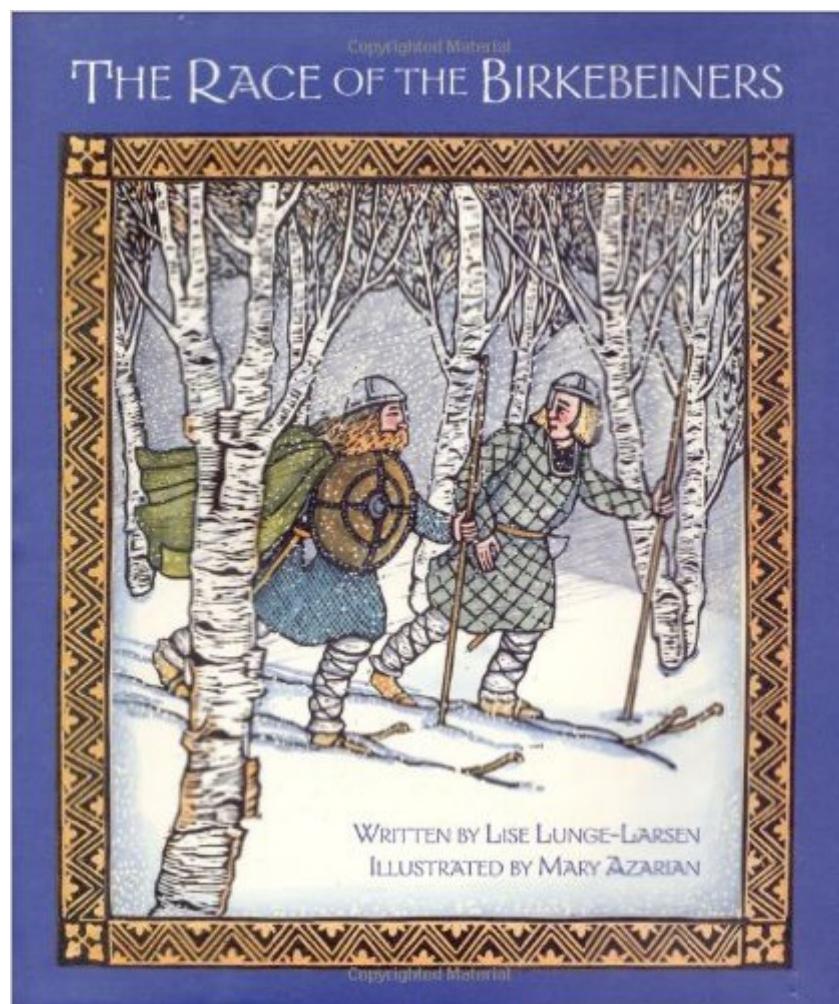


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# The Race Of The Birkebeiners



## **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

Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Company; 1st edition (September 24, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0618103139

ISBN-13: 978-0618103133

Product Dimensions: 9 x 0.1 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars (See all reviews) (20 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,222,615 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #90 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > European #154 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Norse #1837 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Historical

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## **Customer Reviews**

The Birkebeiners were peasants and fierce warriors in the Middle Ages whose King sat on the throne of Norway. Their rivals, the Baglers, were rich noblemen who wanted to claim the throne for themselves. In 1206, the King had died and left behind an infant son, Prince Hakon. His Queen, Inge, hid her baby for over a year to keep him safe, but as the Baglers became stronger, and threatened the life of the prince, she realized it was time to travel north to Nidaros where the Birkebeiners would protect them, and the prince could take his rightful place on the throne. She asked the priest, Sira Trond, for help, and he gathered the best and bravest men of his small village.

To outwit the Baglers, this small band of Birkebeiners decided to ski over the mountains at the darkest, coldest, most dangerous time of the year, braving fierce storms to bring their Queen and baby Prince to safety..... Take a slice of engaging medieval history, add beautiful and evocative artwork, and you have The Race Of The Birkebeiners. Based on Sturla Tordsson's account of the escape and rescue of Norway's future King Hakon, written in 1264, Lise Lunge-Larsen has authored a compelling picture book that's sure to mesmerize youngsters with its powerful story. Her dramatic text is full of atmosphere and suspense, and begs to be read aloud. Mary Azarian's rich, bold and colorful woodcut illustrations transport the reader back to Medieval times, and on this long ago journey over mountains, through snowstorms, and darkness to safety. With an afterword detailing King Hakon's reign, Norway's Golden Years, and how the Birkebeiners are still honored today for their bravery and heroism, this is an exceptional and captivating story children 5-9 shouldn't miss.

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!

This is a gorgeous book with illustrations that are breathtaking in their beauty. As for the content, it is a fascinating story. The Christian content of the book is not as inappropriate as a previous review made it seem. No more so than any of the other well-done books centered on other religions. The violence is not troublesome, either, unless one expects their children to be in a position to carry red hot irons at home or school! I would hope that when exposing children to the many facets and experiences the world has to offer, we don't deprive them of wonderful books such as these simply to conform to a contemporary politically correct outlook.

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 Birkbeiners 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!

I love this book. Having lived and traveled in Norway, this book brought that special feeling of the lonely Hytter on the Fjell back. I am not a child but I still love the beautiful illustrations and historically accurate portrayals of medieval Norwegian life including the deep faith of the people.

What a joy it was to read this book beside the fire with my friends and family. A unique and wonderful story of Christmas from a distant place in history.

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 have owned this book since it was first published, and continually track down copies to give as gifts to nordic friends.beautiful illustrations and excellent storytelling.

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