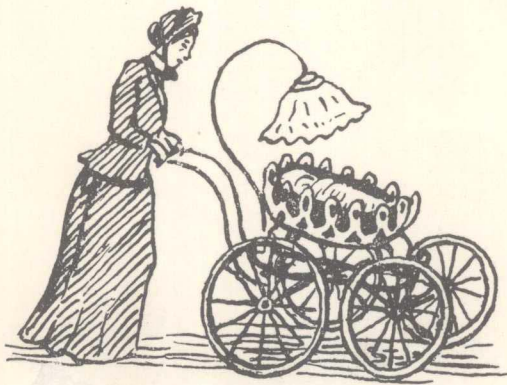


# PERIOD PIECE

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by  
GWEN RAVERAT

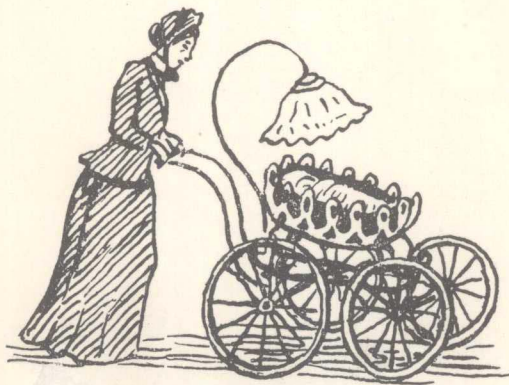


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# PERIOD PIECE

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by  
GWEN RAVERAT



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To  
FRANCES



## Contents

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I. PRELUDE	<i>page</i> 15
II. NEWNHAM GRANGE	31
III. THEORIES	47
IV. EDUCATION	60
V. LADIES	75
VI. PROPRIETY	98
VII. AUNT ETTY	119
VIII. DOWN	139
IX. GHOSTS AND HORRORS	162
X. THE FIVE UNCLES	175
XI. RELIGION	210
XII. SPORT	230
XIII. CLOTHES	253
XIV. SOCIETY	268

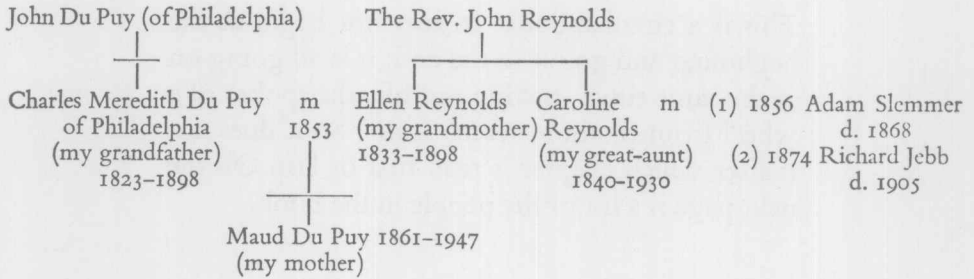


## *Preface*

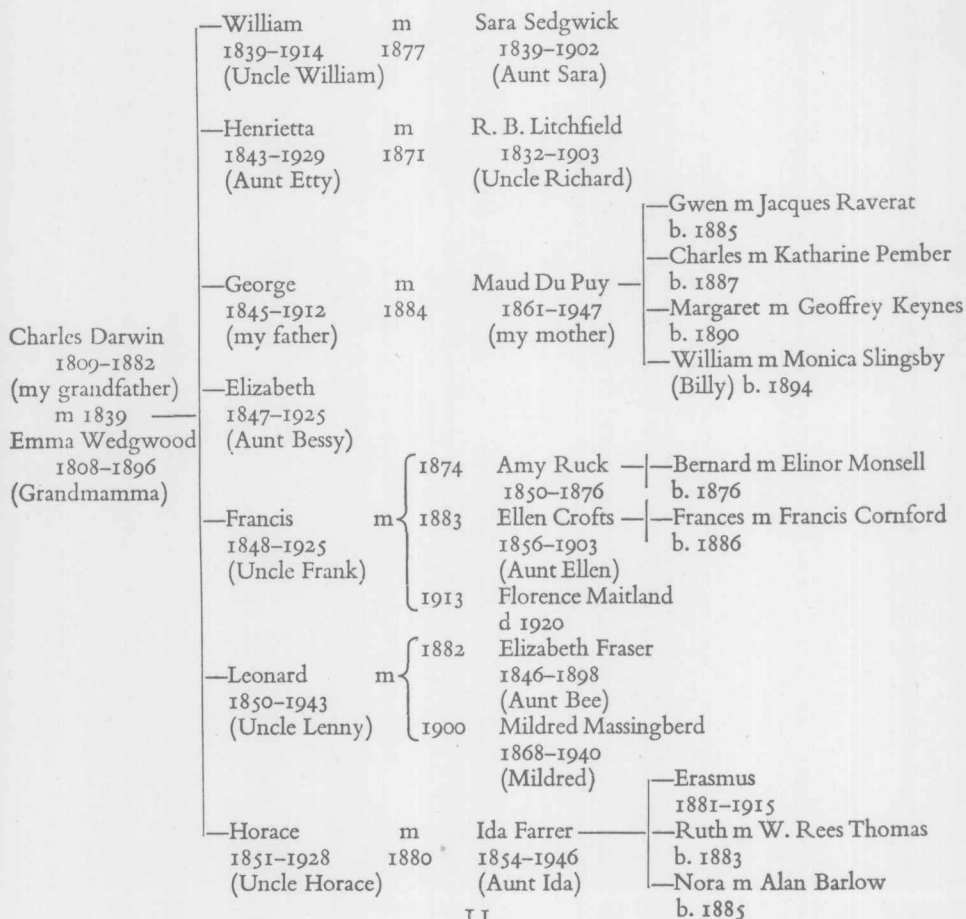
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This is a circular book. It does not begin at the beginning and go on to the end; it is all going on at the same time, sticking out like the spokes of a wheel from the hub, which is me. So it does not matter which chapter is read first or last. On the next page is a list of the people in the book.

## *My Mother's Family*



# My Father's Family





## *Period Piece*



## CHAPTER I

### *Prelude*

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In the spring of 1883 my mother, Maud Du Puy, came from America to spend the summer in Cambridge with her aunt, Mrs. Jebb. She was nearly twenty-two, and had never been abroad before; pretty, affectionate, self-willed, and sociable; but not at all a flirt. Indeed her sisters considered her rather stiff with young men. She was very fresh and innocent, something of a Puritan, and with her strong character, was clearly destined for matriarchy.

The Jebbs, my great-uncle Dick, and my great-aunt Cara, lived at Springfield, at the southern end of the Backs, and their house looked across Queens' Green to the elms behind Queens' College. Uncle Dick was later to be Sir Richard Jebb, O.M., M.P., Professor of Greek at Cambridge, and all the rest of it; but, at that time, he held the chair of Greek at Glasgow, and so had been



## Prelude

obliged to resign his Trinity fellowship and the post of Public Orator at Cambridge. However the Jebbs spent only the winters in Glasgow, and kept on their Cambridge house for the summers, while they waited hopefully for old Dr. Kennedy to retire, so that Uncle Dick might succeed him in the Cambridge Professorship. This was the Dr. Kennedy who wrote the Latin Grammar, which we all knew very well in our youth, and he had not the slightest intention of retiring; neither was it by any means so certain as the Jebbs chose to consider it, that the succession would fall to Uncle Dick. However, after keeping them waiting for thirteen years, Dr. Kennedy died in 1889, and Uncle Dick came into his kingdom at last.

The earliest Cambridge that I can remember must have been seen by me in reflection from my mother's mind, for it is the same picture as that which she draws in a series of artless letters, written to her family in Philadelphia in this summer of 1883, two years before I was born. In this, the first Cambridge in the mirror of my mind, the sun is always shining, and there are always ladies and gentlemen sitting in the garden under the trees, very much occupied with each other. It was quite a different Cambridge which I saw later on, when I looked at it with my own eyes.

My mother had fallen into a world which was very strange to her. She wrote home: '*I am at last at the Utopia of all my fondest dreams.*' It was a Utopia of tea-parties, dinner-parties, boat-races, lawn-tennis, antique shops, picnics, new bonnets, charming young men, delicious food and perfect servants; and it almost seems too good to be true. I suppose there must have been some difficulties, even in those days; and indeed all the right sleeves of my mother's dresses would keep on getting too tight, from the constant tennis; and the helpings of ice-cream were far too small for an American; but, otherwise, you would really think, from the letters, that Unrequited Love—other people's Unrequited Love—was the only