

Extract from John Diment's account as related to Ralph Neville-Grenville

taken from Dorothy Hood's "The Admirals Hood"

His stories of old Mr. Hood, who died in 1777, must have been second-hand, perhaps handed on by some older Hood retainer. Arthur Hood, he tells us, died before his father, "of the black fever which killed numbers at Butleigh, although he went about with his mouth filled with herbs. Old Mr. Hood was a very large fat man. Thorncombe was a very good living, and they kept their carriage and lived in style."

"But I'm going to tell what really happened, Sir, and I hope you won't think it a lie, Sir. They went to dine one night at Ford Abbey, and when they came home the Coachman left the carriage in the yard after he put his horses in the stable, and when he had gone in, the carriage was lifted right up into the air, turned round and ran against the corner of the wall. They wouldn't use it for a length of time, and sent all the servants riding in it several times before they would get in themselves. It was bewitched and they knew who'd a-done it, and so do I ... it was a Landlady. And when the hearse and four horses was to take the old Gentleman to Butleigh here, it ran up against the same corner three times and the coachman try all he could, could not keep the horses off it."

Old Diment said that after her father's death, Ann Hood, who returned to Butleigh, lived "in the Dumb Court [*present St. James' Square*], a very pretty house it was, and very fond of flowers she was. You could smell them for a long distance, and I do mind that there was an apricot tree which blossomed beautifully in the Spring but when Madam was taken ill, it withered away. However she got better and the tree shot out afresh, but when she fell sick and died the tree withered away."

The whereabouts of this manuscript unknown to me at present - RCS