

**NAXOS**  
AudioBooks

**COMPLETE  
CLASSICS  
UNABRIDGED**

**George Eliot**

**THE MILL**  
on the  
**FLOSS**

Read by **Laura Paton**

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## CD 1

1	<b>Book I</b> Chapter I	5:38
2	Chapter II	13:14
3	Chapter III	10:22
4	Maggie ran in an instant...	9:53
5	Mr. Riley paused a moment...	9:49
6	Chapter IV	11:25
7	Chapter V	9:10
8	With this terrible conclusion, Tom ran away from Maggie...	8:07

**Total time on CD 1: 77:44**

## CD 2

1	They were on their way to the Round Pool...	4:31
2	Chapter VI	10:55
3	But Maggie, gifted with that superior power of misery...	14:33
4	Chapter VII	9:45
5	'Well, sister, you're late; what's the matter?'	12:15
6	A dreadful resolve was gathering in Maggie's breast...	11:23
7	Slowly she rose from amongst her scattered locks...	13:47

**Total time on CD 2: 77:14**

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### CD 3

1	'You've got a bond for it, I reckon,' he said...	5:09
2	Chapter VIII	12:19
3	If Mrs. Moss had been one of the most astute women in the world...	10:59
4	Chapter IX	14:48
5	Mrs. Tulliver felt that she ought to be affected...	11:04
6	'It's dreadful to think on,' said aunt Pullet...	8:24
7	Chapter X	13:52
8	Chapter XI	1:48

**Total time on CD 3: 78:29**

### CD 4

1	Maggie soon got out of breath with running...	12:19
2	'Here's a bit o' nice victual, then,' said the old woman...	12:40
3	Chapter XII	10:30
4	This was the general aspect of things...	11:15
5	'Well, Mr. Glegg! it's a poor return I get...'	9:21
6	Chapter XIII	7:07
7	<b>Book II</b> Chapter I	12:35

**Total time on CD 4: 75:51**

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## CD 5

1	Perhaps it was because teaching came naturally to Mr. Stelling...	12:28
2	Tom, as I said, had never been so much like a girl...	11:32
3	Maggie found the Latin Grammar quite soothing...	12:16
4	Chapter II	9:16
5	Tom, looking round with some anxiety...	8:56
6	Chapter III	12:54
7	Chapter IV	9:50

**Total time on CD 5: 77:18**

## CD 6

1	The thumb-screw was a little relaxed...	15:24
2	Chapter V	10:34
3	Chapter VI	10:37
4	Chapter VII	15:32
5	<b>Book III</b> Chapter I	15:45
6	Chapter II	8:24

**Total time on CD 6: 76:21**

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## CD 7

1	The natural strength and firmness of his nature...	2:55
2	Chapter III	14:22
3	The aunts and uncles appeared to have been in warm discussion...	11:50
4	Mrs. Moss was in too much agitation...	11:10
5	Chapter IV	8:59
6	Chapter V	14:02
7	Mr. Deane tapped his box again.	13:46

**Total time on CD 7: 77:09**

## CD 8

1	Chapter VI	8:07
2	Bob had drawn out a dirty canvas bag...	8:36
3	Chapter VII	13:02
4	'Mrs. Tulliver, I think?' said Mr. Wakem.	15:29
5	Chapter VIII	9:39
6	'Yes, father,' said Tom, in answer to the gaze.	9:32
7	Chapter IX	13:57

**Total time on CD 8: 78:26**

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## CD 9

1	<b>Book IV</b> Chapter I	13:17
2	Chapter II	13:47
3	Chapter III	14:17
4	In one of these meditations...	12:12
5	I suppose that is the reason...	10:19
6	<b>Book V</b> Chapter I	13:07

**Total time on CD 9: 77:05**

## CD 10

1	'I don't know,' said Maggie, musingly.	7:51
2	'I have never had any doubt that you would be the same...'	7:53
3	Chapter II	14:39
4	Uncle Glegg, who regarded himself as a jocosé man...	13:20
5	'Eh mum, I'm loth, that I am,' said Bob...	11:31
6	Chapter III	11:58
7	Maggie felt unable to speak.	5:16

**Total time on CD 10: 72:33**

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## CD 11

1	Chapter IV	13:32
2	Chapter V	13:00
3	'Tom,' she said, urged out of pride into pleading...	14:46
4	Chapter VI	10:23
5	Chapter VII	15:34
6	<b>Book VI</b> Chapter I	11:41

**Total time on CD 11: 79:00**

## CD 12

1	Surely the only courtship unshaken by doubts and fears...	8:03
2	Chapter II	9:51
3	Lucy had looked up from her work...	12:05
4	Did Lucy intend to be present at the meeting...	8:31
5	Chapter III	9:52
6	Chapter IV	8:50
7	That was a cruel word. Maggie's lip began to tremble.	7:49
8	Chapter V	9:39

**Total time on CD 12: 74:45**

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## CD 13

1	Chapter VI	11:23
2	One day – it was the day of Philip's return...	13:16
3	Chapter VII	10:46
4	But Maggie was conscience-stricken.	10:08
5	'That's the way with you tenors,' said Stephen...	10:51
6	Chapter VIII	16:36
7	Chapter IX	6:09

**Total time on CD 13: 79:14**

## CD 14

1	'No, no; see, she has got a customer...'	8:44
2	'You find your office rather a fatiguing one...'	8:20
3	Chapter X	14:45
4	Chapter XI	7:51
5	'Take my arm,' said Stephen, entreatingly...	8:55
6	Chapter XII	6:12
7	'Heh, hegh!' said Mr. Glegg...	10:32
8	Chapter XIII	13:45

**Total time on CD 14: 79:09**

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## CD 15

1	When the morning came, Philip was too ill...	11:06
2	Stung by this reproach, he released her hands...	11:14
3	Chapter XIV	13:26
4	'Remember what you felt weeks ago,' she began...	15:29
5	<b>Book VII</b> Chapter I	9:29
6	Maggie was silent a little while...	8:31
7	Chapter II	9:20

**Total time on CD 15: 78:39**

## CD 16

1	As soon as her mother was gone, Maggie put on her bonnet.	14:05
2	Chapter III	8:17
3	Still two or three more days passed...	8:29
4	Chapter IV	8:27
5	The Miss Guests saw an alleviation to the sorrow...	8:26
6	Chapter V	14:48
7	'It is the boat!' cried Maggie.	14:11
8	Conclusion	2:23

**Total time on CD 16: 79:11**

**Total time on CDs 1–16: 20:38:08**

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# George Eliot

(1819–1880)

## THE MILL on the FLOSS

George Eliot is the pen-name of Mary Ann (Marian) Evans, who was born in 1819 in Nuneaton, Warwickshire, where her father was a land agent.

As a young girl she was much influenced by an evangelical preacher, the Rev. John Edmund Jones. After her mother's death she became her father's housekeeper for a time, continuing to educate herself and learning German and Italian. In 1841 she moved to Coventry, where her friendship with the progressive intellectuals Charles and Caroline Bray led to her questioning her orthodox religious beliefs.

Her friendship with the Brays resulted in an introduction to John Chapman, the publisher, and to a commission to translate Strauss's *Life of Jesus*. In 1850 Eliot became a contributor to *The Westminster Review* and in 1851, when Chapman became its

proprietor, he offered her the position of Literary Editor.

Following her move to London in 1849 after the death of her father, she formed a close friendship with the philosopher Herbert Spencer, whom she nearly married. She also met the writer and critic George Henry Lewes, and their relationship would have resulted in marriage had Lewes been free. As he already had a wife from whom he was estranged, the couple made the decision to live together unmarried, a union which lasted from 1854 to Lewes's death in 1878.

It was Lewes who encouraged Eliot to turn her attention away from philosophy and towards fiction. Her earliest fictional works appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* and attracted immediate critical acclaim as well as considerable interest in the

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identity of their author. *Amos Barton*, the first of the *Scenes from Clerical Life*, was published in 1857, followed by *Mr Gilfil's Love Story* and *Janet's Repentance*. Then came her novels *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Silas Marner* (1861), *Romola* (1862–3), *Felix Holt* (1866), *Middlemarch* (1871–2) and *Daniel Deronda* (1874–6).

She travelled widely on the continent, gaining inspiration for *Romola* from visits to Florence in 1860 and 1861; and for her dramatic poem *The Spanish Gypsy* (1868) from a trip to Spain in 1867.

In May 1880 she married John Walter Cross, a man twenty years her junior, who was to become her biographer. She died in December the same year.

## **The Mill on the Floss**

Although *The Mill on the Floss* is set in Lincolnshire, and Eliot travelled there to ensure the accuracy of the background, the story is in many aspects autobiographical, and the people and scenes derive largely from the author's Warwickshire childhood.

*The Mill on the Floss* is peopled with

vivid characters, many of whom lose nothing in comparison with the creations of Eliot's great contemporary Charles Dickens. Both authors share a compassion for human failings and unhappiness, but Eliot is possibly the subtler psychologist in that there are no characters in the novel who are entirely good or bad; each one is a complex being compounded of individual strengths and weaknesses, operating within the limitations of his or her intelligence and understanding.

When Eliot was challenged by acquaintances who thought they recognised themselves in her novels, she denied having drawn portraits directly from life, but she did admit to using material from her early childhood, and this would seem to be particularly true of *The Mill on the Floss*.

The book is written in the first person, and right from the start the author creates a link between herself and Maggie Tulliver, as she looks back across the years and sees herself as a child playing among the well-remembered scenes of home.

The fictional home of the Tullivers, Dorlcote Mill, has been identified as

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Arbury Mill, which is where Mary Ann played as a girl; Arbury Hall being an estate where her father was a land agent.

The relationship between Maggie and her brother Tom appears to echo that of the author and her brother Isaac. There seems to have been something of Tom Tulliver's stern morality and unforgiving nature in Isaac Evans. His refusal to have anything further to do with Mary Ann once she had decided to live with Lewes may well have suggested Tom's harsh behaviour in response to Maggie's elopement with Stephen Guest.

When we first meet Maggie as a child, she is wild and unruly: the despair of her helpless mother; the joy of her doting father. But her 'naughtiness' and reluctance to behave like a 'young lady' are signs of a passionate emotional nature, a vivid and lively imagination, and a formidable intelligence.

As Maggie grows up, the restrictions of the provincial society in which she lives and the lack of opportunity for education and self-development create a stifling atmosphere for her passionate nature.

Maggie's craving for the love and

affection of her brother, the person she most loves and fears in the world, cannot be adequately satisfied due to the essential difference in their natures. Tom's unimaginative mind and rigid outlook make it impossible for him ever to understand Maggie and ensure his permanent disapproval of her.

Fate sends her further obstacles to forming a close loving relationship in the form of two unsuitable lovers – one whom she is prevented from encouraging by a family feud, the other who is not available because he already belongs to someone else. Her loving nature responds to both, but in different ways; Philip Wakem engages her compassion and sympathy, but it is Stephen Guest who awakens her dormant sexuality.

The sensual part of Maggie's nature is at painful odds with her strong morality, and she struggles with herself to do what she believes is right. She knows that she cannot be happy if it means causing unhappiness to others.

Caught in an impossible situation, Maggie gives up her chance of love and a happy future rather than cause pain to

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others. She does so not because it is easy for her, but despite its difficulty. Hers is the way of heroic sacrifice – the way of the Cross – and in accepting her fate, she rises above the selfishness of human desires. In Maggie Tulliver, George Eliot has created a protagonist truly deserving of the description ‘heroine’.

How far Maggie’s inner struggles between desire and morality mirror those of her creator must remain conjecture, but there is an authentic anguish in the author’s description, which suggests that she was no stranger to similar feelings.

Whilst it may not be helpful to draw direct analogies between the experiences of Eliot’s characters and those of their author, there is no doubt that Victorian England must have been an uncongenial society for a woman gifted with formidable intellectual powers, and George Eliot must have suffered painfully from the patronising attitude exemplified by Mr Stelling’s arrogant opinion of women. When asked by Tom whether Maggie would be capable of learning his lessons, he says: ‘They’ve a great deal of superficial cleverness; but they couldn’t

go far into anything. They’re quick and shallow.’

If women were believed to lack intellectual capacity, they were also expected to be without sexual understanding, and Eliot’s empathy for the passion of desire in her male characters was attacked by one critic who was ‘not sure that it is quite consistent with feminine delicacy to lay such stress on the bodily feelings of the other sex’.

If Eliot’s deeply felt religious faith underpins the moral struggle of her heroine, it is her own passionate nature which gives her the ability to enter into Maggie’s dilemma. In *The Mill on the Floss*, both the characters and the situations are informed by George Eliot’s psychological insight and philosophical understanding. The reader is made aware of the author’s belief in the innate goodness of people despite their shortcomings; she invites us to share her feelings of compassion for the limitations of human nature which are common to us all, and for the pain and suffering they cause.

**Notes by Neville Jason**



**Laura Paton** trained at LAMDA where she won the St Philip's Prize for Poetry and the Michael Warre Award. She has toured the UK extensively in productions as varied as *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and Oscar Wilde's *Salomé*. Among her other recordings for Naxos AudioBooks are Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, both volumes of *Grimms' Fairy Tales*, and *Anna Karenina*.

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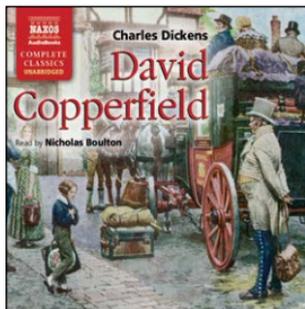
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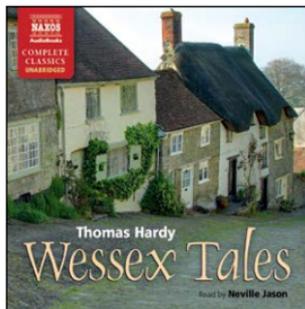
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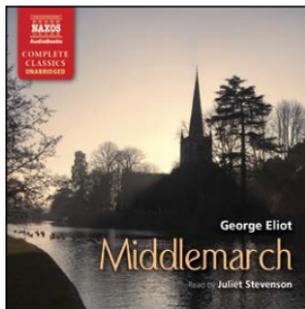
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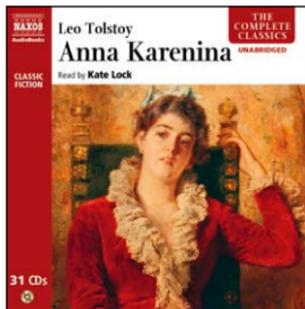
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