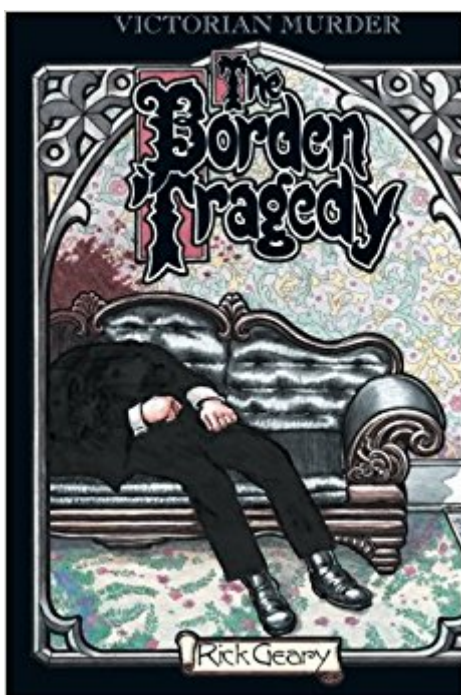


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# The Borden Tragedy: A Memoir Of The Infamous Double Murder At Fall River, Mass., 1892 (A Treasury Of Victorian Murder)



## Synopsis

“Lizzie Borden took an axe, gave her mother forty whacks, when she saw what she had done, she gave her father forty-one!” • The famous Lizzie Borden double murder.

## Book Information

Series: A Treasury of Victorian Murder

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## Customer Reviews

Rick Geary received quite a bit of critical praise for his Jack the Ripper volume of A Treasury of Victorian Murder, and rightfully so. The Borden Tragedy (the third volume in the series), is no less impressive. Based on the famous 19th-century Lizzie Borden double murder, this comic-book version of the event is supposedly excerpted and adapted from the unpublished writings of an unknown woman from the Borden's hometown of Fall River. The narrator, a friend of Lizzie Borden, is intent on finding out all of the facts behind such a grizzly butchering. We are taken through meticulously researched evidence, all stunningly illustrated by Geary, but Geary leaves us without taking a strong stand one way or the other. As an extra treat, the back cover includes a list of comparisons between Lizzie Borden and O. J. Simpson.

Comics artist Geary returns with another typically superlative work, the third in his series, A Treasury of Victorian Murder. As in his Jack the Ripper, Geary uses a fictional narrator to present a stylish, painstakingly researched treatment of the gruesome 1892 ax-murders of Abby and Andrew Borden in Falls River, Mass., and of the investigation, trial, and public and media spectacle that

followed. The unsolved Borden murders have passed into folklore ("Lizzie Borden took an ax, gave her mother forty whacks") and the question of Lizzie's guilt (she was acquitted but remained under suspicion for the rest of her life) remains unanswered in Geary's book. It's Geary's artfully precise reconstruction of turn-of-the-century Falls River that makes his work so haunting, and such a delight. Geary carefully re-creates the layout of the town (complete with maps); the history, quirks and familial resentments of the prominent Borden family; and, of course, the bloody hatchet murders themselves, complete with minute details of the police investigation and a look at the forensic techniques of the time. His marvelous black-and-white drawings alternate a heavy, sensuous line with more delicate linear accents, deftly capturing the architecture, clothing, objects and everyday details of small-town life in the 1890s. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From the introduction: "The account presented in these pages of 19th Century America's most famous murder case is excerpted and adapted from the unpublished memoirs of a (thus far) unknown lady of Fall River, Massachusetts. Since the typewritten, unedited manuscript came to light at a 1990 estate sale, its provenance has been established to a satisfying degree. As part of the contents of an unopened trunk, it resided since the turn of the century in the basement of a private archive in Boston." No page numbers in the book; on a page with a drawing of Andrew J. Borden, near the back of the book, a newspaper article from The Fall River Herald - has a statement from the servant, Bridget Sullivan, to the police that she was in the attic washing windows at the time of Andrew Borden's murder and that she didn't see anyone enter or leave the house. Emphasis on LEAVE! Her bedroom window overlooks the back yard and she has a view of the barn door! So much for Lizzie's alibi! Remember, Bridget was said to have been laying on her bed resting before starting the noon meal on the day of the murders. All kinds of gems in this well done book; very glad I bought and read.

I'm not familiar with Rick Geary's other books, but I'm a big fan of Lizzie Borden (ever since reading "You Be the Judge, You Be the Jury in fourth grade)! I added this book to my library before going to stay at the Lizzie Borden B&B, and sleeping in the JV Morse room where Abby took her whacks! This book is loaded with content. Maps of the town, drawings of the house layout, newspaper clippings, etc. The illustrated story is told from the perspective of a family friend, and combines several testimonials. Plus, the style of the book makes the dense, murky pile of evidence used in the case a little more palatable to those of us who go blank during the "Order" part of "Law and Order." A couple comments: the book is entirely in black and white. beautifully drawn graphic novel,

but the lack of color is disappointing. Also, the graphic novel little more text heavy than some might like. Finally, I would have enjoyed if there had been some more photos of the key players, murders, autopsy, house, etc. That would have made it more of a "treasury" in my opinion. Overall, if you're a fan of Lizzie, this is a must. You might find a lot of it repetitive with what you already know, but it's an entertaining collection and less academic-heavy. If you're a fan of serial killers, gore, mystery, history, etc, this is a good addition. If you're just a fan of quality graphic novels, however, this might leave you a little underwhelmed.

Rick Geary's retelling of the case of Lizzie Borden is enhanced by his strong graphic style. He doesn't dwell on the grotesque, but his illustrations are nonetheless eerie. Perfect nonfiction read for a middle schooler, too!

Too often, comics are thought of as "kid stuff". But Rick Geary has created a well-researched account of the infamous Borden murders in cartoon format, & it is useful for adults & children alike. Filled with illustrations derived from old photos, maps & blueprints, the reader gets an excellent feel for the events. It is also well-written. Geary makes plain many features & details, such as the oppressively hot Summer temperatures (this kept most people off the street), the single eyewitness that saw Lizzy in the yard, clean & un-bloodstained, & many other documented facts that are neglected or ignored by careless or less objective authors. This early era in American History come across well, & the cartoon approach makes the "horse & buggy" period comprehensible to the Internet Generation. The Hipster gives it a Big Thumbs UP!

Geary is one of the best and most under-appreciated illustrators of our time. His Victorian Murder series is both fascinating and beautifully illustrated. "The Borden Tragedy" is especially well done. Every drawing is something to be carefully examined and enjoyed. My only complaint - and it's a big one - is the fault of his publisher. If this is indeed a "Series" then it should look like one, and not haphazard accidents of design. Only the recent two volumes have a similar look, and even then, one has a bio of Geary and other doesn't! These incredible works should be reissued as a set, with consistent design treatments. This would be a wonderful opportunity to mimic period book design!. After all, the Victorians LOVED multi-volumed book sets! Nevertheless, well done ...

I did not realize this was a graphic novel. Of course most of us are familiar with the story. This is an interesting take on it.

Particularly enjoyed the treatment of the story as a graphic novel. I've always been intrigued by the case, (even visited the house last year) & have also read other books on the case. This one is a simple down to brass tacks approach. I also ordered the "Jack the ripper" book by the same author. Both well done & worth the price.

Kudos to Mr. Geary for an outstanding book! I have never purchased a graphic novel and this one is amazing! More than just the excellent artwork that gives you a bird's eye view of the Borden home's rooms, this book covers the timeline of the murders and the evidence. I would love to know the identity of the mystery author Mr. Geary bases his story upon. Well done! A new fan.

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