Swaledale mo
last of the lea

OBITUARIES

ONE of Reeth's best-known characters has died at the age of 91 following a lifetime in the Swaledale community.

Mr Fremont Hutchinson, known locally as Fremmie, was the last of the leadminers and died last Friday in hospital.

He was born in neighbouring Arkengarthdale in 1910, one of six children of Fremont and Ethel Mary, and attended the local school.

He started work at the age of 14, two weeks after leaving school, first as a farm hand for his mother's uncle and then as an under-cowman on an estate in the dale, until 1934 when the farm was sold.

Mr Hutchinson then joined his father in the mines, where he worked at first in the chert quarries, extracting the hard, blue flint used for paving.

In the 50s, he worked at Pryse mine at Hurst, on the moors above Arkengarthdale, when a company decided to re-establish the lead mining industry which had thrived in the previous century.

He walked four miles to the mine, then a mile underground to work with hammer and drill by candlelight. In summer, he would play cricket in the evenings after a long day underground.

The re-opening of the Hurst mines was a failure and the re-



Fremont Hutchinson: member of 'Reeth parliament' – D&S