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CRUISE REPORT

F.R.S. "SCOTIA"

15th October - 4th November 1963

Narrative

"Scotia" left Aberdeen at 11.00 hours on the 15th October in a strong southerly wind and steamed to an anchorage in St. Andrews Bay. The ship proceeded to the Gut on the 16th and the next six days were spent trawling in this area and north of the Dogger but catches of all fish were very poor, and work was frequently interrupted by strong to gale S to SW winds. On the 23rd the ship sailed for Aberdeen docking at 0530 hours on the 24th.

Due to the scarcity of fish, particularly whiting, in the central North Sea, it was decided to try the northern grounds in the second half of the cruise and "Scotia" left Aberdeen at 1745 hours on the 25th for the Orkney region. The fishing here was good, the catches consisting mainly of haddocks. More whiting were obtained in deeper water off the east coast of Shetlands but on the 29th the weather deteriorated and shelter was sought in the Wick of Gruting at Fetlar. The wind moderated on the 1st November, but a large swell made fishing impossible in this area so passage was made to the Moray Firth where trawling was conducted for the last two days of the cruise about 9 miles off Buckie. Two hauls were made in the Buchan Deeps and "Scotia" arrived at Aberdeen at 1400 on the 4th November.

Results

Trawling: A total of 2041 fish were tagged of which 46 whiting, 303 haddock and 60 cod were tagged in the Gut and north Dogger Bank area, and 59 whiting, 1122 haddock and 451 cod off the east coast of the Orkneys and Shetlands and in the Moray Firth. Live fish were brought back to the Laboratory for behaviour studies and the aquarium.

Hydrography and plankton: Surface and bottom $t^{\circ}C$ observations and salinity samples were taken at 12 selected positions. Plankton samples were obtained with the Gulf III at 11 stations and with the 1 metre 26 mesh oblique net at one station.

D. J. SYMONDS
11th November, 1963