

Treasure of Green Knowe

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L. M. Boston's thrilling and chilling tales of Green Knowe, a haunted manor deep in an overgrown garden in the English countryside, have been entertaining readers for half a century. Now the children of Green Knowe--both alive and ghostly--are back in appealing new editions.

The spooky original illustrations have been retained, but dramatic new cover art by Brett Helquist (illustrator of A Series of Unfortunate Events) gives the books a fresh, timeless appeal for today's readers.

Treasure of Green Knowe Details


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Author : L.M. Boston , Peter Boston

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Anna Katharine says

I loved- and was slightly unsettled by- the Green Knowe series as a kid, and I'm glad to revisit them. I'm still charmed by the story, and love the relationship between Tolly and his grandmother. The amount of ambiguity present in the existence of the 'others,' and the nature of their interaction with the modern world, now seems like creative story telling; as an adult reader, I can appreciate the ambiguity without needing the solid answers I wanted as a kid. Rereading as a modern adult, though, I'm not sure how to feel about the character of Jacob. The novel makes it clear that Captain Oldknow is against slavery in a time when it was the norm, and the characters who show overt racism towards Jacob are clearly represented as being in the wrong. I still imagine that this would be an uncomfortable book for a child of color to read, however. The description and treatment of the 'Gypsies' is worse, as they're depicted as shiftless and lacking all redeeming qualities. I realize this book is a product of its time, and while I still enjoy the nostalgia of the story reading it as an adult, I doubt I'd give this as a gift to a kid. Sometimes it's bittersweet to revisit old favorites, and realize how limited a worldview they present.

Terri Lynn says

I enjoyed this Green Knowe book even more than the first one. Tolly is back again, spending his spring vacation with his great grandmother at Green Knowe out in the country but is somewhat upset to find that the portrait painting of the three ancestor children who he "met" as ghosts on his Christmas visit seem to have disappeared along with the portrait that his great grandmother lent to an art exhibit. He is further alarmed when she says that money is tight because the place must have repairs (it is an official heritage site and the law requires it be kept up properly)and she might sell it.

Great Grandmother Oldknow is such a treasure! I would love to have her for my own great grandma and I wouldn't mind being Tolly's mom (or sister).

L.M. Boston's descriptions of the house and grounds and especially of the animals and plants and the natural world make me want to step into the book and move in with Great Grandmother Oldknow and Tolly. Exquisite descriptions!!

Great Grandmother Oldknow gives Tolly an idea of a way to make the needed repairs on the property while saving the children's portraits. Tolly spent his evenings sitting with her as she worked on family quilts and she told him the story of one of their ancestors and his family and a lost treasure that Tolly decided to recover for her.

The story is intersperses with Tolly's own activities at Green Knowe and he actually becomes part of the story as he gets involved with events that happened long ago! The story is told of ancestors who lived around 150 years after the children did. Captain Oldknow is a sweet, kind, intelligent and fair man who is a sea captain and has to be away from Green Knowe for long periods of time. I can't even begin to imagine why he married his flighty social butterfly wife who is madly in love- with herself. Their elder child is a worthless son named Sefton who is full of himself, cruel, dishonest, and a "dandy". Their second child is sweet Susan who is born blind.

With the Captain away, poor Susan is at the mercy of a mother who is ashamed of her but who lets her come visit her room for a few minutes every night. She holds the child on her lap and lets her feel her face and

jewelry. Maria openly makes hurtful remarks that she can't really dress Susan up and show her off because she is blind and complains that they can't marry her off and will be stuck with her for life. The woman who watches over her is way too protective to the point of smothering Susan. She will not allow the child to walk around unless someone holds her hand and ties her to a chair to keep her from touching anything. Susan is not allowed to have any normal experiences at all. The Captain's mother who is Susan's grandmother is a mean old religious fanatic who is cruel to the child and calls her "it".

All of this changes when the captain gets sick of it on a visit home. He hires a young man Jonathan to read to Susan and when the Captain visits an island where there has been an uprising of slaves, he is astonished when a young black boy begs him to buy him to save him from something worse. At first the captain resists. He hates slavery. In the end, he saves the sweet and charming little boy named Jacob and takes him home to be a companion to Susan.

You can probably imagine the racist uproar when he brings a "black skinned heathen", as the Captain's hateful mother refers to the child, home to live with them. Maria and Sefton are less than amused but Jonathan likes the boy and enjoys working with both children. Soon he is teaching them both to read which was an idea Jacob came up with. While Jacob can work with a slate, he had the clever idea that Susan could use bread dough to shape letters!

Sefton played cruel tricks on the boy such as having clothes made suitable for a hurdy gurdy man instead of what the Captain ordered and by forcing him to go up the chimney to find a bird Sefton lied and said he had shot. Susan and Jacob very quietly paid Sefton back by hiding one of anything he had two of (cuff links, slippers, etc) and in other ways.

Soon Tolly has met the ghost Susan back in her own time and Jacob as well and manages to be a hero then and in his own time. This is a very exciting story which I have enjoyed as an adult as much as any child would. I recommend it to all!

stormhawk says

Love this series of children's books, which are full of mystery and magic. The house at Green Knowe touches both the present and the past as the backdrop of the adventures of Tolly, a young boy who comes to live there between school terms.

Plethora says

This book covers Tolly's spring visit to his Grandmother's house in Green Knowe. I really enjoyed his Tolly learns about the past inhabitants of the house and their daily life. He meets Susan and Jacob who are sure to win your heart, as they make a dynamic duo. This series makes me wish to have a granny that would share such wonderful stories with me.

Lexi says

The novel bounces between two stories, but in such a smooth, seamless way. I love how she writes a blind character.

Paula says

A charming book. Certainly a missed book from my childhood. The language is some what dated, though there is a strong moral message to it. I enjoyed the time slip elements to it. I look forward to read more books by the author, Lucy M. Boston.

Cherie says

I love the stories that Granny tells to Tolly about the old house and the family. Home on Spring break, Tolly explores the old house and looks for treasure. We meet cousin Susan and her friend Jacob.

The narration by Simon Vance is mesmerizing. I cannot wait to start the next one.

Unacra says

That was a good, fun read. And now, I can watch "From Time To Time", which seems to have an excellent cast and I'm very excited about.

Verity W says

So I read some of this series as a child, and was reading this with a view to then passing it on to my 8-year-old niece who is a voracious reader. In my memory, this was a sweet series with ghosts. And bits of this still are BUT it has a young black boy in this who has been rescued from being a slave and some of the language and the way this is done is... of its time and means that I've decided against sending this to my niece. It's beautifully written and atmospheric and there are things that I really liked about it, but I think needs to be read with an appreciation of the fact that attitudes have changed - and what was liberal when this was written, is a bit problematic now, even with good intentions behind it.

Emily says

This second book in the Green Knowe series was a big disappointment. I absolutely loved the first one, but this one was full of casual racism. I guess this isn't surprising, as it was published in the 1950s, but it was still hard to stomach.

Lucy Beban says

I enjoyed this book and the historical and mystery sides of it. I was introduced to this book by my mother

and though i found the first book less engaging i really liked this one.It addresses the themes of discrimination and prejudice through how many characters treat Jacob.

Ivan says

Extremely well written and compelling. However, not nearly as wonderful or wonder full as the first. Is that because we know what to expect? Perhaps. The first story was exquisite in its simplicity and wrapped in a sure and flawless prose. This second novel has more mystery and new characters both good and evil. L. M. Boston is a truly gifted writer. Enjoy.

Emily says

I am rereading this beloved series. I find that when I read childhood favorites as an adult, the really good books are never silly or immature. They have a long-lasting ability to draw me in and capture the wonder I had when first reading them as a child. The house and people in this series are dear friends and their stories are timeless. I loved the line Tolly said at the end: Why do people only invent things that go faster and faster, instead of finding some way way to keep it at now? The quintessential question. If only we had the answer. Perhaps it is by reading old favorites that we can achieve this - just a little.

Ivonne Rovira says

It was not until I began to read *Treasure at Green Knowe*, the second volume in L.M. Boston's charming Green Knowe series, that I realized just how much I had missed Tolly; his great-grandmother, Mrs. Oldknow; and the spectral Toby, Linnet and Alexander, who died of bubonic plague 300 years before Tolly was born. I absolutely loved *Children Of Green Knowe*, a delight for adults as well as children, and none of the magic has disappeared in this volume, which originally appeared in 1958 under the title *The Chimneys Of Green Knowe*.

My only disappointment is that, while Tolly and the kind, understanding Mrs. Oldknow are back, Linnet, Toby and Alexander are missing — literally! Tolly has returned to Green Knowe for the Easter break, just a few months after his first visit the previous Christmas. Mrs. Oldknow has dispatched their portrait to a museum exhibition, and the ghosts have gone with the painting. However, Boston makes up for that loss by introducing two new characters: blind Susan Oldknow and Jacob, a slave boy from Barbados who was redeemed by Susan's kind-hearted and upright father, Captain Oldknow, and who serves as Susan's helper and companion. The pair lived at the very end of the 18th century, and they're both about Tolly's age. In the course of the book, these new ghosts befriend Tolly, and they help him search for a treasure that was lost during their day. Poor Mrs. Oldknow feared that she would have to sell the portrait of Alexander, Linnet and Toby to keep the roof from literally caving in, and, this being a beautiful fable, there's never any doubt that Susan and Jacob will come through just in time.

With romances and children's books, the end comes as no surprise; the enjoyment comes not from a surprise at the destination but in the journey. You won't regret taking the journey delineated by *Treasure at Green Knowe*.

Angela Randall says

That was a good, fun read. And now, I can watch "From Time To Time", which seems to have an excellent cast and I'm very excited about.

Miriam says

I guess I must have read this at some point, since I remember the part about the blind girl her stupid brother and his horrible friend forcing the slave boy to climb the chimney. I don't remember the rest with Tolly and his grandmother and the treasure, though, and I don't feel interested enough to reread it.

Orinoco Womble (tidy bag and all) says

Three and a half stars. At first I thought I wouldn't like this volume as much as the first, but I did. Each installment seems to be so different from the others; in this one, Tolly and Great-Grandma are the same but the 17th century painting is gone, replaced by an 18th century one. Of course it comes with its own ghosts and encounters. This time Tolly gets to play a larger part in the life of the past. For some strange reason I was strongly reminded of an American "ghost" story, The Ghost of Opalina

However there are a few oddnesses, which is probably why Boston is careful not to be too specific about the years the "past" takes place in. Somewhere a date in the late 1700s is mentioned, though, so when I read about the gypsy woman having a cageful of betcherrigahs (budgerigars), I thought "oops!" Because the very first budgerigar was not taken to England until about 1840 by John Gould, and captive breeding didn't really get started till 10 years later. There were a couple of things of that kind which pulled me up short and made me think, "No, that's wrong." I know that the blind have much sharper senses than those who can see (and perhaps, our visual input overrides some of the other senses)...but could Susan seriously have *smelled* the horses arriving--from inside the house?

Who IS Great-Granny, anyway? Not too many women of that age can run around climbing trees and squeezing into underground hideouts. Is she real, or part of the mystery? Again, the ending seemed a bit rushed, but hey, better that than to have it rattle on and become tiresome.

And having inadvertently started Vol 3 before this one, after reading Vol 2 I am wondering (view spoiler). I guess I'll find the answer when I read it all.

Hayley says

Arrived in the mail as a present to read during exam period. Excellent description. I would like to visit the Green Knowe mansion one day...

Michael Fitzgerald says

The present-day stuff was predictable and kind of boring, but the stories from the past were wonderful.

Annalisa says

This is a nice very light children's adventure story. Not much happens as far as action goes, but Tolly is visiting his grandmother on holiday and learns about Green Knowe, the house he is staying at, through stories and exploring. I enjoyed listening to this lots.
