

〔論文〕

The Chronology of *North and South*¹

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to call critics' attention to the effectiveness of a chronology as a means for objective understanding of Elizabeth Gaskell's meaning in *North and South*. Modelled after C. P. Sanger's chronological analysis of the structure of *Wuthering Heights* and Karl Kroeber's statistical investigation into styles in fiction, a comprehensive chronology is composed for *North and South* first by dividing the narrative into scenes in accordance with the shift of time, and then by examining main characters' frequency of appearance and the change of locations scene by scene. Elucidating its construction procedure together with some contradictions which are uncovered during the process, this paper eventually displays "The Comprehensive Chronology of *North and South*." This is a device to pinpoint Gaskell's meaning for her novel as well as to take a bird's-eye view of its structure.

KEY WORDS Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South*, objective understanding of authorial meaning, comprehensive chronology, characters' frequency of appearance, C. P. Sanger, Karl Kroeber, a bird's-eye-view of fiction's structure

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Modelled after C. P. Sanger's chronological analysis of the structure of *Wuthering Heights* and Karl Kroeber's statistical investigation into styles in fiction,² a comprehensive chronology is composed for *North and South* first by dividing the narrative into scenes in accordance with the shift of time, and then by examining main char

acters' frequency of appearance and the change of locations scene by scene. Elucidating its construction procedure together with some contradictions which are uncovered during the process, this paper eventually displays "The Comprehensive Chronology of *North and South*." It is a device to pinpoint Gaskell's meaning for her novel as well as to take a bird's-eye view of its structure.

There is no mention of a specific calendar year in this novel. One of the rare historical references is the 1844 act of smoke prevention John Thornton briefly speaks of in Chapter 10.³ From the mill-owner's remark that no Milton chimney has been informed against "for five years past" (82), it can be assumed that this chapter deals with the event of 1849. As time data across the novel show the story covers four years, and that Chapter 10 illustrates an event in the second year, the period treated turns out to range from 1848 to 1851.⁴ Thus, it is brought to light that one of the most crucial events in the novel—the heroine Margaret Hale's protection of Thornton in front of the mob (Ch. 22, Vol. 1)—occurs on Saturday, 23 August 1849.

The following discussion demonstrates a process of arranging internal events in chronological order and a couple of instances of Gaskell's careless dating. Chapter 19 of Volume 1 depicts Margaret's visit to Bessy Higgins. From the factory girl's remark "The twenty-first—that's Thursday week" (151), the reader realizes the Thornton dinner party is being held on Thursday the 21st, and that the heroine's visit to her is paid on Thursday the 14th. On "the very day before Mrs Thornton's dinner-party" (153), that is, Wednesday the 20th, Margaret comes upon the scene of John Boucher's argument with Nicholas Higgins where the neighbour workman accuses the Union leader of his false prediction on a Wednesday that the strike should end in a fortnight, adding "it's now *Tuesday* i' th' second week" (154; emphasis added). This inconsistency is recorded as it is in our chronology. As the source of subsequent dating, however, the narrator's date would be appropriate rather than Boucher's since the party is held on the ensuing day (158-60), not on the two days after the argument scene.

On the party night, Mrs Hale's health declines (167-68). On "the third day" from then (171), Saturday, 23 "August" (171), Margaret goes to Marlborough Street to

borrow a waterbed for her mother from Mrs Thornton, where she meets the frenzied labourers and shields John Thornton from their violence. At the earnest request of her weakening mother, Margaret writes a letter to Frederick, her brother, and posts it on the following day (192, 199), Sunday the 24th; Mrs Hale expects her exiled son to come home "in twenty-two days" (204). In the afternoon of Monday the 25th (212, 213, 215), Thornton pays a brief visit to Crampton Crescent to give Mrs Hale a fruit basket. In "the next morning" (234, 236), Tuesday the 26th, he brings her another gift of fruit. His mother comes to see the valetudinarian "the next morning" (238, 240), Wednesday the 27th; in the afternoon, Frederick appears (243-44). According to our calculation, therefore, he arrives in England three days after the letter was dispatched, not "twenty-two days." His return may seem unnaturally quick, but Mrs Hale's dating cannot but be considered as incorrect to minimize the chronology's inconsistency. She becomes unconscious next day and dies before the Friday morning comes (250), 29 August, which the narrator calls "the October morning" (251). Frederick leaves Milton from the Outwood railway station Friday evening (260), when he causes George Leonards, his former subordinate in his navy days, to stumble in jumping into the train. Because it is understood from the calendar data on the subsequent pages (272, 278, 283, 316) that this incident takes place on Thursday, 26 October, our date of Mrs Hale's death (Friday, 29 August 1849) turns out to conflict with the narrator's (Wednesday, 25 October 1849). This contradiction is left unsolved in our chronology.

The argument above indicates the author's calculation of dates is not always accurate.⁵ Nevertheless, these contradictions are exceptions, and her dating is fairly accurate, viewed as a whole. "The Comprehensive Chronology of *North and South*" thus provides objective and reliable statistical data concerning Gaskell's use of time, characters, and places, three pivotal elements of the structure of realist fiction.

The Comprehensive Chronology of *North and South*

active

referred

non-appearance

dead

Scenes 1-18: before Margaret moves to Milton. Scenes 19-133: where Margaret lives in Milton. Scenes 134-67: after Margaret leaves Milton.

Cra: Crampton, Milton (the Hales) Margaret brought to Milton (her childhood home)	Cro: Cromer, Norfolk	Eaz Frances Street, Milton (the Higginsey)	Har: Harley Street, London (the Lennoxes)	Hel: Helstone, Hampshire	Hes: Heston	Lon: London
	Mil: Milton	Out: at Outwood Station, Milton	Oxf: Oxford	Str: on the street	Tra: on a train	Way: on the way home

Volume	Chapter	Time Inferred		Scene				Stage	Main Characters															Brief Summary of Each Scene						
		Year	Month	Day	Number	Range	Length		Percent	John Thornton	Mrs Thornton	Fanny Thornton	Nicholas Higgins	Bessy Higgins	Mary Higgins	John Boucher	Mrs Boucher	Margaret Hale	Richard Hale	Maria Hale	Frederick Hale	Dixon	Adam Bell		George Leonards	Henry Lennox	Captain Lennox	Edith	Anna Shaw	
1	1	7		one evng	1	5-14	10.0	2.32	Har																				Farewell dinner for Edith at Mrs Shaw's	
	2				15-17	2.0	0.46	Tra																						Margaret travels home with her father.
2	2	9			3	17-22	4.5	1.05																					Mrs Hale's delicate health	
					4	22	0.5	0.12																						Henry Lennox's visit is announced
					5	22-28	5.5	1.28																						
3	3				6	28-30	2.5	0.58																					Henry's confession of love	
		10	15		7	30-31	1.0	0.23																						Henry leaves Helstone soon afterwards.
					8	31-32	1.5	0.35	Hel																					
4	4				9	32-40	8.0	1.86																					Mr Hale tells Margaret his determination.	
1	5			16	10	41-43	1.5	0.35																						She spends a miserable and restless night.
					11	43-48	5.5	1.28																						
	6			J	12	49-52	3.0	0.7																						Preparation for removal is progressing.
					13	52-56	4.0	0.93																						
9	9			early	14	56-57	1.5	0.35	Lon																				The Hales stay at a London hotel.	
				next day	15	58-59	1.0	0.23	Hes																				The Hales arrive at Heston, a seaside town.	
	7			next day	16	59-64	5.5	1.28	Mil																					They spend there a fortnight.
					17	64-65	1.0	0.23	Hes																					Margaret's first meeting with Thornton
	8			mid	18	65	0.5	0.12	Mil																					Father and daughter return to Heston.
					19	65-68	3.0	0.7	Cra																					
																														The Hales are settled in Milton.

V	Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	le	%	St	JT	HT	TJ	NH	BH	MH	JB	MB	MH	RH	MH	D	AB	GL	HL	SL	AS	Brief Summary
8			winter	one day	20	68-72	4.0	0.93	Cra																		Margaret meets Nicholas and Bessy Higgins.
9					21	72-74	2.0	0.46	Mil																		They are living in Frances Street.
10				next day	22	74-76	2.0	0.46	Cra																		Mr Hale invites Thornton to tea.
					23	76-78	2.0	0.46	Mor																		Thornton comes home to dress for the visit.
					24	78-86	8.0	1.86	Cra																		His respect for self-denial
					25	86-89	3.0	0.7																			The Hales' views of Thornton exchanged.
11			early spring	several days	26	89	0.5	0.12	Mil																		Margaret is busy searching for a servant.
				one day	27	89-92	3.0	0.7	Mor																		Margaret visits Bessy's home.
					28	92-93	1.0	0.23	Cra																		Mrs and Miss Thornton's visit is planned.
12					29	93-95	1.5	0.35	Mor																		Thornton wishes them to be civil.
					30	95-96	1.5	0.35	Mor																		Mrs and Miss Thornton's preparation
				next day	31	96-99	2.5	0.58	Cra																		Mrs Thornton is proud of Milton.
13					32	99-103	4.0	0.93	Mor																		Margaret visits Bessy's dwelling.
				some days	33	103-05	1.5	0.35																			Milton life is affecting Mrs Hale's health.
14				one evng	34	105-09	5.5	1.28	Cra																		A detailed story of Frederick's mutiny
					35	110-11	1.0	0.23	Str																		A return call of Mr Hale and Margaret
15				next day	36	111-16	6.0	1.39	Mor																		Mrs Thornton takes pride in her son.
					37	116-24	8.0	1.86																			Thornton's view of masters and men
16					38	124-31	7.0	1.63	Cra																		Mrs Hale's wish to meet her son once again
				next day	39	131-36	5.5	1.28																			Higgins and Margaret discuss the strike.
					40	136-38	2.5	0.58																			Margaret comforts Bessy.
17					41	139-40	2.0	0.46																			Margaret comforts her father.
18				next day	43	140-41	0.5	0.12																			Mr Hale's anxiety about her wife's health
					43	141-46	5.0	1.16	Mor																		The Thorntons' talk about Margaret
			8 (171)	14 Thu (151)	44	146-48	1.0	0.23	Cra																		Mrs Hale's concern about Margaret's dress
19					45	148-51	4.0	0.93	Mor																		To Bessy, Margaret looks like an angel.
					46	151-53	1.5	0.35	Cra																		Thornton's kindness and mercilessness
				20(153) Tue (154) or Wed	47	153-56	3.5	0.81	Mor																		Higgins tells Boucher to be patient.
					48	157-58	2.0	0.46	Cra																		A basket for the Bouchers
20					49	158-60	1.5	0.35	Mor																		Mr Hale's visit to the Bouchers
					50	160-65	6.0	1.39	Mor																		the Thornton dinner party
				21 Wed (154) or Thu (151)	51	166-67	2.0	0.46	Way																		Margaret should do justice to Mr Thornton.
					52	167-70	3.0	0.7																			Mrs Hale has been dying.
21				22	53	170-71	0.5	0.12	Cra																		Mrs Hale becomes feverish before night.
				23	54	171	0.5	0.12																			Borrow a water-bed for Mrs Hale.

V	Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	le	%	St	JT	LH	FT	NH	BH	MH	JB	MB	MH	RH	PH	D	AB	GL	HL	SL	AS	Brief Summary
	21				55	171-73	1.5	0.35	Str																		Margaret is struck with crowded people.
	22			23	56	173-77	4.0	0.93	Str																		Milton work-people intimidate Thornton.
					57	177-80	3.0	0.7	May																		Margaret protects him from the savage mob.
					58	180-85	5.0	1.16	May																		Expression of love to the swooned Margaret
					59	185-89	4.0	0.93	May																		Thornton withholds the visit to Crampton.
1	23				60	189-92	2.0	0.46	Cra																		Margaret cannot sleep well at night.
	24				61	192-96	4.5	1.05	Cra																		Thornton's confession of love to Margaret.
					62	197-98	2.0	0.46	Cra																		Margaret involuntarily compares two offers.
25				24	63	198-201	3.0	0.7	Cra																		Higgins's accusation of Boucher
					64	201-05	3.5	0.81	Cra																		Margaret writes a letter to Frederick.
					65	205-06	1.0	0.23	Str																		Her father approves of her deed.
					66	207-08	1.5	0.35	Mil																		Thornton confirms his love for her.
					67	208-12	3.5	0.81	May																		The riot helps to exhaust the strike.
2					68	212-14	2.5	0.58	Mil																		Thornton purchases a fruit basket.
					69	214-15	1.0	0.23	Cra																		Mr Thornton's brief visit to the Hales.
					70	215-17	2.5	0.58	Cra																		Bessy died this morning.
3				25 Mon	71	218-22	4.5	1.05	Cra																		Margaret invites Higgins home.
					72	222-25	3.0	0.7	Cra																		Mrs Hale begins to fear Frederick's return
					73	225-33	8.5	1.97	Cra																		Higgins joins the Hales in family prayer.
4				26	74	234-39	5.5	1.28	Cra																		Another offering of fruit for Mrs Hale
					75	240-42	3.0	0.7	Cra																		Mrs Thornton pays a visit to Mrs Hale.
5				27	76	242-50	7.5	1.74	Cra																		In the afternoon, Frederick appears.
					77	250	0.5	0.12	Cra																		Mrs Hale becomes unconscious.
2				28	78	250-51	1.0	0.23	Cra																		Mrs Hale dies before the morning comes.
					79	251-61	9.5	2.21	Cra																		Frederick glances at Thornton.
6				29	80	261-62	1.0	0.23	Cra																		Frederick takes his last look at his mother.
7				26 Thu (272, 278, 283, 316)	81	262-65	3.5	0.81	Out																		Margaret sees off Frederick at the station.
					82	266-67	1.0	0.23	Cra																		Mary Higgins helps Dixon.
					83	267	1.0	0.23	Cra																		The Hales's preparation for the funeral
8				27 Fri	84	267-69	1.5	0.35	Cra																		Frederick remains in London.
					85	269-70	2.0	0.46	Mil																		The Higginses and Thornton at the funeral.
				28 Sat	86	271	0.5	0.12	Cra																		Leonards dies at the Infirmary.
					87	271-72	1.5	0.35	Cra																		Margaret receives a police-inspector's visit.
9				31 Tue	88	272-75	3.0	0.7	Cra																		Margaret denies her presence at the station.

V	Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	le	%	St	JT	HT	FT	NH	BH	MH	JB	MB	MH	RH	MH	FH	D	AB	GL	TH	SL	AS	Brief Summary			
10	10	10	10	31	89	275-77	2.0	0.46	Cra																			Margaret has lied to save Frederick.			
					90	277-79	1.5	0.35	Str																					Thornton knows Margaret is in difficulty.	
					91	279-81	1.5	0.35	Mar																						Thornton decides to help out Margaret.
11				1	92	281-83	2.5	0.58																				She finds herself degraded in his eyes.			
					93	283-89	5.5	1.28	Cra																					Margaret knows Frederick's safe departure.	
					94	289	0.5	0.12																							Mr Hale relapses into melancholy.
12	11			2	95	289-95	6.0	1.39																				Higgins has been out of work.			
					96	295-99	4.0	0.93																							Boucher's body is brought into his house.
					97	300-01	1.5	0.35																							Mr Hale and Margaret visit Higgins.
13	12	1849		3	98	301-03	1.5	0.35	Str																			Margaret wishes Thornton's opinion of her.			
					99	303-09	5.0	1.16	Cra																					Higgins gives up working in South.	
					100	309-14	5.0	1.16	Mar																						Thornton hides Margaret's falsehood.
14			11	one day	101	314-17	3.5	0.81	Cra																			Mrs Thornton remonstrates Margaret.			
					102	318-21	3.5	0.81	Mar																					Thornton rejects Higgins's wish for a job.	
					103	321-23	1.5	0.35	Cra																						Margaret is aware of her love for Thornton.
15				next day	104	323-27	4.0	0.93																				Thornton gives Higgins work at his mill.			
					105	327-28	1.5	0.35	Str																					The talk between Thornton and Margaret.	
					106	328	0.5	0.12																							Margaret is merry this afternoon.
16				some days later	107	328-29	1.0	0.23	Cra																			Letters come from Mr Bell and Edith.			
					108	330-37	8.0	1.86																						Mr Bell's suspect	
					109	337-38	0.5	0.12																							Mr Hale has no intention of leaving Milton.
17				winter (338)	110	338-39	1.0	0.23																				Higgins begins to rely on his master.			
					111	339-42	2.5	0.58																						Margaret's face is wet with tears.	
					112	342-43	1.0	0.23	Cra																						Thornton's occasional visits to see Mr Hale.
18				2	113	343-44	1.0	0.23																				Married Frederick becomes a trader.			
					114	344-46	2.0	0.46	Cra																					Margaret regrets her faithlessness.	
					115	346-47	1.0	0.23																							Higgins takes interest in a Methodist hymn.
19				3	116	347-48	1.0	0.23	Cra																			Margaret thinks about her future.			
					117	348-50	2.0	0.46																							Mr Hale's talks with Mr Bell.
					118	350	0.5	0.12	Oxf																						Mr Bell is shocked by his sudden death.
20			4	next day	119	350-53	2.5	0.58	Tra																			Mr Bell happens to meet Thornton.			
					120	353	0.5	0.12	Cra																						Margaret realizes Mr Bell's business.
					121	353-54	1.5	0.35																							Mr Bell writes to Mrs Shaw.
21				next day	122	354-55	1.0	0.23	Har																			Mrs Shaw decides to go to Milton.			
					123	355	0.5	0.12	Mil																						Mrs Shaw arrives at "that horrid place."
					124	355-57	1.5	0.35	Cra																						Margaret weeps on her aunt's shoulder.

V	Ch	Y	M	D	No	R	le	%	St	Brief Summary	
24		10			159	416-18	1.5	0.35	Har	AS	Margaret fulfils her seaside resolve.
					160	418-21	3.0	0.7		E	Thornion is depressed, but does not despair.
25			late	one night	161	421	0.5	0.12	Mil	SL	secret help of Higgins and his fellow worker
			spring	one day	162	421-23	1.5	0.35		HL	Thornion knows Margaret has a brother.
2			(420)	one morn	163	423-26	3.0	0.7		GL	Thornion ventures a risky speculation.
26		1851			164	426	0.5	0.12		AB	Thornion's bankruptcy
			sum-	one evng	165	427-33	6.0	1.39		D	He tells Margaret Higgins's round-robin.
			mer	next day	166	433-34	1.0	0.23		FH	Margaret's concern was to help Thornion.
27			(427)	next day	167	434-36	2.5	0.58	Har	MH	Recognition of mutual love
					167	434-36	2.5	0.58		RH	
					167	434-36	2.5	0.58		JB	
					167	434-36	2.5	0.58		MB	
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Notes

1 This paper is part of my unpublished article titled “Statistical Analysis of the Structure of *North and South*: The Novel of Two Themes.”

2 Charles Percy Sanger, “The Structure of *Wuthering Heights*,” 1926, rpt. in *Wuthering Heights*, by Emily Brontë, Norton Critical Edition, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 1972) 286-98. Karl Kroeber, *Styles in Fictional Structure: The Art of Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1971) 3-287.

3 Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South*, ed. Angus Easson (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1982) 82. Subsequent references are to this edition and inserted parenthetically in the text. Editors differ in identifying this law. Easson (*North and South* 439) and Ingham (Introduction 430) regard it as the 1847 Act of “the Prevention of Smoke” (10 & 11 Victoria, c. 34), but Collin (*North and South* 532) as the 1844 “Act for the Good Government and Police Regulation of the Borough of Manchester” which includes the regulation of smoke prevention (7 & 8 Victoria, c. 40). I followed the latter’s suggestion because the 1844 law was intended particularly for the borough of Manchester (Simons, Vol. 17, 485) while the 1847 for the whole British Isles (Simons, Vol. 18, 637). If we take the suggestion of Easson and Ingham, however, the years covered in this fiction will range from 1851 to 1854. Some critics consider it is set in the 1850s (Bonaparte 167; Chadwick 208; Kestner 164; G. D. Sanders 64).

4 Henry states it is “set firmly after 1847” (Introd. to *Ruth* xxiii).

5 J. G. Sharps is sympathetic about this authorial oversight in consideration of the novel’s mode of production and publication (570). Gaskell confesses the stress of serialization in one of her letters (*Letters* 328); see also Gérin (150) and Schor (140).

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