

New Light on Philip Dorland: Prodigal Son to Patriarch¹

Gordon Thompson with Randy Saylor²

Arthur Dorland's doctoral dissertation "The Quakers in Canada—A History," first published in 1927, has made him the best known member of the Dorland family.³ The family name is also very closely connected with the initial settlements and Quaker communities that came into existence in the area around Adolphustown and Prince Edward County during the early days of Upper Canada.

The intent of this article is to examine the treatment that Arthur Dorland afforded his ancestral family members, Philip and Thomas Dorland. It re-examines some of the conclusions that Arthur Dorland proposed concerning the effect of the American War of Independence on these two individuals in particular and on Quaker migration from the United States into

Canada in the immediate post-war period in general. By making use of new documentation that has become available since Dorland's original work the article will provide a revised interpretation of the lives of the two brothers in the period preceding their removal from New York in 1783 as members of the Loyalist evacuation. Finally, the article will comment on the manner in which the norms of historical writing have changed since Dorland's seminal publication.

A full treatment of the relationships and experience of Quakers in the United States during the American War of Independence is beyond the scope of this piece. Almost ninety years have passed since the initial publication of *The Quakers in Canada—a History*. During that time the emergence of

¹ Editor's Note: Some of the arguments made in this article challenge the conclusions Daniel Nelson presented in an article published in this journal in 1999. Nelson changed his position on some of his original conclusions in his Master's Thesis, "Faith Enough to Move Mountains: The Dorlands and the Quakers of Upper Canada, 1784-1955" (MA Thesis: Trent University, 2002). Historiographically, that work should have been consulted in order to have built on Nelson's more recent conclusions. Nelson's thesis is available in the Dorland Room and readers should consider it alongside the material presented here. The authors also rely heavily on the work of John Dorland Cremer, whose work has been revisited by Barbara A. Barth et. al. in *The Dorland Enigma Solved: A Revision of the Dorland Genealogy* (Sandisfield, MA : Diane Barth Swartz, 2007).

² This article is the result of a collaborative effort involving a number of individuals, each of whom have contributed in various ways that have made this composition possible. I have written the article and Randy Saylor acted as researcher, transcriber, and consultant. The finished work would not have been possible without the transcribed minute books of Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, New York. Randy coordinated the team of volunteer transcribers who undertook the transcription from the microfilmed images of the original minute books. In addition, Randy's knowledge and willingness to share the essential land grant and petition information images drawn from the Haldimand papers has been critical to the discussion of Philip Dorland's military activity during the Revolutionary War in America. Thanks are also due to Christopher Densmore, curator of the Swarthmore College archives, for his kind assistance in providing the necessary Nine Partners minute book microfilms. The authors would also like to acknowledge and express their gratitude for the excellent transcription work and key contribution provided by Moira Greenlee, Carman Foster and Doug Smith, and to Ruth Jeffery-MacLean who read through the initial draft. Robynne Rogers Healey has reviewed and edited the article.

³ Arthur G. Dorland, *The Quakers in Canada – A History* (1927, rpt. Toronto, ON: The Ryerson Press, 1968).

additional documentation and increased accessibility to record collections have provided a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the life of Philip Dorland in particular. The additional information reveals an individual whose life and Quaker experience is more complex and variable than that of the steadfast Quaker that Arthur Dorland has portrayed. This new light on Philip Dorland provides a more complete accounting of the man and an additional window into the manner in which the outbreak of the revolutionary war affected him and members of his Quaker family and community.

When Dorland published his book, *The Quakers in Canada*, he realized that many of his readers would not be familiar with the elements of Quaker faith and practice, which distinguish the Religious Society of Friends. Accordingly, he devoted the first chapter of the book to setting out the organization, discipline, and testimonies typical of all historic Quaker meetings. He also detailed the manner in which adherence to the distinctive Quaker principles impacted and delineated aspects of individual Quaker experience and opportunity in early Upper Canada.

In the second part of Chapter One, Dorland addresses the specific Quaker testimony against oaths. For purposes of illustrating the principle in action, and the consequences that arose from a particular instance, he had at hand a ready example in the well documented case of his own ancestral family member, Philip Dorland. Arthur Dorland exercised considerable effort to help his readers understand the circumstances which led to the proffering of an oath of allegiance to Philip Dorland as a newly elected member of the first provincial assembly. He wrote:

The first Quaker in Upper Canada to

be penalized because of his testimony regarding oaths was Philip Dorland, who was member elect for Adolphustown and Prince Edward to the first Parliament of Upper Canada which met at Niagara September 17, 1792. Philip Dorland had already shown his allegiance to the government of Great Britain by joining the Loyalists who came to Upper Canada in 1784, and he had journeyed over Indian trails, on horseback, some 200 miles for the sole purpose of serving his King and country in the first Parliament in Upper Canada. It so happened, however, that each member before taking his seat was required to take an oath of allegiance which Philip Dorland as a Quaker could not do on conscientious grounds. Although his loyalty was unquestioned, and he expressed his willingness to affirm instead of taking the oath, there was no provision in the Act of 1791 for such procedure; while in any case he might have affirmed his "true allegiance to King George as lawful sovereign etc.", he could hardly have affirmed his willingness to "defend him (i.e. the King) to the utmost of my power against all traitorous conspiracies etc.", as prescribed by the Act, inasmuch as such an undertaking implied personal combatant service which no Quaker could perform. Philip Dorland was accordingly disqualified from taking his seat in Parliament, and writs were ordered for a new election. At the close of the first session a new election returned Major Peter VanAlstine to serve as member for Adolphustown and Prince Edward

for the duration of the Parliament.⁴

Arthur Dorland's account of this instance provides an effective illustration of the general principles and consequences related to the testimony against the swearing of oaths. Other sources and information contained in the recently transcribed Nine Partners Monthly Meeting Men's Minute books provide new details concerning the life and early Quaker experiences of Philip Dorland. These details serve to inform the context of this event, and to alter our understanding of Arthur Dorland's account.

We can never know exactly which sources or records Arthur Dorland was able to examine and review. His original research was performed at a time when the capabilities of modern technology could not even have been imagined. The compilation of a comprehensive history of the Quakers in Canada made the best use of the major available printed sources. It is clear, however, that Dorland devoted considerable effort to reviewing the fine yet important details contained in the available minute books of the early meetings in Canada. This work required access to and the patient decipherment of the sometimes faint and obscured original minute books themselves. This is very time-consuming work, and Dorland appears to have naturally limited this research to Canadian sources. As an individual who had spent his childhood growing up among his numerous Quaker family members he also had access to family accounts and oral tradition. Some aspects of family oral tradition or inferred events appear to have been included in Dorland's account of Philip and Thomas. As detailed below, the actual circumstances and the consequences that ensued for

Philip Dorland can now be reviewed and understood in the light of the transcribed Nine Partners Monthly Meeting Men's and Women's Minute books. These minutes reveal details about Philip Dorland at a much earlier period of his life than that detailed in Dorland's book. These details, in turn, provide important context related to the events in Niagara in 1792 and afterwards. This information allows us to see and appreciate that, in the course of his life, Philip Dorland grew and matured through phases and experiences to which many individuals can relate.

After outlining Philip Dorland's position, Arthur Dorland provides background information on the relationship between Quakers and political engagement helpful to understanding Dorland's decision to act as he did in 1792. In a subsequent chapter he provides details about the migration of American Quakers into Upper Canada, again using the accounts of the Dorland family to illustrate aspects of the migration and his understanding of the factors for it. Philip Dorland features prominently in this illustration. Consider, for instance, this lengthy summary on loyalist migration to Upper Canada:

The prevailing tradition which has associated the first Quaker settlement in Upper Canada with the Loyalist migration after the American War of Independence has probably arisen because of the loose use of the terms "Loyalist" and "Quaker" as in the case of the Pennfield or Beaver Harbour colony. The confusion arose because the Quaker migration, though not strictly speaking a Loyalist movement, nevertheless merged into

⁴ Dorland, *The Quakers in Canada*, 23.

a migration of Loyalist relatives, friends and neighbours from the older American settlements to Upper Canada.

The earliest phase of the movement may be illustrated by several families from among the first band of pioneers who laid the foundations of Upper Canada. For example, when the Revolutionary War broke out, Joseph Allen was a Quaker mill owner at Monmouth, New Jersey. Contrary, however, to the principles of Friends who discountenanced all support of the War, he accepted a contract for the supplying of flour and provisions to the British Army. This was, of course, sufficient to bring disciplinary measures and ultimately, his “disownment” as a member of the Society of Friends. When his mill was afterwards looted by American partisans, he joined the British forces and was given a captain’s commission. Captain Allen was second in command under Captain Van Alstine, who in 1783 sailed from New York to Quebec with a party of Loyalist refugees. After spending a hard winter under canvas at Sorel in the Lower Province this heroic group finally settled on about 11,459 acres in the Fourth Township (or, Adolphustown) on the Bay of Quinte. In this same company with Captain Allen was Captain Thomas Dorland and his elder brother Philip. The Dorland family was an old Dutch family of Quaker stock from Dutchess County, New York. But Thomas having actively identified himself with the Royalist cause, had been disowned from

membership in the Society. He thereupon became a member of the Episcopal Church, which was decidedly Royalist, and accepted a captain’s commission in the army. He was an officer in the Canadian militia till the end of his life, and was in active service during the war with the United States during 1812 and 1814. Philip Dorland though also a “Loyalist” – but in a narrower sense of the term – had not been a “Royalist” (i.e. an active partisan), but like his more aggressive brother he had suffered abuse and the confiscation of his property because of the offence his neutral attitude had given to the local authorities. Thomas, therefore, became a Royalist refugee because he fought – Philip because he would not fight. Nevertheless, they both came to Upper Canada at about the same time and to the same place in 1784. The Barkers, the Niles and other Quaker families were in precisely the same position. The Quakers who came to Adolphustown, as far as available records indicate, were all members in good standing in the Society of Friends and since most of their leading members came from New York State they were under the authority of New York Yearly Meeting. Therefore, when in 1798 a Preparative Meeting was first established in the house of Philip Dorland in Adolphustown, there is nothing to indicate that there had been any irregularity in the previous standing of its members, which would not have been the case if they had been “Loyalists”.⁵

⁵ Dorland, *The Quakers in Canada*, 50-51.

These two passages from Dorland convey two items of information that relate to the brothers Philip and Thomas Dorland. First, Philip Dorland refused to swear an oath on Quaker principle, thus relinquishing his status as the duly elected member to the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada in September 1792. Second, Arthur Dorland had a particular understanding of the migration of Quakers from America into Upper Canada after the Revolutionary War.

In 1898 John Dorland Cremer, a descendant of one of the two brothers who had emigrated from Holland in 1652 and 1663 and settled on Long Island, published an extensive family history entitled *Records of the Dorland Family in America*.⁶ It is likely that Arthur Dorland, born 30 July 1887, drew heavily on the contents of this publication for his information concerning Philip and Thomas Dorland. The Cremer records include the basic details of the life events of Philip and Thomas that later appear in *The Quakers in Canada*. Cremer sketches Philip Dorland in this way:

He was a Quaker and a Loyalist sympathizer with the British during the Revolution and as such suffered the confiscation of his property. After the peace, he and his family with his brother JOHN and his sisters MARY, LETTY and ANNA, and their families, and perhaps his brother THOMAS, were members of the celebrated U.E. Loyalist refugees under Major Vanalstine who left home and kindred behind in New York and sailed away to the wilds of

Upper Canada to found new houses and a new empire.

PHILIP settled first on the Bay shore in front of Adolphustown, at the point opposite Glenora. His farm is now owned by Doctor Young. PHILIP's brother THOMAS settled on the farm adjoining. PHILIP afterward removed across the Bay to the vicinity of Wellington, Prince Edward Co., where remain many of his descendants, prominent residents. He was elected for the old Midland District to the first Parliament of Upper Canada, Aug. 21, 1792, which was opened by John Graves Simcoe, the first governor of the Province Sept. 17, 1792, and sat at Newark, now Niagara; but being a Quaker, PHILIP declined, as Quakers still do, to take the prescribed oath, and his seat was declared vacant. It was in PHILIP's house that the first meeting of the Society of Friends was held in that locality.⁷

Although many details of the Cremer records of the generations preceding and following Philip Dorland are quite detailed, the dates of key events in Dorland's life are not provided. These include the date and location of his marriage and the date and location of the birth of his first child. Although Cremer characterizes Philip Dorland as a British sympathizer, there is no evidence in the Cremer account of Dorland having officially participated with the British or Loyalist military or civil organizations.

The information provided by Cremer pertaining to Thomas Dorland, however, does include details of his military service

⁶ John Dorland Cremer, *Records of the Dorland Family in America* (Washington, DC: Byron S. Adams, 1898).

⁷ Cremer, *Records of the Dorland Family in America*, 112 footnote.

in the British forces and is more developed than the information included by Arthur Dorland in the *Quakers in Canada*. Cremer's work is not, however, a scholarly history. Like the later work of Arthur Dorland, Cremer provides a mixture of family tradition and oral history. To his credit Cremer makes an effort to identify family sources and family information. In a series of footnotes to the genealogical records related to Thomas Dorland, however, Cremer makes two assertions that Dorland repeated in his later work. The first was that Thomas Dorland had been in possession of land in New York State, which had been confiscated. The second was that Thomas Dorland had attained the rank of Captain while serving the British in the local Loyalist Provincials. Cremer claims:

He was known as "Captain THOMAS". His property in New York was confiscated by the State. A tradition in the family has it that he remained in hiding in the woods near his home in Dutchess Co. for a time after the surrender of Burgoyne and was supplied with food in secret by members of his family. By one account he fled from Dutchess Co. to Canada in 1780, by the overland route up through the woods and lakes of northern New York to Sorel on the St. Lawrence. By another account he joined his brothers JOHN and PHILIP and his sisters MARY, LETTY, and ANNA in the band of Major Vanalstine in their memorable voyage by water to Sorel in 1783, going from New York up the Atlantic coast and up the St.

Lawrence

It is related that he took with him from New York 20 Negro slaves to assist in clearing the forests in his future Canadian home. As a Captain of Provincials he received half-pay from the British government after the peace and also 3000 acres of land in Adolphustown and in Prince Edward for himself and 200 acres for each of his children. The farm he selected for his homestead adjoined his brother PHILIP's on the Bay in front of Adolphustown. In Canada he served as Commissary for 18 years; and on the refusal of his brother PHILIP to take the prescribed oath as a member of the first Parliament, he was elected to succeed him, and occupied a seat in Parliament for years. He was thus the first serving member for the old Midland District.⁸

As reported by Arthur Dorland the military service of Thomas Dorland extended into the War of 1812. Cremer reported that Thomas Dorland was a captain, commanding "a body of Canadian troops defending the "Upper Gap," Ont., leading to Kingston from the New York side of the St. Lawrence." Moreover, Cremer remarks that Canadian historian, William Canniff, even refers to Dorland in his work as "brave Captain DORLAND."⁹

In reference to the military service and rank attained by Thomas Dorland it now appears that the highest rank attained by Thomas during his service in Canada was mistakenly incorporated into family history as also being the rank that he had attained while on Long Island serving in the

⁸ Cremer, *Records of the Dorland Family in America*, 134 footnote.

⁹ Cremer, *Records of the Dorland Family in America*, 289.

Associated Loyalists. As discussed later in this article, the assumed rank of captain in the Associated Loyalist Provincials is not supported by the post-war British military records. Cremer also noted that, as the formal British withdrawal from America approached, the British Parliament established a commission to address the circumstances of those who chose to remain British subjects loyal to the King. Although this commission established amounts of land to be granted to those who had rendered military service to Great Britain according to rank, the available documentation does not support Cremer's assertion that Thomas Dorland received 3000 acres. It appears that the Dorland family oral tradition that Thomas Dorland had been a captain in the Loyalist Provincial militia on Long Island led to an erroneous conclusion that Thomas had therefore been entitled to receive a land grant of 3000 acres in Upper Canada. This information, in turn, is restated as an assertion that the complete allocation had been received. Although Thomas Dorland did receive land grants for his service on Long Island, he was not granted 3000 acres, nor did his actual rank at the conclusion of hostilities entitle him to an allocation of that size.

Neither Arthur Dorland in 1927 nor John Dorland Cremer in 1898 intentionally misrepresented events or information in their respective historical accounts. They both reported the information that was available to them, and both stated as fact details like reported land confiscation and the corresponding land allocation. These and other examples may be logically inferred from the historical and oral record even though specific documentation was absent. The difficulty with historical

reporting of this time period is that documented facts are seldom distinguished from those that are inferred.

As we have seen, the information concerning Philip Dorland, as recorded by John Cremer and largely repeated by Arthur Dorland, indicates that neither of them were aware of additional records contained in the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting minute books and elsewhere. Taken together, strong documentary evidence indicates that certain elements of the Arthur Dorland account are not as he understood them to be and stated in *The Quakers in Canada*.

Before discussing this additional information and to understand the available documentation and inferences that can be drawn from these records, a brief history of the Dorland family will be beneficial.

The John Cremer account provides helpful family history information. It indicates that the Dorland family were Dutch migrants to America, moving from Holland to the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam. The first to arrive was Jans Gerretse Dorlandt in 1652 followed, in 1663, by brother Lambert. The later peaceful transition of the New Amsterdam colony to the possession of England involved the swearing of an oath of allegiance to the British crown by the established Dutch citizens. Jans Gerretse Dorlandt was recorded as having taken the oath in late September 1687; at that time he had lived in North America for thirty five years.¹⁰ Jan Gerretse Dorlandt is known to have been still living as late as 1711. Although details are lacking, he is thought to have married within a few years of his arrival in North America, and to have fathered five children by his first marriage and an additional five following his second

¹⁰ Cremer, *Record of the Dorland Family in America*, 35.

marriage in 1667 to Anna Remsen.

Over the generations in North America, the Dorlandt family name assumed various spelling variations, the most common being Dorland. During these initial generations the family also revealed a remarkably high rate of infant survival. The two marriages of Jan Gerretse Dorlandt engendered ten descendants. The second oldest of the ten first-generation children of Jans Gerretse Dorlandt was Elias Dorland, born about 1656. Although his marriage in about 1680 to the widow Miriam Williams resulted in the birth of only two sons, Elias Junior (b. 1682), and John (b. 1686), these two children enjoyed, in addition to their nine aunts and uncles, the company of as many as seventy or more first cousins. Elias Junior and his wife had seven children of their own, and the 1715 marriage of the younger brother John Dorland to Mary

Bedell also resulted in seven children. The fourth child of John Dorland and Mary (nee Bedell) was a son, Samuel, born in Hempstead, Long Island in 1721.

Samuel and his cousins and siblings represented only the third generation of the Dorland family in America. Samuel married Anna Esmond on 16 December 1743, and, soon after, they began to raise their own family, which eventually included eleven children. Although the baptismal records and other documents reveal that most of the previous generations had been members of the Dutch Reform Church, at some point Samuel and his family were accepted into membership in the Hempstead Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. By the early 1700s there were numerous Quaker meetings on Long Island. The Hempstead meeting was located only sixteen kilometres south and



Nine Partners Meetinghouse, photograph by Randy Saylor

west of the Jericho, Long Island Meeting which was central to what would become the Westbury Quarter.

After ten years in Hempstead, Samuel and Anna and their young family relocated to an area of Dutchess County known as Beekman's Patent. There they came under the care of the local Quaker meeting. They eventually transferred their certificates of membership to Nine Partners Monthly Meeting after it was established in 1769. Within the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, they were part of the Oswego Preparative Meeting.

Although they could not have known it at the time of their marriage in December of 1743, the birth of their children would span a period of more than twenty years from 1745 to 1767. As a result various members of the fourth generation of this branch of the Dorland family came of age in the revolutionary period.

Samuel and Anna's eldest child, a daughter Elizabeth, was born in 1745. She was followed by brothers Gilbert (1747) and John (1749), a sister Mary (1752), and another brother, Enoch, born the year the family moved to Dutchess County in 1753. Philip and Thomas Dorland were the sixth and eighth children and among the six that were born after the family left Hempstead. Of these six children, Philip was the first to be born on 9 September 1755. He was followed by Samuel Junior in 1757, Thomas, born 17 April 1759, and sisters Letty (1761), Anna (1763), and Miriam (1767).

This brief chronology is important in that it allows us to see that, when the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence on 4 July 1776, Samuel and Anna had children

ranging in age from thirty-one (Elizabeth) to nine (Miriam). Philip was almost twenty-one, and Thomas was past his seventeenth birthday.

At the time of the Declaration of Independence young Philip was attaining adulthood and taking on responsibilities accordingly. He had, or would shortly commence, a relationship with Elizabeth Bedell, two or three years his junior. They shared a great deal in common: like Philip, Elizabeth was also born in Beekman's Patent, and her parents were also descendants of settlers who had initially taken up land near Hempstead, Long Island. Like the Dorland family some members of the succeeding generations of Bedell's had also migrated into the Beekman's Patent area of Dutchess County. As a result, both Philip Dorland and Elizabeth Bedell had a large extended family in both Hempstead and, locally, in the Beekman Patent. Philip's own grandmother was born Mary Bedell, although Philip and Elizabeth were not directly related to each other. Unlike Philip, however, Elizabeth was not a Quaker, nor were members of her family. Her neighbouring uncle Reuben Bedell was listed in 1759 – the year British and colonial forces capture Quebec – as a lieutenant of the local colonial British militia.¹¹

Their differing religious backgrounds notwithstanding, their similar social and family circumstances and their strong attraction to one another created a powerful bond. It is, at least in part, as a result of his intimate relationship with non-Quaker Elizabeth Bedell, however, that Philip Dorland's name first appears as an adult in the minute books of Nine Partners Monthly Meeting. The minutes of the

¹¹ WikiTree "Reuben Bedell about1735- Hempstead, QC, Long...-WIKITREE" <http://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Bedell-58> (accessed 9 August 2015).

Men's Monthly Meeting held in December 1778 note, "A complaint came to this meeting by way of the Preparative Meeting at Oswego agains [sic] Philip Dorland for neglecting to attend our religious meetings and wagering money on a horse race and be accosted [sic] of committing fornication."¹²

Any one of the alleged offenses, if found to be true, would have been valid grounds for disownment. Disownment is not an action Quaker meetings, then or now, take lightly or deal with in a manner that is not diligent, patient and methodical. In the case of Philip Dorland, as in other such cases, a committee composed of members of the Men's Monthly Meeting was established to investigate the allegations brought forward anonymously by the complainant. The subsequent minutes of the Nine Partners Men's Monthly Meeting show that the process that finally led to disownment took place over the course of five months, beginning in February 1779 and concluding in June of the same year.¹³ The period of time and the amount of effort devoted to establishing the facts related to the complaint brought against Philip Dorland are not unusual or exceptional. Disowned Individuals had a right of appeal and to challenge the information used to justify a disownment. Great care was taken to ascertain the veracity of all complaints. The information that is reported to Nine Partner Monthly Meeting in March and April of 1779 provide brief but significant details of his circumstances at the time. In March of

1779 the committee report and the meeting response was recorded as follows: "The friends appointed on the account of Philip Dorland reported that he is gone away and that they were informed that he carried [sic] a pistol [sic] when he was here, therefore the same friends are desired to inspect further into the mater [sic] and make report at next monthly meeting how things are on his account."¹⁴

As requested, the committee investigated further and at the Monthly Meeting held in April 1779 provided their report. The details reported and the action taken by the meeting in response to the findings were as follows:

The friend appointed on the account of Philip Dorland that according to appointment they have inspected into the matter on his account and do not find but that he is guilty of what is contained in the complaint against him and furthermore informed he carried pistole [sic] to defend himself and also that he has absconded therefore this meeting appoints Stephen Dean and Israel Titus to draw a testimony [sic] against him and produce it to next monthly meeting.¹⁵

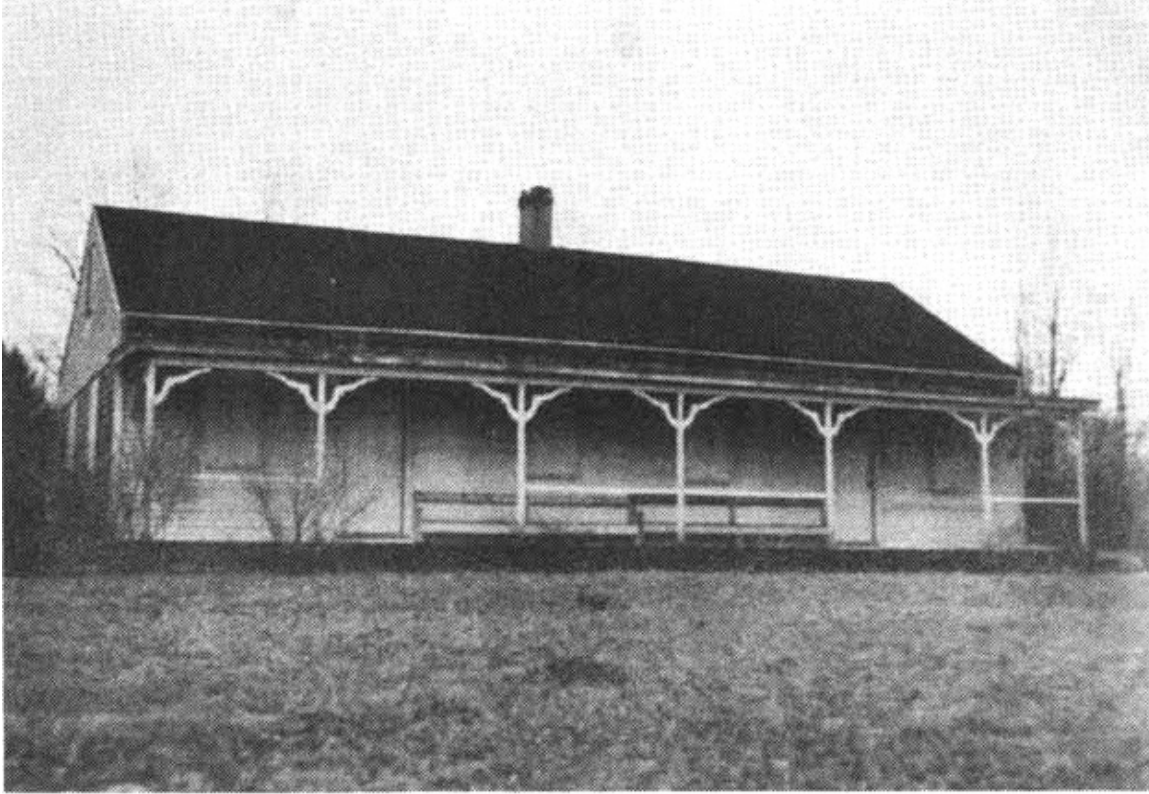
The wording of the 16 March 1779 minute leaves little doubt that investigation confirmed several of the offences noted in the complaint, namely neglecting to attend meetings and gambling on a horse race.

¹² Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, 18 – 12 mo – 1778. Reference is courtesy of Christopher Densmore, Curator, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.

¹³ Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meetings 1779-1783, 19 – 2 mo – 1779 to 18 - 6 mo - 1779. [Transcription Copyright Canadian Friends Historical Association (CFHA), 2014.] www.cfha.info.

¹⁴ Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, 1779-1783, 19 – 3 mo – 1779. Transcription Copyright CFHA 2014.

¹⁵ Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, 1779-1783, 16 – 4 mo – 1779. Transcription Copyright CFHA 2014.



Oswego Monthly Meeting Meetinghouse, source: Van Wagner, Alson D., A Short History of Oswego Monthly Meeting, published by Bulls Head-Oswego Monthly Meeting, Clinton Corners, New York,

The original complaint *accused* (“accosted”) Dorland of having committed fornication. Disownment of both men and women for committing fornication was not exceptional in Quaker practice but it was a far less common a cause than was “marrying out” or “marrying out of order.” The relatively small number of disownments where fornication was cited as grounds is related to the difficulty of obtaining unequivocal objective evidence of the offense. The investigating committee did not report that Philip Dorland was guilty of marrying out of meeting but, rather, concluded that he was guilty of fornication as had been alleged.

Two related findings of the committee would have supported this conclusion. The

first was the date of birth of Philip Dorland Junior, the first child of Philip and Elizabeth. This date was recorded as being 31 December 1777.¹⁶ By March of 1779 the child would have been over a year old and clear evidence of Philip and Elizabeth’s “fornication.” It is probable that their relationship, the pregnancy, and the birth of the child were known or suspected by members of Oswego Preparative Meeting soon after they occurred. The complaint against Philip was first submitted to the local Oswego Preparative Meeting near the end of 1778. By that time their child would have been over ten months old.

The second committee finding would have related to the marriage status of Philip and Elizabeth, and the lack of any

¹⁶ WikiTree ‘Elizabeth Bedell about1757- Dutchess County, NY’ <http://www.wikitree.com/wiki/ElizabethBedell> (accessed 9 August 2015).

indication, such as witnesses or documentation, that would have confirmed that by April of 1779 Philip and Elizabeth had married out of meeting. Such a marriage would also have been a disownable offense, but if a marriage had occurred it would have been communicated to the meeting to avoid any stigma to the family and to Philip Dorland Junior in particular. No contemporary record of marriage between Philip Dorland and Elizabeth Bedell has yet been found.

With the facts of the three items of the original complaint thus established, the committee then added the confirmation of a fourth offense: carrying a “pistole [sic] to defend himself.” The decision to disown Philip Dorland was the only one that could be reached under the circumstances, and accordingly the meeting directed that a written testimony against Dorland be drawn up. This document is the official record of the expulsion of Dorland from membership in the meeting. Under normal circumstances a copy of the written testimony would have been delivered to Dorland in person, and he would have been advised of his right to appeal or contest the action taken by the meeting. With Philip having left the area personal delivery of the testimony would not have taken place, and it is possible he never received it.

The circumstances of each individual testimony of disownment were unique, but in general shunning was not strictly practiced and disowned Quakers could continue to attend meeting for worship if they chose to do so. Members of Philip Dorland’s family, including his older brothers, remained members in good standing and continued to serve the meeting in various capacities. There was,

however, an element of public shaming in being disowned. A disownment does not come into effect until the meeting receives and approves the wording of the draft testimony against the individual. The approved version of the testimony was then read aloud at the close of the subsequent meeting for worship at the respective monthly and preparative meetings involved. This is referred to as being “read out of meeting.” In Philip Dorland’s case, the final wording of the testimony of disownment was approved in May of 1779, and the minute confirming the reading of the testimony at Nine Partners Monthly Meeting and at Oswego Preparative Meeting was recorded in June of 1779: “the friends appointed to Read the Testimony against Phillip Dorland Reported they have answered their appointment and produced the Testamony [sic] here.”¹⁷

Brief as these minute book records are, they provide a sense of the young Philip Dorland as a self-possessed individual who had not remained constrained by the practices or boundaries of his Quaker community. He comes across as his own man. Undoubtedly his disownment and departure from the area as recorded in the minutes of April 1779 was disappointing to his immediate family. No appeal of the disownment is ever recorded in the minutes of the years that follow. It would be almost fourteen years before Philip Dorland would be restored to membership at Oswego Preparative Meeting.

The minutes do not indicate why Dorland had taken to carrying a gun, specifically a pistol. In the context of the times this particular offence can be easily associated with the division of the local

¹⁷ Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, 1779-1783, 18 – 6 mo – 1779. Transcription Copyright CFHA 2014.

community into Patriot and Loyalist camps. While it is clearly established that Philip favoured the British cause, it is not clear how early his support was expressed in ways that may have put his life at risk. Some evidence does suggest that Dorland could have been actively supporting what would become the Loyalist cause as early as the time of his disownment.

In Dutchess County the Patriot cause claimed greater support and a Patriot civil administration took form and exercised authority. This civil administration attempted, to varying degrees, to make allowances for Quaker religious principles such as the refusal to swear oaths and the desire to remain neutral in the war. In areas such as Dutchess County where patriots exerted local authority Quakers were allowed to affirm allegiance to the revolutionary cause in place of swearing an oath. Additionally, a system of posting bonds against aiding the British was imposed as a means of restraining loyalist tendencies among the young adult Quaker men. Samuel Dorland was among the Quaker family heads who were required to post these specific 'Bonds' to prevent their sons taking up the loyalist cause, under pain of substantial fines if they did so.

Documentary evidence shows that Samuel Dorland, father of five sons of fighting age (his eldest son Gilbert had died in 1774) was assessed at £2200; the highest assessments were for those who had sons with the enemy. Records show that on 23 December 1780 Samuel Dorland was fined £82/10 for one son gone to the enemy.¹⁸ This could only be the "absconded" Philip Dorland, now twenty-five years old, and

disowned by Nine Partners Monthly Meeting not quite eighteen months earlier in June 1779. We can be certain that this fine was not levied against any of the older brothers as they all remained in the area and in good standing at Nine Partners Monthly Meeting. It could not have been the result of actions taken by Thomas Dorland, as another contemporary source documents the appearance of "Samuel and Thomas Dorland, both yeoman of Beekman, before the local Committee on Conspiracies" on 8 December 1781. This record details that Samuel Dorland posted a bond of £100 to ensure that Thomas, now a little more than four months after his twenty-third birthday, would not leave Beekman and Rombout Precincts.¹⁹

Although not definitive, this evidence suggests that Philip had become openly affiliated with the British cause some time before December 1780. If the Nine Partners minute reference to his having "absconded" is in fact a reference to a bond or surety levied against his father, however, it is plausible that his concern for his defence, and thus his decision to arm himself, was associated with his Loyalist sympathies. By this time war had been waged between British and Loyalist forces against their opponents in the Continental American army for months. In hindsight, it appears that Philip Dorland may not have absconded, but fled out of concern for his own safety.

The reference to taking up a pistol and absconding suggest that, as the Revolutionary War was gathering momentum, Philip Dorland was moving away from the neutral and pacifist stance of

¹⁸ Frank Doherty "A true copy of a Tax List Agreeable to an Assessment Roll of those persons that has a son or sons gone to the enemy of Beekman Precinct, Public Papers of George Clinton, 3449" *Settlers of the Beekman Patent, Dutchess County*, V1 (1990), 533.

¹⁹ Doherty "Ancient Documents, Dutchess County, 10176," *Settlers of the Beekman Patent, Dutchess County*, 538-9.

the Quakers to outright political and military support of the British cause. As noted above, Cremer relates that Dorland family history has Thomas Dorland present with British General Burgoyne at Saratoga in 1777. Although this oral history is interesting, no contemporary documentation has been found to corroborate it. It now appears that it was Philip Dorland and not Thomas who was the first of the brothers to become actively associated with the British military effort.

As noted above, Samuel Dorland posted a bond of £100 to ensure that Thomas Dorland would not leave Beekman and Rombout Precincts. Even so, Thomas did leave. Although his circumstances are different than those of his older brother Philip, it is possible that after December 1781 Thomas did not feel safe in Dutchess County. In late 1781 or early in 1782 he also left Dutchess County. With the benefit of hindsight it now seems likely that when Philip Dorland absconded in Dutchess County he and Elizabeth and Philip Dorland Junior had relocated back to the Hempstead area of Long Island as early as 1778 or early 1779.

Hempstead offered the benefits of numerous extended family members on both sides of the family. It was also an area where British/Loyalist sympathies predominated and so represented, in the early stages of the war, the safest place for citizens who were not sympathetic to the American cause. It is likely that, for a time, Thomas joined Philip and, presumably, Elizabeth and four-year old Philip Dorland Junior on Long Island. At some point Thomas and Philip both enlisted in the

Loyalist Provincial militia based on Long Island under the command of another Loyalist of Dutch descent, General Abraham Cornelius Cuyler.

Cuyler, who had been the mayor of Albany, New York in 1770, and had military experience before the revolution, had been imprisoned by patriots in 1776. He escaped and made his way to New York City. In 1777 he took part in an unsuccessful effort to advance up the Hudson River to reduce pressure on the British forces under General John Burgoyne. According to the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, "In October 1779 he was appointed lieutenant-colonel commandant of a proposed force of Loyalists, but the unit never materialized. The following August he was made colonel of a group of Loyalist militia on Long Island. By the fall of 1782 Cuyler and his family had moved to Montreal, and the same year he was appointed inspector of refugee loyalists in the Quebec City area."²⁰

No contemporary record of the activity of this militia in general or of Philip or Thomas Dorland specifically has, as yet, become available. Therefore, it is not possible to ascertain the actual experiences of either Philip or Thomas and whether or not they were participants in or witnesses to combat. It is highly probable that both men saw active service. As the war progressed skirmishes and fighting broke out on Long Island. Even the Hempstead Quaker Meeting House, according to one account, was seized and its dismantled material pressed into the war effort by Patriot forces.²¹ This would have brought the combat into the immediate area of the

²⁰ *Dictionary of Canadian Biography online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/en/index.php> (accessed 9 August 2015).

²¹ Daniel Nelson, "The Dorlands – A Loyalist Family," *Canadian Quaker History Journal* 64(1999), 41. Nelson cites Thomas Jones, *History of New York during the Revolutionary War and of the Leading Events in the Other Colonies at that Period* in stating that "A Quaker Meeting House in Hempstead, Long Island was torn down and the materials used for the war effort."

local Dorland and Bedell families. The lack of contemporary records is unfortunate as it does not allow assessment of the role that active military experience may have had in the post war spiritual and social lives of the two brothers.

The lack of Associated Loyalist Provincials records for the period on Long Island is at least partially remedied by the exact records compiled in the immediate aftermath of hostilities and the British evacuation from New York. These post-war records show that during the period of active service Philip Dorland attained the rank of lieutenant and his younger brother, Thomas, rose to the rank of sergeant. This outcome is consistent with a sequence of events which has Philip being the first of the two to become affiliated with the British cause and, therefore, achieving a longer period of service prior to the end of the revolutionary war. The clarity of these records untangles the confusing admixture of oral history and later post-war military service by Thomas Dorland as reported by both John Cremer and Arthur Dorland. They also confirm Philip's commitment to the British cause and the extent to which his personal qualities and leadership abilities resulted in a promotion to the rank of officer.

The information related to the military service of Philip Dorland stands in strong contrast with the image of him painted by Arthur Dorland and others. In the article, "The Dorlands-A Loyalist Family," by Daniel Nelson, the military service of both Philip and Thomas Dorland is acknowledged. Nelson, also a descendant of the Dorland pioneers who had settled in Adolphustown, noted the evidence that

Philip Dorland had served under Abraham Cuyler and attained the rank of Lieutenant.²² Curiously, however, Nelson echoed Arthur Dorland's conclusion: that Philip Dorland became a Loyalist because he would not fight, and that only Thomas was disowned. Nelson wrote: "Undoubtedly Tories did face some kind of persecution. Philip Dorland may have been forced to become a Loyalist by not wishing to fight while his brother Thomas did so willingly, metaphorically jumping from the Tarpeian Rock. It seemed that Thomas did not hold to his religious principles as strongly as Philip. Thomas was disowned by the Society for his active participation in the Revolution and he never repented."²³ Nelson's conclusions differ from those of Arthur Dorland in that he understands Philip Dorland to have been forced by degrees from steadfast adherence to Quaker pacifist principle to one of active military participation: "Philip Dorland would end up abandoning his pacifist principles. He served as a Lieutenant with Captain Abraham Cuyler's Corp of Associated Loyalists on Long Island."²⁴

New information about Philip Dorland's disownment from Nine Partners Monthly Meeting in April 1779 sheds light on his participation with the Associated Loyalists. Arthur Dorland, John Cremer, and Daniel Nelson contrast Thomas Dorland's willingness to fight against his brother Philip's presumed reluctance. This conclusion does align with what we now know about Philip Dorland in his early twenties. The picture that emerges is not one of a reluctant Quaker abandoning his pacifist principles. Rather, in matters of personal relationship, social behavior and,

²² Nelson, "The Dorlands –A Loyalist Family," 43.

²³ Nelson, "The Dorlands –A Loyalist Family," 43.

²⁴ Nelson, "The Dorlands –A Loyalist Family," 43.

New Light on Philip Dorland

C 2

"Return of Loyalists Embarked on Board the Transport Ships Bound for Canada *Three Sisters & Grace*," (PRO WO 60 Vol. 33 Part II).

Name	Occupation	Former Place of Residence		
Peter Van Alstine	Farmer	County of Albany		
John Huyek	Farmer	"		
John Claw	Blacksmith	"		
Daniel Hugenan	Joiner	"		
John Scherp	Taylor	"		
Leonard Conine	Taylor	"		
Henry Graham	Taylor	"		
Casper Halenbeck	Taylor	"		
Richard Dannis	Farmer	"		
Peter Lampman	Farmer	"		
John Johnston	Blacksmith	"		
William Euklar	Farmer	"		
John Driver	Farmer	"		
Frederick Lampman	Farmer	"		
Jogem Hayck	Farmer	"		
Vilokert Spring				
James Gromel		New York		
Richard Van Hoesen	Farmer	County of Albany		
Joseph Alen	Farmer	New Jersey		
Peter Van Skriver	Joiner	New York		
Cornelius Van Horn	Weaver	"		
Andrew Kittle	Blacksmith	"		
Christopher Garmen	Shoemaker	"		
William Pears	Farmer	"		
Richard Collier	Farmer	New York		
Philip Dorland	Farmer	New York		
Daniel Cole	Farmer	"		
John Melany	Farmer	"		
George Smith	Watchmaker	"		
Richard Dun	Watchmaker	New York		
James Burns	Butcher	"		
John Herry	Weaver	"		
Joseph Jawm	Butcher	"		
Stephen DeLancey	-	New York		
Allen McDonald	-	Tryen County		
Patrick Smith	-	Fort Edward		
Patrick McNeff	Merchant	Saratoga		
John Graham	Farmer	"		
Robert Jungate	Farmer		Great Britain	
Alexander Hair	Merchant		New York	
Mathew Buckley	Merchant		"	
John McGinnes	Farmer		"	
Richard McGinnes	Farmer		"	
Lodewick Stright	Farmer		New York	
Lodewick Stright Jun.	Farmer		"	
John Cole	Farmer		"	
Elias Cole	Farmer		"	
William McCare	Farmer		New York	
Countrad Van Dusen	Farmer		"	
James Green	Butcher		"	
Farreut Lewes	Farmer		"	
William Jokes	Blacksmith		New York	
Casper Van Dusen	Farmer		"	
Hannah Harries	-		"	
John Jones	Farmer		"	
Audreu Turnbull	Farmer		New York	
John Cole	Farmer		"	

1783 Ship List for Three Sisters & Grace from NY to Quebec.

Source: Return of Loyalists Embarked on Board the Transport ships Bound for Canada, Public

ultimately, in military activity, Philip Dorland demonstrated no reluctance to follow his own head and his own heart. This does not bespeak an enthusiasm for war or military activity, but it does signify an individual who had confidence in his own judgement and capabilities. Rather than abandoning his own principles, the evidence suggests that during his early years Philip Dorland was not convinced of Quaker principles or way of life. While the two brothers may have held differing degrees of sympathy for military service, there is no actual evidence available to suggest that Philip was reluctant to take up arms. In the end both Philip and Thomas took this course of action. Both would have been equally subject to disownment. Philip could not be disowned for his military activity, however, as he had already

been disowned. This earlier disownment appears to have been obscured in the Dorland family traditions, and to have led to the erroneous conclusion that Thomas was disowned because of his willingness to fight but that Philip had somehow retained his membership due to his reluctance to fight.

Thomas Dorland's disownment is actually less clear than has been historically claimed. Although both John Cremer and Arthur Dorland state unequivocally that Thomas was disowned, neither provides any specific reference or source document as evidence of that event. If Thomas was disowned, it would have been the result of a complaint submitted to the Oswego Preparative Meeting as happened in Philip's case. This complaint would then have been referred to Nine Partners Monthly Meeting

for further investigation. No record of such an action is found in the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting Men's Minutes from January 1779 onwards. It is possible that Thomas may have been disowned earlier but the earlier minute books have not been examined for this article.

At the conclusion of the 1783 Treaty of Paris, the members of the Loyalist Association together with their families and other Loyalists were evacuated from New York. After sailing from New York up the east coast and the Saint Lawrence River and surviving the winter in a refugee camp they eventually settled in Prince Edward County and in the vicinity of present day Adolphustown. This group of Loyalists resulted in an early Upper Canadian population consisting mainly of disbanded militia and officers. British administrators made explicit plans to ensure that the strong relationships and social rank formed during the war would survive in Upper Canada. As a result many of Philip Dorland's military colleagues and shipmates during transport acquired positions of political prominence in the civilian administration.

As Loyalists who had served in the Loyalist Association under Abraham Cuyler, both Philip and Thomas were entitled to large grants of land under the policy adopted by the Commissioner. An extensive body of documentation related to the land petitions submitted by Thomas and Philip and other petitioners exists. Many of the relevant documents are in the collection known as the Haldimand papers. Genealogist and historian of the Bay of Quinte area Randy Saylor has extensively

researched the contents of the Haldimand papers, and easy public access to them is provided on his website.²⁵

Post-war records of the British administration confirm the military rank attained by Thomas and Philip Dorland while they had been on Long Island. These records also call into question statements made by Cremer and repeated by others concerning the confiscation of land owned by the brothers during the Revolutionary War. Randy Saylor notes that neither Dorland brother submitted a claim for losses suffered as a consequence of their Loyalist affiliation. This strongly suggests that neither brother had owned any land in Dutchess County or elsewhere in New York. The brothers were well aware of the compensation available to those who had had land confiscated. Saylor notes that although Thomas Dorland submitted no claim for losses, he did provide a sworn affidavit on behalf of claimant Paul Huff for the loss of leased land in New York and horses, cattle sheep and hogs that were sold by the Commissioners of Forfeitures.²⁶

The years following the initial settlement of the Loyalists in 1784 were spent transforming raw wilderness into functioning farms and communities. When the settlers first landed on the shores of the Bay of Quinte in present day Lennox and Addington County on the north shore, and Prince Edward County on the south shore, most of the land was still in its natural state. The settlers at this time were mostly male, and they set to the task of clearing plots of land for the construction of the first generation of habitations. Although both Philip and Thomas had spouses in

²⁵ Randy Saylor's website is: freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~saylorchowbray/.

²⁶ Loyalist Claims for Losses: The Second Report of The Bureau of Archives For the Province of Ontario, Subtitle: United Empire Loyalists, Enquiry into the Losses and Services in Consequence of Their Loyalty, Evidence in the Canadian Claims, 1904, Alexander Fraser.

1784, the military ration records for Cataraqui (later Adolphustown) for that year show Philip drawing a single ration for himself, but Thomas drawing one each of a man's and a woman's ration respectively. The presence of Thomas Dorland's wife in this first year of settlement was sufficiently noteworthy that her presence was recorded on the ration report with a notation "woman on the land." The records also indicate the magnitude of the effort required to render the land habitable: each of the two men had managed to clear less than two acres on their respective lots when the record was made.²⁷

The initial assignment of lots was by draw based on seniority of military rank in the now disbanded militia. On a higher level of organization, however, the British military administration had pre-assigned blocks of land which were made available for selection only among specific regimental groups and by original country of ethnic origin (English, Scottish, Irish, Dutch, etc.) After almost five years of clearing the land, an official record of the acreages that had been granted to the Adolphustown and Prince Edward County Loyalist militia officers was compiled 24 February 1789. The document indicates that Philip Dorland had been granted 500 acres for his service as a Lieutenant serving under Abraham Cuyler, and one hundred acres as family land.²⁸

The amount of land initially granted to Philip Dorland and his fellow officers in 1783 was less than that granted to officers of equal rank who had served in the disbanded 84th Regiment of the regular

British Army. This inequality was addressed in a document dated 17 January 1791, which named the respective militia officers who were to receive additional land grants to bring their compensation into line with that of regular officers. It identifies "Philip Dorland, a Lieutenant in *ditto* [Cuylers Corps, associated Loyalists] and allocates him an additional land grant of 1400 acres.²⁹ This additional grant brought the combined military service and family land grants allocated to Philip Dorland to 2000 acres. To put this grant into perspective, there are 640 acres in a square mile. In aggregate, the 2000 acres allocated to Philip by January of 1791 represent an area of over three square miles. Other officers of similar rank received similar quantities of land. This policy created an entire class of former militia officers who had effectively attained significant local wealth as landowners. By comparison, the amount of land allocated to Loyalists who had not served in the British forces was two hundred acres. As a non-commissioned officer Thomas Dorland did not receive as much land as Philip, but he also attained local prominence. The military land grants lent themselves to a nascent political structure of growing communities largely populated by those who had shown leadership and had attained higher rank within the Loyalist militia while on Long Island. These included the Dorland brothers, Philip and Thomas, and Peter Van Alstine.

The year after Philip Dorland received the additional fourteen hundred acre land grant, and eight years after the landing of

²⁷ Upper Canada Land Board Minutes and Records, 1765-1804, RG1 L4, LAC, Vol 7, Mecklenburg District, 81-82 and information repeated on 188, C-14027.

²⁸ Upper Canada Land Board Minutes and Records, 1765-1804, RG1 L4, LAC, Vol 7, Mecklenburg District, 81-82 and information repeated on 188, C-14027.

²⁹ Upper Canada Land Board Minutes and Records, 1765-1804, RG1 L4, LAC, Vol 7, Mecklenburg District, 227-8, C-14027.

the Loyalists, Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe issued a proclamation establishing the first legislative assembly of Upper Canada and the first elections to that body. Philip Dorland was among those who stood for election. In his article "The Dorlands-A Loyalist Family," Nelson interprets the events that followed:

Adolphustown township was part of Lennox and Addington County but for the purposes of the election, the township was attached to the county of Prince Edward. Philip was elected as the representative for this county. He was one of 16 members elected in the early autumn of 1792. These members met in Newark (later Niagara) on September 18 and continued meeting until October 18. Unfortunately, Philip had returned to his Quaker roots after the Revolution and as such was bound by a religious belief that swearing oaths was wrong....

...Since he refused to swear an oath of allegiance, the House unanimously voted him incompetent to serve. A new election was called and, ironically, Phillip's friend Peter Van Alstine was elected in his place.

In the end, it does not matter whether or not Phillip [sic] served a full term of office in the first Legislative Assembly. Surely the significance is that Phillip was the first to be elected in that fledgling martial community. He was respected enough to be elected despite his pacifist principles in a community consisting of many people who had so recently fought in the American Revolution with him. Again, Phillip suffered for his

conscience as he had during the War and was not allowed to serve his fellow citizens. Like many people, the Dorlands were forced into responding to the Revolution but the Dorland story diverges from the norm because of the filter of religious belief. It would seem that Phillip and his wider family were dedicated to a sense of religious and civil responsibility. That responsibility had ramifications that resulted in refugee status for some Dorlands. They ended up in the wilderness and had to begin their lives again.³⁰

Dorland's refusal to swear the oath of allegiance in September 1792 does indicate, as Nelson states, a return by Philip to an active expression of the Quaker testimony against the swearing of oaths. It is not clear, however, that his election to the assembly represented acceptance of, or respect for, Quaker pacifist principles by the voters. At the time of his election Philip was still a disowned Quaker and there was, as yet, no local meeting to promulgate awareness of Quaker practice among those unfamiliar with the faith. Arguably his local prominence as a landholder, derived as it was from his military service, figured more prominently in his electoral success. It is noteworthy that Dorland had not declined the additional land grant for military service allocated to him only the previous year. A devout Quaker fully committed to the principles of the faith would have been expected to disassociate himself from the land gained by virtue of military service. Dorland did not do so in 1791.

Nelson's account of Philip Dorland's response to the requirement of swearing an

³⁰ Nelson, "The Dorlands -A Loyalist Family," 46-47.

oath to sit in the assembly conveys the sense that the incident resulted in a personal epiphany and was a watershed moment in his Quaker experience. The experience at the Legislative Assembly appears to act as a trigger for the release of sentiments which Dorland may have privately harboured for some time. His first born son, Philip Dorland Junior, had turned fourteen years old and had been joined by younger siblings. Dorland appears to have acquired a new-found respect for the Quaker values and ordered way of life of his own upbringing. If Philip Dorland had at some point privately come to consider himself to be a Quaker once again, then the incident at the Legislative Assembly had the effect of making his Quaker principles a matter of public record. This, in turn, apparently brought Dorland to the realization that his public statements of belief were in fundamental contradiction with his status as a disowned Quaker.

Less than three months after this experience, and over thirteen years after being disowned, Philip Dorland initiated the process of being reinstated into membership at Oswego Preparative Meeting and Nine Partners Monthly Meeting. This required him to submit a written acknowledgement and condemnation of his errant behavior as cited in the original complaint of 1778. On 12 December 1792 Philip wrote his acknowledgement, addressed to the Monthly Meeting to be held at Nine Partners only one week later. Despite this extremely short time interval, the minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meeting held on 19 December 1792 recorded the receipt of the acknowledgement. This strongly

suggests that Philip Dorland travelled back to Dutchess County and delivered the acknowledgement to family members in person. As noted in the December minutes, the acknowledgement was presented to Nine Partners Monthly Meeting by Oswego Preparative Meeting as was the case when the original complaint against Dorland had been brought forward. There is a hint of surprise in the December 1792 minutes which recorded the receipt of his acknowledgement:

Oswego Preparative Meeting forwarded to this an acknowledgement from Philip Dorland Condemning Divers Disorders for which he was some time since Disowned which after being considered appoints Silvanus Gardner, Lophar Green, Tripp Mosher & Isaac Thorn to visit him on that account & report to next meeting their sense of the Disposition of his Mind.”³¹

The time between the December 1792 and January 1793 sessions of Nine Partners Monthly Meeting was a relatively short twenty-seven days. That the appointed committee was able to fulfil its responsibilities in this short time and bring a satisfactory report is further evidence that Dorland had travelled to Dutchess County and met locally with the committee members. The minutes of the January 1793 monthly meeting recorded the actual text of Dorland’s acknowledgement, its acceptance and the direction that the minute of acceptance be read at Oswego Preparative Meeting as follows:

³¹ Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meetings, 1790-1797, 19 – 12 mo – 1792. [Transcription Copyright Canadian Friends Historical Association (CFHA), 2014.] www.cfha.info.

The friends appointed to Visit Philip Dorland on account of his acknowledgement report they have visited him to a good Degree of satisfaction believing there was sincerity in his acknowledgement under consideration thereon accepts it which is as follows Viz

~~ To the Monthly Meeting to be held at Ninepartners 19th of 12th Mo 1792 ~~

Dear Friends

Whereas I have had a birth right amongst you and by not giving heed to the Divine ----- Monitor have widely deviated from the principles of Truth which led me into divers disorders such as departing from Plainness [sic], keeping Company with one not of our Society & Committing [sic] Fornication with her (that is now my wife) and also took up arms for my defense which misconduct brought a blemish on Truth which I am sorry for & do heartily Condemn & I do desire you to pass by the same & receive me under your Care~
12th 12Mo 1792 Philip Dorland

Lawrence Dean & Israel Titus are appointed to Inform him thereof, also to read it at the Close of a first Day meeting at Oswego & report..."³²

The wording and format of this acknowledgement is typical of the time. Philip acknowledged most of the errors cited in the initial complaint only, without any reference to having formally taken up

arms or having served in the British military forces on Long Island. It appears from the wording of his acknowledgement that he did not have a copy of the original letter of disownment available for reference, for he confesses to an element of misconduct, "departing from Plainness," which was not part of the initial complaint while omitting reference to an element, "wagering money on a horse race" which was. This acknowledgement also clarifies and confirms that Philip Dorland and Elizabeth Bedell were, indeed, married, although no particulars are provided.

With these two brief minutes Philip Dorland, the prodigal son, was restored to full membership in the Religious Society of Friends. These minutes are among the very few in the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting records where Upper Canada is mentioned, and are the first appearance of Philip Dorland's name since he had been disowned. The return of Philip Dorland to membership re-established a formal relationship between him and the meeting. The significance of this relationship cannot be overstated. Up until this point there had been no recorded relationship between Nine Partners Monthly Meeting and any former Quaker or Quaker in good standing in Upper Canada. One earlier reference in the Men's Monthly Meeting minutes of April 1789 cites a request from Jonathan Dorland, a nephew of Philip and Thomas, for a travelling minute to Upper Canada. This suggests members of the Dorland family maintained contact with their Upper Canadian kin. The travelling minute was issued but, when it was returned in November that year, no report of meetings or visits with individuals was recorded.³³ Even six months *after* Philip Dorland was

³² Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meetings, 1790-1797, 18 – 1 mo – 1793.

³³ Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meetings 1790-1797, 18 – 4 mo – 1789.

accepted back into membership, the Nine Partners Women's Meeting summarily disowned a woman, Metura Bowerman, for marrying out, relieving themselves of their duty to treat with her because she had relocated to Upper Canada, not far from Philip Dorland.³⁴

The treatment of Metura Bowerman indicates that, at the time, members of Nine Partners Monthly Meeting did not consider themselves capable, due to the great distance involved, of providing full care and oversight in Upper Canada. Dorland's return to membership in the Religious Society of Friends seems to have provided the focal point for others in his community, both non-Quakers and former Quakers, to coalesce. The reference in the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting minute book to Philip Dorland in January 1793 is actually the first of only two records in this book to a local Quaker in this area of Upper Canada in 1793. The second reference is to the disowned Metura Bowerman. In the years that follow, however, references to a growing list of membership applications and Dorland family connections related to Cataraqui, Adolphustown and Ernesttown began to appear in the Nine Partners minutes. Few references appear in 1794, but the Upper Canadian community, which acquired the

oversight of Nine Partners as a result of the link to Philip Dorland, grew the following year. A number of men and women from the area around Adolphustown requested membership in Nine Partners Monthly Meeting in July 1795.³⁵ Additional requests from local women were forwarded to the monthly meeting in August 1795, including one from Philip's wife, Elizabeth.³⁶

At the July 1795 monthly meeting a committee of Nine Partners men and women friends was appointed to visit Upper Canada to assess the requests. As the minutes of the subsequent months and years reveal, the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting encountered great difficulty in effectively dealing with and administering the requests originating from the Adolphustown group associated with Philip Dorland. The evidence suggests that Nine Partners MM was willing to accept Philip Dorland back into membership but may have been reluctant to become more extensively involved with him and the group in Upper Canada. The 1789 request by Jonathan Dorland for a traveling minute, for example, was approved and dealt with in the same meeting in which it was raised. By comparison, a similar request put forward by Enoch Dorland, Philip's older brother, and his traveling companion,

³⁴ Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meetings 1790-1797, 17 – 7 mo – 1793. "...The womens meeting informs this that Metura Bowerman formerly Bull has married out of Unity of friends and Likewise she has removed to Catarockway [Cataraqui] as she is out of the reasonable reach of this meeting to Labour with her they are easy that she be Disowned..."

³⁵ Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meetings, 1790-1797, 15 – 7 mo – 1795. "Was Presented to this meeting an acknowledgement from Peter Irish, whe [sic] was formerly disowned for marrying out of the unity of Friends,- As also Two requestes [sic] to be admitted members with us from persons residing in Upper Canada Viz-Aaron Brewer & Daniel Way." The women's meeting minutes for the same month record applications from Weight Ferris, Catharine Ferris, Elizabeth Brewer wife of Aron Brewer, and Mary Ireish [sic] wife of Peter Ireish.

³⁶ Minutes of Nine Partners Women's Monthly Meetings, 1794-1811, 20 – 8 mo – 1795. [Transcription Copyright (CFHA), 2014.] "...Three requests came to this meeting from the Women living in Upper Canada whose Names are Elizabeth Dorland Isabella Wanskever and Lydia Blunt."

Garret Burtis, in August 1794 was approved in the same meeting but a committee of four was appointed to draft the letter. The letter was not actually produced and signed until mid-October.³⁷ The handling of membership requests in July 1795 was similar.

The committee appointed in July 1795 to visit Upper Canada and meet with the membership applicants was large, consisting of fifteen individuals in all: nine men and six women. Of the individuals named, two men and one woman were members of the extended Dorland family and one, Enoch Dorland, was an older brother of Philip and Thomas Dorland. Despite this promising start in July 1795 and a report of Adolphustown Quakers received in August that “the few friends there meet together & some others & sit down for worship” no visit was performed during 1795.³⁸ In January 1796 the committee was made larger by the appointment of two more women: Rebeckah Palmer and Phebe Underhill. With the appointment of this committee, the frequency of minute book entries referencing Upper Canada temporarily increased, but little actual progress was achieved.

Finally it was reported to the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting in September 1796 that members of the committee were to visit Upper Canada.³⁹ The report of the visiting appointees was submitted in November 1796 when the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting accepted the acknowledgement of Peter Irish and the membership requests of Aaron Brewer,

Cornelius Blount and Daniel Way.⁴⁰ That same month the Women’s Meeting accepted membership requests from Catharine Ferris, Elizabeth Brewer, Mary Irish [sic], Lydia Blunt and Elizabeth

Dorland. Requests from Waight Ferris and Isabele Vankever were deferred a month.⁴¹

Philip Dorland is not mentioned by name in any of the references to Upper Canada during this period, although it is highly likely that the meetings for worship reported in August 1795 were taking place at his house. His presence in Adolphustown as a member of Oswego Preparative and Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, however, defined and established the meeting affiliation for the entire community. Without his membership in the Dutchess County meetings, there would have been no reason for the Upper Canadian community to come under the care of Nine Partners Monthly Meeting. Another, closer, meeting would have been a more logical choice. Uncertainty concerning the propriety of admitting the Adolphustown applicants into membership under the care of Nine Partners Monthly Meeting may have been a factor in the year-long delay in dealing with these requests.

The challenges of the typical Quaker pattern of close personal visitation and oversight of members and meetings required the adoption of a number of measures to address the distance from Upper Canada to the New York monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings. During the Yearly Meeting Session held on 1 June 1797, New York Yearly Meeting received a

³⁷ Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meetings, 1790-1797, 20 – 8 mo – 1794, 17 – 9 – 1794, 15 – 10 - 1794.

³⁸ Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meetings, 1790-1797, 19 – 8 mo – 1795.

³⁹ Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meetings, 1790-1797, 14 – 9 mo – 1796.

⁴⁰ Minutes of Nine Partners Monthly Meetings 1790-1797, 16 – 11 mo – 1796.

⁴¹ Minutes of Nine Partners Women’s Monthly Meetings, 1794-1811, 16 – 11 mo – 1796, [Transcription Copyright (CFHA), 2014].

report of a committee appointed to “the consideration of the situation of the Members of our Religious Society in Upper Canada...” The report recommended that members of the Yearly Meeting Committee visit the friends in Upper Canada in conjunction with additional committee members drawn from Nine Partners Quarterly Meeting. The report also recommended that the visiting committee be authorized to act “for the like purpose and being impressed with a belief that there would be a propriety [sic] and safety [sic] in granting those friends the privilege [sic] of holding a preparative Meeting and to be Furnished with a copy of our Discipline....”⁴²

Although Nine Partners Quarterly Meeting acted on this report and appointed the required delegates (Garret Burtis and Enoch Dorland among them) in August 1797, the actual visit did not occur until the following year. A total of five committee members travelled to Adolphustown and attended a meeting arranged for the purpose of establishing a local preparative meeting. This was duly recorded in the meeting minutes: “Having requested that friends might meet in order for opening or [sic] preparative meeting agreeable to the above directions they accordingly met at the House of Philip Dorlands in Adolphustown in Upper Canada the 17th of 9th mo. 1798 [erroneously transcribed as 1790] And after a period of working together wherein several suitable communications were offered and the divine presence measureably [sic] the said Meeting opened and appointed Philip Dorland Clerk.”⁴³

Philip Dorland’s appointment as clerk

must have represented another watershed and the culmination of a long, difficult, and improbable journey. Almost fifteen years earlier he had been a young disowned Quaker refugee on Long Island with a small family and uncertain prospects. In the intervening years he and his wife Elizabeth had created a substantial home and had achieved a significant degree of social, political, and economic success. Equally remarkable is Dorland’s spiritual journey. However dormant the seeds of Quaker faith and practice may have been in the past, they had emerged at a critical time. As clerk of the fledgling Adolphustown Preparative Meeting, Philip Dorland set an example for the meeting members and for those unfamiliar with Quaker principles and practices. He appears to have been able to maintain personal respect among the many former British military officers and administrators who had taken up local political prominence in what was largely the garrison town of Kingston, while simultaneously promulgating Quaker membership.

As Daniel Nelson and others have noted, Dorland did not retreat from secular and political engagement after his experience at the Legislative Assembly in 1792, and his return to Quaker principles. He held public office as the first town clerk of Adolphustown in 1792, and remained a prominent citizen with close family and social connections to his former military colleagues who made up a large part of the local civil administration. One can see these connections in play in the account of Elias Hicks, appointed as a member of a second New York Yearly Meeting committee delegated to assess the suitability of

⁴² Adolphustown Monthly Meeting Minutes, 1798-1813, 17 – 9 mo – 1798, [Transcription Copyright The Trustees of the Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends.]

⁴³ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting Minutes 1798-1813, 17 – 9 mo – 1798.

establishing a Canada Half Years Meeting. During his 1803 visit to Adolphustown and Prince Edward County, Hicks attended many meetings held to acquaint local residents with the nature and essence of Quaker worship. These meetings were held in private homes and in public inns and taverns throughout the area. The meeting in Kingston was exceptional, however, for its venue, as Hicks noted:

On Sixth Day, we attended Friends preparative Meeting at Kingston. And on Seventh Day had a meeting in the town of Kingston at the courthouse – the first friends meeting ever held at that place. The people appeared much unacquainted with the order of our meetings. Some of the principal men seemed at a loss how to behave themselves in the time of silence, but during the communication they were generally quiet and solemn. And Truth arose into victory, furnishing Doctrine clothed with the divine power, carrying full conviction to the minds of most present.⁴⁴

During some part of his tour Elias Hicks was hosted at the home of John Dorland. Hicks was familiar with the extended Dutchess County Dorland family, but he makes no mention of Philip Dorland during this excursion to Upper Canada.

John Dorland, another older brother of Philip and Thomas, is known to have relocated from Dutchess County to Adolphustown as early as 1796. He joined a small but growing nucleus of Dorland and related family members who came under the care of the local meeting once it was established. In early 1803 their younger

sister and local resident, Letty, who had been disowned for marrying Reuben Bedell, the brother of Philip's wife, Elizabeth, was readmitted into membership in Nine Partners Monthly Meeting. The initial Adolphustown Preparative meeting had few friends with lengthy Quaker experience to call upon. In his account of the establishment of Adolphustown Preparative Meeting, Arthur Dorland does not comment on the composition of the newly created meeting. It is telling, however, that two of the overseers appointed at the September 1798 opening session of the Preparative Meeting were new to the Society of Friends. Appointed with John Dorland were Cornelius Blunt and Aaron Brewer, both of whom had only recently been accepted into membership. This was a young meeting with few "weighty" Friends. Interestingly, the initial administrative appointments of the Preparative meeting were all individuals who were family members or had established relationships with Philip Dorland.

The example of Quaker faith and practice that Philip Dorland provided following his experience at the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada in 1792, and his subsequent restoration to membership, set a solid foundation for the rapid growth of the local Quaker community. The Adolphustown Preparative Meeting that was established in 1798 became a Monthly Meeting only three years later in 1801, indicating its growth in size and maturity. Philip Dorland was among those present in January 1810 when, once again, committee representatives from New York and Philadelphia Yearly Meetings attended to establish the opening of Canada Half-Years Meeting in a meeting house which once

⁴⁴ Elias Hicks, *The Journal of Elias Hicks*, ed. Paul Buckley (San Francisco, CA: Inner Light Books, 2004), 114.



UEL monument at Adolphustown, 2015.

Photograph courtesy Jane Lovell, Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Historical Society.

stood at Bowerman's Hill near present day Wellington in Prince Edward County. When Philip Dorland passed away near Wellington on 18 December 1814 another conflict between the United States and Britain was just concluding. This time, however, Philip Dorland had built a legacy of peaceful Quaker witness and example. Exactly twenty-two years and six days had transpired since Philip Dorland, the Quaker prodigal son, had penned his letter of acknowledgement. In that relatively short span of time the Quaker presence he had planted in Upper Canada had grown to a Monthly Meeting, including four preparative meetings. Viewed in this light, the experience at the Legislative Assembly may be seen for what it apparently was: a significant incident and a seminal moment. It is the legacy of a life subsequently lived

in accordance with Quaker principles, however, which is the greater example that Philip Dorland provided, and why he may deservedly be considered the patriarch of the Quakers in eastern Upper Canada.

Summary and Conclusions

Arthur Dorland illustrates the Quaker testimony against the swearing of oaths by citing the example of Philip Dorland's refusal to swear an oath of allegiance, thereby forfeiting the seat he had just won in the first Legislative Assembly in Upper Canada. Dorland and subsequent writers such as Daniel Nelson appear to over emphasize this experience. Neither Dorland nor Nelson appears to have been aware of Philip Dorland's 1779 disownment, and that it was only after this 1792 event that he returned to Quaker membership. New documentary evidence indicates that Dorland's experience in 1792 was a single incident in a much longer account of Philip Dorland's Quaker experience and spiritual journey. Arthur Dorland complicates the issue in distinguishing between 'Quakers' and 'Loyalists' in terms that are mutually exclusive. He wrote:

The Quakers who came to Adolphustown, as far as available records indicate, were all members in good standing in the Society of Friends and, since most of their leading members came from New York State, they were under the authority of New York Yearly Meeting. Therefore, when in 1798 a Preparative Meeting was first established in the house of Philip Dorland in Adolphustown there is nothing to indicate that there had been any irregularity in the previous

standing of its members, which would not have been the case if they had been “Loyalists.”⁴⁵

With greatly improved access to records we can see that the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting Minute books record no Quakers who could be verified to be in good standing among *the initial group* of refugees who landed at Adolphustown in 1784. A recorded Quaker presence in that location came into being only after Philip Dorland acknowledged his disownment and was returned to membership in the Society. Arthur Dorland also seems to have concluded there must have been a particular Quaker understanding of ‘Loyalist’ which was deemed to be a cause for disownment, but exactly what that understanding was comprised of was not reflected in the Quaker discipline of the day. Being a ‘Loyalist’ either by reason of political choice or persecution or accident of geography was never cited as an offense to Quaker discipline. Swearing an oath of allegiance was an offense to Quaker discipline. Dorland has implied or assumed that ‘Loyalists’ had, by definition, sworn an oath of allegiance and therefore could not be Quakers in good standing. This view does not take into adequate consideration the cases of spouses or dependents or Quakers like Philip Dorland who had been disowned for reasons unrelated to any status as a ‘Loyalist’. All letters of acknowledgement recorded at Nine Partners Monthly Meeting from former Quakers in Upper Canada between 1784 and 1798 cite typical errors such as marrying out or fighting as the cause of disownment. No acknowledgements cite swearing an oath or being a Loyalist as a cause of disownment. The standing of

those inhabitants of Upper Canada who were former Quakers from 1784 onwards, as far as the Nine Partners records indicate, bears no relationship to their status or identity as Loyalists. Arthur Dorland’s statement that “there is nothing to indicate that there had been any irregularity in the previous standing of its members, which would not have been the case if they had been ‘Loyalists’” appears to have been based on the premise that Quakers who were ‘Loyalists’ had, as noted above, sworn an oath of allegiance and therefore been disowned or not in good standing. While this may have been hypothetically true evidence that this actually occurred to Quaker or former Quaker members of the 1784 settlers is lacking.

Philip Dorland acquired extensive land grants as a result of his military service. Some entitlements to land grants survived him and were pursued by his sons and daughters. It appears that the stance taken by contemporary Quakers with respect to these entitlements was similar to the approach taken to acknowledgements of error for marrying out. Upon receipt and acceptance of a suitable acknowledgement, the offending Friend could be restored into membership without divesting the acquired land. Philip Dorland’s disownment preceded, and was not related to, his military activity. When he acknowledged the errors related to his disownment, he was restored to membership. He was not required to relinquish any of the benefits, such as his land grants, that might have accrued as the result of disownable offences committed during the period he was not in membership. The acquisition by Quakers of various categories of land that became available in early Upper Canada was the source of some controversy among

⁴⁵ Dorland, *The Quakers in Canada*, 51-52.

the Quaker community. This subject was one of the first concerns dealt with at the opening session of Canada Half Years Meeting in January of 1810. Although Philip Dorland was present at this opening session, the land grants he held and the means by which he acquired them may have figured in the fact that he was not named to the committee appointed to examine the issue.

Dorland's entanglement in the issues related to military participation during the Revolutionary War has made it easy for historians to employ too narrow a focus when examining the facts of his life and particularly his Quaker experience in Upper Canada. Both Arthur Dorland and Daniel Nelson express a point of view that Philip Dorland either never fought or, at best, was a reluctant warrior created by external circumstances. We now know that the former view is not accurate, and the latter view does not appear to take into consideration that Dorland had been disowned for reasons not related to actual military service. Despite the unquakerly aspects of this phase of Philip Dorland's life there is no need to apologize for the military activity he participated in. Rather, the qualities of leadership that earned Philip Dorland personal respect among his military peers later acted to facilitate respect for his spiritual leadership and the Quaker principles expressed by him and his small group. In this sense, Philip Dorland was able to utilize some aspect of his personal credibility as a bridge between the two very different social orders he inhabited. This would not have been as easily achieved had he not spent time in each respective camp.

The nature of historical writing has undergone significant change with the development and availability of new technologies. While it was acceptable for historical writing during the time of Arthur

Dorland to provide a loosely differentiated blend of established facts and unsubstantiated family tradition, these practices introduced both errors and corresponding incorrect interpretations into the written record. New access to original records has demonstrated the importance of re-examination and verification of the earlier histories. It has also further developed interest in accurate and complete historical records, and has facilitated greater dialogue among students of Canadian Quaker history.

One final conclusion can be drawn concerning Philip Dorland: his full role in the establishment of the Quaker community in eastern Upper Canada is only now becoming apparent. In the same way that the name Timothy Rogers is associated with the establishment of the Yonge Street Quakers, and that of Peter Lossing with the Norwich community, so too can Philip Dorland be celebrated as a founder of Friends in Adolphustown, Prince Edward County and beyond. The military period of his life is unique among those considered Canadian Quaker founders, but when the entirety of his experience is considered the pervasive influence and presence of his Quaker upbringing is eloquently revealed. It is hoped that this summary of the new light concerning Philip Dorland will allow us to identify more closely with the human particulars of his experience. This will include a closer identification with his attributes as a maturing young adult, and also the spiritual growth and dedication to the prospering of Truth that he demonstrated in his later years.