

**REMAINS, HISTORICAL AND LITERARY,  
CONNECTED WITH THE PALATINE COUNTIES  
OF LANCASTER AND CHESTER, VOL. XIV. THE  
JOURNAL OF NICHOLAS ASSHETON OF  
DOWNHAM, IN THE COUNTY OF LANCASTER,  
ESQ. FOR PART OF THE YEAR 1617, AND PART  
OF THE YEAR FOLLOWING**

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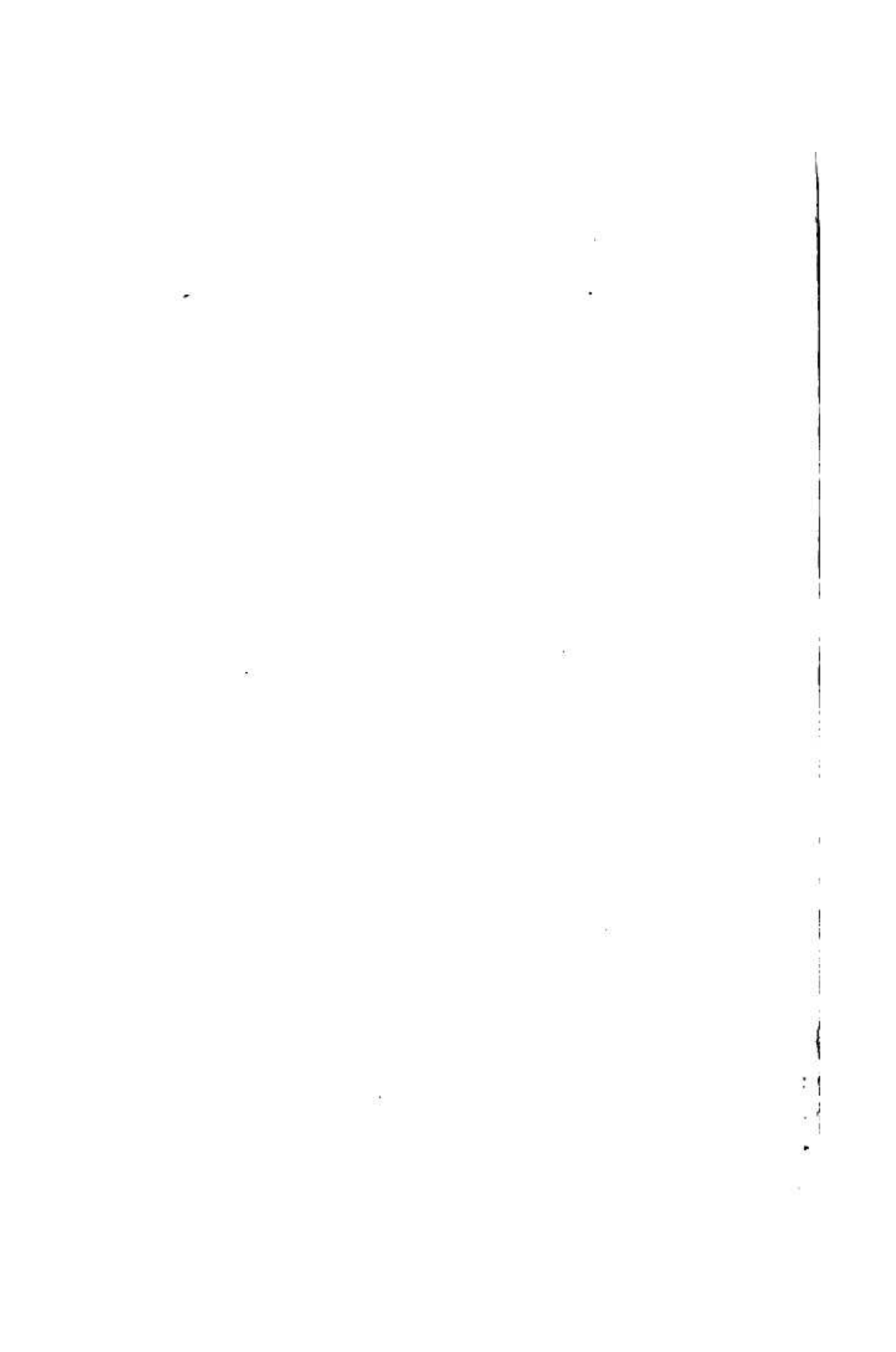
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THE JOURNAL  
OF  
NICHOLAS ASSHETON

OF DOWNHAM,

IN THE COUNTY OF LANCASTER, ESQ.

FOR

PART OF THE YEAR 1617, AND PART OF THE  
YEAR FOLLOWING.

INTERSPERSED WITH NOTES FROM THE LIFE OF HIS CONTEMPORARY, JOHN BRUEN OF  
BRUEN STAPLEFORD, IN THE COUNTY OF CHESTER, ESQ.

EDITED BY

THE REV. F. R. RAINES, M.A. F.S.A.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE ASSHETONS derived their surname from the town of Ashton-under-Lyne, where, according to the Heralds of former times, they were seated shortly after the Norman Conquest. The first of the family on record is said to have been Orme, the son of Eward or Ailward, to whom Albert de Gredley the elder gave in marriage with his daughter Emma, a carucate of land in Eston, or Eshton, being a sub-infeudation of the manor of Manchester. Thomas de Ashton and Orme his father gave lands in Ashton to Robert de Buron; and Roger, another son of Orme, gave lands in Nut-hurst to the abbey of Cockersand.—*Testa de Nevil*. Their descendant, Sir John Assheton of Assheton was Knight of the shire of Lancaster in the year 1413 (1 *Hen. V.*) and his second son, Sir Raphe, obtained the manor and advowson of Middleton, with large estates at Rydale in the county of York, on his marriage (covenants dated 15th April 1438) with Margery Barton, the wealthy heiress of her father John Barton of Rydale, and of her uncles Richard and Raphe Barton of Middleton, which lands had descended from their ancestors John de Barton and his wife Matilda, daughter

and coheiress of Roger de Middleton, living in the reign of Edward II.

Raphe Assheton, a younger son and one of the thirteen children of Sir Raphe Assheton the first of Middleton, became possessed of a considerable estate at Great Lever, near Bolton-en-le-Moors, in right of his wife Margaret, the daughter and heiress of Adam de Lever, about the year 1465.

His grandson, Richard Assheton, appears to have followed the profession of the law, and married the rich widow of a London merchant. He also fortunately attracted the notice of that acute and profound statesman, William, Lord Burleigh, and was appointed by him Receiver General of the Duchy of Lancaster for Queen Elizabeth. In this office he acquired great wealth, which he wisely expended in the purchase of estates in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the county palatine of Durham.—*Hist. of Whalley*, p. 244. Hopkinson has preserved a lengthened catalogue of the lands thus acquired, and they appear to have been chiefly the confiscated property of religious houses, having been obtained conjointly with his kinsman, John Braddyll of Brockholes Esq. and with his nephew Thomas Crompton of Hounslow Priory Esq. Auditor of Revenue to Queen Elizabeth, son of John Crompton of Prestolee and of London (*Visit.* 1567) and father of Sir Thomas Crompton M. P. (See p. 113.)

Downham, however, had always been a lay fee, and was acquired by John de Dyneley in marriage with the heiress of Downham in the year 1308. The manor was sold by his descendant, Henry Dyneley Esq. in 1545 to Richard