

## Mary G. and Edward R. Landon Papers

1836-1841

1 file (0.1 linear feet)

Call no.: MS 038 bd

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A native of Guilford, Conn., Edward Ruggles Landon emigrated to the Michigan Territory after graduating from Yale (1833) and receiving legal training in a New Haven law office. His time in the west, however, would prove difficult. Settling first in Detroit and then Tecumseh, Landon bore the full brunt of financial hardship, and after marrying in 1837 and losing both his wife and infant son the next year, he returned home to Guilford. Landon went on to enjoy a prominent career as attorney and judge of the New Haven County Probate Court.

The Landon collection consists entirely of typed transcripts of letters written by Mary Griswold Landon to her son Edward, during the few years he spent in Michigan. Filled with news of day to day life in Guilford, family and friends, domestic duties, financial challenges, and the occasional intervention of politics and national affairs, the letters are both a reflection of Edward's experiences in the west and Mary's strong personality and attitudes toward family and life in nineteenth-century Connecticut.

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## Background on Mary G. and Edward R. Landon

Born in Guilford, Conn. on May 31, 1813 (sometimes recorded as 1812), Edward Ruggles Landon was the son of Nathaniel Ruggles Landon (1784-1851), a prosperous merchant, and his wife Mary Griswold (1786-1871), and the grandson of the patriot and Revolutionary veteran David Landon. Having received his bachelor's degree at Yale (1833) and studied law at an office in New Haven, Edward looked westward for his fortune, relocating first to Detroit and later to the small town of Tecumseh. The timing of his move to the Michigan Territory, however, was less than fortunate, coinciding with an economic downturn and the financial panic of 1837 as well as some personal misfortune. In 1837 Landon married a young woman from Guilford, Anna Lay (1817-1838), and brought her west, only to lose both her and their infant son the next fall.

Recovering from his tragedy, Landon returned home to Guilford in December 1838 and built a successful life for himself, working as an attorney, president of the Guilford Savings Bank, and for thirty-five years, as a judge on the Probate Court of New Haven County, and in 1871, marrying for a second time to Parnel Clarissa Hotchkiss (1819-1886). Landon died at the age of 70 on July 25, 1883, and is buried in Guilford's Alderbrook Cemetery.

## Scope of collection

The Landon collection consists entirely of typed transcripts of letters written by Mary Griswold Landon to her son Edward, probably made in the early twentieth century. Written during Landon's brief years in Michigan, Mary's letters are filled with news of day to day life in Guilford, family and friends, domestic duties, financial challenges, and the occasional intervention of politics and national affairs. The letters are both a reflection of Edward's experiences in the west and his mother's strong personality, her hopes for the future, relations with her husband and son, and her attitudes toward family and life in nineteenth-century Connecticut.

## Administrative information

### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Provenance

Gift of Margot Culley and transferred from University Archives, May 2008.

### Processing Information

Processed by I. Eliot Wentworth, July 2014.

### Related Material

The Beinecke Library at Yale University houses a collection of papers of Edward R. Landon.

### Language:

English

### Copyright and Use (More information )

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## Search terms

### Subjects

Depressions--1837

Guilford (Conn.)--History

Landon, Anna Theodora Lay, 1817-1838

Lawyers--Michigan--19th century

### Contributors

Landon, Mary G. [[main entry](#)]

Landon, Edward Ruggles, 1812-1883

### Genres and formats

Letters (Correspondence)

## Link to similar SCUA collections

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