

Edward Gibbon

**THE DECLINE AND FALL
OF THE
ROMAN EMPIRE**
VOLUME IV

Read by **David Timson**

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 this recording, David Timson incorporates the most salient of Gibbon's footnotes.

In *Volume IV* (Chapters XXXVII–XLVI), Gibbon explores the state of the Roman provinces after the dissolution of the Western Empire, and examines the reasons for its fall – not excluding its 'immoderate greatness'. He then moves to the Empire in the East and its rule under Justinian (527–565), whose formidable leadership saw the re-fortification of Constantinople and the frontiers of the Eastern Empire. However, dangerous times remain ahead as the Persians make attempts to siege Constantinople. Gibbon ends with the state of the Eastern Empire in the sixth century and its weaknesses after a long war.



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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