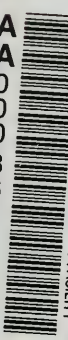


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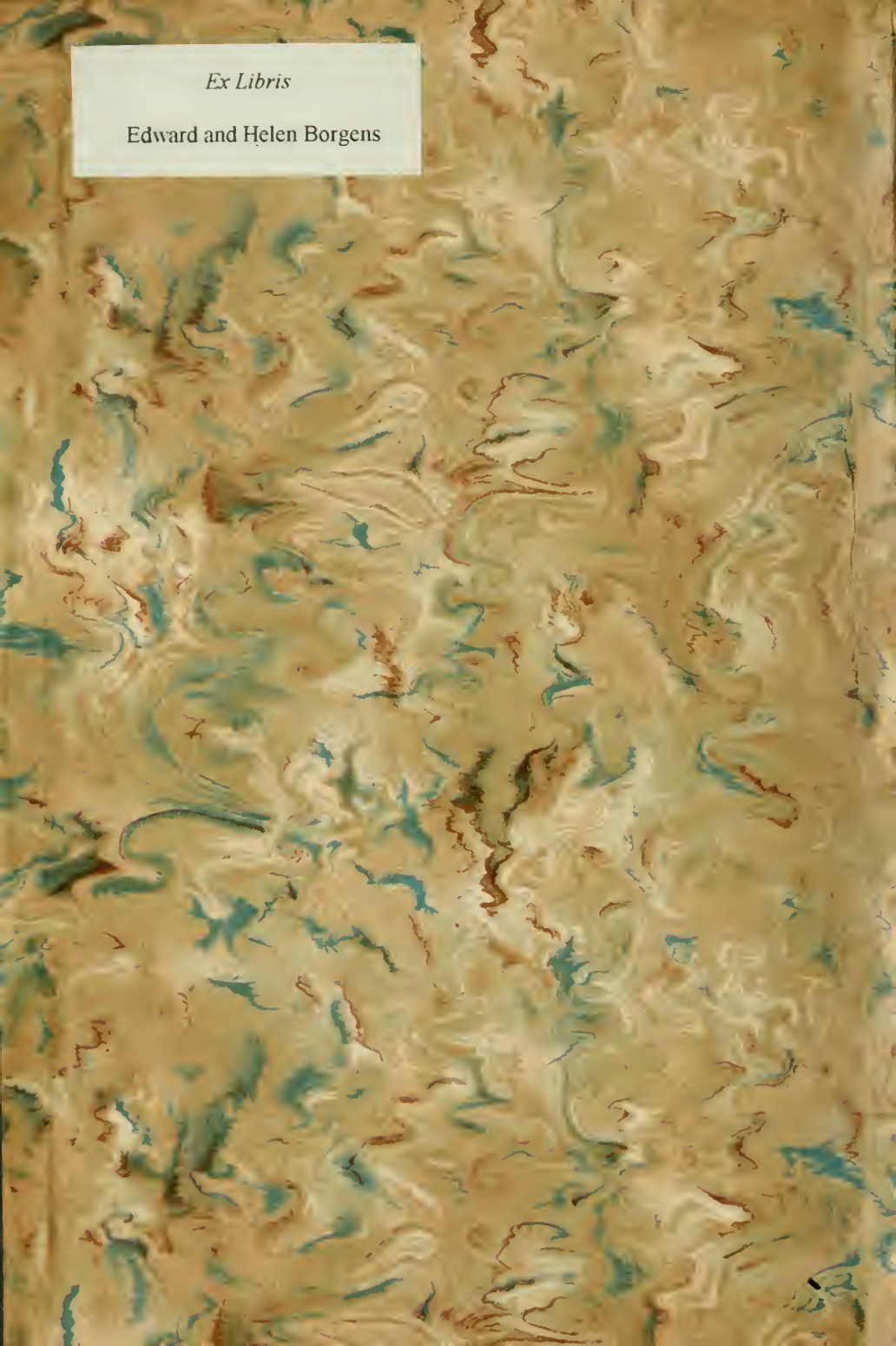


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*From the painting by Sir Frederick Burton, 1864
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GEORGE ELIOT

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THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE, MASS., U. S. A.

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Illustrations

George Eliot. From the painting by Sir Frederick
Burton, 1864 *Frontispiece*

Robert Evans. Reproduced from a miniature PAGE 150
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George Eliot's Life

INTRODUCTORY SKETCH OF CHILDHOOD

“**N**OV. 22, 1819. — Mary Ann Evans was born at Arbury Farm,¹ at five o'clock this morning.”

This is an entry in Mr. Robert Evans's handwriting on the page of an old diary that now lies before me, and records, with characteristic precision, the birth of his youngest child, afterwards known to the world as George Eliot. Let us pause for a moment to pay its due homage to the precision, because it was in all probability to this most noteworthy quality of her father's nature that the future author was indebted for one of the principal elements of her own after success, — the enormous faculty for taking pains. The baby was born on St. Cecilia's day, and Mr. Evans, being a good Churchman, takes her, on the 29th November, to be baptised in the church at Chilvers Coton, — the parish in which Arbury Farm lies, — a church destined to impress itself strongly on the child's imagination, and to be known by many people in many lands afterwards as Shepperton Church. The father was a remarkable man, and many of the leading traits in his character are to be found

¹ The farm is also known as the South Farm, Arbury.

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