

Marlborough College Wiltshire

John Meade Falkner was 14 in May 1872 and his father decided that he should complete his education as a boarder at a Public School. Marlborough College was chosen. He was already about six feet in height and a telegram was sent from the college checking he was the age he claimed to be. When the whole school was measured for the Anthropological Society of London some time later, Falkner was the tallest of over 550 boys, standing at 6 foot 3 and five-eighths inches: he was still under sixteen.



Marlborough College in 1873

Academically, Falkner's achievements were highly variable. He did win the Plater Prize – for 'the best English Ode or Poem in Heroic Verse' – with his "Italian Painters". It was published in the school magazine in December 1876. He spoke in school debates and played house rugby [Falkner not surprisingly 'rarely missed catching the ball when thrown in'] and racquets. Above all he took up what was to be a lifelong love of bicycling around the countryside, where, as he later described it to a friend, he 'ecclesiologized a great deal'.



The Chapel [1848-1884]

Falkner left Marlborough in March 1877, a few weeks before his nineteenth birthday, in the middle of a College year. Perhaps lack of finance or a desire to study at home for Oxford led to this decision.

Meade Falkner is remembered in Marlborough with his own road sign – **Falkner Close**.

