

Rebecca (Rider) Demaree, (11 Apr 1823 – 2 May 1900), Newport News, Thursday, May 3, 1900

Mrs. **Rebecca Demaree**, widow of the late **John S. Demaree** and familiarly known as Aunt Beckie, died suddenly of heart failure about three o'clock yesterday afternoon at her home on Third street. She took quite sick of pneumonia early last Friday morning, but her recovery was not considered improbable, her physician seeing nothing to cause any unusual apprehension when he left her a few minutes prior to her death. The attack of heart failure evidently came as quickly as it was immediately fatal.

Mrs. Demaree was the seventh child of a family of eight daughters and one son, all of whom are now dead. She was the oldest native citizen, having been born April 11, 1823 where the residence of James Morrow now stands on South Second Street. She was a daughter of **John Rider** and wife. Her father and his two brothers owned all the land lying along the river between Big Buffalo and Little Buffalo creeks, a distance of more than a mile. It was divided into three contiguous tracts her father's share comprising the ground on which the town now stands.

It was a forest west of Third Street when Mrs. Demaree was born, deer and other wild animals sporting among the trees with utmost freedom. She had seen the town grow from year to year from practically nothing into its present proportions, and it was only recently that she expressed the hope that she would live two years yet, believing that during that time still greater improvements will take place.

It was originally known as Ridersville. She was married to **John S. Demaree**, subsequently the leading merchant of the town. He died January 6, 1888. They had nine children, all but two of whom are living, namely: Miss **Alberta, B.F., W.V.** and **Mrs. Samuel Light**, all of Newport: **David R.** of Altoona: **John** of Wilmington, Del., and **Charles**, of Wilkes-Barre. Mrs. Demaree was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Funeral services will be held at the house tomorrow (Friday) afternoon at 3 o'clock: Interment at the Newport cemetery.