himself for the use of his daughter. It gives nothing but the barest facts, excepting three anecdotes about his in­fancy, his school-days, and his marriage. The date of his birth coincides with the close of the Marlborough wars. He was born at Clonmel, Ireland, on November 24, 1713, a few days after the arrival of his father’s regiment from Dunkirk. The regiment was then disbanded, but very soon after re-established, and for ten years the boy and his mother moved from place to place after the regiment, from England to Ireland, and from one part of Ireland to another. The familiarity thus acquired with military life and character stood Sterne in good stead when he drew the portraits of Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim, and the influence of the excitements, shifts, and hardships of this life of vagabond gentility may also be traced in his own character. To its hardening effect we may fairly refer some part of his later reckless defiance of clerical proprieties and comical persistence in self-conscious eccen­tricity. After ten years of wandering, he was fixed for eight or nine years at a school near Halifax in Yorkshire. His father died when he was in his eighteenth year, and he was indebted for his university education to one of the members of his father’s family. His great-grandfather the archbishop had been master of Jesus College, Cambridge, and to Jesus College he was sent in 1732. He was ad­mitted to a sizarship in July 1733, and took his B.A. degree in 1736. One of his uncles was a prominent church dignitary in Yorkshire. Young Sterne took orders, and through his influence obtained in 1738 the living of Sutton, some 8 miles north of York. On his marriage three years afterwards he was presented to the neighbour­ing living of Stillington, and did duty at both places. He was also a prebendary of York.

Sutton was Sterne’s residence for twenty uneventful years—years at least concerning which his biography is silent. The only ascertained fact of consequence is that he kept up an intimacy which had begun at Cambridge with John Hall Stevenson, a witty and accomplished epicurean, owner of Skelton Castle in the Cleveland dis­trict of Yorkshire. Skelton Castle is nearly 40 miles from Sutton, but Sterne, in spite of his double duties, seems to have been a frequent visitor there, and to have found in his not too strait-laced friend a highly congenial companion. Stevenson’s various occasional sallies in verse and prose—his *Fables for Grown Gentlemen,* his *Crazy Tales,* and his numerous skits at the political opponents of Wilkes, among whose “macaronies” he numbered himself,—were collected after his death, and it is impossible to read them without being struck with their close family resemblance in spirit and turn of thought to Sterne’s work, inferior as they are in literary genius. Without Stevenson Sterne would probably have been a more decorous parish priest, but he would probably never have written *Tristram Shandy* or left any other memorial of his singular genius. The two friends began to publish late in life and in the same year. The first two volumes of *Tristram Shandy* were issued on the 1st of January 1760, and at once made a sensation. York was scandal­ized at its clergyman’s indecency and indignant at his caricature of a local physician ; London was charmed with his audacity, wit, and graphic unconventional power. He went to London early in the year to enjoy his triumph, and found himself at once a personage in society,—was called upon and invited out by lion-hunters, was taken to Windsor by Lord Rockingham, and had the honour of supping with the duke of York.

For the last eight years of his life after this sudden leap out of obscurity we have a faithful record of Sterne’s feelings and movements in letters to various persons, published after his death by his daughter. At the

end of the famous Sermon on Conscience in vol. ii. of *Tristram* he had intimated that, if this sample of Yorick’s pulpit eloquence was liked, “ there are now in the posses­sion of the Shandy family as many as will make a hand­some volume at the world’s service—and much good may they do it.” Accordingly, when a second edition of the first instalment of *Tristram* was called for in three months, two volumes of *Sermons* by Yorick were announced. Although they had little or none of the eccentricity of the history, they proved almost as popular. Sterne’s clerical character was far from being universally injured by his indecorous freaks as a humorist : Lord Faulconberg presented the author of *Tristram Shandy* with the living of Coxwold. To this new residence he went in high spirits with his success, “fully determined to write as hard as could be,” seeing no reason why he should not give the public two volumes of Shandyism every year and why this should not go on for forty years. By the beginning of August he had another volume written, and was “ so delighted with Uncle Toby’s imaginary character that he was become an enthusiast.” The author’s delight in this wonderful creation was not misleading ; it has been fully shared by every generation of readers since. For two years in succession Sterne kept his bargain with himself to produce two volumes a year. Vols. iii. and iv. appeared in December 1760; vols. v. and vi. in January 1762. But his sanguine hopes of continuing at this rate were frustrated by ill-health. He was ordered to the south of France ; it was two years and a half before he returned ; and he came back with very little accession of strength. His reception by literary circles in France was very flattering. He was overjoyed with it. “ ’Tis *comme à Londres,*” he wrote to Garrick from Paris ; “ I have just now a fortnight’s dinners and suppers upon my hands.” And again, “ Be it known I Shandy it away fifty times more than I was ever wont—talk more nonsense than ever you heard me talk in your days, and to all sorts of people.” Through all his pleasant experiences of French society, and through the fits of dangerous illness by which they were diversified, he continued to build up his history of the Shandy family, but the work did not progress as rapidly as it had done. Not till January 1765 was he ready with the fourth instalment of two volumes ; and one of them, vol. vii., leaving the Shandy family for a time, gave a lively sketch of the writer’s own travels to the south of France in search of health. This was a digression of a new kind, if anything can be called a digression in a work the plan of which is to fly off at a tangent whenever and wherever the writer’s whim tempts him. In the first volume, anticipating an obvious complaint, he had protested against digressions that left the main work to stand still, and had boasted—not without justice in a Shandean sense —that he had reconciled digressive motion with progres­sive. But in vol. vii. the work is allowed to stand still while the writer is being transported from Shandy Hall to Languedoc. The only progress we make is in the illustra­tion of the buoyant and joyous temper of Tristram himself, who, after all, is a member of the Shandy family, and was due a volume for the elucidation of his character. Vol. viii. begins the long-promised story of Uncle Toby’s amours with the widow Wadman. After seeing to the publication of this instalment of *Tristram* and of another set of sermons,—more pronouncedly Shandean in their eccentri­city,—he quitted England again in the summer of 1765, and travelled in Italy as far as Naples. The ninth and last and shortest volume of *Tristram,* concluding the episode of Toby Shandy’s amours, appeared in 1767. This despatched, Sterne turned to a new project, which had probably been suggested by the ease and freedom with which he had moved through the travelling volume in