

**OLIVER MADOX BROWN.
A BIOGRAPHICAL
SKETCH, 1855-1874**

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Oliver Madox Brown. A biographical sketch, 1855-1874 by John H. Ingram

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JOHN H. INGRAM

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OLIVER MADOX BROWN.



Yours most sincerely
Oliver Madox-Brown.

TO
HIS PARENTS
THESE MEMORIALS OF
OLIVER MADOX BROWN
ARE INSCRIBED BY
THEIR COLLECTOR.





INTRODUCTION.



‘I AM sure that no memoir will ever do Oliver justice,’ wrote Mr. Richard Garnett to the youth’s father some months ago: ‘The wonderful precocity of his genius may be set forth, but the peculiar charm of his character, its sweetness and manliness, its alliance of the most daring originality to the most exquisite ingenuousness, can never be adequately represented, even by those who knew him most intimately. It was something unique and indescribable, and the objective and purely imaginative character of his writings renders even them very inadequate exponents of his mind and heart. I should despair of communicating any just conception of him to one

who never knew him, and can only say that I should expect anything sooner than to meet with another Oliver Madox Brown.'

Confronted by this opinion, and by the fact that, personally, Oliver Madox Brown was unknown to me, my attempt to compile a short biography of him will appear to savour of rashness. I was, however, prompted to the undertaking, not only by admiration for his genius, but by the circumstance that whilst every year lessened the material for a faithful record, no effort appeared to be made by any of his personal friends to produce one; and that no fuller *Memoir* existed of him than the few pages prefixed to his *Literary Remains*; to which, to Mr. P. B. Marston's article on 'Oliver Madox Brown' in *Scribner's Magazine*, and to an appreciative, able critique on the *Literary Remains* in the *Examiner*, I am indebted for various items of value. My researches have been so warmly and generously aided by the friends and relatives of the talented youth, and so many interesting *data* have been forthcoming, that I am not altogether hopeless of having obtained a sufficiency and

excellency of material to attract even those who, like myself, were personally unacquainted with Oliver Madox Brown.

Indeed, whatever interest appertains to this monograph is due to the kind assistance afforded me by those who knew and loved the youthful author: I am little more than the compiler and editor of their communications. To Mr. Ford Madox Brown my warmest thanks are due for kind permission to make full use of his son's correspondence and poems (published and unpublished), as also for information and corrections in matters of fact, and, above all, for the use of the illustrations to this volume; to Mrs. William M. Rossetti I am under deep obligation for valuable assistance; to Mr. William M. Rossetti I am much beholden for the use of Dante Rossetti's correspondence with Oliver, and to Mr. Philip B. Marston I am greatly indebted for his kindness in placing at my disposal some most interesting correspondence with his deceased friend, and for various items of information. My thanks are also tendered to Mrs. Robertson for the use of the letters addressed by Oliver to