

Introduction

The *Golden Goose and Other Stories* is a collection of traditional tales, sometimes called folk tales. They are very old; about times long, long ago and places far, far away. Strange things happen. Animals speak. Wishes come true. People sleep for a hundred years. Witches, fairies and other magical people play a part in these stories.

Most folk tales began quite simply as part of family life. No one knows who first made them up. Usually older people told them to younger people. They remembered the stories they liked, and later told them to their own children. This went on for hundreds of years.

Then the stories were put into writing. We do know something about the people who first wrote the stories down.

About Charles Perrault

Charles Perrault collected stories like *Cinderella*, *Puss in Boots*, *The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods*, *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Toads and Diamonds*. You will find the last two in this book. Perrault lived in France in the 17th century. He was a lawyer, but he is well known as a writer. He wrote his book of folk tales over three hundred years ago. The book became famous. Later, it was translated into English. It was called *The Tales of Mother Goose*.

About the Brothers Grimm

Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm were brothers. They were

born in the 1780s in Germany. They worked in Berlin as university professors, and became interested in old stories and fairy tales. They did not want these stories to be lost, so they asked people to tell them the old stories they knew. They spent their free time travelling from place to place, collecting these tales. They wrote them down and published a book of over 200 stories in 1819. You can read five of them in this book: *The Golden Goose*, *The Frog Prince*, *The Wolf and the Seven Kids*, *Hansel and Gretel* and *Rosebud*.

About Carlo Collodi

The story of Pinocchio was written by an Italian man, Carlo Collodi (his real name was Carlo Lorenzini). He was asked to translate Charles Perrault's stories into Italian. Later, a friend started a magazine for children. The first part of a story made up by Collodi appeared in the first edition of this magazine. It was called *A Story of a Puppet*. Each week, children all over Italy read new things about this puppet, called Pinocchio. Later, in 1883, the whole story was published as a book. It has been translated into many different languages, and has become a favourite with children all over the world.

About Sara Cone Bryant

Sara Cone Bryant was an American teacher. She liked to use stories in her lessons, and later she wrote a book called *How to Tell Stories to Children*. In this book she included a collection of traditional children's stories. *The Cat and the Parrot* is one of them. You can read the story in this book.

The Golden Goose

Wood for the fire

There was once a young man who lived with his mother, father and two brothers in a house in the forest. His name was Dummling. His whole family thought he was stupid. They were very unkind to him. 5

One day, the eldest brother said, 'Mother, we need more wood for the fire. I will go into the forest to cut some.'

'What a good son you are,' his mother replied. 'Wait a moment. Before you leave I will get you something to eat and drink. You can take it with you.' She got a bottle of wine and a nice meat pie from the cupboard. She put them in a bag for him. 10

The eldest brother went to the forest to look for wood. He walked and walked until he found an old, dead tree. 15

'This is a good tree,' he said to himself. 'The wood is hard and dry. It will burn nicely.'

Before he started to cut the tree down, he decided to have something to eat and something to drink. He sat down. He took the meat pie and the bottle of wine out of his bag, and began his dinner. 20

The little old man

A little old man came along. He saw the young man sitting at the foot of the dead tree, eating and drinking. 25