MY MOTHER'S BOOK

JOAN LYONS
So she broke her engagement and married my father with all his children. There were four boys, and Annie and Gussie and Tillie—seven children. Nineteen years old and she walked into that bedlam.

A reason for marriage, right? He was a very fine man. He treated her gently, fine. But there was the brood to take care of and she did it. She had a very hard life. Because, after all, a beautiful young girl—say she had to be an old maid—but here she was engaged to somebody from out-of-town. And she sent back whatever it is you do to break an engagement and went and married into this kind of family. Of course he was wonderful to her, but what sort of a life, and who would allow a daughter to marry a man with all these children when she had a choice. But she did, and she did a very fine job, and they were very wonderful to her. I mean she had as nice a life as they lived at that time.

But that was the story of my mother’s life and the rest is history.
AFTERWORD

This book begins with my grandmother’s dream and ends with mine. The stories and pictures which form its contents are only in a sense particular to one family and one set of circumstances. What interests me is what is remembered, and how, as it is passed along. My mother hated her mother’s hard life and wanted another, as I hated my mother’s life and wanted another.

This book is for her memory and for her generations.