

The logo for Naxos AudioBooks, featuring the word "NAXOS" in a bold, serif font above the word "AudioBooks" in a smaller, sans-serif font. The text is set against a dark red background with a decorative border of small white squares above and below the text.

Leo Tolstoy
War and Peace

Read by **Neville Jason**

**CLASSIC
FICTION**



NA404212D

1	July 1805 – ‘This means war’	6:15
2	Pierre, illegitimate son of Count Behuzov	4:59
3	Prince Andrei queries Pierre’s future	6:45
4	Rum, a ledge and a dancing bear	4:51
5	The name day of St Natalya – at the Rostovs	10:04
6	A ball at the Rostovs	11:16
7	At Bleak Hills, the home of the Bolkonsky family	11:04
8	Old Prince Bolkonsky says farewell to his son	3:21
9	Kutuzov, Commander in Chief	6:16
10	Hélène Kuragin meets Pierre	8:52
11	November 1805 – The Battle of Austerlitz	4:20
12	Prince Andrei takes up the flag	9:42
13	Nikolay Rostov, Lieutenant of the Hussars	11:03
14	Pierre and Hélène – a separation	6:25
15	A new direction for Pierre	10:11
16	A new inspiration for Prince Andrei	6:37
17	A ball and a betrothal	10:07
18	Natasha goes to the opera	8:42
19	Anatole Kuragin	9:26
20	Kuragin and Dolohov plan an abduction	5:33

21	A broken engagement and threats of war	9:29
22	The trappings for another war	5:32
23	The war comes to Smolensk, near Bleak Hills	4:46
24	Old Prince Bolkonsky falls unconscious	6:05
25	Civil breakdown in Moscow – Pierre reacts	11:47
26	August 25 – the eve of the Battle of Borodino	7:22
27	Prince Andrei in battle	8:28
28	The Rostovs prepare to flee Moscow	5:55
29	The last day in Moscow	6:08
30	The conquerors arrive in the capital	5:58
31	Pierre makes contact – and a decision	7:50
32	Natasha discovers the wounded Andrei	8:49
33	Pierre captured	6:55
34	In Petersburg – an unexpected death	7:37
35	Pierre on trial	8:14
36	Prince Andrei weakens	6:06
37	The tide of the war turns	5:41
38	The flight of the French, the plight of the Russians	8:33
39	Pierre meets old friends	8:21
40	Marriage and new lives	3:56
41	A new generation, fresh with hope?	10:08

Total time: 5:10:01

Leo Tolstoy

War and Peace

Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy was born in 1828 at Yasnaya Polyana in the Tula province of Russia. He studied Oriental languages and law at the University of Kazan and after serving in the Crimean War, he wrote *The Sebastopol Stories*, which established his literary reputation. A great reformer, he spent time in St Petersburg and abroad studying educational theories which he then applied in his school for peasant children on his estate in Yasnaya Polyana. In 1862 he married Sophie Andreyevna Behrs. They had thirteen children and Tolstoy spent his time managing his estate and writing: *War and Peace* (1865-68), *Anna Karenina* (1874-76), *A Confession* (1879-82). A series of pamphlets he wrote rejecting the state and church earned him many enemies and in 1901 he was excommunicated by the Russian holy synod. He died in 1910.

Although the main narrative of *War and Peace* is a panorama of Russian life, both domestic and military, during the Napoleonic Wars, Tolstoy's main purpose was to show that the continuity of life in history is eternal; that history is influenced

by every conceivable human force. He wanted to show the whole evolution of events and personalities. Each character must change and, in turn, affect those around him. The most notable examples of course are Pierre, who changes from dissolute wastrel to responsible landlord and loving father and husband, and Prince Andrey, who, disillusioned with military life, first opts for domestic tranquillity, but then, partly through Natasha, finds new motivation and ultimately an acute self-awareness.

The abridgement of a work of this scale and breadth poses particular problems, as the plot for Tolstoy was the vehicle by which he could express his own philosophy of history; indeed, there is a long epilogue to the book in which he expounds in detail his theories and at times throughout the text there are lengthy expositions. This abridgement aims to draw the listener into the basic narrative of the book: the violence and drama of war, the passion and turmoil of love, in short, the life of aristocratic Russians as it was lived through the

turbulent years of the early nineteenth century. Tolstoy was no doubt aware that the themes of *War and Peace*, the decisions and actions of the characters, speak for themselves, but he was keen that his voice should also be heard. The following passage, which does not appear in the abridgement, encapsulates his philosophy:

Why does an apple fall when it is ripe? Is it brought down by the force of gravity? Is it because its stalk withers? Because it is dried by the sun, because it grows too heavy, or the wind shakes it, or because the boy standing under the tree wants to eat it?

None of these is the cause. They only make up the combination of conditions under which every living process of organic nature fulfils itself ... In the same way the historian who declares that Napoleon went

to Moscow because he wanted to, and perished because Alexander desired his destruction, will be just as right and wrong as the man who says that a mass weighing thousands of tons, tottering and undermined, fell in consequence of the last blow of the pickaxe wielded by the last navy. In historical events great men – so-called – are but labels serving to give a name to the event, and like labels they have the least possible connection with the event itself.

Every action of theirs, that seems to them an act of their own free-will, is in the historical sense not free at all but is bound up with the whole course of history and preordained from all eternity.

Notes by Heather Godwin

Cover picture: Officier de chasseurs de la garde impériale chargeant by Theodore Géricault.
By courtesy Musées de la Ville de Rouen.

The main characters in War and Peace

The Bolkonskys

Prince Andrei Bolkonsky – wealthy Russian prince

Princess Lisa ‘The little princess’ – Andrei’s wife

Prince Nikolay Bolkonsky – Andrei’s tyrannical father

Princess Marya – Andrei’s sister

The Rostovs

Count Rostov

Countess Rostov

Natasha – their beautiful daughter

Nikolay – their eldest son

Petya – their youngest son

Sonya – cousin to Natasha

The Behuzovs

Pierre Behuzov – illegitimate son of a wealthy count

Count Behuzov – Pierre’s wealthy father

The Kuragins

Prince Vassily

Anatole – Prince Vassily’s son

Hélène – Prince Vassily’s daughter

Other characters

Dolohov – a gambler and socialite

General Kutuzov – Russian commander-in-chief

Napoleon Bonaparte – French commander-in-chief

Marya Dimitryevna – Moscow matron, friend of the Rostovs

Osip Alexyevitch Bazdyev – a distinguished Freemason

The main action of the story takes place between 1805 and 1813.

The music on this recording is taken from the NAXOS catalogue

BORODIN PRINCE IGOR (RUSSIAN FESTIVAL) CSR Symphony Orchestra (Bratislava)/Anthony Bramall	8.550085
TCHAIKOVSKY SOUVENIR DE FLORENCE Vienna Chamber Orchestra/Philippe Entremont	8.550404
VOLKMANN RICHARD III OVERTURE ETC (BATTLE MUSIC) CSR Symphony Orchestra (Bratislava)/Ondrej Lenard	8.550230
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RIMSKY KORSAKOV SYMPHONY NO 1 'ANTAR' St Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra/André Anichanov	8.550811
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Leo Tolstoy

War and Peace

Read by **Neville Jason**

War and Peace is one of the greatest monuments in world literature. Set against the dramatic backdrop of the Napoleonic Wars, it examines the relationship between the individual and the relentless march of history. Here are the universal themes of love and hate, ambition and despair, youth and age, expressed with a swirling vitality which makes the book as accessible today as it was when it was first published in 1869.



Neville Jason trained at RADA where he was awarded the Diction Prize by Sir John Gielgud. He has worked with the English Stage Co., the Old Vic Company and the RSC as well as in films, TV and musicals. He is frequently heard on radio. He also reads *Far From The Madding Crowd*, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* for Naxos AudioBooks.

*"Executed with scrupulous care,
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THE TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT

CD ISBN:

978-962-634-042-4

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Post-production: Simon Weir, The Classical Recording
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Total time
5:10:01