

NAXOS
AudioBooks

Erskine Childers

The Riddle of the Sands

Read by **Dermot Kerrigan**

**CLASSIC
FICTION**



NA238512D

1	An invitation to a cruise	12:33
2	On board the Dulcibella	10:13
3	Sailing in the Baltic	4:45
4	Schiffer Bartels	9:22
5	Herr Dollman	4:41
6	The Dulcibella – stranded	10:46
7	Revelations about Herr Dollman	8:04
8	Through the canal	8:35
9	A night-time visitor	7:30
10	Commander von Brüning	9:56
11	Memmert	7:05
12	Fräulein Dollmann	10:55
13	A journey in the fog	6:08
14	Finesse at a dinner party	8:41
15	A temporary farewell	6:54
16	Carruthers plays the spy	9:11
17	A rehearsal thwarted	8:25
18	Dollmann unmasked	9:00
19	Epilogue	0:35

Total time: 2:33:29

Erskine Childers

The Riddle of the Sands

Erskine Childers was born in 1870 of Anglo-Irish parents and was educated at Haileybury and Trinity College, Cambridge. From 1895 to 1910 he was a clerk in the House of Commons. He spent the long holidays sailing in the North Sea and the Channel, exploring the shoals of the German, Dutch and Danish coasts. At the outbreak of the Boer War, Childers volunteered, later writing a record of his experiences, *In The Ranks Of the C.I.V.*, which was the fifth volume of *The Times History of the War in South Africa*. He also published two books which demonstrated the outdated use of cavalry against modern weapons.

The Riddle of the Sands, his famous spy novel which has become a classic, was published in 1903. The following year Childers married Mary (Molly) Alsen Osgood, whom he met on a trip to Boston.

In 1910 Childers resigned from his job to devote himself to working for the Irish

cause, and in 1911 he published *The Framework of Home Rule* which advocated full dominion status for Ireland. In 1914, he used his yacht, the *Asgard*, to bring German arms to the Irish volunteers.

However, during the First World War, he did reconnaissance work in the Royal Naval Air Service, and served in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve and as an Intelligence Officer. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

After the war, Childers settled in Ireland, to work and write for its independence. In 1921 he became a Sinn Fein member of the Irish parliament for County Wicklow, and minister for propaganda. He opposed the treaty that established the Irish Free State, joined the Irish Republican Army and, in 1922, was arrested and shot by a British firing squad.

One of his sons, Erskine Hamilton Childers (1905–74), became the 4th president of Ireland (1973–74).

Although published in 1903, *The*

Riddle of the Sands showed prophetic insight, with its background of German preparations for a naval invasion of Britain – a plot line which would not have seemed dated in the late 1930s.

John Buchan wrote of Childers, 'No revolution ever produced a nobler or purer spirit.'

Notes by Lesley Young.

The music on this recording is taken from the NAXOS catalogue

SCHUMANN SYMPHONY NO.4 IN D MINOR, OP120
Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra / Antoni Wit

8.550923

Cover picture: *The Shipwreck* by George Clairin
Courtesy of the Fine Art Photographic Library, London.



