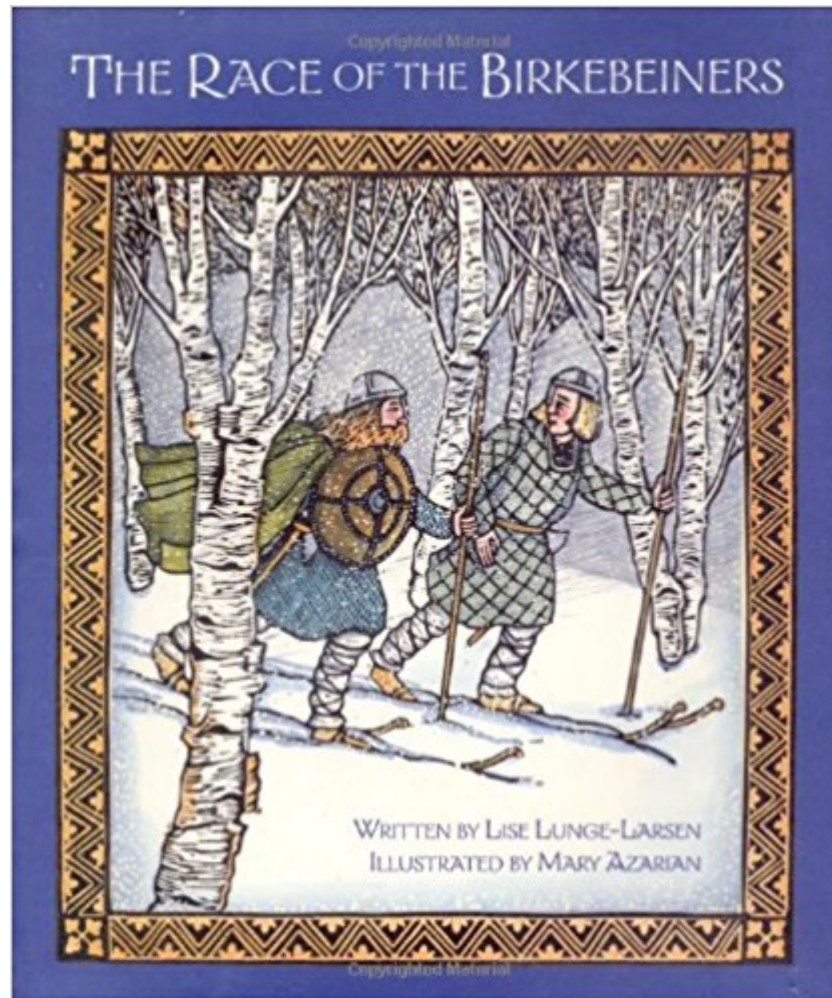




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The Race Of The Birkebeiners



Synopsis

When they went into battle they wore no costly armor, just birchbark wrapped around their legs, and so they were called Birkebeiners, which means "Birchleggers." It is the year 1206, and deep in the snow-covered mountains and valleys of Norway the fiercest warriors in the land struggle to ski a baby to safety. They race against the greed and inequity of the rich, against the very weather of Norway. They race as the only way to save a child prince and bring peace to their country. Here is a true, untold story of both bravery and tenderness. Mary Azarian's strong, sure woodcuts capture the warmth and ruggedness of medieval life, while Lise Lunge-Larsen's dramatic telling is direct and mesmerizing.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 660L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

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Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 23 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #865,424 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #36 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > European #131 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Norse #1305 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Historical

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

Customer Reviews

Imagine the bravest, fiercest Norwegian warriors that ever lived, carrying a baby prince across blizzard-wracked mountains to save his life. Picture the babe's mother undergoing a cruel, brutal test to prove her son is indeed the bona fide prince of Norway. A fairy tale? No, this is a true story, based on the account written in 1264 by Sturla Tordsson, about the Middle Ages' most powerful king during what are known as Norway's Golden Years. Norwegian-born author Lise Lunge-Larsen tells the story of this king's miraculous adventure in infancy, while woodcut artist Mary Azarian stunningly depicts the heroism of the birch-bark armored peasant warriors, the Birkebeiners. Mary

Azarian was awarded the Caldecott Medal for her lovely woodcut illustrations in *Snowflake Bentley*. Lunge-Larsen is the award-winning author of *The Troll with No Heart in His Body* and *The Legend of the Lady Slipper*. (Ages 4 and older) --Emilie Coulter

Based on a 1264 account documenting a true incident in Norwegian history, this engaging narrative opens during a 1206 Christmas Eve gathering at the home of one of the Birkebeiners, a group of brave warriors. A priest knocks on the door, who has in his protection a baby, Prince Hakon, and his mother; a rival band aspires to kill the child (who is heir to the throne) and to declare one of their own king. Soon a handful of Birkebeiners escorts the trio, escaping on skis across tall, stormy mountains. Caldecott winner Azarian's (*Snowflake Bentley*) finely detailed woodcut illustrations, hand-tinted with watercolors, capture the serene snow-covered landscape as well as the driving snowstorm that impedes the travelers' progress. In direct and compelling prose, Lunge-Larsen recounts how the two Birkebeiners most renowned for their skiing ability forge ahead with the prince, fortuitously happen upon a barn buried under a snowdrift and manage to keep the baby alive by feeding him snow. In a concluding note, the author explains that Hakon became Norway's most powerful king during the Middle Ages and brought peace and prosperity to the country, making this rescue tale all the more gratifying. The stately art, which includes intricate borders framing blocks of text, neatly captures the historical and cultural aspects of this story. Ages 5-9. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

I wanted my grandson to read the story of the saving of the king. This was right in his reading level.

Based on the actual historical event, a lavishly illustrated bed-time story for your little Vikings: In 1206, the king of Norway died. His queen was left in a dangerous and politically volatile situation, as their son, crown-prince Haakon, was only a baby. The Baglers, a league of corrupt power-hungry land-owners, saw their chance to eliminate Haakon, and place a king of their choosing on the throne. It was Christmas Eve, and the enemy was on the move. Queen Inge found refuge in the homestead of a loyal follower. They had to get baby Haakon to a safe haven. The Birkebeiners came to the rescue! These were a band of select-warriors, skilled in living off the land, experts in scouting and raiding, every one of them highly adept in battle-skills and skiing. Two of these Medieval Rangers carried the prince over the mountains in the middle of a snow-storm, beyond the reach of his enemies!

Was told about this race from my friend in Norway! ... Very well written and marvelous illustrations!!
Our three year old sat in rapt attention thru the entire book! :)

yes, it's true. while the children will love this tale of snowbound adventure, adults will love it equally as much! the woodcut carving pictures on every page are well done and lovable. the imagery is palpable, and is best read on a snowy night, cuddled up with a loved one.

We collect all books beautiful for our home education library, this was another excellent find. Mary Azarian is an all-time favorite; Lise Lunge-Larsen tells the story with suspense and wonder. Historical intrigue for both boys & girls...a great example of Medieval times that take place somewhere other than English countryside. This family appreciates the colorful text that will surely enhance language skills. Holiday gift or for home education, this one is a MUST HAVE!

A household favorite for boys and girls. All my kids, from age 2 to 10 love the story.

great

How often do you find a book with so many 5 star reviews. Great book for kids.

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