

Edward Gibbon

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

VOLUME II

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 alike. Its sheer scale is daunting, encompassing over a millennium of history, covering not merely the Western Empire from the days of the early emperors to its extinction in AD 476, but also the Eastern Empire, which lasted for another thousand years until the Turks vanquished it in 1453. But Gibbon's style, part historical fact and part literature, is enticing, and the sheer honesty of the man, who endeavours to be scrupulously impartial in his presentation, endears him to the reader.

In *Volume II* (Chapters XVI–XXVI), Gibbon continues his survey of Christianity from Nero to Constantine, while also continuing with the establishment of Constantinople, the new principal seat of the Empire, and its strategically important site. The second volume also contains Gibbon's sympathetic portrait of Julian, whose reign was short, but whose personality, wisdom, courage and clarity bore the hallmarks of the great emperor that Rome needed. It closes towards the end of the 4th century with the settlement of the Goths in Thrace and Asia.



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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