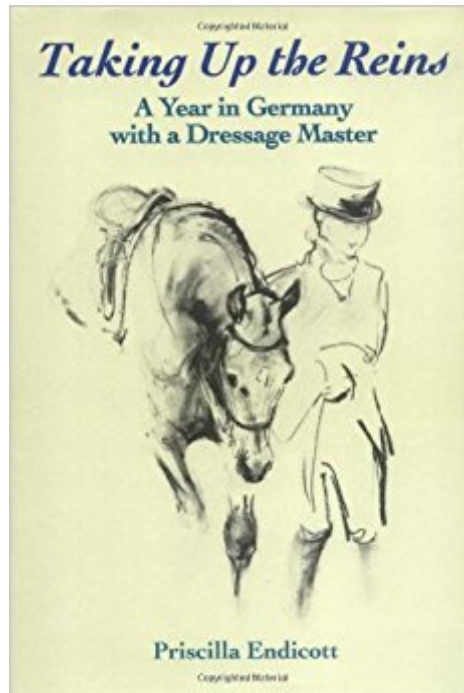


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Taking Up The Reins: A Year In Germany With A Dressage Master



Synopsis

A personal memoir chronicling an American woman's intense year in Germany studying with the great dressage master Walter Christensen.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If wishes were horses (and for many of us, they so often are), then just about any passionate dressage rider would want to follow in Priscilla Endicott's adventure. She clearly chronicles what it is like to enter into a relationship with a wonderful horse, and then to trust her mentor, Walter Christiansen, with that relationship far from home. She submits herself and her horse to the regimen so often looked upon with envy and awe by American riders...German dressage training. She takes us from the barn she comes to call home for a year to visits with the great Herbert Rehbein; and from Christine Steuckelberger and her trainer, Georg Wahl. Mainly, though, she takes us deeper into her growth as a rider and as a person, and into those extraordinary way horses and dressage teach us about life. It is a wonderful read first from the standpoint of horses and the art of dressage, but it also speaks of the courage to leave your own country to learn from another culture. I loved this book.

The book was written like a diary with most of the interesting parts removed. Priscilla does a nice job of sharing some of the people and personal observations of her experience, but does not cover what I was interested in. Where was she at in her riding when she arrived, what did she accomplish

while she was in training, and how did that opportunity help her when she returned? She did share what she saw in stable management and horse care, but mostly at an observer's level. I was interested in finding out what she learned and how working with a dressage master changed her own riding.

For any dressage enthusiast, this book is a wonderful account of the early days in the States when dressage was little known. For many of us, there still is, even today, a long journey to try to find a good teacher for this wonderful art form. Priscilla's account of her journey, her love for her horse, and her experience with a true dressage master are fascinating. Horsekeeping in Germany was quite different from the States. Made me feel so grateful to have pasture and turn out for my horses! Most of all I appreciated Priscilla's insights into how long it takes to train a horse well and how dressage is not just about learning the movements, developing the muscle to do them - but it's also imperative to have a deep, sensitive and loving partnership with the horse. Dressage is art! It's also a way of life. this is a mature book by a woman who has thought about many of the issues that face all of us who want to pursue an art form - and who deeply love our horses!

I read this book when it first came out and I was in my 50s, at a time when life was really complicated and I was having 'issues' with my horse and frustrated that I could not find a trainer to work with who really what they were doing - and not a 'dusty ring instructor' someone who was mucking stalls the week before and suddenly 'promoted' to trainer. This book made me laugh and reminded my why I got into the horse sports 45 years ago, that having had decades of lessons maybe to not have lessons for a while can be beneficial to me, to my mare and to our relationship. I have since given this book to other women of a certain age who are at a crossroads about whether to continue riding. Now I'm 61, my mare is 27 and retired, my Irish Draft Horse (don't ask, I was smitten, he passed the vet, has a great personality) just turned 6. Taking it all one stride at a time.

Priscilla Endicott did what many people only dream about. She ventured to Germany for a year to train with master trainer, Walter Christensen. The ups and downs of the year were clearly explained and the ups always conquered the downs. The routine of the stable was like nothing I have ever seen or read about before. And Priscilla came back to America with an experience that she will never forget. I got the book as a gift and could not stop reading it! I have loaned it out to my horse friends and they have all loved it! It is a must read for all dressage riders. It will make you more determined than ever to get to Germany and train with the best in the world!

A must read for every American equestrian enthusiast. This book if listened to and absorbed tells us why we rank so far below other riders in the world. A totally captivating story that opens up the world for true horse people , Worth more to you then 100 clinics you will ever attend.

I came across this book looking for a good "horsey" read, and I love it! Very well written, the author puts you right in the arena or the stable with her, and makes me wish I could a take a year off and get the kind of training like she did. I'm primarily a western rider who has always had a fascination with and an admiration for dressage. I'd definitely recommend this book!

I really enjoyed this journey to Germany to train with a dressage riding master. Part training journal, part travel journal, this story is authentic and honest and I found myself caught up the author's adventure. Sure, I would have liked more details about what she was learning technically about riding and dressage and training her horse. But I found many gems of wisdom and perspective in what she was learning about hard work, dedication, and patience. It's so true that American culture runs counter to the ideal of patience and the bit by bit progress that happens in classical dressage training. Americans want progress NOW and it's no different today than it was decades ago when this author took her journey to Germany and when dressage was just beginning to take hold here in the United States. All too often today we see the horses suffering from being pushed and pulled into a frame, rather than taught gradually and with much patience how to carry more weight on their haunches and where the horses are given the time it takes to build the correct muscling. This book brings that important reminder that progress in dressage training (and in life!) requires hard work and patience, that there are no short cuts worth taking, that dressage riding & training correctly means learning to grow in wisdom and perspective as well as technical & physical skills. This book is all about the journey and I applaud the author's insights and willingness to share her journey with us all.

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