



## MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE

*This view of Marlborough College was almost certainly made before the buildings were completed, perhaps to support the Prospectus. Taken from what is now the A4(!) it was made by Edward Blore, antiquarian draughtsman, who designed Walter Scott's pseudo-gothic 'Abbotsford' and was architect to Westminster Abbey until superseded in 1849 by Sir Gilbert Scott. In the centre is A House, modelled loosely on the 17th century mansion of the Hertfords, which ought to appear behind it but has been omitted to offer a clearer view of the new buildings. The old house had fallen on hard times and in the latter half of the 18th century had been famous as The Castle, one of the coaching inns on the way to Bath. When the 1830s brought the railways it lost its trade and was conveniently ready to be taken over for the College in 1843. At the left is the Chapel, still building when Morris went there in 1848, and consecrated later that year. On the right is The Mount, or Mound. Never properly investigated, it is ancient, perhaps contemporary with nearby Silbury Hill: may once have had a Norman keep built on it. In the early 18th century it became a picturesque plaything for the Countess of Hertford, who crowned it with a summerhouse and made a shell-grotto at its foot. Opposite, we print, from the first issue of the Marlborough Magazine, the sad plaint of The Mount—which faintly veils the distaste felt by some members of the staff for Blore's crudities.*

(*To the Editor of the Marlborough Magazine.*)

April 10th, 1848.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,

One who has suffered unparalleled insults and injuries at the hands of a man, who is alas! too powerful for him alone to grapple with, whose name he dare not mention, lest resentment for honest indignation should heap new woes upon his devoted head, appeals to you, and through you to the world, for compensation for the past, and protection against future oppression.

I am descended from one of the oldest families of England, a family well known and respected as early as the time of the Druids, and in this county of Wiltshire especially. Few of my relations now remain—the hand of improvement has ruthlessly levelled the glory of my race, and I am left almost alone. But the recollection of my ancient nobility but adds fresh poignancy to my grief, of which you, sir, and your school-fellows are unwittingly and unwillingly the cause. Since this College, which is—with sorrow do I say it—an eyesore to me, has been founded, I have undergone a series of persecutions, enough to break a heart of stone much more one of chalk. I was first made aware of my danger by a monster in human form, whom I over-heard making this remark to a companion, “This establishment will be ruined if the mount is not levelled!” Happily for the College I have not yet been utterly destroyed, though, as far as regards myself, I had as lief not be, as live to be a subject for the experiments of my enemy. By him I have three times been trepanned, and the third operation was quite successful—that is to say, it has given me water on the head, from which disease I fear I shall never recover. My feet he has covered with rubbish, and my head—but I will not enumerate all his barbarities: suffice it to say that, not content with surrounding me with masses of brick and mortar, ugly enough to frighten the boys from Marlborough, he has, after this, proceeded to dig holes in my sides, and done his best to heap every possible indignity upon me. However I am now resigned to my fate, and am content to be turned to mere utilitarian uses, all my ancient beauty being overwhelmed with brickbats. My heart is full—I am overpowered by my feelings—I can write no more. Excuse, I beg of you, my style, as I write “non usitatâ pennâ,” i. e. with a pen that I never used before, and my fingers are stiff with chalk gout.

I remain Sir,

Yours, (as long as you remain here,)

MARLBOROUGH MOUNT.