



## Works of Edith Wharton

*Edith Wharton*

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### **Works of Edith Wharton** Edith Wharton

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### **Works of Edith Wharton Details**

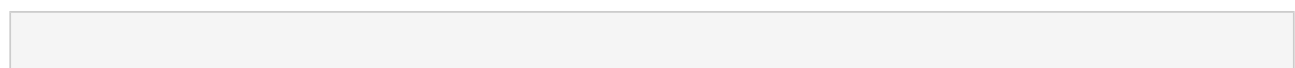
Date : Published (first published 1978)

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Author : Edith Wharton

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## From Reader Review Works of Edith Wharton for online ebook

### Mary says

This is a very long book with many sections. I am on the fifth story "The Bunner Sisters"  
So far I have enjoyed the book. The second book was "The Age Of Innocents" that we read with the Savant Book Club. This one may take me a long time as I will read other books before this one is finished.

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### grey1066 says

Wharton writes excellent short stories and, though not many, some of the best ghost stories. This is a collection of her entire corpus and I just got too bogged down in "Age of Innocence", and so it is digitally backshelved at the moment.

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### Luci says

It was fun revisiting some of my favorite Wharton novels and stories but this collection is very bare bones when it comes to editing and endnotes.

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### Teacherhuman says

I love this woman's voice. The House of Mirth will always be my favorite--with irony to spare from title to final word--she paints the gilded age with poverty and blood and lovely clothes and houses.  
I don't know an author who better shows the plight of the women of her age.

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### Cecily says

I have NOT read this book, but am using this as a place for general observations about Wharton's **New York Stories**, which I reviewed individually [HERE](#).

### Write Your Own Wharton Short Story

Wharton has a store-cupboard of favoured ingredients that she expertly blends in varying combinations and quantities to concoct her exquisite tales. Each of the twenty New York Stories has a unique combination of familiar ingredients, plucked from different shelves, but there is magic in her method. The result is more than the sum of the parts.

The recipe is hard to reverse-engineer, so although I'm tempted to try to write one of my own, I doubt the results will be worth sharing. I expect some GR friends could rise to the challenge, though. Note: This is intended as a bit of fun, not to trivialise Wharton's undoubted skill.

The key ingredients are:

### **Characters**

- \* Strong women
- \* Divorcées
- \* Artists and authors (mostly men)
- \* Returning exiles

### **Objects**

- \* Paintings
- \* Books
- \* Letters: unexpected, expected but not arriving, anonymous, or misattributed
- \* Money: needing, gaining, keeping, losing

### **Situations**

- \* Rivalry: for success in art/writing or over a partner
- \* Courting, marriage, divorce, and remarriage amid changing mores
- \* Double duplicity: men and women marrying on false assumptions
- \* Mistaken authorship (deliberate and not)
- \* Emotional pain, even amid luxury
- \* Caring for an invalid
- \* Contemplating a view

### **Ethics and Dilemmas**

- \* Honesty and integrity of artistic purpose versus the need to survive
- \* Honesty and integrity versus kindly white lies and good manners
- \* Fidelity in relationships
- \* Forgiveness, turning a blind eye, and possible redemption
- \* Ill-gotten gains, used for good

### **Narrative Arc**

- \* Twists and reversals
- \* A surprising, ambiguous, or open ending

### **Style and Symbols**

- \* Acerbic and insightful wit, exposing societal hypocrisy
- \* Contrary and contradictory opinions (very Wildean)
- \* Interior decor to indicate interior mind and exterior social position

Although Wharton wrote also ghost stories, there is only one in her New York Stories collection.

Of the twenty stories, which I reviewed [HERE](#), I gave eight 5\*, seven 4\*, and five 3\*. If I'd spread them out over a longer time, some of the ratings may have been a little higher, as they did become a little too familiar.

### **Biographical Notes on Wharton**

Edith Wharton was born in 1862, died in 1937, and although always a New Yorker, was a regular traveller to and sometime inhabitant of Europe (mainly England, France, and Italy), starting with a spell from ages four to ten.

She was not always as wealthy as those around her, and apparently had little maternal instinct. At 23, she

married an older man who developed depression and other health problems, lasting many years. Just before WW1, after nearly 30 years of marriage (no children), she divorced him. She lived in Paris throughout the war.

All these experiences feature in at least one of her New York Stories.

Wharton was prolific, though her first novel was not published until she was 40. She was the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for literature (for *The Age of Innocence* in 1921), and was three times nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature (1927, 1928, and 1930).

### **Wharton and/or Wilde?**

The style and setting meant I frequently wondered if Wharton was, in some ways, the American Wilde, or he was the Irish Wharton - which is not meant to diminish the talent of either. He was only eight years older, but whereas he died in Victorian times (just), she lived almost until the start of WW2.

I don't know if Wharton ever met or corresponded with Wilde, but she must have known of his works, and maybe he of hers. She travelled in Europe and he in the US, and they may have met in 1882, but there doesn't seem to be any actual evidence, as discussed here.

### **Quirky Negatives**

I noticed several unfamiliar negative forms of common words, including: innutritious, inoccupation, unanxious, unsuccess (a noun; the adjective unsuccessful is commonplace), and inconsecutive.

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### **Gail says**

This collection consists of *Ethan Frome*, *The House of Mirth*, and *Tales of Men and Ghosts*.

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