

0. WAS SHE LYING? - Story Preface

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What did Lizzie do after her father came home? At the inquest, she said she went to the barn - to find fishing gear for an upcoming trip:

Q: Can you give me any information how it happened at that particular time you should go into the chamber of the barn to find a sinker to go to Marion with to fish the next Monday?

A: I was going to finish my ironing; my flats were not hot; I said to myself "I will go and try and find that sinker; perhaps by the time I get back the flats will be hot." That is the only reason.

Obviously not believing Lizzie, Knowlton questioned further why she went to the barn to get fishing gear. Didn't she have sinkers with the rest of her equipment?

Q: ... It occurred to you after your father came in it would be a good time to go to the barn after sinkers, and you had no reason to suppose there was not an abundance of sinkers at the farm and abundance of lines?

A fair question, to which Lizzie gave no reasonable answer.

Some of the most incriminating testimony was still to come. (See page 75 of the inquest testimony.) Lizzie, who had refused to eat the morning of the murders, because she was ill, decided to eat pears in the hot barn while she looked for her fishing gear.

Q: Was the window open?

A: I think not.

Q: Hot?

A: Very hot.

Q: How long do you think you were up there?

A: Not more than fifteen or twenty minutes, I should not think.

Q: Should you think what you have told me [she was looking for fishing sinkers] ***would occupy four minutes?*** [It is fair to wonder: In the suffocating heat?]

A: Yes, because I ate some pears up there.

...

Q: I suppose that was the hottest place there was on the premises?

A: I should think so.

...

Q: What did you do?

A: I ate my pears.

Q: Stood there, eating pears, doing nothing?

A: I was looking out of the window.

By this time, Knowlton no longer believed what Lizzie said. His questions (see page 84 of the inquest record) begin to reflect that tone.

Q: Can you give me any judgment as to the length of time that elapsed after he came back, and before you went to the barn?

A: I went right out to the barn.

Q: How soon after he came back?

A: I should think not more than five minutes; I saw him taking off his shoes and lying down; it only took him two or three minutes to do it. I went right out.

By the time she came back into the house through the back door, her father was dead.
What would the jury think about such testimony?

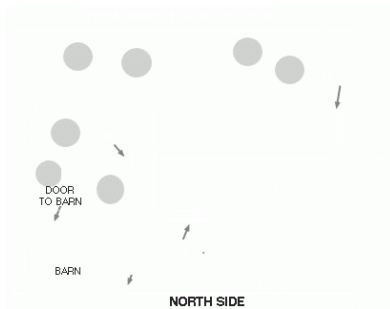
See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/WAS-SHE-LYING-Lizzie-Borden>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/WAS-SHE-LYING-Lizzie-Borden>

Media Stream



Borden House Lot Plan

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

PD

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Borden-House-Lot-Plan>



Lizzie Borden House - Rear Entrance Photo

Image online, courtesy Fall River Police Department.

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Lizzie Borden - No Longer Believed

From *The Legend of Lizzie Borden*, with Elizabeth Montgomery as Lizzie Andrew Borden.

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