

The Hillhouse family of Irvine, Scotland and Dunboe/Aghanloo c.1600-1750

The history of Limavady and the Roe valley in the seventeenth century is inextricably linked to two very important individuals whose influence dominated the region in the early decades of the century. Sir Thomas Phillips was an Englishman [with Welsh origins] and an Elizabethan soldier rewarded as a servitor having fought in the Nine Years war. Phillips received a huge estate at the old O’Cahan stronghold at Limavady, where he resided and in 1612 was responsible for building Newtownlimavady about a mile from the old town. Some four years later, Sir Robert McClelland of Bombie, Kirkcudbright became the first farmer of the Clothworkers’ estate centred on Killowen/Articlave in Dunboe parish and in 1618 he also became the landlord of the Haberdashers’ portion centred on Artikelly, Aghanloo near Newtownlimavady where he resided in his castle. Both men were conscientious planters and encouraged migration from their respective homelands.

McClelland was more successful in attracting Scottish colonists than Phillips the English and therefore his estate became a bridgehead for Scots entering the county and this facilitated further colonial spread. One family that came with McClelland to north Derry was the Hillhouse family who initially resided in the parish of Dunboe on McClelland’s Clothworkers’ estate where they were important tenants, but the family suffered greatly during the 1641 rebellion. Following the native uprising the subsequent history of the family became inextricably linked with the parish of Aghanloo and with Artikelly and Moneyvennon/Freehall in particular [on the McClelland/Maxwell Haberdashers’ estate].

The Aghanloo family were merchants trading initially out of the port of Coleraine and later Derry. As a consequence of this there was a degree of social mobility and merchant networking. Often nuptial bonds were arranged over a considerable geographical distance. The family was well connected to important Ulster families – Alexander and Phillips of Limavady, Ferguson of Burt, Donegal and merchant families such as Lennox of Derry, Haltridge of Dromore, county Down and McCartney of Belfast. These families had trading links with ports in Britain and America and as a result there were several branches of the Hillhouse family established in New England, and Bristol and London in England. Some of these branches thrived whilst the family name died out in Aghanloo by the mid-eighteenth century [although distaff lines included Alexander and McCausland]. This account will focus primarily on the main stem family that remained in county Londonderry.

There are difficulties with trying to trace a family in county Derry in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. With the absence of formal records it was necessary to utilise a wide-range of primary and secondary material. I undertook a detailed search of sources pertaining to the townlands and parishes where the family was known to have resided and it was through these sources that I occasionally uncovered additional information on the family. There is an obvious difficulty in making connections between individuals and also between the different generations of the family because of gaps in the records. Thus, this account is a general overview of the family in the period 1600-1750 and I have not tried to build a family tree in any formal way.

The origin of the Hillhouse family is undoubtedly Ayrshire in Scotland. Hillhouse is a surname of local origin from one or other of the half-dozen small places of the name in Ayrshire¹. The second home of the family is most definitely north Derry. Abraham Hillhouse of Artikelly in Aghanloo parish had two hearths in the 1663 hearth returns but at an earlier time the family can be found in the parish of Dunboe².

The earlier branch of the family in Ayrshire can be traced to the parish of Kilmarnock in the late sixteenth century and the Irvine branch was possibly an offshoot. The will of Johnne Hillhouss, merchant and burgess of Irvine was probated 5 May 1624 and also John Hilhouss merchant and burgess of Irvine on 10 July 1645. Evidence suggests that the Artikelly family were connected to the Irvine branch and most probably the family entered Ulster through Coleraine which had well established trade links to the western Scottish seaboard. I have noted in the records a very strong connection between the towns of Coleraine and Irvine.

HILLHOUSE IN DUNBOE PARISH

The earliest settler and the first of the name in Derry was Adam Hillhouss of the parish of Dunboe whose will was probated in 1635.³ A John Hillhouse is recorded in the parish of Dunboe in a rent roll as early as 1640 as a tenant of Gortycavan and part of Dunalis.⁴ Dunboe is a parish that is quite close to Coleraine, which was a port of entry for many Scots into the north of the county.

¹ Black, ‘Surnames of Scotland’, p. 359

² There was a Hillhouse family in north Antrim. John Hilhouse was recorded with one hearth in 1666 and 1669 in Ballymoney town. The 1740 Protestant householders’ survey for county Antrim lists John Hillows in Rasharkin; Frans and John Hillows in Drummaul; James and Frans Hillows in Ahoghill.

³ Thrift’s index of wills, Diocese of Derry, 1612-1858, p. 61

⁴ T/724/1

T/724/1 Manor of Killowen, page 29.

Entry 8

De ffirmā duoram townlands vocatorum, Gortacavan et Downekingē continentium ducentas acras in terra, Johannis Hillhouse, Johannis Lumberton et Matthei Galbraith per annum.

Entry 10

Fe ffirmā ruins townland vocati Donallies (Dunalis) centum et nonaginta acras Johannis Bar, predicti Johannis Hillhouse et Gilberti Rosse per annum.

John Hillhouse was in joint possession a farm of over two hundred acres in Gortycavan and a further one hundred and ninety acres in Dunalis. Both townlands were in the parish of Dunboe and part of the Clothworkers' estates under the control of the Lord Kirkcudbright of the McClelland family. Hillhouse was a strong farmer or minor landlord. His wife was Jane Todd.⁵

The plantation was put in jeopardy by the Irish rebellion of 23rd October 1641. Following the severe defeat at Garvagh on 13 December 1641 [when William Canning son of the Ironmongers' agent was killed], the settlers in Aghadowey fled to Coleraine. Houses burned in the district included that of John Hillhouse, described as being near Sunday's Well in the marches of Coleraine, Dunboe and Macosquin. Jane Todd, relict of John Hillhouse of Gortycavan, in her deposition tells how her husband was killed on the night of 13 December 1641.

*'Rory Duffe McCormacke and his brothers Art and Edmund McCormacke with 30-40 men about 12 midnight came into the house of John Hihouse at Gortecavan in Dunboe parish, Co Derry, with a shout and cry and sett upon the house this Ex(animate) and her husband John Hillhouse and their six children and one William Tannahill and their servants being there in ye house. That upon the shout the servants fled out and that her said husband, William Tannahill and her maid, an English woman and her said children staid in the house and defended it until they were forced to leave it for smoake, the house being sett on fyre as aforesaid. That as soon as her husband was gone out of the house with his sword in his hand and the said William Tannahill and herself and her mayd and six children the said Rory Duffe McCormacke and his said brothers and followers with some of their kinsmen slashed downe and murdered her said husband and Wm Tannahill and stript this Ex. and wounded her soe as they left her for dead, but afterwards reviving she escaped into Coleraine together with her said maide and children. Said Rory Duffe McCormacke tooke and gott upon her husband's best horse and yt he and his brothers and those with him took away all their goods which were not burnt'*⁶

It does not appear that the countryside was entirely cleared of settlers at this time, for John Kennedy of Dunboe said in his deposition that Rory Duffe McCormack had come to him while he was making a corn stack and asked him for a help of corn. Kennedy asked in reply how he could ask corn from a Scotsman and queried if Rory had not killed John Hillhouse [Rory lived in the next townland to Gortycavan and kept Tristram Beresford's cattle]. In the aftermath of the rebellion whole estates were re-released to new tenants from Scotland. We find in 1655 Gortycavan re-leased to Thomas Moffat, James Canderse, John Bar, John Johnstone and Thomas Jonstones.⁷ William Red [1662 subsidy roll] and Johne McLellane [1663 hearth returns] were resident in Dunalis. John Barr appears to have survived the rebellion and is listed in the 1663 hearth returns for the parish of Dunboe.

Both the Hillhouse and Tannahill⁸ surnames resonate of Ayrshire. Tannahill is a common surname in Ayrshire from Tannahill near Kilmaurs. In 1547, there were seven families of the name in Kilmarnock.⁹ One Marjore Tannochill [sic] was the wife of John Hillhouse of Hillhouse, Ayrshire. She died in 1666.¹⁰ Adam Hillhouse of Dunboe who died c. 1635 appears to have been the primogenitor of the Dunboe family. This gives us an interesting link to Tarbolton in Ayrshire where there is a known and recorded memorial to an Adam Hillhouse of Fail [about 10 miles from Irvine].

⁵ A Thomas Todd was an early settler in Dunboe listed in the summonister court records of March 1639/40 [T808/15130].

⁶ T.H. Mullin, 'Aghadowey, a parish and its Linen Industry', Belfast, 1972, pp. 35-36 and T.H. Mullin, 'Coleraine in by-gone centuries', p. 80

⁷ T640/62 and T640/82

⁸ There is a Tannahill headstone in Agivey graveyard, 'Erected to the memory of Alexander Tannahill, late of Killeague who departed this life the 13 May 1796 aged 72 years; also his daughter Ann who died 21 October 1812, aged 21 years. Likewise his wife Mary Tannahill, alias Douglas who departed this life the 24 November 1819 aged 81 years'.

⁹ Black's 'Surnames of Scotland', p. 762

¹⁰ Last will and testament of Marjore Tannochill proved in the probate court of Glasgow 16 May 1666.

Tarbolton Graveyard Inscription, Ayr:

‘This stone is er[ected] by Adam Hillhowse, [of] Fail and James Hillhowse Fmr, [of] Shaw; Mary Paton la[w]ul spouse to Adam Hillhowse lyes in this place; John Hillhowse son of James Hillhowse d 21 Aug 1816 and his g’son d 12 Apr 1818 aged 7; James Hillhowse d. 17 June 1834 aged 79’.

John Hillhouse who was murdered during the Irish rebellion on 13 December 1641 may have been a son of Adam Hillhouse of Dunboe. It is recorded in Jane Hillhouse’s deposition that that she and her six children took refuge in Coleraine in the aftermath of her husband’s death. What became of the Dunboe family is difficult to determine and it may be that they resided with the Artikelly family.

HILLHOUSE OF ARTIKELLY AND FREEHALL/MONEYVENNON, AGHANLOO PARISH

Abraham Hillhouse Sen. [c. 1610-1675].

The key figure in the Aghanloo family was Abraham Hillhouse who was recorded as a resident in Artikelly with two hearths in the hearth money returns of 1663. Hillhouse was a tenant on McClelland’s Haberdashers’ estate. Although Hillhouse was not listed in McClelland’s muster roll of 1630/31 he was resident in the Roe valley at the time of the 1641 rebellion as he later gave deposition to that effect. Given that Dunboe and Aghanloo were part of the McClelland estate, this does suggest consanguinity between the Hillhouses of Aghanloo and Dunboe.

During 1644, the Solemn League and Covenant was ‘administered’ right across Ulster, from Ballywalter on the east coast of Down, to Ballyshannon in south Donegal. ‘*Abraham Hillhouse, of Ballycastle, [Aghanloo] and a burgess of Limavady with a large number of people took the Oath of Covenant in September 1644, at Ballycastle, and there met the Scottish Ministers on their return from Londonderry to Coleraine.*’¹¹ It is likely that Hillhouse took refuge in McClelland’s castle at Ballycastle, Aghanloo during the rebellion. Artikelly was the homestead of Abraham Hillhouse and his family at the time of the hearth returns, 1663. He also remained a burgess of Limavady Corporation until 1668.

In the aftermath of the rebellion depositions were taken in Newtown [Limavady] on 25 August 1656 and Abraham Hillus [sic] of Artikellie, gentleman gave evidence to the panel. Evidence suggests that Abraham Hillhouse collected the rents on the Haberdashers’ estate being farmed by Tristram Beresford, as in the dispute between Tristram Beresford [Plaintiff] and Sir Robert Maxwell [Defendant] dated 24th November 1663 Abraham Hillus of Artikelly, merchant was described as ‘*receiver of the rents*’ for the plaintiff.¹²

Abraham Hillhouse was elected Burgess of Limavady Corporation on 20th November 1660 and remained a burgess¹³ until 1668. On the 24th June 1668, Abraham Hillhouse was fined 10 shillings by Limavady Corporation for failing to make an appearance and on 29th September 1668 was fined a further 20 shillings for not having made his submission. He was finally disenfranchised on 20th November 1668, most likely because he was a Presbyterian. Captain Nicholas Lane was sworn as burgess by the Corporation as his replacement.

The 1662 Subsidy roll for Aghanloo parish gives Sir Robert Maxwell Kt, holding lands valued at £13, 10 paying a subsidy of £10, 9, 6d. Twelve others in the parish met the £3 threshold value for goods and paid a subsidy of £1, 12, 0 each. The list was headed by Abraham Hillhouse of Artikelly. That Abraham Hillhouse of Artikelly was listed in the subsidy rolls for Aghanloo parish in 1662 was an indication that he was a citizen of some means and his property had two hearths recorded in the 1663 returns.¹⁴ Sir Robert Maxwell inherited part of the McClelland Haberdashers’ estate [part of the Manor of Freemore] and in 1660 Abraham Hillhouse [sic] of Artikelly was the largest tenant on the estate with an annual rent of £7 sterling.¹⁵ Hillhouse is recorded as paying a half-year rent of £3:15:06 on the estate of Robert Maxwell in Aghanloo on 30th March 1669.¹⁶

¹¹ Samuel Martin, ‘Historical Gleanings from county Derry’, pp. 137-139, and Boyle’s ‘Records of Limavady’, p. 2

¹² T640/99

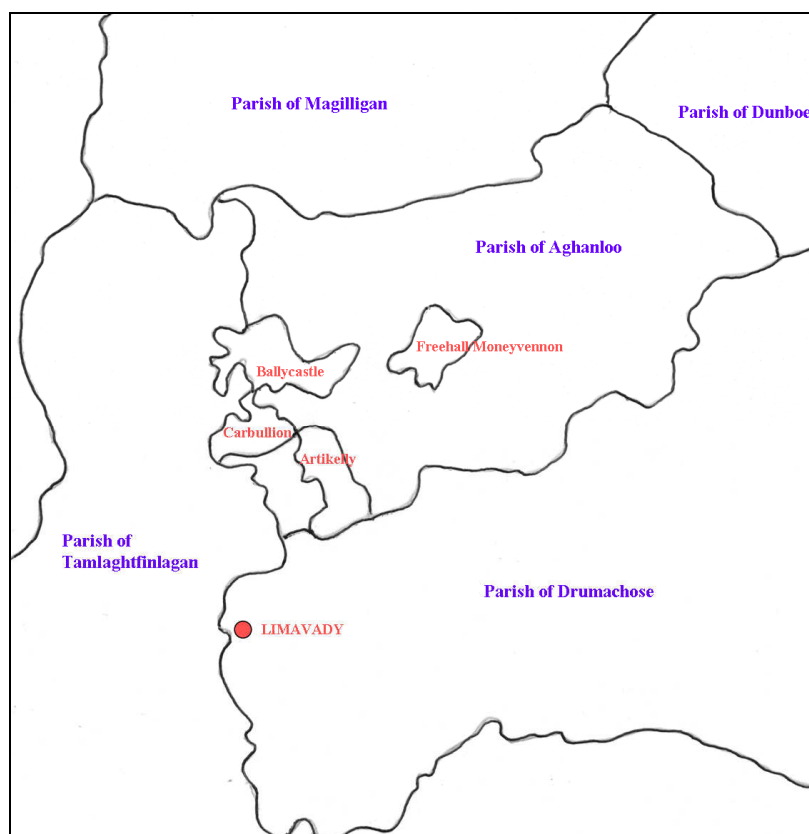
¹³ Boyle’s ‘Records of Limavady’, pp. 2 and 18

¹⁴ T307/A

¹⁵ T620/2

¹⁶ T640/108

Location of Artikelly, Aghanloo in relation to Limavady:



Little is known about Abraham Hillhouse's wife. We do not know her maiden name but her Christian name appears to have been Jean or Janet. On 3rd April 1662, in a lease of bargain and sale, George Phillips [of New Hall] transferred property in the parish of Tamlaght Finlagan to Abraham Hillhouse of Ardikelly, endorsed with assignment by Jean Hillhouse to Henry Conyngham.¹⁷ Hillhouse came into possession of 'ye [two] Largyes' and Carrymena by way of a mortgage for £200, and thus his estate continued to grow.¹⁸

It seems that Abraham Hillhouse did well enough to be able to build a substantial house, which was given the name Freehall, [there is a Freehall in Dunboe parish and it is possible that the family named their residence after their former place of abode?]. It seems that John Hillhouse [second son of Abraham Hillhouse sen.] extended the family residence and in a deed of 1717 it was described as a 'mansion house'. William Hillhouse of New Haven, Connecticut, a descendant of the Artikelly branch, visited the old place in 1789 and gave a description, '*this residence, at the foot of a mountain about two miles from the village of Newton-Limavady on the land adjacent to Artikelly, commands a fine view of Lough Foyle and many miles around*'. William Hillhouse recorded in his diary, '*went out on the Coleraine road till we came to the narrow lane leading to the old mansion house. It has been very large, with pavements, gates, walks, gardens, etc. and had once been as I was informed, a fortification, but it is now very much in ruins, and great part of the house is fallen down. The garden had been laid out with mounds and walks, and we visited a mound erected by Abraham James Hillhouse upon the occasion of his father's giving an entertainment to all the people of the country*'.¹⁹

The will of Abraham Hillhouse [sic] of Ardikelly, parish of Aghanloo was probated in 1676.²⁰ This would give Abraham Hillhouse a birth date of say c.1610. Part of the will was transcribed by Miss Mary Lucas Hillhouse of Sachem Wood who visited the old homestead in 1882. The will of Abraham Hillhouse of Artikelly was dated 1675, [probated 1676]. '*Although sick in body, yet of good, perfect and sound memory, praise be to Almighty God, my heavenly Father by whose mercy and only of his grace I trust to be saved and redeemed into eternal rest through the death of my Saviour and Redeemer Jesus ----- to be buried in such charges as my dear wife Janet, and my eldest son, Abraham Hillhouse shall think fit.*'²¹

¹⁷ PRONI calendars D155/147/1-21 – originals closed as in a fragile state

¹⁸ T2835/C/5/1

¹⁹ Helen T Hillhouse and Laurens Petigru: 'The Hillhouse Family; South Carolina Branch,' 1959.

²⁰ Thrift's index of wills, Diocese of Derry, 1612-1858, p. 61

²¹ Margaret P Hillhouse, 'Historical and genealogical collections relating to the descendants of Rev. James Hillhouse', New York, 1924, p. 13

Evidence from Scotland indicates that Abraham Hillhouse had property in Irvine as there is a recorded transaction and an *'instrument of resignation 17 November 1675 by Abraham Hillhouse, merchant in Ardikillie in the county of Londonderry, Ireland, in favour of Robert Francis, merchant Burgess of Irvine, of a tenement in Irvine.'*²² The date suggests that Abraham Hillhouse probably demised part of his property in Irvine, Ayrshire in his will. This indicates strongly that the Hillhouse family of Dunboe and Aghanloo had their origins in the Irvine area of Ayrshire.

Children of Abraham Hillhouse Sen. of Artikelly

Possible children of Abraham and Janet Hillhouse based on available evidence:

1. Abraham Hillhouse jun. of Artikelly [at the siege of Derry/inherited property in Tamlaght Finlagan parish].
2. Female Hillhouse [married Andrew Alexander].
3. John Hillhouse [inherited Freehall, died 1716].
4. William Hillhouse [in Limavady Corporation minutes 1665/resided in Derry city].
5. James Hillhouse of Bristol [admitted to Liberties of Bristol in 1704 married firstly Hester, daughter of John Hollister, a linen draper of Bristol and secondly in 1718 Mary Lennox of Londonderry. Given date of death 1754 he may have been a grandson of Abraham Hillhouse Sen. unless of course he had lived to a great age. He was the primogenitor of the Bristol family].

Note: I am certain that the first three children listed are issue of Abraham Hillhouse Sen. but I am less certain of William and James.

1. Abraham Hillhouse Jun.

Abraham Hillhouse junior was alive at the time of his father's will [1675] and he can also be found in the local records after his father's death. The Artikelly property and Free Hall came into possession of the second son, John Hillhouse but it does appear that Abraham Hillhouse Sen. had offset some of his property to his eldest son Abraham Hillhouse, Jun. before the will came into effect. George Phillips, by means of bargain and sale dated 3 April 1662, offset to Abraham Hillhouse of Ardikelly, merchant, property in the parish of Tamlaght Finlagan.²³ It also appears that Abraham Hillhouse, Jun. had come into possession of the townlands of 'ye [two] Largyes' and 'Carymena' by way of a mortgage of £200 sterling²⁴. Both of these townlands were in Tamlaght Finlagan parish. The account book of James Buoy [Boyle], agent on Phillips' estate in Limavady, which was subsequently purchased by William Conolly, lists an Abraham Hilhou [sic] in the period between 1684 and 1693 so this must refer to Abraham Hillhouse junior.²⁵

An Abraham Hillhouse was an Irish student at Glasgow university in 1666²⁶ and I take this to be Abraham junior. This suggests a birth date for Abraham Hillhouse jun. of c. 1646-1650. The Reverend John Graham in his 'Ireland Preserved' states that Abraham Hillhouse was at the siege of Londonderry²⁷ and at the time of the siege of Derry he would have been about 40-44 years old. His name appears in the list of those under the ban of James' Act of Attainder, as 'Captain' Abraham Hillhouse²⁸ and on 30 July 1689, King William's provision ships relieved the city, he was one of the subscribers to a document expressing to the Sovereign the humble thanks and gratitude of the survivors [the name of Abraham Hillhouse appears between those of Adam Downing and John Mulholland]. He was one of the Captains paid 40 pounds each in June 1693 as remuneration for their services during the historic siege²⁹. This is the last recorded reference that I have for Abraham Hillhouse, Jun.

2. Female Hillhouse

Andrew Alexander of Ballyclose married first Jessie [daughter of Thomas Phillips, Knt.] by whom he had a son Jacob Alexander [married Margaret Oliver, only daughter of John Oliver of the Lodge, Limavady] and secondly a daughter of the Laird of Hilles [I take this to be Abraham Hillhouse] by whom he had a son, John Alexander; ancestor of Alexanders of Milford, Portglenone, Forkhill, Somerhill Kent, of the Earls of Caledon and the

²² Boyd family papers, Kilmarnock NAS: GD8/871.

²³ D1550/147/1-22

²⁴ T2835/C/5/1

²⁵ T2835/C/5/1

²⁶ David Dobson, 'Scots-Irish Links 1575-1725', Part Two, p. 12

²⁷ Boyle's 'Records of Limavady' p.2

²⁸ Samuel Martin, 'Historical Gleanings from County Derry', p. 143 and Robert Simpson 'The Annals of Derry', p. 169

²⁹ Calendar of State papers [Domestic series: William and Mary], 1693 [published 1903], pp. 165-208.

Baronets Alexander.³⁰ Another source states that Andrew Alexander of Ballyclose married the daughter of Hilles, a landowner of the county of Londonderry and had three sons, John, [resident in Ballyclose 1717], Thomas [of Errigal parish] and one son unknown.³¹ It appears that the family of Hillhouse of Aghanloo was directly connected to the Alexander family and indirectly connected to the Phillips family of Limavady through marriage.

3. John Hillhouse

John Hillhouse, second son of Abraham Hillhouse Sen. inherited the Freehall estate. It was through this line that the Hillhouse property eventually passed by marriage to the McCausland family and was subsumed into their large estate.

A John Hillhouse, merchant was recorded in Articlave, County Derry and New Hall, Newtownlimavady issuing private tokens [in the period between 1653 and 1679] when small coins were scarce in the aftermath of the rebellion.³² I assume that the tokens were issued by the same John Hillhouse who was trading out of Limavady and Articlave, Dunboe. Again this suggests that the Dunboe and Aghanloo families were related.

Why New Hall?

It was interesting to note that John Hillhouse issued tokens out of New Hall, Limavady. As already mentioned there was an indirect family connection between the Hillhouse and Phillips families through marriage to the Alexanders. New Hall was residence of Phillips family, proprietors of a massive estate inherited from Sir Thomas Phillips, servitor and founder of the new town of Limavady c.1612. The family had resided at O’Cahan’s castle at the Deer Park, old Limavady but were in Newtownlimavady at the time of the hearth returns [1663]. Their new residence was called New Hall and located at the upper [western] end of Main Street. The new Phillips residence seems to have been destroyed in 1689 by the Earl of Antrim’s troops in their retreat from the siege of Derry, with much of the town. The entire settlement was rebuilt and the Phillips residence later became known as Newtown Lodge.

John Hillhouse was sworn as freemen of Limavady Corporation on 24th June 1665 for a fine of 10 shillings.³³ Freemen paid an annual fine to trade in the borough. On the 24th February 1669, the Corporation minutes noted that, *‘John Hillhouse, Merchant, shall have free liberty to vend what tokens or brass pennies he hath now in hand and to enter into sufficient security not to vend any more, he paying as fine for the use of the Corporation, 40 shillings.’*³⁴ This is undoubtedly the John Hillhouse of New Hall, and Articlave issuing tokens in the period before 1679. I am not sure if this is the same John Hillhouse who inherited the estate at Freehall after the death of his father Abraham Hillhouse Sen. but is probable. John Hillhouse died in 1716 so it is likely that he was born c.1640-1650 and this would match the dates of the John Hillhouse sworn freeman in 1665.

At the time of his father’s death John Hillhouse of Artikelly was also in possession of the townland of Carbullion, Aghanloo. Letters of attorney dated April 20th 1677, by Sir Robert Maxwell of Ballycastle, Knight, appointed John Hamilton of Coleraine *‘to enter and come into and upon the town land of Carboylan in the manor of Freemore, barony of Kenaght, County Londonderry, now occupied by John Hilhouse of Ardekelly.’*³⁵ Hillhouse was discharged of the deeds of mortgage for the townland for the sum of £200 sterling paid to Sir Robert Maxwell on 20th day of April 1677.³⁶ John Hillhouse was admitted and sworn a freeman of Limavady on 24th June 1710³⁷ and died in 1716. I will come back to the family of John Hillhouse later in this account.

4. William Hillhouse

William Hillhouse [whom I take to be the son of Abraham Hillhouse Sen.] was sworn as freeman of Limavady Corporation on 24th June 1665 for a fine of 10 shillings.³⁸ I think that this William Hillhouse moved to reside in Derry [the family had property in Queen’s street in the city]. William Hillhouse, Gent was registered as a voter in the Derry elections of 24th June 1699.³⁹ Despite the fact that he resided in Derry William Hillhouse still retained a

³⁰ Boyle’s ‘Records of Limavady’ p. 14

³¹ ‘Memorials of the Earl of Stirling and the house of Alexander’, chapter 28 pp. 98-99

³² T.H. Mullin, ‘Coleraine in bye-gone centuries’ p. 100 and ‘The Irish Ancestor’ Vol. X, No.1 1978, p. 53

³³ Boyle’s ‘Records of Limavady’, p. 13

³⁴ Boyle’s ‘Records of Limavady’, p. 21

³⁵ NAS: RH/15/91/70

³⁶ T640/129

³⁷ Boyle’s ‘Records of Limavady’, p. 51

³⁸ Boyle’s ‘Records of Limavady’, p. 13

³⁹ T3161/1/4

connection to Limavady Corporation and admitted and sworn freeman of Limavady Corporation on 24th June 1696 and on 24th June 1710.⁴⁰ There is also a mention of William Hillouse in Artikelly in 1694.⁴¹

Although a Presbyterian family the Hillhouse family in Derry used the Established church for burials, that is, St. Columb's Cathedral so there is recorded details of some of the family in the registers. There is a record of a William Hillhouse in Derry city in 1705 and in 1714 [this may be the same man but only if he had been a widower and re-married].

Jane the daughter of William Hilhous and Lettis his wife was buried the 6th of November 1705

Ann, the wife of Mr William Hillows was buried the 4th September 1714⁴²

It was possible that William Hillhouse was a brother of John and Abraham jun. A William Hillhouse was elected Constable of Limavady Corporation on 14th October 1718⁴³ but this may have been a different William. This was the last record of a Hillhouse in the Limavady Corporation records.

5. James Hillhouse of Bristol

James Hillhouse was born in Aghanloo and was reputedly the third son of Abraham Sen. It is not known exactly when he moved to Bristol but he was admitted into the Liberties of the city in 1704 for he married Hesther,⁴⁴ daughter of John Hollister [by his wife Susanna Hobson], a linen draper of that city and he had taken the Oath of Obedience and paid 4shillings, and 6d. Hesther Hillhouse died some time between 1712-1717 and James Hillhouse was remarried in May 1718 to Mary Lennox⁴⁵, second daughter of James and Elizabeth Lennox of Londonderry city. The American family have a record of James Hillhouse being Mayor of Derry in 1693, however, this is incorrect. Rather it appears that the family tradition refers to Colonel James Lennox of Londonderry [second in command of the siege of Londonderry] who was Mayor of Derry in 1693 and 1697⁴⁶ and M.P for Londonderry city 1703-1713. The Bristol family tradition places James Hillhouse, the primogenitor of the family, at the siege of Londonderry, he being '*one of the Commissioners to treat with Lord Mountjoy.*'⁴⁷ James Hillhouse died in Bristol in 1753/4 having amassed a fortune through shipping and other commercial interests. His date of death does suggest that he may have been a grandson rather than a son of Abraham Hillhouse Sen. of Artikelly. Of course, it is possible that he did live to be a great age – his will of 23 October 1753 begins '*James Hillhouse of the city of Bristol, merchant, being in advanced years.*'⁴⁸ Two of his great grand-children Abraham and George Hillhouse were ship-builders of the firm 'Hillhouse and Hill & Co. Bristol', until 1845 when the whole concern was purchased by Charles Hill. I have a complete family tree of the Bristol branch from the initial James Hillhouse to an Abraham Hillhouse [mayor of Bristol 1820⁴⁹] who was residing in Lion Row, Clifton, Bristol at the time of the 1841 census.⁵⁰

I will now return to the county Derry family, which is the main focus of this family account.

THE COUNTY DERRY FAMILY

John and Rachel Hillhouse

John Hillhouse the second son of Abraham Hillhouse Sen. inherited the Freehall estate upon the death of his father. His wife's name was Rachel. Their son, the Reverend James Hillhouse [founder of the New England branch] emigrated to America some time after the death of his parents. He was in America by 1720 and in the year of his arrival the young Hillhouse published a sermon he had written eulogising his mother, [it was prefaced by his friends, Increase and Cotton Mather, who spoke of him, as '*a worthy hopeful going clergyman lately arrived in this country.*']. What is interesting is that the Reverend James Hillhouse dedicated the pamphlet as follows:

⁴⁰ Boyle's 'Records of Limavady', pp. 39 and 50

⁴¹ NAS: RH/15/91/60

⁴² Register of the Cathedral Church of St. Columb, Derry, 1703-1732, pp 29 and 100

⁴³ Boyle's 'Records of Limavady', p. 52

⁴⁴ She was born 31 March 1678

⁴⁵ T3161/1/9

⁴⁶ Robert Simpson, 'The Annals of Derry' Londonderry, 1847, pp. 202-207

⁴⁷ Margaret P Hillhouse, 'Historical and genealogical collections relating to the descendants of Rev. James Hillhouse', New York, 1924, p. 11

⁴⁸ Prerogative Court of Canterbury will: National Archives Prob: 11/806 [the will is four pages long].

⁴⁹ John Latimer, 'Annals of Bristol', volume 3, 'The mayors and sheriffs of Bristol, 1800-1899'.

⁵⁰ He was aged 55 in 1841

‘To Mrs Anne McCartney in Belfast;

Madam,

I am very sensible of the very great esteem and value you ever had for my dear Mother, **your kinswoman**’

The Reverend Hillhouse ended his address to Mrs McCartney, **‘Your most affectionate cousin.’**

I take Mrs Ann McCartney to be the wife of Isaac McCartney, the Belfast merchant.⁵¹ He was the son of Belfast merchant ‘Black’ George McCartney and his wife Martha Davies.⁵² George McCartney’s merchant letter books revealed that by the late seventeenth there was increasing contact with Irish ports other than Dublin and he had contacts with merchants in Londonderry and Coleraine, especially the latter.

Isaac McCartney [born c. 1670] married Ann Haltridge of the Dromore family⁵³. Isaac McCartney’s will dated to 1736 refers to John Haltridge of Dromore as his ‘brother-in-law’.⁵⁴ **Thus, Ann Haltridge McCartney was a kinswoman of Rachel Hillhouse, wife of John Hillhouse of Aghanloo.** It is possible that Rachel Hillhouse’s maiden name was Haltridge. We can see that the Hillhouse family were well connected to some of the leading merchant families in Ulster.

Isaac McCartney’s out-letter book of correspondence [from 1704] mentions both William Galbraith and James Hillhouse in Bristol. Most of Belfast’s trade at foreign ports was handled by a network of merchants from Belfast and Ulster who had settled abroad and the merchant class was increasingly Scots-Presbyterians, and a high percentage had Ulster roots.

Rachel Hillhouse died 7 January 1716 and was buried in the church of Aghanloo. John Hillhouse [her husband] died 31 July 1716 and was also buried in Aghanloo church.⁵⁵

Children of John and Rachel Hillhouse of Freehall,

The American family history records six sons:

1. Abraham [inherited Freehall from his father John Hillhouse].
2. James [Presbyterian minister emigrated and settled in Connecticut⁵⁶].
3. William [supposedly to West Indies⁵⁷].
4. John [to England⁵⁸].
5. Samuel [no evidence uncovered]
6. Charles [no evidence uncovered]

⁵¹ I made a note of an Alexander Hillhouse, merchant in Belfast [a contemporary of George McCartney’s]. I suspect that he is connected to the Hillhouse family of Artikelly. He was made a freeman of Belfast on 8 May 1674 [Robert M Young, ‘Town Book of the Corporation of Belfast’, p.278]. In 1677, ‘Alexander Hillhouse of Belfast was to be paid £16 for a voyage to the West Indies [although the arrangement fell through] and would have had the opportunity to ship some goods of his own’ [Jean Agnew, ‘Belfast Merchant Families in the 17th century,’ Four Courts press, 1996, p. 41].

⁵² T559/27 p. 18

⁵³ T403/1: The will of William Haltridge merchant of Dromore, Co. Down 4 November 1691 mentions his estates in Ireland and Scotland. His wife was Elizabeth, son John, daughters Margaret and Ann Haltridge. The latter received a legacy of £760 to be paid within a year and a half of marriage.

⁵⁴ T559/27 p.18

⁵⁵ Margaret P Hillhouse, ‘Historical and genealogical collections relating to the descendants of Rev. James Hillhouse’, New York, 1924, p. 9 [Extracts from the Hillhouse family Bible in possession of Maj. Abraham McCausland].

⁵⁶ He may have been the James Hillhouse, a Scots-Irish student at Glasgow university in 1704 [David Dobson: ‘Scots-Irish Links’, 1575-1725 Part 5]. In 1718, Mr William Conolly, the Limavady landlord, wrote to the General Synod recommending Mr James Hillhouse from Drumachose, but Mr Hillhouse maintained that this was without his knowledge, and was ordained by the Presbytery of Derry in May 1719 prior to his emigrating to America. He settled in Connecticut [where he died in 1740] and his son William was a cavalry officer in the Revolution and a member of Congress [Julia Mullin, ‘The Presbytery of Limavady’, p. 73 and TH Mullin, ‘Limavady and the Roe Valley, p. 122]. The Reverend James Hillhouse was the founder of the New England branch of the family.

⁵⁷ A William Hillhouse was elected Constable of Limavady Corporation on 14th October 1718. There is evidence of a William Hillhouse in Antigua after this date. The will of William Grantham of Antigua dated 8 April 1719 was witnessed by William Hillhouse, John Martin and John Weatherill. Also, the Public Treasury accounts for Jan 1727-Jan 1728 lists a Mr Hillhouse in St. John’s.

⁵⁸ A John Hillhouse [no age given] was buried in 1766 in the parish of Westminster, Covenant Garden, London [London Burial Index, 1583-1853]. There is no way of knowing of course if this was John Hillhouse of Aghanloo.

Abraham Hillhouse of Freehall

Abraham Hillhouse, son of John and Rachel Hillhouse of Free Hall, county Derry was married twice. He married firstly Miss Elizabeth Herron on 20 April 1714 but she died without issue 22 September 1716. He married secondly Miss Ann Ferguson on 12 December 1717 [daughter of Reverend Andrew Ferguson of Burt, Donegal]. John Hillhouse appears to have received Lower and Upper Main from the Fergusons as part of his marriage arrangement.⁵⁹ The estate now consisted of Freehall/Moneyvennon and Lower and Upper main townlands. The family had a mansion at Freehall.

Abraham Hillhouse and Ann Ferguson had issue the following children.⁶⁰

Ferguson Hillhouse was born 5 Jan. 1719 baptised by his grandfather Rev. Andrew Ferguson [died 31 May 1730 and buried in Derry churchyard]

Rachel Hillhouse was born Nov 1720 and baptised at Free Hall by her uncle Victor Ferguson

Abraham James Hillhouse was born 29 May 1724 and baptized by Mr William Conniston

Victor Hillhouse was born 23 Sept. 1728 and baptised by Mr William Conniston [died 19 Aug. 1728 of smallpox, buried Aghanloo church].

Sarah Hillhouse was born 6 Oct 1728 [died Nov. 1732 buried Derry Churchyard beside her mother]

Ann Ferguson Hillhouse [wife of John Hillhouse] died 10 June 1730 and was interred in Derry Churchyard 12 June 1730.⁶¹

Only two children survived into adulthood – son Abraham James Hillhouse and daughter Rachel Hillhouse. From the baptismal and burial details we see that Abraham Hillhouse resided variously in Derry city or at Freehall. He was a merchant trading out of Derry in the 1730s and 1740s. The 1740 Protestant householders' survey records a Mr Hillis in Londonderry city, and I take this to be Abraham Hillhouse. The family estate in Aghanloo appears to have been leased to a variety of tenants [Hull, Perry and Douglas are mentioned in registered deeds].

In 1745 Abraham Hillhouse transferred and assigned Freehall and Maine to his only son Abraham James Hillhouse⁶² who was a merchant residing in London⁶³. In 1755 Abraham James Hillhouse mortgaged Freehall and Maine to David Latouche of Dublin for £1500.⁶⁴ Unfortunately, Abraham James Hillhouse appears to have died in 1756 and the rights of the estate was transferred to his sister Rachel Hillhouse [the last surviving relation in Ireland] who had married Frederick McCausland in 1742 and as a result the Hillhouse estate was subsumed into the much larger McCausland estate.

MCCAUSLAND ESTATE

Frederick McCausland was born in Streeve Hill, Derry, Ireland, and died 18 November 1763. He married Rachel Hillhouse 1742 in Ireland, the daughter of Abraham Hillhouse and Ann Ferguson: They had issue: Abraham [married Elizabeth Anderson 1765] Robert, Conolly of Fruithill, Frederick, Mary, Ann [married William Stewart], Hanna [married Boyd] and Sarah [married Thomas Fanning Esq].⁶⁵ Frederick McCausland married secondly Jane

⁵⁹ Registry of Deeds Volume 183, pp. 501-502 memorial no. 123629

⁶⁰ Margaret P Hillhouse 'Historical and genealogical collections relating to the descendants of Rev. James Hillhouse' New York, 1924 p. 9 [Extracts from Hillhouse family bible].

⁶¹ Register of the Cathedral Church of St. Columb's, Derry, 1703-1732 p. 263

⁶² Registry of Deeds Volume 119 page 159, memorial no. 82070

⁶³ On 30 March 1744 the Corporation of Derry resolved that all Popish inhabitants residing within the walls of the city should depart the same by 1 May 1745. In 1748 the Irish Society claimed that there was not one Catholic within the walls of the city – this claim was based on the affidavits of 3 young men in London who had been brought up in Londonderry, namely Abraham [James] Hillhouse, David Harvey and William Alexander. The latter two had been years in London as linen factors.

⁶⁴ Registry of Deeds Volume 181 page 47, memorial no. 119409

⁶⁵ T559/27 p. 61

Anderson [the widow of John Anderson of Derry nee Cochrane] on October 1760 in St. Mary's, Dublin [she died December 1799].

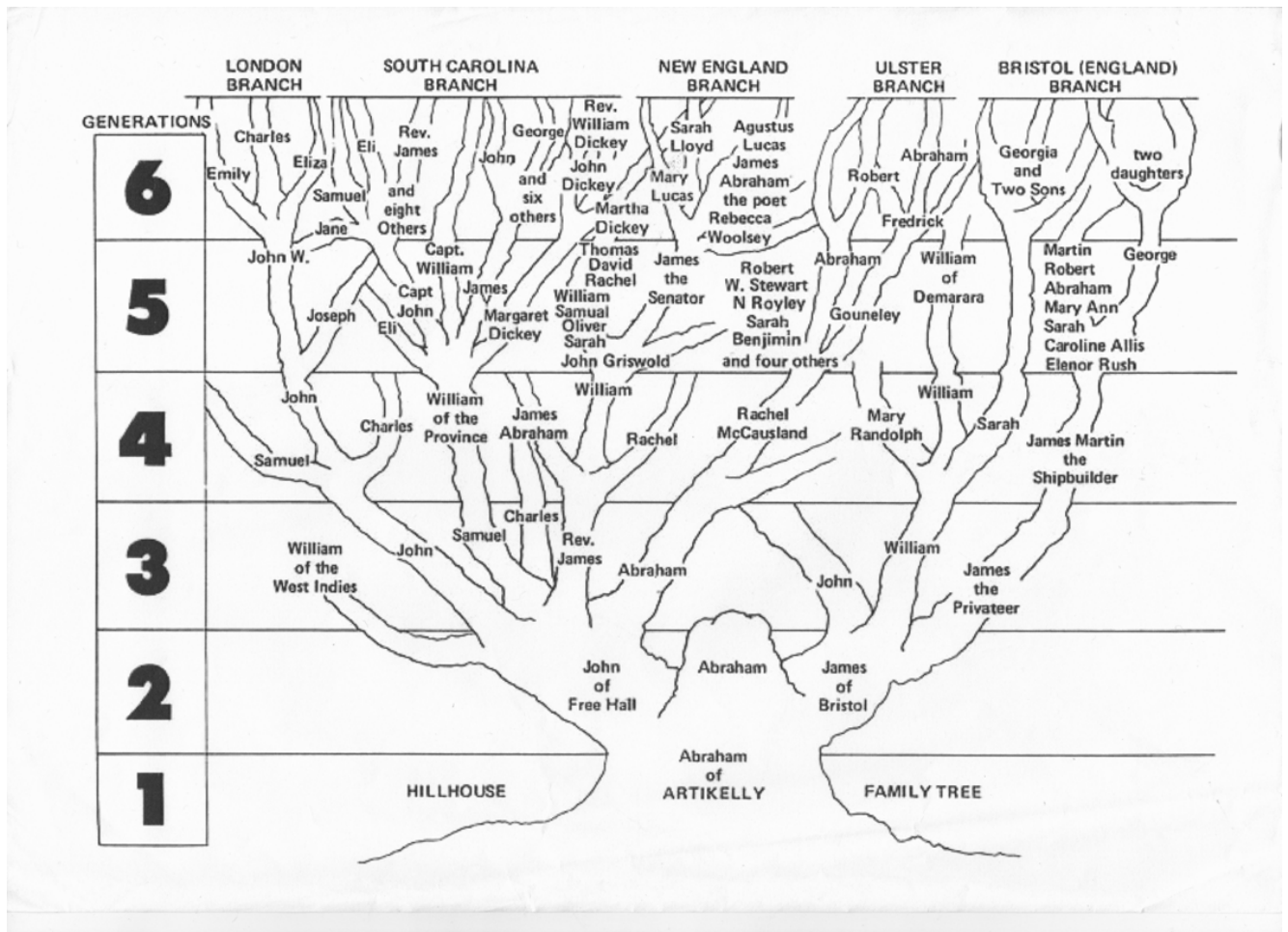
Rachel [Hillhouse] McCausland

The Ulster branch of the Hillhouse family was assimilated into the McCausland line with the marriage of Rachel Hillhouse to Frederick McCausland. The family in America has a partial family tree, which is re-produced below and is a useful template with regard to future research. The tree indicates that there were at least four additional branches to the Hillhouse tree - two in England [Bristol and London] and two in U.S.A [New England and South Carolina]. There are descendants today in England and America so I hope that this brief study will assist those of lineal descent who want to know more about the origins of the Hillhouse family of Dunboe and Aghanloo parishes.



Rachel Hillhouse McCausland c.1750

HILLHOUSE FAMILY TREE AND VARIOUS BRANCHES



APPENDIX

HILLHOUSE IN CHURCH RECORDS

Ballykelly Presbyterian marriage register [original in the Presbyterian Historical Society].

Alex'r Hillhouse and Janet Small, he in Anlow and she in Ballykelly gave their consent this day to mar[r]y and desires ye benefit of proclamation in advance thereunto Xber 26 1707 and were married Janr 16 1707.

HILLHOUSE IN REGISTRY OF DEEDS

Registered 1737

Volume 87, page 303, memorial no. 61720: Abraham Hillhouse to Henry Dickson.

Hillhouse to Dickson: Reg. 11 August 1737 at 4 o'clock afternoon

A deed of Assignment dated 19 day of July 1737, whereby Abraham Hillhouse of the city of Londonderry, Merchant for the consideration therein mentioned did grant, assign and sell overunto Henry Dickson of said city merchant, all the double Messuage or tenement situate in Queen Street in said city no/12/13/ together with 12 acres of land in the quarter of Lismonan and 110 perches in ye island of Derry late in possession of Ald. Frederick Coningham and to him demised by the Society of London.

To hold to said Henry Dickson for all of the remainder of years unexpired of a lease of said premises from the said Society as in and by said deed may appear, which said deed was solely executed by said Abraham Hillhouse in the presence of James Naderson of said city merchant and Andrew Makilevaine of city of Dublin, Gent

Sealed Ab. Hillhouse

Ald James Ash

Will Scott, Rt

Pet Stanley

Registered 1744

Volume 115, page 206 no. 80207: Abraham Hillhouse to James and Joseph Douglas, 10 July 1744.

Abraham Hillhouse of the city of Londonderry, Gent ---- Joseph and James Douglas of Upper Maine, Londonderry, in the manor of Freemore ---- lease at will for the natural life/lives of Abraham James Hillhouse, James Douglas and Isaiah Fowler. Rent of £10 sterling.

Registered 1744

Volume 117, page 178, no. 80205: Abraham Hillhouse to John Douglas.

Indentured lease dated 1 February 1746 [mistake?], made between Abraham Hillhouse of Londonderry, Gent and John Douglas of Main, county L'Derry ---- demise that part of Main in possession of said John Douglas, lease at will sixty acres --- for natural lives of Abraham James Hillhouse, John Hillhouse, senior and John Douglas, my son, junior.

Witnessed by Rachel Hillhouse daughter to said Abraham Hillhouse and Archibald Robinson of Main farmer, aged about 40 years

27 December 1744

Registered 1745

Volume 119, page 159, no. 82070: Hillhouse to Hillhouse, registered 16 September 1745.

Dated 20 August 1745, whereby Abraham Hillhouse of Freehall in the county of L'Derry Gent did sell, assign and transfer/make over unto his son Abraham James Hillhouse, all his right, Title and Interest to his real Estate of Freehall, aforesaid and the Maine in said county subject to sev'ral Cov[enan]ts.

Witnessed by Andrew Ferguson and Hugh Lyle both of Coleraine in the said county;

Signed, sealed by said Abraham James Hillhouse in the presence of said Andrew Ferguson and Charles Church of Coleraine aforesaid Gent,

Coleraine 29 August 1745 Cha Church, JP for county L'Derry; Dom. Heyland and Her. Heyland

Registered 1755

Volume 181 page 47 no. 119409: Hillhouse & another to Latouche 16 Day Dec'r 1755 at 6pm.

Indenture of Lease & Release ----- mortgage and Release 24th day of May 1755 between Abraham James Hillhouse of London merchant of one part & John Barton of London aforesaid merchant of the second part & David Latouche of the city of Dublin Esq, 3rd part whereby Abraham James Hillhouse & John Barton ----- did

bargain, sell, alien and confirm to David Latouche lands, tenements & hereditaments called and known by the name Freehall & the Main county LD --- payment of the sum of £1500 1st day of November 1755:
Witness – Edmund Kelly Inner Temple, London Gent & Thos Ciffy of same place.
24 May 1755

Registered 1757

Volume 183 pages 501-502 no. 123629: Ferguson to Hillhouse to Ferguson
Reg. the 17th day of Febr'y 1757

A memorial of an Indenture made the Twenty fourth day of October in the year of our Lord God one thousand seven hundred and seventeen between the Rev Andrew Ferguson minister of the Gospel in Burt in the barony of Inishone & county of Donegal of the one part & Abraham Hillhouse of Freehall in the county of L'Derry, Gent of the other part witnesseth that for & in consideration of a marriage by God's permission shortly to be solemnized between the s'd Abraham Hillhouse & Mrs Ann Ferguson daughter of the sd Andrew Ferguson & for divers other good causes & considerations the sd Andrew Ferguson did covenant & agree for himself and his heirs ex'rs, adm'rs, Afs in manner following viz that sd Andrew Ferguson to pay Abraham Hillhouse £100 GB sterling as a portion with his said daughter as one entire payment within 6 months after solemnizing said marriage. Said Abraham Hillhouse --- after said marriage the townland of Moneyvenan commonly known by Freehall and the Upper & Lower Main --- shall be in possession of Abraham Hillhouse during his natural life and after his decease to the heirs lawfully begotten of the body of the said Ann Ferguson – if said Ann Ferguson shall die before said Abraham Hillhouse that the said Abraham Hillhouse in case of another marriage doth for himself reserve his holding in Freehall to himself enduring his natural life and if children by another marriage to reserve the Upper and Lower Main to dispose of to such children; if said Abraham Hillhouse shall die before his wife Ann Ferguson – to leave £20 to Ann as dowery --- out of the land of Freehall without paying any taxes and to live in the mansion house of Freehall enduring her widowhood along with her children if she have any until the heir be married and then she is to be paid her £20.

Witnessed by Eleanor Ferguson late of Coleraine county L'Derry spinster dec'd and by Andrew Ferguson of Burt county Donegal, Min.

This memorial was duly perfected by said Abraham Hillhouse in the presence of said Andrew Ferguson and of Frederick McCausland of Streevhill, co L'Derry Gent 12 February 1757.

Registered 1758

Volume 187, page 190, Memorial no.128927: Hillhouse to Hull.
Registered the 28th day of June 1758 at 11 o'clock in the afternoon.

A memorial of a Lease of lives renewable forever bearing date the tenth day of April in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty three bewixt Abraham Hillhouse of Londonderry in the county of Londonderry of the one part Gentleman and Thomas Hull of Moneyvannon in the said county of the other part whereby the said Abraham Hillhouse did then demise and set unto the said Thomas Hull his heirs, exors, Admons and Assigns all that part of Moneyvanon then in possession of the said Thomas Hull containing 60 acres be it more or less and situate in the mannon of Freemore in the county of Londonderry aforesaid be the same more or less together with all buildings and appurtunances thereunto belonging for and during the Natural lives of Abraham James Hillhouse son to the said Abraham Hillhouse and of Abraham and James Hull sons to the said Thomas Hull and for and during the life or lives of such person or persons might thereafter be added or inserted for ever at and under the yearly rent of twelve pounds sterling together with eleven shillings and six pence for each renewal and other clauses usual betwixt Landlord and Tenant and on the backs of which Lease Conolly McCausland son to Frederick McCausland, Gent is added in the Room of the said Abraham James Hillhouse deceased as a life on Renewal bearing date the second of March in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty six and Which lease is Witnessed by James Smith deceased, John Hopkins deceased and William Johnston of Lisnagrib in said County farmers and this memorial is aforesd Witnessed by the said William Johnston and by William Patton of Newtown Limavaddy in said County, farmers

Signed and sealed in presence of

William Johnston

William Patton

Signed – Abr Hillhouse

Registered 1761

Volume 24, page 5666, no. 147978: Hillhouse to Perry.

A memorial of a deed roll [?] bearing date the 24 day of July one thousand seven hundred and forty one and made between Abraham Hillhouse of Londonderry Gent of the one part and George Perry of Main in the County Londonderry on the other part whereby the said Abraham Hillhouse for the consideration therein mentioned did sell grant and confirm unto the sd George Perry his heirs and assigns forever all that part of Main being a ¼ of

Middle Main as the said Abraham Hillhouse shall lay it out being a part of the Manor of Freemore in the Barony of Kenaught and county of Londonderry together with all houses and other appurtenances belonging being 30 acres less more except as therein;

Unto said George Perry his heirs from 1st day November then, next and during natural lives of George Perry, John Perry and William Sherer and the survivor and survivors of them --- paying unto Abraham Hillhouse yearly sum of £4, 10sh sterling rent to commence from 1 November then next half year payments--- of 11sh, 4 ½d within 3 months after the death of each of lives aforesaid ----

Said deed duly executed in the presence of Charles Garroway in city of L'Derry gent and James Hull of Cookstown in county Tyrone.

This memorial was duly signed and sealed by said George Perry and said Charles Garroway and Henry Sloan of said city of Londonderry, Gentlemen.

Said Charles Garroway subscribing witness saw said deed duly executed.

Sworn 30 day of June 1761 at city of Londonderry.

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