



The Wind in the Willows

Kenneth Grahame

Read by:	Adrian Praetzelis	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	6 hours and 53 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1193
Language:	English	UPC:	0701236969115
Style:	Solo	MSLP:	\$9.99
Genre:	Children's Fiction		

The Wind in the Willows began as a series of bedtime stories author Kenneth Grahame invented for his only son and has since become a classic tale of loyal friendship and madcap adventures that has delighted generations since its first appearance in 1908. It features four main animal characters, Toad, Rat, Mole and Badger, who possess distinctly anthropomorphic character attributes and spend time “messaging about in boats” on the River Thames and getting in and out of various scrapes in the Thames Valley. In the main, the story centers on the impulsive obsessions of the rich, jovial, amiable but conceited and aimless Toad and the efforts of his loyal friends to rescue him from the consequences of his misadventures. Of course, each has his

own surprises and challenges along the way. *The Wind in the Willows* was initially rejected by numerous publishers until President Theodore Roosevelt campaigned for its publication. He later wrote Grahame that he had “read it and reread it, and have come to accept the characters as old friends.” The story has undergone numerous adaptations for the stage, film, radio and television, and appears at number 16 on the BBC’s 2003 Big Read, a list of Britain’s best-loved novels of all time.

Kenneth Grahame (March 8, 1859 – July 6, 1932) was a British writer best known for the children’s literature classics *The Wind in the Willows* and *The Reluctant Dragon*. Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, he was raised with his siblings after the death of their mother by his grandmother in the village of Cookham in Berkshire. The roomy, dilapidated house called The Mount and its spacious grounds in an idyllic setting with ample opportunities for boating and riverside rambles is thought to be the inspiration for the setting of *The Wind in the Willows*. Prevented from attending Oxford by the cost, he went to work for the Bank of England in 1879 and rose through the ranks to become Secretary before taking early retirement in 1908 for health reasons. He married Elspeth Thompson in 1899. Their only child, Alastair, born a year later, evidenced a headstrong and wayward nature that inspired the character of Mr. Toad. He began to publish stories while in his 20’s, and published several collections in the 1890’s. *Dream Days* (1898) contains the classic *The Reluctant Dragon*. *The Wind in the Willows* initially received a generally negative reception from critics, who were expecting more of the same from his earlier works. The public loved it, however, and it required numerous printings and the issuance of additional illustrated editions to keep up with the demand.