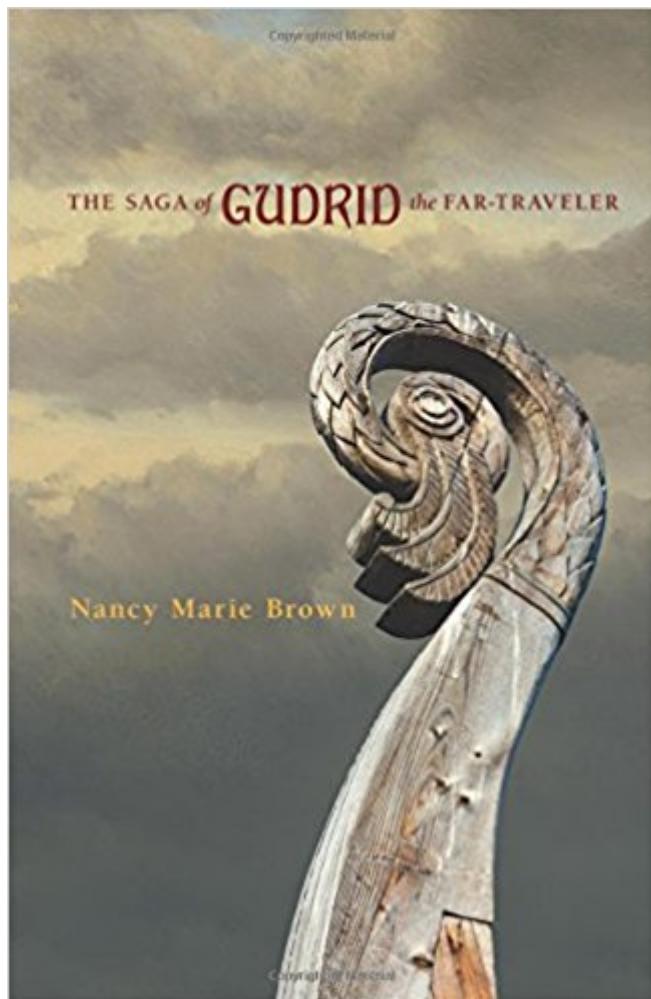


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# The Saga Of Gudrid The Far-Traveler



## Synopsis

“Father,” Gudrid said, “when winter is over, my husband and I want to explore this Wine Land. Will you lend us your ship?” The room fell dead quiet. She could feel the hush. Her father put down his knife and looked at her, astonished. “One shipwreck is not enough?” The quiet domestic life—spinning yarn, making cheese and skyr, collecting herbs for tea—might have been enough for other young women, but it was not enough for Gudrid, daughter of Thorbjorn of Laugarbrekka. If Leif Eiriksson could sail west and find a rich new land, why not Gudrid? What else lay beyond the western edge of the world the Vikings knew? The medieval Icelandic sagas recorded the bare bones of Gudrid’s story, hinting at the adventures and accomplishments that would make her a legend for a thousand years. Now, in **THE SAGA OF GUDRID THE FAR-TRAVELER**, Nancy Marie Brown fills in the details, creating an engaging portrait of an extraordinary young woman determined to make her own way in a world dominated by men, using her wits, her imagination, and her courage.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

## Customer Reviews

Gr 10 Up—Gudrid is the daughter of an Icelandic chieftain, and she has been promised in marriage to Leif Eiriksson—but she wants to marry Einar because "he's young and rich and handsome and he owns a ship." She and Einar elope to Greenland. Gudrid has an adventurous

spirit and sets her sights on settling eventually in Wine Land, that is, North America. But before she makes it that far, she is shipwrecked, widowed, and remarried, survives an epidemic that kills her second husband, considers becoming a nun, and then marries her third husband. Brown's account of Gudrid's legendary adventures is too short to fully encapsulate the saga, and the result is that most of the plot points feel rushed and few of the characters are well developed. The work also lacks the emotional depth. However, this book will have an appeal to readers with an interest in Norse history, and it comes complete with an author's note explaining what is known of Gudrid's identity and life. The narrative includes frequent brief but vivid descriptions of the Scandinavian setting, including a walrus hunt, sightings of the Northern Lights, and the final journey toward Wine Land where "The gray cliffs unrolled against the sky. [The ship] cut cleanly through the green sea, kicking up ripples." VERDICT Despite all of its merit as informative historical fiction, this book is unlikely to appeal to a wide audience of young adults. —Magdalena Teske, River Forest Public Library, IL --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"Well-written, thoroughly researched, and adventure-filled, this story of a determined and very human young woman is timeless." --Kirkus Reviews "As the story of a young woman bucking traditional roles and exploring her world and the world abroad, it makes for intriguing historical fiction." --Publisher's Weekly

Historical Fiction is one of my favorite genres and as someone who loves historical fiction and Old Norse history, The Saga of Gudrid the Far Traveler by Nancy Marie Brown was a thoroughly enjoyable read. I read her non-fiction book The Far Traveler about her search to discover the truth about Gudrid's life and I couldn't put it down! I read the 200-page novel The Saga of Gudrid the Far Traveler in one night! The novel flows easily and does not get bogged down in excessive details or require a PhD in history to follow! I have read several novels based on Scandinavian history and Norse Mythology that required much more effort to follow! Having read the non-fiction book first, I already had a sense of the characters and their real-life journey, however a casual reader could easily follow this novel without that background information. As a reader, the most important aspect of a novel for me is Voice and Character Development. Regardless of Genre, if a novel can fool me into thinking the character(s) are real and their voice speaks to my soul, then I am hooked! I thoroughly enjoyed Nancy Marie Brown's characters in all their flaws and glory! There were some plot twists I saw coming and a few I did not! Overall it was an enjoyable experience. As a side note, for some this

novel may not be salacious enough! There is little mention of sex or violence! This novelization of the Viking Era does not include graphic battle scenes, raping and pillaging or explicit sexual passages! This is essentially an adventure story and exploration of Gudrid's character journey. While characters do marry, have sex and kill one another along the way, the author prefers to bring attention to the Saga and the characters themselves. In conclusion, I would definitely recommend this novel, as well as Nancy Marie Brown's other works.

I've read Nancy Marie Brown's published non-fiction works pertaining to medieval times, *The Abacus and the Cross* and *The Far Traveler*. Her first novel, conveys how tough and intricate cultural life was in Iceland and Greenland during Norse times. She gives defined personalities to the characters. The heroine, Gudrid, has to continuously learn and grow, facing restrictions for women in Norse culture, as well as terrible adversities both on sea and land. Brown reveals the vast knowledge a woman of the time needed to help run a farm and ship. Gudrid was an amazing traveler.

While this nicely written, it was a bit stale and safe. I preferred the author's non-fiction book on this saga heroine. Author is a great, and I mean great, non-fiction writer about these topics, but fiction --- not so much.

Wonderful, well researched and definitely kept my interest.

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