

The Chronology for *Wives and Daughters*

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1. Chronology

Gaskell's chronology for *Wives and Daughters* is, as Easson points out, "a little (but not crucially) uncertain," as those for her other novels mostly are. Nevertheless, the chronology that should be closest to her original intention can be deduced from external as well as internal evidence as is the case with her other fiction. The following investigation is an attempt to create the most reliable chronology for the novel.

2. Time Span

Careful examination of the time sequence discloses the period treated in this novel is eight years (See "The Comprehensive Chronology for *Wives and Daughters*" for detail). Chapters 1-2 mainly describe 12-year-old (*WD* 2) Molly Gibson's first visit to the Cumnor Towers in "June" (*WD* 1) of Year 1. Since her birthday is "22 June" (*WD* 146) and her visit to the Towers is probably the event of 17 June,² she is nearly thirteen at this stage, to be exact. In Chapter 3, the scene moves "sixteen years" (*WD* 27) back to Gibson's settlement in Hollingford and its subsequent events. The narrative enters Year 5 at the beginning of Chapter 4, for Molly is "nearly seventeen" (*WD* 34). Gibson's meditation in Chapter 5—"she's only just seventeen, —not seventeen, indeed, till July; not for six weeks yet. Sixteen and three-quarters!" (*WD* 48)—indicates Molly's month of birth is July, which contradicts Phoebe's claim that her birthday is "the 22nd of [. . .] June" (*WD* 146). Our chronology leans upon Phoebe, who piques "herself on knowing all about dear Mr Gibson's domestic affairs" (*WD* 146). The contradiction should be resolved if the busy doctor's miscalculation were supposed to be caused by his uneasiness about his apprentice Mr Coxe's confession of love towards his 16-year-old "baby" (*WD* 48). Molly becomes "seventeen" (*WD* 80, 83) during her three-month stay at Hamley Hall from May to August of Year 5 (Chs. 6-13). In Chapter 19, time passes into Year 6, as Roger comes back from Cambridge for Christmas holidays in December (*WD* 205, 705) and returns to sit for "the mathematical tripos" (*WD* 231) beginning on Monday "from 14 to 21 January" (*WD* 706). After describing Molly's hopeless "winter" (*WD* 430, 432), the narrator introduces her conversation with Cynthia about the date of Roger's letter—"December the 10th." "That's nearly two months ago" (*WD* 433). This gives us a hint that the year has turned into Year 7 here in Chapter 37.

Cynthia leaves for London (*WD* 514; Ch. 45) in the "dead season of the year" (*WD* 532; Ch. 47)—

probably “November” (*WD* 723) of Year 7, as can be inferred from the following events. Soon after, Molly carries out her mission to hand Cynthia’s note to Preston in a bookshop, which happens to be witnessed by Mrs Goodenough, the gossip (Ch. 46). Chapter 49 describes Lady Harriet’s action on “November” (*WD* 553) days to find the truth in the Hollingford rumour about Molly and Preston. Cynthia comes back from London within Year 7, for, on the day of her arrival, she talks with her mother about the coming Charity Ball scheduled for the “25th” (*WD* 562; Ch. 50), probably of December.

Accused by Gibson of her misdemeanour (*WD* 571-74; Ch. 50), Cynthia declares to her mother and Molly her intention to terminate her engagement to Roger, “three months” (*WD* 575; Ch. 51) after she was in London—that is, in January or February of Year 8.³ In “late June” (*WD* 619, 624), Roger comes back temporarily from Africa. Cynthia’s “engagement” to Henderson (*WD* 636) should be the event of July. In “August” (*WD* 646), Molly spends “a week” (*WD* 655) at the Towers for recuperation. Her weekly visit to Hamley Hall is paid in the ensuing week (*WD* 656), probably in early September, for it is “about six weeks” after Cynthia’s engagement (*WD* 656) and “early” autumn (*WD* 661). Osborne’s child catches scarlet fever on the last day of Molly’s stay. Only “three weeks or a month” (*WD* 676) afterwards, i.e. in late “September” (*WD* 653), Roger leaves again for Africa. On the final few pages is described the conversation among Gibson, Clare, and Molly, which takes place some days after his departure. Consequently, the narrative ends probably in early October of Year 8.

3. Three Options

There are three candidate years for Year 1 (See Table 1). The first is 1819. The date of the prelude (Chs. 1-2) is set “[f]ive-and-forty years” (*WD* 2) before 1864, when the story began to be written.⁴ This fulfils the other condition indicated on the same page that it is set “before the passing of the Reform Bill” of 1832. The second is 1830, which was worked out by counting backwards from 1837, when the construction of the “new line between Birmingham and London” (*WD* 638), the event in Year 8, was complete. Easson proposes the third option, 1823. Relying on Gaskell’s statement in 1864 that her story is “of country-town life 40 years ago” (*Letters* 731), “historical references,” and “the reasonable assumption that Gaskell more or less tied Molly’s age to her own” (Introd. to *WD* xiv), he presumes the starting year is 1822 (Gaskell was born in 1810), and that the main action “takes us from June 1827, shortly before Molly’s seventeenth birthday, to autumn 1830” (Introd. to *WD* xiv).⁵

Chapters	1-2	4-19	19-37	37-50	50-60
Allocated Page (%)	3.86	28.1	28.72	20.27	17.34
	Year 1	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Option 1	1819 (Y)	1823 (Y)(Y/N)	1824 (N)	1825 (N)	1826 (N)
Option 2	1830 (Y)	1834 (N)(Y)	1835 (N)	1836 (Y)	1837 (Y)
Modified Easson’s	1823 (Y)	1827 (Y)(Y)	1828 (Y)	1829 (N)	1830 (N)
	Year 1	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
Easson’s	1822	1827	1828	1829	1830

Y=consistent with historical facts; N=inconsistent

Table 1. Candidate Years for *Wives and Daughters*⁶

There are six historical references in the text to be examined for establishing the authorially-intended chronology: (a) the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832 (*WD* 2; Ch. 1), (b) the end of Napoleonic Wars in 1815 (*WD* 37; Ch. 4), (c) the death of Lord Byron in 1824 (*WD* 143; Ch. 12), (d) the passing of Catholic Emancipation Bill in 1829 (*WD* 271; Ch. 23), (e) the foundation of the Geographical Society in 1830 (*WD* 473; Ch. 41), and (f) the opening of the railway line between Birmingham and London in 1837 (*WD* 638; Ch. 57). The chronology which tallies with as many historical facts as possible should be the most appropriate candidate that represents Gaskell's intention. Easson claims his calculation matches all historical references except the last (*WD* 689).

Historical Reference	Reform Bill (1832)	Napoleonic Wars (1815)	Byron's death (1824)	Catholic Emancipation (1829)	Geographical Society (1830)	Birmingham-London line (1837)
Chapter	1	4	12	23	41	57
Year Concerned	1	5	5	6	7	8
Option 1	1819 (Y)	1823 (Y)	1823 (Y/N)	1824 (N)	1825 (N)	1826 (N)
Option 2	1830 (Y)	1834 (N)	1834 (Y)	1835 (N)	1836 (Y)	1837 (Y)
Modified Easson	1823 (Y)	1827 (Y)	1827 (Y)	1828 (Y)	1829 (N)	1830 (N)

Y=consistent with historical facts; N=inconsistent

Table 2. Textual Consistency with Historical Facts

(a) At the outset of the story, the narrator states that the date of Chapter 1 is set "before the passing of the Reform Bill" (*WD* 2), i.e. the 1832 Reform Act. This criterion is met by all options for the chronology. (b) In describing the spring of Year 5, the narrator observes that those days are "the decade after the conclusion of the great continental war" (*WD* 37). Neither Easson's dating "1827" nor Option 1's "1823" produces serious conflict with the narrator's "1825"—only two-year discrepancy—, since the end of Napoleonic Wars was 1815. Option 2, however, displays nine-year difference as its Year 5 is 1834. (c) In defence of having quoted Byron, a "very immoral poet," Lord Cumnor apologizes to his wife by saying "I saw him take his oaths in the House of Lords" (*WD* 143). Their conversation takes place in the summer of Year 5. Easson infers, from "a change of tense in MS,"⁷ that Byron has already been dead at that time (*WD* 701). The date of his death, 19 April 1824, verifies that the critic's Year 5 "1827" and Option 2's "1834" are in harmony with the narrator's, while Option 1's "1823" not. It is possible, however, to consider the year of Byron's death barely affects determination of Year 5; for, Lord Cumnor may be just recollecting his past experience of witnessing the poet's misdemeanour, regardless of his being dead or alive. (d) Osborne hesitates to confess his secret marriage to Aimée, a French Catholic, to his father in March of Year 6, because it was the period when "Catholic emancipation has begun to be talked about by some politicians, and [. . .] the sullen roar of the majority of Englishmen, at the bare idea of it, was surging in the distance with ominous threatenings" (*WD* 271). The narrative reflects the political circumstances in the 1820s: "Radical MPs [. . .] had been arguing for some years that Parliament should bring an end to anti-Catholic legislation. After O'Connell's victory [in 1826], even Tories such as Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington began arguing for reform" ("Daniel O'Connell," *Spartacus Educational*). Therefore, Easson's Year 6 "1828" corresponds to the historical facts, while Option 1's

"1824" is a little too early and Option 2's "1835" too late. (e) Roger sets off for Africa in the autumn of Year 6 (*WD* 395), or 1828 of the modified Easson chronology. Morris supports Easson's dating: "Gaskell's historical accuracy is not at fault" (xxii), for throughout "the 1820s the African Association [founded in 1794 for the purpose of furthering geographical discoveries] continued to support exploration in Africa" (xxiii). Notwithstanding, a contradiction occurs when Roger's letter from Africa is read by Lord Hollingford at the Geographical Society in the early autumn of Year 7, or Easson's "1829": the society's foundation year is "1830" (Morris xxiii; *Royal Geographical Society*). Only Option 2 is consistent with the historical fact. (f) The newly constructed railway "line between Birmingham and London" Lady Cumnor refers to (*WD* 638) opened on 20 July 1837, sixteen days after the Liverpool and Manchester line was linked to Birmingham ("Grand Junction," *Spartacus Educational*). Hollingford, modelled after Knutsford, is supposed to be located between Manchester and Birmingham; Lady Cumnor's seeing off her first daughter Lady Mary Cuxhaven, who leaves for London (*WD* 91), at a railway station (*WD* 638),⁸ is probably the event of "August" (*WD* 646) of Year 8. Hence, the year falls on 1837. Easson's Year 8 "1830," thus, incurs contradiction, but it is acknowledged by the critic himself (*WD* 690). Among three options, only Option 2 accords with this historical reference.

The above comparison of three options with historical references discloses there is no difference in matching rate between Option 2 and the modified Easson's—both 66.7% (they match four historical facts out of six). The solution to the question as to which chronology represents authorial meaning better, then, is to depend on the outcome of inquiry into the following three issues: (g) autobiographical reading of the text, (h) the internal date concerning the birth certificate of Osborne's son, and (i) statistical data on page allocation.

(g) The attempt to read *Wives and Daughters* as Gaskell's autobiography has generally prevailed, but such reading is disputable. In agreement with Easson's semi-autobiographical reading (*WD* 689), Baker considers its action is set in the late 1820s: "The action is placed forty-five years before the time of writing, making the heroine the same age as the author, so that descriptions and details in the novel have the authenticity of personal memories" (Introd. to *WD* 5-6).⁹ Nevertheless, Easson himself discreetly avoids depending too much on autobiographical elements in constructing his chronology, and makes a parenthesised concession in the following assertion: "Molly's age is closely tied to Gaskell's (born 1810), so that the novel (in no sense autobiographical) opens in 1822" (*WD* 689). Whether Gaskell describes Molly as her prototype or not is open to question, as is suggested by some crucial inconsistencies between the fiction and her actual life. For instance, Molly's birthday is 22 June while Gaskell 29 September; Molly is seventeen at the time of Gibson's remarriage while Elizabeth three of her father's. Therefore, autographical elements are too subjective and weak to rely on as the grounds for setting the action in 1820s. (h) In early Year 8, the narrator reveals the birthday of Osborne's son is "June 21, 183-" (*WD* 598), and that he is "nearly two years old" (*WD* 601) at that time of his father's death. The narrative sequence flows smoothly in Option 2, where Year 8 is 1837. In the modified Easson's, young Osborne's year of birth falls on 1828 and his father's year of death 1830 (*WD* 726). (i) Probably, the most objective (therefore reliable) criterion for establishing the chronology would be page

allocations to each Year: the chronology occupying the largest number of pages on which the narrated events agree with historical references should be most closely reflecting the author's intention. The page allocation in "The Comprehensive Chronology of *Wives and Daughters*" demonstrates Gaskell's main focus lies on Year 6 (28.7%), followed by Years 5 (28.1%) and 7 (20.3%); in other words, these three years covers 77.1% of the total actions. According to Table 2, Option 2, in which years consistent with historical facts are Years 1, 5, 7, and 8, matches 55.5 percent of total actions: Year 1 (3.86%) + Year 5 (14.05%, or half of 28.1%) + Year 7 (20.27%) + Year 8 (17.34%). On the other hand, Modified Easson's Chronology, where they are Years 1, 5, and 6, tallies with 60.7 percent of all events: Year 1 (3.86%) + Year 5 (28.1%) + Year 6 (28.72%). If the allocation rate for the flashback scenes (Scenes 22-25) of Chapter 3, 1.05%, is added to the data for accuracy's sake, Option 2's matching rate rises up to 56.6 percent of the total pages, while modified Easson's 61.7 percent.

The investigation above implies the time sequence closer to authorial meaning is the latter. Accordingly, its discrepancies with the historical references about the Geographical Society and the Birmingham-London line and with the fictional date of young Osborne's birthday cannot but be appraised as Gaskell's careless errors.¹⁰

4. Credibility of the Chronology

4.1. Process

Five illustrations are given below to show the process for determining the timeline of the novel. (a) The annual festivity to the school visitors takes place on "Thursday, the 19th" (*WD* 91; Ch. 8). The month should be June, since that of the festivity Molly attended in Chapter 2 is "June" (*WD* 1). (b) Preston reveals in Chapter 20 that Roger Hamley has recently become "senior wrangler" (*WD* 237) in the Cambridge examination of the mathematical tripos, which is normally conducted in mid-January (Easson's "Notes," *WD* 706). The month treated in Chapter 20, therefore, is considered to be January. (c) Chapter 29 deals with "autumn" (*WD* 342), Chapter 30 "the beginning of winter" (*WD* 356), Chapter 32 the Cumnors' "autumn" sojourn at the Towers (*WD* 371), Chapter 33 "one of those still and lovely autumn days" (*WD* 382), and Chapter 34 Cynthia's secret engagement to Roger in "autumn" (*WD* 391). Accordingly, it is reasonable to suppose Chapters 29-34 are set in autumn of 1828. (d) The conversation between Cynthia and Molly in Chapter 37 reveals it was "nearly two months ago" that Roger's letter dated "December the 10th" reached the former (*WD* 433). It can be inferred, therefore, that their talk is had someday around 10 February. (e) Osborne's call at Mr Gibson in Chapter 45 is the event of "November" (*WD* 585) 1829; Molly relates his secret marriage to her father "six months" later (*WD* 585)—that is, in April of 1830.

4.2. Careless Dating

(a) One of the controversial dates is the one related to Cynthia's determination to end her engagement to Roger (*WD* 575-76) and Osborne Hamley's death on the same day (*WD* 579). Clare's statement that she could have understood her daughter's decision had it happened "three months ago" (*WD* 575), i.e. around early November 1829, indicates that the date is probably someday in January

1830. On the following day, however, Molly, disclosing Osborne's secret marriage, tells her father that the Hamleys' elder son paid him a visit "six months ago — last November" (*WD* 585). Molly's computation discloses the date is someday in May 1830. This conflict, or the gap of four months, is the cause of what Easson calls "the only uncertainty [. . .] between November 1829 and spring 1830" ("Notes," *WD* 689) in the timeline.¹¹ Similarly, this careless dating of Gaskell's brings about the following confusion. Aimée, Osborne's fiancée, pays a sudden call at Hamley Hall on "February" (*WD* 606) 1830. If this dating is correct, Cynthia's determination and Osborne's death, which occur a few days before it, is to be the events of "January" or "February," not "May." On the other hand, in describing Roger's temporary return home of "late June" (*WD* 619) in Chapter 55, the narrator remarks Roger received "the intelligence of Osborne's death" and "Cynthia's hasty letter of relinquishment" "two months" (*WD* 620) ago. If so, his brother's tragic death and his fiancée's change of mind are to be the occurrences of "late April." The contradiction is unresolved and left as it is in our chronology.

(b) Cynthia's paternal uncle Kirkpatrick, QC, should be titled "KC," since the years treated in the novel are "before Victoria's accession (1837)," as Easson correctly points out ("Notes," *WD* 719).

4.3. Credibility of the Chronology

The following are four examples to prove the correctness of the narrator's calculation and the reliability of our timeline. (a) In autumn 1829, Gibson confesses that he has been practicing at Hollingford for "more than twenty years" (*WD* 511). It is "sixteen years before" (*WD* 27) the first year of our chronology, 1823, that he came to the village, namely in 1807. Hence, he has been a Hollingford practitioner for twenty-two years at the time of 1829, which matches Gibson's confession. (b) Mrs Goodenough remarks it was "about a week ago" (*WD* 528) that Molly happened to witness the secret meeting between Cynthia and Preston (*WD* 483-87). Careful reading confirms the correctness of narrator's calculation. It is an "autumn" (*WD* 480) day in 1829 that the incident occurs. "Towards evening" (*WD* 501) of the next day (*WD* 500, 502), i.e. the first day after the clandestine meeting, Cynthia asks Molly if she can retrieve her letters from Preston (*WD* 503). In response, Molly meets Preston next day, or the second day, and this meeting is witnessed by Sheepshanks (*WD* 503-08). "[N]ext morning" (*WD* 510), i.e. the third day, Preston returns Cynthia's letters to the owner and Molly hears Cynthia's second request — returning his money to Preston (*WD* 513); "tomorrow" (*WD* 511), or the fourth day, Gibson and Cynthia leave for London (*WD* 514); "on the day following on Mr Gibson's departure" (*WD* 517), i.e. the fifth day, Margaret gives Preston Cynthia's note in Grinstead's shop (*WD* 523); and, on the sixth day,¹² Mrs Goodenough gossips about Molly's hurried walk and Preston's sudden appearance seen "about a week ago" (*WD* 483, 528). (c) Lady Cumnor's praise of Roger Hamley in August 1830 reminds Clare that she turned him out from her house "two years ago" (*WD* 640) for his untimely early visit. It is indeed the occurrence of June 1828 (*WD* 331). (d) It is related in August 1830 that Roger left for Africa "nearly two years" (*WD* 646) ago. According to our chronology, his departure is the event of autumn 1828 (*WD* 391-95).

4.4. Discoveries

Below are four discoveries concerning personal events of Molly, Clare, and Cynthia, which are not

clearly stated in the text. (a) Molly's year of birth is 1810 (the same as the author's), as she is "seventeen" on 22 June 1827 (*WD* 146). (b) Molly loses her first mother Mary when she is "just three years old" (*WD* 29); hence, the year of Mary's death turns out to be 1813 or 1814. (c) Clare Kirkpatrick has been a widow for "seven months" (*WD* 17) at the time of 17 June 1823; thus, it turns out she lost her husband in December 1822. (d) In describing the events of autumn 1829, the narrator observes that Cynthia was "not sixteen" (*WD* 498), or probably fifteen, when she promised marriage to Robert Preston "four or five years" ago (*WD* 491). Therefore, she is nineteen or twenty then. Her year of birth, accordingly, turns out to be 1809 or 1810.

Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	al	%	Stage	God	Molly Gibson	Mr Bob Gibson	Mrs Mary Gibson	Betty	Mr Cox	Miss Eyre	Lord Cunnor	Lady Cunnor	Lady Cuxhaven	Lady Agnes	Lady Harriet	Lord Hollingford	Sally Browning	Phoebe Browning	Clare Gibson	Cynthia	Mrs Goodenough	Squire Hamley	Mrs Hamley	Osborne Hamley	Aimee	Roger Hamley	Mr Preston	Henderson	Narrator	Brief Summary		
3	197			24	30-31	1.0	0.15																											Mr Gibson's position settled			
				25	31-34	3.0	0.45																												Miss Eyre, Molly's governess		
				26	34	0.5	0.07																												Molly nearly seventeen.		
4				27	34-36	1.0	0.15																											Lord Hollingford, so scientific			
			28	36-37	1.5	0.22		Hollingford																										Gibson welcomed at the Towers			
			29	37-39	2.0	0.3																												Lord Hollingford and Mr Ashton			
			30	39-44	5.0	0.74																													Squire Hamley and his family		
			31	44-47	1.5	0.22																													Gibson's two apprentices		
5			Thursday (57)	32	47-48	1.0	0.15																												Gibson takes a note for Molly.		
		33		48-49	1.5	0.22																													Mr Cox's love letter		
		34		49-50	0.5	0.07																													A motherless girl with two boys		
		35		50-54	4.0	0.6																													Talk between Gibson and Cox		
		36		54-55	0.5	0.07																													Mr Gibson's cogitations		
		37		55-56	0.5	0.07																													Mrs Hamley is pleased.		
		38		56-57	1.0	0.15			Hi																										Squire's pride in Osborne		
6	1827		Friday (55)	39	57-59	2.5	0.37																												Gibson hidden reason		
		40		59-60	0.5	0.07																												Molly at Miss Rose's shop			
		41		60	0.5	0.07																													Difficulty in reading a daughter		
		42		60-61	1.0	0.15																													Molly leaves for Hamley		
		43		61-62	0.5	0.07																														Molly reaches Hamley.	
		44		62-63	1.5	0.22																														Molly welcomed by Mrs Hamley	
		45		63-66	2.0	0.3																														Portraits of the two boys	
		46		66	1.0	0.15																														"I don't think I am pretty."	
		47		66-67	0.5	0.07																															Squire welcomes Molly.
		7					48	67-69	2.0	0.3																											
				49	69	0.5	0.07																												Gibson's visit		
				50	69-70	0.5	0.07																												Squire's pride in his two boys		
				51	70	0.5	0.07																												Her father's second marriage?		
				52	70-71	1.5	0.22																													During and after breakfast	
7				53	71-75	3.5	0.52																												Squire takes Mlly to the garden.		
				54	75	0.5	0.07																												Mr Gibson's martyr-cook		
				55	75-76	1.0	0.15																												Another domestic trouble		

Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	sp	%	Stage	Molly Gibson	Mr Bob Gibson	Mrs Mary Gibson	Betty	Mr Coke	Miss Eyre	Lord Cumnor	Lady Cumnor	Lady Cuxhaven	Lady Agnes	Lady Harriet	Lord Hollingford	Sally Browning	Phoebe Browning	Clare Gibson	Gynthia	Mrs Goodenough	Squire Hamley	Mrs Hamley	Osborne Hamley	Aimée	Roger Hamley	Mr Preston	Henderson	Narrator	Brief Summary				
7	5		Same day as above	56	76-79	3.0	0.45																											Milly will stay two months more.				
				57	79-81	2.0	0.3																													Squire expresses anxiety.		
				58	81	0.5	0.07																													A letter from Osborne		
				59	81-82	0.5	0.07																													Mrs Hamley's talk puzzles Milly.		
				60	82-83	0.5	0.07																													Molly's happy days at Hamley		
				61	83-84	1.5	0.22																													Preparation for Roger's return		
				62	84-85	0.5	0.07																													The arrival of Roger		
				63	85-86	1.5	0.22																													Osborne's result unsatisfactory		
				64	86	0.5	0.07																														Molly's meditation	
				65	87-89	2.5	0.37																														Molly's first meeting with Roger	
8	6 (83, 90, 91)			66	89-90	0.5	0.07																												Roger's life in Hamley			
				67	90	0.5	0.07																												When may I come home, papa?			
				68	90-91	0.5	0.07																													Gibson drifting into matrimony		
				69	91-96	5.0	0.74																														Ladies' talk in London	
				70	96-97	1.5	0.22																														The plan approved by the Lord	
				71	97-98	1.5	0.22																														Clare's features	
				72	98-100	1.5	0.22																														Clare's inward comparison	
				73	100	0.5	0.07																														Lady Cumnor in indisposition	
				74	100-02	1.5	0.22																														The evening after the party	
				75	102	0.5	0.07																														Clare's anxiety: Lady's health	
9			1 or 2 days after	76	102	0.5	0.07																												Lady Cumnor's request			
				77	102-04	2.0	0.3																													Lord Hollingford's advice		
				78	104-05	1.0	0.15																														Clare: Gibson's possible partner	
				79	105	0.5	0.07																														Lady Cumnor healed by Gibson	
				80	105-06	1.0	0.15																														Lord Cumnor's letter	
				81	107	0.5	0.07																														The object of Clare's thought	
				82	107-10	3.0	0.45																														Gibson's marriage proposal	
				83	110-11	1.0	0.15																															Lord Cumnor's letter read
				84	111-12	0.5	0.07																															The second talk in the library
				85	112-13	0.5	0.07																															On his way to Hamley Hall

Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	sp	%	Stage	God	Molly Gibson	Mr Bob Gibson	Mrs Mary Gibson	Betty	Mr Coke	Miss Eyre	Lord Cumnor	Lady Cumnor	Lady Cuxhaven	Lady Agnes	Lady Harriet	Lord Hollingford	Sally Browning	Phoebe Browning	Clare Gibson	Cynthia	Mrs Goodenough	Squire Hamley	Mrs Hamley	Osborne Hamley	Aimée	Roger Hamley	Mr Preston	Henderson	Narrator	Brief Summary				
10			Same day as above	86	113-15	3.0	0.45																												Gbsn's confession; Milly's shock				
				87	116-17	1.0	0.15																														Milly weeps on the ash-tree seat.		
				88	117-21	5.0	0.74																															Roger comforts Molly.	
				89	121-22	1.0	0.15																															Roger's talk to his mother	
				90	122-23	0.5	0.07																															Talk: Molly and Mrs Hmily	
				91	123	0.5	0.07																															Milly sobs on Mrs Hmily's breast.	
				92	123-24	0.5	0.07																															Roger's tenderness in deeds	
				93	124-25	1.0	0.15																																Reconciliation
				94	125-26	1.0	0.15																																Clare's wish for speedy marriage
				95	126-27	0.5	0.07																																Clare's plan obstructed
11			Next day (124)	96	127-28	1.5	0.22																													Talk on wedding arrangements			
				97	128-29	1.0	0.15																														Clare dislikes girls.		
				98	129	0.5	0.07																														Milly on her way to the Towers		
				99	129-33	3.5	0.52																															Milly critical of Cir's selfishness	
				100	133-36	3.0	0.45																															Lady Cumnor's plan opposed	
				101	136	0.5	0.07																															Gibson eases the discordances.	
				102	136-37	0.5	0.07																															Wander about in the garden	
				103	137-38	2.0	0.3																															Lady Cumnor's plan discussed	
				104	138-39	0.5	0.07																															Molly bursts into tears.	
				105	139-40	1.0	0.15																																Molly's defence of selfishness
12			Thurs (124)	106	140	0.5	0.07																													Mrs Hamley joins the talk.			
				107	140-41	0.5	0.07																														Squire Hamley's regret		
				108	141	0.5	0.07																															The bond strengthened	
				109	142-43	1.5	0.22																															Lord and Lady Cumnor's talk	
				110	143-46	2.5	0.37																															Clare's preparation for wedding	
				111	146	0.5	0.07																															Gbsn's preparation for wedding	
				112	146-51	4.5	0.67																															Gibson's two requests granted	
				113	151-52	1.0	0.15																															Roger and Molly drawn together	
				114	152	0.5	0.07																																Molly leaves the Hall, missed
				13		8 (181)	Few days	115	152-53	0.5	0.07																												
116	153-54	1.5	0.22																																	Silly notion about Roger			
117	154-55	1.0	0.15																																		Reconciliation: Sally and Molly		

Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	ti	%	Stage	God	Molly Gibson	Mr Bob Gibson	Mrs Mary Gibson	Betty	Mr Coxe	Miss Eyre	Lord Cunmor	Lady Cunmor	Lady Cuxhaven	Lady Agnes	Lady Harriet	Lord Hollingford	Sally Browning	Phoebe Browning	Clare Gibson	Cynthia	Mrs Goodenough	Squire Hamley	Mrs Hamley	Osborne Hamley	Aimée	Roger Hamley	Mr Preston	Henderson	Narrator	Brief Summary						
13		8	Next day (155)	118	155-57	1.5	0.22	HI																											Renovation of Gibson's house						
				119	157-58	0.5	0.07																														Molly in her bridal attire				
				120	158-62	4.5	0.67																															Gibson and Molly in Ashcombe			
				121	163-64	1.5	0.22																															On the way to the church			
14		9 (168)	29 (?): Michaelmas (127)	122	164-65	0.5	0.07																													The wedding ceremony					
				123	165-69	4.0	0.6																														Molly is Harriet's favourite				
				124	169-70	1.0	0.15	L																													Lady Harriet's apology to Molly				
				125	170	0.5	0.07																														Molly's thought about Harriet				
				126	170-72	2.0	0.3	HI																														Roger's brings his mother's note			
				127	172	0.5	0.07																															Molly becomes light-hearted.			
				128	172-74	1.5	0.22																															Molly's first meeting with Osbrn			
				129	174-75	1.0	0.15	HA																														Squire and Roger come back.			
				130	175-77	2.0	0.3																																Phoebe's talk: Harriet's visit		
				131	177-78	0.5	0.07																																The return of the newly-wed		
15	1827	10? (214)	Next Tues (177)	132	178-80	2.0	0.3																														Clare's indelicacy				
				133	180-81	1.0	0.15																															Must I call her "mamma"?			
				134	181-82	0.5	0.07																																Servants' grumbings		
				135	182-83	1.0	0.15																																Betty may be dismissed.		
				136	183-85	1.5	0.22																																Servants leave; Gibson's regret		
				137	185-86	1.0	0.15																																Coxe leaves Gibson as an heir.		
				138	186-87	1.0	0.15																																Visit of the two young Hamleys		
				139	187-88	1.5	0.22																																	Talk with Osborne and Roger	
				140	188-90	2.0	0.3																																		Molly's wish ignored by Clare
				141	190-92	1.5	0.22																																		Clr perplexed at Harriet's notes
16		12? (190)	One day	142	192-95	3.0	0.45																															Squire Hamley's sudden visit			
				143	195-96	1.0	0.15																																Conflicts: Clare and Molly		
				144	196-98	2.0	0.3																																	Mrs Hamley's interrogation	
				145	198-201	3.0	0.45																																	Mrs Hamley's family distress	
				146	201-02	0.5	0.07																																	Squire Hamley in a sad state	
				147	202-03	1.0	0.15																																	Mrs Hamley's approaching death	
				148	203-04	1.0	0.15																																	Gibson's summon for Osborne	
				149	204-05	1.5	0.22																																		Molly tells Squire Gbsn's note.

Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	le	%	Stage	God	Molly Gibson	Mr Bob Gibson	Mrs Mary Gibson	Betty	Mr Cox	Miss Eyre	Lord Cunnor	Lady Cunnor	Lady Cuxhaven	Lady Agnes	Lady Harriet	Lord Hollingford	Sally Browning	Phoebe Browning	Clare Gibson	Cynthia	Mrs Goodenough	Squire Hamley	Mrs Hamley	Osborne Hamley	Alme	Roger Hamley	Mr Preston	Henderson	Narrator	Brief Summary						
26			Same day as above, or Easter Tuesday	213	294-97	3.5	0.52	Hollingford																												The Gbsns enter the ball-room.					
				214	297-98	1.0	0.15																																Phoebe's talk of the dresses		
				215	298-300	1.5	0.22																																		Dances start.
				216	300-03	3.0	0.45																																	Preston's power over Cynthia	
				217	303-04	1.0	0.15																																		The absence of the Cumnors
				218	304-05	0.5	0.07																																	The long-expected party arrives.	
				219	305-07	3.0	0.45																																	Harriet's reason for late arrival	
				220	307-08	0.5	0.07																																		Clare's blame of Molly.
				221	308-09	1.0	0.15																																		Cynthia dances with Preston.
				222	309-10	1.0	0.15																																		Talk: Harriet and her brother
				223	310	0.5	0.07																																		Molly singled out
				224	310-11	0.5	0.07																																		Milly dances with Lord Hllingfrd
225	311-12	1.0	0.15																																Hollingford praises Molly.						
226	312-13	0.5	0.07																																Clare tells Cynth to read a book.						
227	313-14	1.0	0.15																																Squire and Osborn in conflict						
228	314-17	3.0	0.45																																Lord Hollingford's invitation						
229	317-18	1.0	0.15																																Squire's irritation						
230	318-20	2.0	0.3																																The cause of Osborne's debt						
231	320	0.5	0.07																																Rgr declines Lord H's invitation						
232	320-21	0.5	0.07																																	Squire's reason for pride					
233	321	0.5	0.07																																	Cynthia languid and silent					
234	321-24	3.0	0.45																																	Osbrn declines Hrst Wood picnic					
235	324-26	1.5	0.22																																		Cause of Cynthia's indisposition				
236	326-27	0.5	0.07																																	Gbsn's prescription for Cynthia					
237	327-28	1.5	0.22																																	Roger's care for Cynthia					
238	328-29	1.0	0.15																																	Roger is not wanted.					
239	329-32	3.5	0.52																																	Clare's positive rudeness					
240	332-34	1.5	0.22																																	Clare's scorn for Roger					
241	334-36	2.0	0.3																																	Osborne prefers Molly.					
242	336-38	1.5	0.22																																	Gibson's view of his marriage					
243	338-40	2.0	0.3																																	Gibson's advice for Osborne					

1828

4 (323)

5 (323)

6 (329)

au-tumn

Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	le	%	Stage	Molly Gibson	Mr Bob Gibson	Mrs Mary Gibson	Betty	Mr Cox	Miss Byre	Lord Cumnor	Lady Cumnor	Lady Cuxhaven	Lady Agnes	Lady Harriet	Lord Hollingford	Sally Browning	Phoebe Browning	Clare Gibson	Cynthia	Mrs Goodenough	Squire Hamley	Mrs Hamley	Osborne Hamley	Aimée	Roger Hamley	Mr Preston	Henderson	Narrator	Brief Summary						
29			Same day as above	244	340	0.5	0.07																											Gibson: Osborne's health						
				245	340-41	1.0	0.15																														Osborne's visit to the Gibsons			
				246	341-43	2.0	0.3																														Talk in the garden			
				247	343-45	2.0	0.3																														Cynthia: "I'm not good."			
30			One day (346)	248	345-46	1.0	0.15	Ha																											Roger's hesitation to visit Clare					
				249	346-48	1.5	0.22	HI																													Roger's admiration for Cynthia			
				250	348-49	1.0	0.15																															Osborne's reflection		
				251	349-50	1.5	0.22																															Squire's visit to the old tenant		
				252	350-52	2.0	0.3																															At Old Silas's cottage		
				253	352-55	2.5	0.37																															Squire's quarrel with Preston		
				254	355-56	1.5	0.22																															Roger's intervention		
				255	356-57	1.0	0.15																															Squire cannot bear insults.		
				256	358-59	1.5	0.22																																Preston's hatred towards Roger	
				257	359-61	2.0	0.3					HI																											Preston's popularity	
31	1828	au- tumn (342, 356, 371, 382)	(466)	258	361-64	2.5	0.37																														Difference: Molly and Cynthia			
				259	364-65	1.0	0.15																															Rgr's wish for marrying Cynthia		
				260	365-66	1.5	0.22																																Rgr's promise of gaining money	
				261	367	1.0	0.15					Hamley																											Legacy from grandfather	
				262	367-71	3.0	0.45																																Is Osborne's wedlock legal?	
				263	371-72	1.0	0.15																																Cynthia does not love Roger.	
				264	372-75	2.5	0.37																																Clare's monopoly of Harriet	
				265	375-78	4.0	0.6																																	Lady Harriet's visit to Clare
				266	378-80	2.0	0.3																																	Lady Harriet's lunchtime talk
				267	380	0.5	0.07					Hollingford																												Distortions of truth
32			One day (372)	268	380-81	1.0	0.15																														Molly misses Roger.			
				269	381-82	1.0	0.15																															Gbsn's reason for visiting Hmly		
				270	382-87	4.5	0.67																															Prevention is better than cure.		
				271	387-88	0.5	0.07					Hamley																											Estrangement: father and son	
33			One day	272	388	0.5	0.07																													Roger's visit home				
				273	389	0.5	0.07																														Roger's visit to the Gibsons			

Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	le	%	Stage	God	Molly Gibson	Mr Bob Gibson	Mrs Mary Gibson	Betty	Mr Cox	Miss Eyre	Lord Cunmor	Lady Cunmor	Lady Cuxhaven	Lady Agnes	Lady Harriet	Lord Hollingford	Sally Browning	Phoebe Browning	Clare Gibson	Cynthia	Mrs Godenough	Squire Hamley	Mrs Hamley	Osborne Hamley	Aimée	Roger Hamley	Mr Preston	Henderson	Narrator	Brief Summary					
34	1828	Autumn (391)	Same day as above	274	389-90	1.5	0.22	Hollingford																											Molly comes back from walk.					
				275	390-91	0.5	0.07																														Molly hears Roger has come.			
				276	391-92	1.0	0.15																															Molly in her room		
				277	392-95	3.0	0.45																															Secret engagement		
				278	395-98	3.0	0.45																															"We shall never be married."		
				279	398-405	7.5	1.12																															Conjugal interview		
35	1828		One day more than a week later	280	406-08	2.5	0.37	Hollingford																												Gibson's interview with Cynthia				
				281	408-12	4.5	0.67	H																													Gibson tells the news to Squire.			
36			Thursday (415) Friday (417)	282	412-13	0.5	0.07																														Clare's regret			
				283	413-16	3.0	0.45																															Thursday invitation accepted		
				284	416-17	0.5	0.07																																Three women's visit to Hamley	
				285	417-19	2.5	0.37																																Gibson's interview with Molly	
37		winter (432)	One day	286	420-21	1.5	0.22																														Coxe's return to claim Molly			
				287	421-22	1.0	0.15																															Coxe falls in love with Cynthia.		
				288	422	0.5	0.07																															Coxe's visits at the Gibsons		
				289	422-24	2.0	0.3																																Coxe's interview with Gibson	
				290	424-27	2.0	0.3																																Gibson's blame of Cynthia	
				291	427-30	3.5	0.52																																The Gibsons: high moral standard	
38	1829	winter (433)	(435, 436)	292	430-32	2.5	0.37	Hollingford																														Molly spends a sad winter.		
				293	432-34	1.5	0.22																															Roger's letter		
				294	434	0.5	0.07																																Molly's prayer for Roger	
				295	434-36	1.5	0.22																																	Cynthia's secret
				296	436	0.5	0.07																																	Peaceful and monotonous winter
				297	436-39	3.0	0.45																																	Gossip about Mr Kirkpatrick
38	1829	(436)	Easter vacation (440)	298	439-40	1.0	0.15	L																														About Mr Kirkpatrick, QC		
				299	440-41	1.5	0.22	H																														Mr Kirkpatrick's visit to Gibson		
				300	441-42	0.5	0.07	L																														Letter of invitation despatched		
																																				Gibson gives Cynthia L10.				

Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	si	%	Stage	God	Molly Gibson	Mr Bob Gibson	Mrs Mary Gibson	Betty	Mr Cox	Miss Eyle	Lord Cumnor	Lady Cumnor	Lady Cuxhaven	Lady Agnes	Lady Harriet	Lord Hollingford	Sally Browning	Phoebe Browning	Clare Gibson	Cynthia	Mrs Goodenough	Squire Hamley	Mrs Hamley	Osborne Hamley	Aime	Roger Hamley	Mr Preston	Henderson	Narrator	Brief Summary			
44		10 or 11	Same day as above	334	501-03	1.5	0.22																											Cynthia's request for help				
				335	503-08	5.0	0.74																													Molly's interview with Preston		
				336	508	0.5	0.07																													Encounter with Mr Sheepshanks		
				337	508-10	1.5	0.22																													Molly's talk with Cynthia		
45		10 or 11	Next day (510)	338	510	0.5	0.07																												Molly depressed			
				339	510-12	1.0	0.15																													Letters: Roger and Kirkpatrick		
				340	512	0.5	0.07																													Molly copies Roger's letter		
				341	512-14	1.5	0.22																														Cynth's request for another help	
46		11	Next day (513)	342	514-17	3.0	0.45																													Gibson and Cynthia for London		
				343	517	0.5	0.07																														Clare to the Towers	
				344	517-20	2.5	0.37																														Osborne comes to see Gibson	
				345	520-21	1.0	0.15																															Phoebe's comfort visit
47		11 (553, 585)	Next day (517, 518)	346	521-22	1.5	0.22																														To Grinstead's bookseller	
				347	522-23	1.0	0.15																													M gives Preston Cynthia's note		
				348	523-24	1.0	0.15																														Molly's meditation	
				349	524-27	2.5	0.37																														Gossip at Mrs Dawes's table	
48		11	Next day (528, 530)	350	527-29	2.5	0.37																													Mrs Goodenough's disclosure		
				351	530-32	2.5	0.37																													Gibson's return from London		
				352	532	0.5	0.07																														Visit to Hamley postponed	
				353	532-33	1.0	0.15																														Preston true to Cynthia	
49		11	One evening (535)	354	534-35	1.0	0.15																														Gossip gathering strength	
				355	535-37	3.0	0.45																														Phoebe tells Sally the gossip	
				356	537-38	1.0	0.15																														Sally's talk with Mrs Dawes	
				357	538-39	0.5	0.07																															Sally summons Gibson
48		11	One evening (549)	358	539-41	2.5	0.37																														Sally tells Gibson the scandal	
				359	542-47	6.0	0.89																															Gibson's interview with Molly
				360	548-49	1.5	0.22																															Molly feels perpetual slights
				361	549-51	2.5	0.37																															Clare has been ill for two weeks
49		11	One evening (553)	362	552-53	1.0	0.15																														Cumnors' return to the Towers	
				363	553-55	3.0	0.45																															Lady Harriet doubts the rumour
				364	555-58	2.0	0.3																															Lady Harriet vs Miss Brownings
				365	558-60	2.5	0.37																															

Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	le	%	Stage	Brief Summary
57			Same day as above Tuesday (648)	429	646-48	2.0	0.3		Sir Charles Morton
				430	648	0.5	0.07		Molly regaining health
				431	648	0.5	0.07		Molly at dinner
				432	649	0.5	0.07		Cynthia's wedding day
				433	649-50	1.5	0.22	Towers	Roger attracted by Molly
58		8	Saturday (650)	434	650-53	2.5	0.37		Talk between Molly and Roger
				435	653	0.5	0.07		Roger's explanation to Molly
				436	653-54	1.0	0.15		Lady Harriet's prophecy
				437	655	0.5	0.07		Molly's promised visit
				438	655-56	1.5	0.22		Talk between Molly and Clare
				439	656-57	1.0	0.15	Hillingfrd	Miss Brownings' visit
				440	657-59	1.5	0.22		Mrs Goodenough's visit
				441	659-61	1.5	0.22		Mrs Goodenough: husband hunt?
				442	661	0.5	0.07		Molly's visit to Hamley Hall
				443	661-63	1.5	0.22		Lunch-time conversation
59	1830		One day in next week	444	663	0.5	0.07		Molly's air of constraint
				445	663-64	1.0	0.15		Aimée's consideration for Molly
				446	664-66	2.0	0.3	Hamley	Squire's advice for Roger
				447	666-67	1.0	0.15		Squire's talk to Molly
				448	667-68	1.0	0.15		Young Osborne falls ill.
				450	668-69	1.0	0.15		Roger gives Molly a nosegay.
				451	669	0.5	0.07		Too late—or not?
				452	670-71	1.0	0.15		Roger's love for Molly
				453	671-74	3.0	0.45		Talk between Clare and Molly
				454	674	0.5	0.07	Hillingfrd	Little Roger: scarlet fever
60			One day (675)	455	674	0.5	0.07		Molly may not see Roger.
				456	675-76	1.0	0.15	Hillingfrd	Gibson's talk at dinner
				457	676-79	3.0	0.45	Hm	Gibson's sanction
				458	679	0.5	0.07		Lover vs father: lover wins.
				459	679-80	1.0	0.15	Hl	Roger's farewell, departure
			Tuesday (676)	460	680-81	0.5	0.07		Clare envious of Cynthia

Notes

- 1 Elizabeth Gaskell, *Wives and Daughters: An Everyday Story*, ed. Angus Easson (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000) 726. Page references hereafter in the text with the abbreviation of the novel *WD* attached to.
- 2 According to the talk between Lady Cumnor and her daughter Lady Agnes, they are returning to London on "Friday the 18th" as soon as the school visitors' affair is over (*WD* 7).
- 3 Alternatively, Molly's remark to her father on page 585: "six months ago—last November, when you went up to Lady Cumnor" suggests Cynthia's breach of engagement is the occurrence of March or April. This is another example of Gaskell's careless calculation.
- 4 Outlining the story in her letter to George Smith, the publisher, dated 3 May 1864, Gaskell discloses it is about "country-town life 40 years ago" (*Letters* 731-32); its serialization in *The Cornhill Magazine* started from August of the same year (*Cornhill*, vol. 10, 179).
- 5 Easson's counting is modified, as he mistakes the five-year span between the first year and the fifth for the six-year. If Molly is shortly before seventeen in June 1827, the date when she is shortly before thirteen (which she actually is at the beginning of the novel) should be June 1823.
- 6 The data is based on the Comprehensive Chronology of *Wives and Daughters*.
- 7 The change was confirmed in Manchester University Library on 27 September 2004 (John Rylands was under repair): "s" is deleted with two short lines slanting from left top to right bottom in the phrase "he's was a very immoral poet" in the first volume of MS (212). The tense has been altered from the present to the past.
- 8 The station may not be Hollingford Station, for Knutsford Station, its model, opened on 12 May 1862 ("Class 3's Local History Work"; Uglow, *EG* 542; Goodchild 11; Payne 12).
- 9 Uglow also considers the novel is set in the late 1820 (*EG* 61).
- 10 This conclusion is supported by Uglow (*EG* 580).
- 11 "There is unspecified gap of some months between ch. XLIX (November (1829), p. 553) and ch. L (reference to the Easter Charity Ball, p. 562)" (Easson's "Note," *WD* 726).
- 12 Mrs Goodenough discloses she saw Margaret handing a note to Preston "only yesterday" (*WD* 528).

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Synopsis: 『妻たちと娘たち』 推定年代記

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テキストにちりばめられた時間や季節の描写と歴史的事実への言及を基に、エリザベス・ギヤスケルによる最後の長編小説『妻たちと娘たち』の正確な（つまり、作者が意図したはずの）年代記を策定する。まず、作品内の時間データの分析から、物語が8年間に及ぶことをつきとめた後、考えられる三つの候補を選定。おのおのについて、作中で言及される6つの歴史的事実との矛盾の有無を吟味し、歴史的事実と合致する年に最も多くのページ数が割かれている候補を、作者が意図した年代記と断定した。結果的に明らかになった作者の不注意な時間設定や、これまで気づかれなかった登場人物の生年などを指摘して、論考の締めくくりとした。