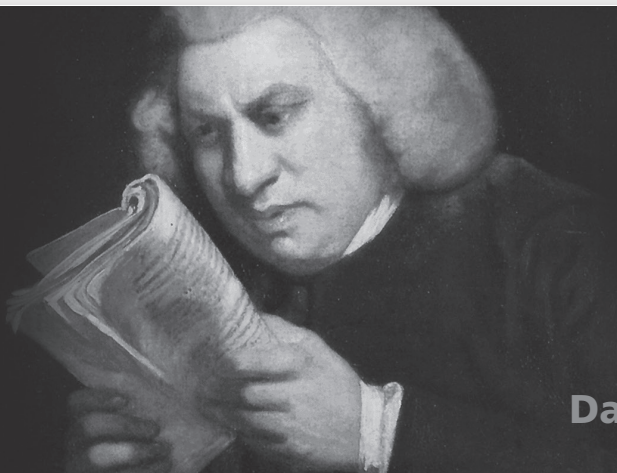


JAMES BOSWELL THE LIFE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON



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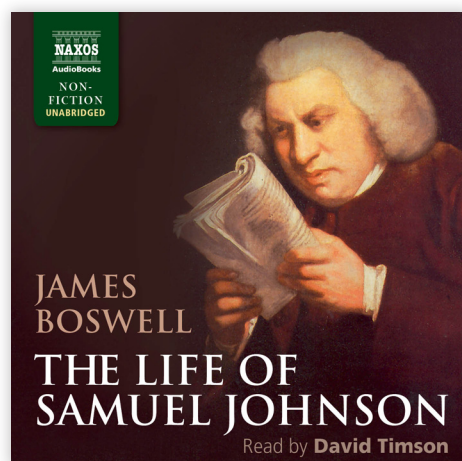
NON-
FICTION
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Read by
David Timson

Charming, vibrant, witty and edifying, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* is a work of great obsession and boundless reverence. The literary critic Samuel Johnson was 54 when he first encountered Boswell; the friendship that developed spawned one of the greatest biographies in the history of world literature. The book is full of humorous anecdote and rich characterisation, and paints a vivid picture of 18th-century London, peopled by prominent personalities of the time such as Sir Joshua Reynolds, John Wilkes, Oliver Goldsmith and David Garrick, while also giving a compelling insight into Johnson's complex humanity – his depression, fear of death, intellectual brilliance and rough humour.









David Timson has made over 1,000 broadcasts for BBC Radio Drama. For Naxos AudioBooks he has written *The History of Theatre*, an award-winning production read by Derek Jacobi, and directed four Shakespeare plays including *King Richard III* (with Kenneth Branagh). He has also read the entire *Sherlock Holmes* canon and Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.



Total running time: 51:01:05 • 42 CDs

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		The Life of Samuel Johnson					
1	1-1		9:47	25	4-4	But the year 1747 is distinguished as the epoch...	10:08
2	1-2	What I consider as the peculiar value...	8:20	26	4-5	While the Dictionary was going forward...	10:03
3	1-3	Samuel Johnson was born at Lichfield...	11:40	27	4-6	Dr Adams was present the first night...	9:06
4	1-4	Young Johnson had the misfortune to be much...	10:11	28	4-7	Posterity will be astonished when they are told...	9:39
5	1-5	He discovered a great ambition to excel...	9:18	29	5-1	As the <i>Rambler</i> was entirely the work...	9:37
6	1-6	Translation of part of the Dialogue between...	10:34	30	5-2	To point out the numerous subjects...	11:49
7	1-7	In estimating the progress of his mind...	10:57	31	5-3	Sir Thomas Brown, whose life Johnson wrote...	10:45
8	2-1	But let not little men triumph upon knowing...	10:38	32	5-4	In 1751 we are to consider him as carrying on...	9:49
9	2-2	No man had a more ardent love of literature...	9:45	33	5-5	The state of mind in which a man must be...	10:45
10	2-3	Johnson was so far fortunate...	11:27	34	5-6	Many are, no doubt, omitted in this catalogue...	11:28
11	2-4	This being the first prose work of Johnson...	12:09	35	5-7	He entered upon the year 1753...	9:22
12	2-5	His juvenile attachments to the fair sex were...	11:43	36	6-1	Lord Chesterfield, to whom Johnson had paid...	11:55
13	2-6	While Johnson kept his academy...	8:33	37	6-2	That Lord Chesterfield must have been...	11:56
14	2-7	At this period we find the following letter...	8:39	38	6-3	'In the course of this visit (1754), Johnson and I...'	9:40
15	3-1	He now removed to London with Mrs Johnson...	10:10	39	6-4	In 1755 we behold him to great advantage...	10:09
16	3-2	But what first displayed his transcendent powers...	11:53	40	6-5	In one of his little memorandum-books...	9:34
17	3-3	Johnson's <i>London</i> was published in May, 1738...	10:08	41	6-6	To the Reverend Mr Thomas Warton.	11:02
18	3-4	About this time he made one other effort...	11:31	42	6-7	His introducing his own opinions...	8:02
19	3-5	In 1739, beside the assistance which he gave...	11:23	43	7-1	Johnson this year gave at once a proof...	11:22
20	3-6	In 1740 he wrote for the <i>Gentleman's Magazine</i> ...	8:57	44	7-2	It is worthy of remark, injustice to Johnson's...	10:06
21	3-7	In 1742 he wrote for the <i>Gentleman's Magazine</i> ...	8:02	45	7-3	This year Mr William Payne...	11:06
22	4-1	His writings in the <i>Gentleman's Magazine</i> ...	12:24	46	7-4	In 1758 we find him, it should seem...	10:36
23	4-2	In February, 1744, it accordingly came forth...	9:55	47	7-5	But in this number of his <i>Idler</i> his spirits...	10:19
24	4-3	That Lady Macclesfield was convicted...	12:30	48	7-6	Notwithstanding my high admiration of <i>Rasselas</i> ...	7:10



49	7-7	His negro servant, Francis Barber, having left...	10:32
50	8-1	In 1761 Johnson appears to have done little.	14:02
51	8-2	In 1762 he wrote for the Reverend Dr Kennedy...	11:42
52	8-3	To the same. Dec. 21, 1762.	11:15
53	8-4	This year his friend Sir Joshua Reynolds...	9:44
54	8-5	I have dwelt the longer upon this remarkable...	12:15
55	8-6	A few days afterwards I called on Davies...	14:57
56	9-1	Here let it be observed...	10:08
57	9-2	When I talked to him of the paternal estate...	9:58
58	9-3	Mrs Piozzi and Sir John Hawkins have strangely...	10:33
59	9-4	On Wednesday, July 6, he was engaged to sup...	10:52
60	9-5	Talking of those who denied the truth of...	11:13
61	9-6	Mr Levet this day showed me Dr Johnson's...	10:24
62	9-7	Mr Dempster having endeavoured to maintain...	9:17
63	10-1	He again insisted on the duty of maintaining...	10:13
64	10-2	The conversation then took a philosophical turn.	10:42
65	10-3	We walked in the evening in Greenwich Park.	9:59
66	10-4	He talked of Mr Blacklock's poetry...	10:08
67	10-5	Utrecht seeming at first very dull to me...	11:00
68	10-6	Soon after his return to London...	11:46
69	10-7	He was for some time in the summer at Easton...	9:42
70	11-1	Mr Thrale had married Miss Hester Lynch...	8:39
71	11-2	Both in 1764 and 1765 it should seem...	11:16
72	11-3	Dr Johnson was very kind this evening...	11:10
73	11-4	After I had been some time in Scotland...	11:55
74	11-5	It appears from his diary...	12:09
75	11-6	Mr Cuthbert Shaw, alike distinguished...	9:00
76	11-7	His Majesty then asked him what he thought...	9:02
77	12-1	We have the following notice in his devotional...	9:59
78	12-2	He expatiated on the advantages of Oxford...	11:01
79	12-3	Upon his arrival in London in May...	9:43
80	12-4	In 1769, so far as I can discover...	9:57
81	12-5	Talking of a London life, he said...	13:28
82	12-6	He honoured me with his company at dinner...	9:56
83	12-7	Politics being mentioned, he said...	9:04
84	13-1	Next day, October 20, he appeared...	13:02
85	13-2	I had hired a Bohemian as my servant...	9:43
86	13-3	Next morning I sent him a note...	10:31
87	13-4	Of this year I have obtained the following letters...	9:49
88	13-5	'But let us view him in some instances...'	10:19
89	13-6	'He was much affected by the death...'	10:06
90	13-7	'To find a substitution for violated morality...'	9:32
91	14-1	Mr Strahan, the printer, who had been long in...	11:06
92	14-2	In 1772 he was altogether quiescent...	11:46
93	14-3	We drank tea with Mrs Williams...	10:19
94	14-4	After he had read for some time...	10:51
95	14-5	I again visited him at night.	10:14
96	14-6	We talked of the proper use of riches.	10:25
97	14-7	I spoke of the inequality of the livings...	8:09
98	15-1	On Thursday, April 9, I called on him to beg...	9:39
99	15-2	On Saturday, April 11, he appointed me...	10:19
100	15-3	Mr Langton told us he was about to establish...	11:33
101	15-4	On Saturday, May 9, Mr Dempster and I...	11:06
102	15-5	'To make a penal law reasonable and just...'	10:09
103	15-6	To James Boswell, Esq. Dear Sir...	10:04
104	15-7	On the 9th of April, being Good Friday...	11:05
105	16-1	On Thursday, April 15, I dined with him...	10:59
106	16-2	On Monday, April 19, he called on me...	11:45
107	16-3	On Thursday, April 29, I dined with him...	10:43
108	16-4	Johnson praised John Bunyan highly.	11:44
109	16-5	'Having thus shown that the right of patronage...'	9:42
110	16-6	He repeated an argument, which is to be found...	10:17



111	16-7	During this argument, Goldsmith sat in restless...	8:41
112	17-1	To the Reverend Mr Bagshaw, at Bromley.	9:40
113	17-2	In a letter from Edinburgh, dated the 29th...	11:41
114	17-3	His humane forgiving disposition was put...	13:52
115	17-4	Mr Boswell to Dr Johnson. Edinburgh, May 12...	9:58
116	17-5	Mr Boswell to Dr Johnson. Edinburgh, Sept. 16...	9:50
117	17-6	To James Boswell, Esq. Dear Sir...	10:28
118	17-7	To Dr Lawrence. Footnote...	7:50
119	18-1	His <i>Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland</i> ...	10:41
120	18-2	My much valued friend Dr Barnard...	10:13
121	18-3	Of this performance I avoided to talk with him...	9:30
122	18-4	On Friday, March 24, I met him...	12:45
123	18-5	Next day I dined with Johnson at Mr Thrale's.	11:37
124	18-6	Next day, Sunday, April 2, I dined with him...	8:26
125	18-7	On Thursday, April 6, I dined with him...	9:38
126	19-1	Friday, April 7, I dined with him at a tavern...	10:33
127	19-2	On Friday, April 14, being Good-Friday...	11:37
128	19-3	On Sunday, April 16, being Easter-day...	9:56
129	19-4	<i>The Beggar's Opera</i> , and the common question...	12:01
130	19-5	A few days afterwards I consulted him...	10:04
131	19-6	To James Boswell, Esq. Dear Sir – I am now...	9:46
132	19-7	To James Boswell Esq. Dear Sir – I am glad...	9:44
133	20-1	'Oct. 14. Saturday. We went to the house of...'	10:28
134	20-2	'Oct. 23. Monday. Last night I wrote to Levet...'	9:57
135	20-3	'Nov. 2. Thursday. We came this day...'	10:46
136	20-4	In the course of this year Dr Burney informs me...	11:54
137	20-5	My opposition was very displeasing to my father...	10:12
138	20-6	This letter, which had considerable influence...	9:15
139	20-7	I wrote to Dr Johnson on the 20th of February...	10:58
140	21-1	He seemed very happy in the near prospect...	9:35
141	21-2	We got into a boat to cross over to Blackfriars...	10:51
142	21-3	Gwyn was a fine lively rattling fellow.	10:12
143	21-4	He then carried me to visit Dr Bentham...	10:44
144	21-5	In the afternoon, as we were driven...	10:42
145	21-6	Dr Johnson said to me in the morning...	10:43
146	21-7	We went and viewed the museum...	10:43
147	22-1	After dinner Dr Johnson wrote a letter...	10:43
148	22-2	Having left Ashbourne in the evening...	9:56
149	22-3	On Sunday, March 31, I called on him...	11:38
150	22-4	I mentioned Mr Maclaurin's uneasiness...	9:36
151	22-5	Volumes would be required to contain a list...	9:31
152	22-6	On Wednesday, April 10, I dined with him...	11:05
153	22-7	A journey to Italy was still in his thoughts.	8:47
154	23-1	Johnson and I supped this evening at the Crown...	9:54
155	23-2	A literary lady of large fortune was mentioned...	9:44
156	23-3	No man was a more attentive and nice observer...	10:17
157	23-4	If we enquire into the practice of the primitive...	9:38
158	23-5	When I read this to Mr Burke...	10:48
159	23-6	When we entered Mr Dilly's drawing-room...	11:25
160	23-7	Mr Arthur Lee mentioned some Scotch...	9:45
161	24-1	Sir William Forbes writes to me thus...	13:04
162	24-2	Mr Boswell to Dr Johnson. Edinburgh, August...	10:43
163	24-3	In 1777, it appears from his <i>Prayers</i> ...	11:58
164	24-4	To James Boswell Esq. Dear Sir – It is so long...	12:16
165	24-5	To those who delight in tracing the progress...	11:00
166	24-6	A circumstance which could not fail...	9:24
167	24-7	On the 23rd of June, I again wrote...	6:40
168	25-1	To the same. Dear Sir – This gentleman...	11:50
169	25-2	Dr Johnson to Mrs Boswell. Madam...	12:45
170	25-3	To James Boswell Esq. Dear Sir – I write to be...	10:07
171	25-4	He this evening, as he had obligingly promised...	9:56
172	25-5	It has been confidently circulated...	10:21



173	25-6	In the evening, the Reverend Mr Seward...	9:41
174	25-7	Thursday, September 18. Last night Dr Johnson...	8:34
175	26-1	When we arrived at Derby...	12:16
176	26-2	As we drove back to Ashbourne...	9:50
177	26-3	On Saturday, September 20, after breakfast...	10:17
178	26-4	I have no doubt that a good many sermons...	10:20
179	26-5	Mr Burke's 'Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol...'	11:22
180	26-6	I complained of a wretched changefulness...	11:03
181	26-7	I talked to him of misery being 'the doom...'	8:21
182	27-1	I record Dr Johnson's argument fairly...	9:44
183	27-2	To James Boswell, Esq. Dear Sir – You will...	10:38
184	27-3	To James Boswell, Esq. Dear Sir – To a letter...	9:58
185	27-4	We retired from Mrs Williams to another room.	9:50
186	27-5	In his review of Dr Warton's 'Essay...'	10:12
187	27-6	Boswell. 'Well now, let us take the common...'	10:34
188	27-7	Thrale's carriage not having come for him...	11:26
189	28-1	I looked into Lord Kames's <i>Sketches</i> ...	11:10
190	28-2	We talked of living in the country.	12:36
191	28-3	On Friday, April 10, I found Johnson at home...	11:18
192	28-4	He talked of Mr Charles Fox...	12:26
193	28-5	I could not help thinking that this was too high...	9:59
194	28-6	We talked of the styles of different painters...	8:05
195	28-7	At Mr Dilly's today were Mrs Knowles...	8:20
196	29-1	Dr Mayo having asked Johnson's opinion...	10:20
197	29-2	Somebody mentioned the Reverend...	10:24
198	29-3	I expressed some inclination to publish...	11:19
199	29-4	Mr Edwards mentioned a gentleman...	10:46
200	29-5	We went to St Clement's church...	10:17
201	29-6	Mrs Cholmondeley, in a high flow of spirits...	9:25
202	29-7	On Tuesday, April 28, he was engaged to dine...	10:26
203	30-1	I mentioned a nobleman who I believed...	9:50
204	30-2	Dr Robertson expatiated on the character...	10:06
205	30-3	Mr Langton having repeated the anecdote...	12:12
206	30-4	I mentioned a reflection having been thrown...	11:49
207	30-5	I stayed all this day with him at Streatham.	12:19
208	30-6	I wrote to him on the 25th of May, from Thorpe...	8:51
209	30-7	In the course of this year there was a difference...	8:44
210	31-1	About this time Mr John Hussey...	10:29
211	31-2	During my stay in London, this spring...	9:38
212	31-3	On Thursday, April 8, I dined with him...	11:56
213	31-4	A celebrated wit being mentioned, he said...	9:47
214	31-5	I did not write to Johnson, as usual...	9:44
215	31-6	On Sunday, October 10, we dined together...	9:58
216	31-7	I mentioned to him a dispute between a friend...	9:45
217	32-1	I left London on Monday, October 18...	11:27
218	32-2	To James Boswell, Esq. Dear Sir – Your last letter...	10:08
219	32-3	Mrs Thrale being now at Bath with her husband...	10:58
220	32-4	'On Wednesday I walked with Dr Scot...'	11:03
221	32-5	To James Boswell, Esq. Dear Sir...	10:29
222	32-6	Mr Thrale had now another contest...	9:51
223	32-7	'Having asked Mr Langton...'	9:04
224	33-1	'Dr Goldsmith, upon occasion of Mrs Lennox's...'	9:44
225	33-2	'It is evident enough that no one who writes...'	11:39
226	33-3	'Johnson one day gave high praise...'	10:28
227	33-4	'On occasion of Dr Johnson's publishing...'	9:47
228	33-5	It is remarked by Johnson, in considering...	10:27
229	33-6	In drawing Dryden's character, Johnson...	11:34
230	33-7	In the <i>Life of Addison</i> we find an unpleasing...	9:56
231	34-1	In the <i>Life of Lyttelton</i> , Johnson seems...	12:23
232	34-2	I have not confined myself to the order...	11:41
233	34-3	To the same. Sir – Being informed that...	9:44



234	34-4	Johnson's profound reverence for the Hierarchy...	11:23
235	34-5	On Sunday, April 1, I dined with him...	10:55
236	34-6	On Saturday, April 7, I dined with him...	8:12
237	34-7	Dr Scott left us, and soon afterwards...	8:03
238	35-1	The general effect of this day dwells....	9:56
239	35-2	He gave us an entertaining account of <i>Bet Flinty</i> ...	10:25
240	35-3	Johnson could not brook appearing...	9:46
241	35-4	On Saturday, June 2, I set out for Scotland...	10:05
242	35-5	The opinion of a learned Bishop...	9:55
243	35-6	It has been said, that the Scottish nation...	11:32
244	35-7	The following curious anecdote I insert...	10:35
245	36-1	To Mrs Strahan. Dear Madam – Mrs Williams...	10:37
246	36-2	To Mr Hector, in Birmingham. Dear Sir...	12:40
247	36-3	On the 30th of August, I informed him...	10:38
248	36-4	He met Mr Philip Metcalfe often at Sir Joshua...	11:07
249	36-5	It has been observed and wondered at...	9:48
250	36-6	There was in this discourse much novelty...	8:36
251	36-7	It is remarkable, that notwithstanding...	8:51
252	37-1	Yet, though Johnson had this habit in company...	10:32
253	37-2	Johnson was at a certain period of his life...	10'26
254	37-3	On Thursday, April 10, I introduced to him...	7:35
255	37-4	On April 18 (being Good-Friday), I found him...	11:27
256	37-5	Time passed on in conversation...	10:15
257	37-6	To one of Johnson's wonderful fertility of mind...	12:18
258	37-7	On Saturday, May 17, I saw him for a short time.	10:49
259	38-1	Two days after he wrote thus to Mrs Thrale...	10:51
260	38-2	I shall here insert a few particulars...	10:50
261	38-3	I wrote to him, begging to know the state...	10:58
262	38-4	I consulted him on two questions...	9:58
263	38-5	Notwithstanding the complication of disorders...	10:10
264	38-6	To James Boswell, Esq. Dear Sir – I hear of many...	11:18
265	38-7	I wrote to him, March 28, from York...	9:06
266	39-1	To the Reverend Dr Taylor, Ashbourne, Derbyshire.	12:05
267	39-2	On Sunday, May 16, I found him alone...	9:59
268	39-3	On Thursday, June 3, the Oxford post-coach...	10:29
269	39-4	After dinner, when one of us talked...	9:58
270	39-5	We were well entertained and very happy...	8:53
271	39-6	On Sunday, June 13, our philosopher was calm...	8:53
272	39-7	During our visit at Oxford, the following...	12:55
273	40-1	Mr Burke uniformly showed Johnson...	10:18
274	40-2	It has been supposed that Dr Johnson...	10:41
275	40-3	On Sunday, June 27, I found him rather better.	10:15
276	40-4	On Wednesday, June 30, the friendly...	9:52
277	40-5	I have had occasion several times, in the course...	10:25
278	40-6	By a letter from Sir Joshua Reynolds...	10:55
279	40-7	July 31 – Not recollecting that Dr Heberden...	11:04
280	41-1	October 6 – The fate of the balloon...	10:41
281	41-2	To Mr Windham: August – The tenderness...	10:16
282	41-3	To Mr John Nichols: Lichfield, Oct. 20...	8:38
283	41-4	To Mr Henry White, a young clergyman...	10:58
284	41-5	Feeling very soon, that the manner in which...	10:02
285	41-6	Poetry and works of Imagination	11:52
286	41-7	Mr Colman, in his 'Prose on several Occasions'...	11:30
287	42-1	My readers are now at last to behold...	10:31
288	42-2	About eight or ten days before his death...	10:21
289	42-3	Upon these testamentary deeds it is proper...	10:10
290	42-4	When talking of a regular edition...	10:59
291	42-5	As he opened a note which his servant...	8:47
292	42-6	A few days before his death he had asked...	8:57
293	42-7	The character of Samuel Johnson has, I trust...	9:47

JAMES BOSWELL THE LIFE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON

Samuel Johnson was born in Lichfield in 1709 and died in London in 1784 aged 75. He came from a modestly middle-class background, but his father's bookselling business failed and his Oxford education was abruptly terminated for want of funds. In spite of this, he became the greatest English scholar and man of letters of his day; he was a man of enormous learning but equally a man who loved life in all its variety.

Having married, in 1735, Mrs Elizabeth Porter, a widow almost twice his age, and having had little success in running a school with only three students, Johnson moved to London, accompanied by his pupil David Garrick. Both found fame in the capital (Garrick more rapidly as the greatest actor of his time) and both remained lifelong friends. Johnson's literary career began humbly enough, producing hackwork for various journals, but it was the publication of his *Dictionary* in 1755 which really set the seal on his reputation. The *Dictionary* was the result of nine years' labour, in conditions of some poverty, and in the teeth of the terrible depressions which frequently afflicted him.

In 1762 Johnson was granted a crown pension, and in 1763 he met James Boswell, so from this time we have the full and wonderfully vivid account of his life given by the latter. Johnson's acquaintance was wide and included such eminent men as Sir Joshua Reynolds, Edmund Burke, Oliver Goldsmith and Charles Fox: all were members of the Literary Club founded in 1764. Other of Johnson's works include his poem *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, his edition of Shakespeare, *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, *The Lives of the English Poets* and *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia*.

Johnson was a man of huge personality – almost terrifying to behold, with his scarred face, massive frame and eccentricities of word and movement. He could be a loyal friend and a formidable opponent; he loved to talk and held in thrall a large circle of admirers who contradicted him at their peril. He read voraciously and could talk on almost any topic; his politics were Tory, yet he abhorred slavery, condemned the English treatment of the Irish and attacked religious complacency – perhaps because his faith in the divine was coloured by a profound terror of death. His generosity to the poor and willingness to provide a home for some of those who had enjoyed little worldly success are touching testimonies to his deep humanity. It was, above all, Johnson's love of society, conversation and friendship which gave Boswell the material for his biography – described by Macaulay as the best ever written.

James Boswell (1740–1795) was born in Edinburgh and studied law, but was more interested in travel, writing and politics – not to mention what he would have called the 'dissipation' of his London life. His *Journals* give an extraordinarily lively and intimate impression of this excitable, enthusiastic and energetically philandering character. His *Life of Samuel Johnson*, published in 1791, took him many years to compile and was mainly based on the extensive conversations and travels he enjoyed with his subject, for whom he had an affection bordering on worship.

Notes by Perry Keenlyside

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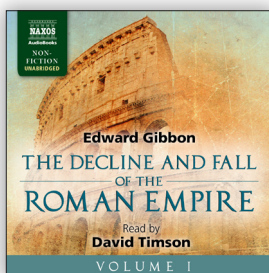
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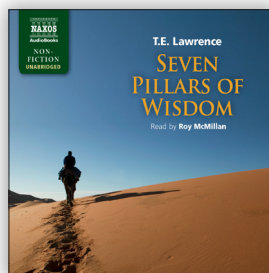
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