

SUMMARY

BY ALYSSA BURNETTE

For the Record

By David Cameron



Summary of For the Record by David Cameron

Written by Alyssa Burnette

A memoir from Britain's former prime minister.

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
Cameron’s Childhood Inspired Him to Get Involved With Politics	6
Cameron’s Early Career in Politics.....	10
Final Summary	13



**DO YOU WANT THIS BOOK
AS AN 20-MINUTE AUDIOBOOK?**



**Get the key insights of non-fiction books
in minutes instead of hours. Listen to
our free audiobooks while you workout
or on your commute to work.**



**DOWNLOAD
OUR FREE APP**



Introduction

From Harry Potter to *Pride and Prejudice* to the Queen, England has captured the world's imagination. It's easy to think of England as a magical and sophisticated place, but how much do you really know about the country and its politics? David Cameron's memoir tells the candid story of his time as the prime minister, the experiences that shaped him, and what it was like to lead his country through a very difficult and controversial time.



GET THE FREE AUDIOBOOK IN OUR APP: [QUICKREAD.COM/APP](https://www.quickread.com/app)

Cameron's Childhood Inspired Him to Get Involved With Politics

When you think about the English aristocracy, a certain privileged pedigree comes to mind. For centuries, the leaders who sit at the pinnacle of British government have been prepared for their positions by a very privileged background. For example, most prime ministers and members of parliament (commonly abbreviated as MPs) come from very wealthy families and have received the best private education money can buy. And as a general rule, “the best private education money can buy” is another way of saying Eton College. Eton College is one of the most prestigious-- and expensive-- high schools in the world. In fact, this institution is so integral to Britain's upper classes that it is commonly referred to as “the nursery of England's gentleman.” This is partly because only boys from the ages of 13-18 are allowed to attend Eton.

Fifteen members of the British royal family have attended Eton, including Prince William and Prince Harry. Five of England's prime ministers have been educated at Eton. Their website explains that "Eton College was founded in 1440 by Henry VI as “Kynge's College of Our Ladye of Eton besyde Windesore.” With this historic legacy, it's understandable that the educational community at Eton is steeped in tradition and a commitment to excellence. The cultural expectation is that certain types of people go to Eton and they only go on to pursue certain types of highly successful careers. And David Cameron was no different. Cameron was born to a similarly privileged family and he also attended Eton from the ages of 13-18. But his childhood wasn't quite as idyllic as you might imagine. In fact, his childhood experiences taught him some valuable lessons that prepared him for a career in politics.

David Cameron was born in London on October 9th, 1966, to Mary and Ian Cameron. He was one of four siblings. But even though his parents had a great deal of money, their lives were not always easy. That's because Cameron's father Ian was born with a physical deformity. His legs were much

shorter than an average person's legs should be and he had been born without heels. He also had only seven toes: three on one foot and four on another. Although he had an impressive presence and carried himself with a lot of confidence, he only stood a little over five feet tall. However, Cameron and his siblings thought nothing of this while they were growing up. Most kids grow up assuming that their lives are pretty normal, and Cameron was no different; he thought his dad was amazing and he didn't see anything wrong with him at all.

But as he and his siblings grew older, they began to learn about disability and discrimination. They realized that their dad was not like everyone else's dads and they were shocked to learn that there were people who would be very unkind to their father because of that fact. But they were even more shocked to realize that those people were members of their own family. When Cameron was a teenager, his father confided in him, confessing that Cameron's grandfather Donald was deeply embarrassed by Ian's disability. In fact, he was so embarrassed that he blamed Ian's mother and forbade her from having any more children for fear that their other children would turn out like Ian. Later, Cameron also learned that his father's aunt-- a woman he and his siblings called GAV, which was short for 'Great Aunt Violet'-- had feared for Ian's life when he was a baby. In fact, she was so afraid that she sat outside his nursery door for multiple nights in a row because she was afraid that another member of the family would sneak in and try to kill him! That's how embarrassed Ian's family was of his disability, and it was heartbreaking to young Cameron (and pretty much anyone else with an ounce of human compassion!) Fortunately, neither Cameron nor his siblings ever met their ableist grandfather, who died in 1958.

Fortunately, however, his father's upbringing wasn't all bad. Ian wanted his children to know about the struggles he had experienced because of his disability, but he also wanted them to know that he had never let his disability hold him back. As a young man, Ian had been determined to participate in sports just like anybody else. Although it was difficult, he never gave up, and he helped the Eton rugby team win many a game. This spirit of optimism and persistence characterized Cameron's memories of his father

and it taught him a lot about the kind of man he wanted to be. And his father's stories about his struggles left a mark on him as well. The lessons he learned from his father inspired him to stand up for the marginalized in the community, for the people nobody else looked out for. But his father also taught Cameron about the importance of hard work and responsibility. "Do the right thing" was a message Cameron often heard from his father when he was growing up. His father also instilled in him the value of giving back to the community and the importance of being a "giver" rather than a "taker" in life.

So, even though young David Cameron grew up with money and attended an elite boarding school, he also learned many hard and powerful lessons from his father. These lessons inspired him to be the best version of himself and to pursue a career in politics so he could make a positive difference for his fellow man. The same was true of his experiences at Eton, where Cameron often felt like an outcast. His older brother Alex had also attended Eton and he was close friends with Prince Edward. In fact, Prince Edward often invited Alex to stay at Windsor Castle! Cameron was not invited and he was both disappointed and jealous. So, even though he enjoyed the academic environment and the freedom he experienced at Eton, he sometimes felt unsure of himself and he desperately wanted to make friends. He also felt as though he was living in Alex's shadow and that no one really noticed him. This meant that he was often inclined to be a follower rather than a leader, and sometimes he followed the crowd even when the crowd was going in the wrong direction.

This was especially true when it came to young Cameron's first brush with recreational drugs. Drug use was expressly forbidden at Eton but, as many kids do, Cameron and his classmates sometimes broke the rules. When they wanted to get high in secret, Cameron and two of his friends would take one of the school's small row boats and row to a private island where they would quietly enjoy some weed together. Although Cameron enjoyed his secret time with his friends, their clandestine rendezvous quickly led to trouble for them all. Before they knew it, two of his friends were caught and expelled. Many other students who had been involved were rounded up and interrogated,

and by the time Cameron was called into the principal's office, his principal had a signed confession from other students, confirming that David Cameron had also taken drugs. So, he couldn't deny it; he could only accept the shame, blame, and responsibility as he confessed to the wrongdoing. Fortunately for Cameron, however, the school accepted his apology and he was not expelled. He was so thankful for their leniency that the moment served as a tremendous wakeup call. From that moment on, he began to think very seriously about his studies and about his future.



GET THE FREE AUDIOBOOK IN OUR APP: [QUICKREAD.COM/APP](https://www.quickread.com/app)

Cameron's Early Career in Politics

Cameron's newfound passion for his studies led him to develop an intense focus on political science. And after he graduated from Eton, he went on to pursue a Politics, Philosophy, and Economics degree at Oxford. He felt that this type of educational background would be good preparation for a career as a politician. And in 1998, he began working as a member of the Conservative Party's research department. But it wasn't long before his career took off. By 2001, he had been elected as a Member of Parliament for the Oxfordshire constituency of Witney. And after a successful career as an MP-- and a lot of campaigning-- he was elected the leader of the Conservative Party in 2005.

Rebranding the Tory party was one of Cameron's first goals for his time in office. He wanted to establish a modern, compassionate brand of British conservatism and he believed he was the right man for the job. Although he loved many of the Conservative Party's values, he felt that their stance on many other subjects was woefully outdated, and he believed that this was responsible for a lot of the opposition against his party. Cameron felt that if he could rebrand the party and unite people across bipartisan lines, he could truly make his country a better place. So, he began to work toward things that the Tory party had previously opposed, like closing the gender pay gap and legalizing gay marriage. These progressive initiatives did exactly what he hoped: many people began to think of the Conservative Party in a new light. And as a result, more people were willing to listen to what he had to say. Although his efforts angered many other people-- including a longtime member of the Tory party who visited Cameron just so he could tear up his membership card right in front of him-- Cameron believed that he really was accomplishing his goal to rebrand the party and help his fellow man.

But his biggest challenge occurred in 2013, when Cameron had to negotiate Britain's relationship with the European Union. In 2013, the British people were unhappy about Britain's membership in the European Union. Although Britain's relationship with the EU was meant to bring prosperous trade benefits for Britain, many people felt that the partnership was not beneficial

enough. Many others felt that the European Union was not adequately representing them or their country's values. As a result, many British citizens felt that they would be better off if they left the EU and focused only on a return to British values and products that were made in Britain. Cameron acknowledged the people's dissatisfaction and promised to find a solution. At first, he thought the best solution would be renegotiating the terms of Britain's membership. If the negotiation went well and he could present a new and improved trade deal, he thought the British people would be happy with the agreement and be content to stay in the EU. And, on January 23, 2013, he promised that if the deal wasn't satisfactory, he would call a referendum and Britain would leave the European Union.

A referendum is defined as "a direct and universal vote in which an entire electorate is invited to vote on a particular proposal and can have nationwide or local forms. This may result in the adoption of a new policy or specific law." So, in this case, a referendum would be a vote that redefined Britain's entire relationship with the European Union. Cameron later stated that he never thought the referendum would actually go through. This was partly because he assumed that his opposing party, the Liberal Democrats, would block any attempt at a referendum. But sadly, nothing happened according to plan. For starters, the negotiations with the European Union were not successful. Although Cameron believed that the deal he negotiated was a good one, the people he represented were not satisfied. They wanted a referendum. Cameron believed that leaving the European Union would be a catastrophic decision and he did his best to ensure that that would not happen. He did everything he could to convince the British public that it was within their best interests to remain in the EU. But at the end of the day, democracy dictates that the people have a choice in their country's direction, so Cameron had no choice. Even though it required him to go against his personal beliefs, he remained true to his word and called the referendum. Despite his strenuous disagreement, he still wanted his people to know that he was a proud proponent of democracy and he was committed to representing them.

In the end, Britain voted to leave the European Union. The vote was 52% to 48%. Cameron had lost and he had no choice but to accept it. Although he had done the right thing and upheld his promises, he did not feel comfortable remaining in his position as prime minister given the result of the vote. Because he disagreed wholeheartedly with the direction his country was taking, he felt that he could not, in good conscience, be the man to lead his country into that future. With a heavy heart, he resigned from his position, and he and his family left the prime minister's traditional home at 10 Downing Street.



GET THE FREE AUDIOBOOK IN OUR APP: [QUICKREAD.COM/APP](https://quickread.com/app)

Final Summary

David Cameron's early experiences inspired him to pursue a career in politics. His disabled father taught him the importance of optimism, perseverance, and kindness, and his father's lessons left an indelible imprint on Cameron as a young boy. His parents also taught him that he should always do the right thing, always look out for others, and always give back to the community. Cameron internalized these lessons and they informed both the man he would become and the political values he would embrace. As a boy, he was enthralled with the freedom and history of education at Eton College, but he was also led astray by his desire to fit in.

An early brush with the law scared him straight when he was caught with drugs and threatened with expulsion. When he realized that he could lose his cherished position at Eton, Cameron vowed to focus on his studies and abstain from all risky and illegal behavior. This formative experience inspired him to approach his studies with a new vigor and this prepared him for his career in politics. His focus and determination put his political career on the fast track and led to his election as prime minister in 2005. During his career as prime minister, David Cameron was faced with the controversial decision of calling a referendum to address Britain's membership in the European Union. Ultimately, Britain voted to leave the EU-- much to Cameron's disappointment-- and Cameron resigned from his position as prime minister. However, he remains proud of his efforts to update the Conservative Party and represent the British people.



GET THE FREE AUDIOBOOK IN OUR APP: [QUICKREAD.COM/APP](https://www.quickread.com/app)



**DO YOU WANT THIS BOOK
AS AN 20-MINUTE AUDIOBOOK?**



**Get the key insights of non-fiction books
in minutes instead of hours. Listen to
our free audiobooks while you workout
or on your commute to work.**



**DOWNLOAD
OUR FREE APP**

