AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER READING

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Catching up on two months worth of reading;
I'm sure that I've left some out.
Category: Observations

You may have noticed that I've not posted much on this blog for a while. I'm afraid that enthusiasm and energy have been rather low. I've also started one of my periodical changes to the way that the site looks, but I ran out of steam halfway through. I will get there eventually! Meanwhile, here is a list of the books I've read over the past couple of months. I may miss a few, but I should capture most of them.

You probably need to be a runner or someone who really loves the Lake District to want to readÂ Running Hard: The Story of a Rivalry, by Steve Chilton. I fit into both categories and really loved it.

Murders

I recently found a boxed set of all of the Morse novels by Colin Dexter in a charity shop for a very reasonable sum. I'm slowly working my through them all. Some I've read before and others I've seen on the TV, but they are still excellent. If you like detective fiction and you haven't read Morse, you really should; it doesn't get much better than this.

I picked up a copy ofÂ Before I Go (Maria Kallio Book 7)Â for free on a Kindle offer and enjoyed it so much that I decided to read more of the series and also readÂ My First Murder (Maria Kallio Book 1)Â andÂ Her Enemy (Maria Kallio Book 2)Â but decided to stop buying them after this. These are interesting books, with good characters and convoluted plots, but three was enough for me. If you want to try something new in the Scandi-noir line, these books, set in Finland, might interest you.

I apparently readÂ Harm None (A Davies & West Mystery Book 1)Â sometime in the last two months, but I don't remember a thing about it. It was good enough for me to read right through to the end, so it can't have been an absolute stinker. I do rememberÂ His First His Second (An Alicia Friend Investigation Book 1)Â and rather wish I didn't. It's free, so you won't be wasting any money - but I really didn't enjoy it. Gratuitously dark. A few months ago, I read one of the Inspector Skelgill mysteries by Bruck Beckham; these are set in the Lake District which obviously appeals to me. I'm not sure that I'll bother with the whole series, but I've read another three and quite enjoyed them. There are some picky details that rather irritate me, but they won't bother normal people.Â Murder at the Flood,Â Murder in AdlandÂ andÂ Murder at Dead CragsÂ were all pleasing enough reading. They'd be better if the author didn't try and represent every accent and dialect spoken by his characters, however.

Malta

We had a short holiday in Malta and I decided to read (or it might be re-read) a couple of history books about the island. One was a description of the Great Seige of Malta by the Ottomans and the other about the defence of the island in World War Two. I'll let you guess which is which:Â Wings Over MaltaÂ andÂ The Great Siege, Malta. They were both very good.

Science Fiction

Orson Scott Card is the author of one of my favourite SciFi books, Ender's Game.Â The Worthing ChronicleÂ wasn't quite up to that standard, but it wasn't bad. It's more like the second half of Ender's Game (exploring the meaning of life) than the first (Cowboys and Indians in outer space) but I found it an interesting read despite the lack of thrills and spills.Â Duty, Honor, PlanetÂ does provide Cowboys and Indians in space, but it doesn't challenge you in any way. It's the first book in a trilogy, but I can't imagine reading the rest - not unless they are released for free.

Other Fiction

Command (Lt Peter Harding Book 1)Â is a cracking good novel set aboard a British submarine in WWII. I've read one other in this series and thoroughly enjoyed that one too. If you like military fiction, you should give these a try.

Christian Books

Northern Gospel, Northern Church: Reflections on Identity and MissionÂ looks at the question of whether there is a distinctive gospel for the North of England. There are some interesting essays, but the book as a whole is very unsatisfactory. It spends far more time talking about Aidan, Bede and Cuthbert than it does about Methodism and Pentecostalism, both of which are far more significant influences on the contemporary Northern scene than any Anglo-Saxon saints. Ultimately, this is due to the fundamental flaw in the book which is that all of the writers are from the Church of England, despite the book looking at the area of the country where Anglicanism is at its weakest and Non-Conformity at its strongest. Interesting, but essentially a missed opportunity.

If I'd had a little more energy, I'd have givenÂ Crossing Cultural Frontiers: Studies in the History of World ChristianityÂ by Andrew Walls a full review. If you are interested in World Christianity or mission studies then you need to read this book of essays. It's as simple as that.