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**KILLING THE BORDENS**

**"MYSTERIOUS AND INTRIGUING."**

**"THE STORY UNFOLDS  
IN FRONT OF YOUR EYES."**

**"A Compelling Read,  
with Care and Research Infused  
into Every Page."**

# DID LIZZIE BORDEN REALLY MURDER HER PARENTS?

**"Lizzie Borden took an axe,  
Gave her mother forty whacks,  
When she saw what she had done,  
She gave her father forty-one."**

ON THE MORNING OF AUGUST 4, 1892, Abby and Andrew Borden were brutally murdered in their home, only a few steps from passersby. No trace of the killer or killers was found.

There were suspects, though.

The daughters, Emma and Lizzie Borden, were suddenly wealthy women. Lizzie and the

Borden family maid, Bridget, had been home at the time of the murders but swore they saw nothing. Uncle John stayed, unexpectedly, in the Borden guest room the night before the murders, though he brought no change of clothes.

Lizzie quickly became the focus of attention and then the main suspect.

But did she kill?

Exhaustively researched, *Killing the Bordens* tells the true crime Borden murder mystery and the life of Lizzie Borden as a novel, and reveals who committed the murders, how, and why.

C. CREE writes historical fiction based on real events, especially true crime. Find out more about this book and others at the author's website: [CCREEWITER.COM](http://CCREEWITER.COM).

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**KILLING THE BORDENS**

LIZZIE BORDEN AND  
THE UNSOLVED  
1892 BORDEN MURDERS

**C. CREE**

**Fall River Daily**

FRIDAY AUGUST 5, 1892

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# KILLING THE BORDENS

## LIZZIE BORDEN AND THE UNSOLVED 1892 BORDEN MURDERS

### Husband and Wife Murdered in Daylight

FALL RIVER, MASS., August 4, 1892. —Andrew J. Borden, a wealthy real estate and mill owner and president of the Union Savings Bank, and his wife were murdered this morning almost in the face and eyes of the public. At least two persons were within conversational distance of the tragedy and a third within easy calling, and yet the assassin came and did his work and departed without leaving a trace of any kind which might lead to his identification.

Bridget Sullivan, the servant, was up in the third

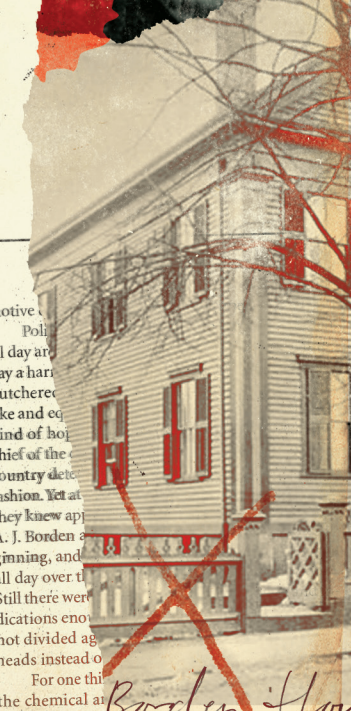
story, cleaning windows. Miss Lizzie, the daughter, was assisting in this, and at the time Mr. Borden was lying down to read his paper she passed through his room to the barn in search of an iron window scraper.

### NO CLUE TO THE MURDERER

The peculiarity of the cuts and the neatness with which the heads of both victims were cleft gave every evidence that the weapon was a cleaver, but no such article was to be found; neither were any bloody tracks or finger-marks about the house. The only blood there was a little pool under the lounge on which Mr. Borden's body lay and some spots under his arms when his body was raised. There was very little blood up stairs in the bedroom and that was in close proximity to Mrs. Borden's body.

The lack of evidence of the presence of the murderer beyond the terribly mutilated bodies of his victims was baffling. There was not the slightest thing to indicate that any man had been in the house. No

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*Borden House  
of Street*

# KILLING THE BORDENS

LIZZIE BORDEN AND THE UNSOLVED 1892 BORDEN  
MURDERS



C. CREE

Killing the Bordens.

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

The Bordens were real. Abby and Andrew Borden were murdered in Fall River, Massachusetts, in 1892. Lizzie Borden was suspected.

The Borden story is one of the most famous unsolved mysteries in American history. Thousands of pages of original case materials still exist, including witness statements, newspaper reports, trial transcripts, and lawyers' notes. The Fall River Historical Society maintains an extensive collection of documents, photos, and other evidence.

Since the murders, many novels, movies, and plays have been based on the Borden story. There was even an opera. These are often true to the premise but then tell tales inconsistent with the facts.

My goal with *Killing the Bordens* was to create the most historically accurate fictional telling ever written of the Borden story. Where possible I've used historical records and other related sources to understand and tell the story, including using direct quotes from police notes, legal journals, and transcripts.

Through years of research, many aspects of the events became clearer.

*Killing the Bordens* also reveals who committed the murders, how, and why.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

Warning: This book involves disturbing topics, including but not limited to hatchet murders, blood spatter, corpses, and autopsies.

Note: For a character list, floor plans of the Borden house, and historical notes, see the end chapters. See [www.ccreewriter.com](http://www.ccreewriter.com) for additional materials related to the Borden story.

## CHAPTER 1



*THURSDAY, AUGUST 4, 1892, FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS*

For most of the morning, neighbors and passersby on sunny Second Street went about their lives unaware. Dozens passed right by the Borden house, which was so close to the street that pedestrians could almost lean over from the sidewalk and touch it on their way to the paint shop, livery, diner, and doctors' offices. That day a newspaper seller worked up and down the street and men cut bricks in a yard behind the Borden place.

Sixty-nine-year-old Andrew Jackson Borden trudged up the hill from downtown at twenty to eleven, wearing the black wool suit and Prince Albert jacket he wore every day, regardless of season or summer heat. That morning he was ill, short of breath and weak as he returned home unusually early for his noon meal.

Widow Adelaide Churchill lived just north of the Bordens. She'd spent the morning making beds and cleaning the home which she, her mother, and sister ran as a boarding house. It was an ordinary day, hot and muggy, but not especially so for August.

At quarter to eleven, Adelaide went to the market one street over.



Walking back, she saw Bridget Sullivan, the Bordens' twenty-six-year-old "girl," their live-in maid, running across the street from Dr. Bowen's to the Borden home.

Adelaide wondered if someone was ill at the Borden place, her neighbors of twenty years.

Andrew Borden's money was in mills, real estate, and banks, and he cared mostly about his own affairs and property. When he met Adelaide on the street he'd greet her with, "How do?" and a tilt of his head. That was generally all.

Andrew's second wife, Abby, was sixty-four and stepmother to his two daughters, the first Mrs. Borden having died in 1863. Abby had few friends and people called her "fleshy" because of the weight she carried from sweetbread indulgences.

Older daughter Emma, a spinster, forty-one and just younger than Adelaide, was friendly enough and always proper. Adelaide found her bland and inscrutable.

Miss Lizzie Borden was also a spinster at thirty-two. With her close friends she was known as kind, generous, straightforward, and a good listener. She had an easy, contagious laugh. She could also be guarded and defensive. More emotive than the rest of the family, Lizzie's sharp tongue had gained her a reputation for being difficult, but she was also the only Borden who could laugh at herself.

If Adelaide were honest, only if pressed, she would have to say that she'd never quite liked any of the Bordens.

Adelaide set her bundles down in her kitchen and saw, out her window, Lizzie standing inside the Bordens' screened side door. Lizzie leaned against the door frame, rubbing her forehead in apparent distress.

"Lizzie, what is the matter?" Adelaide called out.

"Oh, Mrs. Churchill," Lizzie replied. "Do come over. Someone has killed Father."

Adelaide delayed only long enough to tell her mother there was trouble next door, and then hurried over. Lizzie sat almost frozen on the second step of the stairs just inside the door, her gray eyes wide.

Tragedy and death were common in those days. Adelaide's father

had died twenty years before and her husband only a few years into their marriage. Her sister was also a widow.

But murder was not common, and Adelaide thought that maybe Andrew was only sick rather than dead or killed. Lizzie, who'd never lived outside her father's house, was prone to overreaction.

Adelaide touched Lizzie's arm. "Lizzie, where is your father?"

"In the sitting room," Lizzie said, her expression flat.

Looking into the kitchen and to the closed sitting room door, Adelaide listened and heard nothing in the hot, humid house. Was a killer hiding inside? She spoke more softly, "Where was you when it happened?"

"I went to the barn to get a piece of iron."

For what use, Adelaide did not ask. "Where is your mother?"

"She had a note to go and see someone who is sick," Lizzie said, "but I don't know if she is killed too, for I thought I heard her come in."

The Borden house was poorly built and carried sound. Abby should have appeared if she could. And where was Bridget?

Lizzie said, "Father must have an enemy. We have all been sick, and we think the milk has been poisoned. Dr. Bowen is not at home and I must have a doctor."

It was possible that Andrew had an enemy. Or enemies, thought Adelaide. Indifferent precision was Andrew's business gospel, including swift eviction of families who could not pay their rents. Perhaps a disgruntled former tenant had killed him and fled. A horse-drawn wagon on the street clomped and creaked by. "Shall I try to find someone?" Adelaide asked, too scared to look herself.

"Yes." Lizzie nodded emphatically.

Gathering her skirts and sprinting to the stables across and down the street, Adelaide found her working man. "Mr. Bowles, somebody has hurt Mr. Borden; go and get a doctor," she gasped.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Hurry and do not try for Dr. Bowen. He's not at home."

"Yes, ma'am."

The newspaper seller overheard some of the exchange and went to find a telephone. Adelaide ran back to the Borden house, where she

found Lizzie in the same state, still in the entryway. "I shall have to go to the cemetery myself," Lizzie said vaguely.

"Oh, no," said Adelaide. "Lizzie, the undertaker will attend to all such things as that for you."

After that they waited in hot, stuffy silence.

Adelaide had been in the Borden house before, though not often. The old, narrow house, with its closed-in rooms, was hardly suitable for a man as rich as Andrew Borden. It had been a tenement house with two apartments when Andrew bought it in 1872 and he did not fully convert it to a house for one family, leaving a peculiar layout of small rooms and awkward doorways. The kitchen did not have a sink. Instead, a sink room hid near the side door. The Borden daughters could not host grand parties in the small parlor, sitting, and dining rooms.

The family slept on the second floor, with the parents' room at the back and Lizzie's, Emma's, and the guest room at the front, connected only by a door directly between the parents' room and Lizzie's bedroom. That door stayed locked. Andrew had the only key. Emma's room was off of Lizzie's. The front stairs led only to the front bedrooms and the dress closet. Mr. and Mrs. Borden's room in the back and Bridget's attic room could only be reached via the rear stairs.

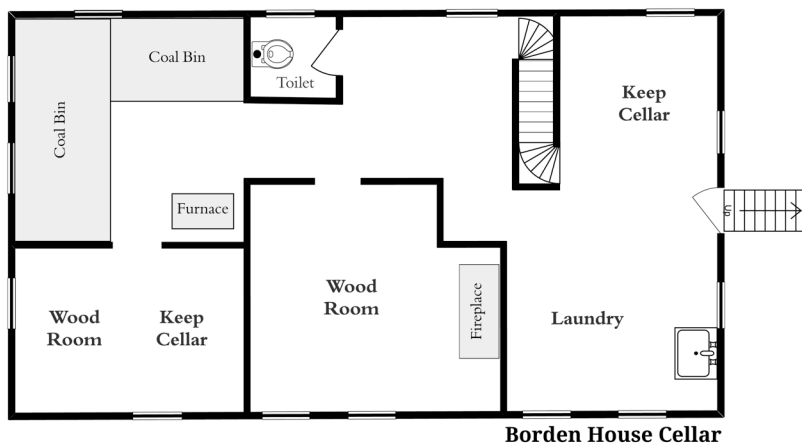
The house sorely lacked comforts. It had no bathrooms, save for one toilet in the cellar and two cold-water-only sinks — one in the cellar and the one in the sink room near the kitchen. When the household did bathe, much to the daughters' frustration, they used pitchers and basins in their rooms. They used kerosene lamps despite the availability of gas piping for households well below Andrew's means. He'd bought the house because of the short walk to his downtown banks and crowning achievement, the A. J. Borden building, and cared little for comforts.

The Borden house was peculiar in another respect: most of the rooms, including the closets, were kept locked. Everyone in the house locked their bedroom when they left it, even if only going down to the kitchen. Andrew locked his and Abby's room each morning, but oddly always left the key on the sitting room mantle.

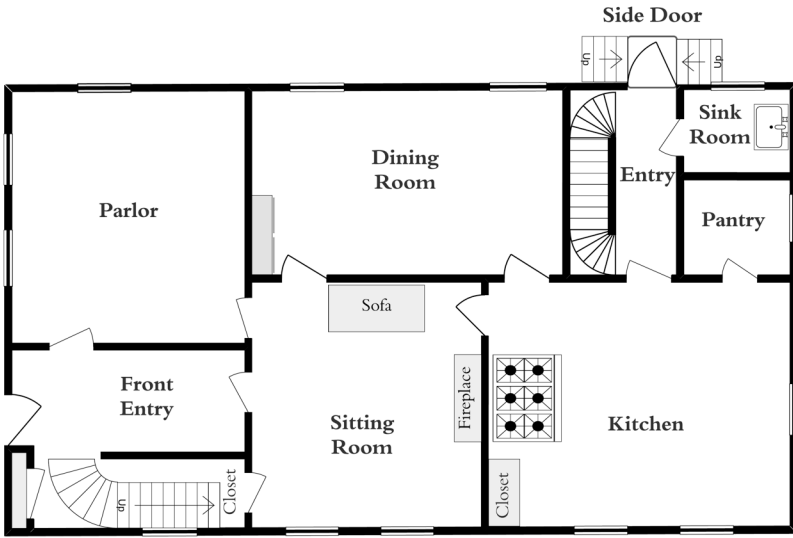
The Bordens had lived in the house on Second Street for twenty years, but they had never belonged, a rich man's family in a working man's house and neighborhood.

## BORDEN HOUSE FLOOR PLANS

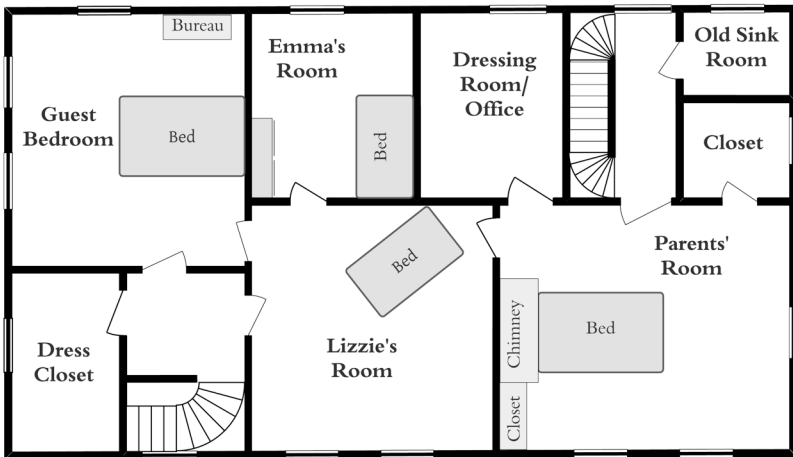
These floor plans are also available at [www.ccreewriter.com](http://www.ccreewriter.com).



BORDEN HOUSE FLOOR PLANS

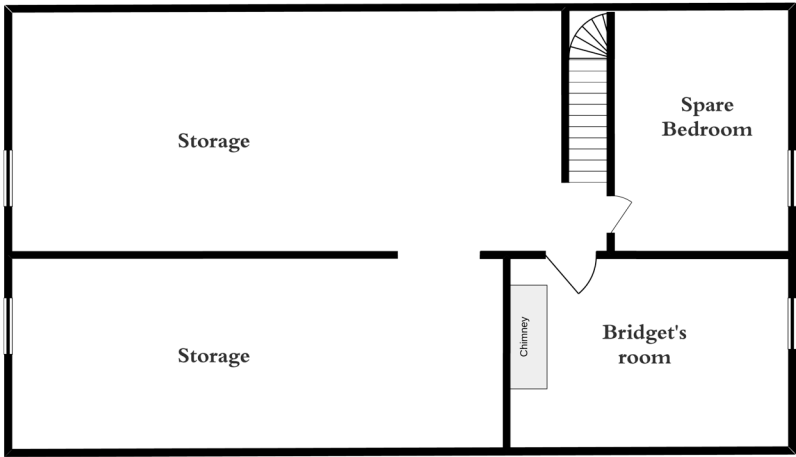


**Borden House Ground Floor**



**Borden House Second Floor**

BORDEN HOUSE FLOOR PLANS



**Borden House Attic**