

Role and influence of ruth wilcox in howard's end essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Howard's end is a symbolic novel. The novel deals with conflict of different social class and human relationship. Ruth Wilcox is very important character as I am going to discuss the role and influence of Mrs. Wilcox.

Ruth Wilcox is representing the conservative English. Although, she is alive only for a short time. Her symbolic connections are with the land. Mrs. Wilcox often wears a long dress trailing on the grass. In contrast to her, other women always avoid their skirt to have contact with land. Through Mrs. Wilcox, Forster opposes London. "London makes separateness: it against personal relations, it makes individuality almost impossible without money" (1) Forster main hope is at Howard's end (Mrs. Wilcox's house). The value and tradition of England is represent:

"[The house] was English and the wych-elm that [Margaret] saw from the window was an English tree. No report had prepared her for its peculiar glory. It was neither warrior, nor love, nor god; in none of these roles do the English excel. It was a comrade, bending over the house, strength and adventure in its roots, but in its utmost fingers tenderness, and the girth, that a dozen men could not have spanned became in the end evanescent, till pale bud clusters seemed to float in the air. It was a comrade. House and tree transcended any similes of sex." (pp. 217-218)

Ruth Wilcox represents the primary connection between the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes. She identified with the image of hay fever that contrasts her to Charles, Henry and Tibby; all of them have hay fever because they are not the person who will inherit Howard's end. You will see that later the person who fit for Howard's end is son of Helen and Leonard Bast. When speak of

personality, Mrs. Wilcox has little in conventional sense and even less in liveliness sense but when Margaret tells her that her house is to be destroyed then Mrs. Wilcox said

“ It is monstrous, Miss Schlegel; it isn't right. I had no idea that this was hanging over for you. I do pity you from bottom of my heart. To be parted from your house, your father's house - it oughtn't to be allowed. It is worse than dying. I would rather die than- Oh poor girls! Can what they call civilization be right, if people mayn't die in the room where they were born? My dear, I am sorry” (p. 79) She is not a feminist all and she said “ it is wiser to leave action and discussion to men” (p. 77)

However, Margaret did not understand Mrs. Wilcox clearly because they just know each other. Margaret feels that is just a house in contrast to Mrs. Wilcox because when she is at Howard's end, she feels at home and it brings back memories of peace and happiness of her aristocratic childhood.

Mrs. Wilcox's relationship with Margaret deals with symbolic and realistic. Symbolically, Ruth wants to give Howard's end, the goal, and the future of England to Margaret but realistically, she is just impressed with Margaret's many qualities. Margaret is not relating to Mrs. Wilcox but she declares the house to Margaret to be the heir of Howard's end. Somehow, the Wilcoxes cheated on her. Nevertheless, it was fate that made this to happen because Margaret is not yet worth for the house, as she has to experience more. Nevertheless, her furniture already fits in Howard's end. Symbolically, she fits for Howard's end.

The real gift of Mrs. Wilcox is her tolerance and self-control, and her continuity with the traditions of Howard's end. For example, The tradition that embodied in the pig's teeth driven in to the tree (it was believe that a piece of bark would cure toothache) Throughout the brief friendship Mrs. Wilcox gives Margaret a great gift greater than the gift of Howard's end itself. She shows Margaret how to care deeply for a place and for ancestry.

Margaret still got influence after Mrs. Wilcox's death. She receives Mrs. Wilcox's quality. As Mrs. Wilcox combines idealism with realism, and she realizes the important of the Wilcoxes: " If the Wilcoxes hadn't worked and died in England for thousands of years, you and I couldn't sit here without having our throats cut. There would be no trains, no ships to carry us literary people about in, no fields even." (p. 164) Soon after, Margaret recognizes the Wilcox's value.

Margaret also feels that Mrs. Wilcox is her guidance. As Margaret says to Helen, " I feel that you and I and Henry are only fragments of that woman's mind. She knows everything. She is everything. She is the house, and the tree that leans over it...I cannot believe that knowledge such as hers will perish with knowledge such as mine." (p. 313) At this point, Margaret becomes increasingly similar to Mrs. Wilcox

Howard's end cannot be left to the Wilcox's because they lack of inner life. The house is in the middle of money and culture. Ruth Wilcox wanted Margaret to be the heir but she cannot be the inheritance either. Because the real owner is the baby of Helen and Leonard Bast because the child will

get idealism and passion from Helen, connect with the spirit of adventure and the ambitious in Leonard.