

Laurence Sterne

(1713-1768)

Biography

Life: dates and events

24th November 1713 was born in Clonmel, Ireland

1724/31 attended Halifax grammar school

1731 admitted to Jesus College, Cambridge

pulmonary haemorrhage, beginning of ill health

1738 took Holy Orders and became a priest; was presented to the Vicarage of Sutton in-the-Forest, near York

1761 went to Southern France to recuperate from ill health

1765 travelled through France and Italy for seven months

1768 caught influenza, developed pleurisy and died on March 8th.

Works

1758 *The History of a Good Warm Watch Coat*, a satirical work, was suppressed by local church authorities

1759 first two volumes of *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*

1760 *The Sermons of Mr Yorick* along with volumes III and IV of *Tristram Shandy*

1761 volumes V and VI of *Tristram Shandy*

1765 volumes VII and VIII of *Tristram Shandy* followed by volume IX in 1766

1768 *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*

Laurence Sterne's portrait (1760)
by Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792).



Write an essay on L. Sterne's life using the biographical information displayed in the chart below.

Family and Environment

father: an army ensign; family constantly moved from place to place

father died

1741 married Elizabeth Lumley; unhappy marriage, wife was mentally ill

immediate fame and fortune

two daughters born, of which only one, Lydia, survived

idealized by Parisian society

left family in France at their request, had a sentimental love affair with Mrs Eliza Draper

Attitudes. Interests. Influences

was not an exceptional student but read widely

met John Hall, rich, eccentric future patron of the arts

amateur painter and musician

delighted in attacking ecclesiastical hypocrisy

tried to lose himself in his works to escape family problems

Tristram Shandy became a controversial work, hated by some, loved by others