

**A NEW GUIDE TO
BLENHEIM PALACE,
THE SEAT OF THE
DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH**

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A New Guide to Blenheim Palace, the Seat of the Duke of Marlborough by William Eccles

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WILLIAM ECCLES

**A NEW GUIDE TO
BLENHEIM PALACE,
THE SEAT OF THE
DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH**

A NEW GUIDE
TO
BLENHEIM PALACE,
THE SEAT OF HIS GRACE
THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH,
Containing an accurate Account of
The Paintings, Tapestry, and Furniture,
ACCORDING TO THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENT,
AND A DESCRIPTION OF
The Gardens and Park.
EMBELLISHED WITH A
BEAUTIFUL STEEL ENGRAVING OF THE PALACE,

by *William*^{Esq.} *Eccles*

To which is added

AN ACCOUNT OF THE BOROUGH OF WOODSTOCK.

FIFTH EDITION.

Woodstock:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM ECCLES

Price One Shilling and Six-pence.

1852.

TO HIS GRACE
THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH,

ſc. ſc.

THIS COMPENDIOUS
Guide to Menheim Palace;

IS,

BY KIND PERMISSION,
VERY RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY HIS GRACE'S
MOST OBEDIENT AND HUMBLE SERVANT,

WILLIAM ECCLES.

GENERAL INFORMATION.

THE PALACE OF BLENHEIM may be inspected every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, from Eleven till One o'Clock. The rest of the day may be agreeably and profitably filled up, by viewing the Park and Gardens, which are open to the Public every week day.

*• The Private Gardens can only be viewed by parties furnished with a Ticket of Admission from His Grace.

NEW DESCRIPTION

OF

BLLENHEIM.

"Having seen every thing that was curious in Oxford, we proceeded to BLENHEIM, the Seat of His Grace the Duke of Marlborough. This place is without comparison superior to any thing I ever beheld. The beauties of Windsor Park faded before it, and every other place I had visited was effaced from my recollection, on viewing its magnificence." *From the Travels of Mirza Abu Taleb Khan, commonly known in this country by the title of the "Persian Prince," 1791—1803.*

THE magnificent and widely celebrated structure, or the Palace, of Blenheim, is situated in the County, about eight miles from the famous University, of Oxford; and within half a mile of the Brough of New Woodstock.

To become acquainted with the various attractions of Blenheim and its Gardens, its Park and other accompaniments, in any considerable degree, will require, as it will reward, repeated visits, and a minute and close inspection.

The general appearance of the Palace is grand and imposing. Within, it consists of a great number of handsome and spacious apartments, rich in decorations and elegantly furnished, containing inestimable treasures of Art and Literature. It abounds in Paintings, of singular excellence, by first-rate masters of nearly all the most celebrated schools of Antiquity; and several works of superior merit, the fruit of more modern genius and talent, are to be found within its walls. The surrounding scenery is of varied and charming character, consisting of wood and water, hill and vale, and in fact combining in itself, nearly every essential element of a magnificent and pleasing landscape. To direct attention to the principal objects of interest is all this Guide pretends to; the Visitor of taste will discover much that is worthy of being noticed and remembered, which must necessarily be omitted in a work of this nature, and of which, indeed, no mere verbal description could convey a perfectly correct or adequate idea.

Large sums have been from time to time expended, in repairing the Palace, and improving the grounds adjoining, by the several noble proprietors of Blenheim. His Grace, the present Duke has manifested his regard for this seat of

his ancestors, not merely in the restoration of what the ravages of time had injured, but in many judicious alterations and valuable additions, at an expenditure of £80,000. The Palace indeed is more indebted to the Marlborough family, than is generally supposed. According to the notion popularly entertained, it was erected at the charge of the British nation; and with the concurrence of Parliament, was bestowed, together with the Manor of Woodstock, upon John, Duke of Marlborough by his royal mistress, Queen Anne, in acknowledgment of the eminent services of that illustrious commander, especially in the brilliant and successful battle fought on the banks of the Daaube, near the Village of Blenheim, from which the palace derives its name. This, however, demands some qualification. The fact is, that Queen Anne, after supplying the funds for the building up to a certain point, deserted the undertaking, and the noble structure was completed by the Marlborough family at an expence of £150,000.

The Battle of Blenheim having been fought on the second day of August, 1704, it was enacted, " That on the same day of every year for ever, the inheritor of His Grace's honours and titles should render at Windsor to Her Majesty, her heirs, and successors one standard or colours, with

three fleur-de-lis painted thereon, as an acquittance for all manner of rents, suits and services due to the crown." A careful compliance with the terms of this enactment, has, of course, not been neglected. The requisite standard has been duly presented every returning year, and a large collection of them is now to be seen in Windsor Castle.

The visitor, who surveys the Palace of Blenheim, and forms his judgment from the impression he receives on contemplating the structure itself, unbiassed by the fastidious or affected criticism of others, can hardly fail to admire the magnificent pile of building before him ; and each succeeding view will assuredly heighten his admiration. In the earlier periods of its existence, however, it was far from uniting the suffrages of every pretender to architectural taste and skill in its favour. Various objections, more or less important, were not unfrequently urged against it, and particularly it was censured as being heavy. In a work of such extent and magnitude, it would, indeed, be marvellous if nothing were introduced, which might not with advantage have been omitted, and that there should be no incongruity or want of harmony in any of its details. The ablest architect cannot anticipate with perfect accuracy, what the ultimate and finished effect will be from the most carefully