

Fourthly, a study of known dates is revealing.

Certainly Beauchamp once owned and Kathleen stayed at Downes Point. Having visited that house I have no doubt that it is the one described in Katherine Mansfield's journal entry of 1 June 1907 and though the sea has encroached it must have 'stretched right up to the yard' before the present retaining wall was built. During the big storm in 1968 when the *Wahine* was wrecked, water lashed the windows nearest to that sea-wall.

But Beauchamp had not bought the land until about March 1906, when he 'apparently immediately erected a cottage'. That the 'cabin-like bedroom fitted with bunks' of the Journal had become in the letter of 4 March 1908 to Sylvia Payne, 'two bedrooms fitted with bunks' suggests that the carpenters had been back.

On 6 December 1906, Katherine Mansfield returned to Wellington after attending school in England, so she had turned eighteen before she first visited the Downes Point house. It seems to me incredible that she would have transferred the Kezia of the story and her correspondingly younger sisters and cousins to this later house. And her Aunt Belle (Beryl in the story) who remained in England at the end of 1906, never saw it.

Katherine left for England again in July 1908. She had known the Downes Point house only during the previous eighteen months, a period pitted by much sadness and unrest. The tender memories of the story could not, even by deliberate transference, have been associated with that house.

Although for these and other reasons I think Mrs Morris is right to look beyond Downes Point for the house at the bay, she has not persuaded me that The Glen is that house, even if The Glen be the furnished cottage which Beauchamp, in his 1937 letter to Mr Morris, recalled having taken for his family at Muritai. Her case leaves me with too many doubts.

Supporting the proposition that many of the characters in the story are drawn very closely from life is the authority of Katherine Mansfield herself. In a 1921 letter which discusses *At the Bay* she wrote:

'It is so strange to bring the dead to life again. There's my grandmother, back in her chair with her pink knitting, there stalks my uncle over the grass; I feel as I write, "You are not dead, my darlings. All is remembered. I bow down to you. I efface myself so that you may live again through me in your richness and beauty."'

Vera (Isabel) was born in 1885, 'Chaddie' in 1887, Katherine in October 1888, Jeanne in 1892, Belle Dyer about 1875. How old are the children in *At the Bay*? Kezia digs a river down the middle of her porridge (so would I, but no matter). Lottie finds it fearfully hard to get over a stile and playing at cards she cannot remember whether she