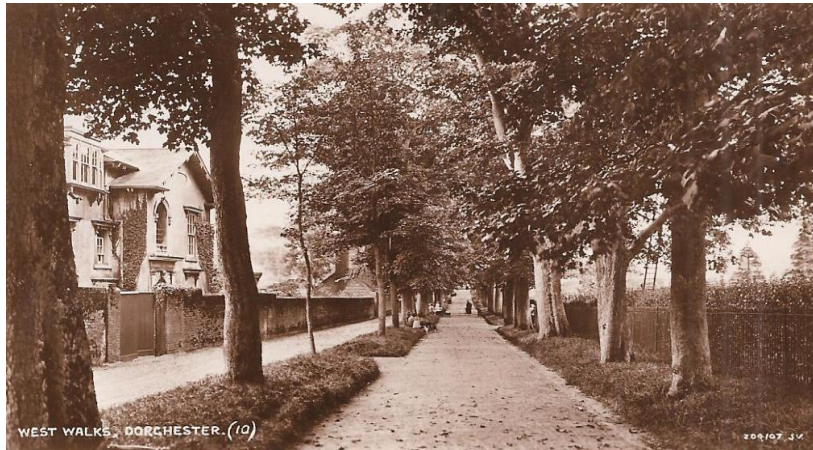


Dorchester

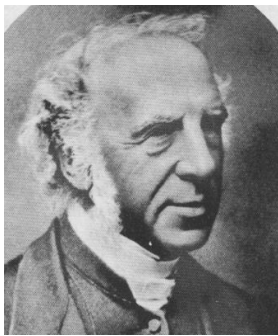
Dorset

The family moved to Dorchester when John Meade Falkner was one year old. He was to live there until he was twelve and, in his memoirs, he makes it clear that the town made a great impression on him. They lived at West Walks House, newly built, surrounded by gardens and out-buildings – “at the back and side there were a vegetable garden, a greenhouse, a coach-house and a stable and a laundry. In front were flower beds, a lawn, a ‘round-about’ and some shrubberies which we children called a ‘wilderness’ ”.



Falkner's home is on the left.

Formal education for Falkner started on his fifth birthday, when his mother gave him lessons in Latin. This was later supplemented by holiday tuition by Edward Stone, a near neighbour but also a Senior Classics master at Eton. Falkner then went to a private school run by the Rev Henry Moule.



Henry Moule in 1870

He also developed a profound love of books, greatly influenced by his grandfather's library now in his father's possession.

On 10 October 1869, aged 11½,

Falkner started at the 300-year **old Dorchester Grammar School**. The school placed great emphasis on the teaching of the classics. Arithmetic was sidelined.

When the Rector of Holy Trinity

died, Falkner's father was proposed for the vacancy, but it came to nothing and the family soon moved to another living in Weymouth. Falkner inevitably had to leave Dorchester Grammar for schooling in his new home town.

Falkner never forgot his time in Dorchester and often subsequently visited the area. He became friends with Thomas Hardy in later life and, in September 1907, they met at the Amphitheatre near Weymouth. Falkner and his wife also visited Hardy's home at Max Gate.



The Grammar (or Free) School

There is now a small display relating to Meade Falkner in the Dorset County Museum in Dorchester.