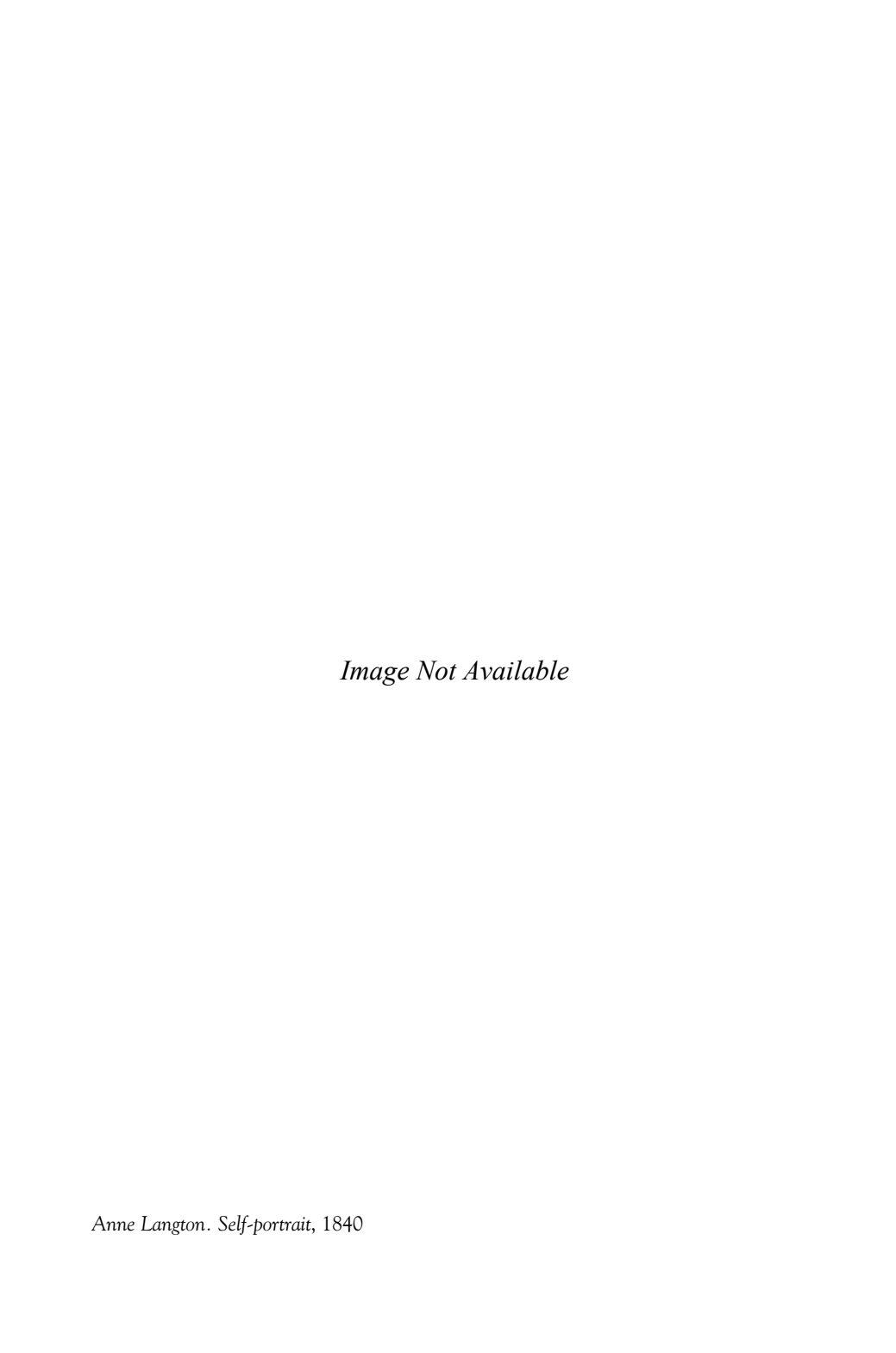
A GENTLEWOMAN IN UPPER CANADA:
THE JOURNALS, LETTERS, AND ART OF ANNE LANGTON



Anne Langton. Self-portrait, 1840

A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada

The Journals, Letters, and Art of Anne Langton

Edited by Barbara Williams

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For my son and daughter, Matthew and Sophie Wilson

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Preface

Anne Langton (1804–93), gentlewoman, artist, and pioneer settler, is best known for *A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada: The Journals of Anne Langton*, a volume that chronicles almost a decade (1837–46) of her family's experience as settlers at Sturgeon Lake, near Fenelon Falls, Upper Canada (now Ontario). A posthumously published edition of her letters and journals, the volume was edited by Hugh Hornby Langton, her last surviving Canadian nephew, and was published in Toronto in 1950.[1] That volume now being out of print, publication of a revised and expanded edition is timely.

As editor of Langton's work, I have three primary aims: to introduce her unique voice and vision to a fresh audience in the twenty-first century (while reacquainting earlier readers with her work); to present her work within a broader context than was previously possible; and to expand access to her writings that were omitted from the H.H. Langton edition. Langton's letters and journals are important primary sources on women's experiences, including self-inscription in writing and visual arts, as well as subjects such as early emigration, pioneer settlement, and community development in Upper Canada.

With respect to my primary focus and fuller text, I alert readers to an initial printing of Anne Langton's letters and journals in 1904. Entitled *Langton Records: Journals and Letters from Canada, 1837–1846*, that volume was edited by Ellen Josephine Philips, one of Langton's English nieces (the second of six daughters of Anne Langton's older brother, William).[2] Printed in limited edition, 'for private circulation only,' it was distributed to an exclusive audience of family members and close friends. As my base text for the present edition, I have taken Hugh Hornby Langton's edition of *A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada* but have expanded it significantly by including material from Philips's version that he chose to omit.

Philips and H.H. Langton each had access to their aunt's original letters and journals, which were sent to William's family as a chronicle of the 'emigrés' Langtons' settler experiences.[3] In contrast, despite some forty years of research in Canada and England, I have found no trace of Anne Langton's original letters and journals. I was more fortunate when it came to her artwork. Although not a single piece of her embroidery work has come to light, I have located a large number of Langton's other artworks, from juvenilia to material culture produced during the last decade of life. Her visual oeuvre consists of miniatures on ivory, pen and graphite drawings, watercolour sketches, and hand-painted decorative designs on delicate porcelain pieces. Although both *Langton Records* and Hugh Hornby Langton's edition of *A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada* were illustrated with sketches and portraits by Anne Langton, most of her work remained unknown to the public until I curated an exhibition of Langton's works for the Web site of the Archives of Ontario (2003)[4] and another, Sketches by Anne Langton: Fenelon Falls, Bobcaygeon and Peterborough, 1837–1852, for the Lindsay Art Gallery (2004).[5] Prior to these exhibitions, reproduction and exhibits of Langton's art were found mostly in articles or exhibitions featuring multiple artists.[6]

Langton's writing and art remained unpublished during her lifetime, unlike that of her more well-known contemporaries Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill (the Strickland sisters) and Anna Jameson, whose works were published in Canada, the United States, and England.[7] Langton never sought commercial sales, exhibition, or publication of her writing and artwork. As a result, while she certainly had talents that would have served her well in a professional capacity as writer and artist, her work was unavailable for public and critical scrutiny until the second half of the twentieth century and has never been as widely known as it deserves. Nor has extensive critical work been done on her life or work, though *A Gentlewoman* and some of her artwork are cited in a number of books and journals, mainly in relation to pioneering life, social history, and antique furniture.[8] By revising and expanding the first published edition of *A Gentlewoman* to include both a biographical overview and some of Langton's never-before-published sketches and miniatures, I hope to increase awareness of her life and work.

A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada, a steady seller over more than four decades after its publication in 1950, was also published in paperback in 1964 without illustrations other than the small image on the front cover – a cameo of one of Langton's early self-portraits, superimposed on a background forest scene. Paperback reprints occurred in 1966, 1967, and 1985. The 1985 cover features a self-portrait (1833) that represents Langton at a time closer to emigration. I have selected this latter image for the cover of the present edition.

I retain the title *A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada*, as it so aptly and immediately conjures up the writer herself as well as her context and era. It also highlights the primary perspective from which I view Langton: as a quintessential representative of the word 'gentlewoman.' At first glance, the title might beg the question, 'Were there any gentlewomen in early Upper Canada?' Closer scrutiny of pertinent scholarship reveals that, indeed, although a minority among immigrants and settlers, female members of the gentrified classes were among the prominent inhabitants of the provinces of both Upper and Lower Canada.[9]

During the early years of white European settlement, many of the genteel women in Upper Canada were temporary visitors, wives of official dignitaries or of militia officers. Elizabeth Simcoe (wife of Governor John Graves Simcoe) and Anna Jameson (wife of Attorney-General Robert Sympson Jameson) are prominent examples of such residents.[10] Some female visitors wrote of their impressions and experiences, but their writings largely remained unpublished until the twentieth century. These 'visitor' voices include those of Simcoe, Jane Ellice, Lady Durham, Juliana Horatia Ewing, Frances Anne Hopkins, and Lady Dufferin.[11] By the time of Langton's arrival in the province in 1837, a significant number of genteel women were permanent settlers. To the voices of Traill, Moodie, and Langton, we can add those of Frances Stewart, Mary O'Brien, and, in Lower Canada, Lucy Peel.[12] The majority of these women, whether visitors or 'permanent' settlers, wrote for themselves and their families, but a few, such as Traill, Moodie, and Jameson, wrote specifically for publication in their lifetimes.[13]

For this new edition of *A Gentlewoman*, I have made use of primary Langton family manuscript materials held in private collections and public institutions in England and Canada. Two privately printed Langton family titles yielded valuable background information. *The Story of Our Family* is Anne Langton's family memoir, which she wrote in 1879 at the age of seventy-five and which her English nieces and nephews arranged to have printed, without her prior knowledge.[14] *Letters of Thomas Langton to Mrs. Thomas Hornby, 1815 to 1818*, edited by E.J. Philips, reproduces the letters from Anne's father to his sister, Cicely.[15] Yet another Langton volume originates with Anne's younger brother, John. *Early Days in Upper Canada: The Letters of John Langton from the Backwoods of Upper Canada and the Audit Office of the Province of Canada*[16] was edited by John Langton's third son, William A. Langton, and was the first Langton material printed in Canada and the first to be formally published anywhere. Each of these three volumes is illustrated with sketches and portraits by Anne Langton.

The provenance of the original primary materials can be traced as they

were handed down to Langton's nephews and nieces in the form of family papers: letters, notebooks, journals, maps, by various family members, as well as artwork by Anne. After 1933 most of these items were donated by Langton descendants to various Canadian public institutions. Some of John Langton's letters and maps survive, and much of Anne's artwork is now held in public institutions in Canada, although some remains in private hands in England and Canada.[17]

In addition to consulting the above sources, my introduction to the present edition of Anne Langton's journals and letters addresses key changes in critical discourse that have occurred since the original publication of *A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada* more than fifty years ago. This new edition will appeal to an audience with an interest in social history as well as in feminist historical studies in the fields of literature and fine art. Successive waves of the women's movement in Canada, with their extensive cultural and social influences and implications, opened up new avenues of exploration and analysis in feminist critical research and scholarship.[18] Present-day readers live in a postcolonial era in which earlier imperial interpretations – which classified cultures and peoples according to hierarchical theories of dominance and subordination – have been called into question. It is appropriate, therefore, to revisit Langton's text in light of these developments.

Recent analyses of the effects of gender, class, and race on individual and societal norms have also resulted in shifting perspectives within cultural studies.[19] These evolving insights further justify re-examination of Langton and her work. I support Jane Errington's claim that the absence of women from most early official records has been largely responsible for 'the unspoken belief of some that, then as now, what has traditionally been considered "women's work" had little or no redeeming social or economic value' and that women, therefore, have not been regarded as 'materially aid[ing] the development of the colony.'[20] Anne Langton's body of work is testament to the value of female settlers in establishing order and coherence and facilitating community and cultural development within early Canadian society. Thus, there is continuing value in the preservation of her writing and art, which form important resources for current and future study.

I shall focus on the significance of Langton's work primarily in terms of life writing and visual art disciplines within Upper Canada, especially in relation to the historical condition of women participants in those fields. As Errington has pointed out, 'the voices of [early Canadian] women themselves ... sometimes in harmony, but often in counterpoint, echoed the complexity of life and experience shared by all in the colony.'[21] I also suggest the relevance

of Langton's life and work in connection to several other disciplines: early Canadian emigration, settlement, education, medicine, First Peoples, community, social and cultural development, and travel and tourism. While pointing readers to titles for study in these areas, I do not engage in any depth in the critical debate within these fields. To do so would detract from my primary purpose and result in far too lengthy a book. I leave it to other scholars to examine the significance of Langton's text for those fields. Similarly, while I briefly describe in my annotations events and people referred to in the letters, I do not focus in detail on background history or politics.

The primary lens through which I filter my interpretation of Langton and her work is that of the societal code of genteel conduct that came to the fore in Britain sometime around the end of the seventeenth century, increased in significance during the eighteenth century, and reached its zenith in the middle years of Victorian England. I examine this phenomenon in detail in the introduction. Suffice it to say here that this unofficial code ascribed differing, usually diametrically opposed, characteristics to the two sexes: men were seen as active, strong, courageous; women, in contrast, as passive, weak, dependent. These characteristics were considered to be 'essentially' (that is, biologically) determined and therefore 'natural' and so inarguable.[22] The result was a hierarchical ordering of social relations within the genteel classes, with unofficially ascribed roles and status for each gender: men were public figures, societal arbiters; women were private tenders of family, hearth, and home.

It is my contention that these beliefs greatly influenced Langton's personal development, her identity, and the entire course of her life and work. Close readings of her journals, letters, and family memoir support this interpretation. It is true that, as a result of emigration and settlement in the New World, she came to question some precepts and practices of the genteel code, but she consciously trod a fine line between adopting new behaviours and adhering to the social tenets and patterns according to which she had been raised. It would take the active determination of subsequent generations of women over the next one hundred and more years to successfully challenge the ideology of broad 'natural' differences between the sexes and offer, in its stead, the view that proscribed gender roles are in large part socially and culturally determined.

By bringing Anne Langton's writings and visual art – and, through them, her inner conflicts, partial transcendence of circumstances, and qualified modification of her behaviour – to the forefront, I aim to realize a subtle, nuanced portrait of this particular gentlewoman, to reflect the lights and

shades of her responses in all their complexities. I also hope such a reading and viewing of her oeuvre, will inspire others to delve more deeply into the records left by women of all classes in early Canadian society, to reveal further details of their experiences and contributions, and thus fill out the historical canvas of their times more richly, providing us with a fuller understanding of our early cultural roots.

Two further clarifications are in order with regard to my interpretation of Anne Langton's life and work. In studying a person's life, any patterns that emerge are seldom attributable to single causes. To borrow a phrase from medical and social sciences: effects are almost invariably overdetermined – that is, no single root cause can be viewed as a sole contributing factor in a person's development. I am highly conscious of the need to allow for ambiguity, complexity, paradox, even occasional inconsistencies, in discussing the life, work, and times of an individual. Life abounds in contradictions. As Gustave Flaubert observed, the only worthwhile conclusion is that it is futile to try to come to conclusions.[23] Provisional conclusions are the best we can hope for in a pluralistic world of multiple ethnic and cultural diversities, with its varying viewpoints and backgrounds. Each scholarly generation builds on foundations laid by previous workers; each scholar contributes only a portion to overall knowledge and discernment. With these qualifications in mind, I present my perspectives on Anne Langton's life and work in the introduction and notes to this volume.

A word about the circumstances in which these journals and letters were produced and conveyed: it is well to remind ourselves that mail communication between Upper Canada and Britain in the 1800s was a drawn-out process carried out via horse, wagon, train, and ocean-going ship. Mail conveyance between the two continents often took weeks, sometimes months. In Upper Canada, adverse weather conditions, poor road and lake conditions in certain seasons, and comparative slowness of conveyance and delivery in a country with a broadly scattered population and few post offices were just some of the obstacles to communication. Immigrants, including the Langtons, sometimes sent word to loved ones in the Old Country via acquaintances who were journeying across the Atlantic.[24] These missives, too, could be delayed by long voyages, a change in the bearer's plans, misplacement, or loss. Long delays heightened the significance of receiving letters once they eventually arrived. Postage costs were based on number of sheets, weight, and distance. To save on expense, pages were often crammed full with tightly written script that was sometimes 'crossed' – that is, written in two directions (first horizontally, then vertically across the first lines). On many counts,

then, senders and recipients had to exercise great patience in their efforts to keep in touch after emigration.[25]

To clarify relationships within the Langton family, a section of the Langton family 'pedigree' is provided in the preliminary materials (see page xxxiii). Other persons mentioned frequently in the journals and letters are identified (where possible) in the list of frequently mentioned names, the introduction, or the annotations. I also provide an afterword outlining the second half of Anne Langton's life (1847–93).

NOTES

1 Anne Langton, *A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada: The Journals of Anne Langton*, ed. Hugh Hornby Langton. Hugh Hornby Langton (1862–1953) was the youngest child and fifth son of Anne Langton's younger brother, John, and his wife, Lydia (née Dunsford). He studied law at the University of Toronto, where he later served as chief librarian (1892–1923). Co-founder of the *Review of Historical Publications Relating to Canada* (now, *Canadian Historical Review*), he wrote biographies of James Loudon, Sir Daniel Wilson, Sir John McLennan, and James Douglas. For further details, see Robert H. Blackburn, *Evolution of the Heart*, 101–30.

2 Anne Langton, *Langton Records: Journals and Letters from Canada, 1837–1846*, ed. E.J. Philips. The textual histories of the H.H. Langton and E.J. Philips editions are discussed in the note on the text following the acknowledgments to the present volume.

3 In his preface, H.H. Langton states that the correspondence was eventually transmitted by William's heirs to the Canadian members of the family. Anne Langton, *Gentlewoman*, xv.

4 Barbara Williams, *Anne Langton: Gentlewoman, Pioneer Settler, and Artist*.

5 Barbara Williams, *Sketches by Anne Langton*.

6 In addition to the titles cited in notes 4 and 5, Langton is also discussed in the following works: J. Russell Harper, *Early Painters and Engravers in Canada*, 188; Barbara Williams, 'Anne Langton,' *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (hereafter *DCB*), 12: 523–7; Rosemary Ball, '"A Perfect Farmer's Wife": Women in 19th Century Rural Ontario'; E. Jane Errington, *Wives and Mothers, School Mistresses and Scullery Maids*; N.E.S. Griffiths, *Penelope's Web*, ch. 6; Beth Light and Alison Prentice, eds., *Pioneer and Gentlewomen of British North America, 1713–1867*, ch. 2; Helen E. Smith and Lisa M. Sullivan, '"Now that I know how to manage": Work and Identity in the Journals of Anne Langton.' For further discussion of

Langton's life and work see Barbara [Williams] Wilson, 'Anne Langton,' in *Portraits: Peterborough Area Women Past and Present*, 54–64; Williams, *Anne Langton: Pioneer Woman and Artist*; Wilson, '"Strangers in a Strange Land": Literary Use of Canadian Landscape by Five Genteel Settlers.' Exhibitions of Langton's art have focused primarily on her work in the Fenelon Falls area: Fenelon Falls (1983, 1986); the Lindsay Gallery (December 1981–January 1982; December 1983–January 1984); Sault Ste Marie, Art Gallery of Algoma (9 August–2 September 1984); Toronto, Sigmund Samuel Gallery, Royal Ontario Museum, Two Gentlewomen in Upper Canada (16 June–18 September 1977), curated by Helen Ignatieff; Unionville, Varley Gallery, Three Graces Remembered: Charlotte Price, Catherine Reynolds, and Anne Langton (22 January–26 March 2006), curated by Alison Kenzie. Three of Langton's sketches were included in the exhibition From Women's Eyes: Women Painting in Canada, at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre (12 December 1975–1 February 1976), curated by Dorothy Farr and Natalie Luckyj. Four of her works were included in the exhibition From the Four Quarters: Native and European Art in Ontario 5000 BC to 1867 AD, at the Art Gallery of Ontario (March 30–May 20 1984), curated by Dennis Reid and Joan Murray.

7 See Susanna Moodie, *Roughing It in the Bush, or Forest Life in Canada*; Moodie, *Life in the Clearings*; also see Carl P.A. Ballstadt, 'Strickland, Susanna (Moodie),' *DCB* 11: 857–61; Catharine Parr Traill, *The Backwoods of Canada*; Traill, *The Canadian Settler's Guide*; Michael A. Peterman, 'Strickland, Catharine Parr (Traill),' *DCB* 12: 995–9; Anna Jameson, *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*; see also Clara Thomas, 'Brownell, Anna Murphy (Jameson), *DCB* 8: 649–51.

8 References to Langton, her writing and art, are found in several specialized historical studies, including Marian MacRae, *The Ancestral Roof*, 106; G.H. Needler, *Otonabee Pioneers* (see ch. 7, 'The Sturgeon Lake Group,' 156–71); Philip Shackleton, *The Furniture of Old Ontario*, 31–3; Eve Zaremba, *The Privilege of Sex*, 3–5, 9–31; Maria Tippett, *By a Lady*.

9 See, for example, Helen M. Buss, *Mapping Our Selves*; Errington, *Wives and Mothers*; J.K. Johnson and Bruce G. Wilson, eds., *Historical Essays on Upper Canada*, which includes the essay by Katherine M.J. McKenna, 'Options for Elite Women in Early Upper Canadian Society: The Case of the Powell Family,' 401–23; Barbara Maas, *Helpmates of Man*; Katherine M.J. McKenna, *A Life of Propriety*.

10 For Elizabeth Simcoe, see Edith G. Firth, 'Elizabeth Gwillim (Simcoe,)' *DCB* 7: 361–3. Jameson, already separated from her husband when she arrived in Upper Canada, came in hope of either reviving the marriage or divorcing with prudent provision of a financial agreement to secure her future economic security. The

latter proved to be the final outcome. She thereafter led an independent life as an early feminist art and literary critic.

11 See (in chronological sequence of arrival in Canada) Elizabeth Simcoe, *Mrs. Simcoe's Diary*; Lady Durham, *Letters and Diaries of Lady Durham*; Jane Ellice, *The Diary of Jane Ellice*; Juliana Horatia Ewing, *Canada Home: Juliana Horatia Ewing's Fredericton Letters*; and her *Illustrated News: Juliana Horatia Ewing's Canadian Pictures*; Lady Dufferin, My *Canadian Journal, 1872–1878*. See also Desmond Pacey with additions by Judith St John, 'Gatty, Juliana Horatia (Ewing),' *DCB* 11: 333–4.

12 See Frances Stewart, *Our Forest Home*; see also G. de T. Glazebrook, 'Browne, Frances (Stewart),' *DCB* 10: 104–5; Mary O'Brien, *The Journals of Mary O'Brien*; Lucy Peel, *Love Strong as Death*. Although the Peels came with the intention of settling, they returned to England after only three years.

13 Like Anne Langton's writing, most of the above-named diaries and journals were published posthumously, including those by Simcoe, Stewart, O'Brien, Ellice, Durham, Peel, Ewing, and Dufferin. Their voices remained silent until later generations of scholars rediscovered them, from about 1965 onwards, contemporaneously with the earliest feminist studies of women's work. Frances Stewart's and Anne Langton's work are, to some extent, exceptions. Stewart's letters were published in 1898, edited by one of her daughters; Langton's appeared in 1950, edited by her last surviving nephew. Lucy Peel's work is a further exception in that it was edited by a male scholar, J.I. Little. For further discussion of Simcoe, Traill, Moodie, Jameson, and Dufferin, see Marian Fowler, *The Embroidered Tent*. Other useful titles include: Susanna Moodie, *Susanna Moodie: Letters of a Lifetime*; and Charlotte Gray, *Sisters in the Wilderness*. For wider, though less in-depth, representation of pioneer women writers in Canada and other colonial countries, see Jane Robinson, ed., *Parrot Pie for Breakfast*, which includes writing by Anne Langton and other Canadian pioneer settler women.

14 Anne Langton, *The Story of Our Family*. Langton wrote this memoir at the request of her nieces and nephews in England and Canada.

15 Thomas Langton, *Letters of Thomas Langton to Mrs. Thomas Hornby 1815 to 1818*.

16 John Langton, *Early Days in Upper Canada*. William Alexander Langton (1854–1933), the editor of John Langton's volume, was an architect in Toronto. A founding member of the Ontario Association of Architects, he was its president for a time. He was also a founding member and sometime president of the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, which still exists today.

17 For extant letters from and maps by John Langton to his family, see the Archives of Ontario, 1, Correspondence, John Langton family fonds (hereafter

JLFF), F 1077-1, MU 1690, envs. 1–6. Public institutions holding artworks by Anne Langton include: Archives of Ontario; Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes; Library and Archives Canada; Peterborough Public Library; Peterborough Centennial Museum and Archives; Toronto Reference Library, Thomas Fisher Rare Books Room; University of Toronto, University College; University of Toronto, University of Toronto Archives; St James Anglican Church, Fenelon Falls; St John's Anglican Church, Peterborough.

18 For detailed discussion of first-wave feminism in Canada and the Western world see particularly, Jennifer Henderson, *Settler Feminism and Race Making in Canada;* on first- and second-wave feminism, see Carol Lee Bacchi, *Same Difference*. Bacchi identifies early second-wave feminism as beginning in the 1960s and 1970s.

19 On gender and class issues, as well as the code of gentility, seminal works include: Harriet Blodgett, *Centuries of Female Days*; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes*; Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture*; Errington, *Wives and Mothers*; N.E.S. Griffiths, *Penelope's Web*; A. James Hammerton, *Emigrant Gentlewomen*; Mary Hartman and Lois W. Banner, eds., *Clio's Consciousness Raised* (see especially Patricia Branca, 'Image and Reality: The Myth of the Idle Victorian Woman'; Beth Light and Alison Prentice, *Pioneer and Gentlewomen*; J.I. Little, *The Child Letters*; Little, *Love Strong as Death*; Maas, *Helpmates of Man*; McKenna, *A Life of Propriety;* Mary Poovey, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer*; Katherine M. Rogers, *The Troublesome Helpmate*, see esp. ch. 7, 'The Drooping Lily: The Nineteenth Century,' 189–225); Sylvia Van Kirk, *'Many Tender Ties'*; Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women*; Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter*; Barbara Welter, 'The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820–1860'; Mrs West, *Letters to a Young Lady in Which the Duties and Character of Women Are Considered, Chiefly with Reference to Prevailing Opinions*; Eve Zaremba, *Privilege of Sex*. With regard to Native issues, see especially Olive Dickason, *Canada's First Nations*; F.W. Hodge, *Handbook of the Indians of Canada*; Keith Hollinshead, 'White Gaze, "Red" People – Shadow Visions: The Disidentification of "Indians" in Cultural Tourism'; Patricia Jasen, *Wild Things*; Watson Kirkconnell, *County of Victoria Centennial History*; John Langton, *Early Days;* Mary Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*; Donald B. Smith, 'The Dispossession of the Mississauga Indians: A Missing Chapter in the Early History of Upper Canada,' in Johnson and Wilson, eds., *Historical Essays on Upper Canada,* 23–51; Valene L. Smith, *Hosts and Guests*; Bruce Trigger, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 15.

20 Errington, *Wives and Mothers*, xiii.

21 Ibid., xiv.

22 For useful discussion of these views see, e.g., Buss, *Mapping Ourselves*: Maas,

Helpmates of Man; Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses*; Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter*.

23 Gustave Flaubert to Louis Bouilhet Damas, 4 September 1850, *Extraits de la Correspondance ou Préface a la Vie d'Écrivain* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1963), 52. The actual quotation is 'L'ineptie consiste à vouloir conclure ... Oui, la bêtise consiste à vouloir conclure. Nous sommes un fil et nous voulons savoir la trame.' (It is foolishness to want to come to conclusions ... Yes, stupidity to want to come to conclusions. We are but a thread, yet we want to understand the web.)

24 For such experiences, see Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, passim.

25 See Cameron, Haines, and Maude, *English Immigrant Voices*, xxxiv-xxxv.

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Acknowledgments

The present book is the culmination of research conducted over more than four decades in England and Canada. Numerous people at many institutions have greatly facilitated my research. They include: at the Archives of Ontario, Archivist of Ontario Miriam McTiernan, John Barton, Karen Bergsteinsson, Craig Brown, John Dirks, Mary Ledwell, Iona McCraith, Wendy McPhee, Allan MacDonald, Andrea Robbins, Anastasia Rogers, Jan Rollins, Paul Thomas, Leon Warmski; at the Edward P. Taylor Library, Art Gallery of Ontario, Randall Speller, who has always indefatigably and meticulously responded to my queries; and staff (and, in some cases, volunteers) at The Grange (Art Gallery of Ontario); Library and Archives Canada; the Municipal Office of Fenelon Falls; the Fenelon Falls Museum; Peterborough Centennial Museum and Archives; the City of Kawartha Lakes Records and Archives Facility (Lindsay, Ontario); Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library; Native Canadian Centre of Toronto; Royal Ontario Museum; at the University of Toronto, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University College Archives, and University of Toronto Archives and Records Management Services; and at the Women's Art Association of Canada (Toronto headquarters).

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The two people who have accompanied me longest on this journey have been my son and daughter, Matthew and Sophie Wilson. On a day soon after our own arrival in Canada in 1966, their pre-school eagerness for us to look at library books together led me to select my book with less deliberation than usual. I simply picked up a volume whose title – *A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada* – appealed to me. It captivated me then; the contents have fascinated me ever since.

A Note on the Text

First, a note on terminology: 'letters,' 'journal letters,' and 'journals' are used by both E.J. Philips and H.H. Langton in their headings. *Letter* and *journal* are self-explanatory. The *journal letter*, however, is used when the writer begins a letter, but adds later 'entries' over several days (or, occasionally, over a week or so). Each of the additional entries in a given journal letter begins with the date – for example, 'December 15,' 'December 11.' When Anne later writes her formal journals (from October 1838), however, the entries begin with the day of the week as well as the date – for example, 'Saturday, October 6.' In the journal letter, entries are sometimes only sporadic. In the formal journals, Anne attempts to keep to the discipline of daily entries.

Vexing lacunae occur in any life story, not just those based on fragile documents produced more than 150 years ago and sent across the ocean. Editing results in still more gaps, and lack of original manuscript documents means such gaps cannot always be closed. My aim has been recovery and restoration of original text wherever possible, filling in gaps as feasible, and dovetailing the two earlier printed versions of Anne Langton's letters and journals into a new edition drawing on all known sources.

Recovered material and variant texts are indicated by the annotation 'recovered material' in the corresponding footnote, along with first and last words/phrases of the reinserted passage. In instances where H.H. Langton omits or substitutes only a single word, phrase, or line, I do not point up his omissions.

Although H.H. Langton's edition is my base text, I retain the letter headings from E.J. Philips's edition, as being, perhaps, closest to Anne Langton's original presentation. These indicate the writer, recipient, date, and place, where supplied.

Editorial comments occasionally appear within the body of the text. Those

created by E.J. Philips but not found in the H.H. Langton edition are indicated by '(EP)'; those created by Philips and retained by H.H. Langton are indicated by '(EP; HHL)', those created by the present editor are marked '(BW).'

I mostly retain spellings from Philips's edition, especially with regard to names of persons and places. Chronologically, Philips had closer contact with Anne Langton's era, as well as access to her original letters and, therefore, to her stylistic preferences and practices. Likewise, I usually retain the punctuation found in Philips. I occasionally (and silently) amend spelling and punctuation to clarify meaning. I mostly retain H.H. Langton's paragraphing, as Philips's edition has few paragraph breaks (likely reflecting Anne Langton's material). Where I recovered material from Philips's text only, I occasionally inserted extra paragraph breaks. In the case of Ellen Langton's journal, which is almost devoid of paragraphing, I retain the breaks as found in H.H. Langton's version.

Ellen Langton seldom employs terminal punctuation other than the dash, so her sentences often run together. H.H. Langton altered the punctuation in many instances to facilitate readability. I retain most of his changes. Ellen frequently capitalizes nouns (customary in the eighteenth century, the era in which she was educated). H.H. Langton dispenses with these capitalizations. I retain them so as to remain faithful to her personal style. Ellen often writes in short phrases, as if making notes, so I occasionally add a word or phrase in square brackets to clarify the meaning.

In instances where I make an interpolation of my own (e.g., for clarification purposes) into Philips's or H.H. Langton's text, I enclose my interpolation within square brackets. Similarly, where I have omitted material, I enclose an ellipsis in square brackets.

The two earlier printed primary texts included footnotes. I retain these, beginning each with 'original notation' and indicating the source (i.e., EP and/or HHL). Annotation in the present volume has been considerably expanded to render the text more accessible to later generations. Items – people, places, events – of contextual significance are pointed up. I do not, however, annotate every name, place, or event. Full bibliographical details are omitted from annotations but are given in the works cited at the end of the book.

As was suggested earlier, Anne Langton often worked on more than one version of a particular subject or scene. In some of these instances, there are variant titles of a given subject. Titles given here correspond to those found in the particular collection from which the reproduction was made.

Frequently Mentioned Names

Anne Langton's Family

Thomas – father; died in 1838 in Upper Canada

Ellen – mother; died in 1846 in Upper Canada

William – eldest brother; resided in Manchester

John – brother on whose property Anne, Thomas, and Ellen Langton and Alice Currer settled in Upper Canada; married Lydia Dunsford in 1845

Alice Currer – aunt; sister of Ellen, who lived with family at Blythe Farm; died in 1846 in Upper Canada

Margaret: sister-in-law; wife of William

Alice Langton – niece; eldest daughter of William and Margaret; also mentioned are her younger sisters Ellen, Anna Margaret, and Katharine Elizabeth, and a younger brother, Henry Currer

Zachary Langton – brother of Thomas; resided in London

Acquaintances in Upper Canada

William Allen – a tailor, who lived on northeast quarter of Lot 18, Concession 1, Verulam Township; married a widow from the United States, one of whose sons, William Dick, was a servant of the Langtons for a number of years; another son, George, was also briefly in their service

Richard Atthill – graduate of Trinity College, Dublin; purchased Lot 11, Concession 3, Verulam Township; with James Wallis, Robert Dennistoun, Robert Jameson, and John Langton, early fundraiser for the first church in Fenelon Falls; gave up farming in 1838 and ultimately returned to Ireland

Mossom Boyd – emigrated from Ireland in 1834; settled midway between Bobcaygeon and Sturgeon Point; bought Thomas Need's mill; in partnership with John Langton and James Dunsford in the lumbering business, late 1840s–early 1850s; married to Caroline Dunsford, daughter of Rev. and Mrs Dunsford, in 1844

Henry and Angel[ine] Junkin Brandon: – neighbours; servants of the Langtons for a number of years, after replacing William Ellis and his wife, Ann (née Junkin, Angel's sister) in 1841

Alexander and Mrs Daniel – neighbours of the Langtons; Alexander emigrated from Scotland

Robert and Maxwell Hamilton Dennistoun – Maxwell Hamilton was a daughter of Major Hamilton; she married Robert Dennistoun in 1839; Robert settled on Cameron Lake c. 1835; later studied law and became a QC; moved to Peterborough sometime in 1840s, where he became a county judge; fundraiser for the church at Fenelon Falls

Dr Diehl – absentee owner of Lot 15, Concession 10, Verulam Township, adjoining John Langton's property; lived in Toronto

Captain Francis and Mrs Dobbs – settlers in Fenelon Township, Lot 23, Concession 7

Ferguson and Mrs Duke – neighbours of the Langtons

Hamilton Dundas – fellow genteel settler in the same region

Rev. and Mrs James Hartley Dunsford – emigrated to Bobcaygeon area in 1838, with five sons and five daughters; the Beehive log house was built for the family; daughter Lydia married John Langton in 1845; Rev. and Mrs Dunsford moved to Peterborough, mid-1840s

William Ellis – neighbour and sometime employee of the Langtons; located on east half of Lot 17, Concession 1, Verulam Township, by 1840; formally purchased this land from John Langton in 1844

Mr and Mrs Fidler – Mr Fidler, a minister, was the first incumbent at the church at Fenelon Falls

Mr and Mrs Fortye – son-in-law and daughter of Major Hamilton; Mr Fortye managed the major's brewery and distillery in Peterborough

Mr and Mrs Fraser – lived on the south shore of Sturgeon Lake; Mr Fraser was formerly in the British military; received free land grants of Lot 11, Concession 6, Lot 12, Concession 6, Verulam Township, and Lot 14, Concession 3, Fenelon Township

Gavin (Gawin) Hamilton – son of Major Hamilton; took up his father's grant of land on Cameron Lake

Maggie Hamilton – youngest daughter of Major and Mrs Hamilton; occasionally stayed at Blythe Farm

Major and Mrs Hamilton – Major Hamilton, of the 78th and 79th Highlanders, originally settled in Peterborough, where he owned a sawmill, gristmill, distillery and brewery; also owned a grant of land on Cameron Lake, which on his death in 1836 passed to his son Gavin; Mrs Hamilton and some of her younger children lived with Gavin after her husband's death

Mr and Mrs Hoare – neighbours of the Langtons; Robert Jameson's father- and mother-in-law; following Jameson's departure from Upper Canada, the Hoares lived in his former house

Robert Jameson (incorrect variant spelling of Jamieson in journals) – scion of Irish distillery family; Cambridge graduate; tried unsuccessfully to encourage poor settlers to emigrate and buy land from him; lived in Fenelon Falls; with James Wallis and Alexander McAndrew, was appointed one of three local magistrates; partner with Wallis in land transactions and business enterprises at Fenelon Falls, including a mill and a store; by 1835, owned some 12,000 acres (some in partnership with Wallis); early fundraiser for the church at Fenelon Falls; permanently left Upper Canada in 1842

Sally Jordan – neighbour who helped with work at Blythe; married a Mr Woods in 1840

William and Mrs Jordan – neighbours of the Langtons; located on north half of Lot 18, Verulam Township (to north of Ellis family)

William MacCredie – bought land on Sturgeon Lake in 1834; returned to England in 1836

Alexander McAndrew (also M'Andrew) – close friend of John Langton; emigrated from Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1833; settled opposite Sturgeon Point; appointed one of three local magistrates; left Upper Canada for England in the mid-1830s

Mr McCall – purchased land on south shore of Sturgeon Lake in 1834; returned to England by August 1835

Major James McLaren (also M'Laren) – neighbour of the Langtons; superintended the mills at Fenelon on behalf of James Wallis

John Menzies – neighbour of the Langtons; bought west half of Lot 17, Concession 1, Verulam Township, from John Langton, for whom he worked as hired help; his two daughters were Anne Langton's first pupils at her home school at Blythe Farm; family left the area in 1841

Thomas Need – neighbour; graduate of Oxford University; emigrated in 1832; settled on north shore of Sturgeon Lake, near Bobcaygeon; established a sawmill and store at Bobcaygeon in the mid-1830s; author, *Six Years in the Bush*, an account of his early years as a settler, published in England (1838); returned permanently to England, 1845

Daniel O'Flynn (also O'Flyn) – neighbour of the Langtons; sometime served as hired help to John Langton; brother of Mary Scarry

Mrs Russell – occasional servant to the Langtons

Captain Sawers – located near Bobcaygeon rapids; owned a tavern there by 1837

Mary Scarry – sister of Daniel O'Flyn(n); accompanied parents and brother to Sturgeon Lake in 1833, leaving her husband in Ireland with intention of

returning there, or having her husband join her at Sturgeon Lake; remained at Sturgeon Lake, working for the Langtons for many years; accompanied them when they moved to Peterborough in 1852

William Taylor – carpenter who did work for John Langton; later a school trustee

James Wallis – born in Glasgow of English and Scottish ancestry; emigrated to Montreal in1832; moved to Upper Canada in 1833 and purchased land in Fenelon township; formed partnership with Robert Jameson for land transactions and business enterprises, including grist- and sawmills, in 1833; laid out Fenelon town site; purchased additional 8,000 or 10,000 acres in the township; one of three magistrates appointed for Fenelon, 1835; fundraiser for the church at Fenelon; brought in other settlers, including Major McLaren; left Fenelon permanently for Peterborough in 1844.

Note: In addition to the above names, Anne Langton frequently mentions several servants by first name only: Bridget, Kitty, Margaret, and two boys called Timothy.

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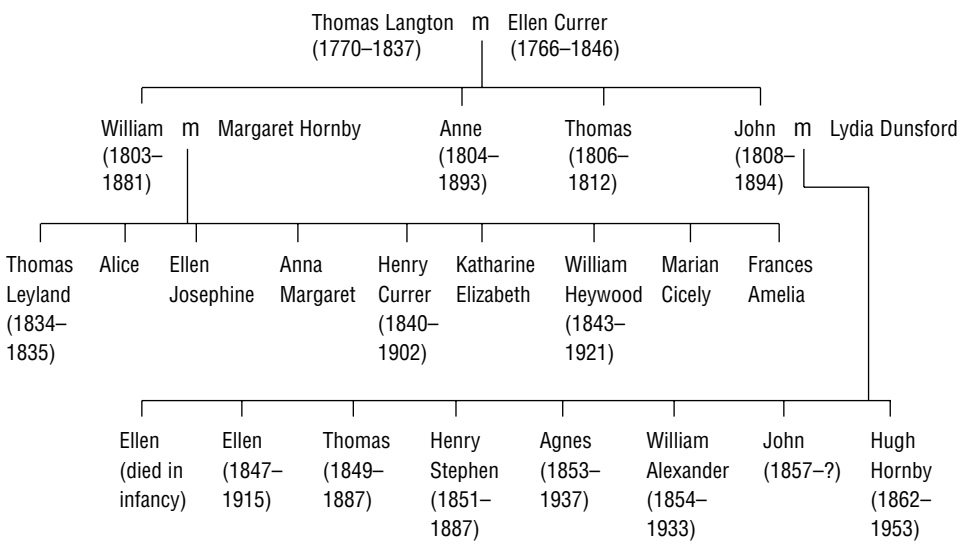
Langton Family Tree



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Abbreviations

AO	Archives of Ontario, Toronto
BW	Barbara Williams
DCB	*Dictionary of Canadian Biography*
CKLRAF	City of Kawartha Lakes Records and Archives Facility
ALAC	Anne Langton Art Collection
HHL	Hugh Hornby Langton
JLff	John Langton family fonds, F 1077, Archives of Ontario
EP	Ellen Philips
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
UCLR	Upper Canada Land Records
UTARMS	University of Toronto Archives and Records Management Services

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Fenelon Falls, c. 1839

A GENTLEWOMAN IN UPPER CANADA:
THE JOURNALS, LETTERS, AND ART OF ANNE LANGTON

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Introduction

> At last ... after all delays and disappointments, our long journey is accomplished. John looked very proud when he handed his mother into his little mansion. His arrangements for our accommodation are very snug ... And now you will ask what I think of the spot that has been so much talked of, and thought of amongst us. Upon the whole very much what I expected to think of it. The picture my mind had formed of the Lake is really very correct; that of Blythe was so much more particular in all its details that it could not be quite so exact. What most strikes me is a greater degree of roughness in the farming, buildings, gardens, fences, and especially roads, than I had expected. But when one looks at the wild woods around, and thinks that from such a wilderness the present state of things has been brought [ab]out by a few hands, and how much there is for those few hands to be constantly doing, one's surprise vanishes, and one rather wonders that so much has been done, than that so much remains to be done.

So wrote Anne Langton on 22 August 1837 to her sister-in-law, Margaret, in the industrial city of Manchester, in northern England. With just one week of hands-on experience as a hard-working settler in the Canadian 'backwoods,' this accomplished English gentlewoman and artist sat down to record her initial impressions of her new home. She and her parents, Thomas and Ellen, and her maiden aunt, Alice Currer (Ellen's sister), had emigrated to join her younger brother, John, on Blythe Farm, his pioneer homestead at Sturgeon Lake, near Fenelon Falls, Upper Canada, where he had settled four years earlier. John Langton's 'Diagram of Part of the Newcastle District' (fig. 1) indicates the site of his farm.

The above extract reveals key aspects of Anne Langton's personality and character: her emotional resilience and philosophical outlook in the face of life's challenges, her keen sensibility and deft ability to conjure a scene men-

Image Not Available

1 John Langton, 'Diagram of Part of the Newcastle District,' 1833.
John Langton sketched this 'diagram' in a letter to his father, dated 2 August 1833. Thomas Langton later copied it into a notebook. John's intention was to give his family 'some idea of the [Kawartha] lakes which are miserably laid down in all the maps I have seen' and to indicate his initial explorations in the region. His legend reads: 'Where there is the mark > there is a rapid where one lock will join [Balsam Lake] to Cameron Lake ... >> two locks at Cameron's Falls lead into the North Branch of Sturgeon lake … [>] One more lock at Bobcayjwin which is to be compleated this fall leads into Pigeon lake. α where I breakfasted β where I slept γ Need's [property] δ the Indian Village … *a* … on Balsam Lake. I have not seen this [land] myself … [the surveyor's] report was on the whole favourable … *b* is a most beautiful situation on Cameron Lake … In the neighbourhood of *c* is some good land … *d* … near the promontory [Sturgeon Point] … *e* & *f* are private property, but might be bought for a trifle above the government price … *g* … appears swampy …' In an appendix to the letter (dated 23 August 1833), John adds: 'McAndrew, who will be a pleasant neighbour, bought land at - *h* - opposite Sturgeon Point & I bought about 300 acres where the dotted lines are at - *c* - .'

tally (a talent so useful in her art), her elegant writing style, interwoven with a conversational tone. It also foreshadows recurrent themes of her writing: the difficulties of wresting an existence from the wilderness, an appreciation of hard-won basic essentials such as habitable buildings and arable land, the importance of adjusting to an unfamiliar context.

Readers could scarcely wish for a more delightful, perceptive, and witty companion-guide than Anne Langton to introduce them to the life of a nineteenth-century genteel emigrant-settler family in the backwoods of Upper Canada in the 1830s and 1840s. Transported from her birthplace, Farfield Hall, a stately mansion set in the picturesque Yorkshire Dales in England, and from her childhood home, the elegant estate of Blythe Hall, near Ormskirk in Lancashire, to the stark reality of Blythe Farm, Anne Langton travelled a vast distance physically, psychologically, and emotionally.[1] When she first set eyes on John's small, simple, log cabin she referred to it as 'his little mansion.'

The Langton Family

Who was Anne Langton and how did she come to emigrate to Upper Canada? She was born in 1804 into an aristocratic mercantile family, the second child and only daughter of Thomas Langton and Ellen Currer Langton.[2] Raised for her first ten years in an affectionate family circle at Blythe Hall, she grew up in privileged circumstances, mingling in a culturally rich milieu of extended family and distinguished wealthy friends, many of whom were also of aristocratic birth.

As the youngest of five brothers, Anne's father, Thomas, could expect to inherit neither his family's ancestral home nor significant wealth. Consequently, as a young man he had worked as an agent in the family hemp and flax-trade business in Riga, Latvia, then part of the Russian Empire, for some fifteen years, before returning to England around 1800 and marrying Ellen Currer, daughter of a Yorkshire country parson.[3] When Anne was only a few months old, Thomas bought Blythe Hall, parts of which dated back to the twelfth century. It was the birthplace of the Langtons' last two children: Thomas, who was born in 1806 (and who lived only until 1812) and John, born in 1808. The significance of Blythe Hall for the Langton family cannot be overstated. It was the setting for their almost paradisal life together and for Anne's happy childhood. Not surprisingly, it became the family's ideal image of 'home.'

Anne's upbringing and education started conventionally enough for a girl of her social class. With her brothers, she was first tutored privately at home by her parents and by a French emigré priest and the parish church organist. From the time Anne was eleven until she turned sixteen, however, her edu-

cation took an entirely different course from that of most of her female contemporaries. In 1815 Thomas Langton uprooted his family to travel abroad, with the purpose of providing his children with a diverse education. This venture was to be no mere three-month excursion in the manner of the European Grand Tour usually undertaken by young men, often accompanied by tutors, before they settled into adulthood.[4] Instead, it would last several years, involve the entire family, and include extended stays in several countries. Blythe Hall was rented out, and the family departed, unaware that they would never again resume their idyllic life there. The children learned the languages of countries they visited and were exposed to different cultures. Thomas engaged local masters wherever they resided in one place for any length of time and as they journeyed. The children received instruction in the three R's and in such desirable genteel accomplishments as art, music, and dancing.

The family's initial destination was Yverdon, in Switzerland. There, they became acquainted with a widow, Madame de Peyrou, who invited them to stay *en pension* at her elegant neo-Palladian estate, Champ-Pittet, on Lake Neufchâtel, just outside Yverdon.[5] The Langtons' domestic arrangements developed into an agreeable reminder of life at Blythe Hall. It was at Yverdon that Johannes Pestalozzi had established an innovative educational system. Rather than teaching by traditional rote learning, Pestalozzi's methodology involved 'the full and fruitful development of the child according to his own nature.' Almost all his original pupils were orphans whom he rescued from 'beggary and vice' following Swiss regional wars.[6] He conducted his work at Yverdon Castle, which had been given to him by the town authorities.

John Langton was soon enrolled in Pestalozzi's institute. William, because of his delicate health, and Anne, because of her gender, were tutored privately by institute masters in the Yverdon apartments of a family friend, Mademoiselle Bourgeois. In addition to languages, literature, geography, science, and mathematics, Pestalozzi emphasized the importance of sensory perception, personal observation, practical experience, and rational deduction from first principles. He also advocated spontaneous freedom of expression. In this creative environment, the children spent most of their initial year abroad, returning for a shorter stay in their second year. A glimpse of the family's daily schedule indicates how intently they pursued education:

> We go on here pretty regularly. We rise before six – at that hour the music-master comes, who gives to all three [children] jointly an hour ... At seven we breakfast, at eight the drawing-master expects us at Mdlle. Bourgeois' in Yverdun [*sic*]. At nine, or soon after, an Italian master endeavours to prepare us for our further travels ... At eleven we return, or should return, to Champitet [Champ-

> Pittet], for little commissions, and seeing friends, etc., generally keep us till twelve. From thence till half-past one we look a little at our Latin, etc. At two we dine.
>
> In the afternoon each gives up forty minutes to practise their music; some little preparation is made for the Italian master, or some smaller pursuits are squeezed in here or there as we can; the rest of the evening is given to play. At seven we have tea and fruit, after which the old lady [Madame de Peyrou] and we three elders make a rubber at whist ... We contrive to prolong the evening till eleven. In the rule the children ought to go to bed at half-past eight or nine, but we generally find them up, and sometimes they keep up till ten, though when roused in the morning at half-past five John often declares that he really cannot do with so little sleep.[7]

'Aunt Alice,' Ellen's unmarried sister, joined the family abroad in 1816. Ellen had been finding it difficult to feel 'at home' on the continent. At fifty, she was not as adept at learning new languages. Thomas was anxious to alleviate her social isolation. Alice was an ideal companion, as the sisters were very close to each other. The arrangement was mutually beneficial. Alice, a genteel woman of limited means, was grateful to share a home with the family, to participate in their adventures abroad, and to find herself much-loved and respected within the family circle.[8] Her role and position adumbrated the one Anne Langton would eventually adopt for herself.

The Langtons' itinerary took them through Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and across the Alps to Italy, the tourist's mecca. Their return journey, in 1820, took them through Switzerland, Germany, and France. Stopping places included major cities: Brussels, Frankfurt, Geneva, Innsbruck, Milan, Bologna, Venice, Florence, Rome, and Paris.

It is useful to pause here to consider the phenomenon of travel and touring that developed to almost cult status in Britain and much of western Europe from about the middle of the seventeenth century. Curiosity spurred scientist, explorer, and tourist, though to differing degrees. In the eighteenth and well into the nineteenth centuries, European people of means embarked on the Grand Tour. If, as has been argued by some scholars, the pursuit of pleasure, leisure, and personal emotional gratification are key components of the impetus to travel, then touring was a highly satisfactory way of fulfilling those urges.[9] Valene Smith's survey of types of tourism includes five categories: ethnic/native, cultural, historical, recreational, and environmental (the latter a recent trend).[10] The Grand Tour offered opportunities to indulge the first four types, or combinations thereof. And,

indeed, the Langtons' writings reveal them to be keen participants in all four types.[11]

There is insufficient space here to discuss the Grand Tour phenomenon in detail, but some observations are in order. Its rise coincided with an era of increasing exploration and discovery, encouraged by European nations looking to expand their territorial reaches and trade potential. Imperialism and colonialism were prime motivators in the exploration of 'new' lands, as reflected in many early travel narratives. The narrator often wrote from the perspective of a dominant, observing visitor or resident overlord. Mary Pratt describes the type well, as the '(Lettered, male, European) eye,' or, 'he whose imperial eyes look out and possess.'[12]

Books, visual art prints, and aesthetic treatises contributed to a flourishing 'touring' phenomenon. The upper and middle classes travelled to refine their aesthetic tastes and accumulate a hoard of novel 'foreign' experiences. Smith suggests that a 'hierarchy of prestige' was associated with such travel: 'To measure the hierarchies of prestige, the journey motif suggests that the further removed from the ordinary, the better; the sacred/profane motif suggests that the more extraordinary, the better; while the time measuring aspect suggests that the longer the period or more frequent the trips, the better.'[13] By this reckoning, the Langtons' five-year expedition, which took in visits to many places of almost 'holy' pilgrimage, was an outstanding achievement.[14] For example, it included archaeological sites such as Herculaneum, Pompeii, and ancient Roman ruins; natural attractions such as Alpine ranges, famed waterfalls, and Vesuvius; cultural venues such as cathedrals, galleries, and museums in prominent European cities; and ecclesiastically significant shrines, such as St Peter's in Rome.

In *The Tourist Gaze*, John Urry observes that travellers and tourists alike were preoccupied with the 'gaze.'[15] What they viewed – whether natural elements or human, animal, or 'man-made' components of a scene – were literally 'objects,' subject to visual scrutiny by those who were passing through a particular spot, at a particular time. The sophistication of this scrutiny varied according to the powers of the observer. The Langtons were well aware of particular sights/sites revered by tourists, and included many in their itineraries, but they also exercised discernment in how they viewed the subjects. Thomas Langton's observations on the nature and true value of travel reflect a seasoned wisdom: 'There is some danger I confess of adopting new prejudices in the place of those we lay down, and we travellers must not expect that all we bring home will be worth the carriage. The collection of each will depend upon his particular genius.'[16]

The circles in which the Langtons moved in cosmopolitan centres on the

continent included a number of like-minded writers and travellers. Most notable among these was Isaac Weld, Anglo-Irish author of *Travels through the States of North America and the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada during the years 1795, 1796 and 1797*, an account of his visit to and travels in, North America. The Langtons also encountered a Mrs. Herz, who had translated Weld's North American travel book into German.[17] In addition, Mariana Starke, a renowned English travel writer, was touring Europe to gather material for a new, expanded edition of her earlier popular travel books and tourist guidebooks. In their volume *The Age of the Grand Tour,* Anthony Burgess and Francis Haskell note that Starke's guides 'proved useful forerunners of [guidebooks by] Murray and Baedeker.'[18] Her recommendations covered not only places to visit, suitable accommodations, and works of art to be viewed, but basic travel arrangements and even warnings of unscrupulous *banditti* afoot in the tourist regions around Naples. Undoubtedly, these travel writers made a lasting impression on Anne Langton at a time when her own love of travel and aesthetic appreciation were evolving.

By late 1820, the Langtons were living in Paris, where Anne was receiving training in the art of miniature portrait painting. Her enriching European tour might have continued further, but that year Thomas learned that the family business in Liverpool – left in the hands of a nephew during his absence abroad – was floundering. Thomas immediately returned to England to try to avert disaster. The prognosis for the business was not good, and the Langtons were confronted by reduced prospects. Thomas returned briefly to the continent, presumably only to assist with the family's preparations for departure, and in January 1821 the family abruptly ended their tour and hastened back to England to sell Blythe Hall and look for more manageable accommodations in Liverpool. Thomas returned full-time to the family business. William, almost eighteen, went to London to begin training for business. John, almost twelve, attended a school in Liverpool. Stringent economy was in order. With a reduced household staff, Ellen, Alice, and sixteen-year-old Anne took on much of the daily housekeeping themselves.

To comprehend the full impact of the Langtons' change in circumstances, it has to be noted that loss of fortune meant loss of property and, consequently, loss of prestige. As Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall have observed, land as property had key significance in the class system in England. Its possession conferred 'special status' on its owners, ensuring that they received respect from their peers as well as from those of lower social rank.[19] Loss of land – whether as a result of accident, misfortune, or miscon-

duct – signified loss of status and prestige and was, therefore, devastating at a personal as well as a social and financial level.

At birth, Anne Langton appeared to have been guaranteed a life of leisure, privilege, good fortune, and ease. As her family's fortunes waned, her life evolved along a very different course. Her brothers went into the wider world, but her existence became narrowly constricted. For Anne, her father's financial losses meant there would be no dowry and no début or 'coming out' as a 'young lady' in formal society at the usual débutante age of seventeen. No dowry and no coming out meant no introductions to eligible young men and, therefore, no likely prospect of suitors, even from the middle classes. No fortune, no suitors – no marriage. This was a serious matter: for women of that era 'the only narrative available to them [was] ... the conventional marriage, or erotic plot.'[20] Cultivated, attractive, with a lively intelligence, Anne, on the verge of womanhood, had to face the likely negation of her marriage prospects and acknowledge that, through no fault of her own, her lot in life would most likely be the fate most dreaded by nineteenth-century British gentlewomen: spinsterhood or, worse still, impoverished spinsterhood, a state that was unflatteringly referred to as being 'a distressed gentlewoman.' As 'nobody's wife and nobody's mother,' an unmarried woman's lot was marginal.[21]

The Langtons may have faced reduced circumstances, but their behaviour was still regulated by the social codes of the class of their birth. Anne's journals, letters, and memoir reveal how the concept of genteel feminine behaviour and proper self-comportment permeated her thinking and being and largely determined her life choices. The concept of the social code of gentility is crucial to our understanding of how she functioned, of how societal influences shaped her, of the limits she set for herself, and of the impediments to her pursuing a professional career. At relevant points in the portrait that follows, I comment on her acceptance of this code, her gradual questioning of it and subsequent limited modifications of her behaviour. First, however, an examination of the nature of 'gentlewomanhood' itself and of the context within which it flourished will furnish some preliminary context for Langton's responses to her condition and circumstances. The codes regulating upper- and middle-class womanhood, while prescriptive, were not universally accepted. Some single middle-class women did seek financial independence and/or a career – one thinks of Hannah More, of the Martineau sisters, of Anna Jameson. But such women were few in number.

What, then, were the main concepts of the code of gentility, especially as it pertained to 'gentlewomen' and to their familial and social roles? What effect did the cultural context have on this young, upper-class woman of

reduced circumstance as she entered her early adult years? The genteel code was an informal, but nevertheless widely held, set of social beliefs. The term 'genteel' originally referred to the status of a male person – a 'gentleman' – born and bred into the upper, aristocratic, land-owning (and therefore wealthy) stratum of British society. If the person were female, then the term used was 'gentlewoman.' Independently wealthy – and so freed from the need to 'earn' their living – the men could afford to pursue an extremely comfortable, often luxurious, leisured lifestyle. Over time, the term 'genteel' also came to denote members of the middle class who acquired considerable wealth and who adopted the mores and outwardly opulent mode of living of the upper class: acquiring property, a large residence, fine clothes, jewellery, and other possessions to advertise their wealth. Based on the idea of a gendered hierarchy of binary opposites, the genteel code ascribed differing characteristics to men and women. Operating among the middle and upper classes, it was founded on the belief that differences between the sexes were biologically determined. These differences were regarded as 'natural' and incontrovertible. Such views held serious implications. In a ground-breaking article, 'The Cult of True Womanhood' (1966), Barbara Welter offered a list of attributes by which nineteenth-century gentlewomen were judged socially: they were expected to embody 'piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity. Put [these attributes] ... altogether and they spelled mother, daughter, sister, wife, woman. Without them ... all was ashes. With them she was promised happiness and power.'[22] The 'power' and 'happiness' were, of course, of limited scope, to be exercised and enjoyed only within the arena of home and family, where, in the final analysis, a woman still remained subordinate to her husband's (or father's or brother's) will if he chose to supersede her domestic authority.

By the time of Langton's birth, this ideology had become concretely reinforced by conduct, or courtesy books. These publications informally, but firmly, served as 'authorities' on women's socialization. One such volume, *Letters to a Young Lady*, written by Mrs (Jane) West and published in London in three volumes in 1806, was unequivocally prescriptive in tone and content. As West's *Letters* make clear, the genteel code resulted in a social view that considered 'man' and 'woman' almost as two separate species. Of women's 'innate' attributes, West wrote: 'the passive virtues and the christian graces are her natural dowry.' According to West, adherence to such principles and exercise of 'christian' duties would ensure a woman's spiritual salvation.[23]

It must have seemed an unjust twist of fate for the young Anne Langton, in 1821, to have to abjure almost every hope of fulfilling the traditional gen-

tlewoman's destiny. In *The Gentleman's Daughter*, Vickery describes the social scene into which Anne would have been introduced as a young gentlewoman in the county of Lancashire. Her 'coming out' was to have taken place at the Assembly Rooms of Preston Guild, 'the supreme arena of polite leisure.'[24] In 1817 Thomas Langton had anticipated this occasion while the Langtons were residing at Montpellier, France. At the express invitation of the 'Premier President' (the chief law authority in Montpellier), Anne's parents were persuaded to take their young daughter to one of his evening functions, where 'she danced a good deal ... and was charmed to be so much noticed.' But Thomas added a note of caution: 'This is not, however, to be taken as a precedent, and she is perfectly contented to think that she is not to come out again till Preston Guild.'[25]

Vickery writes of Preston's Assembly Rooms as the hub of social activities for the Lancashire elite, where 'the Lancashire quality [were] on parade' in all their finery.[26] Thomas Langton had served for a time as a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant for Lancaster,[27] so his daughter would have taken a respected place at such affairs. In the Preston Assembly Rooms, as at the national assembly rooms in London or renowned regional ones such as those at Bath, young ladies had their most realistic opportunities to attract a suitable husband: a member of the landed gentry at least, possibly even of the aristocracy; preferably a rich, handsome, personally agreeable young man (as Jane Austen's novels frequently attest).

For Anne, however, changing circumstances meant that she took on the quotidian role of caregiver to her aging parents and aunt, quietly establishing herself as helpmeet to her family, while preparing for the day when she herself would step into the role of chatelaine. She did so dutifully and willingly, as was considered only 'proper' for a good Christian woman. Acquiescence to conformity was a key tenet of the social code for women. Anne was opting for the one possible path to social redemption for gentlewomen, especially unmarried ones with no home to call their own: self-sacrifice, the ultimate 'salvation,' summed up in one word – 'usefulness.'[28]

Anna Jameson (in 1837) and Anne Langton (in 1838), each writing in Upper Canada, reflect on the importance for a woman of proving herself of use to others, though the two exhibit differing ways of exercising this attribute. Jameson writes: 'Do you not think ... that the true importance and real dignity of woman is everywhere, in savage and civilised communities, regulated by her capacity of being useful; or in other words, that her condition is decided by the share she takes in providing for her own subsistence and the well-being of society as a productive labourer. Where she is idle and useless by privilege of sex ... is not her position quite as lamentable ... as where she