

“A Fishing Party”  
by Thornton Burgess

“I never knew before how handsome Rattles is,” thought Peter. He was about the size of Yellow Wing the Flicker, but his head made him look bigger than he really was. The feathers on top of his head stood up in a crest, as if they had been brushed the wrong way. His head, back, wings and tail were a bluish-gray. His throat was white and he wore a white collar. In front of each eye was a little white spot. Across his chest was a belt of bluish-gray, and underneath he was white. There were tiny spots of white on his wings and on his tail. His bill was black and, like that of Longlegs,

was long, stout, and sharp. It looked almost too big for his size.

Presently Rattles flew out and plunged into the Smiling Pool, this time, very near to where Longlegs was patiently waiting. He caught a fish, for it is not often that Rattles misses. It was smaller than the first one Peter had seen him catch. This time as soon as he got back to the Big Hickory-tree, he swallowed it without thumping it against the branch. As for Longlegs, he looked thoroughly put out. For a moment he stood glaring angrily up at Rattles. When Rattles had plunged so close to Longlegs he had frightened all the fish. Finally Longlegs seemed to make up his mind that there was room

for but one fisherman at a time at the Smiling Pool. Spreading his great wings, folding his long neck back on his shoulders, and dragging his long legs out behind him, he flew heavily away in the direction of the Big River.

Rattles remained long enough to catch another little fish, and with a harsh rattle flew down the Laughing Brook. “I would know him anywhere by that rattle,” thought Peter. “There isn’t any one who can make a noise anything like it. I wonder where he has gone to now. He must have a nest, but I haven’t the least idea what kind of a nest he builds. Hello! There’s Grandfather Frog over on his green lily pad. Perhaps he can tell me.”

“The Lad Who Rode Sidesaddle”  
by James Baldwin

“I understand,” said Mr. Webster.  
“Our neighbor, Johnson, is sending the nag to Exeter for the use of a lady who is to ride back with me. He does me a favor by letting you to ride on the nag. I do him a favor by taking care of it.”

“But won’t it look rather funny for me to ride to Exeter on a sidesaddle?”

“If a lady can ride on it, perhaps Dan Webster can do as much.”

They set out on their journey. Mr. Webster rode in front, and Daniel, on the old gray nag, followed. The roads were muddy, and slowly they went. It took them two days to reach Exeter.

# “The Golden Goose”

By Andrew Lang

After a time they all came to a town where a King reigned whose daughter was so serious and solemn that no one could ever manage to make her laugh. So the King had decreed that whoever should succeed in making her laugh should marry her.

When Dullhead heard this he marched before the Princess with his goose and its appendages, and as soon as she saw these seven people continually running after each other she burst out laughing, and could not stop herself. Then Dullhead claimed her as his bride, but the King, who did not much fancy him as a son-in-law,

made all sorts of objections, and told him he must first find a man who could drink up a whole cellarful of wine.

Dullhead bethought him of the little grey man, who could, he felt sure, help him; so he went off to the forest, and on the very spot where he had cut down the tree he saw a man sitting with a most dismal expression of face. Dullhead asked him what he was taking so much to heart, and the man answered, “I don’t know how I am ever to quench this terrible thirst I am suffering from. Cold water doesn’t suit me at all. To be sure I’ve emptied a whole barrel of wine, but what is one drop on a hot stone?”

“I think I can help you,” said Dullhead. “Come with me, and you shall drink to your heart’s content.” So he took him to the King’s cellar, and the man sat down before the huge casks and drank and drank till he drank up the whole contents of the cellar before the day closed.

Then Dullhead asked once more for his bride, but the King felt vexed at the idea of a stupid fellow whom people called “Dullhead” carrying off his daughter, and he began to make fresh conditions. He required Dullhead to find a man who could eat a mountain of bread. Dullhead did not wait to consider long but went straight off to the forest.