

Record

VICE ADMIRAL SIR ARCHIBALD DAY

VICE Admiral Sir Archibald Day, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., a past President of the Institute, died at Dover on Friday, 17 July where, at the time of his death, he was Chairman of the Dover Harbour Board. He had recently retired as Acting Conservator of the River Mersey and from the Board of the Port of London Authority.

Day first went to sea after two years' training in H.M.S. *Conway* at the age of 15 when the Fleet was mobilized in 1914. He spent the war in the North Sea and later in the Mediterranean. He volunteered for the hydrographic surveying specialization in 1920, joining H.M.S. *Endeavour* for surveys on the Egyptian coast.

For the next 12 years he served in surveying ships in many parts of the world, being given his first command, H.M.S. *Fitzroy*, in 1932 for surveys in Home Waters, and later H.M.S. *Ormonde* for work in the Persian Gulf and in Cyprus where he was promoted to Commander in 1934. This commission was curtailed by the Abyssinian War crisis, when the Mediterranean Fleet was based on Alexandria and Day became the Fleet Hydrographic Officer.

After two years as Superintendent of Charts in the Hydrographic Department he commissioned the new surveying ship *Scott* in February 1939 for surveys off the east coast of England.

Soon after the outbreak of war he was appointed Staff Hydrographic Officer, Dover, but in June 1940 he was promoted Captain and took over as Chief Staff Officer to Rear Admiral Ramsay, Flag Officer, Dover. He was largely responsible for the organization of the seaborne evacuation of our forces from Dunkirk and other French ports and beaches, and for this he was awarded the C.B.E.

During 1943 and 1944 he held the post of Assistant Hydrographer, during which time an unprecedented number of charts and chart maps were compiled and printed in the Hydrographic Department for use by British and United States forces in the invasions of Sicily, Italy and Normandy.

The attention of the Department then turned to South-East Asia in preparation for the Allied invasion of Malaya, and Captain Day was appointed to command a large requisitioned yacht, *White Bear*, which was fitted out as a surveying headquarters ship with a chart production unit on board. In *White Bear* Day commanded an assorted squadron of mine-sweepers and survey craft. After clearing and marking the Rangoon River before the assault on the city, for which he was awarded the D.S.O., he moved southwards to open up the Malayan and East Indies ports after the Japanese surrender.

After the war he again held the post of Assistant Hydrographer, and commanded H.M.S. *Dalrymple* for surveys in the Mediterranean. He was promoted Rear Admiral in 1949 and for a year held the appointment of Flag Officer, Germany. In 1950 he was appointed Hydrographer of the Navy, a post he held with great distinction for five years during which he was promoted to Vice Admiral, awarded the C.B. and advanced to K.B.E.

His period as Hydrographer was marked by the introduction of the two-range Decca fixing system which extended the range of accuracy of surveys far from land and made it possible to continue survey work regardless of visibility. He also turned the attention of the Hydrographic Department to the importance of oceanography and the need for oceanographic surveying, to further which he created a new Commander's post in the Department.

Day's determination, coupled with his great charm, made his term of office as Hydrographer a progressive one during which morale at sea and in the office was extremely high.

Immediately on retirement in 1955 Day returned to active surveying in the field, taking charge of a small unit to make the first modern hydrographic surveys of Lake Nyasa.

His interest in oceanography led, in 1956, to his appointment as Coordinator of Operations for the International Geophysical Year. He remained in the post for three years with his headquarters in Brussels, and from there he travelled tirelessly by air to many parts of the world in the course of his work.

In 1967 H.M.S.O. published his book, *The Admiralty Hydrographic Service 1795-1919*, a scholarly and very detailed review of this long period of hydrographic history, which now serves as a book of reference for all who are interested in British Admiralty charts and their makers, a devoted race of men of which Admiral Day was an outstanding example.

He served as President of the Institute of Navigation from 1951 to 1953.
G.S.R.