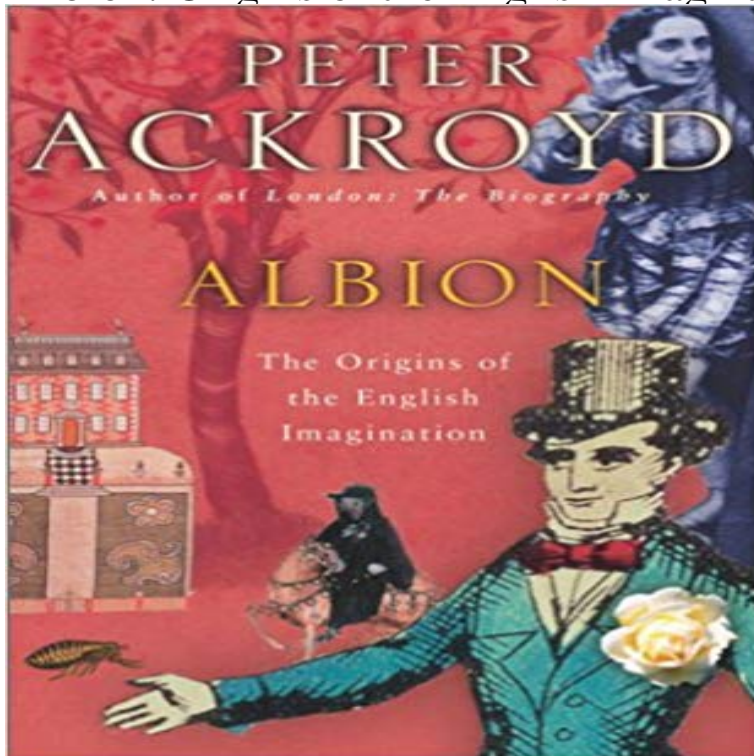


Albion: Origins of the English Imagination



Peter Ackroyd follows his acclaimed *London: The Biography* with a book that once again plumbs the history of England and uncovers the continuities that link past and present. A dazzling, highly original exploration of English culture from its roots in the Anglo-Saxon period to the present day, *ALBION* demonstrates that a quintessentially English quality imbues every form of cultural expression not just literature, but also painting, music, architecture, philosophy, and science. In an intricate, expertly crafted mixture of narrative and theme, Ackroyd travels through time and across cultural categories as he seeks out the roots and the essence of the English imagination. With an irrepressible curiosity and contagious enthusiasm, he moves from *Beowulf* to Virginia Woolf, Hogarth to Hockney, Purcell to Vaughan Williams, Inigo Jones to Edward Lutyens. His lively biographical sketches and incisive exegeses of the work of figures both well known and less familiar deepen our understanding and appreciation of our inherited culture. Like *London: The Biography*, *ALBION* contains unexpected treasures, including a thought-provoking look at immigration and assimilation and a delightful digression into the English obsession with gardening. Black-and-white photographs and drawings, and two lavish four-color inserts add visual appeal throughout. Ackroyd's talent for distilling information and presenting it with novelistic flair shines on every page of *ALBION*. It is Peter Ackroyd at his most brilliant and exuberant.

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