

## K. Adlard Coles, OBE

ADLARD COLES, a Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Institute, died during the summer of 1985 at Lymington, aged eighty four. A publisher of nautical books by trade (he founded both Adlard Coles Ltd and the Nautical Publishing Company) he was during his day one of the most highly regarded figures in ocean sailing. He was awarded the Institute's Gold Medal in 1971 'for his services, over a lifetime of sailing, to the navigation of small craft'. The citation for that award, from which the following extract is taken, indeed forms a suitable epitaph for the navigational side of his career.

'As a practical sailor he has few peers. In addition to many years cruising, he has over the last twenty-five years entered each of his succession of boats in most of the Royal Ocean Racing Club's classic events and he has three times won the Club's points championship (no local honour for these races are truly international). He has won the transatlantic race and has twice won his class in the Fastnet. In 1957 he was made Yachtsman of the Year and in 1969 awarded the first Royal Cruising Club Medal for Services to Cruising.

In his book, *Heavy Weather Sailing*, published in 1967, which contains an analysis, with the author's reflections backed by long practical experience, of a series of notorious gales which small craft have (or in some cases have not) survived over the last twenty years, general conclusions are drawn about the handling of yachts and other small craft in heavy weather. It might be thought that experience down the ages must provide sufficient information on this subject, but in fact, perhaps because the underwater profile of the modern yacht is very different from earlier types, there is considerable difference of opinion about what is best done in "ultimate" or survival gales. Cole's book undoubtedly makes an important contribution.

All this may be on the fringe of navigation. However, Adlard Cole's magnificent series of pilot books, for the north and south coasts of Brittany, the Bay of Biscay, and the English Channel, are true aids to navigation which admirably supplement, for small craft, the various official publications: they are in fact worthy successors to the many earlier privately published pilots which have appeared over the last two hundred years, and their value is internationally recognized. These volumes, compiled from the author's own observations, provide small vessels with detailed pilotage instructions for a whole series of harbours and anchorages too small or shoal to be described in the Admiralty Sailing Directions or their equivalents abroad. Illustrated by charts and photographs, their text is accurate, seamanlike and exhaustive.'

Coles wrote two outstandingly interesting contributions to the *Journal*. The Loss of *Morning Cloud*, in April 1975 (28, 193) and, in 1980, The Fastnet Storm of 1979 (33, 184).