

# STORY OF ROBERT LAND, U. E. LOYALIST

(BY JOHN H. LAND)

---

(Reprinted by permission of the Wentworth Historical Society)

When the American Colonies rebelled against the British Government in 1776, Robert Land, who, with his brother, had some twenty-five years before, come seeking a fortune in the New World, was living contentedly on the farm he had made out of the wilderness on the Delaware River near Coshecton, N.Y.

He had married Phoebe Scott of Virginia, (an aunt of General Winfield Scott) and had five sons and two daughters.

He opposed the "Colonial" movement, and on the breaking out of hostilities joined the Loyalist ranks. His elder son John, then sixteen and able to bear arms, was therefore seized and placed in prison and the family subjected to all the harassment that their enemies were masters of.

Mr. Land was, owing to his knowledge of the country where the forces were operating, made a messenger and entrusted with despatches. Finding that the feeling against him was visited on his unoffending family and that threats of death to him and destruction to the home were becoming loud, he decided to get away to Canada and if possible send for them from that land of safety. He arranged with a Quaker friend who had traded a good deal in that direction to accompany him. Through some spy their purpose and rendezvous became known and as they started they were met by a band of "patriots," on whose approach Mr. Land at once took to his heels and called to his friend—a Mr. Morden—to follow. The latter, however, could see no reason why he should avoid them. He had never taken up arms or mixed up in the affairs, one way or the other, so in spite of the warning calls of his fleeing comrade he waited—for his death. These brave "patriots," incensed at the escape of Mr. Land, and in spite of his protestations, hung Mr. Morden to a tree as a warning to all who sympathized with the Loyalists. While this uncalled for crime was enacting, part of the gang had been in hot pursuit of Mr. Land, firing at him as they ran, and seeing him approaching a swamp whose thick underbrush they knew would hide him effectually, they sent a volley after him as a parting compliment. One of the bullets struck his knapsack, penetrating right through it and his clothing to the very skin, knocking him down and cutting his hand severely as he fell. Seeing