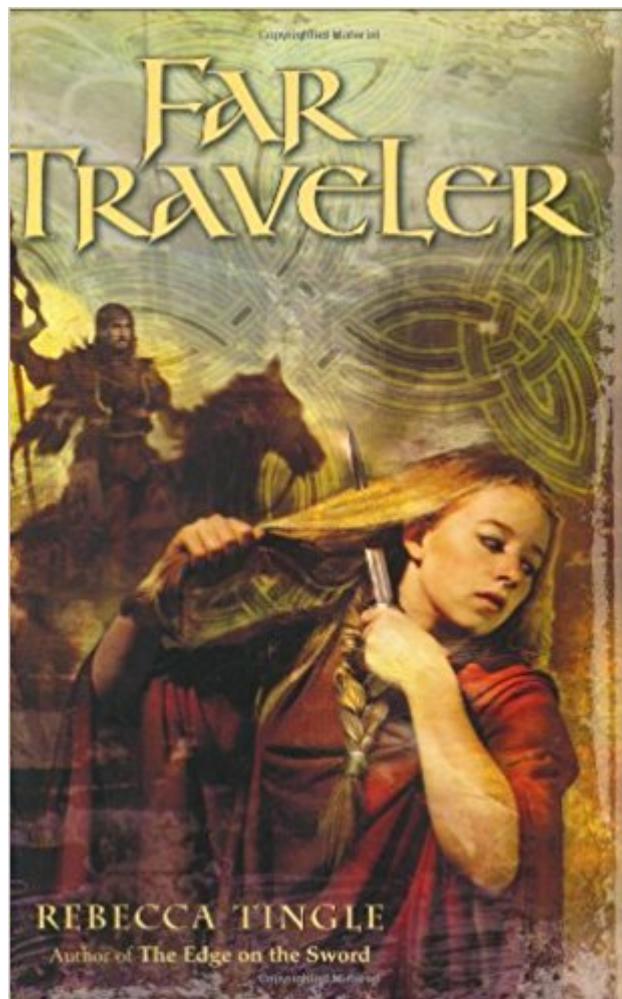


The book was found

Far Traveler



Synopsis

When King Edward gives his niece Elfwyn two choices--marry one of his allies or become a nun--Wyn is at a loss to decide. Her strong, warrior mother has just died, so it's impossible to know what she would have wanted. Wyn takes the first risk of her life and flees. Disguising herself as a boy, she adopts a new identity as a traveling storyteller called Widsith (far traveler) and reinvents herself, drawing upon the books she has loved all her life. Soon she finds her fate inextricably tied with the dark-eyed King Wilfrid, who knows her only as Widsith, and wants her help in a plot against her own uncle.

Book Information

Hardcover: 240 pages

Publisher: G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers; First Edition edition (February 17, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0399238905

ISBN-13: 978-0399238901

Product Dimensions: 8.1 x 5.6 x 0.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars 7 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #912,345 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #26 in Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Africa #237 in Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Medieval #392 in Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Military

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 7 Up - An exciting novel set in 10th-century England. In this sequel to *The Edge on the Sword* (Putnam, 2001), which ended as King Alfred's daughter, Ælfthelwif, was about to marry Ethelred of Mercia, Tingle moves a few years forward to tell of Ælfthelwif's 16-year-old daughter, Elfwyn. A scholarly girl with no interest in the riding, swordplay, or politics that absorb her widowed mother, Wyn is surprised to learn that her uncle, the West Saxon King Edward, has arranged her marriage to a much older earl in order to solidify a political alliance. Then her mother's unexpected death throws Mercia's future into a state of uncertainty. With King Wilfrid of Northumbria eager for an alliance with Mercia, Wyn's uncle insists that her marriage take place immediately or that she enter a convent. Knowing that either choice will mean the downfall of her country, Wyn

decides instead to flee. Disguised as a boy, she passes herself off as a scop (itinerant bard) and adopts the name Widsith ("Far Traveler"). By chance, she joins King Wilfrid and his men and soon finds herself falling in love with him. When she unwittingly becomes embroiled in Wil's attempts to regain power from her uncle, she must decide where her loyalties lie. This compelling novel is filled with well-researched details, an action-packed plot, and well-drawn and sympathetic characters. Tingle is a worthy successor to Rosemary Sutcliff, sharing her ability to make British history come to life for modern readers. - Ginny Gustin, Sonoma County Library System, Santa Rosa, CA Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Gr. 7-10. In *The Edge on the Sword* (2001) Tingle wrote about 15-year-old Aethelflaed, daughter of Alfred the Great, who became a powerful ruler in her own right. Little is known about her daughter Aelfwyn, who disappeared from historical record and literature following Aethelflaed's death in 919. Intrigued by the girl's disappearance, Tingle has created an immensely satisfying back story for Aelfwyn (Wyn), which mixes fact and fiction as it vividly depicts the political turmoil of the time. Wyn's life is probably more romantic than that of the historic Aelfwyn. At 16, Wyn seems shy and scholarly, but when her uncle commands her to marry or enter a convent, she disguises herself as a traveling bard and flees. Wilfrid, a Northumbrian king beleaguered by Norse invaders, offers the bard protection, friendship, and trust---a trust that may be shattered by a plan that can endanger England and force Wyn to choose between her own people and heritage and her friend Wilfrid. An introductory note provides a few facts about the real Wyn. Chris ShermanCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

Fast, easy, interesting read. Certainly recommend this story for young girls middle school and up. It would be a great summer read for them. This is not to say-- it is not a story for adults. I enjoyed it very much. But it is a fast moving and interesting story that I feel would hold the attention of the younger reader. I really appreciate the reviews presented by on all the books they make available to us. No small thing. Thanks . [And YES! I still LOVE my Kindle]. And for an ole 'book packing-stacking hound' that thought she would never go for e-reading-- well that is history. I still buy 'em and stack'em, but I go to bed every night with my Kindle. It goes to the dentist, the doctor, everywhere I think I might be bored! Bet I have "sold" more Kindles than-- a few!

Aelfwynn is the bookish daughter of one of the great women warriors in English history, Aethelflaed, Lady of the Mercians. At her mother's sudden death she is at the mercy of her uncle, King Edward

(I, who will come to be called "the Elder".) Though an archbishop and a dispossessed king come to ask her to help them against the Danish incursions in Northumbria, she is unable to act and is taken from Mercia to Wessex to be married off. She runs away, disguised as a boy, (where have I heard that one before?) Her learning causes her to think she can be a storyteller and entertainer, but her talent is only for farmers. When she runs into the dispossessed king, Wilfrid, he takes her under his arm to teach her how to be a real skald but also, though he does not know she is Aelfwynn, to use her against her uncle. The real historical Aelfwynn is unremarked in the chronicles after her uncle removes her from Mercia, and this is what the author, Tingle, took as her starting place. In her author's note she talks more about the possibility that the girl might have been able to pass as a skald than the likelihood she would manage to travel in the world as a boy. Unfortunately that is the problem with this book, its credibility. Yes, it's fiction, but fiction needs at least to follow logically within the confines of its two covers. For one, Aethelflaed appears not to have copied raising of her daughter as her own father, Alfred the Great, raised her, to lead and be a fighter and general in her own right. Aelfwynn, on hearing the story of Judith and Holofernes is amazed that Judith would use a sword. Was she kept in willful ignorance, and, if so, why? Aelfwynn in herself is not inspiring. She is prone to gloominess and reluctance to face facts. She lacks the ability to act on duty. I found it hard to believe that she would up and put on boy's clothes and head out of town to escape the unwanted marriage. Her decision that she might have what it takes to be a storyteller brings us into the only real interest in this young adult novel. Tingle obviously knows a great deal about Anglo Saxon England and about the arts thereof. The exposure you get here to riddles, music and musical instruments, storytelling tradition, poetry, and the skaldic life is fascinating. Then it all falls apart again with an Aelfwynn *ex machina* that follows some highly disorganized reasoning on the girl's part and even less credible apotheosis. Tingle tries to get some insight into Edward and his war-like "diplomacy" but that's all the scraps you will find on the table as the book comes to an end. I am sorry I felt this way about this novel. I like Tingle's other work. But I cannot even imagine caring for it at fourteen or fifteen. Perhaps it appeals to girls who want to believe that in spite of their possibility they too can be carried off and loved by the loser king of Northumbria. I purchased this novel to read on my Kindle. I thank the publisher and/or author for making the book text to speech enabled so I could listen to it.~ from That's All She Read [...]

great book, my daughter love it

This is Tingle's second book about 10th century England; I eagerly await a third. Once again, the

central figure is a young girl making her way in a man's world -- in this case, Aelfwyn of Mercia, who disguises herself as a boy "scop" (wandering storyteller and singer) to escape the political control of her uncle, King Edward. The story is rich in details about medieval life (the sort that make me long for time-travel), and although it's hard to imagine a girl as bookish and sheltered as Aelfwyn being able so successfully to transform herself into a scop, the momentum of the story carried me forward and over my doubts. I think I fell in love with her accidental protector, Wil, before she did. One tiny complaint: there's no reason for this book to be marketed to a teenage audience. Adults are sure to enjoy it as well. I certainly did.

This book was moderately exciting and enjoyable. However, it could get quite boring at times. It's the story of a girl who disguised herself as a boy to escape an unwanted marriage. But, Elfwyn, this girl has no self confidence, no spunk and I found myself feeling bored as I followed the story of her half hearted attempts to escape and find herself. The climax of the book proves that she is yielding and supports the king who wanted her to marry a man old enough to be her grandfather. I was disappointed by this book as a story, but I'm sure as another reviewer remarked that the historical information in this book was interesting even if I personally did not appreciate it. I think I might be a little too old for this book as it is recommended for ages 9-12. Being 14 myself I was not so entertained by it.

This book was good, but started out pretty slow. I enjoyed the middle and end of the book much more than the beginning. I realize that the author was basing the book on historical accounts, but I frequently found myself confused and bored. The middle and end gets better, but I don't think that many people under the age of twelve would enjoy the book because of its difficulty level. Overall, it was interesting, but there could have been a little more romance between Wil and Aelfwyn. I also wondered why her cousin went from being her best friend, to hardly showing any kindness or interest in her at all. I give this book four stars, because all though it was well written, it was a little lacking in excitement.

I picked up this book thinking that I would give it to my young teen to read but I started reading it before I passed it along. The book has vivid descriptions of life in 800 AD England while giving a glimpse into the history of England along with an interesting tale to make you not want to put it down. After reading this book, I went to find the 1st book in the series, The Edge on the Sword, which I also enjoyed. I am looking forward to a 3rd novel by the same author.

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