



Fighting France: From Dunkerque to Belfort

Edith Wharton

Read by:	Elizabeth Klett	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
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When the First World War broke out Edith Wharton, who had settled permanently in Paris after the breakup of her marriage, joined the French Red Cross and began to record her experiences so that Americans would have a better understanding of the war and its consequences. She was one of the few foreigners permitted to travel to the front lines and with her novelist's eye vividly described the destruction of the countryside, the oppressive dread of the trenches, the "sudden scream of a battery", and a military hospital populated by "battered, shattered, frostbitten, deafened and half-paralysed" soldiers from the front. She manages to maintain an analytical distance from the subject which gives her the perspective to fully and clearly

describe the utterly hellish reality of the war on the ground. The articles appeared in Scribner's Magazine in 1915 and were published in book form as *Fighting France, From Dunkerque to Belfort* in 1918 as part of The War on All Fronts series.

Edith Wharton (January 24, 1862 – August 11, 1937) was an American writer and designer best known for her stories featuring an insider's view of America's wealthy and privileged class. She was born Edith Newbold Jones into an upper crust family (the Joneses of the phrase "keeping up with Joneses") and was raised in the thick of New York society. In 1885 she married well-bred Bostonian Edward Wharton. They traveled widely and eventually settled in 1902 at the Mount, her estate in Lenox, Massachusetts. Edward suffered from an increasingly acute depression, deemed incurable in 1908, and they divorced in 1913, subjecting her to the opprobrium of her peers. She moved to France shortly thereafter, dividing her time between Paris and a villa in Provence, returning to America only once in 1923, to accept an honorary degree from Yale University. She won the Pulitzer Prize in 1921 for *The Age of Innocence*, the first woman to do so, and was nominated for the Nobel Prize in 1927, 1928, and 1930.