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## What the 'ghost' of the butler saw at The Grange

Evening News Reporter

**O**UTSIDE a chill wind howled over last night's bleak January landscape and occasional squalls of rain tattooed against the window.

I sat in the study of The Grange, one of the hostels of the City of Leeds Training College, Beckett Park—talking with Dr. B. R. Dyson, tutor of the hostel . . . and waiting for a ghost.

Dr. Dyson was sceptical: I was nervous.

### Broken heart

The story begins long ago—long before Leeds Corporation acquired The Grange from Lord Grimthorpe in 1911.

The house was the local manor and the butler—legend has it—was in love with the daughter of the house. This he told her many times, until she tired of him, and one wild night said that, unless he dropped his advances, she would ask for his dismissal.

With broken heart the butler wandered about the house that night until he found himself standing at the top of the great, curving staircase. It was an easy matter to let go of the balustrade and fall the 40-odd feet to his death in the stone stair well, three storeys below . . .

Since then there have been many stories of the ghost of the love-crazed servant searching the house for the girl he loved.

And two recent reports have been worrying some of the 57 men

—trainee teachers—who live in the hostel.

First of these was from 21-year-old Alfred Briandle, second year student from Dover, who told me his story as the clock ticked off the minutes towards midnight and the gale-force wind buffeted at the windows and doors of the 300-year-old manor house.

### 'Muttering'

"I was asleep in bed. It was the muttering which woke me, I think—a low, indistinct sound in my room," he said.

"Eventually as I came fully awake, the muttering stopped and at first I thought it was some of the other fellows coming to throw me out of bed or something.

"I said: 'All right, what do you want?' There was no answer and I looked up and saw a figure standing beside me at the head of the bed.

"Then, suddenly, it vanished. Yes, it literally vanished. It couldn't have walked away—I'd have seen and heard it. Then I realised what I'd seen and dived under the blankets—I was terrified.

"As I remember the figure was grey all over, quite short and solidly built and was wearing something buttoned up to the neck, similar to pyjamas, I suppose. It was either bald or had close-cropped hair and his—for it was a man—hands were hanging loosely at his side.

"I never believed in ghosts before, but I am convinced that what I saw that night was a ghost, although I don't claim it was the butler in the story."

His story was greeted with jeers at breakfast next day, but some of his colleagues began to think again when the second report came a few days later . . .

### 'Terrified'

BRIAN STONE, a first-year student, was working alone in one of the studies last Tuesday night around midnight when he heard footsteps walking across the parquet-floored room behind him. He turned, saw nobody and checked his chair to see if it was creaking. It was not, but still the footfalls continued. Brian ran upstairs to his room.

"He was absolutely terrified," said a room-mate. "He was not faking—we had to keep the lights on that night and he would not go out of the room alone."

So it was that I waited for the ghost. As midnight neared we searched the dark house by torchlight. It was eerie, the rafters creaking in the wind.

As we stood in the stair well, torches probing the gloom above us, a clock chimed the first stroke of 12.

But the ghost did not walk last night . . .

As I stepped out of the porch into the howling wind, a dark cloud scudded across the full moon throwing The Grange into spooky darkness.

I shivered—but that might have been the cold . . .

† . . . and still is! Though I must admit that I still can't account for those curious noises on West Wing and Top Circle . . . or the cold in Oak Study