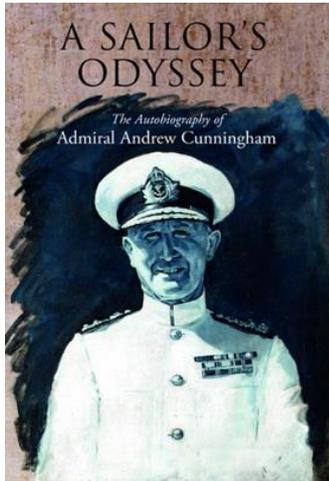


BOOK REVIEW
A SAILOR'S ODYSSEY
The Autobiography of Admiral Andrew Cunningham
Andrew Cunningham
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First published in 1951 the proceeds from this edition will go to support the Royal Navy & Royal Marine charity and the King Edward VII Hospital, the latter as a tribute to Admiral Cunningham's father Professor DJ Cunningham author of the Textbook of Anatomy. Andrew Brown Cunningham has produced one of the best autobiographies I have read. The narrative flows making this work easily readable and is quite understated in its overall tone. Admiral of the Fleet Andrew Browne Cunningham, 1st Viscount Cunningham of Hyndhope, KT, GCB, OM, DSO & Two Bars (7 January 1883 – 12 June 1963) was a I think it fair to say a sailor in the Nelsonian tradition. I was totally enthralled with his description of action in destroyers, especially during the Gallipoli campaign. During his career he was awarded a DSO and two bars

initially for his actions in the Dardanelles and the Baltic. I was quite intrigued by his somewhat negative view of the navy during his time a Scapa Flow and could totally understand his desire to get back on Destroyers which he did with the Dover Patrol spending on one occasion 18 straight days at sea! Appointed Commander -in-Chief Mediterranean Station in June 1939 he is best remembered for his leadership in the Mediterranean during the Second World War, his bold and vigorous leadership made up for the dearth of ships and aircraft especially after the Allied withdrawal from Crete. There were successful actions against the Italian Regia Marina at Taranto and Matapan but setbacks as at Scarpanto. After a period from June to October 1942 with the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington where he was highly respected, he resumed command of the Mediterranean Fleet and was promoted Admiral of the Fleet in January 1943. He insisted Alexandria and Malta be maintained as British Bases to maintain communications and support for the army and RAF and oversaw the successful landings in North Africa in November 1942 as well as the landings at Sicily in July 1943 and later at Salerno in September 1943. Elevated to First Sea Lord in 1943 with responsibility for the operational policy of the Royal Navy during the later stages of the War. He attended the conferences at Casablanca, Teheran, Quebec and Yalta, and gives revealing glimpses of Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin. His was a truly remarkable career. ABC died suddenly in 1963 in London and was, fittingly buried at sea off Portsmouth. This work, the recounting of a 'Sailors Odyssey' is a very finely written and absorbing account of the life and career of one of Britain's finest sailors

Martin Willoughby