

April 4, 1888 – CHESTER TIMES

CAPTAIN THOMAS I. LEIPER – Death of a Well-Known and Useful Citizen of Chester

Captain Thomas I. Leiper of the Irving & Leiper Manufacturing Company, died early last evening at his home on Second Street, near Penn. Though it was generally known that he had been in failing health for some time, his death was unlooked for by the community, and the news of his demise caused great sorrow and surprise. He was in his 54th year.

Deceased was one of the most prominent business men of this city and for many years was a leading figure in mercantile life. As a soldier of the war of the Rebellion, he has a fine record. He enlisted when Lincoln's first call for troops was made, being mustered in October 19, 1861. The Fifty-eighth Regiment to which his command, Company A belonged, was ordered to Fortress Monroe, reaching its destination while the action between the Monitor and Merrimac was in progress. On May 10 it led the advance and unfurled its flag on the Norfolk custom house. While at that city, First Lieutenant Leiper, who had been previously appointed adjutant, was assigned to the staff of General Thomas L. Kane, under whom he was in service at the battles of Antietam and Gettysburg.

On September 9, 1863, he was promoted captain of Company A, and he at once returned to his command. May 1, 1864, the regiment joined the Army of the James under General Butler in the operations against Richmond and on the 9th was in nation, near the Appomattox River, and the following day destroyed for a considerable distance the Petersburg and Richmond Railroad. The regiment was subsequently transferred so the army under Grant and at Cold Harbor was in the chare that captured the rifle pits. It was also in the attack on the enemy's lines in front of Petersburg, when the outer works were carried.

On June 24 the re-enlisted soldiers were ordered to Philadelphia on the regular furlough granted veterans re-entering the service, but Captain Leiper remained at the front in command of the men who had not re-enlisted and the recruits forwarded to the Fifty-eighth. The regiment then joined the army on the north of the James, and on September 23 Captain Leiper was in the desperate assault on Fort Harrison, in which the colors of his regiment were three times shot away. The same day his regiment participated in the assault on Star Fort, a mile to the left of Fort Harrison. In all his subsequent campaigning, Captain Leiper bore an honored part.

He was mustered out October 24, 1864, and came home to enjoy business pursuits. When the Irving & Leiper Manufacturing Company was incorporated, Captain Leiper was made treasurer. He continued a member of the company until his death and until sickness came assisted in the conduct of the big mills. He was a public spirited man and was in the front of a number of enterprises. When the Board of Trade organized he was chosen president, but when his term was up declined re-election. He was vice-president and a director of the Chester Real Estate Company and was also connected with other local corporations. He was very thorough in everything and before engaging in business, learned the textile industry as an apprentice with John P. Crozer.

Deceased leaves a wife and four children, only one of whom, Mrs. Magee, of Pittsburg, is married.