

Hans Brinker

Mrs Dodge was a widow. She had two boys. She had to earn the money for the family when her husband died. How did she do it? She wrote!

Mrs Dodge was an American. She wrote stories for children. She told the stories to her boys. Her boys liked them. Then she sent them to a magazine for children. The editor of the magazine paid for the stories. Mrs Dodge's stories were good. The children liked the stories. They wanted to read more. So the editor asked Mrs Dodge for more stories. Soon Mrs Dodge was the editor of a magazine herself. Then she wrote a set of stories. They were put together to make a book. Children liked the book. Many copies were sold. The publisher of the book was pleased. He earned plenty of money from the book. Mrs Dodge earned plenty of money too.

Mr Motley was an American. He was an ambassador. He was an American Ambassador. An ambassador works for the government of a country. Mr Motley worked for the American government. An ambassador lives in a different country. Mr Motley lived in Holland. An ambassador represents his country. That is what Mr Motley did in Holland.



Mr Motley liked to write. He liked history. When he came home to America he wrote a book. It was a history of Holland. Americans like reading history. They liked Mr Motley's book. Mrs Dodge read it. She liked it very much. "My boys would like to know all this history," she said. "But the book is too hard for them. I know what I will do! I will write a story. It will be about Holland."

She began her story. She told it to her boys at bed time. It was a story about a Dutch boy and girl. The story had many Dutch things in it. It had canals. It had windmills.

It had skates. It had Dutch food. Mrs Dodge had never been to Holland. That did not matter. Mr Motley's book was so good. She could almost see Holland in her mind now.

Mrs Dodge's boys liked the story. Mrs Dodge wrote it down. She worked very hard. She

wrote and wrote and wrote. "I must be careful not to make any mistakes about Holland," she said.

Near where Mrs Dodge lived in America lived two Dutchmen. "I will show them my story," she said. "They will help me."

The Dutchmen liked the story. They helped Mrs Dodge. They told her where she had made mistakes.

Sometimes Mrs Dodge met American travellers. If they had been to Holland she was happy! "Please read my story!" she said. In this way she got more help.

At last the book was finished. Mrs Dodge sent it to the publisher. The publisher was surprised. "Oh dear!" he said. "I wanted a book like the last one. That was a set of stories. This is one long story. I do not know if people will buy this!" He wrote to Mrs Dodge. "I want another set of stories," he said. "Do you have one ready?"

Mrs Dodge did not. She had been writing her Dutch story. She did not have time for other stories.

"Oh dear!" said the publisher. "I will have to publish that then. I hope people will buy it."

They did! The copies all sold at once. The book is called *Hans Brinker or the Silver Skates*. You will read it when you are older. It is a grand story.

