

IN MEMORIAM

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JOHN RUTHERFORD LAND

In the recent death of John Rutherford Land, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, Shreveport has lost one of its outstanding citizens and lawyers. He was a descendant of a colonial line of ancestors and an outstanding family of distinguished lawyers. He was the youngest son of Thomas Thompson Land and Mary Elizabeth Dillingham Land. His father was born in Tennessee in 1815 and subsequently moved to the State of Mississippi where he began the practice of law and served one term in the Legislature of that State. His father moved to Shreveport in 1846 where again he practiced his profession until he was elected a member of the Supreme Court of this State where he served from 1858 to 1862. His older brother, the late Justice Alfred Dillingham Land, was also a member of that high tribunal from 1903 to 1917. John Rutherford Land was born in Shreveport in 1863 and was educated at Thatcher's Institute in Shreveport and at Washington and Lee University of Virginia. He was admitted to the Bar in 1884 and practiced his profession for four years when he was elected to the State Legislature. In 1892 he was elected District Attorney of Caddo Parish and served for twelve years. In 1912 he was elected District Judge of Caddo Parish and held that office until 1921 when he was elected to the Supreme Court of this State, becoming the third member of his family to sit on that Bench. He was re-elected in November, 1928, and was an active and outstanding member of that Court continuously to the date of his death, April 18, 1941.

In October, 1896, Justice Land was married to Miss Willie Armistead of Mississippi who survives him, together with a son, -

John Rutherford Land, Jr., and a daughter, Mrs. G. B. Triplett, a grandson, John R. Land, III, and a sister, Mrs. James Hollingsworth, Jackson, Mississippi. He is also survived by a sister-in-law, Mrs. D. T. Land, four nieces, Mrs. Edward Nield, Mrs. G. C. Nesbitt, Sr., Mrs. T. S. Serpell and Mrs. T. H. Scovell, and two nephews, James L. Land and G. C. Nesbitt, Jr.

His public life extended over forty years as legislator, prosecutor and judge. Brilliant, able and energetic, he was an outstanding prosecuting attorney and successfully prosecuted some of the most celebrated criminal cases in the history of this Parish. He was considered an authority on criminal law and his first opinion as a member of the Supreme Court was in a criminal case. His work on the Bench is well known to the members of the legal profession, and like most men of a brilliant and versatile type of mind, he was sometimes charged with reaching his conclusions too hastily and before full consideration of the law and facts. It is admitted, however, that when such decision was rendered if an application for rehearing was made, he usually reached the correct conclusion and did not hesitate to overrule his former opinion. His opinions in the Supreme Court grace volumes of our reports from 1921 to 1941, volumes 149 to 197, inclusive. His decisions were characterized by brevity and distinctness and a rare lucidity of statement supported by apt and pertinent authorities. He had an attractive personality, a keen sense of humor, making him a charming companion and interesting conversationalist. He had no outside interests but gave himself entirely to his profession and to the discharge of his duties as a judge.

We are sure that this Bar will unhesitatingly agree that Justice Land was a man whose memory it is a privilege and a delight to honor.

On behalf of the Shreveport Bar Association, we present this memorial and move that same be inscribed upon the minutes of this Association and that a copy be sent the members of his family.

*John B. Fines*  
*Henry J. Hester*  
*E. W. Hester*