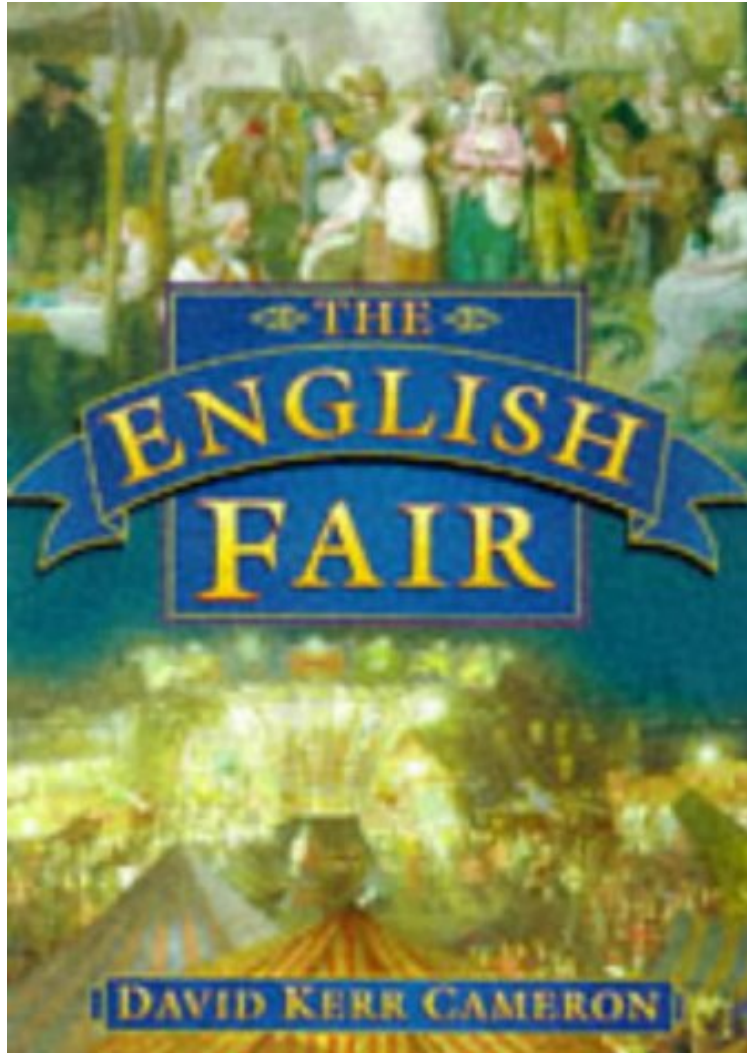


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The English Fair

David Kerr Cameron

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David Kerr Cameron : The English Fair before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The English Fair:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Lovely pictures but disappointing content
By Customer
This book is profusely and gorgeously illustrated with period photos and paintings of English fairs, and as such it could be an invaluable resource to reenactors or devotees of the contemporary Renaissance Faire. However I found much of the text to be dry, repetitive, and frustratingly superficial, being largely composed of lists of the fairs that dealt in whatever commodity was being discussed (wool, beef, etc) along with relevant dates, locations, and sprinklings of anecdotes from authors and diarists of the time. Occasionally, however, these anecdotes would paint a vivid picture of a time and place different than our own. I enjoyed the information on the relationship of the church and the fair (factoid: many

early fairs were held by churches in graveyards to take advantage of pilgrims' business when they came to visit the relics of the saints on their feast days). I was dismayed by the description of the hiring fairs ("mops") in which housemaids and farmhands would come to display themselves like cattle, looking for work in the coming year. Overall I was disappointed in this book- I was hoping for something with more disciplined, sociological approach- but it's possible a reader with different interests and objectives might find it more useful than I did.

This comprehensive and readable new study examines a long-neglected subject and its impact on trade and everyday lives. Based not only on wide exploration of local sources, museum and library archives, but also on extended interviews with old farmers and dealers, the book traces the fair's history from early Saxon times to the present day, examining why today's fairs are based purely on entertainment rather than trade. David Kerr Cameron traces the fair's history from its lowly beginnings in the ancient landscape, through its periods of growth under the patronage of the Church and the granting of royal charters and its eventual transformation into the all-important livestock and specialist events of the regions.

About the Author David Cameron is a noted author, book reviewer and social historian. He is former assistant art editor on the Daily Telegraph. He is the author of numerous award-winning books of British social history.