Tristram Shandy (selected edns.

Laurence Sterne (1713-68)

Life
b. 24 Nov. 1713, Clonmel; son of impoverished English ensign of a family from Elvington, York; lived in various barracks in Ireland until the regiment was decommissioned; his father lost arm in a duel, his mother held school as a seamstress in Dublin; ed. Hipperholme, Halifax Grammar School, Yorkshire [aetat. 10]; proceeded to Cambridge on the Archb. Sterne Schol.; befriended Hall-Stevenson ['Eugenius', who appears both in Tristram Shandy and in Sentimental Journey], and read Locke;

contracted tuberculosis [TB]; ord., 1738; living at Sutton-on-the-Forest; given prebendary of York, 1741; m. Elizabeth Lumley [cousin of Eliz. Montagu], but unhappy; appt. Justice of the Peace; issued The History of a Good Warm Watchcoat, 1759 [formerly entitled published posthumously, being a satire on eccles. courts which was burnt by Church authorities; passed parish to care of curate; first version of vols. 1&2 of Tristram Shandy turned down by Dodsley; rewritten 'under greatest heaviness of heart' due to mental breakdown of wife and death of parents; wife committed to private asylum, 1758; Apologies of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman (York 1759; Dodsley 1760 [half issue for sale]), bringing overnight fame though Dr. Johnson was to say, 'Nothing odd will do long. Tristram Shandy did not last'; flirtation with Catherine Fourmantel, singer ['dear Jenny']; moved to London; painted by Reynolds; invited to court; 2nd ed. of Vols. 1 & 2; Michael's Church, Coxwold, Yorkshire and settled in the house he called "Shandy Hall" (North Yorkshire), from 1760 to his death; issued the Sermons of Mr Yorick (1760), whilom styled scandal-making; Yorick's Sermons, vols. 2&3 Yorick, 7 vols. (1760-69)]; fell in love with Elizabeth Draper, young wife of East India official, 1767; Yorick to Eliza (1773), reflecting a platonic passion, written on her enforced departure for India; d. of pleurisy; reputed to have neglected his mother's needs when in Peter's Prison for debts - hence Byron, 'I am as bad as that dog Sterne, who preferred whining over "a dead ass to relieving a living mother"';

he is considered to have been influenced by Cervantes, Rabelais, Sir Thomas Browne, Locke - and called the Essay Concerning Understanding by the last-named 'a history-book ... of what passes in man's own mind'; the "Journal to Eliza", found in manuscript, is now regularly printed with Journey; an edition of the Letters published posthumously by his dg. Lydia; his Brahmine's Journal...
pseud. - pub. in 1904; the Letters were edited by Lewis Perry Curtis in 1935; Sentimental Journey was issued by Gardner Stout in 1967; The Florida Edition of his work by Melvyn New, et al., during 1978-2009; the film-maker Michael Winterbottom has made homage to Tristram Shandy (A Cock and Bull Story, 2006).

[Left] “My Uncle Toby on his Hobby-horse” - ill. for Tristram Shandy by George Cruikshank.

(See this and six further illustrations scanned by Adam Cuerden at Wikipedia online.)

Shandy Hall by Eishiro Ito

Shandy Hall (photo by Eishiro Ito - 2015)

Works

Tristram Shandy (selected edns.)

- The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman, and A Sentimental Journey London: Hutchinson & Co. 1906), ill. [by George Cruikshank, presum. earlier]; [...; num. other edns.]


Other works (selected edns.)

- Margaret R.B. Shaw, [ed. & intro.], Second Journal to Eliza; Hitherto known as been written by Yorick and Eliza” [usu. attrib. to William Combe], but now sho
Collected Works


- *The Works of Laurence Sterne in ten volumes complete ... With a Life of the Author* (London: Printed for W. Strahan, J. Rivington & Sons, J. Dodsley, G. Kearsley, 1770, 1783, 1793), and Do. (London: J. Rivington & Sons, J. Dodsley, G. Kearsley, J. Jo and 9 others] 1788), ill. [pls., port.;], 8o [Vols 1-4: Tristram Shandy; Vol. 5: A sentimental journey through France and Italy; Vols. 6-8: Sermons; Vols. 9-10: Letters, with life of the author Do. [18th Century Ser.; Reel 2775; 35mm.] (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications);

- The works of Laurence Sterne: Complete in Eight Volumes ... with a life of the author written by himself (London: Printed for Mundell & Son 1799), [3], 4-280pp [18 cm.; Beauties o account of his writings by Sir Walter Scott Amsterdam: Nayler & Co. 1836), 111 pp;


- George Saintsbury, ed., *The Works of Laurence Sterne* (London: Dent 1894), ill. *The life and opinions of Tristram Shandy, gentleman* [Vols. 1-3]; *A sentimental journey through France and Italy; The letters, sermons and miscellaneous writings of Laurence Sterne*;

- David Herbert, ed., *The Complete Works of Laurence Sterne* (Edinburgh: Nimmo, Hay & Mitchell 1885, 1897);


Bibliographical details

Criticism

- John Ferriar, *Illustrations of Sterne* (1798; 2nd ed. 1812);
- Walter Bagehot, ‘Sterne and Thackeray’ [q. publ.] (1864);
- W. D. Cross, *Laurence Sterne* (1904);
- Wilbur L. Cross, *The Life and Times of Laurence Sterne* [3rd Edn.] (Yale UP 1923);
- Wayne C Booth, ‘The Self-Conscious Narrator in Comic Fiction before Tristram Shandy LXVII (1952) [q.pp.];
- John Traugott, *Tristram Shandy's World* (California UP 1955);
- Barbara Bray [trans.,] *Laurence Sterne, From Tristram to Yorick* (OUP 1965) [ab Fluchère, Laurence Sterne, de l'homme a l'oeuvre (Paris 1961)];
- Christopher Ricks, ed., & Intro., *Tristram Shandy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin 1968);
- Thomas Keymer, *Sterne, the Moderns and the Novel* (OUP 2002), 236pp.;


Commentary

Samuel Taylor Coleridge spoke of the Tristram Shandy’s character in these terms...
Specimens of the Table-talk of the late Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. H. N. Coleridge (1835):

‘I think highly of Sterne; that is, of the first part of *Tristram Shandy*: for part, about the widow Wadman, it is stupid and disgusting; and *Journey* is poor sickly stuff. There is a great deal of affectation in Sterne still the characters of Trim and the two Shandies are most the individual. Sterne’s morals are bad, but I don’t think they can do much harm to they would not find bad enough before. Besides, the oddity and erudite which much of his dirt is hidden, take away the effect for the most part sure, the book is scarcely readable by women.’

Ftn.: Mr. Coleridge considered the character of the father, elder by much the finer delineation of the two. I fear his low opin Sentimental Journey will not suit a thorough Sterneist; but I could him to modify his criticism. He said, “The oftener you read Sterne clearly will you perceive the great difference between *Tristram S* the Sentimental Journey. There is truth and reality in the one, beyond a clever affectation in the other.’

“A Course of Lectures”, in Specimens of the Table-talk of the late Coleridge, ed. H. N. Coleridge (1835, &c.)

[On the Distinctions of the Witty, the Droll, the Odd, and the Hum The Nature and Constituents of Humour; Rabelais - Swift - Sterne]

[...]

Sterne

‘With regard to Sterne, and the charge of licentiousness which presses his character as a writer, I would remark that there is a sort of knowing which depends - 1st, on the modesty it gives pain to; or, 2dly, on the innocent ignorance over which it triumphs; or, 3dly, on a certain of individual’s own mind between the remaining good and the encroac nature - a sort of dallying with the devil - a fluxionary act of combin cowardice, as when a man sniffs a candle with his fingers for the firs still, perhaps, like that trembling daring with which a child touches because it has been forbidden; so that the mind has in its own white the same or similar amusement, as may be supposed to take place debauchee and a prude, - she feeling resentment, on the one hand, fr anxiety to preserve appearances and have a character, and, on the o sympa with the enemy. We have only to suppose society innocent, tenths of this sort of wit would be like a stone that falls in snow, m because exciting no resistance; the remainder rests on its being an off
good manners of human nature itself.’

The excellencies of Sterne consist -

1. In bringing forward into distinct consciousness those minutiae of feeling which appear trifles, yet have an importance for the moment, as every man feels in one way or other. Thus is produced the novelty of peculiarity, together with the interest of a something that belongs to our common nature. In short, Sterne seizes happily on those points, in which every less a humourist. [...]

Q.pp.; available at Gutenberg

W. M. Thackeray: ‘He is always looking on my face, watching the effect, uncertain whether I think him an imposter or not.’ (Quoted in David Nokes, review of The Florida Edition of the Works of Laurence Sterne, Vols. 7 & 8 [being the Letters], in Times Literary Supplement, 21 Aug. 2009.)


Christopher Ricks, ed., Tristram Shandy (Penguin, 1967), Introduction: Ricks cites of the Drapier’s Letters: ‘Read this Paper with the utmost Attention, or get it read to speak of ‘the old story in the jest books, where a templar leaves a note in the key-lock he cannot read it, to carry it to the stationer at the gate, who will read it for him Illustrations of Sterne, 1798; 2nd edn. 1812). Ricks goes on to speak of ‘that comic illogicality expanded in a thousand ways’ and later notes that Samuel Beckett is an admirer of Sterne and cites Beckett’s quoting with relish Augustine’s saying about the two thieves (‘Do not despair, one of the thieves was saved; do not presume, one of the thieves was damned’, continuing: ‘Admittedly those words speak of a world very different from Sterne’s important heir of Sterne it would be altogether far-fetched to quote them’, and go on to consider the condition of the novel as Sterne found, and amended it ‘at a moment in history when the novel, was becoming tempted to presume.’ (Tristram Shandy, 1967, p.7.) Beckett’s use of the French Catholic theologians per se, remarking on his interest in baptism that the tone of such parodies is affectionate. The locus classicus is where authorities determine in French, at great length, pp.84-86, that one can inject baptismal water into the uterus - in spite of Aquinas’s untested assurance that in maternis uteris ... baptizari pussunt nullo modo reflecting his, Sterne’s footnote ends, ‘O Thomas, Ó Thomas!’ This is indeed affectionate chiding, but the concluding jibe is more acerbic, where Shandy sends compliments to the doctor multitudinous homunculi can conveniently be pre-baptised ‘par le moyen d’une syringe] applied to the father before conception, sans faire aucune tort au père. No Shandy: ‘The minutest philosophers, who by the by, have the most enlarged souls being inversely to their enquiries) show us incontestably that the Homunculus is [and is] as much and truly our fellow-creature as my Lord Chancellor of England Walter Bagehot, ‘Sterne and Thackeray’, 1864; Wayne C Booth, ‘the Self-Conscious


**A. N. Jeffares, Anglo-Irish Literature** (1982), b. Clonmel, his father’s regt. broken; Dublin; Derrylossary, nr. Annamoe in Wicklow where he had the escape with a millrace while the m. inedible, but known for truth in all that part of Ireland - where hundred of the see me.’; Carrickfergus; school in England, &c. ‘What he had gained from growing up in Ireland was the common heritage of many Anglo-Irish writers; genteel poverty, rich relatives, and talk as the cheapest means of entertainment. Mock-seriousness, serious mockery, the strain runs from Swift to even gentle Goldsmith shared this capacity for self-mockery. and the English read i so many of them failed to allude to their mothers, or to do so in respectful terms. mother had failed, in choosing as husbands those who in turn failed to provide .. duty of ambition to their sons. ... particular Anglo-Irish problem, of how ambition poverty, was perennial (Jeffares, pp.53-57). NOTE, the episode at Annamoe is also c *Gems She Wore* (1972).

**David Lodge** writes, Sterne is a comic novelist who uses humour as a stay against death, which is what he tells us he is doing in *Tristram Shandy* paraphrasis, with particular reference to the dedication to Pitt, ‘I want to laugh because I’m going to die, and therefore this is my protection. The play of the mind is my protection against the dying of the body’ (*Laughing Matter; The Comic English Novel*, talk given by David Lodge and Malcolm Bradbury, 1991 Brighton International Festival in *Sprak*, Vol. lxxxvi, no. 1, 1992, p.7.)

**Vincent Sherry, Joyce’s Ulysses** (Cambridge UP 1994): ‘In *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* Sterne concocts the most preposterous example of the story ever waiting to happen, purports to tell the tale of its author’s life *ab ovo*, its first complete twenty-three and seventh and last five years before. The prankishness of the compulsive digression and searching critique of the very material culture that creates the expectations Sterne’s inveterate detours and backtracking: namely, the culture of books, the medium of linear and sequential mode as a paradigm of progressive reasoning, of consecutive happenings after another, the apparently militant continuum of print presents a fallacy of...
penetrates and dramatises with comic genius. His insights anticipate the premise of some post-structuralist linguistics, in particular the Derridean concept of deferral or *différance*. Here the serial arrangement of language locates the primary place for the actions of reading and writing. Thus the digression, veering off the single tract that prints projects as its one axis of happening, captures the true experience of literature, of written letters, of books like Sterne’s. [Quotes “Digressions, incontestably, are the sunshine...”], &c., as image of the bridegroom stepping forth to the consummation provides the ultimate prospect of fulfillment, but here appetite is satisfied through deferral, the *via negativa* of print. [...]’ (pp.45-

Paddy Bullard, ‘Motley Emblem of His Worm: Michael Winterbottom’s *Tristram Shandy*’, review of *A Cock and Bull Story*, in *Times Literary Supplement* ‘Tristram Shandy is self-reflexive in two ways. It worries about its medium (its bookishness), and it worries about the effectiveness of its many curious moves. Sterne’s self-consciousness over the novel’s physical form shows up most obviously in conventional typography. These include famously a page of solid black ink that marks the death of Yorick, an inserted sheet of bookbinder’s marbling (“motley emblem of my work”), a squiggly line to trace the flourish of Toby’s stick, and a blank page on which every reader can draw their own Widow Wadman. Sterne’s proposal is that they celebrate the diversity of opinions among his readers, and (with tongue in cheek) the “many opinions, transactions and truths which still lie mystically hid” under his tale. / One might add that they make a happy point about the distances between life and art, and a rather grave one about the way that they anticipate the terminal literary impasse that Shandyism is supposed to have reached. Everyone who knows *Tristram Shandy* and who has yet to see *A Cock and Bull Story* about how they are handled by Winterbottom. [...] If the director of *A Cock and Bull Story* is reluctant to reflect on his medium, he is still more bashful about his rhetorical designs on the audience. One source of humour in *Tristram Shandy* is the bumptiousness (“these heavenly emanations of wit and judgment”) with which Sterne discusses the felicity of his pen: “It governs me, - I govern not if”. He is always boasting about how unsuited the rashness of his writing is to the narrowness of the emotional mark at which he aims. The precision of Sterne’s attention to the incidental angle of Trim’s posture as he reads out Yorick’s sermon, or to the timing with which Trim drops his hat while announcing the death of Bobby, gives these sentimental strategies a comical, oratorical turn. But Sterne’s dearest wish is to have his fellow “fiddle both his and their own work “by their eyes and ears, - admirable! - trusting to in an air sung, or a story painted to the heart, - instead of measuring them by a quadrant”. This self-consciousness about emotional effect is connected with Sterne’s anxiety over posterity. Readers have always thought *Tristram Shandy* too odd to last, and Sterne’s prayer that his book would swim safely down the gutter of time makes a grim choice between disposal and dispersal. [...] At the end of the film, Winterbottom transforms Sterne’s morbid obsession with literary fertility into a dream celebration of childbirth and parenthood. In so far as a self-reflexive, it allows no room for reflection on what its cinematic merits should be. Perhaps that is Winterbottom’s point, but a true Shandean should hope not.’
Peter Bradshaw, review of *A Cock and Bull Story*, in *Guardian Weekly* (27 Jan. 2006), p.21: ‘[...] an almost delirious atmosphere [...] making us breathe two different sorts of heady fume: postmodernism and celebrity. ‘[...] the risk of studenty archness is high, and it is tricky to handle the comedy inherent in the fact that all this non-action and thwarted narrative is often quite boring [...] cheeky and flippant, with a book that, as Coogan puts it, was postmodern before there was anything to postmodern. The film might just date more quickly than the book [...]’. see further under “Notes”

**Quotations**

Digressions, incontestably, are the sunshine; - they are the life, the soul of reading; - take them out of this book for instance, - you might as well take the book along with them; - one cold eternal winter would reign in every page of it; restore the writer; - he steps forth like a bridegroom, - bids All hail; brings in variety, and forbids appetite to fail.’ (*Tristram Shandy*, ed. Graham Petrie, Harmondsworth: Penguin 1986, p.95; quoted in *The Electronic Labyrinth*, Virginia Univ. Electronic Text Centre)

‘’Tis a venereal case, cried my two scientific friends - ’tis impossible, that, replied I - for I have had no commerce whatever with the sex, no wife, added I, these fifteen years ... We will not reason about it, said the physician, but you must undergo a course of mercury.’ (Letter to Earl of Shelburne recounting medical examination of the wound in his groin which Sterne later introduced as an episode in *Bramine’s Journal*; quoted in David Nokes, review of The Florida Edition of *The Works*, Vols. 7 & 8, in *Times Literary Supplement*, 21 Aug. 2009.)

‘The truest respect which you can pay to the reader’s understanding, matter amicably, and leave him something to imagine, in his turn, as For my part, I am eternally paying him compliments of this kind, and do all that lies in my power to keep his imagination as busy as my own.’ (*Tristram Shandy* 2; quoted in Brigid Brophy, review of Colin MacCabe, *James Joyce and the Revolution of the Word*, in *London Review of Books*, 21 Feb. 1980, pp.8-9 - available online)

‘Gravity, a mysterious carriage of the body to conceal the defects of the mind.’ - Sterne; quoted in Ezra Pound, *The ABC of Reading* (1st Edn. 1991, p.13.)

**Tristram Shandy** (Sundry quotations):

I.1, Tristram’s conception, ‘Pray, my dear, quoth my mother, have you not clock? ... Good G-! Did ever woman since the creation of the world, interrupt a question?’[[35-36]. 1.II homunculus [cf. 83 infra]; lack of concentration of producing ‘weaknesses of body and mind’; Locke [39]; HOBBY HORSE [4 passion - farewell cool reason], 113; also 132: ‘as tender a part as he has a
peerless knight of La Mancha more than the greatest hero of antiquity introduced, and his descent from Hamlet’s jester; I.12, Yorick’s plagiarisms “Alas, poor Yorick”, & black [not blank] page; ‘this rhapsodical work’ [63]; I.1 Elizabeth Mollineux) marriage Indenture; ‘...called Tristram! - The thing is ir reader re-read and attends return [82]; I.20, satire on Catholic theology a birth, and logical reduction to baptism by syringe applied to the father’s spec[83ff]; uncle TOBY SHANDY [90]; ‘Digressions, incontestably, are the sunshin the soul of the reading [95]; Momus’s glass [96; cf. intro., p.14]; Toby’s HOBB' in his groin [100; wound incurred at Landen, 612]; 2.1, ff., Toby’s recreati-[104ff]; Trim reads Sermon on Conscience [141-51]; Book III embarks on a birth and the flattening of his nose; Toby whistles Lillabullero during th ‘whistling L. as loud as he could, all the time’, 182; 591; ‘interjectional whistle 591]; knots in Dr Slop’s bag [180] [blank page, facing 182]; excommunicator Toby, ‘Good God! Are children brought into the world with a squirt?’ [197]; ‘r dearer Cervantes’ [201]; Author’s preface, addressed to ‘dear anti-Shandea books fabricated [230] marbled pages, inter 232-235; Hafen Slawkenbergius [ ‘hobby-horsical career’ [244]; Vol. IV, Slawkenbergius’s Tale, in Latin and Eng only) [248-273]; Walter Shandy’s reflections on ‘Man’ [IV.7 [279]; footnote on since shaking of heads came into fashion, never did two heads shake toget two such different springs. God bless/God deuce ‘em all, said my uncle Toby to himself.’ [285]; passage on relative chronology in novelistic and real time [2 IV.14: Susannah’s confused message whereby Mr Shandy’s choice of n conveyed to Yorick as Tristram (Yorick’s own), is narrated in [287-88]; ‘mis [291]; Father’s Lamentation (IV.19) [294ff]; ‘the thing cannot be undone, Yori of Phutatorius, Didius, et al.; Kysarcius, ‘...that the mother was not of kin to ho what said the Duchess of Suffolk to it?’ The unexpectedness of my un confounded Kysarcius more than the ablest advocate’ [326]. ‘My brother Walter Shandy, ‘What is the life of man! Is it not to shift from side to si sorrow? - to button up one cause of vexation! - and unbutton another!’ [331; Shandy family’ [332]; ‘True Shandeism’ [333]; V.1, digression Upon Whisk [[341]; ‘melancholy account of my brother Bobby’s death’ [344; Father’s follows]; ‘nature is nature, said Jonathan’ [360]; music - ptr..r..ing-twing-tcurved bad fiddle’ [365]; Tristram’s circumcision, ‘Susannah did not consi well hung in our family - so slap came the sash down like lightning upon us; Susannah, nothing is left - for me, but to run my country’ [369]; Trim as use weights to furnish Toby’s military models [371]; chapter on sash-window paedia written by Tristram ‘in order to render complete’ [276]; ‘quod omne a triste’ [388]; Dr Slop predicts the boy’s injury will end in a phimosis [391 sieg 358], and siege narrative, begun under his majesty King William himself . devilish wet swampy country ... surrounded ... with the Shannon, and is, by the strongest fortified places in Ireland [392]; ‘a North-west passage to the in whole depends on auxiliary verbs’ [394; chapter on auxiliaries follows, V.43; without dedication]; time to take Tristram out of women’s hands and put l governor [401]; ‘a thousand unnoticed openings ... which let a penetratin man’s soul; ..a man of sense does not lay down his hat in coming into a room
out of it, but something escapes, which discovers him', acc. Walter [402]; So digressions, VI.6 [403-419]; Yorick writes and deletes BRAVO to his own shortest chap, 'I'll put him into breeches, said my father, let the world say wth IX.27, p.608, and blanks at 592-93]; long deferred account Uncle Toby’s Wadman, one of the most systems, both of the elementary and practical making, that was every addressed to the world’ [448; vide 216]; Toby follows t of Marlborough in models [429ff]; blank page, facing 450; chart of digress begins 459ff.[this volume based on French sojourn, at Calais, 463, Blough Abbeville, 470, Paris, 477 ... Lyons, 492; etc.]; Advice from Eugenius on De; ‘make them like unto a wheel’ [471]; ‘the French have a gay way of treatin Great; and that is all can be said upon it.’ [479; and note ludicrous digressive putatively on the associative principle, following]; the abbés of Andouill ending ‘boger, fouter’ [485ff]; VEXATION upon VEXATION [494]; story of An pabulum for soft brain of youth ‘being tender and fibrillous, more like paa [496]; poor ass [497ff]; Reviewer of my Breeches [500]; Vol. VIII returns to ‘my [after 513]; on beginning a book [516; see QUOT]; Now as widow Wadman - and my uncle Toby did not love widow Wadman [525]; alphabet of [R]idiculous) [526-27]; VIII.16, Widow Wadman and Uncle Toby in the sentry and pricks on the road from Fesse to Cluny [531-32]; narrative of King of Boho told by Trim [534ff]; ‘except the groin’ [543]; Mrs Wadman unpinne her stood upon one leg [543]; Trim’s wounded knee rubbed by the Beguine, the to every part of my frame’ [548-49; and cf. popish clergywoman, 563]; Mrs W: eye and cambric handerchief to Toby; ‘Honest soul! thou didst look ir innocency of heart, as ever child looked into a raree-shew-box; and ’twere a hurt thee ... I will answer for him, that he would have sat quietly upon a January ... with an eye as fine as the Tracian Rodope’s beside him, with either it was a black or a blue one.’ (ftn. Rodope Thracia tam inevitabili [550-51]; it was an eye ... it did my uncle Toby’s business [552] ‘took it like a Walter’s love-paroxysm [553]; ftn. ‘this will be printed along with my father &c’ [553]; ‘I am in love, corporal!’ [554] Wadman to Mrs Bridget, ‘terribly afr wound in his groin ... I could like to know’ [555]; Dr Slop and Toby prior to Walter, bettering Plato, ‘Love is not so much Sentiment as Situation, into w and takes every step to show himself a man of prowess [sic]’ [562]; advice Vol. IX, dedication ‘to a great man’ [unnamed] compares change of ideas and with verses dedicated to some gentle Shepherd ‘Whose thoughts proud Sci stray,/Far as the Statesman’s walk or Patriot-way’ [570; and note that PATR family horse which has been sold, 345]; mother’s ‘curiosity’ at the ‘keyhole’ [5 celibacy, ‘whilst a man is free.. ‘, and flourish of stick [doodle graphic] [576]; T ‘Moorish girl’ [579]; ‘circumvallation’ of Wadman [581]; Vocative allusion to ‘ cf. Tristram! Tristram! O Jenny! Jenny!’, 526]; cuvettes, and Mrs Shady’s habit of non understanding [582, and quot.]; ‘that just balance between wisdom and f book not hold together a single year’; ‘digression ... upon a good frisky subje FANCY ... WIT ... PLEASANTRY; ‘the best way for a man, is to say his prayers’ on pishes, ‘return to my uncle Toby’ and Trim [who had] marched down avenue’ before they ‘recollected that their business lay the other way’ [589]’
Time & Fiction (Tristram Shandy): ‘I am this month one whole year older than I was this time last year; and having got, as you perceive, almost into the middle of my fourth volume - and having written of my first days of life - ’tis demonstrative that I have three hundred and sixty-four days more life to write when I first set out; so that instead of advancing, as a common writer, in my work with what I have been doing at it - on the contrary, I am just thrown so many back - was every day of my life to be as busy as this - And why not? - and the transactions and opinions of it to take up as much description - And for what reason should they be cut short - as at this rate I should just live 364 times faster than I write - It must follow, an' please your worships, that the more I write, the more I shall have to write - and consequently, the more your worships read, the more your worships will have to read. / Will this be good for you well for mine; and, was it not that my OPINIONS will be the death of me, I perceive I shall lead a fine life of it out of this self-same life of mine; or, in other words, shall lead a couple of fine lives together.’ [Vol. IV, chap. 13; p.286].

Walter Shandy: ‘I am convinced, Yorick, continued my father, half-reading and half-discoursing, that there is a North-west passage to the intellectual world; and that the soul of man has short-furnishing itself with knowledge and instruction, than we generally take with ... t added my father, in a low voice, upon the auxiliary verbs, Mr Yorick.’ [394]. A man the utmost reverence to both I speak it, are exactly like a jerkin, and a jerkin’s lining rumple the other.’ [174]. ‘The gift of ratiocination and making syllogisms - I mean classes of beings, such as angles and spirits, - ‘tis all done, may by please your w INTUITION; - and beings inferior, as your worships all know, - syllogise by their noses [242]; ‘That of all the several ways of beginning a book which are now in practice throughout the world, I am confident my own way of doing it is the best - I’m sure it is the most religious - for I begin with writing the first sentence - and trusting to Almighty God for the second’ [516]; ‘what has this book done more than the Tale of a Tub, that it may not swim down the gutter of Time along with them? [Mrs Shandy never refused] her assent and consent to any proposition my father laid before her, merely because she did not understand it, or had no ideas to the primal word or term of art upon which the tenet or proposition rolled. She contented herself with doing all that her godfathers and godmothers promised so would go on using a hard word twenty years together - and replying, to it too,
trouble to enquire about it.’ [[582]; Mr Shandy, consoling uncle Toby in the matter of Widow Wadman, ‘That provision should be made for continuing the race of so great, so exalted and godlike a Being as man - I am far from denying ... that it should be done by means of a passion which bends down the wisdom, contemplations, and operations of the soul backwards - a passion, my dear [addressing his wife], which couples and equals wise men with fools, and made us come out of our cave like satyrs and fourfooted beasts than men./I know it will be said ... that in itself, and simply taken - like hunger, or thirst, or sleep - ‘tis an affair neither good or bad - or shameful or otherwise. Why then did the delicacy of Diogenes and Plato so recalcitrate against it? and wherefore, when we go man, do we put out the candle? and for what reason is it, For what reason is it, the parts thereof - the congeidents - the preparations - the instruments, and whatever serves thereto, ar to a cleanly mind by no language, translation, or periphrasis whatever?’ [613-14.]

**Shandean Pessimism:** Sterne makes Mr Shandy cite classical pessimism, ‘The Thracians wept when a child was born’ - (‘and we were very near to it’, quoth my uncle Toby) - ‘and feasted and made merry when a man went out of the world; and with reason ..’ [351]. ‘How finely we argue upon mistaken facts!’ [316]

**Citations:** Sterne as Irish tradition by Donn Byrne, and claimed as Irish in CABINET. Justin McCarthy. *Irish Literature* (1904), gives extracts from *Tristram Shandy*, an *Dictionary Quotations* has 43 Sterne items.

**Celibacy defended** [Trims flourish of his stick] said more for celibacy [than] a thousand of my father’s most subtle syllogisms.’ [Mrs Shandy during the conception of Tris have you not forgot to wind up the clock?’ [Tristram as narrator:] ‘Here are two roads, a dirty one and a clean one, - which shall we take?’

**What a Misfortune:** ‘It is a terrible misfortune for this same book of mine, but more so for the Republic of letters; - so that my own is quite swallowed up in the consideration of it, - that this fresh adventures in all things, has got so strongly into our habits and humours - a upon satisfying the impatience of our concupiscence that way, - that nothing but parts of the composition will go down; - the subtle hints and sly communications fly off, like spirits upwards; - the more heavy moral escapes downwards; and both the one and the other world, as if they were still left in the bottom of the ink-horn. (*The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* 67; ed. Graham Petrie, Penguin 1967, p.84.)

**References**

*Dictionary of National Biography:* after some years wandering sent to school in H: Cambridge by cousin, Richard; sizar, etc. matriculated 1735; MA 1740; curate of Buckden; vicar of Sutton, 1738; first used epithet ‘sentimental’ in letter, 1740; obtained Stillington adjoining Sutton by wife’s influence, 1743; chaplain to 4th earl of Aboyne; interested in local private enclosure acts, 1756 demands for money, and said to have let starve; interested in music; partic ‘Demoniacks’ orgies; satirised York lawyer as Trim in sketch (*A Political Romance* [rare], first publ 1769); unfaithful to wife, who became insane; flirtation with Madal
denounced in York on account of recognisable characters incl. Dr. John Burton; Warburton unavailing effort to restrain his obscenity; pamphlets against him, 1760-61; called house at Coxwold Hosp. London, 1761; vols. v and vi of Tristram issued for him by Becket; entertained by Fox at St Germain; left wife and dg. at Montauban by their wish; preached at Foundling Hosp. London, 1761; vols. v and vi of Tristram issued for him by Becket, and ded. to Lord Spencer; entertained by Fox at St Germain; left wife and dg. at Montauban by their wish; preached at English embassy in Paris, seeing much of Wilkes; painted by Gainsborough at Bath, 1765; ('Smellfungus'); book ix of Tristram ded. Chatham; Voltaire among subscribers to Sermons Mrs Eliza Draper [q.v.] at house of Sir William James in London, Dec. 1766; kept jour after her departure (MS BML), Apr. to Aug. 1767; body sold to Dr Collignon, skeleton preserved at Cambridge; no will, died insolvent; wife and dg. salvaged by collections made by Hall-Stevenson and Mrs Draper; publication of letters to Mrs Draper threatened by widow; letters published by authorised by Mrs Draper, 1775; The Letters from Eliza to Yorick (1775) and Let written by Yorick and Eliza (1779), are both forgeries; other forgeries incl. John Shandy (1760); J. Hall-Stevenson’s continuation of Sentimental Journey (1769) [but Oxford Companion of English Literature (OUP: 1985), by ‘Eugenius’, long incor Stevenson, see Note infra]; Richard Griffith’s Posthumous Works of a late Celebrate first collected ed.); his works include many literary thefts, notably the scher Dunstan’s A Voyage round the World ... the rare adventure of Don Kainophilus (?172 ed. of Tristram Shandy (1767), last (1779); Sermons reissued collectively, first 1’ Journey, with plates (1792); first collective ed. of works (without letters (Dublin letters and Hogarth plates), 1780; another edited by Dr. J. O. Browne, with newly 1783. Query: ODNB calls Archb. Sterne his grandfather ( d.1683); DIB reports that he a cousin. See also Richard Ryan, Biographia Hibernica: Irish Worthies (1821), Vol. II,
Toby. Garrick’s epitaph, ‘Shall pride a heap of sculptured marble raise, / Some worthless, unmourn’d, titled fool to praise; / And shall we not by one poor grave-stone wit, and humour sleep with Sterne?’

Justin McCarthy, gen. ed., *Irish Literature* (Washington: University of America 1904); selects the same passages from *Tristram Shandy* as in *Cabinet* [supra], viz., ‘Widow Wadman’s Eye’, and ‘Al biographical narrative is repeated, but an add. bibliographical item is added in *Cabinet* [supra], viz., ‘Widow Wadman’s Eye’, and ‘Al biographical narrative is repeated, but an add. bibliographical item is added in *Cabinet* [supra], viz., ‘Widow Wadman’s Eye’, and ‘Al

Margaret Drabble, ed., *Oxford Companion of English Literature* (OUP 1985); note that the entry on Sterne equates ‘Eugenius’ with Hall-Stevenson, implying [‘probably model for’] that he is A. N. Jeffares & Peter Van de Kamp, eds., *Irish Literature: The Eighteenth Century - An Annotated Anthology* (Dublin/Oregon: Irish Academic Press 2006) selects extracts from *A Sentimental journey Through France and Italy* [202]. Cites Also *Journal to Eliza* found in COPAC.

Belfast Public Library holds *Tristram Shandy* and *Sentimental Journey*, *Sermons of Mr. Yorick* (1766); *Works*, 8 vols. (1794).

Eric Stevens Books (1992) lists *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (Caddell 1794) [£12].

Notes


**Portraits** by Reynolds, and a copy of one of these by Robert West (see Anne *Collection*, 1968). [See also Gainsborough, infra.] Lord Byron damaged his reputation by calling him a miserly and undutiful son; Thackeray wrote of ‘foul satyr’s eyes’ staring out of his prose; Leavis called Tristram Shandy nasty and trifling. Also, Laurence Sterne as ‘Tristram Shandy bowing to death’ by Jesus Coll., Cambridge.

**Sarsfield Connection**: It is worth noting that is Uncle Toby and Trim were at the Siege of Limerick in ‘a marshy country ... *surrounded* by the Shannon’ [392]; but it is curious that Toby got his wound at Landen [612] - where Patrick Sarsfield died fighting in the Irish Brigade on the other side.

**Source of Shandy?**: John Arbuthnot, Queen Anne’s physician and the friend of Jonathan Swift, wrote a history of the youth and education of Martin Scriblerus which, according to Carl Van Doren, Laurence Sterne ‘later pilfered from [...] for his history of Tristram Shandy’. (See Van Doren, intro., *Portable Swift*, 1948; Penguin Edn. 1977, p.24.)

**Yorick/Yerrick**: note that one Richard Yerrick was bishop of London in 1769, when he ordained Samuel Parr, Burke’s sometime correspondent.

**A Cock and Bull Story** (2006): the film-maker Michael Winterbottom has made homage to Tristram Shandy, with Steve Coogan and Rob Brydon playing themselves playing Shandy and Uncle Toby and Northam and James Fleet play the director and producer; Gillian Anderson plays Widow Wadman, while Kelly Macdonald is Coogan’s partner, and Naomie Harris plays the on-set runner Jennie, with whom he flirts dangerously. (Peter Bradshaw, review, in *Guardian Weekly* supra.)