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The Ghosts of Motley Hall

UK TV sitcom : 1976-77 : dir. : Granada : 20 x 25 min
prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:

Freddie Jones; Arthur English; Sheila Steafel

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	€	M	☺	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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An eternity as kid sidekick to a spectral Arthur English – it's not a pretty thought

Source: 25 Years on ITV

Halliwell's Television Companion review:

"The ghosts of a stately home resent intruders. Lively comedy with effective trick work and a host of amusing characterisations. ★"

25 Years on ITV – 1955-1980 caption:

"Richard Carpenter, creator of **"Catweazle"**, continued to place figures

from the past in modern contexts with **"The Ghosts of Motley Hall"**, a series for children in which five historical spectres haunted a house together. "

[no listing in "The Golden Age of Children's Television", "The History of Television", "Into the Box of Delights - A History of Children's Television" or "Television's Greatest Hits"]

Radio Times Film & Video Guide 1995

notes:

“Comedy series.

- The ghosts get a shock when they examine the contents of some large cardboard boxes.
- Gudgin the caretaker gets his head wedged in the banisters.
- It's Hallowe'en, and the ghosts plan a musical evening.
- Sir George's sister Alexandra is making life unbearable for the other ghosts.”

No further information currently available. “Making life unbearable” for a ghost is a neat trick. The identity of the boy pictured is not known. As a core idea, bundling spooks from different historical periods into one haunted location is quite rich in possibilities – a pity then that one of them had to be cheeky chappie Arthur English, who went on to play the caretaker at Grace Bros in “**Are You Being Served?**”. Chummy ghosts *per se* is a rather less original idea, beginning with Wilde's “**THE CANTERVILLE GHOST**” – itself filmed several times – most recently reworked in the shape of “**My Friend Walter**” (girl on a trip to the tower of London discovers the ghost of her ancestor, Walter Raleigh). The later series “**Rentaghost**” was also not dissimilar, while Australia had a variant in the shape of the serial “**Elly and Jools**” (90). What sets this series apart is that the ghosts themselves are the central characters, seeing off various threats to their hall from the living, a variant on the inverted normality premise of “**The Addams Family**”, “**Bewitched**” and “**The Munsters**”. I believe I glanced at an episode or two, but the boy is a token presence, swamped by adult afterlife hams.

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