



'Ratcliffe's Who Can Fluke 'Em'

By Zoe Greaves

'Ratcliffe's Who Can Fluke 'Em' is a magical, beautifully illustrated, mystery story for all ages - perhaps most suitable for 6 - 9 year old readers.

Amy and her grandmother advertise for some help with their garden and a mysterious man named Ratcliffe knocks on their door soon afterwards. There is no doubt that Ratcliffe is a brilliant gardener and Granny is delighted but Amy isn't quite so sure...

Ratcliffe really existed, although not at all as I imagined him in this book. In real life he was my great-grandmother's gardener.

My granny lived with her mother-in-law during the Second World War and it was here that she met Ratcliffe. He was by all accounts quite a character. His fertiliser, which he called his 'Who Can Fluke 'Em' was potent and effective. With wartime rationing a supply of fresh vegetables were a real treat. Granny told me that no one in the household knew what he put in it - there were suspicions but no-one dared ask!