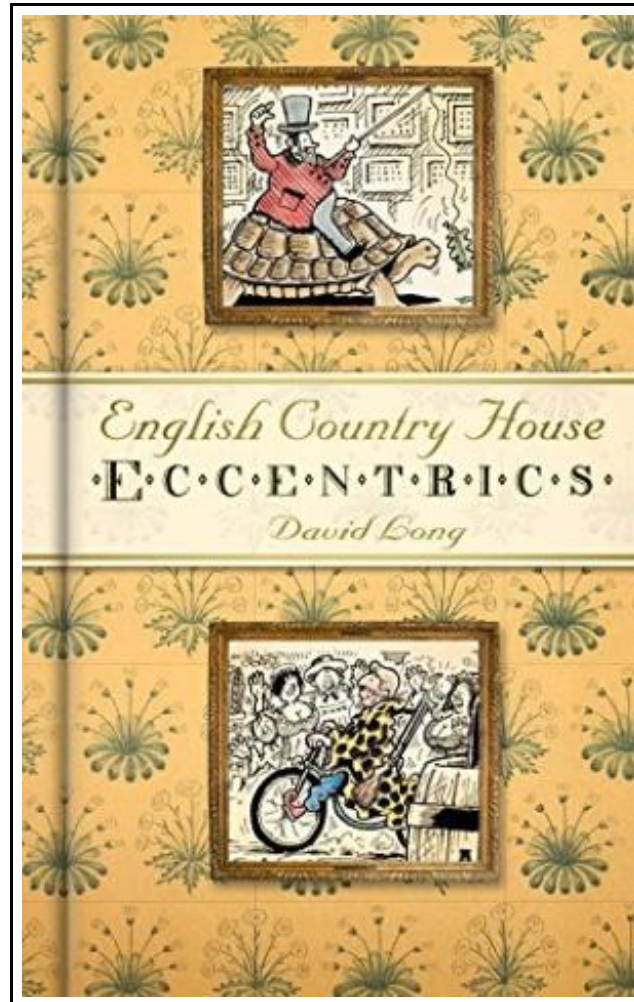


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The History Press Ltd. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, English Country House Eccentrics, David Long, This is a lighthearted, witty but factual biographical account of the eccentric lifestyles of the builders and residents of one hundred of England's best-known country houses. Extraordinary buildings require extraordinary people, and over the centuries our historic houses have produced more than their fair share of oddballs. Insulated from the outside world by vast wealth, rolling acres and the social status that a title implies, aristocrats have always been able to amuse themselves - and now us - by pursuing idiosyncratic interests and manias to the point of eccentricity. The 12th Duke of Bedford, for example, preferred parrots to people - forcing his children to steal the birds' food to make up their meagre rations - while the 5th Duke of Portland paid his staff a bonus on the understanding they would never speak to him. The Hon. Henry Cavendish inherited GBP200 million at today's values, but never spent more than five shillings on dinner, while more recently the 2nd Lord Rothschild spent weeks training a team of zebra to pull his carriage up the Mall and into Buckingham Palace. Aimed squarely at the National Trust set, this lifts the lid on all that's bizarre, implausible, unthinkable and downright wacky about our glorious heritage homes and their unusual occupants.

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