

Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 15 January 1893

THE CAREER OF JOHN LEECH.

A Stanch Fifth Ward Democrat and Ex-Alderman Gone.

John Leech, whose death at his home, 854 Livingston street, was announced in yesterday's EAGLE, had spent almost the whole of his long life in Brooklyn. He came from Scotland with his parents in 1813, when he was 2 years old. Mr. Leech has long been prominent in politics in the city and especially in the Fifth ward, where he lived. At his majority he joined the whig party and was loyal to it until its dissolution in 1855, when he joined the Democracy and has been a zealous Democrat ever since. When Mr. Leech was a young man he ran for alderman in the Fifth ward twelve successive times and was beaten every time. That didn't discourage him, however, and on the thirteenth time, in 1850, he was elected, defeating the Democratic candidate. The fight was a hot one and there were said to have been more votes cast than there were men, women, children and navy yard marines in the ward. But everything went in those days and Leech, who had a plurality of four, took his seat. He was the only anti Democrat candidate ever elected alderman in the Fifth ward and he served with honor. In 1828 he joined No. 6 Volunteer engine company, stayed with it for three years and then helped organize old Constitution No. 7, in Front street. In 1837 Mr. Leech helped organize Jackson No. 11, of which he was foreman and assistant engineer. He was afterward foreman of No. 9 in High street, and when No. 9 engine house was burned he was again elected foreman of No. 11. Mr. Leech was a member of the Tippecanoe club in 1840, and after he became a Democrat was active in the Jefferson hall organization. Mr. Leech established a stone cutting yard in 1830 and retired from business in 1870. His yard was at Bridge and Plymouth streets, where several local politicians learned their trade of him. He was a member of Fortitude masonic lodge No. 19 and served in every capacity, from treasurer up to grand master. Mr. Leech took part in many progressive measures and was well known in the group which used to make Jacob Cole's auction rooms, on Fulton street, a headquarters. Mr. Leech's political enthusiasm did not waver in his old age, and, although he was in feeble health at the last election, he rode to the polls in a carriage and cast his last ballot for Grover Cleveland.