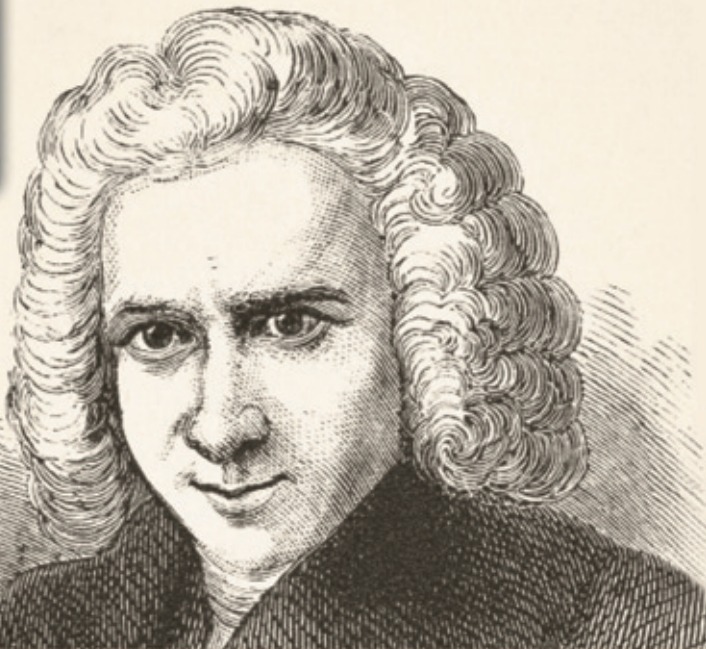




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**COMPLETE
CLASSICS
UNABRIDGED**



Laurence Sterne

A Sentimental Journey

Read by **Anton Lesser**

1	A Sentimental Journey by Laurence Sterne – Volume 1	7:44
2	The Monk. Calais. – 'Tis very true, said I...	4:41
3	Preface. In the Désobligeant. It must have been observed...	4:26
4	It is sufficient for my reader...	3:52
5	Calais. I perceived that something darken'd the passage...	5:52
6	The Remise Door. Calais. When I told the reader...	6:59
7	The Snuff Box. Calais. The good old monk was within six paces...	7:59
8	In the Street. Calais. Having, on the first sight of the lady...	7:05
9	The Remise. Calais. Monsieur Dessein came back...	5:37
10	Montreuil. I had once lost my portmanteau...	5:49
11	Montreuil. As La Fleur went the whole tour...	3:48
12	A Fragment. – The town of Abdera...	6:32

13	The Bidet.	Having settled all these little matters...	7:24
14	Nampont. The Postilion.	The concern which the poor fellow's story threw me into...	6:07
15	The Letter. Amiens.	Fortune had not smiled upon La Fleur...	6:11
16	The Letter.	Madame, Je suis pénétré de la douleur la plus vive...	1:31
17	Paris.	When a man can contest the point...	2:07
18	The Wig. Paris.	When the barber came...	2:33
19	The Pulse. Paris.	Hail ye small, sweet courtesies of life...	5:44
20	The Husband. Paris.	I had counted twenty pulsations...	2:52
21	The Gloves. Paris.	The beautiful grisette rose up...	2:57
22	The Translation. Paris.	There was nobody in the box...	4:55
23	The Dwarf. Paris.	I had never heard the remark made...	6:43

24	The Rose. Paris.	
	It was now my turn to ask...	3:49
25	Volume 2 – The Fille de Chambre. Paris.	
	What the old French officer had delivered...	7:07
26	The Passport. Paris.	
	When I got home to my hotel...	3:40
27	The Passport. The Hotel at Paris.	
	I could not find in my heart...	6:33
28	The Captive. Paris.	
	The bird in his cage pursued me...	5:14
29	The Address. Versailles.	
	I should not like to have my enemy take a view...	4:11
30	Le Pâtissier. Versailles.	
	Before I had got half way down the street...	5:02
31	The Sword. Rennes.	
	When states and empires have their periods of declension...	3:42
32	The Passport. Versailles.	
	I found no difficulty in getting admittance...	5:36
33	The Passport. Versailles.	
	There is not a more perplexing affair in life to me...	6:15
34	The Passport. Versailles.	
	As the passport was directed to all lieutenant-governors...	6:27

35	The Temptation. Paris.	
	When I alighted at the hotel...	6:10
36	The Conquest.	
	Yes, – and then –.	4:19
37	The Case of Conscience. Paris.	
	I was immediately followed up by the master...	6:35
38	Le Dimanche. Paris.	
	It was Sunday; and when La Fleur came in...	6:36
39	The Fragment. Paris.	
	– Now, as the notary's wife disputed...	6:52
40	The Fragment, and the Bouquet. Paris.	
	When La Fleur came up close to the table...	6:30
41	The Riddle Explained. Paris.	
	I stepped hastily after him...	7:44
42	Maria. Moulines.	
	I never felt what the distress of plenty was...	7:39
43	Maria. Moulines.	
	Though I hate salutations and greetings...	6:26
44	The Grace.	
	When supper was over, the old man...	7:06
45	The lady was a Piedmontese of about thirty...	5:31

Total time: 3:69:01

Laurence Sterne

(1713–1768)

A Sentimental Journey

I think there is a fatality in it – I seldom go to the place I set out for.

When you embark on Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy*, you do well to remember that your first step will take you into a room where you will find unannounced characters in mid-conversation. Your second step will take you to France with Mr Yorick as your guide. Then it is well to remember that although the title indicates that you will be escorted to Italy, you won't actually arrive there. And lastly it may pay to know that when you reach the end of the journey you are really only half-way there:

The Author begs leave to acknowledge to his Subscribers, that they have a further claim upon him for two volumes more than these delivered to them now, and which nothing but ill health could

have prevented him, from having ready along with these.

The work will be completed and delivered to the Subscribers early the next Winter.

However, by that 'next Winter' (1768), Laurence Sterne was dead and buried in St. George's Fields, Hanover Square, London and the subscribers were left with a book that was undoubtedly incomplete but nonetheless quite perfect in its own peculiar way. This journey is but a fragment of a journey and that but a fragment of a life.

John Cowper-Powys saw Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* like a stream wandering lazily along over a flat plain, meandering gently across the landscape. It's a good description. On this journey

with the author of *Tristram Shandy* you will deliberately avoid the main routes and travel only where chance dictates. Yorick, your guide, will take you with him without consulting the equivalent of *Baedecker* or the *Blue* or *Rough Guide*. His unpredictable story will go where it wishes and you will go with him. And in the course of it you will be taken up dark alleyways and into intimate hotel bedrooms; you will find a Mystery as well as a Case of Delicacy; you will agree that an encounter is one of the best you could ever have experienced; you will disagree with an opinion and there will be a flash of wit that you will find difficult to comprehend; you will travel with the realisation that that your involvement will challenge your indifference and your joy will be balanced by sorrow.

Virginia Woolf was ahead of her own time when she described Sterne as being ahead of his.

It is no use going to the guide-book; we must consult our own minds; only they can tell us what is the comparative importance of a cathedral, of a donkey, and of a

girl with a green satin purse. In this preference for the windings of his own mind to the guide-book and its hammered high road, Sterne is singularly of our own age.

Conversation with the people Mr Yorick meets may sometimes be difficult – both the language and the culture presenting obstacles and misinterpretations – but the language of the Heart and the observations of the Traveller will lead to a greater understanding than that reached by a mere exchange of pleasantries. Watch, observe and interpret how the characters behave by their ‘body language’: they may not make themselves clear with words but their actions will tell us much of their real feelings and their real characters. Do they move forwards to help – or retreat to avoid involvement? If they welcome the stranger with ‘respectful cordiality’, with lentil soup, wheaten bread and wine, then a peasant meal becomes a ‘feast of love’.

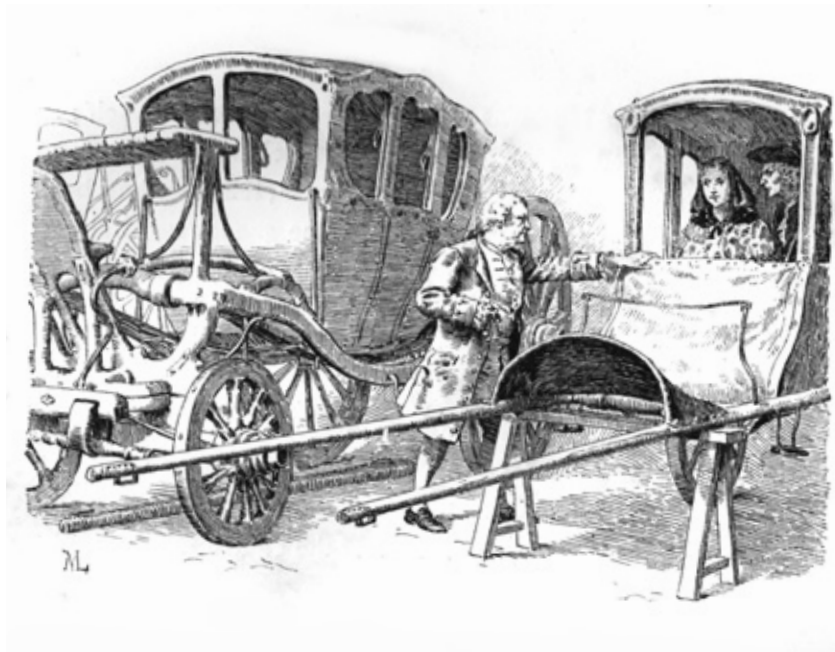
Hail ye small sweet courtesies of life, for smooth do ye make the road of it!

See how a deeper understanding of an encounter with a caged bird manages to turn what was a fixed opinion to one entirely its opposite. Observe how you react when you find yourself considering your own possible actions: should you offer help or pass by on the other side? Maria of Moulines, the Starling and the Grisette will allow you the opportunity to explore these feelings deeply and entertain you wonderfully at the same time.

My advice is to seize the opportunity of travelling on this sentimental journey with Mr Yorick – simply open your arms and give him a broad smile of welcome.

Notes by Patrick Wildgust

*Patrick Wildgust is the curator of Shandy Hall
(see pp.13–14)*



The Remise. Calais.



*In saying this, she suffered me to kiss her hand twice,
and with a look of sensibility mixed with concern,
she got out of the chaise,— and bid adieu.*



One of Britain's leading classical actors, **Anton Lesser** has worked extensively at the National Theatre, and is an associate artist of the Royal Shakespeare Company. His many television appearances include roles in *The Cherry Orchard*, *King Lear*, *The Politician's Wife*, *Vanity Fair*, *Perfect Strangers* and *Dickens*. Films in which he has appeared include *Charlotte Gray*, *Fairytale – A True Story*, *Imagining Argentina*, *River Queen* and *Miss Potter*. He is a familiar voice on radio, and has become particularly associated with his award-winning readings of Dickens for Naxos AudioBooks. He has also read *Tristram Shandy* for Naxos AudioBooks.

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Cover Image: *Laurence Sterne*, from 'The National and Domestic History of England' by William Hickman Smith Aubrey (1858–1916); courtesy of The Bridgeman Art Library

The images on page 10 and 11 are taken from an edition entitled *Sterne's Sentimental Journey* with illustrations by Maurice Leloir published by Routledge, 1885. The edition is in the collection at Shandy Hall and is used with the permission of the Laurence Sterne Trust.

SHANDY HALL

'I am as happy as a prince, at Coxwold – and I wish you could see in how princely a manner I live – 'tis a land of plenty. I sit down alone to venison, fish and wild fowl, or a couple of fowls or ducks, with curds, and strawberries, and cream, and all the simple plenty which a rich valley under Hambleton Hills can produce – with a clean cloth on my table – and a bottle of wine on my right hand to drink your health. I have a hundred hens and chickens about my yard – and not a parishioner catches a hare, or a rabbit, or a trout, but he brings it as an offering to me... – I am in high spirits – care never enters this cottage' –
Letter by Laurence Sterne, June 1767

In December 1759 the first two volumes of *Tristram Shandy* were printed and put on sale in York. By the following year, Sterne and his hero Tristram were equally famous. The sermons Sterne had given in his earlier life were now also in print but under the name of Yorick – the fictional Parson Yorick of the novels *Tristram Shandy* and *A Sentimental Journey*. Sterne was known as both Tristram and Yorick and the difference between reality and fiction became blurred.

Shandy Hall became a reality as Sterne moved from nearby Stillington to the medieval hall in Coxwold and he took on the duties of Vicar of this delightful village. He preached in the pulpit, which can still be seen in the church, and his bones (or rather *some* of his bones) are buried in the

churchyard alongside generations of local North Yorkshire families. His new home was christened by his friends as Shandy Hall and it has remained so called to this day.

Sterne's house is now a lived-in museum containing the finest collection of editions of his works and related prints and paintings. It is open to the public on Wednesdays and Sunday afternoons from May to September, but group visits can be arranged at any time. Exhibitions and events take place regularly and details can be found on www.shandean.org or by contacting shandyhall@dsl.pipex.com.

Written by Patrick Wildgust (Curator – Shandy Hall)

The Laurence Sterne Trust



Shandy Hall, Coxwold, York, North Yorkshire, YO61 4AD

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Tristram Shandy
(Sterne) ISBN: 9789626349670
Read by Anton Lesser

Laurence Sterne

A Sentimental Journey

Read by **Anton Lesser**

Published just months before his death in 1768, *A Sentimental Journey* is Sterne's lightly fictionalised account of his own European travels; and being Sterne, it is more about digressions, misunderstandings and risqué jokes than the places he visits.

Narrated by the (apparently) innocent Parson Yorick, who appeared in Sterne's other masterpiece, *Tristram Shandy*, it is full of anecdote and incident, and is far more about the people than the landscapes on the road from Calais. Despite the title, any sentimentality is offset by the elegance of the writing, the engaging companionship of Yorick himself and the constant, playful surprises.



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