

约克文学作品辅导丛书

YORK NOTES ON

# HOWARDS END

霍华德庄园

E.M.Forster



LONGMAN  
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GUIDES

# YORK NOTES

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E. M. Forster

# HOWARDS END

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## 《约克文学作品辅导丛书》介绍

《约克文学作品辅导丛书》(York Notes)系 Longman 集团有限公司(英国)出版。本丛书覆盖了世界各国历代文学名著,原意是辅导英国中学生准备文学课的高级会考或供英国大学生自学参考。因此,它很适合我国高校英语专业学生研读文学作品时参考。

丛书由 A. N. Jeffares 和 S. Bushrui 两位教授任总编。每册的编写者大都是研究有关作家的专家学者,他们又都有在大学讲授文学的经验,比较了解学生理解上的难点。本丛书自问世以来,始终畅销不衰,被使用者普遍认为是英美出版的同类书中质量较高的一种。

丛书每一册都按统一格式对一部作品进行介绍和分析。每一册都有下列五个部分。

① 导言。主要介绍:作者生平,作品产生的社会、历史背景,有关的文学传统或文艺思潮等。

② 内容提要。一般分为两部分:a.全书的内容概述;b.每章的内容提要及难词、难句注释,如方言、典故、圣经或文学作品的引语、有关社会文化习俗等。注释恰到好处,对于读懂原作很有帮助。

③ 评论。结合作品的特点,对结构、人物塑造、叙述角度、语言风格、主题思想等进行分析和评论。论述深入浅出,分析力求客观,意在挖掘作品内涵和展示其艺术性。

④ 学习提示。提出学习要点、重要引语和思考题(附参考答案或答案要点)。

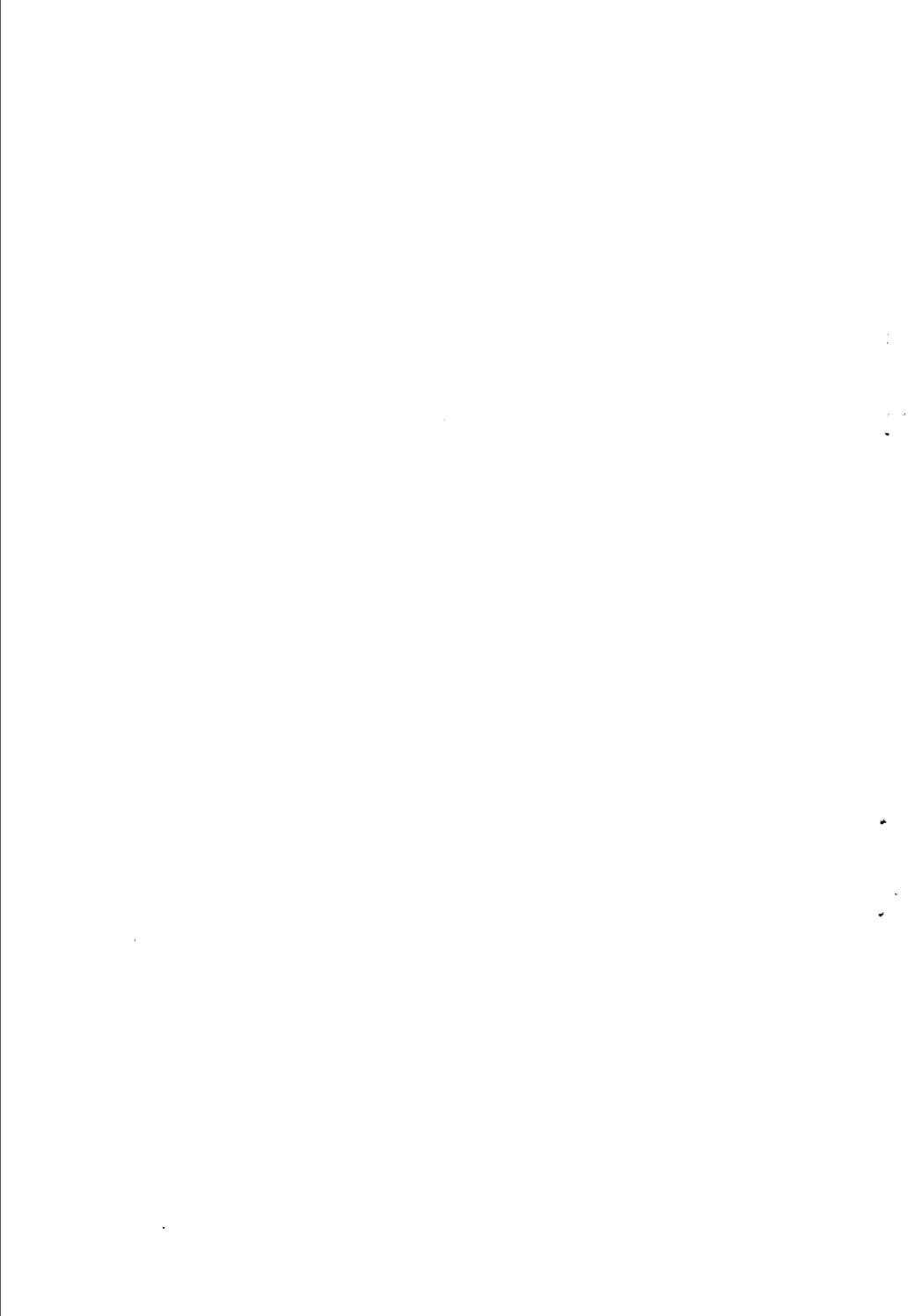
⑤ 进一步研读指导。介绍该作品的最佳版本;版本中是否有重大改动;列出供进一步研读的参考书目(包括作者传记、研究有关作品的专著和评论文章等)。

总之,丛书既提供必要的背景知识,又注意启发学生思考;既重视在吃透作品的基础上进行分析,又对进一步研究提供具体指导;因此是一套理想的英语文学辅导材料。



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## Part 1

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# Introduction

EDWARD MORGAN FORSTER was born on 1 January 1879. Shortly after his birth his father died of tuberculosis, and so the child was brought up exclusively by his mother. Her family name was *Whichelo*; her father had been a drawing master at grammar schools in Stockwell, London. The family was modest and socially obscure, and Lily, their third daughter, was lucky to find a benefactress in Marianne Thornton, whose family were bankers and leading members of the Clapham sect, champions of the anti-slavery movement. Not only was this to give her a complete social and family background, but she was also to meet her husband through the Thorntons: Edward Forster, a rector's son, was a nephew of Marianne Thornton, who went to Charterhouse school and then Trinity College, Cambridge, before taking up architecture. Because of his early death he could not influence his son's childhood, and Forster was always closer to his mother, never showing any curiosity about, or attachment to, his father.

His mother was to dominate him throughout her life, and he rarely lived apart from her until she died. Two and a half years after Edward Forster's death, Lily and her son moved from London to Rooksnest, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, the house which was to inspire *Howards End*. Forster's life there was paradisaical, spent mostly out of doors, playing with the son of the neighbouring farmer Frankie Franklyn, whom he continued to visit later in life. Another friend was Ansell, one of the garden boys, who gave his name to a character in Forster's second novel, *The Longest Journey* (1907), and inspired a short story entitled 'Ansell'.

Forster was a precocious child, teaching himself to read at the age of four and writing short stories at the age of five. During these early years he was surrounded by what he himself termed a 'haze of elderly ladies', some of whom were to feature in various ways in his works. One of whom he was particularly fond was Louisa Whichelo, his maternal grandmother, a witty and lively woman who was the model for Mrs Honeychurch in his third novel, *A Room with a View* (1908). Another was 'Maimie', the widow of his benefactress's nephew, Jervis Synott, whose remarriage after her husband's death contributed to the plot of his first novel, *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905).

Looking back on these years later as a schoolboy, Forster wrote a



nostalgic description of Rooksnest, and the similarity between the house of *Howards End* and these notes of his is very striking. Forster's first experience of school was a rude break with this life; at the age of eleven he was sent to Kent House, a preparatory school at Eastbourne in Sussex. Sensitive and rather marked by his mother's mollicoddling, he was an ideal bully's prey. Although unhappy, he managed to work hard at his studies, and in his Christmas examinations in 1892 was top of his form in Classics, French and Scripture. By now the lease of Rooksnest had expired and the Forsters moved to Tonbridge in Kent, where Forster became a day boy at the public school. The following two years were probably the unhappiest in his life. The moral attitudes and discipline did not suit his artistic temperament for he was far from being an ideal English schoolboy. During these years, however, he was cultivating a knowledge of the classics that was to give a firm foundation to his writing, and eventually he even earned popularity and respect because of his intelligent and witty conversation. None the less, his miseries at Tonbridge left a lasting impression on him, and he recapitulates this episode of his life through Sawston school in *The Longest Journey*.

Cambridge was to exert an influence too, but in a very different way, by bringing him into contact with a whole intellectual universe that would confirm his inherent outlook on many things. One of the basic attitudes, reflected in *Howards End*, is an innate belief in the survival of the cultural heritage of man, and a complementary awareness of the growing menace to civilisation. This resulted in a disdain for the up-and-coming Tory business class, and a tendency to see scholars and civil servants as the true leaders of society. At the time the prestige of the professions had increased, but Forster did not share in the general approval of them; indeed he seized many a literary opportunity to show up doctors and clergymen. The Cambridge 'truth' of the day, inspired by the philosopher G.E. Moore's (1873–1958) *Principia Ethica* (which appeared in restated form in his *Ethics*, 1916), can be summed up as an aesthetic faith in the essential role of human intercourse and the cult of the beautiful as fundamental to social progress. Moore was the chief luminary of the 'Apostles', the Cambridge Conversation Society, to which Forster was elected in 1901.

There was an enormous gap between this life and the suburbia around the home where he now lived with his mother in Tunbridge Wells. It was there he came into contact with that respectable society of afternoon teas, of tennis clubs, which emerges from the social comedy in his work, in particular in the suburbia of 'Sawston' portrayed in *Where Angels Fear to Tread*.

Forster graduated in history and classics in 1901, and went off for a year's travel through Italy and Austria with his mother. He was able to

afford this thanks to the legacy left to him by Marianne Thornton. The life he later wrote of her expresses his gratitude, and in its final words actually recognises that she made his 'career as a writer possible'. In Italy he was to visit San Gimignano, the model for the town of 'Monteriano' in *Where Angels Fear to Tread*. He wrote a short story there, 'The Story of a Panic', and it would seem that during this sojourn he realised that he would most probably become a writer.

On his return to England he took up a post as lecturer at the Working Men's College in Bloomsbury, where many Cambridge dons and graduates taught. This college was founded in 1854, with the aim of helping to alleviate the cultural deprivation of the under-privileged. John Ruskin (1819–1900) and Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–82), among others, had lectured there, and the link with Cambridge was very close, with an annual gathering at Cambridge for the students of the college. In Leonard Bast's attempts at self-improvement in *Howards End* Forster expresses his slightly ironical view of something in which he had been closely involved, especially as he taught there for twenty years or more. In 1904 he also lectured on Italian art and history for the Cambridge Local Lectures Board, and contributed to liberal journalism through the *Independent Review*. In that year he moved to another suburban home, this time in Weybridge.

In 1905 he had experience of Germany as tutor to the children of Elisabeth, Countess von Arnim (née Mary A. Beauchamp, 1866–1941), author of *Elisabeth and her German Garden* (1898), and it was there, at Nassenheide in Pomerania, that he received the proofs of his first novel: in October 1905 *Where Angels Fear to Tread* was published. It was successful, its sales encouraged by favourable reviews. In this novel, Forster shows the mediocrity of English suburbia in contrast with Italian spontaneity and colour; yet his love for the English countryside, as shown in *Howards End*, was beginning to grow, and he began to cover the landscape on long walking tours. The year 1906 marks the beginning of the friendship which orientated him towards India when he became tutor to Syed Ross Masood.

During the next two years he published two more novels: *The Longest Journey* (1907) and *A Room with a View* (1908), and both got very good reviews. *The Longest Journey* is his most directly personal work, Rickie Elliot being very close to himself. *A Room with a View* springs from his experiences in 1901, when he lived in a *pensione* in Florence.

A first sketch of *Howards End* appears in Forster's diary in 1908, where he mentions that *Howards End* is to have a 'wider canvas' than his other novels; during the following year social outings, a dinner party, casual conversations or acquaintanceships, all contributed further observations which were incorporated into his writing of *Howards End*. He worked on it all the summer of 1909, and on its publication in

1910 the press almost unanimously referred to the event as Forster's 'arrival', and the term 'Forsterian' came into use. It marked a turning point in his life, as he became a celebrity.

During this time he was moving from a peripheral relationship to the Bloomsbury Circle,\* and was becoming increasingly involved in their activities. A landmark of this association is Roger Fry's (1866–1934) portrait of Forster, painted in 1911. Also in 1911 Forster published *The Celestial Omnibus*, a collection of short stories; these were written at various times over the past years, and accompanied the writing of his novels. They are really preparatory to the novels, a more whimsical and less subtle revelation of the 'unseen'.

In October 1912 Forster left for India, and this journey greatly influenced his future writing, which culminated in *A Passage to India* (1924). In 1913, on his return to England, Forster's friendship with Edward Carpenter (1844–1929) and a visit to the home Carpenter shared with a group of Uranians,† all revering the same notions, confirmed Forster's confidence in his homosexual life. In 1914, he finished *Maurice* (1971), a novel based on his affair with H.O. Meredith, a fellow student at Cambridge, but he decided it was not to be published until after his death.

At the outbreak of the 1914–18 war Forster became cataloguer for the National Gallery in London, leaving this position in 1915 to work for the Red Cross in Egypt until 1919. A book materialised from this experience, *Alexandria, a History and a Guide* (1922). In 1921 he returned to India, and during his stay accumulated material for *A Passage to India* which was already under way before his departure. Its publication, in 1924, was a resounding success. Mrs Moore, in this novel, like her predecessor Ruth Wilcox, is a gentle and unassuming person who incarnates the presence of the unseen throughout the work.

This was to be Forster's last novel, and it is difficult to know why he never returned to this form. When asked he would simply reply: 'I have nothing more to say.' In 1927 he gave the Clark lectures at Cambridge, where he spoke about the novel, and these lectures were published under the title *Aspects of the Novel* (1927). In 1924 he had moved to a country home, West Hackhurst, at Abinger, near Dorking, the lease having been left to him by an aunt. He participated increasingly in various activities, constantly writing letters, articles and petitions, reacting against Nazism and Stalinism with vigour. He also took part in many congresses and sat on committees. In 1934 and in 1942, he was

\* This was a group which began to meet about 1906 and which included, among others, Vanessa and Clive Bell, Roger Fry, Lytton Strachey, and Virginia and Leonard Woolf. Their aesthetic philosophy was largely inspired by G.E. Moore (see p. 6).

† Uranians revered the same notions of comradeship, suggested by the naming of their community after Uranism, a form of male homosexuality.

President of the National Council for Civil Liberties. In 1934 he published a life of his Cambridge friend, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson (1862–1932), an affectionate and interesting study for what it conveys of the Cambridge atmosphere. His last visit to India took place in 1945; it was arranged through the PEN association of writers, but he was disillusioned with many changes that had occurred.

His mother died in 1945 at the age of ninety, after years of close companionship, a relationship in which Forster complained but kept constantly in touch when away. He was elected an Honorary Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and was to spend the rest of his life there in residence, although for the first seven years he did not live in his rooms but with friends in Cambridge, the Wilkinsons. In 1947 and 1949 he went to lecture in the United States, at Harvard and the Academy of Arts and Letters. In 1949 he began working on the libretto of Benjamin Britten's opera *Billy Budd*. *Two Cheers for Democracy*, a collection of essays, appeared in 1951, and *The Hill of Devi*, about the princely state he stayed in in India, Dewas Senior, in 1953. In 1945 came *Marianne Thornton*, the biography of his benefactress.

In these late years Forster suffered extremely bad health, but had a most surprising resilience; he saw many of his friends die before him. His close friends, the Buckinghams, took him to their home whenever he fell seriously ill, and it was there, at Coventry, that he eventually died on 7 June 1970.

### A note on the text

*Howards End* appeared on 18 October, 1910; it was published by Edward Arnold, London. The book was acclaimed by A. Marshall in *The Daily Mail* as 'The Season's Great Novel', and turned E.M. Forster into a renowned literary figure overnight. A paperback edition of *Howards End* is published by Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1941; latest reprint, 1981.

## Part 2

# Summaries

of HOWARDS END

### A general summary

The novel opens with a description of Howards End, a house in Hertfordshire, and this is given through letters addressed by Helen Schlegel to her sister, Margaret Schlegel, who has stayed at home at Wickham Place in London to look after their brother, Tibby, who is sick with hay fever. A move from this first objective, exterior description is made by the conclusion of the novel, where the house has become the centre of the Schlegels' existence. Helen's first two letters are followed by a brief note stating that she and Paul, the younger son of the family she is staying with, the Wilcoxes, have fallen in love. Back in London, her sister is considerably upset by the news, and their Aunt Juley, who is staying at Wickham Place, goes by train to see what the situation is. Margaret, back from seeing off her aunt, finds a telegram from Helen, saying that all is over between herself and Paul.

Aunt Juley is picked up at the station by the elder Wilcox son, Charles, who is rather unpleasant. Helen is in tears; the mother, Ruth Wilcox, calm and dignified, seems aware of what has been happening. Helen and Aunt Juley return to London. Helen explains her disillusionment with Paul, who had yielded to family pressure and disowned his feelings very quickly.

Helen and Margaret resume their cultural activities. One of these is going to concerts, and, after listening to a performance of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Helen is extremely moved, leaving before the concert is over. Her sister has got into conversation with a young man they do not know, and Helen absent-mindedly takes his umbrella off with her. Leonard Bast accompanies Margaret home to get his umbrella; he leaves hurriedly, taking their card with him. He goes back to a depressing suburban flat, where his companion, a rather blowzy woman, joins him for supper. He tries to read Ruskin's *Stones of Venice* (1851-3), but his companion, Jacky, does not make it easy.

The Schlegels discover that the Wilcox family have taken a flat just opposite them. Helen is not very affected by this; she is off to Germany, having been invited there by her cousin, Frieda Mosebach. When she has left, Margaret writes a note to Mrs Wilcox declining any further acquaintance. She later regrets this, and on visiting Ruth Wilcox, finds her charming. They become friends; Ruth Wilcox comes to lunch with

Margaret and her intellectual friends; they go Christmas shopping together. On this occasion Margaret declines Ruth Wilcox's invitation to go directly to visit Howards End, to which Ruth is obviously deeply attached. But then Margaret changes her mind and joins Ruth at the station; when they are ready to leave they are interrupted by the arrival of Evie Wilcox and her father, Henry; their motoring tour has been cut short by an accident.

Mrs Wilcox dies after an illness. The funeral over, her family are shocked to hear that she has left Howards End to Margaret Schlegel in a note written at the nursing-home. After debating the matter, Henry and Charles decide to burn the note (Paul, the younger son, is in Africa) and they do so in the presence of Evie and Dolly, Charles's wife. Margaret, unaware of Ruth's request, is grateful to receive her silver vinaigrette as a present from Henry Wilcox. She welcomes back her sister, who has turned down a marriage proposal from a German friend of her cousin's.

Two years pass and the Schlegels' brother is now at Oxford; Margaret is concerned for his future, and worried about their having to leave Wickham Place as the lease is soon to expire. A visitor calls, looking for her lost husband. Next day, Leonard Bast calls, explaining that the mysterious lady was Jacky (now his wife), looking for him because he had not come home that night; inspired by his reading, he had taken an all-night walk in the country. Jacky had seized on the Schlegels' card as providing a possible address to which he might have gone. The girls go out to dinner at a Chelsea discussion society, and during their debate they cite Leonard as an example of the under-privileged. Afterwards, Helen and Margaret go along the Chelsea Embankment, and they run into Henry Wilcox. He tells them that the insurance firm where Leonard works as a clerk is going to crash. They invite Leonard to tea to warn him; Henry and Evie arrive, and Henry is shocked to see them receive Leonard.

Margaret is increasingly concerned about having to find somewhere else to live. She lunches with Henry and Evie and her fiancé. Henry offers to help Margaret. She and Helen go on their annual summer holiday to Aunt Juley, at Swanage. Margaret gets a letter from Henry, offering to rent them his London house. When she visits it he proposes to her. Helen, when Margaret returns to Swanage and tells her, is upset, and against the marriage. But Margaret accepts, and when Henry comes down to see them they hear by letter that Leonard has given up his old job for a less well-paid one. Henry says Leonard's old job was a good one; the company is no longer in danger. Helen is furious, and Margaret realises that Helen hates Henry. Margaret visits Howards End, and loves it. She goes to Henry's home in Shropshire for Evie's wedding. After the reception, Helen arrives with Leonard and Jacky;

they are impoverished, Leonard having lost his job. Jacky recognises Henry, her lover of ten years before. Helen and the Basts sleep in the local hotel. Margaret, after a short time of reflection, forgives Henry.

Helen visits Tibby; she is leaving for Germany and wants to give five thousand pounds as compensation to Leonard, who refuses it. Wickham Place is emptied and the furniture goes to Howards End for storage. Margaret is married, and lives in London for the winter; she and her husband are building a new house. She goes to Howards End to find that Miss Avery, the neighbour, has unpacked and arranged their furniture in the house. She decides to get it stored in London, but has no time as Aunt Juley is seriously ill with pneumonia. Helen is called, but replies that she will only be able to stay a very short time, and when Aunt Juley recovers Helen just leaves her address with their bank in London, which refuses to give it to Margaret. Realising that Helen is avoiding her, Margaret becomes anxious. On Henry's advice she arranged for Helen to see the furniture, as she wishes, at Howards End, and they 'ambush' her there. She thus discovers at Howards End a pregnant Helen; she protects her from the menfolk. Helen wants to stay at Howards End for a night; Henry refuses and Margaret is shocked at his lack of understanding. Margaret and Helen nevertheless sleep the night at Howards End, and Margaret learns that the father of Helen's child is Leonard.

Leonard, since the night in Shropshire with Helen, has been full of remorse. He eventually tries to find the Schlegels, and arrives on the morning of the night they have slept at Howards End. Charles, who has just arrived at the house, attacks him; he succumbs to heart failure. Charles gets three years' imprisonment and Henry, distressed, falls back on Margaret. Helen, Margaret, Henry and Helen's son all live together at Howards End. Henry decides that Howards End will be Margaret's; Ruth Wilcox's wish is fulfilled.

## Detailed summaries

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### Chapter I

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Through an epistolary approach we are introduced to the house of the title. The first of these letters, all from Helen Schlegel to her sister Margaret, is written on Tuesday, and describes the house and surroundings; a wych-elm is given particular mention. We learn that Tibby, the girls' brother, has hay fever in London, which has kept Margaret at home there with him. The inhabitants of Howards End, the Wilcoxes, are presented: Mrs Wilcox in an image of flowers and hay, the others—the daughter Evie, the son Charles and her husband—all described

humorously, at various activities. The second letter, dated Friday, accentuates Mrs Wilcox's unselfishness and the masculine charm of Mr Wilcox. The last letter, dated Sunday, says that Helen and Paul, the younger son, are in love.

**COMMENTARY:** We are given a full view of Howards End and the well-to-do Wilcoxes in their conventional country life. Mrs Wilcox contrasts with the prevalent atmosphere. Helen's humour emerges, as does her femininity; there is dramatic irony in her encounter with Mr Wilcox, as her attitude will later change radically. The last letter's announcement is typical of Forster's taste for surprise, and links this chapter to the next by suspense.

**NOTES AND GLOSSARY:**

- a-tissue:** an onomatopoeic word, conveying the sound of sneezing, emphasising the motifs of hay and hay fever that run through the novel
- Kings of Mercia:** Mercia was one of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. The Mercians spread into Hertfordshire in the seventh century

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## Chapter II

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At Wickham Place, London, at the Schlegels' house, Margaret and her Aunt Juley receive the news. We learn how the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes met, on holiday in Germany. Margaret defends her sister against interference, but, anxious, accepts Aunt Juley's offer to go and see about the 'engagement'. Tibby is too ill to be left. Margaret accompanies Aunt Juley to King's Cross railway station. A telegram awaits Margaret's return: all is over between Helen and Paul.

**COMMENTARY:** Aunt Juley with her observations gives us a standpoint from which to view the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes. She suggests the liberal, Schlegel tradition and the possible philistinism of the Wilcoxes. The city, a recurrent theme, is seen to be linked to the countryside by the various railway stations. Forster makes a humorous personal intrusion, then launches the plot with a second surprise.

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## Chapter III

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Aunt Juley's thoughts in the train portray the family history. Her sister had died when Tibby was born, when Helen was five and Margaret thirteen. Their father died five years later. Her nieces live on the income from investments. Arriving at Hilton station she finds Charles, the elder Wilcox son, but presumes he is the younger, Paul. Trying to discuss matters in the car she is embarrassed to discover that he is Charles; none the less,



she reacts indignantly to his annoyance on learning of Helen's and Paul's engagement. At Howards End, Helen is trying to explain the situation when Mrs Wilcox appears. Calm and obviously aware of the affair, she disperses everybody.

COMMENTARY: The opening is stylistically original, combining social and individual history in a character's thoughts. Charles's aggressiveness comes over forcefully in his manner and his driving. The survival of the past emerges in the person of Mrs Wilcox.

NOTES AND GLOSSARY:

**Deceased Wife's Sister Bill:** this bill, allowing a man to marry his sister-in-law, was finally passed in 1907, after sixty-five years' debate

## Chapter IV

Helen and her aunt return to London. Helen's experience is discussed, and she and Margaret opt for the 'inner' life over the 'outer', the latter leading only to 'panic and emptiness'. Their idealism is explained by their Germanic origins, and by their childhood which was spent amidst adult intellectual discussion. Helen's more attractive physique is contrasted with Margaret's solidity.

COMMENTARY: Helen's disillusionment gives rise to a strong reaction; masculine strength turned out to be weakness. Harmony reigns as the girls cultivate friendships, attend intellectual gatherings. None the less, Helen's experience was unique, warns Forster, a romantic encounter never to be repeated; he also warns the reader of Helen's vulnerability, arising from her impulsive nature.

NOTES AND GLOSSARY:

**Forward Policy in Tibet:** Imperialist policy, and, in the case of Tibet, a reference to the Younghusband expedition of 1904, sent to forestall Russian influence. It led to a convention with Tibet in the same year

**Esterházy:** court of the famous Hungarian nobles, the Esterházy family, especially associated with the patronage of composers, Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) in particular

**Weimar:** famous as a literary centre in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century