

The Burgoyne Hotel Story

1783 - In the beginning

Hill House, as it was first known, was built in 1783 ‘on the foundations of a much older house, possibly that of Matthew Alderson one of the seventeenth century landholders who held Haterbanks Close’,¹ and ‘may incorporate earlier fabric’.² A ‘Plan of the Manor of Healaugh in Swaledale’ made in 1770 to show the ‘Limits of the Inclosures’ certainly shows a building on the site on which Hill House was built (Fig.1 & detail).

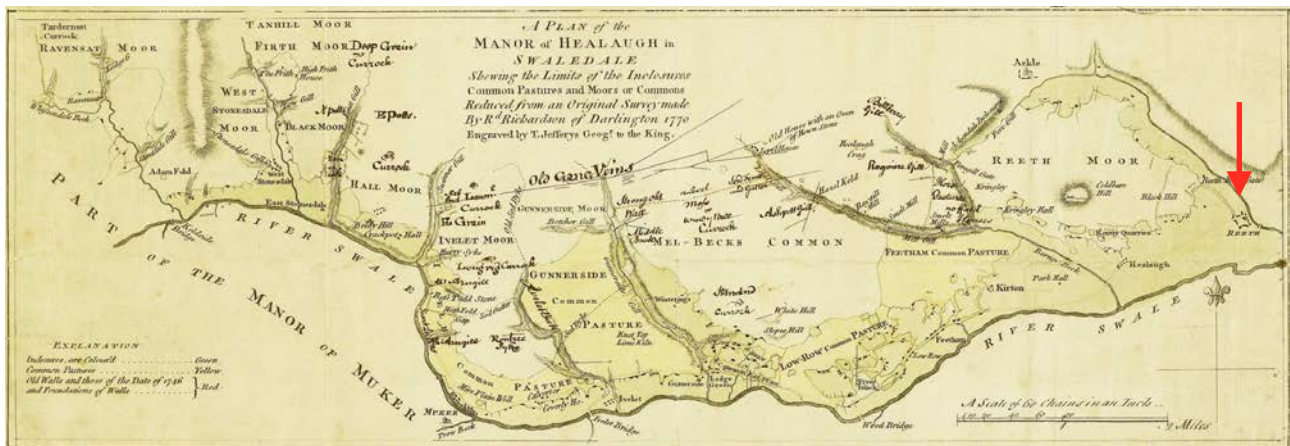


Fig.1 ‘A Plan of the Manor of Healaugh in Swaledale’, from an original survey made 1770, showing Reeth to far right, with detail to below right. Source: Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group, from NYCRO original.



The central block, minus the later wings, forms the original Hill House and is built of hammer-dressed sandstone, with a stone slate roof, both probably locally quarried at Keld.³ The exterior detailing, particularly the central door ornamented with pilasters, frieze and pediment, adopts the polite architecture of fashionable Richmond, Skipton and even York (Fig.2).

¹ Margaret Batty, *Bygone Reeth*, Reeth Methodist Church Council 1985, pp.25-6. ‘Haterbanks’ is mentioned as a street name in the 1841 Census, but by the 1851 Census seems to have been replaced with ‘North Side’. Andrew Fleming in *Valley of the Wild River*, 1991, suggests that the site of the Burgoyne lies on (and just within) the very southern edge of a possible winter park, an enclosed space where cattle (and perhaps also deer) were brought kept during the winter. Thanks to Shaun Richardson for this information.

² Reeth, Swaledale, Conservation Area Character Appraisal Designated 27 November 2001, hereafter CACA, 2001.

³ See to the south west of Keld, http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/703575/Keld.pdf



Fig.2 Photograph of Hill House before the c.1875 extension. Burgoyne Hotel Collection.

The name perhaps derives from its commanding and elevated position, which is ‘literally and metaphorically, the centrepiece of the north side of the Green’.⁴ The Green as it is now, was then a relatively recent feature. When Philip, Lord Wharton (1613-1696),⁵ granted a market charter for Reeth in 1695, it was in recognition of the increase in population reflecting the growth of the lead industry in which he was involved. It has been suggested that at this time the village turned from facing the River Swale, where expansion was limited, to its current direction, embracing the Green, over which Hill House presides.⁶ ‘Reeth at the meeting point of Arkengarthdale with Swaledale, became the economic hub of the lead industry’,⁷ and during the eighteenth century, in response to growing prosperity grew in size and ambition. Larger more imposing structures appeared, including what is now the King’s Arms on High Row in 1734, one of the three-storey townhouses that began to appear in the area from this time, the first Friends’ School in 1778, the

⁴ Ibid. Note that there is no Swaledale surname ‘Hill’, after which the house might have been built.

⁵ Born at Aske, near Richmond. See K.W Watson, ‘Philip, Lord Wharton - Revolutionary Aristocrat?’, *United Reformed Church History Society Journal*, Volume 4 No 8 May 1991: http://www.ravenstonedale.org/history-archive/docs/folder9_wharton.pdf

⁶ CACA, 2001 states ‘that in the medieval period Reeth formed a rough T-shape, with a straggle of houses along a road following a terrace overlooking the Swale, and with a further row of houses extending north from these on a line fronting the west side of the Green. It may be, however, that the re-modelling of Reeth around its green disturbed a more complex development plan’.

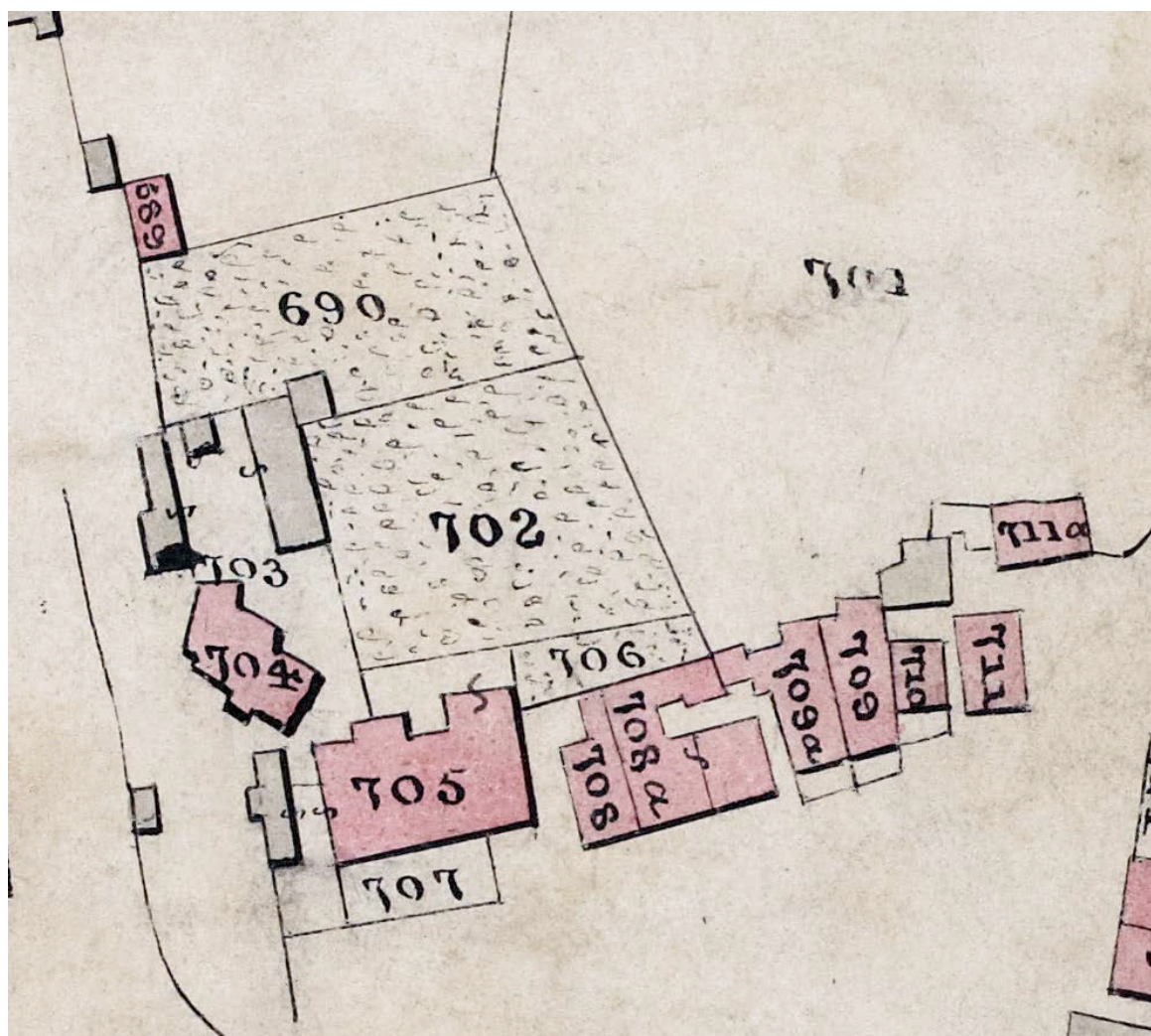
⁷ From ‘Out of Oblivion, A Landscape in Time’ see <http://www.outofoblivion.org.uk/swaledale.asp>

new bridge at Reeth in 1773 by John Carr and the fine late eighteenth century double-bowed shop-front with gothic tracery flanked by Tuscan pilasters, that was added to what is now part of the Black Bull. The new Independent Church was built in the same year as Hill House, although not as well, as it collapsed 70 years later. It has been suggested that, like Hill House, it rose from an earlier structure and was adapted from a pre-existing building, suggesting a more common strategy of construction in Reeth at the time.⁸ Amid all this activity Hill House would have been, and arguably still is, the most imposing building in Reeth. Servants' quarters were built behind it, and the garth in which it stands was enclosed by an imposing crenelated wall to the west and east.

⁸ See Reeth Evangelical Church website: <https://recchistory.weebly.com>, visited 28 October 2018.

Hill House and the Sherlocks

The first Census of 1841 enables us to discover for the first time who definitely lived at Hill House.⁹ It was occupied by the farmer James Sherlock (aged 55), his wife Elizabeth aged (40), two daughters Elizabeth (9) and Mary (2) and son John (3), along with two servants.¹⁰ However, from the family tombstone in the churchyard at St Andrew's Grinton, we know that James died in March 1844.¹¹ By the time of the Tithe Apportionment, taken that same year, Hill House (plot 705), with gardens to the rear (plots 702 & 706) and front (plot 707) with yard to the west (plot 703) was occupied by 'Mrs Sherlock', the landowner listed as 'representatives of James Sherlock' (Fig.3a, see also 3b).¹²



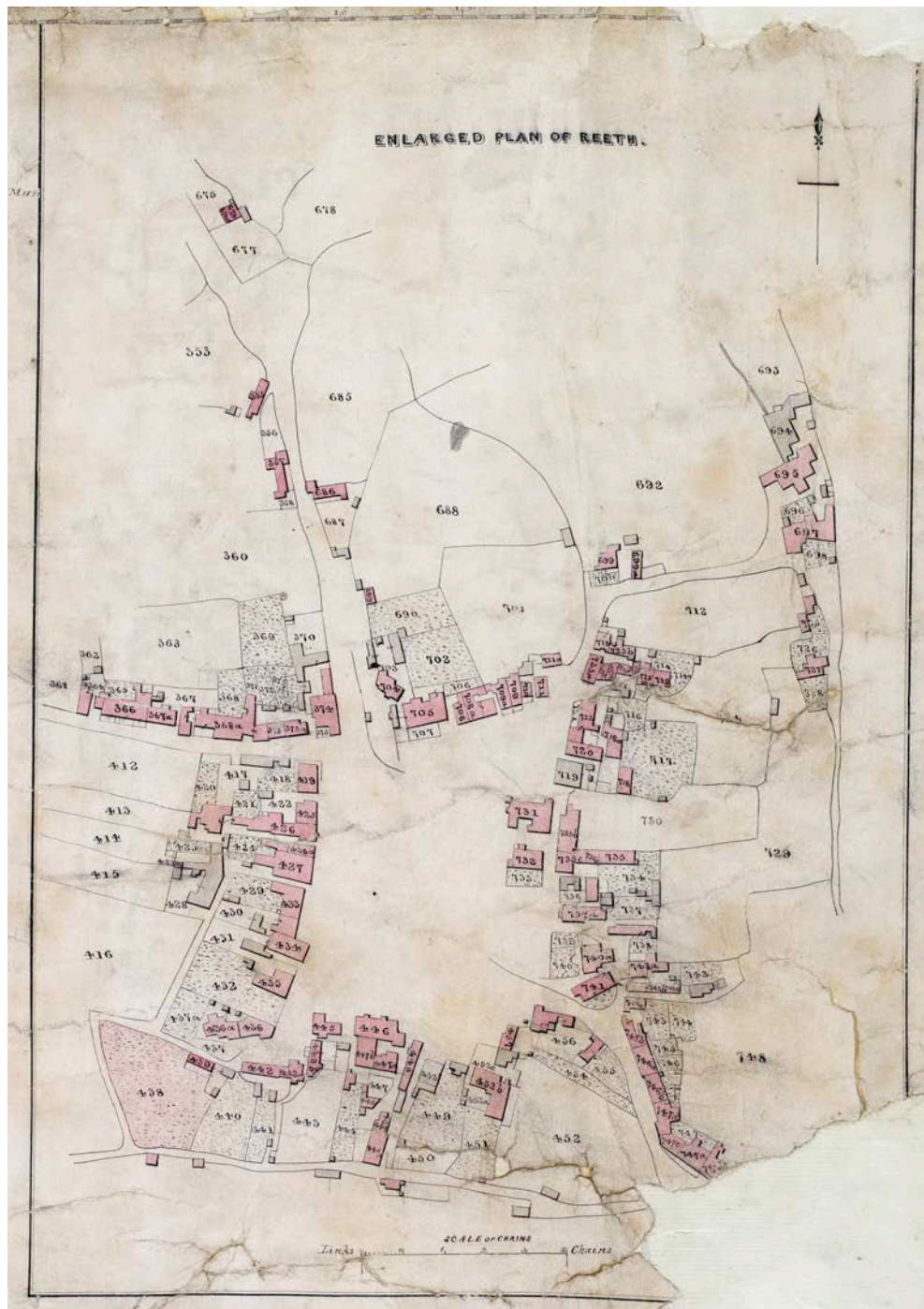
⁹ The 1838 Valuation of the Townships of Fremington, Reeth and Healaugh drawn up by Thomas Bradley & Son of Richmond lists James Sherlock as owning and occupying a 'Mansion, Out Buildings & Garden', although the name Hill House does not appear in the Valuation. Swaledale Museum Archive

¹⁰ http://www.dalesgenealogy.com/census/reeth_41.htm

¹¹ Facing East: 'Erected in Memory of Jas SHERLOCK/Esqr of Reeth/who died/March 10th 1844/Aged 61 years'.

¹² <https://www.swaag.org/TitheApportionmentDb/TithesKeyword2L.php?term=705>

Fig3a Detail from Tithe Map (A Plan of the Township of Reeth in the Parish of Grinton, by Anthony Clarkson), 1839, inhabitants listed 1844, showing plots occupied by Hill House and gardens. Source: Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group, from NYCRO original.



What the Tithe listing also shows is that the Sherlocks were substantial landholders in Reeth, owning over 128 acres in total, although most of this was tenanted, apart from meadow and pasture (plots 492, 498 & 499) (Fig.3b).¹³

Fig.3b Tithe Map (A Plan of the Township of Reeth in the Parish of Grinton, by Anthony Clarkson), 1839, inhabitants listed 1844. Source: Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group, from NYCRO original. In 1851 Elizabeth was still at Hill House, listed in the Census as a ‘farmer’s widow’, with daughter Mary, son John and two servants.

What was Reeth like at this time? *White’s Directory* of 1840 describes:

a small market town, picturesquely seated at the southern foot of the lofty moors of Arkengarthdale, on the small river Arkle near its confluence with the Swale ... has in its township 1,456 inhabitants and 5,491 acres of land, including the hamlets of Fremington and Healaugh ... also many scattered houses, and about 2,000 acres of open moors, which rise abruptly on the north side of the town to a considerable altitude; abounding in lead ore and commanding extensive and highly diversified prospects. The lead mines of Swaledale and Arkengarthdale serve to enrich the town and neighbourhood, and give employment to a considerable number of the inhabitants.

The 1851 Census lists 688 people living in Reeth, in 156 houses. Forty-eight men were employed in mining, as well as six inn keepers, five carpenters, farmers and grocers; four drapers and shoemakers; three blacksmiths, butchers, cloggers corn suppliers, hawkers, ministers, tailors, teachers and waggoners; two carriers, cordwainers, confectioners, plumbers, sawyers and knitters; and one lead mine agent, baker, cooper, cutler, clockmaker, dressmaker, doctor, druggist, gardener, laundress, milliner, printer, rag merchant, sadler, slater, tinner and weaver; as well as 33 domestic servants.¹⁴ Reeth was the busy commercial hub for this lead mining community.

¹³ Pasture, wood and meadow worked by Thomas Robson (plots 849, 851-3, 855-6, 861); meadow and pasture worked by James Siddle (plots 854 & 857), and dwelling house and garden (plots 858-60); pasture worked by Mary Hutchinson (plot 874); meadow, wood and pasture worked by Henry Bradberry (plots 460, 463, 765, 468); meadow and pasture by John Longstaff (plots 643-47) and a dwelling house and garden (plots 648-49), pasture, meadow and wood by Thomas Alderson (plots 631-41) and dwelling house and garden (plots 638-40); pasture and meadow, by Esther Ward (plots 319-31 & 355-77) see Fig.3b.

¹⁴ Batty, *Bygone Reeth*, pp.30-1.

Hill House and the Robinsons

Elizabeth Sherlock probably stayed at Hill House until her death in 1853, aged 53.¹⁵ By the 1861 Census George [Alderson] Robinson (1823-1881)¹⁶ is listed as head of the house, his birthplace given as Reeth, his age 37 and his occupation 'landed proprietor'. He lived with his wife Penelope (33), born in Richmond,¹⁷ and his staff: Isabella Hutchinson aged 23 the cook, and Anne Hutchinson (18) the housemaid, both from Healaugh. It was here that their only son, George William Robinson was born. *Whellan's History* (1857-9) noted that 'George Robinson MD' is listed as one of the twelve principal landowners', in Swaledale and as a magistrate in Richmond.¹⁸ One source states that he 'had come to the village in 1852',¹⁹ which is close to the inheritance or purchase of Hill House from the Sherlock estate, when Elizabeth died. Robinson settled into life in Reeth, becoming involved in many affairs, including complaints about the newly built Reeth Friends' School (erected 1862), supporting those who claimed that it had been badly constructed and was unhealthy.²⁰ As a staunch Methodist, he would have mourned the loss of the Methodist School in Reeth (built 1836, now the Swaledale Museum), which had been replaced as the main day school in the village, by the newly built Quaker School. However his aims were not entirely altruistic as it is said that he had an eye on a trusteeship at the Friends' School, left vacant by the death of Dr McCollah. He offered money to the trustees, and 'on being refused behaved in an outrageous manner, ... he was ... used to having his own way, and when thwarted he resorted to violent language and threats'.²¹ As a result he was issued with what we would call now an Anti-Social Behaviour Order, and was requested not to enter the School. The complaints made about the Friends' School resulted in an enquiry by the Charity Commission in 1866, but the representatives of the Friends' School countered all the claims, and went on to thrive, surviving into the present.

If Robinson emerges from this episode as a difficult man, this should not obscure his otherwise generous philanthropy. He was a great supporter of the Methodist Missionary Society (set

¹⁵ She was buried with her husband, sharing the same tombstone: Memorial E-058 - Facing North: 'And of/Elizabeth/ His wife who died/Sept 16th 1853/Aged 53 yrs/Facing West: John SHERLOCK/Only/son of James /and/Elizabeth SHERLOCK/Died 4th May 1915/Aged 82/"Let Thy mercy come/Also unto me, Oh Lord!'", see: <http://www.grinton.org/e058.html>

¹⁶ Born 6 December 1823, information from gravestone, baptised 26 December 1823, from St Andrew's register.

¹⁷ Penelope Thompson, daughter of William Thompson (1784-1837) and Jane Kay (1789-1844), married George Alderson Robinson in 1848. She died in 1872. Information from Tracy Little.

¹⁸ *Whellan's History and Topography of the City of York & North Riding of Yorkshire*, 1857/9.

¹⁹ Batty, *Bygone Reeth*, p.35. George Robinson had been active in Reeth from at least the 1820s. We know that he was one of four doctors in Reeth at the time, and that he was interested in lead mining and by judicious investments became very wealthy. He was a substantial landholder, listed in the 1844 Tithe Apportionment as George Robinson listed as a landholder owning over 160 acres of pasture and meadowland, and 16 dwelling houses. George Alderson Robinson owned 11 acres of meadow and pasture in Reeth.

²⁰ Batty, *Bygone Reeth*, p.35. See also Edmund Cooper, *A History of the Reeth Friends' School in Swaledale, Yorkshire*, [n.d.], pp.11-12.

²¹ Batty, *Bygone Reeth*, p.31.

up in Reeth in 1813) and the Mechanics Institute in Reeth, an important centre for education and social meeting. The *Teesdale Mercury* reported in 1866 that 'G.A. Robinson Esq. 'took the chair at a Tea Festival' held there, and delivered 'an appropriate opening address' to the 80 gathered who then enjoyed 'glees and songs' to the accompaniment of the harmonium. Mrs George Robinson among other ladies supplied the refreshments. She similarly assisted at the Reeth Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School annual tea in 1867, which catered for 500.²² George Alderson Robinson was also a great supporter of the Temperance Movement and 'Mr Robinson's Temperance Band' was the forerunner of Reeth Brass Band. He paid for the installation of two water pumps, which can still be seen on Reeth Green, each bearing a bronze plaque inscribed 'This water was brought into the Town, and these Tanks erected by the Munificence of Geo Robinson Esq're of Richmond 1868' (Fig.4). They replaced the Low Pump, the base of which still survives near the former Workhouse (near what is now the Copper Kettle Tea Room). Robinson's pumps were listed in 1985.²³



Fig.4 Detail of the bronze plaque on one of the water pumps installed on Reeth Green by

²² *Teesdale Mercury*, 24 April 1866, thanks to Marion Moverly for this reference.

²³ The plaque on the upper pump was removed in the later 1980s when a bus crashed into it, and it was loaned to the Swaledale Museum. In 2017 it was returned to the pump, and one of at least two copies was donated to the Museum in exchange by the Parish Council. Both listed in 1986: Listing NGR: SE0387599340: <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/101131506-water-pump-25-metres-south-west-of-burgoyne-hotel-reeth-fremington-and-healaugh#.W9Ltpy-ZOgQ> & Listing NGR: SE0381699280: <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/101295635-water-pump-25-metres-east-of-kings-arms-reeth-fremington-and-healaugh#.W9Lusy-ZOgQ>.

The address of Richmond engraved on the plaques suggest that George Alderson Robinson had by then moved out of Hill House. This is confirmed by the 1870 Valuation Register, in which Hill House is listed as still owned, but not then occupied, by him. Incidentally he is also shown as owning eight houses and 100 acres of land, as well as Hill House in Reeth, giving a rental income of about £375 (worth about £23,478 today).²⁴ Hill House was tenanted by the retired druggist and grocer James Robinson (77), an uncle of the owner.²⁵ From the same source we know that the Brownrigg family lived next door. Ellen Brownrigg must have been James Robinson's daughter, since fourteen/fifteen year old grandson George Brownrigg (b.1856) was also listed as living at Hill House.²⁶ The 1871 Census, which for the first time gives 'Hill House' as the name of the property, tells us that James Robinson also shared his home with the Messenger family, who acted as his servants: William (42) as groom, born in Brompton and his wife Eleanor (40) from Marske, who served as housekeeper. Their children Joseph (12) Marion (10), John (8), Christopher (6) and William (2) were all listed as 'servants and scholars'. It would have been a lively household.

²⁴ National Archives Currency Converter.

²⁵ http://www.johnhearfield.com/Swale/Home_ownership_1870.htm

²⁶ Incidentally this George, who enlisted in 1873 in 19th (Queen's Royal) Lancers and served in the East Indies, Afghanistan and then East Indies once more, signed up under the false name of Robinson. In 1885 he was required to sign a declaration that 'I George Brownrigg do solemnly & sincerely declare that I was enlisted on the 14 April 1873 under the name of George Robinson which name I now declare to be incorrect'. This did not hinder his advancement to Lance Corporal, and then Sergeant Instructor to the Regiment in 1897. See further: <http://www.dalesgenealogy.com/soldiers/soldiers.html>.

1875- 1920s: ‘The big important house set at the top of the Green’

It was probably the decision of George Alderson Robinson to return to Hill House, after the death of his first wife Penelope in 1872, that inspired the building of the west wing, added c.1875. The extension is captured in an early postcard, showing a man and child standing outside (Fig.5). The large windows have been designed to reflect the architecture of the front door, offering an enhanced view across the Green and Harkerside, increasing not only the size, but also the grandeur of the building.



*Fig.5 Photograph of Hill House after the first c.1875 extension, and before the second 1923 extension.
Source: Swaledale Museum Image Archive SM-1513.*

Certainly by the 1881 Census the Messengers had moved out, presumably after James Robinson's death, as George Alderson Robinson (57) and his new wife Martha Lonsdale (32, born in Durham), who whose parents had been Master and Matron of Reeth Workhouse,²⁷ along with their cook Annie McKay (40) from Rosshire, Alice Medley (21) housemaid from Low Row and Margaret Ward (19) 'table maid' from Reeth are recorded as occupants. Robinson did not enjoy Hill House for long, as the *York Herald* reported his death on 9 July 1881. His obituary gives us an intriguing glimpse of the man and his interests, and indicates that he turned part of Hill House into museum to which he invited visitors.

²⁷ Information from Tracy Little.

The Late Mr G A Robinson - The Inhabitants of Swaledale and Arkengarthdale have, through the death of this kind hearted gentleman, lost a good friend. Connected through his family with the mining enterprise and industry of the dales for a long period, the labouring classes will long remember with grateful affection one who was ever foremost, both by his personal exertions and a large generosity, in the promotion of every movement having its object their mental, moral, and material benefit, while all connected with him in his private relations will lament the death of a kind and liberal landlord and a warm and attached friend. Fond of antiquarian pursuits, deceased had collected a large and varied museum at Hill House, Reeth of flint, stone, brass, bronze, iron and wood implements of warfare, and ornaments of all ages and nations, and which formed a subject not less of attraction to all visitors than of pleasure to him to exhibit and explain. His death is lamented by all classes.²⁸

He was buried in the churchyard at St Andrew's in Grinton.²⁹ His wife Martha was granted administration of his estate at which point she was living with her widowed mother in Shildon and went back to work as a hospital matron. George Alderson Robinson died intestate, and his only son by his first marriage, donated his father's collection of antiquities to the Yorkshire Philosophical Society³⁰ and auctioned the entire contents of Hill House in 1881 in a three day sale. The young bachelor George William Robinson (1864-1916) was living at Hill House by 1891, supported by two local domestic servants, Jennie Cowell (16) and Eliza Croft (12). He had been there from at least 1885, (if not earlier) when the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* reported that he had held a meeting 'from the garden', and the venue is described as 'Mr G. W. Robinson's house'.³¹ *Bulmer's History and Directory of North Yorkshire* published in 1890, notes 'George William Robinson Esq. The Hill House'. In 1892 'George William Robinson of The Hill House, Reeth', was one of those who assented to the Liberal Unionist nominations for the Richmond Division, reported in *The Northern Echo*.³² By 1901 George William Robinson, had acquired a wife, Emma Mangles, aged 36, and had lost Jennie and Eliza, who were replaced by Jessie Ruby Gillespie, aged 21 from Scotland as their domestic servant. They were still there in 1911, without children or servants. The Robinsons at this time would have witnessed a marked change in Swaledale, as the population of the Dale fell from over 1,700 to 580. As a result many houses were left empty as families left the

²⁸ Thanks to Marion Moverley for discovering this.

²⁹ In Loving Memory of/George Alderson ROBINSON of Hill House, Reeth/Born December 6th 1823/Died June 24th 1881/Until the day breaks and the/Shadows flee away. Memorial E-O38.

³⁰ Thanks to Tracy Little for this information.

³¹ 2 November 1885, p.6.

³² 8 July 1892, *Northern Echo*. The Liberal Union Party had been formed in 1886 led by Lord Hartington and Joseph Chamberlain, in alliance with the Conservatives in opposing Irish Home Rule. The coalition governed between 1895 and 1905. With thanks to Alan Gibson for this information.

Dale to seek a new life and work in the cotton mills of Lancashire, the coal mines of Durham and further afield in Spain and North America.

George William Robinson died in 1916, and his estate was valued at £950 (about £56,000 today). We can however gain a rare glimpse of life at Hill House for the later 1910s. The renowned author May Sinclair (1863-1946) took up residence in Reeth between 1912 and 1918, staying at Victoria Cottage (then part of the Black Bull, High Row, and now a private residence) for two to three months every year to write. She featured Hill House in one of the two novels that she set in Swaledale.³³ In her autobiographical *Mary Olivier: A Life*, published in 1919, (republished by Virago in 1980) she describes 'The big important house set at the top of the Green, with three long long rows of windows, the front garden and the iron gate'. Her descriptions are almost forensic in detail, and can be compared to surviving photographs that testify to the accuracy of her account. 'Mary Olivier' describes 'The long house on the top of the Green was gay with rows of pink and white sun-blinds stuck out like attic roofs. The poplars in the garden played their play of falling rain. You waited in the porch, impatient for the opening of the door'. The white sun blinds are captured in a photograph taken by Postgate's Electric Studio, (operating from High Row in Reeth) of Reeth Green (Fig. 6), taken before the installation of the Jubilee Shelter in 1897.



Fig.6 Photograph taken before the building of the Jubilee Shelter, to the front left of Hill House, in 1897. Source: Swaledale Museum Image Archive SM 2683

Better still Sinclair enables us to cross the threshold and gain a sense of the interior as it was in the 1910s.

³³ *The Three Sisters*, 1914 and *Mary Olivier*, 1919.

There was a stuffed perch in a long case in the hall. He swam over a brown plaster river bed, glued to a milk-blue plaster stream. You waited in the drawing room. Drapes of dying amber and the dapple of walnut wood. Chairs dressed in pallid chintz, holding out their skirts with an air of anxiety. Stuffed love birds on a branch under a tall glass shade. On the chimney piece sand white pampas grass in clear blood red vases, and a white marble clock supporting a gilt Cupid astride a gilt ball. Above the Cupid, in an oval frame, the tinted crayon portrait of a young girl. A pink and blond young girl with a soft nuzzling mouth and nose. She was dressed in a spencer and a wide straw hat, and carried a basket of flowers. She looked happy, smiling up at the ceiling. Across the passage a door open. Voices in the passage, a smell like rotten apples, a tray that clatters. Miss Kendal rustled in, tall elegant stiffness, girded in black silk.

This is the claustrophobic home of Sinclair's 'Dr Kendal six feet tall of leanness doubled-up in an arm-chair... Dr Charles Kendal his son, a hard-boned giant, and Miss Kendal'. Sinclair's novels, which were very popular at the time, may have helped promote Reeth and Swaledale as a place to visit, at a time when the area was switching from mining to tourism. *Spencer's Guidebook to Swaledale* c.1920 notes that many people will have heard of the area, because they feature in her novels.

1920s-1930s: The Arrival of Mrs Burgoyne-Johnson

The household at Hill House of the 1910s, as known by May Sinclair, was soon to change dramatically. As Elsie Thompson, author of *Reeth 1850-1950*, notes ‘suddenly Reeth was overwhelmed by the arrival of Mrs Burgoyne-Johnson, her two daughters and entourage’.³⁴ Born Matilda Mangles in Richmond, North Yorkshire in 1866, she had married John Burgoyne Johnson (1868-1920) in the town of her birth in 1889.³⁵ When her sister Emma, who had married George William Robinson, died in 1922, leaving no children, she left everything, including Hill house to Matilda. Matilda’s father-in-law Joseph (1826-1884), who was the son of a coal miner from Hetton-le-Hole, had set up Joseph Johnson (Durham) Limited in 1862 and later bought the City Brewery in Durham, later Westoes.³⁶ Johnson senior purchased public houses to extend the trade of the brewery.³⁷ Joseph Burgoyne Johnson and T. Reay started Hamsteels village and colliery with the sinking of the Taylor pit shaft in 1867.³⁸ Joseph died in 1884, and his businesses were put in the hands of trustees until 1898 when John Burgoyne Johnson, the eldest of his two surviving sons, took complete charge of them.

John was unfit for foreign service, but served in the 8th Battalion of the Durham Light Infantry during the First World War, and by 1915 he was a Major, rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (Fig.7 - awaiting response from War Memorial Indices for purchase).³⁹ His sons also served in the War. Luther Vincent (b.1890) of the 1/8th Battalion (Territorial), was killed at Ypres in 1915, and is remembered at the Menin Gate Memorial.⁴⁰ Francis Wise was taken prisoner at Chardes, north of Rheims and was held at Straslund-Danholm POW camp in Pomerania (near the Baltic

³⁴ The name is unhyphenated at John’s birth, marriage & death. Information supplied by Tracy Little. The relationship between the Robinsons and the Burgoyne Johnson has yet to be established.

³⁵ She is listed as aged 15 and living in Richmond in the 1881 Census. Marriage date noted in North Eastern War Memorials Project: <http://www.newmp.org.uk/article.php?categoryid=99&articleid=1125&displayorder=9>

³⁶ Joseph Johnson Brewers Ltd, see BAC Company Archives 1986, no 588, Minutes 1917-1947, via NRA <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/c/F178104>. The City Brewery was closed in 1924 and the name of the company changed to Westoe Breweries Ltd in 1938. It converted to a public company in 1946 and was taken over by Hammonds United Breweries in 1960.

³⁷ Including Westoes. The Westoe Brewery was operated by Robert Henderson until it was acquired by Johnson in 1907. *Twixt Tyne & Tees – a brief biography of the Westoe Brewery*, notes from Tracy Little.

³⁸ Closed 1958. <https://co-curate.ncl.ac.uk/hamsteels-colliery/> states that the colliery was founded in 1867 by Messrs. R. S. Johnson and T. M. Reay. At its peak of employment in 1914, 917 were employed (683 working below ground, 234 on the surface). See also *Twixt Tyne & Tees – a brief biography of the Westoe Brewery*, notes from Tracy Little.

³⁹ See War Memorial Indices: <http://www.newmp.org.uk/article.php?categoryid=99&articleid=1125&displayorder=9>

⁴⁰ War Office Records, WO 372/11/16010, Medal Card Durham Light Infantry 1914-20. He had been educated at Charterhouse see GODALMING, CHARTERHOUSE SCHOOL MEMORIAL CHAPEL: <http://www.roll-of-honour.com/Surrey/GodalmingCharthouseSchool.html> Charterhouse Register Vol 2, Oration Quarter 1904: Burgoyne Johnson, Luther Vincent. b. 5 Sept., 1890: 1 s. of John Burgoyne Johnson, of Lanchester, Durham, colliery owner; (Laleham-Weekites); Left C.Q., 1909. King’s Coll., Cambridge. L.V. Burgoyne Johnson, Esq., Greencroft Park, Lanchester, Durham. See also photographic portrait Imperial War Museum: <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205302094>

Coast).⁴¹ Reginald Percy (b.1896) served in the Light Infantry,⁴² while George moved from the DLI to join first the Royal Flying Corps then the Royal Airforce,⁴³ and Harold remained as a Lieutenant in the DLI.⁴⁴ Their father returned from the War to live with his family at Greencroft Park, just north of Lanchester, in Durham.⁴⁵ He died in Saltburn in 1920 aged only 51, and was buried back in Lanchester, in the churchyard at All Saints.⁴⁶ John Burgoyne Johnson died leaving his wife Matilda a relatively wealthy woman, with assets of over £110,000 (worth over £3 million today).⁴⁷ Mrs (newly hyphenated) Burgoyne-Johnson must have decided to make a fresh start, hence her decision to move back to Swaledale, this time to Reeth. Three of her sons stayed in Durham to run Joseph Johnson (Durham) Ltd, Reginald as Chairman, and George and Francis as Directors.⁴⁸



Fig 8 Postcard of Reeth, showing on the right, the second wing added in 1923, by Edward Pedley. The newly hewn stone looks brighter, not having had time to weather.

Source: Swaledale Museum Image Archive SM 5637

⁴¹ War Office Records, WO 374/10920, Captain Durham Light Infantry, 1916-21.

⁴² War Office Records, WO 339/16523, 2nd Lieutenant Royal Field Artillery & WO 409/27/42/65, Durham Home Guard, 12th Battalion 1940-45. Photographic portrait via [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)

⁴³ War Office Records, WO 374/37681, Lieutenant Durham Light Infantry 1916-18 & AIR 76/260/161, 1918-19, WO 372/11/10704 Medal Card Royal Flying Corps & Royal Air Force, 2nd Lieutenant Durham Light Infantry, 1914-20.

⁴⁴ War Office Records, WO 374/10921, Lieutenant Durham Light Infantry, 1916-21. Other sources give four sons, George Harold and Harold George might perhaps be the same person, although these war records suggest they were two different men.

⁴⁵ In 1870-72, John Marius Wilson's *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales* described Greencroft Park as 'the seat of Sir W. A. Clavering, Bart.; and was the place where Lady Catherine Graye, daughter of the Earl of Westmorland, was arrested in 1598'.

⁴⁶ Lanchester is 8 miles to the west of the city of Durham and 5 miles from Consett.

⁴⁷ National Archives Currency Converter.

⁴⁸ *Colliery Year Book and Coal Trades Directory*, Louis Cassier Co. Ltd, 1923.

Mrs Burgoyne-Johnson's arrival made a great impact on the Reeth, 'nothing so grand had ever happened to it before'.⁴⁹ She required accommodation for her staff which included a butler, a cook, housemaids, two laundry maids, a gardener and a chauffeur. As a result a laundry and laundry maids' cottage, a garage with a flat above were built at the back and later the house itself was extended by a new east wing, (Fig.8) providing a new dining room and additional bedrooms, which involved the demolition of the gardener's cottage. This wing was built by the Grinton craftsman Edward Pedley (1881-1954), the son of a local lead miner, and a self-employed stone mason and later a builder and contractor.⁵⁰ It is shown in an undated Valentine's postcard, the newly hewn stone for the walls and roof appearing brighter than the rest of the house.⁵¹ It is likely that Pedley carved the two coats of arms on the grand tripartite keyed stone arched fireplace, with the date 1923 and initials 'B.J'. The right hand Johnson crest bears the motto 'nunquam non paratus' ('never unprepared') and the left hand Burgoyne crest 'audaces fortuna iuvat' ('fortune favours the brave') (Figs 9 & 10 below).



Figs. 9 & 10 Carved armorials above fireplace, Burgoyne Hotel

⁴⁹ Elsie Thompson, *Reeth Those Hundred Yesteryears 1850-1950*, pp.61-2.

⁵⁰ He was also parish clerk for Reeth and Grinton for many years. Martha his wife ran Grinton Post Office, and they had five children, four sons who went on to become successful in their own fields, and Elsie who took over the running of the Post Office. See Edward Pedley's obituary in the *Teesdale Mercury*, 17 November 1954.

⁵¹ He is listed under the 1921 List of Mines under the Metalliferous Mines Act - York (North Riding), as owning a sandstone quarry, with no employees, perhaps the source of the stone for the extension to Hill House.



She also commissioned a fine set of arms from Robert Gill (1890-1968), the last blacksmith in Reeth, whose smithy was next to the Congregational Church in Reeth, now the workshop for the Garden House pottery (Fig. 11).⁵² Cut from flat sheet it still adorns the fire-hood of the tripartite keyed stone arched fireplace to left reception room as a lasting testimony to Matilda's ambitions. It is also likely that Gill made the wrought iron lantern holder at the front gate, which appears in post-1923 photographs. It adds a further element of grandeur on arrival at the house.

Fig.11 Photograph of Robert Gill holding the ironwork crest he made for Mrs Burgoyne-Johnson of Hill House. c.1923. Source: Swaledale Museum Archive Abson Collection.

Mrs Burgoyne, as she was known, was a staunch and energetic Tory and soon established a branch of the Primrose League.⁵³ In so doing she contributed to the forces that were to vitalise Conservatism in an hitherto largely Liberal stronghold.⁵⁴ Captain Thomas Dugdale (1897-1997) (afterwards Sir Thomas and in 1959

⁵² Robert's father ran the corn mill at Fremington. Robert trained as a blacksmith and took over Galway House, now the Copper Kettle Tea Room as his home and shop, from where he sold all manner of ironmongery, hardware and gifts. His smithy next door to the Congregational Church closed before his death, due to the decline in the number of horses in the Dale.

⁵³ The Primrose League was an organisation for spreading Conservative principles in Great Britain. It was founded in 1883, and was named after Benjamin Disraeli's favourite flower.

⁵⁴ Duncan Bythell, 'The Fragility of Rural Liberals: Parliamentary Elections and Party Politics in Richmondshire, North Yorkshire 1832-1929', *Teeside Papers in North East History*, no.13, North East Historical Institute, 2003, offprint in Swaledale Museum Library.



Lord Crathorne) was elected Conservative Member of Parliament for the area in 1929,⁵⁵ and the constituency remained Conservative from that date.

Fig 12 Photograph of a fund raising event organised by Reeth Primrose League, n.d.

Swaledale Museum Image Archive SM 2609

of the local League. There are accounts of many fund raising events that she organised in Reeth on behalf of the League (Fig.12).

⁵⁵ Dugdale held the office of Justice of the Peace (J.P.) for the North Riding, Yorkshire in 1928 and was Member of Parliament (Conservative) for Richmond (Yorkshire) between 1929 and 1959. He was Chairman of the Conservative Party between 1942 and 1944, and held the office of Vice-Lord-Lieutenant of the North Riding, Yorkshire in 1957.

Hill House during the Second World War

In 1930 Mrs Burgoyne-Johnson bid farewell to the Reeth Primrose League, and Hill House was left unoccupied.⁵⁶ A 1930s photograph shows the ivy-clad Hill House in the background of a motor cycle rally (Fig.13).



Fig 13 Motorcycle rally on Reeth Green, an ivy-clad Hill House in the background, c.1930s.

Source: Swaledale Museum Image Archive SM 2728

In 1934 the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* ran advertisements for its sale or rent posted by the Reeth auctioneer Thomas Peacock, describing it as a ‘Georgian Mansion House, ideal for a guest house; electric light, central heating’.⁵⁷ The electric light at this time was run by a pioneering hydro-electric power station built at the bottom of Mill Hill, installed in 1911, thus supplying Reeth with electricity before Middlesbrough. Hill House however remained empty until it was requisitioned by the Ministry of Defence during the Second World War, when it became a regimental HQ.⁵⁸ A shower block was built outside, now used as storerooms. Locals remember the arrival of scores of British soldiers from the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) who arrived in Reeth on foot having marched from Darlington station after the Dunkirk Evacuation. During the

⁵⁶ Matilda Burgoyne-Johnson died in 1953 and is buried alongside her husband at Lanchester, Durham. See: <https://www.gravestonephotos.com/public/cemeterynamelist.php?cemetery=4782&limit=101>.

⁵⁷ *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 19th February, p.3 and 17th February, p.2.

⁵⁸ Thompson, *Reeth*, p.64.

latter part of 1940 the RASC personnel were posted away and were replaced by the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC). In 1942/3 Reeth became an important training centre for the Royal Army Reconnaissance Corps (known as RECCES), and Hill House became the RECCE training NCO's Head Quarters.



*Figs 14a & b RECCE Corps, photographed outside Hill House, c.1942-45.
Source: Swaledale Museum Image Archive SM 1822 & SM 1929*



After basic training at the RECCE Training Centre at nearby Catterick, recruits were sent to the Battle School in Reeth for three weeks of further intensive tactical training including night maneuvers, river crossings, mine clearance, survival and foraging skills and weapons training. Keith Jackson of Reeth remembered that 'On a morning up to 100 or sometimes more troops would be marshalled in full battle dress in rows four or five deep along the full length of High Row. After briefing they would be run at the double for a five mile bash, amid lots of shouting and noise which died away as they made their way up the Arkengarthdale Road for Raw Moor Top'.⁵⁹ There are several photographs of the staff of the Battle Training School taken outside the Burgoyne c. 1942-1945 (Figs 14a & b).⁶⁰ Many local inhabitants have fond memories of the men of the RECCE Corps during this period. They were followed shortly after V.E. Day by Dutchmen, several

⁵⁹ 'Keith Jackson, 'Reeth - World War II Army Base & Training Centre', Swaledale Museum Archive.

⁶⁰ Copy in Swaledale Museum Archives see also: <http://ww2talk.com/index.php?threads/recce-battle-school-reeth-photo.18677>.

Hill House becomes the Burgoyne Hotel

After the War Hill House was bought and turned into what is now the Burgoyne Hotel, whilst the laundry and laundry maids' cottage together with the garage became private houses (Fig.15).



Fig. 15 Photograph of the Hill House, with a sign in the window above the front door 'BURGOYNE HOTEL NOW OPEN'. Postgates operated from the Electric Studio on High Row in Reeth. Source: Swaledale Museum Image Archive SM 1680.

The 1951 Reeth Festival of Britain Souvenir Programme includes an advertisement for the 'Burgoyne Private Hotel, proprietors H. & M. Brown'.⁶¹ It proudly announces that 'This Hotel faces South, commanding magnificent views of the Dale and Moor. Electric Light throughout. Hot and Cold Water in all Bedrooms. Home Cooking. Personal Supervision. Garage'. By this date Reeth was successfully adapting to tourism, and the need for accommodation for the increasing number of visitors, including shooting parties in season, must have been the main influence behind turning Hill House into an hotel. It became a popular focal point in the increasing number of postcards produced of Reeth, set against the grand hills in the background.

⁶¹ Copy in Swaledale Museum Archive.



*Fig. 16 Post-1948 postcard (the date from which Morris Minors were manufactured), with the Burgoyne Hotel at centre, a classic view of Reeth. This photograph was used again in a black and white version, and bears a 1962 post mark.
Source: Swaledale Museum Image Archive SM 1508*

Meanwhile interest in local architecture was growing, and the importance of the building became more widely appreciated, in an area famed more for its landscapes than its grand houses. ‘A List of Buildings of Architectural Historical Interest’ compiled under section 32 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1962 was issued in April 1965, based on a survey completed in December 1961. It noted the Burgoyne Hotel as a building of specific interest, and in 1966 it was listed Grade II along with the original fleurs-de-llys capped railings at the front, which can be seen in the earliest known photograph of the building (see Fig.2).⁶² The architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner’s passage through Reeth, *en route* between Richmond and Low Row took in the Burgoyne, which he described as ‘a range of seven bays with windows one and seven tripartite and pedimented’, in an otherwise terse account of the village, published in his *Yorkshire: The North Riding* in 1966.⁶³

After the Browns the next owner of the Burgoyne Hotel was Mrs Pearce. After she died the Hotel remained empty until the Cordingleys purchased it. They in turn sold it to the Fosters in 1989.

⁶² Listing NGR: SE0384599363: <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/101318273-burgoyne-hotel-and-front-railings-reeth-fremington-and-healaugh#.W9LsXy-ZOgQ>

⁶³ N. Pevsner, *Yorkshire, The North Riding*, Penguin 1966, 1999 reprint, p. 289. See Jane Grenville’s revised edition due out 2020.

Two years later Peter Carwardine and Derek Hickson bought the Hotel, first run by both of them, then by Mr Hickson alone, until 2011 when it was sold to Mo and Julia Usman. A new stage in the history of the Hotel began in 2018 when it was bought by the present owner. It still remains ‘unquestionably the most imposing building in the village, queen of all she surveys below her and beyond in wider Swaledale’.⁶⁴

Helen Bainbridge
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⁶⁴ Review by Malcolm Warne, *The Northern Echo*, 12 June 2015, see: https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/13329386.The_Burgoyne_Hotel__Reeth/

Other pictures of the Hill House/Burgoyne Hotel from the Swaledale Museum Image Archive. Can you add to the collection?



The Green, Reeth.

254.



Reeth, The Green.

