

Thomas Hull I

Born about 1776 in Antrim County, Northern Ireland.

Married Elizabeth Miller (Millar) in abt 1798.

Died August 19, 1836 in Ballymakeever, Dungiven, Londonderry, Ireland.

Thomas is buried at the church "at the top of the hill" across the street from the Dungiven Castle.



Church of Ireland-Church at the top of the Hill

He was the first Hull at the Hill foot farm. We would presume that he either built the farm house and buildings or started to rent an existing home and improved on the home and sheds over the years. The farm and home were rented until the late 1870s when it was allowed that our family could finally purchase it. Robert, the son of Thomas Hull the 1st was the first Hull listed on the deed.

Thomas and his wife Elizabeth Miller (Millar), attended the Bovevagh Presbyterian Church. Elizabeth's family lived in the same *townland as the Hulls. This townland is called Mulkeeragh and is located about two or 3 miles from where Thomas and Elizabeth built their first home together in the Ballymakeever Townland. The Bovevagh Presbyterian Church records show that Thomas's fifth son Samuel was born in Mulkeeragh before they lived at the new home at Ballymakeever. Because Samuel was born in 1820 and William their next son to Samuel was born in 1815 Samuel is the only child recorded in the Bovevagh church records. The Church started to keep records in 1818. We don't

know why Christina their last child was not registered as being born in the same parish.

We have some excerpts from letters written by Emma Hull telling us about the Hill Foot Farm house. She says "it is built of stone and lime and has a slate roof. It originally had a thatched roof



Picture of the Hull House with a slate roof

But my father had it slated and made a little higher about 50 years ago. It has a large kitchen and then upper room and a lower room and bedrooms. There are three small apartments upstairs and it has eight windows. Long time ago It had six small windows in the back. In the early days the Hulls, that is your grandfather and are grandfather and family made their living by weaving. That is what the small windows were for. They had a loom at every window, when the weaving stopped and then they started farm the land. Evidently they built up the windows in the house the house is high up so we have a good view of the whole country around.

We learn from other letters from various family members in the 1900s that Thomas and Elizabeth were buried next to each other in the cemetery and in the same cemetery Maggie, Robert and Thomas were also buried. Today you can see Thomas I, Maggie, Thomas and William's marker but not Elizabeth's.

***Townland.** This is the smallest administrative territorial unit in Ireland, varying in size from a single acre to over 7,000 acres. Originating in the older Gaelic dispensation, townlands were used as the basis of leases in the estate system, and subsequently to assess valuations and tithes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They survive as important markers of local identity.



His son Thomas Hull the second had his first three children Peggy Jane, Adam and Susanna at the Hillfoot Farm home. The Hulls were farmers as well as weavers. Thomas 1st paid rent on his farm to the Ogilvy's who lived at the Pellipar house in Dungiven. Apparently Thomas II and his first wife Mary McIllvana moved there little family down the hill a half mile to Magherabouy where Mary took sick and died and where Thomas II re-married to Mary Benson a neighbor.

From then on they attended the Dungiven Presbyterian Church where Elizabeth and Thomas III were baptized. Thomas 1st had several other children marry and stay for a while with them including James and Samuel whose children were blessed at church and the baptism records show they were living in Ballymakeever which is where the Hull Hillfoot Farm is located.

William Gibson Hull, a grandson of Thomas Hull the 1st said the following about his grandfather:” Thomas Hull, My grandfather, was born in Antrim County Ireland. November 4, 1805; there were seven brothers and two sisters, Grandfather being the fourth child. The family was considered wealthy and they owned three woolen mills in the North of Ireland.

After grandfathers father died in 1836 he and his brothers could not agree on the division of this property so they took it to law. It was in the courts for seven years or until grandfather became discouraged and moved out of Ireland into Scotland. It is not clear who was involved in this land dispute. Was it Thomas I and his brothers or Thomas II and his siblings or a combination?

According to family history Thomas and Mary started to move their family in 1839. They first went to Portglenone to stay with Millers which were the family of Thomas’s mother. Then they worked their way across Northern Ireland to Belfast. Mary was pregnant and in Newton-Cromlin she had their son Robert McClelland Hull. This is just before Belfast. He was born in June of 1840. Mary had lost a son by the name of Robert, probably at birth in 1839 in Dungiven.

This history about the woolen mills is part of an oral and written history that was handed down from Thomas Hull the second and William Gibson. In checking the records and the known history of the Dungiven area, the mills and their ownership by the Hull family were not verifiable. The most recent history available during this time is recorded in the ordnance survey memoirs of Ireland published in 1833 to 1835. The books covering the Bovevagh, Dungiven and Balteagh townlands do not list the ownership of any of the mills in the area as belonging to the Hull family.



Bovevagh Presbyterian Church where Thomas I and Elizabeth went to church.

Below is a close-up of Thomas I grave marker showing he died on the 19th of August 1836 in Ballymakeever.

