



# The Life and Trial of Lizzie Borden: The History of 19th Century America's Most Famous Murder Case

*Charles River Editors*

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- \*Includes pictures
- \*Includes reports and witness testimony regarding the murders
- \*Includes online resources and a bibliography for further reading
- \*Includes a table of contents

“I don't know what I have said. I have answered so many questions and I am so confused I don't know one thing from another. I am telling you just as nearly as I know.” – Lizzie Borden

“I knew there was an old axe down cellar; that is all I knew.” – Lizzie Borden

“Lizzie Borden took an axe, and gave her mother forty whacks, when she saw what she had done, she gave her father forty-one.” Like so many others, this ditty and similar ones sacrificed accuracy in the name of rhyme and rhythm, as Abby and Andrew Borden were not hit 81 times but “only” 29. Of course, that still proved to be more than enough to kill both of them and propel their daughter, Elizabeth, into infamy.

Today, cases are often referred to as the trial of the century, but few could lay claim in the 19th century like Lizzie Borden's in the wake of her parents' murders. After all, the story included the grisly axe murders of wealthy socialites and a young daughter as the prime suspect. As Trey Wyatt, author of *The Life, Legend, and Mystery of Lizzie Borden*, put it, “Women were held to strict standards and genteel women were pampered, while at the same time they were expected to behave within a strict code of conduct. In 1892, Fall River, Massachusetts wealthy society ladies were not guilty of murder, and if they did kill someone, it would not be with an axe.”

When questioned, Lizzie gave contradictory accounts to the police, which ultimately helped lead to her arrest and trial, but supporters claimed it may have been the effects of morphine that she had a prescription to take. Much like subsequent famous murder cases, such as the O.J. Simpson case or Leopold & Loeb, Lizzie Borden's trial garnered national attention unlike just about anything that had come before. The case sparked Americans' interest in legal proceedings, and as with Simpson, even an acquittal didn't take the spotlight off the Borden case, which has been depicted in all forms of media ever since. Lizzie became a pariah among contemporaries who believed she'd escaped justice, and she remains the prime suspect, but the unsolved nature of the case has allowed other writers to advance other theories and point at other suspects.

The *The Life and Trial of Lizzie Borden: The History of 19th Century America's Most Famous Murder Case* looks at the personal background of the Borden family and the shocking true crime that captivated America at the end of the 19th century. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about Lizzie Borden like never before, in no time at all.

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