

MOLLIE M. KAYE Author of "THE FAR PAVILIONS"

In an autobiography about M. M. Kaye, the writer, ("The Sun in the Morning") mentions the fact that Mollie and her mother walked down Beach Avenue in Birchington to the boarding school that Mollie was attending at the time. Her parents were living in India during this period, so Mollie was sent to England for her education, as so many Colonial children were.

The school was in Spencer Road, which means that it was at 'Portpool School'. It was a boarding house for the girls and some of the classrooms were the house on the corner of Spencer Road and Constable Road (now Spencer House), while the girls had indoor games and assemblies in the School House, which is now No: 9 Shakespeare Road. This was known as "Gwynant" for many years and was lived in by Miss Kathleen Phillips. It stands on the other end of Constable Road and at the time, the gardens of Portpool and the School House led into each other. There is now new property standing between these two buildings.

Elizabeth Denning also went to the school soon after she and her family came to live in Birchington in 1914. She knew Mollie just slightly, although she was six years younger than Mollie. Elizabeth stayed there until 1928 when, at the age of 14, she says, "I left to go to a 'proper' school." Her family had a house in St Mildred's Avenue, in which she still lives. Elizabeth's father was the local doctor and built 'Leyburn' from which he practised (12 Alpha Road), which first appears in Kelly's Directory in 1928, although it was built by about 1926-7.