

Miss Stretton was British. Her real name was Sarah Smith.

Benjamin Smith, her father, owned a bookstore. By the time she finished school, Miss Stretton had read most of the books in his shop.

Miss Stretton's mother died before she was ten.

Hesba Stretton



Miss Stretton's house



Miss Stretton's grave

Miss Stretton wrote her first story, "The Lucky Leg," when she was twenty.

When Miss Stretton moved to the city, she saw many hungry, ragged children living on the streets. She hoped her stories would make people want to help poor children.

She wrote of children who loved Jesus and told grown-ups about Him.

*Mrs. Taylor was Jewish.
Her parents came to
America from Germany.*

Her father, Morris Brenner,
ran a junk shop, while her
mother, Cecilia, mothered
seven children. Sarah was in
the middle of five sisters.

*Sarah changed her
name to Sydney
when she was 16.*

Sydney Taylor



Sarah's family of five sisters



Mrs. Taylor gets a prize for her good stories

*Sydney got married to
a pharmacist, Ralph
Taylor, and had one
daughter, Jo.*

Jo felt lonely, especially at
bedtime. So Mrs. Taylor told
her stories of herself growing
up with five sisters and, later,
some brothers. She wrote the
stories down for Jo to read.

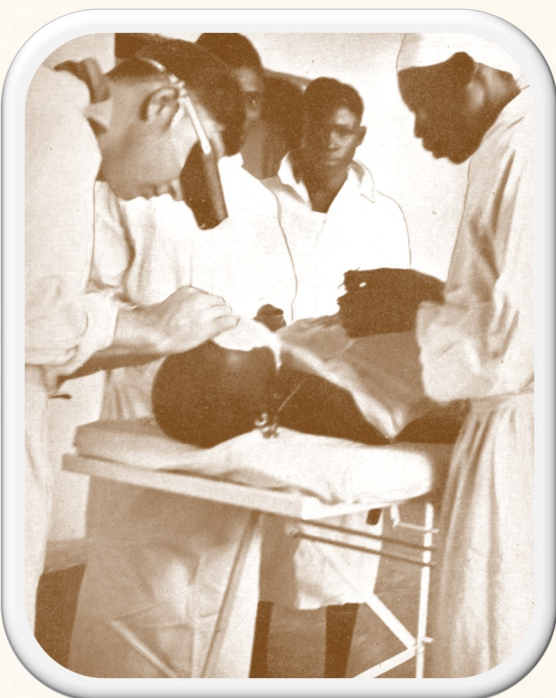
*Her husband found
the stories and sent
them to a book
company.*

Dr. White was an Aussie (Australian). He had no brothers or sisters.

Richard White, his father, had been a soldier in Africa. He told Paul African stories and taught him some Zulu, a South African language.

By sixteen years old, Paul had decided to become an African missionary doctor.

Dr. Paul White



Dr. White operates



Dr. White's family

Dr. White learned to speak Gogo, doctored hundreds of Africans, and made friends.

After two years in Africa, Mrs. White got very sick. They had to go back to Australia. Dr. White was so lonely for Africa that he began writing stories about their years there.

Dr. White's sixty books helped many people decide to become missionaries.

Mr. De Jong was born in Holland. His family moved to America when he was eight.

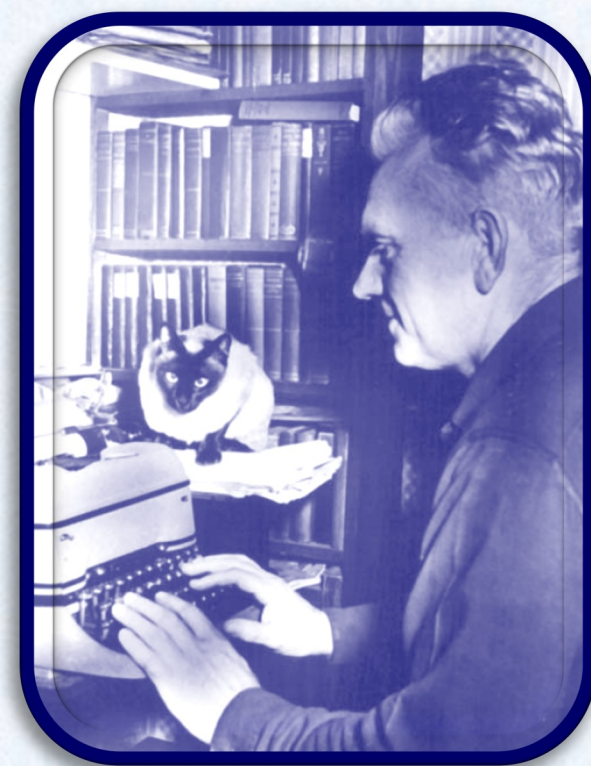
To help his family earn money, Meindert raised chickens and sold eggs door-to-door, charging 2¢ more per dozen than eggs in the store.

His favorite egg stop was the library, where he told stories to the children.

Meindert de Jong



Wierum, the fishing village by the dike, where Mr. De Jong grew up



Mr. De Jong's cat watches him type one of his books

The librarian said he should write the stories down. So he began to write books.

Mr. and Mrs. De Jong did not have any children of their own, but Mr. De Jong loved to read or tell his stories to his nieces and nephews. All of his books are about children.

Mr. De Jong also liked animals. He put one in nearly every story.

Mrs. Spyri was born in Switzerland, the 4th child in a family of 6.

Johanna grew up in Hirzel, a village above Lake Zurich, the snow-capped Alps in the background. Johanna, often called Hanni, loved to read.

When she was 25, Mrs. Spyri went to live in the city with her husband.

Johanna Spyri



The schoolhouse that Mrs. Spyri attended is now The Johanna Spyri Museum



Mrs. Spyri and her son Bernhard

Mrs. Spyri missed the country. She told her son stories of children living on the Alps.

Mrs. Spyri often visited her friends who lived in the Alps. She took walks, making friends with the children who lived there. They gave her story ideas.

After her husband and son both died, Mrs. Spyri wrote 43 books for children.