

Thomas Harper, (1840 – 1893) Newport News, June 30, 1893. Quick Death of Tommy Harper.

Thomas Harper expired in **Jacob Sheaffer's** arms, at the latter's residence, at the lock, two miles east of this place, about 8 o'clock on Monday evening.

He was there fishing, his natural vocation. It was raining, and he would watch his lines from **M. Sheaffer's** residence. While the big drops of rain were coming down in most vigorous fashion **Mrs. Sheaffer** remonstrated with **Tommy** about going out in the wet. He was sitting on a bench and **Mrs. Sheaffer** saw a swaying motion of his body. She called to her husband and asked what was the matter with **Tommy**. **Mrs. Sheaffer** rushed forward and caught him in his arms and held him until he died.

W.S. Newcommer of the firm of John Fleisher & Co. undertakers, went upon the scenes, upon receiving notice of Tommy's death, and the body was conveyed across the river, in a boat by **Mr. Sheaffer, Jere Bair, John Smith** and **Willis Wright** to the residence of **Lewis Harper**, a brother, where the deceased resided, and prepare for burial. The funeral was held at his late house at 2 o'clock Wednesday afternoon, Rev. W.S. Smith officiating, and interment was made in the Newport Cemetery.

Thomas Harper was born in Darby Township, Delaware County, Pa. and came to this place in 1857. He was married to **Ella J. Miller**, daughter of **Jacob Miller**, deceased, late of Eshcol. She died in the house now occupied by E.B. Fleck, Front and Market streets, and was buried with their only child, a **baby** daughter, at Eshcol, May 7, 1868.

He was a soldier of the late war, a member of Company B, 203d Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers.

It is pleasant to indulge in a modest eulogium of "**Tommy**." Nobody can arise and truthfully say he was ever done an injury by this really unpretentious citizen. A superficial analysis would judge his exterior. The writer prefers to penetrate his eternal substance and says that there are few people of his acquaintances to whom he has met rendered uncompensated service. In some respects his career was enviable. He had no care, no ambition, no anxiety, little concern for the future, and in all probability accomplished as much as his equipment of nature made him capable of performing.