

Perry Keenlyside
**The History
of English Literature**

Read by **Derek Jacobi** and cast

**NON-
FICTION**

HISTORIES



-
- THE AGE OF CHAUCER**
- 1 **Geoffrey Chaucer** 1343-1400 7:13
The Canterbury Tales, ?1390-1400 *
- 2 Extract from *The Miller's Tale* 2:42
read by Anthony Donovan
- 3 Extract from *The Franklin's Tale* 3:29
From The Canterbury Tales I, Naxos AudioBooks
- ⦿ NA304412 • ISBN 962634 0444
- 4 **William Langland** c.1330-c.1386 2:04
The Book Concerning Piers Plowman, date unknown *
- 5 **The 'Gawain' poet** birth and death dates unknown 2:55
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, 1375? #
- 6 **John Gower** ?1330-1408 3:34
Confessio Amantis, 1390 §
- THE END OF CHIVALRY**
- 7 **John Lydgate** ?1370-1449 1:53
The Duplicity of Women, mid 15th century *
- 8 **Anon** 1:20
I Sing of a Maiden, early 15th century §
- 9 **Anon** 1:19
Carol of Agincourt, c.1415
- 10 **Anon** 1:03
Black-smutted Smiths, mid 15th century *

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- 11 **Sir Thomas Malory** ?1420-1471 6:40
Le Morte d'Arthur, 1470
From **The Death of Arthur** read by Philip Madoc
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA300112 • ISBN 9626340010
- 12 **John Skelton** ?1460-1529 2:58
Lullaby, c.1500 #
- 13 **Sir Thomas Wyatt** 1503-1542 2:53
They flee from me... #
- 14 **Sir Thomas More** 1478-1535. *Utopia* 2:17
- 15 **Thomas Cranmer**, editor 1489-1556 2:48
The Book of Common Prayer, 1549 *
- THE TRIUMPHS OF ORIANA** 2:18
- 16 **Sir Walter Raleigh** ?1554-1618 2:11
- 17 *As You Came from the Holy Land* #
- Edmund Spenser** ?1552-1599 3:16
- 18 *The Faerie Queene*, 1589
From **The Faerie Queene** read by John Moffatt
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA315912 • ISBN 962634 0029
- 19 **Sir Philip Sidney** 1554-1586 2:54
Astrophel and Stella, 1582 ^S
- 20 **William Shakespeare** 1564-1616 ***The Sonnets***, 1609 4:32

-
- [21] *Three Sonnets* 3:02
Shall I compare thee to a summer's day
Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Let me not to the marriage of true minds
From **The Sonnets** read by Alex Jennings
Naxos AudioBooks
- ⌚ NA314512 • ISBN 962634 1459
- [22] **Christopher Marlowe** 1564-1593 1:15
The Passionate Shepherd to his Love, pub. 1599 [§]
- [23] **Ben Jonson** 1572-1637 1:30
To Celia: Drink to Me Only, pub. 1616 read by Anton Lesser
From **Popular Poetry Popular Verse** read by Lesser/Russell Beale
Naxos AudioBooks
- ⌚ NA201612 • ISBN 962634 0169
- [24] **John Donne** 1572-1631 3:45
Busie old Foole, Unrullie Sunne *
- [25] *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning*, prob. late 1590s * 1:25
- [26] *Holy Sonnets* ?1610 * 1:59
- [27] **Elizabethan Drama** 2:42
- [28] **Christopher Marlowe** 0:58
Dr Faustus, late 1590s *
- [29] **William Shakespeare** 2:00
- [30] *Henry IV Part I*, 1598 * 4:40

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- [31] *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1600 1:40
- [32] *King Lear*, 1605 * # 4:40
- [33] **The Authorised Version of the Bible**, 1611 2:33
The Song of Solomon read by Josette Simon
From **The Old Testament – Selections** read by Madoc/Lesser/Sheen /Simon
Naxos AudioBooks
- 🕒 NA609112 • ISBN 962634 0916
- [34] **Francis Bacon** 1561-1626 2:10
What is Truth? – Essays, 1597-1625 #
- [35] **John Donne** 1572-1631 2:44
Sermons, pub. posthumously 1640-1660 *
- PURITAN'S PROGRESS** 3:17
- [36] **Richard Lovelace** 1618-1657
To Lucasta, Going to the Wars §
- [37] **George Herbert** 1593-1633 2:47
Love, pub. 1633 §
- [38] **Henry Vaughan** 1621-1695 2:25
The Retreate, 1650 *
- [39] **Robert Herrick** 1591-1674. *To Daffodils*, 1648 # 1:32
- [40] **Richard Lovelace** 0:54
To Althea, from Prison #
- [41] **John Milton** 1608-1674 3:42

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- 42 *Paradise Lost*, 1667 1:44
From **Paradise Lost** read by Anton Lesser
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA300212 • ISBN 962634 0029
- 43 **Andrew Marvell** 1621-1678 2:12
The Definition of Love ^s
- 44 *To His Coy Mistress*, pub. 1681 ^s 2:06
- 45 **John Bunyan** 1628-1688 1:53
- 46 *The Pilgrim's Progress* 1678 1:55
From **The Pilgrim's Progress** read by Edward de Souza
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA417112 • ISBN 962634 1718
- RESTORATION**
- 47 **Daniel Defoe** 1660-1731 2:35
- 48 *Moll Flanders*, 1722 3:50
From **Moll Flanders** read by Heather Bell
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA300812 • ISBN 962634 0088
- 49 **John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester** 1647-1680 1:42
A Song of a Young Lady to her Ancient Lover, ?1670 read by Emma Fielding
From **Popular Poetry Popular Verse Volume II**, read by Britton/Britton/Fielding
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA207212 • ISBN 962634 4072X

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- 50 **John Dryden** 1631-1700 3:44
Song for St Cecilia's Day, 1687 #
- 51 **William Congreve** 1670-1729 3:50
The Way of the World, 1700 § #
- 52 **THE AUGUSTAN AGE** 3:45
Alexander Pope 1688-1744
- 53 *The Rape of the Lock*, 1712 * 1:04
- 54 *Essay on Man*, 1733-1734 * 2:32
- 55 **Jonathan Swift** 1667-1745 2:15
- 56 *Gulliver's Travels*, 1726 2:20
From Gulliver's Travels read by Neville Jason
- Naxos AudioBooks**
- NA307712 • ISBN 962634 0770
- 57 **Samuel Johnson** 1709-1784 2:39
- 58 *Preface to Shakespeare*, 1765 * 1:01
- 59 **Henry Fielding** 1708-1754 2:06
- 60 *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews and his Friend,
Mr Abraham Adams*, 1742 * 2:58
- 61 **Thomas Gray** 1716-1771 3:54
Elegy Written in a Country Church-Yard, 1751 *
- ROMANTIC REVOLUTION** 3:26
- 62 **William Blake** 1757-1827
Auguries of Innocence *

-
- 63 *Mock on, Mock on Voltaire, Rousseau*, 1803 * 1:43
- 64 **William Wordsworth** 1770-1850 2:07
Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey, 1798
From **Great Poets of the Romantic Age** read by Michael Sheen
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA202112 • ISBN 962634 0215
- 65 **Samuel Taylor Coleridge** 1772-1834 3:58
Kubla Khan, 1798
From **Great Poets of the Romantic Age** read by Michael Sheen
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA202112 • ISBN 962634 0215
- 66 The Gothic Novel – **Mary Shelley** *Frankenstein* 1:49
- 67 **Jane Austen** 1775-1817 2:29
- 68 *Emma*, 1816 4:07
From **Emma** read by Juliet Stevenson
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA309512 • ISBN 962634 0959
- 69 **Percy Bysshe Shelley** 1792-1822 2:24
- 70 *Ode to the West Wind*, 1819 0:53
From **Great Poets of the Romantic Age** read by Michael Sheen
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA202112 • ISBN 962634 0215

-
- 71 **George Gordon, Lord Byron** 1788-1824 2:20
Fragment, 1818 ⁵
So We'll Go No More a-Roving, 1817
From **Great Poets of the Romantic Age** read by Michael Sheen
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA202112 • ISBN 962634 0215
- 72 **John Keats** 1795-1821 4:23
Ode on Melancholy
Ode to a Nightingale
Ode on a Grecian Urn, 1818
- 73 **FAITH AND DOUBT – THE VICTORIAN AGE** 3:16
Alfred, Lord Tennyson 1809-1892
Be near me when my light is low ⁵
- 74 **Charles Dickens** 1812-1870 6:34
Hard Times, 1854
From **Hard Times** read by Anton Lesser
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA311012 • ISBN 962634 1106
Great Expectations, 1861
From **Great Expectations** read by Anton Lesser
Naxos AudioBooks
- NA408212 • ISBN 962634 0827
- 75 Children's literature 1:59

-
- The Detective Novel
- 76** **The Brontës: Charlotte Brontë** 1816-1855;
Ann Brontë 1820-1849
Emily Brontë 1818-1848 6:13
Wuthering Heights, 1847
From **Wuthering Heights** read by Freda Dowie
Naxos AudioBooks
- ⌚ NA306312 • ISBN 962634 0630
- 77** **Matthew Arnold** 1822-1888 2:03
Dover Beach, 1867 §
- 78** **George Eliot** 1819-1880 3:29
Middlemarch, 1872
From **Middlemarch** read by Carole Boyd
Naxos AudioBooks
- ⌚ NA619612 • ISBN 962634 1963
- 79** **Alfred, Lord Tennyson** 3:57
In Memoriam, 1850 §
Tears, Idle Tears, 1847 §
- 80** **Christina Rossetti** 1830-1894 2:21
A Pause, 1853 •
- 81** **Robert Browning** 1812-1889 3:31
My Last Duchess, 1842 §

-
- 82 **Rudyard Kipling** 1865-1936 1:57
Recessional, 1897 read by Anton Lesser
From **Popular Poetry Popular Verse** read by Lesser/Russell Beale
Naxos AudioBooks
- ⦿ NA201612 • ISBN 962634 0169
- 83 **THE AGE OF ANXIETY** 5:49
Thomas Hardy 1840-1928
Neutral Tones, 1867 read by Bruce Alexander
From **Winter Words – Poetry and Personal Writings of Thomas Hardy**
Naxos AudioBooks
- ⦿ NA219312 • ISBN 962634 1939
Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 1891
From **Tess of the d'Urbervilles** read by Imogen Stubbs
Naxos AudioBooks
- ⦿ NA314712 • ISBN 962634 1475
- 84 **Gerard Manley Hopkins** 1844-1889 3:01
No worst, there is none, 1885 *
- 85 **Alfred Edward Housman** 1859-1936 1:08
- 86 *Into my heart an air that kills (A Shropshire Lad)*, 1896 # 0:49
- 87 **Henry James** 1843-1916 2:20
- 88 **Joseph Conrad** 1857-1924 4:18
Heart of Darkness, 1902
From **Youth/Heart of Darkness** read by Brian Cox

Naxos AudioBooks

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89 **Herbert George Wells** 1866-1946 3:57
The War of the Worlds, 1898 #

90 **David Herbert Lawrence** 1885-1930 5:08
Odour of Chrysanthemums #

91 **Wilfred Owen** 1893-1918 4:17
Futility, 1917-1918 read by Sarah Woodward
From **Poets of the Great War** read by Maloney/Sheen/Britton/Woodward

Naxos AudioBooks

⦿ NA210912 • ISBN 962634 1092

92 **William Butler Yeats** 1865-1939 1:25
The Second Coming, Collected Poems read by Tony Britton
From **Popular Poetry Popular Verse Volume II** read by Britton/Britton/Fielding

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⦿ NA207212 • ISBN 962634 4072X

93 **James Joyce** 1882-1941 4:04
Dubliners, 1914
From **Dubliners**

Naxos AudioBooks Dubliners read by Jim Norton

⦿ NAX31312 • ISBN 962634 3133

Finnegans Wake, 1939
From **Finnegans Wake** read by Jim Norton

Naxos AudioBooks

⦿ NA516312 • ISBN 962634 1637

94 **Virginia Woolf** 1882-1941

To the Lighthouse, 1927

From **To the Lighthouse** read by Juliet Stevenson

3:14

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⦿ NA203612 • ISBN 962634 0363

95 **Evelyn Waugh** 1903-1966

Decline and Fall, 1928 #

3:24

96 **George Orwell** 1903-1950

Coming Up for Air, 1939 *

3:08

97 **T.S. Eliot** 1888-1965

2:38

98 **Wystan Hugh Auden** 1907-1973

Lay your sleeping head, my love, 1940 [§]

1:28

POST-WAR, POST-MODERN

99 **Cecil Day-Lewis** 1904-1972

3:00

100 **Keith Douglas** 1920-1944

How to Kill, 1943 [§]

1:12

101 **Dylan Thomas** 1914-1953

A Refusal to Mourn the Death, By Fire, of a Child in London, 1940 *

1:57

102 **Ivy Compton-Burnett** 1892-1969; **Jean Rhys**

1894-1979; **Doris Lessing** 1919-

3:10

103	Muriel Spark 1918- <i>Memento Mori</i> , 1959 • Iris Murdoch 1919-1999 Graham Green 1904-1991	4:55
104	William Golding 1911-1993 <i>The Spire</i> , 1964 # Angus Wilson 1913-1991 Anthony Powell 1905-2000	6:09
105	Kingsley Amis 1922-1994 <i>Lucky Jim</i> , 1954 *	2:35
106	Philip Larkin 1922-1985 <i>Coming</i> , 1955 *	2:54
107	Sir John Betjeman 1906-1984 <i>The Metropolitan Railway: Baker Street Station Buffet</i> , 1958 #	1:59
108	Ted Hughes 1930-1998 <i>Thrushes</i> , 1960 §	2:13
109	James Graham Ballard 1930- <i>Empire of the Sun</i> , 1984 §	4:10
110	Carol Ann Duffy 1955- <i>Pilate's Wife</i> , 1999 •	2:19
111	Epilogue	2:10

Total time on CDs 1-4: 5:16:56

Perry Keenlyside

The History of English Literature

This is, inevitably, a very brief survey of English literature, and I had better say at once something about the limitations I have imposed upon myself. I begin in 1375 or so because Anglo-Saxon writing, however fine, is in a language which is pretty well unreadable except by those who have studied it; the first flowering of genius in something approaching modern English comes in the second half of the fourteenth century. You will not find here much mention of Irish, Scottish or Welsh writing: to do these literatures justice, each would require its own history, although I have of necessity mentioned such influential figures as Joyce and Yeats in Irish literature, or Dylan Thomas in Welsh. Were this to be a history of literature in English, I would obviously have had to include American and post-colonial writers (Eliot and James are present because they took British citizenship). Dramatists are treated briefly because the history of drama is a subject in itself – see David Timson's *History of Theatre* on the Naxos label. The major exception to this rule is Shakespeare, because it seems to me that he belongs almost as much to literary culture

– and, indeed, culture at large – as he does to drama in particular.

Every literary enthusiast will have his or her favourite authors and texts, and I am well aware that some listeners will be disappointed, even outraged, by the omission of one or more of those favourites. I can only apologise, and confess that I have inevitably been influenced by my own particular loves, however hard I have striven to achieve balance. It would not take Sherlock Holmes (or indeed any great literary detective) to discover that Hardy, Chaucer, Austen and Larkin (to name but a few) are close to my heart... Perhaps I should also say here that literature, for me, has a great deal more to do with pleasure than with moral earnestness or the arrangement of authors in order of merit: if reading isn't enjoyable – and even profoundly disturbing works like *King Lear* are, in a sense, enjoyable – then it is probably a pointless activity. If literature *does* modify life and how we live it, it can surely only do so through the medium of pleasurable appreciation.

I have tried to convey here something of the texts – and contexts – of the major

writers in the English literary canon, quoting enough to give a flavour of each author and attempting to show a little of how they represent or express the age in which they lived. Many of us (myself included) find it helpful to be reminded who was alive and writing at a certain time, and who were his or her contemporaries: the very speed of this survey may provide a clearer overview of changes and developments through the centuries.

A history like this inevitably begs the question: what is literature, and how does it differ from other kinds of writing? It is impossible to provide a satisfactory short answer, but here goes... Literature is writing which is born of a consciously artistic intent to create something which not only expresses a perceived truth about the human condition, but also tries to do so in a manner which is aesthetically satisfying and productive of pleasure. Pamphlets, most journalism, this audiobook, etc., do not therefore qualify... And what (I hear you cry) are the distinguishing features of *English* literature, specifically? No space to do justice to this question, either, but perhaps it has something to do with its ability to range between the sublime and the everyday, the infinite and the particular: English literature that is overtly political or philosophical is

rarely entirely successful – unlike, say, the French, the English have little taste for large abstract theories, and prefer to build from the ground upwards – from the quotidian to the universal. George Eliot, through the character of Dorothea Brooke in *Middlemarch*, expresses this tendency to perfection: the novel has a wide emotional, historical and intellectual scope, and yet its effects are repeatedly achieved through a particular and beautifully-rendered *moment* – the moment, perhaps, when Mrs Bulstrode comes quietly in to forgive her disgraced husband, or when Mr Casaubon's repulsive coldness melts briefly as he sees and is touched by the youthful ardour and vulnerability of his watching wife.

The 'plight' of literature, or of the novel, or the poem, is often discussed nowadays, mainly because of the impact of other media and forms of entertainment: the very fact that this is an audiobook is revealing. Yet more books than ever before are being bought – if not always read – and there will, I believe, always be a hunger for imaginative writing which enlarges the mind or spirit, which gives a sense of shape or meaning to the complicated business of being alive. I hope that this history may make a small contribution to encouraging that process.

Acknowledgements

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Street Station Buffet* by permission of Desmond
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Betjeman

Coming by Philip Larkin, by kind permission of
Marvell Press.



Perry Keenlyside was born in 1950. Educated at Charterhouse and Trinity Hall, Cambridge, he has taught English at independent schools since 1973. Apart from literature, his special interests include music – in his youth he was a competent amateur oboist – anything to do with English history, and France. He is also a devoted fan of Liverpool Football Club. Other Naxos titles written or edited by Perry Keenlyside include *The Life of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*, *Poets of the Great War* and *Realms of Gold: The Letters and Poems of John Keats*.



Derek Jacobi is one of Britain's leading actors having made his mark on stage, film and television – and notably on audiobook. He is particularly known for the roles of *I Claudius* and *Brother Caedfael*, both of which he has recorded for audiobook. His extensive theatrical credits, from London's West End to Broadway, include numerous roles encompassing the whole range of theatre. He also reads *The History of Theatre* for Naxos AudioBooks.



John Shrapnel was born in Birmingham and brought up in Manchester, John Shrapnel joined the National Theatre (under Laurence Olivier) playing many classical roles including Banquo and Orsino. With the RSC he has appeared in classical Greek theatre as well as numerous Shakespearean plays. His TV work varies from Stoppard's *Professional Foul* and *Vanity Fair* to *Inspector Morse* and *Hornblower*. Films include *Nicholas and Alexandra*, *One Hundred and One Dalmatians* and the role of Gaius in *Gladiator*.



Jonathan Keeble – Theatre includes leading roles at Manchester's Royal Exchange, Coventry, Liverpool, Exeter, Lancaster and West Yorkshire Playhouse. TV includes *People Like Us*, *The Two Of Us* and *Deptford Grafitti*. Jonathan has featured in over 250 radio plays for the BBC and was a member of the Radio Drama Company. For Naxos Audiobooks: *Black Beauty*, *Classic Chilling Tales*, *The Soldier's Tale*, *Macbeth*, *Oedipus the King*.



Teresa Gallagher has performed in many leading roles in both plays and musicals across the country, London's West End, and Off Broadway. In addition, she is a well-known voice to listeners of BBC Radio Drama. Her work on film includes *The Misadventures of Margaret* and Mike Leigh's *Topsy-Turvy*.



Anton Lesser is one of Britain's leading classical actors. He has played many of the principal Shakespearean roles for the Royal Shakespeare Company, including Petruchio, Romeo and Richard III. Appearances in major TV drama productions include *The Cherry Orchard*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *The Mill on the Floss* and *The Politician's Wife*. He also reads Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Homer's *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad* and Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Hard Times* and *Great Expectations* for Naxos AudioBooks.

The music on this recording is taken from the NAXOS catalogue

HOLBORNE/ROBINSON PAVANS AND GALLIARDS	8.553874
Christopher Wilson, Shirley Rumsey, lutes	
WARLOCK CAPRIOL SUITE	8.550823
Bournemouth Sinfonietta, Richard Studt, director	
BACH SINFONIAS VOL 4	8.553367
Failoni Orchestra, Hanspeter Gmür	
LAWES CONSORT MUSIC	8.550601
Rose Consort of Viols	
PURCELL THE TEMPEST	8.554262
Arcadia Baroque Ensemble, Kevin Mallon	
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Rose Consort of Viols	
HAYDN SYMPHONY NO 104	8.550287
Capella Istropolitana, Barry Wordsworth	
PARRY SYMPHONY NO 2	8.553469
Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Andrew Penny	
HOLMES IRLANDE	8.223449
Rheinland-Pfalz Philharmonic, Samuel Friedmann	

Music programmed by Nicolas Soames

Perry Keenlyside

The History of English Literature

Read by **Derek Jacobi** and cast

*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day...
Far from the madding Crowd's ignoble Strife...
Emma felt the tears running down her cheeks...
I saw that the bride within the bridal dress had withered...
Move him into the sun...*

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THE INDEPENDENT

CD ISBN:

978-962-634-221-3

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Produced by Nicolas Soames.
Edited by Sarah Butcher, SBS.
Engineer (speech): Mark Smith. Motivation Sound Studios
Cover Illustration by Hennesch Alles.

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Total time
5:16:56