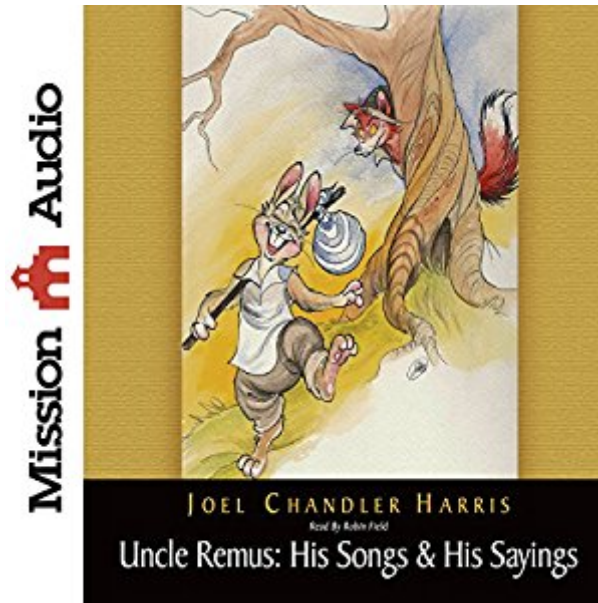


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# Uncle Remus: His Songs & His Sayings



## Synopsis

Working at a plantation in his youth, Joel Chandler Harris found that much of his shyness disappeared in the slave quarters, and his background as the illegitimate son of an Irish immigrant helped fuse a close bond with the slaves. The language of his new friends and the African-American animal tales they shared later became the inspiration for Joel's beloved Uncle Remus stories. When Harris recorded the many Brer Rabbit stories from the African-American oral tradition, little did he know that it would revolutionize children's literature. As an adult, Harris committed to healing post-Civil War America, stressing regional and racial reconciliation during and after the Reconstruction era.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 5 hours and 35 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Mission Audio

Audible.com Release Date: September 10, 2010

Language: English

ASIN: B0042N8TWC

Best Sellers Rank: #203 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Drama #321 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Literary Collections #866 in Books > Literature & Fiction > United States > Anthologies

## Customer Reviews

My mother would read us Uncle Remus as children and I always loved to hear what Brer Rabbit was up to. After reading this account I realized that she must have been reading a different version. It is kind of difficult at first to understand some of the words the way they are written but once you get the cadence it becomes easier.

This book was banned from many libraries for many years because it is set in the time of Afroamerican slavery in the South. I find it, rather, an honor to the history and literature of a great people, and have loved the book as long as I can remember. The expressive dialect is all but unintelligible to those who did not learn it as children, but for me, it is a joy to read, bringing back the beloved voices of beloved friends.

Joel Chandler Harris was a an unrepentant southern sympathizer who attitudes towards race are, in my opinion, repugnant. And he did use the character of Uncle Remus in certain stories that supported his twisted viewpoint. Nevertheless, it is my opinion that the animal stories, which Harris borrowed from African slaves on his plantation and which were not original with him, are inventive, funny, and reflect a wonderful view of the foibles of people in the characters of Brer Rabbit, et. al. These particular stories are in fact, I believe, reflective of the cleverness, the humor, inventiveness and the traditions of the African slaves who passed them along until he wrote them down. I personally read these stories (after carefully screening them) to my children night after night and neither I nor they were "contaminated" with Harris' dismal philosophy. Highly recommended, but, as I say, because of Harris' philosophy, care must be taken, particularly about some of his later "stories", which were no more than apologies for his retarded viewpoints. I would also mention that the dialect versions of the stories, which can be mastered fairly easily, and should be all means be read aloud, are far better than versions converted to "modern english". Some of the dialectal expressions are absolutely charming.

This book was really well written and perfectly shows the time period. I never would have read it if I hadn't taken the class that I did this semester which required me to read it. This isn't my type of story, but then again not many are. If you like to read stories that were from our past when slaves were prevalent, then this is the perfect book for you.

These are the old stories from my childhood. Had a big, illustrated Uncle Remus book from Disney, I think. These are the full stories and it is so fun to flash back to those stories. It is also interesting to see the fabric of a part of life in those times that was not known/understood by me as a young child.

Back in the days when I was a child Uncle Remus was my hero, I loved the stories that inspired my imagination. The foxes and rabbits weren't just animals I saw in the woods around my home..they were lively characters. Uncle Remus was real to me, he was kind, colorful, and loved kids. I might add that Mama read these books to me before the days of Walt Disney. I think that the characters from the hand of Joel Chandler Harris were even larger than those on the screen. Uncle Remus helped inspire me to become an actor.

My grandmother would sing many of these songs to me as a child... had forgotten some of the

words... now I can share with my Grandson!

I have just been reading the Uncle Remus stories, written down and (profited from) by a white (red-haired Irish) man, Joel Chandler Harris, (who was not accepted in white society at that time because of his lineage - what a world!) Harris clearly loved, and was loved by, the black storyteller who imparted the stories originally, judging by the text. The stories are charming, funny, full of love and horrifically, nauseatingly racist, and brutal. Perhaps I take the antics of the characters all too seriously, but I do see how these "dis-anthropomorphized" characters are human, coping with a world lacking in opportunity or mutual concern. I am so torn, I want to share these stories with folks, because they are so funny and clever, but the underlying culture is so oblivious to its dehumanizing habits. Definitely not for children. On the other hand, someone could write a great thesis on this collection.

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