

From Cromford to Cromford

Cooperations between the LVR-Industriemuseum Ratingen, Textilfabrik Cromford and Cromford Mill in England

Both sites – Cromford in England and Cromford in Germany – are closely tied to each other due to history. The foundation of German Cromford in 1783 responds directly to its English model. After all, the foundation in Germany succeeded merely through the technology transfer from England. This transfer recurred when the museum was founded in Ratingen. Technology was brought from England to Germany for a second time in the form of reconstructing the 18th century spinning machines which still exist in England. Since the opening of the museum, there has been an extensive exchange between the two Cromfords. First, the sponsorship association in Ratingen and the Arkwright Society organised mutual visits and excursions. An educational project evolved on this basis which has been realised since 2014.

The history club, an extracurricular activity at the Ratingen museum's partner school, spent a week in Cromford and Derwent Valley. The club consists of a small number of pupils who work within the museum rooms on a regular basis and who have become acquainted with the museum's history and its contents. Both the town of Ratingen-Cromford and Derwent Valley are regarded as the cradle of the Industrial Revolution, which started to spread all over Europe from there. Thus, the area around Cromford (in England) offers a vast number of industrial monuments which can only be compared to those of the Ruhr area or the Rhineland.

A project grew out of this partnership culminating in an excursion which the German pupils made to Cromford in England. It pursues different goals:

- To convey the history of industrialization in England in comparison to Ratingen's development.
- To make the process of the European integration familiar, which is directly linked to the Industrial Revolution. Concurrently, de-industrialisation as a problem of global development is addressed.
- To link the pupils' ethnic backgrounds with the industrial development in the Ruhr area and the Rhineland. Thus, the participants of the excursions travel to the origin of European migration history in the industrial age.
- To promote the equality of opportunity of disadvantaged pupils (more than 50 % of the school's pupils have an ethnic background and live in socially as well as educationally deprived families).

The excursion proved to be a great success. The aim is to have a visit every two years. The last trip to Cromford took place in 2016. The project is exclusively financed from donations.