



## The Hold

You will get well acquainted with the fishhold in your boat, its arrangement and working practices therein. Each fishing boat's hold varies in size and arrangement, but some general statements are in order.

The fishhold is divided into *crossings* varying in number from three to six, depending on their size and on the species of fish carried. One crossing is one transverse division from port to starboard, and is usually subdivided fore and aft into three compartments by *pen boards* that are inserted into channel frames, and when all pen boards are in place up to the deck, the hold is *penned up*.

That portion of the hold at each side of the keel where the bilge curves upward, when divided off, becomes a *side-pen* (sometimes called a *wing-pen*). The square area over the keel is called the *slaughterhouse*.

If the hold is divided into four crossings, we then have forward and after crossings. Each crossing has its side-pen and slaughterhouse, either forward or aft, or second and third slaughterhouse in between (numbering from forward). If there are four crossings, in addition to the forward and after crossing, there will be a "second" and "third" crossing in between. In either the after or forward end of the fishhold, there is a pit covered with heavy boards that usually are notched or bored through with holes to permit drainage. This pit is called a *sump*. All meltwater from the ice and fish drains to the sump and this has to be cleaned out last after washing the hold. Solids left in the sump can plug the suction line to the bilge pumps in addition to creating an unsanitary condition.

In the schooner-type vessel, the

slaughterhouse floor is flat. But in a seine-type vessel with the engine forward, the propeller shaft passes through the fishhold with a shaft box generally built around it, possibly a foot or two high running the length of the fishhold. The boards covering it must be removed and washed, and the inside of the shaft box washed.

The fish are not butchered in the slaughterhouse. They are *dressed* up on deck, if at all. Possibly in the dim past, the naming of the slaughterhouse may have had some connection with fish preparation.

While unloading fish, do not stand under the open hatch when a sling-load is going up. The slings are strong enough, but often a single fish may slide out and give you a playful whack going by. The whack is a measure of the fish's weight multiplied by its velocity, and can be painful to say the least, or break something in your upper parts.

Washing the hold after unloading is important to the quality of the next load of fish. Residual slime and blood must be scrubbed out of the boards and the corners of the cleats. Most vessels follow the last rinse with a spray of disinfectant. Some vessels which ice fish now use plastic liners in the hold, which are removed each trip. Little washing is needed here.

As always, when working below with shipmates, do the best job of which you are capable. With most fishermen, it is an insult to have another go over the same surface or repeat the job just completed. Fishermen observe this nicety, but at times, rather than criticize another's job, they openly do it again and communicate in that way their opinion of the work.

Other instructions for particular jobs that need doing in the hold, such as cleaning sumps or opening the doors above the shelves in the skin of the boat, will be given to you. Each boat has its own peculiarities in these details. Once the instructions are given, it should not be necessary to repeat them next trip.



