

Edward Gibbon

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

VOLUME I

Read by **David Timson**

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The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire has always maintained its initial appeal to both the general public and scholars of subsequent ages. The sheer scale of the subject is daunting, encompassing a millennium and a half of history, covering not merely the Western Roman Empire from the days of the early emperors to its extinction in A.D. 476, but also the Eastern (Byzantine) Empire, which lasted for another thousand years until it was vanquished by the Turks in 1453. But Gibbon's style, part historical scholar, part sensational story-teller, part historical fact and part literature, is enticing, and the sheer honesty of the man, who, writing in the age of reason, endeavours to be scrupulously impartial in his presentation, endears him to the reader. It is meticulously planned, and charts the fall and rise of Western mankind from the dust of the Empire into the modern nations of Europe.

The work consists of 71 chapters, 2,136 paragraphs, some one million and a half words, and close to 8,000 footnotes: a magnum opus indeed by anyone's standards.



David Timson has made over 1,000 broadcasts for BBC Radio Drama. For Naxos AudioBooks he wrote *The History of Theatre*, which won an award for most original production from the Spoken Word Publishers Association in 2001. He has also directed five Shakespeare plays for Naxos AudioBooks, including *King Richard III* (with Kenneth Branagh), which won Best Drama award from the SWPA in 2001. In 2002 he won the Audio of the Year award for his reading of *A Study in Scarlet*. He has read the entire *Sherlock Holmes* canon for Naxos AudioBooks.

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