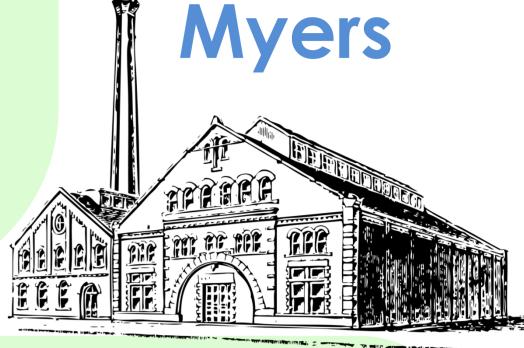
How does Elizabeth Gaskell's novels portray changes made by Victorian industrialisation?

BROKES UNIVERSITY Hannah

Hannah Myers



Introduction

With the new technological advancements, such as the invention of the steam train and the first factory, the period of 19th
Century Britain was deeply defined by the Industrial Revolution. Novelist, and short story writer, Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-1865), having lived in both the country town of Knutsford and the large manufacturing city, Manchester, has paid witness to how industrialisation was changing a variety of areas. The various locations are reflected in the settings of her novels.

Rationale for Study

 To gain a better understanding of Gaskell's opinions of the changes in her lifetime

Method

- Reading and analysing Gaskell's novels, in particular North and South, which is set in a factory town.
- Researching criticism of the novels, especially in regards to the theme of industrialisation.
- 3. Researching relevant information on geographical, historical and social aspects of the time.

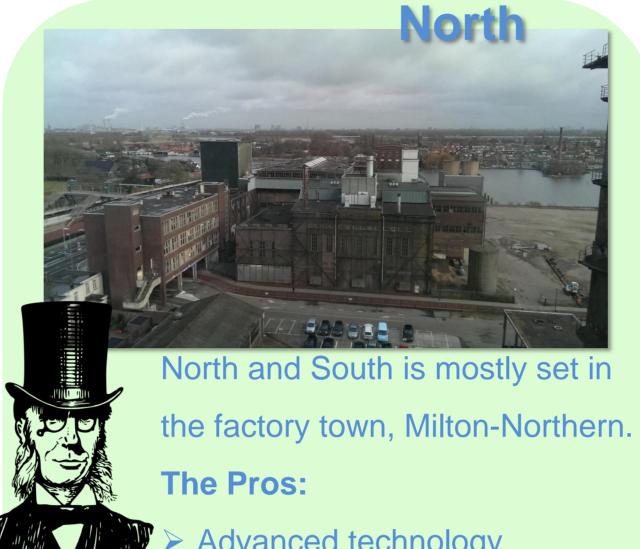
Key Readings by Gaskell

- North and South
- Ruth
- Cranford
- Sylvia's Lovers
- Mary Barton



https://pixabay.com/en/dress-female-people-stern-1296746/ https://pixabay.com/en/gentleman-hat-man-people-top-hat-1299897/ https://pixabay.com/en/british-english-fashion-girl-human-2023201/ https://pixabay.com/en/woman-female-victorian-lady-people-2028250/

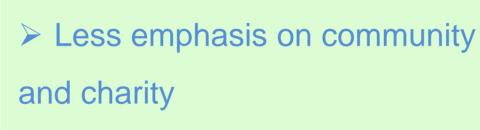
https://morguefile.com/search/Morguefile/1/english%20cottage/https://morguefile.com/search/Morguefile/9/IMAG3011/https://pixabay.com/en/factory-building-chimney-victorian-33004/



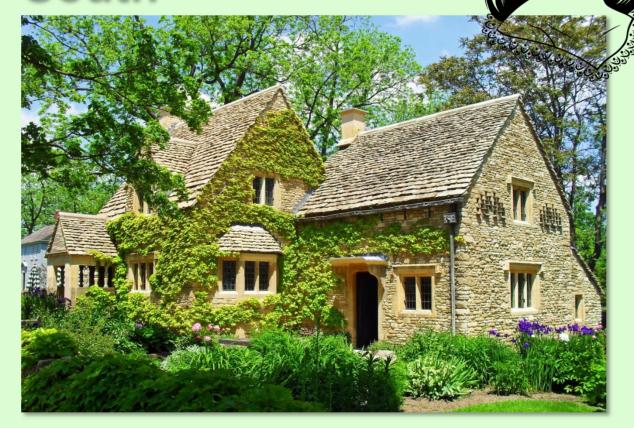
- Advanced technology (progressive)
- Workers are independent and strongwilled
- Lower classes can work their way into positions of power and wealth

The cons:

- Conflict between Masters and Workers
- Poor working conditions



South



Helstone is a southern rural village where the main character, Margaret Hale, originates from.

The Pros:

- Beautiful with lots of nature
- Focus on good taste and comfort, rather than money

The cons:

- Poorer conditions for working class, with less wages earned
- Slow and dull lifestyle (stagnant)
- Superstitious Traditions



Stefan.p21 (Maciej Preś) (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:King_Street_in_Knutsford.jpg),

https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode

Knutsford, on the outskirts of Manchester and where Gaskell grew up, is used as inspiration for Cranford.

Cranford is an example of the traditions of a town in decline. The upper class citizens are learning to perform menial jobs, whilst the traditionally feminine town learns to embrace masculine intruders.

Monkshaven is based on the coastal town of Whitby. Formerly famous for its



whaling industry, the traditional employment went into decline, and it became a bath town.

Mrs Gaskell's Guide to Industrialisation Improvement

- "Work with the community to improve the lifestyle of those less fortunate."
- "Embrace technological progress and try to adapt, if you can."
- "Don't judge a person by class, community or career!"

Conclusion

The industrial towns are described as grim, smokey, masculine, and destructive to traditional values; suggesting a personal distaste. Conversely, there is individuality and potential for lower class citizens to reach higher social standings.