

## APPENDICES

### Synopsis of *The Age of Innocence*

Newland Archer is a wealthy young lawyer who is engaged to May Welland, the wealthy daughter of the Welland family. Both of them are coming from New York society that is bound to the old-fashioned custom and tradition. The old traditions of their society make both men and women become manipulative and guileful. Archer feels oppressed and bored with his society's predictable routine. He thinks that people are supposed to be free to express their feelings. Unfortunately, he realizes that May's innocent attitude is based on what the society expects. That is why Archer is attracted to Ellen Olenska, who is more ignorant towards the society's point of view. Ellen is May's cousin. Her arrival in New York surely threatens the stability of New York society, because she wants a divorce which will disgrace her and her family.

Archer tries to persuade Ellen not to get divorced. In order to keep Ellen's family reputation intact, Ellen agrees to Archer's advice. She neither divorces nor goes back to her husband. After several meetings with Ellen, Archer's motive to protect the reputation of the Mingotts changes gradually as he is falling in love with Ellen. Ellen rejects his love, because Archer is going to marry May; besides,

she agrees not to get divorced because she does not want to hurt her family's feelings.

In the end, Archer and May get married but Archer's feeling towards Ellen remains unchanged. When Archer decides to confess his feeling towards Ellen to May, she interrupts him with the news of her pregnancy. Twenty-five years later, May dies of pneumonia. Archer's eldest son confesses that her mother has told him the day before her death that Archer is once in love with Ellen. Archer refuses his son's suggestion to meet Ellen. He decides to keep the image of Ellen in his mind.

### **Biography of Edith Wharton**

Edith Newbold Jones was born into the wealthy family of George Frederic Jones and Lucretia Rhineland in New York City on January 24th, 1862. She has two brothers, Frederic and Henry "Harry" Edward.

Edith wrote the Pulitzer prize-winning novel *The Age of Innocence* (1920). Set in 1870's New York Society, she examined upper-class tradition, rigidity, and hypocrisy. As the author of numerous best-selling award-winning works including novels, short stories, and travel essays, she inspired many other authors. Some of her works were also adapted to the stage and film, and others are still in print today, such as *The Age of Innocence*.

On April 29th, 1855, Edith married a banker named Edward "Teddy" Robbins Wharton in Trinity Chapel, New York. Their marriage was proved to be unhappy. One of her works, *House of Mirth* (1905) became a best seller book in 1905. In 1907 the Whartons moved from their Park Avenue home to 53 Rue de Varebbe in Paris. While in Paris, Edith met a journalist named Morton Fullerton

and they had an affair that lasted for three years. In 1913 she and her husband got divorced and Edith settled permanently in Paris.

Edith died of a stroke at Pavillon Colombe on August 11th, 1937. Her funeral was held at the American Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Paris and she was buried in the Cimetiere des Gonards, Versailles, France on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 1937.

Source: Gale