

HISTORIC RED HOOK

John W. Morgan

January 6th, 1816–March 22nd, 1901

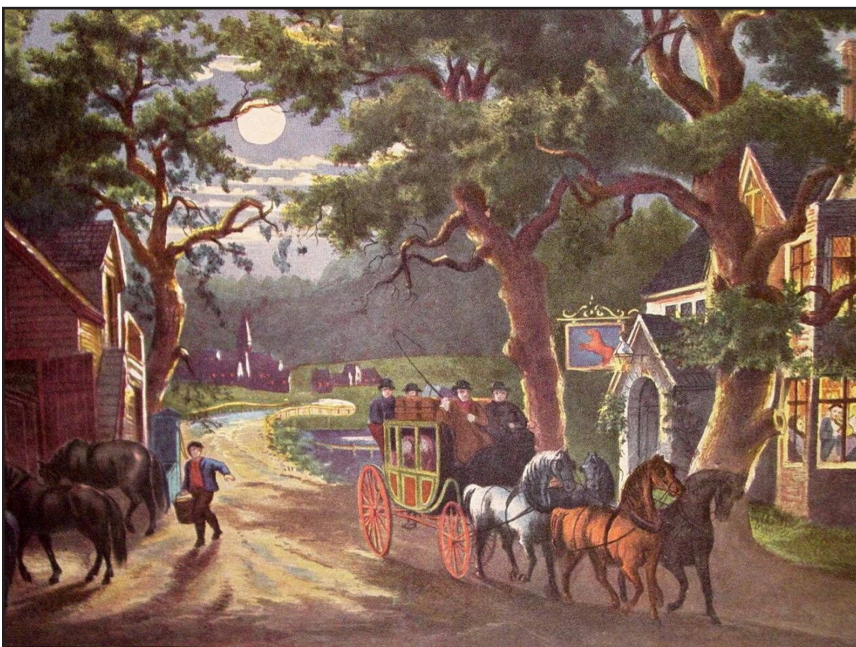
St. Paul's Lutheran Cemetery, Red Hook

Marble tiered rectangular column topped with an urn surrounded by cedars near the intersection of 4 roadways

The Last of the Stage Coach Drivers

When John Morgan died at 85 years of age in 1901 he had been one of the last men alive who drove a stagecoach between New York City and Albany. The last run was made between these cities in the 1850s when the Hudson River Railroad was established, allowing people to reach the end of the line significantly faster. Long after Morgan had been made redundant by technology, he would hold court in general stores and public meeting places and recount stories from his many runs and the interesting people he got to meet on the job.

"He used to tell with pride how he knew every inch of the road from New York to Albany, and boasted that no man on the route was a more careful and expert driver than he." It was said he expertly drove "four-in-hand", a coach drawn by four horses, sometimes at high rates of speed and not once resulting in serious accident.



Detail of "The Wayside Inn" Currier & Ives, 1864

Unfortunately, as it tends to happen when a new form of transportation comes along, the railroad made his job obsolete. It was said he "never took kindly to railroads" for this reason and "could not get used to them." He would work as a coachman, probably to a wealthy family, in the 1870s, and, according to his obituary, did alright for himself when took up carpentry as his second profession. In the 1880 census of Red Hook he was listed as a "retired driver."

He married Catherine Lasher (1826–1916) in 1860 and had two daughters,

Lizzie who married Fred Lasher and Emma who died in infancy. Fred was the brother of Estella Lasher, wife of Frank Burnett of the funeral home fame.

He and Catherine lived in a house on the North side of East Market Street between Graves and Cherry with Lizzie and Fred (who did not have children of their own) for the rest of their lives. All of them are buried in Morgan's plot together.

Research and writing by Sarah K. Hermans, 2025

Sources:

1850 Federal Census, Red Hook, Dutchess Co NY - Stephen Lasher.

1875 New York State Census, Red Hook, Dutchess Co NY - John Morgan.

1880 Federal Census, Red Hook, Dutchess Co NY - John Morgan.

1900 Federal Census, Red Hook, Dutchess Co NY - John Morgan.

Atlas Of New York And Vicinity... F.W. Beers, A.D. Ellis & G.G. Soule. Assistants F.S. Fulmer & Others. 95 Maiden Lane, New York. 1867. [Beers map].

Bassett, Edmund. *Reminiscences of Red Hook (A story of the Village)*

Columbia Republican, 28 Mar 1901.

findagrave.com/memorial/88772365/frederick_nelson-lasher.

findagrave.com/memorial/88772410/elizabeth-lasher.

findagrave.com/memorial/89197101/emma-morgan.

findagrave.com/memorial/89197185/john_w-morgan.

findagrave.com/memorial/89197219/catharine-morgan.

Lasher Genealogy from North America, Family Histories, 1500-2000 / LasherLasher Genealogy in three parts.

Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library. "Red Hook [Township]" The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1876. [Gray map].

Poughkeepsie Evening Enterprise, 25 Mar 1901 "LAST OF STAGE COACH DRIVERS".

Red Hook Journal, 29 Mar 1901.