroe Plateau. No tagging was done on Faroe Bank as the weather limited work there to three hauls and all cod were used for obtaining blood samples.

Aim 3. A 130 mm mesh codend was fished with a 260 mm mesh topside chafer. The codend was fitted with blinder and cover. The selection of haddock by the codend/chafer combination was such that the 50% retention length was approximately 49 cm. The actual numbers of fish retained by the codend were rather few and weather conditions prevented fishing where the length composition of the fish would have been more suitable for the mesh size in use.

Aim 4. A selection of living lemon soles were brought back to the laboratory for Mr. Arnold.

Aim 5. Blood samples and eyes were obtained as follows:

	<u>Blood</u>	<u>Eyes</u>
Cod, Faroe Plateau	140	45
Faroe Bank	81	25

Aim 6. Abandoned.

Aim 7. Only one haul was possible north-west of Muckle Flugga and only two hake were caught. These were deep frozen.

#### Miscellaneous

Otoliths or scales were obtained as follows:

Cod (Faroe Plateau)	178
" (Faroe Bank)	75
Coalfish (Faroe)	118
" (N. North Sea)	47
Haddock	898
Halibut	202
Lemon sole	491
Plaice	139

B. W. Jones  
14.3.67.

Seen in draft: E. A. B. (Master)  
G. W. A. (Fishing skipper)  
D. J. G.

#### Distribution:

Dr. Cole	General Lab.	Mr. Steele
Mr. Lee	Lab. Registry	Director, Bergen
Capt. Aldiss	Library (2)	Mr. Joensen
Dr. Cushing	Mr. Whiting	Director, Reykjavik
Mr. Garrod	ERNEST HOLT file	All Scientific Staff
Mr. Bolster	Mr. Simpson	W.F.A.
Mr. Burd	Dr. Reynolds	
Mr. Cattley	Chief Inspector	
Mr. Corlett	All District Inspectors	
Dr. Harden Jones	Fisheries Registry	
Mr. Iles	Capt. Binnington	
Dr. Jamieson	Mr. Tector	
Mr. Holden	Skipper Argumont	
Mr. Margetts	Dr. Burgess	
Mr. Trout	Mr. Baird, D.A.F.S.	
Mr. Bridger	P.I.O., D.A.F.S.	
Mr. Mitson	Mr. Glover	
Mr. Tungate	Dr. Grant	
Mr. Williams	Hydrographic Dept.	
Mr. Wood	Dr. Lovern	
Mr. Adams	Dr. Lucas	
Mr. Mills	Director, N.I.O.	
Mr. Kay	Dr. Peachey	
Miss Conolly	Mr. Shelbourne	