

NAXOS
AudioBooks

**NON-
FICTION**



Sir Winston
Churchill

The Island Race

Read by
Edward de Souza

Introduced by
Sir Edward Heath

NA304712D

1	Introduction	3:16
2	Julius Caesar	7:03
3	The Saxons	4:21
4	The Vikings & King Alfred	9:07
5	King Harold	7:28
6	King Henry II	4:48
7	King Richard I	2:57
8	King John	4:02
9	King Edward I	6:01
10	King Edward III	7:53
11	The Black Death	3:53
12	King Richard II	3:19
13	King Henry V	5:36
14	Joan of Arc	4:02
15	King Richard III	3:50
16	The Battle of Bosworth Field	3:19
17	Henry VII	7:53
18	Henry VIII	1:47
19	Queen Mary	2:16
20	Queen Elizabeth I	5:40

21	The Spanish Armada	5:58
22	King James VI	0:49
23	The New World	2:48
24	King Charles I	4:22
25	Oliver Cromwell	4:39
26	The Second Civil War	3:23
27	The English Republic	3:55
28	The Plague	1:25
29	King James I	7:11
30	William of Orange	6:47
31	The Battle of Blenheim	2:34
32	The Battle of Ramillies	4:07
33	King George I	3:40
34	The Jacobites	6:43
35	King George III	2:43
36	The British Empire	2:43
37	The French Revolution	5:49
38	The Battle of Trafalgar	6:41
39	Napoleon	2:52
40	Wellington	4:59
41	The Hundred Days War	7:04

42	The Industrial Revolution	3:58
43	King William IV	5:56
44	The Toll Puddle 'Martyrs'	3:04
45	The Great Exhibition	1:36
46	The Crimean War	4:12
47	Gladstone & Disraeli	5:01
48	The War in Egypt	4:11
49	The Reform Bill	6:00
50	The Labour Party	3:14
51	The Boer War	5:46
52	Epilogue	1:48

Total time: 3:54:42

Cover picture: Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I by Marcus Gheeraerts.
Courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery.

Sir Winston Churchill

The Island Race

The Island Race is an adaptation of Sir Winston Churchill's four-volume *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*. Churchill worked on this superbly intelligent and resonant history during the years immediately preceding World War II; politically, he was then a voice crying in the wilderness, warning repeatedly of the dangers of appeasement and the need for rearmament. Some sense of the darkening world stage comes through in these pages: repeatedly he champions the cause of freedom, whether he is speaking of King Arthur (who 'set decent folk an example for all time') or of Magna Carta (... 'here is a law which is above the King and which even he must not break'). Chapters were sent at the outbreak of war to his friend President Roosevelt, who must have been moved by Churchill's largeness of spirit and deep love of the liberal values which the United States would also, in a few years, be called upon to defend.

When Churchill went to the Admiralty on September 3rd, 1939, 'all this was set aside. During nearly six years of war, and an even longer period in which I was occupied with my war memoirs, the book slumbered

peacefully'. Eventually, in April 1956, the first volume was published.

Churchill's purpose was to show how, over the centuries, a culture, a language, and a sense of how man might live decently and democratically, sprang from the heritage of these islands. In the full text, his material extends to colonies, Empire and Commonwealth: for this version I have concentrated on his account of the history of Britain and (largely) of England itself.

Not surprisingly, Churchill has a marvellous knack of capturing the great moments of British history in passages of vivid power – he was not only a serious writer but also an experienced journalist – but his accounts of complex movements and periods are remarkable for their clarity and acuteness. One has the sense always of a man who himself knew what power meant – the responsibility, the triumphs and disasters, the intricate interconnection of matters political, constitutional and military.

Isaiah Berlin has characterised Churchill's historical imagination as 'so strong, so comprehensive, as to encase the whole of the present and the whole of the future in a framework of a rich and multicoloured

past...a desire to find fixed moral and intellectual bearings, to give shape and character, colour and direction and coherence, to the stream of events'. This is a kind of historicism no longer fashionable amongst intellectuals. Churchill places strong emphasis on the role of great individuals in shaping events, but he also has a powerful sense of what we might call 'destiny', of the characteristics of a place, a people and a culture, and how they help to determine the course of history. This is essentially a romantic view: yet few historians can tell a story so clearly, and with such remarkable factual and interpretative grasp.

The style is at one with the approach: Churchill's own, but owing much to classical rhetoric and to the rhythm of Dr Johnson's prose. It is akin to what we find in Churchill's great wartime speeches – it has something of the colour, the grandeur and the poetry of those extraordinary expressions of national will.

Churchill takes the listener from Caesar's invasion of 55 BC to the close of Victoria's reign. He writes as persuasively on military as on constitutional history – his account of Crècy may be more stirring than his analysis of Magna Carta, but both share a sense of the excitement of events as well as a desire to find shape and meaning. Anyone seeking to gain a swift grasp of not only the main facts but also (and perhaps more

importantly) the underlying spirit of British history will find here an ideal guide.

Winston Churchill was born at Blenheim Palace in 1874. Before entering Parliament in 1900 as a Conservative, he had worked as a war correspondent covering the Boer War. He joined the Liberals after a policy disagreement and helped to pioneer the introduction of National Insurance. Churchill took responsibility for the disaster of Gallipoli in 1915; after the war he helped to establish the Irish Free State. As Chancellor of the Exchequer he was active in defeating the General Strike. In the 1930s Churchill was out of office, at odds with Conservative appeasement policy. He was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty on the outbreak of war in 1939, and succeeded Chamberlain as Prime Minister in May 1940. He led Britain through the war years to victory in 1945, only to be defeated in the General Election of 1945. He was returned as Prime Minister in 1951, resigning in 1955. His last years were lived out at Chartwell in Kent, the family home. He died in 1965.

Notes by Perry Keenlyside



Edward de Souza is a familiar figure on the London stage, having played leading roles in over a dozen West End plays and in several seasons at Stratford, The Old Vic and The National Theatre. Apart from many TV and film appearances (including *The Thirty-Nine Steps* and *The Spy Who Loved Me*), he has done numerous readings on radio and cassette, and is particularly well-known to listeners of BBC Radio as The Man in Black in *Fear on Four*. He also reads Cervantes's *Don Quixote* for Naxos AudioBooks.



Sir Edward Heath was Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1970-74 and Leader of the Conservative Party from 1965-75. He was appointed 'Father of the House of Commons' and was the longest-serving member of Parliament. In 1992 the Queen appointed him a Knight Companion of the Most Noble Order of the Garter.

He was also known for his particular interests in classical music (notably conducting) and yachting.

The music on this recording is taken from the NAXOS catalogue

ELGAR SYMPHONY NO. 1, OP. 55 & IMPERIAL MARCH, OP. 32 BBC Philharmonic / George Hurst	8.550634
ELGAR SYMPHONY NO. 2, OP. 63 BBC Philharmonic / Sir Edward Downes	8.550635
ELGAR INTRODUCTION & ALLEGRO, OP. 47 & SERENADE FOR STRINGS, OP. 20 Capella Istropolitana / Adrian Leaper	8.550331
ELGAR POMP & CIRCUMSTANCE MARCH NO. 4 CSRSO / Adrian Leaper	8.550229
ELGAR OVERTURE: COCKAIGNE (IN LONDON TOWN), OP. 40 Polish National RSO / Adrian Leaper	8.550489

Sir Winston Churchill

The Island Race

Read by **Edward de Souza**

Introduced by **Sir Edward Heath**

Here is a history of Britain by one of its finest statesmen, a man who had himself crucially shaped events during perhaps the greatest crisis of modern times. Churchill's resonant prose brings to vivid and compelling life the political, constitutional and military landmarks of our history: his purpose, to show that a sense of how man may live decently and democratically grew from the heritage of these islands.

CD ISBN:

978-962-634-047-9

View our catalogue online at

www.naxosaudiobooks.com



Abridged by Perry Keenleyside. Produced by Andrew Lyle
Post-production: Simon Weir. The Classical Recording
Company
Engineer (speech): Alan Smyth, Bucks Audio Cassettes

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. UNAUTHORISED PUBLIC PERFORMANCE,
BROADCASTING AND COPYING OF THESE COMPACT DISCS PROHIBITED.
© 1995 NAXOS Audiobooks Ltd. © 1995 NAXOS Audiobooks Ltd.
Made in Germany.

Total time
3:54:42