

**THE VISITATION OF LANCASHIRE  
AND A PART OF CHESHIRE: MADE IN  
THE TWENTY-FOURTH YEAR OF THE  
REIGN OF KING HENRY THE EIGHTH,  
A. D. 1533. PART II, PP. 105-261**

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**THOMAS BENALT & WILLIAM LANGTON**

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WILLIAM LANGTON.

FROM THE BAS-RELIEF PORTRAIT OF HIM PLACED IN HIS HONOUR  
ON THE WALLS OF THE ATHENÆUM.

THE  
**Visitation of Lancashire**

AND A PART OF CHESHIRE,

MADE IN THE TWENTY-FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF  
KING HENRY THE EIGHTH,

A. D. 1533,

BY SPECIAL COMMISSION OF  
THOMAS BENALT,  
*Clarencieux.*

EDITED BY  
WILLIAM LANGTON.

PART II.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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**T**HIS being the concluding volume of the *Lancashire Visitation of 1533*, edited for the Chetham Society by WILLIAM LANGTON, esquire, a work which was left incomplete by his sudden and lamented death, it would be ungrateful to let the occasion pass without some prefatory notice of one, who for so many years deservedly enjoyed the respect and esteem of his fellow citizens in Manchester, to many of whose best institutions and works of charity he did valuable service, and who, amid the exacting calls of a life of business, proved himself one of the earliest and best friends of the Chetham Society.

Mr. LANGTON, who was the son of Thomas Langton, esquire, an eminent Russian merchant, by his wife, Miss Curren, the daughter of the Reverend William Curren, vicar of Clapham, was born at Fairfield, near Addingham, in Yorkshire, on the 17th April, 1803. Born of gentle blood, and in that rank of life which the French say is the most favourable to virtue and happiness, Mr. LANGTON, after the usual school education in England, was sent to Switzerland, where he completed his education and learned several foreign tongues. Charles V. was wont to say that



a man was so much the more a man the more languages he knew, and Mr. LANGTON's acquirement of other tongues than his own had in it a two-fold advantage: it fitted him for the pursuits of commerce which he designed to follow, and it enlarged his literary horizon and opened sources of knowledge to him in after life. He retained his fondness for the Italian tongue to the end of his life, and in 1872, when a beautiful sonnet on the death of Rev. F. D. Maurice appeared, he translated it into Italian verse which would have commanded applause if it had proceeded from the pen of any native of Italy. After a stay of about three years abroad he made a short tour in Italy, France, and Germany, and about 1821 he occupied a seat in one or more commercial houses in Liverpool, and was initiated in the course of mercantile life; after which he commenced business on his own account as the English resident and the agent of a number of Russian merchants. In 1829, however, a war having broken out between Turkey and Russia, which closed the Black Sea, his business was stopped by it, and he came to Manchester, where he was offered and accepted an important situation in the well-known bank of Messrs. Heywood. Here, with great satisfaction to himself and not less satisfaction to the firm, he remained until 1854, when he was offered and accepted the very responsible situation of managing director of the large Manchester and Salford Joint Stock Bank, as successor to the late Mr. Paul Moon James. In this important position, where his great intelligence and experience were shewn in the success which the bank attained under his management, he remained until October,

1876, when, owing to the entire failure of his sight, he was compelled to retire from it, and the directors and proprietary, to mark their approbation of his conduct, granted him as an *honorarium*, an annuity to continue during his retirement.

During the whole of his busy life Mr. LANGTON gave proof that a man of order need not be so absolutely absorbed by his business, as to forget that he owes duties to society. He had a fit helpmate in his wife, Miss Margaret Hornby, of a family of good name in the Fylde country, and he had the happiness to have a family of sons and daughters, to whom he was able to impart his own refined tastes. He was a proficient in music and not an unskilful artist with his pencil, and as "good the more communicated more abundant grows," so Mr. LANGTON, by his countenance, wise counsel and support as a means of elevating others, did his best on all occasions to spread a taste for these arts among all classes.

Mr. LANGTON's high character and business talents were so universally known, that he became recognised in Manchester as the centre of a large circle in its society, and, notwithstanding that his position as the manager of a great bank peculiarly exposed him to animadversion, it is certain that he made very many personal friends of those who were most worth knowing, and that he made few, if any, enemies. His warm benevolence led him to lend a ready ear and a helping hand to every well-devised scheme for elevating the character of the people, and this made him one among the foremost of those who first established the Manchester

Mechanics' Institution, and which also induced him to take a prominent part in founding another sister Institution, the Manchester Athenæum, which has now attained a vigorous age and has lately acknowledged her obligations to him, as one of its founders, by placing on its walls his portrait in *bas relief*, where the members may be reminded of him whenever they see his thoughtful face reflected from his features in marble.

To give a catalogue of all the objects charitable, literary, religious, or statistical in which Mr. LANGTON bore a part would occupy too much space here, but we must not omit to notice a few. One of these was an institution called the Provident Society, the object of which was to teach its members the benefits of thrift, self-reliance, and providence, and while discountenancing improvidence, to relieve such of them as were in want through unavoidable circumstances, and not by any imprudence. This institution, doing its work in silence, effected great good, and without seeking it, found itself acknowledged by fame. But in another direction to which Mr. LANGTON turned himself, subsequent events which he could not foresee seem to have made him almost a prophet. So long ago as 1846, he formed the idea that Manchester ought to have a new university of its own, and since that time Mr. OWENS' munificent foundation, which Mr. LANGTON never ceased to recommend and promote, has become so important that it has since become the nucleus of the Victoria University at Manchester, the very thing that Mr. LANGTON had wished for.

Mr. LANGTON's services in this cause have met with a