

## EYEWITNESS REPORT



**Site Location** Luton, Wardown Museum

**Report Date** 20<sup>th</sup> April 2010

**Report By** Anthony R. Roberts

I left school at the age of fifteen and joined a heating and plumbing company called EG.Baker in Park Street Luton. I was put to work with a man called Hugh Upton... now he had been through the First World War and fought on the Somme battlefield. It is important to know this because that generation was different to mine. He would never be bested and he had a singular attitude to life. He was a proud and a brave man.

But I saw that man rooted to the spot with fear that day in Wardown Museum cellar. To get to the point, we were changing a section in the boiler which had cracked. I was in the boiler and Hugh was standing outside by the boiler door. The only other person in the museum at that time was the curator who was upstairs in his office. The museum was closed to the public.

We knew that we three were alone. When we heard footsteps coming towards us we knew something was wrong as there was the sound of a light 'tap tap' and then we heard the sound of a dress swishing as the person walked nearer. There were no lights in the cellar in 1955 at all. The only lighting came from a 100 watt head lamp on a long lead which was plugged in upstairs which threw out a limited light around the boiler.

As we waited a woman appeared out of the gloom about ten feet from where Hugh was standing. She continued to walk towards us then turned the corner and was gone from my sight as I was in the boiler. But Hugh saw her for longer as I could see his head turn as he watched her until she was no longer to be seen.

Now that would have been something to talk about between us, but no old Hugh was old Hugh and he was saying nothing. I could not believe it, and after I got over the shock of what I had seen I begged him to talk about it. But he would not. But he stood there in front of the boiler frozen. It took a while for him to move and when he did he turned to me and said something like "load of rubbish" or words to that effect and that was the last word he ever spoke of the subject.

Now let me try to describe what she looked like. She was tall and wearing a dark possibly blue surge dress. White ruffs at her wrists and a white front or 'V' down to her waist. I don't know if she was wearing a bonnet or not and her face has faded from my memory as indeed old Hugh's has..... When you get to my age you will know what I mean, anyway that's about that.

But as a footnote I thought she was a nurse, could be wrong and one more thing, she was not holding a lamp of any sort. That means there was light in the cellar at that time possibly gas. I have just found LPS online and read about the other heating engineers in 1971. This caused me to put pen to paper and get this on record. I have now joined LPS.

**Anthony R. Roberts**