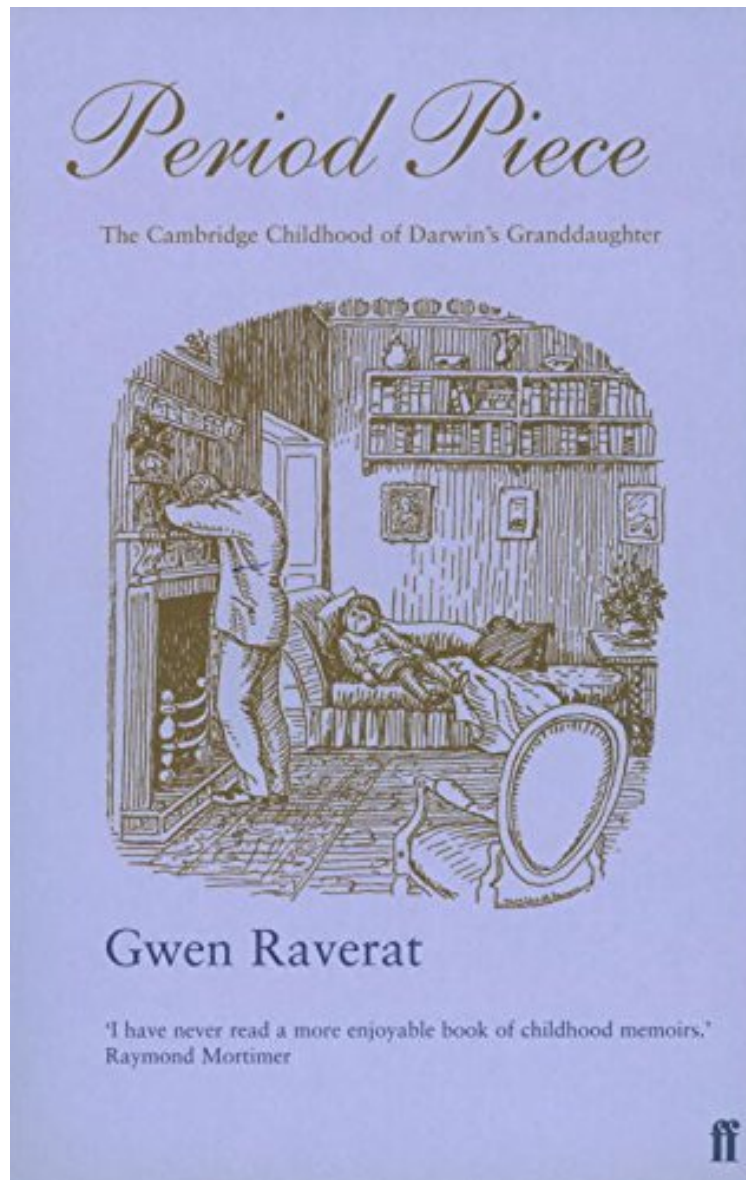


(Get free) Period Piece: A Cambridge Childhood

## Period Piece: A Cambridge Childhood

Gwen Raverat

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**Gwen Raverat : Period Piece: A Cambridge Childhood** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Period Piece: A Cambridge Childhood:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The delicious humor of Darwin's granddaughterBy DFOne of the most delightful books that I have ever read about ordinary life towards the end of the 19th century. Raverat had a great sense of humor that reminds me somewhat of Georgette Heyer's: Never slapstick or vulgar, but with a fine grasp of the

humor of situations and human foibles, which she treats with great appreciation and no meanness. Not many books have been able to make me laugh out loud. This is one of them. If anyone reading this has been made to laugh by Georgette Heyer or--better yet--by Booth Tarkington's wonderful coming-of-age book, *Seventeen*, then you mustn't miss this one. Here are a few samples for your delectation: "I have been told that when Aunt Etty was thirteen the doctor recommended, after he had a 'low fever', that she should have breakfast in bed for a time. (This next sentence is in italics, which I cannot reproduce here.) She never got up to breakfast again in all her life." Be sure to check out the picture of "Aunt Etty ordering dinner (in bed) in her patent anti-cold mask", which she designed using a tea strainer stuffed with antiseptic cotton batting. The mask was worn like a muzzle and appears to have been cone-shaped. One of my favorites among Raverat's pen and ink drawings shows the nursery, with a little boy washing his hands, a nursemaid doing the hair of an older girl, and a girl of maybe 8 or so kneeling underneath the table, praying fervently. The caption says, "The first prayer. 'Please, God, let Miss Ratcliffe be dead before we get to dancing class.'" Caption under a drawing of the head and shoulders of a man who proposed to Raverat's mother but was refused: "Mr. T., from the photograph which.... His hair and beard were considered very attractive, and his legs fortunately don't show here." Well, I guess that might be taken as a bit cruel, but again--fortunately--the man in question was probably dead by the time the book came out. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. CHILDHOOD THROUGH THE EYES OF HERSELF By Anne Salazar I read this book years ago when I shockingly came upon information about my probable relationship to the Darwins through marriage, specifically through the American family of the author's mother Maud, and that information sent me on a quest for all things Darwin -- familial, not so much scientific. That quest may never end since it turns out that the family of Charles Darwin contains an endless number of writers, artists, scientists, statesmen, and just regular people, most of whom have written books! I am thrilled to belong to such a clan, no matter how peripherally. Gwen Darwin Raverat, the author of this book, was a very talented and famous artist who was a member of The Bloomsbury Group and who ultimately had a sad life which makes it all the more remarkable that she would write this charmer about her childhood with her large extended family. She was born into such a fascinating group of people and she was able to write about them with clarity and an amazing amount of grace and humor which I realized more and more throughout the book was no small accomplishment. Although I read *Period Piece* some years ago it remains fresh as I thumb through it now and observe again the hilarity of so many situations and customs seen through the eyes of the adult child, Gwen. It is a reminder to us all that the only constant in our lives is change, and that we shouldn't take ourselves so seriously. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The most fun read I have had in years! By Customer Laugh-out-loud hilarious almost every page. I could hardly put it down. Not just what Gwen Raverat chose to write about in *Period Piece*, but also the way she wrote. I wish I could find more that she has written. I have recommended it to friends bought it through from an English bookseller for a gift. And this has put me on a search for more books about the Darwin family about Gwen Raverat herself. Although not quite the wordsmith as my favorite author, Diana Athill, she is similar in candor topics of observation. Fortright funny!

'A drawing of the world when I was young.' So Gwen Raverat, the grand-daughter of Charles Darwin, described *Period Piece*, her classic memoir of a Cambridge childhood, which since its initial publication in 1952 has never been out of print. Vividly evoking a bygone era, it is a shrewd, touching and comic portrait of her eccentric relations, and of Cambridge society in a time when it was restricted enough to be treated as an extension of the family. As a child she thought it impossible that she would ever succeed as an artist, and yet the observations of the small incidents in her life, recorded here both in word and drawing, reveal an artist's careful eye.

"*Period Piece* is an altogether delightful book, a kind of insouciant wit, too appreciative to be called cynical, too unillusioned to be called pious. Mrs Raverat is not a Darwin for nothing. Her book comes out of a highly civilized background - the English professional and intellectual middle-classes, which, if not the backbone of England, may be held to be, on the whole, its mainstream of culture, and of sophisticated intelligence and wit." --The Times Literary Supplement About the Author Gwen Raverat (1885-1957) was the granddaughter of Charles Darwin. In 1911 she married the French painter Jacques Raverat, and she was an artist, illustrator and wood engraver in her own right. She published her memoir, *Period Piece*, in 1952.