



The Woodshed Mystery

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A double puzzle involves an old friend of Aunt Jane's, romance, and a chase.

The Woodshed Mystery Details

Date : Published January 1st 1990 by Albert Whitman & Company (first published January 1st 1962)

ISBN :

Author : Gertrude Chandler Warner , David Cunningham (Illustrator)

Format : Kindle Edition 163 pages

Genre : Mystery, Childrens, Fiction

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Becca says

In this mystery book, the "Boxcar Children" are fixing up a farm house for their Aunt Jane who used to live there when she was a young girl. The children discover that the house has a mystery behind it that no one in the town can put a finger on. Through a lot of searching and digging, the four children find secret doors and underground cellars that were used to hide ammunition during the Revolutionary War. And a man from the town when Aunt Jane was a young girl went missing and the family finds out he found the mystery before they did. A full happy family resumes at the end. This book was very exciting and kept me entrained throughout. It was a bit obvious from the beginning what was going to happen, but for a child this book would be a great mystery novel. The illustrations on the cover are really enticing and are what made me choose this book from the others in this series. The children on the front look as if they have found something so amazing in an underground area that I just had to start reading to find out what it was! I love this series and mystery books alike. Great choice for young readers!

Brooke Nadzam says

Well, Aunt Jane! You dog!

In this one Aunt Jane moves back east, and what does Grandfather do for her? Buy her their childhood house, of course! How much money does this guy have???

Of course, there is a mystery involving hidden ammunition, a woodshed, and some stolen eggs.

And at the end? Well, Aunt Jane is a hit forward....

Better than some of the more recent ones.

Misbah says

Aunt Jane wants to move back to the village she grew up in, in the East. Grandpa Alden goes and buys a house in the village and takes the kids with him to help fix it up. When they get the house set up Aunt Jane moves in. Soon the kids are acquainted with a lot of the people there and they learn that Aunt Jane was in love with a boy that used to live on a nearby farm. He had suddenly disappeared without a trace after Jane had had a fight with him. Aunt Jane admits that she wanted to marry him but she fought with him because she didn't want to take his last name, Bean.

The kids discover a hidden tunnel in a woodshed attached to the house and also a place to hide people in the cellar of their house. They soon learn that someone has been living in the woodshed and they come back a few times to figure out who it is.

They discover that it was Andy Bean, Aunt Jane's sweetheart, who had come back to the village after all these years so that he could be with Jane again. Jane is happy to see him. He reveals that he left because he was afraid of Jane and he had still loved her all these years. He had traveled the world as a sailor and he had collected precious stones wherever he went so that he could one day give them to Jane. He proposes and she accepts and they get married. (SO SWEET! I wish love was like that in real life. Enduring through time and space.)

Andy tells the kids about how he found the mysterious tunnel in the woodshed when he was a kid and he had found some artifacts in there from the revolutionary war and learned the reason for the tunnel. The house originally belonged to a couple 200 years ago. During the revolutionary war they had hid ammunition there and soldiers from their side of the war. The wife writes that because of their secret they had to cut ties with their neighbors because they were afraid someone would tell the Redcoats and they would be hanged for treason. (So cool!)

Rachel says

Read aloud to Calvin, sometimes he wanted to sit and listen and would ask me to read more, other times he ran off to play. I guess that's how you read when you're 3.

Jg says

cool fun and woody.

Gentry says

My favorite one so far. Nice little history of the Revolutionary War.

Sarah Nessler says

Who knew that the mystery was extremely old. Everyone was afraid to live at the old Alden farm but no one could pinpoint why for sure. They knew something happened in the past and that is all. With little information to go on as usual the Alden children are on the case. Being clever and having an attention to detail is no small feat for them. A stranger comes back after so many years and is reacquainted with one of the Alden clan. Interesting book!

Nicola Mansfield says

One of the better mysteries in this wonderful children's series. All the familiar faces are back as everyone gathers together at the Aldens. For the first time the children do not go on a vacation for the summer, breaking the mold of all the previous books. Aunt Jane moves back to their part of the country, moving into the old family home. Even though the mystery is easily solved by an adult, for the first time in this series a genuine mystery with clues and ties to the past, including the Revolutionary War bring about an exciting story making this one of the finer stories in the collection. At this point Henry is in college, Jessie a high school senior and Violet is ready to start high school after this summer so the dynamics of the children are changing too with Benny still being the only little one left. Most of the minor characters are collected here but with the marriage of one, there is also the mention that some will be leaving and I'm thinking may be departing from the series at this time, while the marriage adds a new character who could easily fill the role played by the departing characters: adventure supervisor, adult companion etc. Since I'm reading Warner's

19, I'm appreciating the flow of the basic plot continuity of reading them in numerical order as well.

Mary Kidd says

A quick read that one could read in less than an hour. I used to read these for school and it's been a very long time since I read one of these. It was nice that the children were allowed to age. I know in later books that after Miss Warner's death they are de-aged but at least this one they are older but the book cover to me they look younger than they are in the book. Benny looks like he is six and Violet maybe ten. Henry looks like he is early teens. Jessie is the only one on the front cover looks close to her age. I know this cover was done later but just something I noticed.

There are draws inside the book like the other one but I didn't really care for them they really don't have the detail that the later books do which maybe some would like that they leave more to the imagination.

I enjoyed these when I was younger and I personally found it hard to read but that was just me. There is really nothing wrong with the story. Maybe it would have been better if I read these in order. I know Aunt Jane is introduced in book two and so if you read this first you will be spoiled I think for that book.

I still recommend reading it. Just be aware it might be better to at least read those first few books in order.

Lillian Bittle says

Wow! What happened?! This is the 7th book and Henry is in college! In book number 150 he is 14. This is so much better! They actually age! Like normal people, I guess.....

Ashle Oaks says

The book is different from the previous books. It explains what happened in the previous books when necessary. The children are also slightly older in this book. There's also a history lesson tied into the story.

Ben says

The main characters in this book are Benny, Henry, Jessie, and Violet Alden, along with their grandfather, and his sister. The book is set in New England (United States) during a time around the 1960s. The conflict is that their (Great) Aunt Jane is coming back from the West to live in New England again, so the kids grandfather buy the house that he and Jane grew up in and they fix it up for when she comes, but while their fixing it up, and when she arrives, the kids find themselves a mystery.

Something I liked in this book was that it was a short, easy read that was still a good book with an interesting plot and varying characters. One other thing that I liked was how funny, happy, and purely innocent Benny is when it comes to just about anything. Whenever I read a Boxcar Children book, he is one of my favorite characters every time. I also liked that Andy and Jane were happy together in the end and decided to get married, after having not seen each other for a long time. One thing that I didn't like was that the author wasted time on useless things, like saying that the family ate breakfast, or that they went outside and sat on the grass. Also, I didn't like that the author sometimes seemed to leave gaps in the explaining/solving of the mystery. I would recommend this book to anybody who is able to read chapter books, who likes adventure, mystery, suspense, and/or realistic fiction, or any combination of those, and for any of you who need a quick

and easy read.

Nevada Libert says

this is a great read aloud, me and the boys really enjoyed the mystery.

C.O. Bonham says

Didn't like this one as much as the other books in the series. The mystery is so weak and the kids are older but not more grown up.

Henry the oldest is in college and he drives a car in the book but when the four siblings go off to explore a potentially dangerous building (Dangerous because it's old and ready to fall down) Their Great-Aunt makes them take an adult with them. Wait a minute, isn't Henry an Adult? He's in college after all. I like that the author didn't want to set any bad examples for her young readers but a simple sentence such as: "I worry about that old building falling down but Henry you are an adult now and I trust you to look out for your sisters and brother," would have solved a large problem for this book.

As for the mystery, there is something that towns folk don't like about the old Alden Farm. But no one seems to know what's wrong or Why they don't like the place. That's the weak mystery. James Alden takes his Grandkids to the farm where he grew up and all anyone can say is, "There's something wrong with that place," It's not haunted there was no murder, they just don't go there. The reason was dumb when it was revealed. Sometimes I reread these books and I get the feeling that she something very exciting planned for the the story but then the publisher or someone else says, "No can't do that in a Children's book." or "No, kids won't get it. Dumb it down."

BefuddledPanda says

This one is a bit dated in terms of gender roles but I read it keeping in mind the context of the time it was written in.
