

My Uncle Silas



Pages:	154
Goodreads Rating:	4.01
Series	Uncle Silas Series
Language	English
Author:	H.E. Bates
ISBN13:	9780140012651
ISBN10:	0140012656
Genre:	Fiction
Published:	1958 by Penguin Books Ltd

[My Uncle Silas.pdf](#)

[My Uncle Silas.epub](#)

In his preface to 'My Uncle Silas', Bates says that the character of Silas and a number of the stories in this volume are firmly based on real events in the life of Joseph Betts, husband of the author's great aunt Mary Ann. Bates characterizes Silas as "the original Adam, rich and lusty and robust" and "a protest against the Puritanical poison in the English blood," and he adds: "to those who find these stories too Rabelaisian, far-fetched, or robust, my reply would be that, as pictures of English country life, they are in reality understated." This volume contains: The Lily, The Revelation, The Wedding, Finger Wet Finger Dry, A Funny Thing, The Sow & Silas, The Shooting Party, Silas the Good, A Happy Man, Silas & Goliath, A Silas Idyll, The Race, The Death of Uncle Silas, The Return. Published in England in October 1939, these 14 tales offer sly, affectionate glimpses of the narrator's great-uncle Silas--a rural oldster of the earthy, boozy, incorrigible school. In a voice at once dreamy, devilish, innocent, mysterious and triumphant, 93-year-old Silas recalls his more youthful days of poaching and wooing.

In ""The Revelation,"" the narrator watches old Silas being given a bath by his surly, longtime

housekeeper--and realizes for the first time that their relationship is (or at least Once was) intensely romantic. Elsewhere, Silas chortles over tall-tales of his Casanova days, trying to out-lie his dandyish, equally ancient brother-in-law Cosmo.

(In one anecdote, Silas hides from a jealous husband in a cellar for days, eating ""stewed nails"" to keep from starving to death.) There are nostalgic vignettes of roof-thatching, pig-wrestling, and grave-digging--plus, in ""A Happy Man,"" a somewhat more serious sketch of Silas' old chum Walter, an outwardly cheerful ex-soldier who eventually succumbs (with traumatic memories of 1880s Asian campaigns) to madness. And, inevitably, ""The Death of Uncle Silas"" arrives at the close--though, even on his deathbed, Silas is sneaking snorts of wine . .

. while, in an epilogue, the narrator shows that he's inherited a wee bit of his great-uncle's mischief.