

Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of the Juniata Valley, Comprising the Counties of Huntingdon, Mifflin, Juniata, and Perry, Pennsylvania, J. M. Runk and Company, Publishers 1897

**Marcus Hulings and His Family.** From data in our possession we are able to give the year of the location of an early settler at the mouth of the Juniata, that of **Marcus Hulings** in 1753. Day and Rupp, relying upon tradition, give the time "possibly as early as 1735." It is a matter of history that all the settlers on Shearmans Creek and the Juniata had been removed by the sheriff, Andrew Work's posse, in 1750, and the houses of the settlers burned; so that it was not for two or three years at least afterwards that the hardy frontiersman ventured to build his rude cabin on the forbidden land. It is stated by Watson that **Marcus Hulings** came from Marcus Hook on the Delaware. Nevertheless, the **Hulings** were among the earliest settlers on that river, settling there long before the founder came over and constituted the grand old Commonwealth called for him. The name is spelled **Uhling**, **Hewlings** and **Hulings**, and is Swedish.

A few years after **Mr. Hulings'** settlement on the Juniata came Braddock's defeat, and all the horrors of an Indian war followed. In the spring after (1756) the savages had reached the Susquehanna; but the few scattered frontiersmen were unequal for the conflict, and were obliged to flee. Some lingered too long, for the wily red man came down suddenly and the tomahawk and scalping knife were reeking with the life-blood of the hardy, but unfortunate, pioneers. **Mr. Hulings**, on being apprised of the near approach of the savages, hurriedly packed up a few valuables and, placing his wife and youngest child upon a large black horse (the other children having previously been removed to a place of safety) fled to the point of the island, ready to cross over at the first alarm. Forgetting something in the haste, and thinking the Indians might not have arrived, **Mr. Hulings** ventured to return alone to the house. After carefully reconnoitering, he entered, and found, to his surprise, an Indian upstairs "coolly picking his flint." Stopping some time to parley with the savage, so that he might retreat without being shot at, the delay, to his wife, seemed unaccountable and, fearing he had been murdered, she whipped up her horse and swam the Susquehanna. The water was quite high, but, nowise daunted, she succeeded in reaching the opposite shore in safety. **Mr. Hulings** soon appeared, and finding the animal with his wife and child had disappeared, in turn he became alarmed, but a signal from the eastern shore of the stream relieved his anxiety, and he himself, by means of a light canoe, was safe from pursuit. The fugitives succeeded in reaching Fort Hunter, where the **Baskins** and others of their neighbors had congregated and the inhabitants of Paxtang had rallied for a defense.

It was not until the fall of Fort Duquesne, and the erection of Fort Pitt, that **Marcus Hulings** returned to his farm with his family. A year after, however, we find him at the Forks of the Ohio, where he took up a tract of land. In the meantime, encroachments were being made upon his lands on the Juniata, and in 1762 we have the following letter, protesting against the same

*"Fort Pitt, May the 7<sup>th</sup>, 1762.*

*"To William Peters., Esq., Secretorey to the Propriatorries in land office in Philadelphia, &c.:*

*"The Petitioner hereof humbly showeth his grievance in a piece of uncultivated land, laying in Cumberland county, on the Northwest side of Juneadey, laying in the very Forks and Point*

*between the two rivers, Susquehanna and Juneadey, a place that I Emproved and lived on one Year and a half on the said place till the enemeyes in the beginning of the last Warrs drove me away from it, and I have had no oportunity yet to take out a Warrant for it; my next neighbor was one **Joseph Greenwood**, who sold his improvement to **Mr. Neaves**, a merchant in Philadelphia, who took out a warrant for the s'd place, and gave it into the hands of **Collonel John Armstrong**, who is Surveyor for Cumberland County; and while I was absent from them parts last summer, **Mr. Armstrong** runed out that place Joyning me, for **Mr. Neaves**; and as my place layes in the verry point, have encroached too much on me and Take away part of Improvements; the line Divided between me and **Joseph Greenwood** was up to the first small short brook that empyed into Susquehannah above the point, and if I should have a strait line run'd from the one river to the other with equal front on each River from that brook, I shall not have 300 acres in that survey; the land above my house upon Juneadey is much broken and stoney. I have made a rough draft of the place and lines, and if Your Honour will be pleased to see me righted, the Petitioner hereof is in Duty bound ever for you to pray; from very humble serv't, "Marcus Hulings."*

"With the foregoing he sent the following note to Mr. Peters:

*"May ye 17th, 1762.*

*"Sir: I have left orders for Mr. Mathias Holston living in Upper Merrion of Philadelphia county, to take out two warrants for me, one for the Point between the two Rivers, and one for the Improvements I have in the place called the Onion bottom on the south side of Juneadey right opposite to the other, where I lived six months before I moved to the other place; from your humble servant, "**Marcus Hulings**."*

Directed to "William Peters, Esq., Secretary to the Proprietories land office in Philadelphia."

With these leters is the "rough draught" of the land at the mouth of the Juniata, which would be worth reproducing, as no description we can give will convey an accurate idea of it. Three islands are noted. One now known as Duncans Island is marked "Island" and the house upon it as "**Widdow Baskins**." The large island in the Susquehanna known as Haldemans Island, containing three houses —the one to the southern point, "**Francis Baskins**," one-third further up, on the Susquehanna side, "**George Clark**," while about the center that of "**Francis Ellis**." On the north point is the word "Island." Almost opposite, on the east bank of the Susquehanna, is "**James Reed's**" house; while between the center of the island and the western shore is a small triangular "island," so marked. On "the point" between the "Susquehanna River" and the "Juneadey River," near the bank of the latter stream is "**Hulings**' house." Some distance from "the point" is a straight line running from river to river on which is written "this is the way I want my line;" while beyond on the West Branch of the Susquehanna nearly opposite "**James Reed's**" house is "**Mr. Neave's** house." Farther up the river, opposite a small island is "**Francis Ellis**' " house. A circuitous line denominated "**Mr. Neave's** line," crosses the straight line referred to, which included "Part of **Hulings**' Improvement." On the south side of the Juniata below the mouth thereof is "**William Kerl's**" house; opposite the point of Duncans Island, "**James Baskins**'" house, while "**Hulings**' house" (another improvement) is farther up — in what is named the "Onion bottom." Beyond this on the south side of the Juniata is a house marked "**Cornelius Acheson**, who has encroached upon **Hulings**' Improvement in the Onion bottom—

settled there last spring." Opposite the islands on the east bank of the Susquehanna are "Peter's mountain" and "narrougths." We suppose **Mr. Hulings** was "righted," as he desired.

Becoming discontented with the situation at Pittsburgh, **Hulings** sold his claim for £200 and returned to his home at the mouth of the Juniata, where he made considerable improvements. He established a ferry, and built, says Watson, a causeway at the upper end of Duncans Island for pack horses to pass.

**Marcus Hulings'** home was lately in the possession of **Dr. George N. Reutter**. He originally owned all the land between the Susquehanna and Juniata below New Buffalo, and had also a tract of land at the mouth of Sherman's Creek, then in Rye Township, Cumberland County, but now Penn Township, Perry County.

**Mr. Hulings** died in September, 1788, and is buried in a graveyard near Losh's Run. **Mrs. Hulings**, whose maiden name has not come down to us, was a remarkable woman, and on more than one occasion forded the Susquehanna and wended her way to the mill at Fort Hunter with a small bag of grain; after waiting till it was ground, she hastened homeward. This, however, was only in the first years of her pioneer life, for shortly after a grist-mill was erected on Sherman's Creek. She was a brave and intrepid pioneer woman, and a noble wife for the hardy frontiersman. She died prior to the Revolution and is buried in the same graveyard with her husband, but their graves are unmarked. They had five children who survived their parents:

I. **Marcus**, the eldest, born in 1747, possibly never returned with his father from Fort Pitt. He erected a large stone tavern and established a ferry on the south side of the Monongahela River, opposite the foot of Liberty Street, Pittsburgh. It was afterwards, says Mr. Isaac Craig, for half a century known as Jones' ferry house, and as frequently noted in the journals of travelers about the commencement of the present century. He seems to have been quite prominent on the western frontiers and is frequently made mention of. Gen. Richard Butler, one of the commissioners appointed to hold treaties with the Northern and Western Indians, in his journal of October 1, 1785, says: "I fortunately recommended the employment of one **Mr. Huling**, who I find to be a very useful, active and ingenious man, he goes ahead with a small canoe to search out the channel, which we find to be very crooked." This was no doubt **Marcus Hulings**. In the journal of Gen. Joseph Buell, the arrival at Fort Harmar of "**Uhling**, a trader on the river," is mentioned three times, November 5 and December 3, 1786, and on the 4th of January, 1787. For more than ten years subsequent to 1790, **Marcus Hulings** was employed by Major Isaac Craig, quartermaster at Pittsburgh, in transporting military stores up the Allegheny to Fort Franklin and to Presqu Isle, and down the Ohio and Mississippi to the military posts on those streams. Major Craig's letter-books and papers contain ample evidence that **Marcus Hulings** was a faithful and reliable man in all his undertakings. We have no knowledge as to his subsequent career, although we are informed that he died in Tennessee. He left descendants.

II. **Mary**, born in 1749; married, first, **Thomas Simpson**; second, on January 18, 1780, **William Stewart**. They had four children. She died February 22, 1790. **Mr. Stewart** afterwards married **Martha Espy**, widow of **James Espy**.

III. **Samuel**, born in 1751, also located on the Ohio. He owned an island in the Allegheny called **Hulings'**, and we presume it is yet known by that name. **Samuel Hulings** married and left issue.

IV. **James**, born in 1753; we have no knowledge whatever.

V. **Thomas Hulings**, youngest son of **Marcus Hulings**, who succeeded to the paternal estate, born March 3, 1755; died in Buffalo Township, Perry County, March, 1808. He was a prominent man in the locality, and served on several important State commissions.

He was twice married, first, to **Elizabeth**, daughter of **Gen. Frederick Watts**, of the Revolution, and **Jane Murray**, his wife, born July 7, 1749; died July 15, 1801. They had issue:

i. **Rebecca**, born March 25, 1789; married May 21, 1811, **Robert Callender Duncan**, son of **Judge Duncan**, of Carlisle, from whom Duncans Island derives the name. She died in April, 1850, leaving two children: **Dr. Thomas Duncan**, who died in 1879, without issue; and **Benjamin Styles Duncan**, who died in 1870, leaving four children now residing on Duncans Island. It may be here remarked that **Mrs. Duncan**, in her will, says, "of Isle Benvenue."

ii. **Marcus**, born February 11, 1791; removed to the south; married and left issue.

iii. **Frederick Watts**, born March 9, 1792; married and settled in Tennessee, where he became quite prominent, being at one time speaker of the House of Representatives of that State. He was a captain in the Confederate army, and while attempting to get on a train of cars during the Rebellion was severely injured, from the effects of which he died at his then residence, New Orleans. He left issue.

vi. **David Watts**, born 1793; married **Maria Patton**, of Lewistown. He studied law and was admitted to the Dauphin county bar April 21, 1823. He became the possessor of the old homestead, and afterwards disposed of it and purchased largely near Lewistown. He bought Hope Furnace, which he greatly improved. He represented Mifflin County in the legislature. Subsequently he removed to Baltimore, where he died leaving children: **Thomas, Maria, Ellen, Mary** and **Lizzie**. **Thomas** married a daughter of **General Thomas**, of Washington, D. C.; was a colonel in the Civil war, and killed in the battle of the Wilderness. **Maria** married **Lloyd Williams**, a lawyer, of Baltimore. **Ellen** married **Charles Denison**, of Wilkes-Barre. **Mary** married **Goodwin Williams**, of Baltimore, and **Elizabeth** married **Chauncey Reynolds** of Wilkes-Barre. The latter are both widows, residing at Baltimore.

v. **Mary**, born May 8, 1798; married **James S. Espy**, of Harrisburg, and had two children, both of whom are deceased.

**Thomas Hulings** married, secondly, **Rebecca**, daughter of **Andrew** and **Rebecca Berryhill**, of Harrisburg, and had issue:

vi. **Eleanor**, born 1803; married **John Keagy**, of Harrisburg, and had issue: **Thomas** and **Rebecca**, both residing at Baltimore. After **Mr. Keagy's** death, she married **Dr. Joseph Ard**, of Lewistown, whom she survived. She died at Baltimore in June, 1880.

vii. **Elizabeth**, born 1805; married **James Dickson**, of Lewistown, and had issue: **Annie** and **William**. The latter died in Philadelphia in 1875, leaving **Annie**, who resides at New Bloomfield. **Mrs. Dickson**, the last surviving child of **Thomas Hulings**, died at New Bloomfield on the 25th of July, 1881.

viii. **Julia**; married **William Bringhurst**, of Clarkesville, Tenn., and had issue, three boys and three girls; two of the former are dead; the remaining children married and are residing in Tennessee.

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