

# **Old New York**

Edith Wharton

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The four short novels in this collection by the author of *The Age of Innocence* are set in the New York of the 1840s, '50s, '60s, and '70s, each one revealing the tribal codes and customs that ruled society, portrayed with the keen style that is uniquely Edith Wharton's. Originally published in 1924 and long out of print, these tales are vintage Wharton, dealing boldly with such themes as infidelity, illegitimacy, jealousy, the class system, and the condition of women in society. Included in this remarkable quartet are *False Dawn*, which concerns the stormy relationship between a domineering father and his son; *The Old Maid*, the best known of the four, in which a young woman's secret illegitimate child is adopted by her best friend -- with devastating results; *The Spark*, about a young man's moral rehabilitation, which is "sparked" by a chance encounter with Walt Whitman; and *New Year's Day*, an O. Henryesque tale of a married woman suspected of adultery. *Old New York* is Wharton at her finest.



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