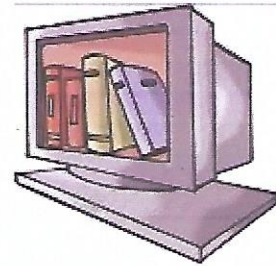


## BOOK SHELF

Reviews of books

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## THE ASHES OF LONDON

**Author : Andrew Taylor**

If you are interested in the Great Fire of London of 1666 and also enjoy a crime mystery story, this book is a “must read” for you.

Andrew Taylor is an award winning author that clearly has a gift for writing historical fiction. His work begins by taking the reader into the heart of London as much of it is being consumed by fire. I have to write this review carefully so that I do not divulge too much of the plot. The story is an enjoyable “who-dunnit” and I must not deny the reader the pleasure of trying to work out who carried out the murders and what was their motive.

What I can divulge is that the body of a man is discovered in the smouldering ruins of St Paul’s Cathedral but it was not the fire that killed him.. He was stabbed. Then, a second body is found and the plot thickens.

James Marwood is a government informer. King Charles II is on the throne and even before the Great Fire he had a multitude of problems with which to cope. His government was profligate and causing the nation to live beyond its means. The population was afflicted by plague and London was not a particularly healthy place to live. The city was being made subject to divisive internal dissent.

Against this background, a fire breaks out in Pudding Lane and spreads unchecked for days destroying a significant part of the capital.

Marwood is given orders to try to track down the murderer(s) and with much reluctance he sets about the detective work. This leads him into treacherous waters and into contact with a determined and vengeful woman.

Some historical accounts of events such as the Great Fire can be somewhat dry and boring because they are dominated by facts and figures. This book takes the reader on a path of discovery about what life was like in 17th century London without it being in the least bit dry.

Published in hard back at a recommended price of £14.99

