

HURRICANE FAITH, August 18 - September 12, 1966

(Preliminary Report)

As indicated on the attached chart, Faith maintained hurricane intensity for a period of at least 13 days while traveling a circuitous route around the southern, western, and northern periphery of the North Atlantic Ocean. With the advantages of hindsight she can be tracked in embryonic form from a position over Africa, near 8 North 5 West, on August 18, 1966. At that time she appeared as only a poorly defined depression in the surface pressure field and a circular mass of cloud in a Tiros IX photograph.

From that early position over Africa she moved westward at a relatively uniform rate of 15 to 20 knots for a period of nearly 8 days. During that period she gradually increased in strength, reaching tropical storm intensity on August 22 and hurricane intensity on August 23. After reaching hurricane intensity her maximum winds remained relatively constant near 75 knots until she reached a position north of the Dominican Republic on August 27. She then made a turn to a north-northwesterly course, slowed to a forward speed of about 5 knots, and intensified rapidly.

She held this new course, with relatively constant forward speed and intensity for three days, then made a second sharp turn to the right -- taking up a northeasterly heading. On September 2 Faith turned gradually eastward and on the 3rd her track curved gently toward the northeast. Her forward rate of movement increased gradually to 30 knots on the 3rd and to 40 knots on the 4th, then remained nearly constant until September 8; by which time she was centered near Arkhangelsk, U.S.S.R. On September 6

FAITH was officially declared extratropical and downgraded from hurricane status. She passed over the Faeroe Islands that day, and moved inland near Nordoyan, Norway on the 7th. Continuing as a deep low pressure center, she moved eastward across northern Norway, Sweden and Finland, then turned northward to cross Novaya Zemlya. By September 12 she had become nearly stationary as a 980 mb. LOW centered over Franz Josef Land, near 81.0 North 60.0 East. Positions subsequent to September 5 have been estimated from the small scale northern hemisphere weather maps received by facsimile from NWAC and are considered only rough approximations.

Hurricane Faith's nearest approach to land, prior to striking the Faeroe Islands, occurred north of the Leeward Islands on August 26. Her center passed within 25 miles of St. Martin. Gale force winds were experienced in the more northerly of the Leeward and Virgin Islands and along the northern coast of Puerto Rico, but only minor damage has been reported.

One crewman was killed in a fall aboard the ship Alberto Benati while she was disabled and being battered by the hurricane in the western Atlantic. Several other ships are known to have encountered the full force of hurricane Faith in the Atlantic, but no reports of damage or loss of life have been received from them. The Associated Press reported five persons missing after 136 persons were forced to abandon a leaking Norwegian ferryboat off the coast of Denmark, as Faith passed to the north. The extent of property damage or loss of life incurred when Faith struck the Faeroe Islands and the coast of Norway is not known at this time.

