

HISTORIC RED HOOK

Sylvester Feller

Born 1853 Died 1902

Red Hook Methodist Cemetery

Granite tablet with a horizontal cylinder atop it, southwest side near the fence

Sylvester was the son of Henry Augustus Feller and Catherine Snyder. He was a farmer and resided in Red Hook. On Sunday, March 22nd, 1902 his oldest son, Fred, came home after serving three years in the army in the Philippines. Two hours later that night, Sylvester headed out to the post office at Barrytown. He chatted with Horace Plass for a bit, then went to cross the train tracks. He stood on the northbound tracks to wait for a long southbound freight train to pass, which might explain why he didn't hear the approach or the whistle of the northbound express train that struck and killed him instantly.

He was survived by his wife Grace, three sons, and two daughters. When Grace tried to sue the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad in 1904, they argued that Sylvester was the negligent party for standing on the tracks. The 'towerman' swore he heard the express train blow its whistle and the freight train conductor said he yelled at Sylvester to look out as his own (presumably slow-moving) train passed him. The case was dismissed. His wife Grace Levenworth is buried beside him despite the fact that she remarried Gordon Merrihew after Sylvester's death.



Research and writing by Sarah K. Hermans, 2022

Sources:

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/43538776/sylvester-feller>

1930 Federal Census, Poughkeepsie, Dutchess Co NY, Grace Merrihew widowed

1925 New York State Census, Poughkeepsie, Dutchess Co NY, Grace Merrihew

1920 Federal Census, Poughkeepsie, Dutchess Co NY, Grace Merrihew

1910 Federal Census, Red Hook, Dutchess Co NY, Grace Feller

1900 Federal Census, Red Hook village, Dutchess Co NY, Sylvester Feller

1892 New York State Census, Red Hook, Dutchess Co NY, Sylvester Feller

Rhinebeck Gazette, 29 Nov 1930 (25 years ago section, RHJ, December 1910)

Poughkeepsie Eagle News, 6 Nov 1933

Columbia Republican, undated clipping c. Mar 1902

Red Hook Journal, 28 Mar 1902

Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle, 30 Nov 1904

Death notices, Dutchess & Columbia County, New York: From Red Hook newspapers