

## **NOTICE CONCERNING COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS**

The copyright law of the United States [Title 17, United States Code] governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the reproduction is not to be used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research. If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use" that use may be liable for copyright infringement.

The institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law. No further reproduction and distribution of this copy is permitted by transmission or any other means.

Michigan State University Interlibrary Loan (EEM)

ILLiad TN: 96715



ILL Number: 5195330



Borrower: EYM

Lending String: \*EEM,UPM,UPM,OSU,OSU

Patron: Howe, Tonya-Marie Locke

Journal Title: Form and meaning in the history of  
the book ; selected essays /

Volume: Issue:  
Month/Year: 2003 Pages: 399-412

Article Author: Barker, Nicolas.

Article Title: Barker, Nicolas; The Library  
Catalogue of Laurence Sterne

Imprint: London ; British Library, 2003.

Notes: Borrowing Notes;

050511

**OCLC**

Receive Date: 5/11/2005 08:07:19 AM

Call #: Z4 .B386 2003

Location: MSU MAIN LIBRARY  
CHECK SHELF

**ARIEL**

Charge

Maxcost: \$25.00IFM

**Shipping Address:**

University of Michigan - CIC  
ILL - 106 Hatcher Graduate Library  
920 N. University Ave.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1205

Fax: (734) 936-3630

Ariel: 141.211.175.21

## THE LIBRARY CATALOGUE OF LAURENCE STERNE<sup>1</sup>

WHEN ABOUT TO EMBARK on any new enterprise, it was customary – depending on your persuasion – to try the *Sortes Biblicae* or *Sortes Vergilianae*: in other words, to open the Bible or Virgil at random, lay your finger on a verse, and accept what omen it offered. You will hardly be surprised to hear that I tried another fate, the *Sortes Shandeanae*, and this – taken more or less at random – is what I got:

Tell me, ye learned, shall we for ever be adding so much to the *bulk* – so little to the *stock*?

Shall we for ever make new books, as apothecaries make new mixtures, by pouring only out of one vessel into another? (*TS*, V.1)

Now this is exactly what I am going to do, occasionally reversing the procedure and pouring the second vessel back into the first. If, at the end of the process, we need a third vessel to contain the mixture, let it be the oracle of Bacchus, to quote Sterne's favourite Rabelais, the bottle that will soon reward you for your patience.

My first vessel is, of course, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759–67) and my second 'A CATALOGUE of a Curious and Valuable Collection of BOOKS, Among which are included The Entire LIBRARY Of the late Reverend and Learned LAURENCE STERNE, A. M. Prebendary of York, &c. &c. Author of *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gent.* and several other Works of Wit and Humour [here I skip a bit] Which will begin to be sold *exceeding cheap* (the Prices printed in the Catalogue) on *Thursday, August 25, 1768*, and continue till all are sold, By J. TODD and H. SOTHERAN (Successors to the late Mr. *Hildyard*) Booksellers in *York*; Who give the utmost Value (in ready Money) for any Library or Parcel of Books' – which last assertion seems somewhat out of line with their previous statement about the exceeding cheapness of their selling prices.

Be that as it may. ...

Both vessels are remarkably full, not to say rich. But they are not easily comparable: anyone who has uncertainly contemplated a modern vessel with

<sup>1</sup> *Oratio habita* – an address given as the Annual Memorial Lecture on behalf of the Laurence Sterne Trust at Shandy Hall on 17 July 1987, substantially as delivered, but emended and annotated since, largely thanks to the kind intervention of the editors.

THE LIBRARY CATALOGUE OF LAURENCE STERNE

A

# CATALOGUE

Of a Curious and Valuable

## Collection of BOOKS,

Among which are included

### The Entire LIBRARY

Of the late Reverend and Learned

LAURENCE STERNE, *A. M.*

*Prebendary of York, &c. &c.*

Author of *The Life and Opinions of Trifram Shandy, Gent.*  
and several other Works of Wit and Humour.

Most of the Books are in good Condition and handsome Bindings.

Among many others, equally valuable, are the following :

F O L I O.  
Caxton's Game of the Chess, 1474  
Draice's York, *large Paper*  
Guilim's Heraldry, *best Edition*  
Chambers's Dictionary, 2 vols.  
Locke's Works, 3 vols.  
Stukeley's Itinerary  
Rapin's England, 5 vols. complete  
Borlase's Cornwall, 2 vols.  
Dugdale's Warwickshire  
Plot's Oxfordshire  
Gerarde's Herbal, by Johnson  
Mezeray's History of France  
Mariana's History of Spain  
Biblia Polyglotta, 6 vol.  
Ca'Relli Lexicon Hæpyglotton, 2 vol.  
Histoire du Concile de Trente, 2 toms.

Q U A R T O.  
Ouvres de Rabelais, 3 toms.  
Middleton's Life of Cicero, 2 vols.  
Ailey's Voyages, 4 vols.  
Aldon's Works, 4 vols.  
Ducarel on Coins  
Long's Astronomy  
Sanderfon's Algebra, 2 vol.  
Magna Britannia, 6 vols.  
Doddrige's Expulator, 6 vols.  
O C T A V O.  
Rollin's Belles Lettres, 4 vols.  
Grey's Hudibras, 2 vols.  
Ouvres du Fré éfophe de Sans-Souci, 1 tom.  
Anthologie Francoife, 3 tom.  
Septuaginta, Gr. a Græbe, 4 vol.  
Ciceronis Opera omnia, Veronngii, 12 vol.

Which will begin to be fold *exceeding cheap* (the Prices printed in the Catalogue) on *Thursday, Aug<sup>st</sup> 25, 1768*, and continue till all are fold,

By J. TODD and H. SOTHERAN,

(Successors to the late Mr. *Hillyard*) Bookfellers in *York*;

Who give the utmost Value (in ready Money) for any Library or Parcel of Books.

CATALOGUES may be had in *London*, gratis, of Mr. *Becket*, in the *Strand*; Mr. *White*, in *Fleet-street*; Mr. *Payne*, next Door to the *Mews-Gate*; Mr. *Johnson*, in *Paternoster-Row*; and Mr. *Cater*, in *Holborn*:—Also of the Bookfellers at *Cambridge*, *Oxford*, *Salisbury*, *Edinburgh*, *Glasgow*, *Newcastle*, *Durham*, *Ilchester*, *Exeter*, *Leeds*; and at the Place of Sale.

Title-page of Todd & Sotheran's Catalogue.

THE LIBRARY CATALOGUE OF LAURENCE STERNE

its contents indicated in millilitres, fluid ounces, and fractions of a pint will recognize the feeling. To begin with, there are (by my count) 208 authors cited by name in *Tristram Shandy*; sometimes a particular work is mentioned, more often not; in one or two cases more precise details are given. The *Catalogue*, on the other hand, lists 2505 items, usually with authors' names, titles, and dates. At first sight, then, it would seem an easy matter to pour the one into the other, so to speak; to contemplate, at least in the mind's eye – yet how many of them are on the shelves at Shandy Hall, lovingly accumulated by Kenneth Monkman, to give tangible form to that vision in the mind's eye – to contemplate, then, one way or the other, the books that Sterne actually used. There they are, for the most part in sober calf bindings, most but not all neatly lettered on the spine, reached down to verify a quotation, lift a passage from Burton, Rabelais, or Cervantes – but did he ever need to refer to his favourite authors whose lines were forever running through his head? Some of them are on the shelves, the labels on the spines recalling works once read or skimmed, leaving images or reflections that popped up in the most unlikely places. Some are on the table, a folio of the fathers suggested by a line of thought in a sermon, an octavo on husbandry or practical medicine or tithes – (tithes, the all-absorbing preoccupation of the eighteenth-century clergyman) – required by the temporal needs of the moment.

So far, so good. ...

But this convincing picture is complicated and occluded by several aspects – I use the word in its astrological sense – that dilute the mixture brewing between our two vessels. The first concerns Messrs Todd and Sotheran. Notwithstanding their erratic views on the relation between 'exceeding cheap' and the 'utmost value', they were, by the standards of their time, honest in stating, if in brevier type, that the 'Collection of Books' they offered only 'included the Entire Library of the late Reverend and Learned' &c &c. But then, how many of the 2505 did actually belong to Sterne? Did he own no. 1, 'Caxton's Game and Play of the Chesse, *wants Title*, 1474. NB: This book is allowed by all the Typographical Antiquaries to have been the first Specimen of the Art among us', let alone the last but one 'Tristram Shandy, vol. 2, 3, 4 and 5, *sewed*, 1s each'?

Well. ...

Even on Thursday 25 August 1768, and making every allowance for Messrs Todd and Sotheran's new succession to the late Mr Hildyard, that was pretty naive. Even then, all the Typographical Antiquaries knew about the *Recuyell of the Histories of Troy*, not to mention the *Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers*, and few would have been so captious as to protest the absence of a title-page fifteen years or more before such an appendage could reasonably be claimed to have been invented.<sup>2</sup> And who, except the foolhardy purchasers (if there were

<sup>2</sup> The last 'Typographical Antiquary' to hold out the hope that *The Game and Play of Chess* was 'the first Specimen of the Art among us' was Samuel Palmer, alias George Psalmanazar, in his *General*

any) who bought the previous 106 numbers, all 'Odd Volumes, Octavo', would have paid as much as a shilling a volume for *Tristram Shandy*, minus volumes 1, 6, 7, 8, and 9? What were Todd and Sotheran up to, and is there any way to penetrate their confused sense of historic accuracy, not to say bibliopolic technique, and get to the true contents of the 'Entire Library' of the Late Reverend and Learned &c &c?

There may be an answer to this question, but a much more important aspect of our vessel-filling supervenes at this point. Did – not to beat about the bush – did Sterne himself write the catalogue entry for no. 1? There is an inspired lunacy about it that suggests affectionate parody of the habits and turn of phrase of such beings as Typographical Antiquaries, as well as retired Turkey merchants, captains, corporals, men-midwives of the Roman-Catholic persuasion, serving men and maids, the mortgagor and the mortgagee, the jester and the jestee, not to say a parson on a horse as lean and lank, and sorry a jade, as Humility herself – or Don Quixote – could have bestrode.

It hardly seems likely – after all, Sterne was in his grave before Todd and Sotheran had any need of their catalogue – but it is worth pausing on the question, for he was a master of that special form of affectionate mockery, mock-learning. It was, of course, a trick he had learned from Rabelais, who perfected an idea that may originally have occurred to Erasmus, in the wake of the invention of printing, which provided so much new material for the student of human folly, and Erasmus had it from Lucian. Mock-learning – which sends up that mixture of craven pride and ostentatious humility that induces scholars to fortify and conceal their own opinions and discoveries by discovering them in the works of earlier writers – only comes off if, like Christopher North, you recognize the special folly of despising fools. The parodist must love the object of his parody: you must love learning before you can mock it. After Rabelais, Cervantes and Sterne: in our own time, Borges and T. H. White. *The Name of the Rose* fails because the mockery is without love. Sterne's affection for learning is woven into what he writes so close that it is next to impossible to say – did *he* know? – when he is quoting and when he is making it up.

When Sterne cites Rabelais (*TS*, III.19), it is no great surprise to find in the next chapter – 'all my heroes are off my hands' and we are – where else? – into the preface – that great Rabelaisian sextet of discreet doctors, Monopolos,

---

*History of Printing* (1732). Already Ames (1749) had distinguished this, the second edition of *The Game and Play*, as the second (now dated 1483) and the first, rightly dated 1474, as printed in Bruges, while *The Dicts and Sayings* was the first dated book (which it remains) printed in England, at Westminster in 1477. The copy sold by Todd and Sotheran is now in the John Rylands University Library of Manchester, and was previously the Spencer copy. John, 2nd Earl Spencer presumably acquired it between 1810 and 1815, since it is not mentioned in Dibdin's edition of Ames (1810) but it is described in the 4th volume of his *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (1815). There he states that 'it formerly belonged to the famous Laurence Sterne, and was purchased by him, at York, for a few shillings'. I fear, I darkly fear, that this statement, unsubstantiated by any earlier authority, e.g. Herbert, is the product of Dibdin's all too fertile imagination.

Didius, Kysarcus, Phutatorius (he of the hot chestnut), Gastripheres, and Somnolentius, not to mention their commentators Agelastes and Triptolemus. None of these – you will not be surprised to hear – is to be found in the *Catalogue*, although it is a fairly close run thing. ‘Didius the great civilian’ is contradicted by Tribonius, not to mention the decretals of Gregory and Justinian’s codex – all real enough. And when it comes to Mr Walter Shandy’s collection of ‘every book and treatise which had been systematically wrote upon noses’, matters become still more complicated.

He ‘set off well’, you will remember, ‘in getting *Bruscambille*’s prologue upon long noses, almost for nothing, – for he gave no more for *Bruscambille* than three half crowns’ (imagine Todd and Sotheran’s envy) ‘– There are not three *Bruscambilles* in *Christendom*, – said the stall-man, except what are chain’d up in the libraries of the curious’ (*TS*, III.35). Now I have, I suppose, a decent familiarity with the libraries of the curious, up and down the world, but nowhere can I find one, let alone three, *Bruscambilles*. The *Pensées Facétieuses de Bruscambille*, of which Ferriar cites editions of 1623 and 1741, contains the text of the prologue, it is true, and there are other books with other titles in which it also appears, but where is the book, that unique three half-crowns’ worth, itself? And when it comes to Prignitz, Andrea Scroderus, Andrea Paraeus (Sterne shared with Sir Walter Scott a passion for calling people Andrew who were not – Scroderus is Joachim and Paré Ambroise), Bouchet’s Evening Conferences, ‘and above all, the great and learned *Hafen Slawkenbergius*’ – matters become still more complicated. The complications are not lessened by the addition of Ponocrates and Grangousier – old friends from Rabelais – to the list.<sup>3</sup>

Prignitz has proved no more findable than *Bruscambille*, but Scroderus’ *Disputatio de Musculis in Genere et Horum Motionibus* (Hamburg, 1617) and Paré’s *Chirurgie* (Paris, 1575) both have something to say on noses, while *Les Serées* of Guillaume Bouchet (Paris, 1585) has, among its chapters on wine, water, women and girls, Kings, ‘qu’on crie le roi boit’, newly-weds, fish, dogs, cuckolds, judges, lawyers and the law, doctors and medicine, horses, mares, asses and mules, chatterboxes and gossips, a passage on noses (iii.110-11). How much of all this can we find in the *Catalogue*? Is the great name of *Hafen Slawkenbergius* lurking among the many learned names among ‘Folio Gr. et Lat.’? Alas – will you be surprised to hear? – the answer is ‘No’, and of all these only Scroderus can be found, and he fairly well hid in no. 774 ‘Fred.

3 I owe to Dr Day an important gloss on *Bruscambille* on noses. There is a copy of Deslauriers’ *Les Oeuvres de Bruscambille* (Rouen, 1635) in the Fothergill collection in York Minster Library. This work is different from the *Pensées facétieuses*, which contains the ‘Prologue on Noses’ printed by John Ferriar in his *Illustrations of Sterne; with other essays and verses* (Manchester, 1798). What Sterne was referring to is the essay ‘En faveur des groz nez’ (*Oeuvres*, pp. 438-42). He may, on the other hand, have never seen either work and have lifted the reference from footnote 15 on chapter 40 of Book I of John Ozell’s edition of Rabelais’ *Works* (London, 1737), p. 317, on which page also occur references to Grangousier’s solution (*TS*, III.38,41), Bouchet’s *Evening Conferences* (*TS*, III.35), and ‘Ambrose Paraeus’ (*TS*, III.35,38) – ‘all in all, a fine economy of effort’, as Dr Day says.

Hoffmanni Clavis Pharmaceutica Schroderiana, 2s 6d *Hulac* 1681', for his reputation lived on in the works of other physicians.

And if no Slawkenbergius, nor can we find, in the *Catalogue* nor in any of the libraries of the curious, the equally splendid name of Adrianus Smelvgot, the 'publisher' (which I take to mean editor) of 'Lithopaedus Senonensis de Partu difficili', whence stemmed Tristram's father's fears of the pressure due to labour pains 'equal, upon an average, to a weight of 470 pounds avoirdupoise acting perpendicularly upon ... the lax and pliable state of a child's head in parturition'. This, you may remember, prompted the first of two memorable footnotes, here on the titles of the work in question:

The author is here twice mistaken; — for *Lithopaedus* should be wrote thus, *Lithopaedii Senonensis Icon*. The second mistake is, that this *Lithopaedus* is not an author, but a drawing of a petrified child. The account of this, published by *Athosius*, 1580, may be seen at the end of *Cordaeus's* works in *Spachius*. Mr. *Tristram Shandy* has been led into this error, either from seeing *Lithopaedus's* name of late in a catalogue of learned writers in Dr. —, or by mistaking *Lithopaedus* for *Trinecavellius*, — from the too great similitude of the names.<sup>4</sup>

Well ... Athosius I cannot find (though the *Progymnasmata* of Athonius (Elzevir, 1649) was no. 2098 in the *Catalogue*.<sup>5</sup> Mauritius Cordaeus edited

4 *TS*, II. 19. Dr Day points out that this footnote is also lifted, in this case from John Burton's *A Letter to William Smellie, M.D. Containing Critical and Practical Remarks Upon his Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Midwifery* (London, 1753), p. 21 — Burton was of course the original of Dr Slop:

The seventeenth Author, collected, as you tell us, by *Spachius*, is *Lithopedus Senonensis*, which instead of being an Author, is only the Drawing of a petrefied Child, when taken from its Mother, after she was opened; and this is evident from the Title, *Lithopaedii Senonensis Icon*, which, with the Explanation, is contained in one single Page only. The Account of it, as published by *Albosius*, in 1582, in Octavo, may be seen at the End of *Cordaeus's* Works in *Spachius*, whence again, I think, it is evident you must have taken your Extracts from some bad Copier.

This passage is footnoted:

This Error is corrected in the second Edition; but how the Author, as he tells us, *he was six Years in cooking up this Performance*, could at first mistake the Title, and represent the petrefied Child as an Author that he had pursued, and taken Extracts from, *for the Information of those who have not Time or Opportunity to peruse the Books from which they are collected*, is what surprises me very much.

Dr Day says he assumes that it was intended to be recognized by Burton, if he was still reading thus far after the introduction of Slop, and taken to be an insulting allusion to his trivial pedantry.

5 For 'Athosius' read 'Albosius': here this author was twice mistaken, too, for he took his reference from the World's Classics edition of *Tristram Shandy*, which he carries for convenience in travel. He took the problem to Kenneth Monkman ('The Bibliography of the Early Editions of *Tristram Shandy*', *The Library*, 5th ser. 25 (1970), 11-31), who thus resolves it:

The error dates back to the *fifth* edition of 1763, and it's easy to see why it happened: an imperfectly printed italic *l* in the copy of the 5th from which the 6th was set was misread as a *t*, and to make some sort of sense of the word the compositor changed the *b* into an *h*. [See Fig. 2.] And so began a mischief which ran through all editions (including the so-called 'edited' one of 1780) until quite recently. Cross's vaunted edition of 1904, presumably because it copied 1780, got it wrong, and the earliest 20th-century *Albosius* I've found on a quick check is in the Shakespeare Head Press edition of 1926, and (although it isn't a particularly scholarly edition) they got it right because they set the text from a five-volume edition of 1769 which they

Pseudo-Hipponax's *De Mulierum Morbis* (1574), while I. Spachius's *Gynaeciorum sive De Mulierum Affectibus Commentaria* appeared in 1597, and the *Opera Omnia* of Victor Trincavellus – a splendidly Rabelaisian name for a great scholar – were published at Lyon in 1586.

I do not think I dare attempt to recite the other learned footnote, which attends the peripeteia of Hafen Slawkenbergius's tale, the verdict of the Strasburg advocates on the Promontory of Noses, if only because it consists mainly of abbreviations, such as learned lawyers affect – in any case, Sterne had lifted the whole idea from Rabelais (Bk. III, c. 39), 'How Pantagruel was present at the tryal of Judge Bridlegoose, who decided Causes and Controversies in Law, by the Chance of Fortune of the Dice.' If Parce Bar, Scrudr., Tubal, Bardy, Luxius, Koinshoven and the rest ever existed, they are lost to science, or, like the learned Lessius, condemned to exist only in a portrait made up of books by Arcimboldi. But there, in the midst, we read 'Quibus add. Rebuff in L. obvenire de Signif.' Rebuff, indeed – but wait, look, and lo and behold, what have we here in the *Catalogue*? No. 508 'Rebuffi Praxis Beneficiorum absolutissima acquirendi, &c. 3s 6d Lugd. 1573' and no. 531 'Rebuffi Tractatus novem, de Decimis, &c. 2s Ling. 1566' – Benefices, Tithes – it is the very stuff of the eighteenth-century country parson's subconscious, the sea into which the Promontory of Noses projects.

No. 2310 in the *Catalogue* is 'De la Charlatanerie des Savans, par Menken, 1s 6d, *Ala Haye* 1721', a very rare book in the original Latin (Leipzig, 1715), so rare that it had to be translated into Italian in 1880 by the lexicographer Rigutini. To it we owe the splendidly iconoclastic view that all ancient works, sacred and profane, were produced by forgers, and the earliest definition of Bibliomania as a disease.

Perhaps the time has come to turn our attention to that matter-of-factual document, the *Catalogue*. The more I think about it, the more certain I am (though the evidence would hardly stand up in a court of law) that one can at least guess which books came from the Entire Library of the late Reverend and Learned, and which were added by Todd and Sotheran. The first 53 or 54 lots, including that equivocal copy of Caxton's 'Game and Play of the Chesse', are all expensive books (though no. 1 is, unusually, unpriced): they include two copies of Drake's *Antiquities of York* of 1736, both handsomely bound, the

---

say (although I doubt this) they 'compared with ... the original and other early editions'. But after 1926 there was a relapse, and various editions including the Golden Cockerel of 1929 continued to stand by *Athosius*, although the Macdonald Classic edition of 1949 broke new ground with an author called *Abosius*. I think Work's good text of 1940 was probably the first after 1926 to get it right, and Monk in 1953 and Ian Watt in 1963 followed him. Naturally Melvyn New did too in the Florida definitive text of 1978; but a remarkable thing to note is that in his detailed Appendix 4 of 'substantive variants between the copy-text and subsequent lifetime editions', New lists the 5th edition as creating the error by printing *A[]bosius*, the faulty / not having registered at all. This is not the case with any of the four copies at Shandy Hall, so I suppose it must exist either in his own, or the Texas or Yale copies, the only others recorded in the appended Bibliography.

THE LIBRARY CATALOGUE OF LAURENCE STERNE

\* The author is here twice mistaken;—for *Lithopædus* should be wrote thus, *Lithopædii Senonensis Icon*. The second mistake is, that this *Lithopædus* is not an author, but a drawing of a petrified child. The account of this, published by *Albofius*, 1580, may be seen at the end of *Cordæus*'s works in *Spachius*. Mr. *Tristram Shandy* has been led into this error, either from seeing *Lithopædus*'s name of late in a catalogue of learned writers in Dr.——, or by mistaking *Lithopædus* for *Trinecavellius*,—from the too great similitude of the names.

Fourth edn, 1760

\* The author is here twice mistaken;—for *Lithopædus* should be wrote thus, *Lithopædii Senonensis Icon*. The second mistake is, that this *Lithopædus* is not an author, but a drawing of a petrified child. The account of this, published by *Albofius*, 1580, may be seen at the end of *Cordæus*'s works in *Spachius*. Mr. *Tristram Shandy* has been led into this error, either from seeing *Lithopædus*'s name of late in a catalogue of learned writers in Dr.——, or by mistaking *Lithopædus* for *Trinecavellius*,—from the too great similitude of the names.

Fifth edn, 1763

\* The author is here twice mistaken;— for *Lithopædus* should be wrote thus, *Lithopædii Senonensis Icon*. The second mistake is, that this *Lithopædus* is not an author, but a drawing of a petrified child. The account of this, published by *Albofius*, 1580, may be seen at the end of *Cordæus*'s works in *Spachius*. Mr. *Tristram Shandy* has been led into this error, either from seeing *Lithopædus*'s name of late in a catalogue of learned writers in Dr.——, or by mistaking *Lithopædus* for *Trinecavellius*,—from the too great similitude of the names:

Sixth edn, 1767

From 'Albosius' to 'Athosius'.

THE LIBRARY CATALOGUE OF LAURENCE STERNE

second 'in Russia Leather, gilt Leaves, &c. by Duncanson'. No. 54 or 55 (Todd and Sotheran are a bit free and easy with the alphabet) starts an alphabetical sequence of authors, some of which are unmistakably Sternean – no. 63, 'Barry's Siege of Breda, under the Conduct of Spinola, with cuts, very fair, 2s 6d 1627'. From this point on, too, the prices are more moderate, the promotional phrases sparer. At the end, however, is an appendix (nos 2353–2409) where higher prices, purpler prose, and – the finishing touch – Duncanson the binder: '2392 Congreve's Works, consisting of his Plays and Poems, 3 vols. printed by Baskerville, elegantly bound in Russia Leather [Russia was always elegant, something even Morocco – pace His present Majesty – could never aspire to], broad Border of Gold, gilt Leaves, &c. by Duncanson 21s 1761' – what were Duncanson's '&cs'? I am inclined to think Sterne's books are, more or less, inclusively, nos 54 or 55 to 2352, although nos 2405–2505, 'Odd Volumes, Octavo', will require our further attention.

If this is so, what addition to the picture of Sterne familiar from *Tristram Shandy* and the *Sentimental Journey* does it provide? Works of divinity and of the Greek and Latin classics abound. The Greek fathers are better represented than the Latin – again predictable in an eighteenth-century divine. Sterne's legal peculiarities, not to say his uneasy relations with his neighbours, are reflected in Dalton's *Country Justice*, 1727 (no. 68), Lilly's *Practical Conveyancer*, 1719 (no. 80), and the 10th edition of *Coke upon Littleton*, 1703 (no. 170); there is a more than respectable amount of books on canon law. All this was turned to good account in *TS*, IV 26–9, when the learned doctors discuss the unchristening of Tristram, interrupted by the hot chestnut: Coke, Brook, and Swinburne on Wills are bandied about by Kysarcius, Didius & Co with all the abandon of thorough experience.

Sterne's early military upbringing, to which we owe Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim, was amplified by unusually thorough reading. No less than thirteen works on military history from the Siege of Breda to Brodrick's *History of the War in the Netherlands of 1713* (no. 962) are in the *Catalogue*, and there are four books on the special subject of sieges and fortifications, including Vauban and Coehoorn – Menno van Coehoorn's *New Method of Fortification of 1705* (no. 78) – which is consistently mis-spelt Cochoorn in all editions of *Tristram Shandy*, thus casting a new light on Yorick's answer to Mrs Shandy's 'What is all this story about?' – 'A Cock and a Bull' he said – but should it be, in Yorkshire dialect, a Coo and a Bull?<sup>6</sup>

6 Here again Kenneth Monkman leaves us pat:

The case seems to be that poor old Menno van Coehoorn was Coched-up from the beginning, surely not by Sterne, but by Ann Ward's compositor and/or proofreader who in the two York volumes made a number of errors including a score in plain English which any four-year-old would have blushed at, and I can't resist quoting: nicity, amout, likewise, uttermost, cirle, contray, hereself, knowldge, progressive, Aldergate, calld, Nocolas (et tul), diversons, moister, slopped (for sloped), Hnonour, Pay (for Pray), heartly, discouse, whimsical, the the; and this does not include a number of foreign words in italics which they got wrong, as *factus*,

Medicine, as you might expect, fills an even larger place in the *Catalogue*: some forty books, some simple pharmacopeias, but also some more abstract treatises, can be counted in the *Catalogue*. Midwifery is, of course, to be found, as well as some puzzles, which obfuscate the path of our enquiry like the Widow Wadman's to the very place where Uncle Toby was wounded. She 'read Drake's anatomy from one end to the other' – presumably his *Anthropologia Nova, or a New System of Anatomy* (1707) of which Sterne had no copy, although he had 'Dr Drake's Essay on the Gout' – the Drakes were a York family with a monopoly of medicine in the neighbourhood. 'She had peeped into Wharton upon the brain' – but how could she, when the celebrated anatomist (Thomas Wharton, 1614-73) wrote only upon the glands, being indeed the discoverer (thus *DNB*) of the duct of the sub-maxillary gland for the conveyance of saliva into the mouth, which bears his name. Was she perhaps more anxious to explore this phenomenon, or was it interest in 'the minute anatomy of the pancreas' of which Wharton 'made a special study' (*DNB*)? If she borrowed Graaf upon the bones and the muscles, but could make nothing of it, she is not to be blamed, poor woman, for the author himself

---

*Lithopedus*, *Tismegistus*, – and *Cochorn*, where perhaps there was just the faint excuse that by candlelight at the end of a tiring November day a 12pt italic *e* might be confused with a *c*.

All but two of these errors were righted in Dodsley's first London and later lifetime editions, the two that survived being 'progressive' (not spotted until the 4th) and of course *Cochorn* (not spotted till the 3rd). The 1st Dublin edition, set from the York text, in fact got progressive right, and most of the others too including Aldersgate, failing only to spot *faetus* and *Lithopedus*, and it did not substitute wrapt for warpt in the York text's 'our minds shine not through the body, but are warpt up here in a dark covering of uncrystalized flesh and blood' (*TS*, I.23), and who, having looked up the two full pages on the meanings, especially the old north-country meanings, of 'warp' in the *OED*, is to say they weren't right to leave the text as Sterne may have meant it to be?

To come back to *Cochorn*, Dublin seems to have been stuck with it until 1779. As for London, the mysterious Lynch ed got it right; so did the pirated 5-volume edition of 1769, and of course all the respectable 9-volume editions thro' to the 7th in 1768; even the 8th in 1770, where the format was changed to 6-volumes, made it without upsetting Baron *Cochorn* (except for the persistent but erroneous single 'o', which, my Dutch editor points out, is one of those English misspellings that any Dutchman would have spotted straightaway). It was the 9th edition in 1773 that restarted the rot (they may have set from Dodsley's first) and worse was to come, for the often cried-up-as-the-first-edited edition of the *Works* in 10 volumes in 1780 also must have used Dodsley and so set a 'standard' that was to survive, on and off (but mostly on) until Work's good edition set the record straight for anyone who bothered to take note of it, which, sadly, Ian Watt did not in 1965, nor, disgracefully, Ian Campbell Ross in Oxford's 'scholarly' edition of 1983. Back among the earlier years there were other black sheep who fell short of their pretensions, as the 3-volume edition in 1894 'Edited by George Saintsbury', the 2-volume Macmillan edition of 1900 'With a Bibliographical Note by A. W. Pollard', Cross's swanky 12-volume 'Sutton Issue' of the *Life and Works* in 1904, the Shakespeare Head edition of 1926 which claimed its text to be 'that of the five-volume edition of Sterne's *Works*, printed in 1769 [had they stopped there they would have been OK but alas they went on meaninglessly to add] compared with that of the original and other early editions.'

But it is pleasant to note a few oases. Most of the sudden outcrop of 4-volume editions of the *Works* around 1800 got it right; so did, surprisingly or perhaps not surprisingly, the first Tauchnitz of 1849; so did the four volumes of the *Works* edited by, rather oddly, Dr James P. Browne in 1873.

footnotes 'This must be a mistake in Mr. Shandy; for Graaf wrote upon the pancreatick juice, and the parts of generation' – to be precise, Regnerus Graaf wrote a *Tractatus Anatomico-medicus de Cussi Pancreatici Natura et Usu* (Leiden, 1672) and *De Generatione Mulierum et Virorum* (1668-72).<sup>7</sup> No wonder she never laid her finger upon the place. ... Have you ever tried to touch a pancreas?

Besides medicine, natural science had a more than respectable place in Sterne's library, including the fine illustrated books on insects of Swammerdam and Merian, Hooke's *Micrographia*, Dr Sloane's *Catalogue of the Plants of Jamaica*, and others. One of them makes an unexpected appearance as the purported source of the third of four Greek footnotes in *TS*, V.28, when Tristram's father, Yorick, and Uncle Toby are discussing the results of Susannah's misadventure with the sash-window. Here, in citing the opinion of washerwomen, after those of apothecaries and statesmen, the Greek text καθαριστητος εινεχεν is quoted as from Bochart – now Sterne had no less than two copies of 'Bocharti de Animalibus S. Scripturae', both in two volumes, the Frankfurt edition of 1675 and the London one of 1663 (nos 290 and 307). Are we to suppose that washerwomen are animals or that Susannah's scrape was sanctified by scripture? I am not sure that we ought to pursue either question. Better, perhaps, to leave it to the learned, who can pursue the matter with Tristram's father in Spencer's (spelt with an s not a c in *Tristram Shandy*, a curiously Freudian slip, reminiscent of *Twelfth Night*) *De Legibus Hebraeorum Ritualibus*, of which there were two copies in the *Catalogue* (no. 303: the folio edition of Chappelow, '14s *Cantab.* 1727', and no. 810, the quarto, '3s *Hagae Com.* 1686'), and in Maimonides, of whom three works are in the *Catalogue* (nos 791-3).<sup>8</sup> With Tristram's breeches we are on safer ground. Here the grand

7 The footnote here (*TS*, IX.26) suggests that either the Widow Wadman or Sterne had also been reading Ephraim Chambers' *Cyclopaedia: or, an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Science* (London, 1751), s.v. 'Anatomy, the art of dissecting or artificially taking to pieces, the solid parts of animal bodies, in order to an exact discovery of their structure and oeconomy'. After dealing with 'The antient writers', Chambers proceeds to the moderns:

Wirtungus, in 1642, discovered the pancreatic duct. Willis, who came after him, published an *anatomy* of the brain, and nerves, in a manner much more exact than had been done before him; yet he had omitted some considerable things, which were afterwards observed by Vicussens. In effect, Glisson treated particularly of the liver; Wharton of the glands; Havers of the bones; Graaf of the pancreatic juice, and of the parts of generation; Lower of the motion of the heart; Thurston of respiration; Peyer of the glands of the intestines; Brown of the muscles; and Drelincourt of the conception of the ova in women, the placenta, and the membranes of the foetus.

Facing this is a fine engraved plate, which, folded, shows the anatomy of the bones and muscles (unfolded, you get the vessels and the viscera as well). Perhaps the Widow preferred pictures to Havers and Brown.

8 Kenneth Monkman writes:

Spencer/Spenser is a duller story. All the lifetime and other early editions seem to have got it right, and the earliest Spenser I have spotted in an hour's browsing occurs in a piracy of the *Works* in 8 volumes in 1790. But hereafter things began to go adrift: several of the 4-volume *Works* around 1800 got it wrong, though the first Edinburgh *Works* of 1803 got it right, so in

authority is Albertus Rubenius *De Re Vestiaria Veterum*, and this text, which is virtually summarized in *TS*, VI.19, was indeed in Sterne's library, no. 828, 'Fig. [that is, with pictures] 3s *Ant[werp]* 1665'.

Let us finally (and about time too) turn to Sterne's favourite authors. Apart from 'τυπω -ing it at Latin and Greek', his serious reading seems to have begun when he went, age twenty (unusually late), to Jesus College, Cambridge, in 1733, where, to quote *DNB*, 'the education system in vogue in the university excited his abhorrence. For mathematics he had an inherent incapacity [but Euclid comes into *Tristram Shandy* more than once and there are two copies in the *Catalogue*]. He discovered only matter for jesting in the terminology of logic and the writing of Aristotle', whose complete works, Duval's edition, '2 vol. Gr. & Lat. 18s *Paris* 1629' are nonetheless no. 451 in the *Catalogue*. 'But his time at Cambridge was not wasted. The classics he read with appreciation in a desultory fashion, and one academic text book – Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding", which had recently been accorded a place in the academic curriculum, awoke in him enthusiasm. Locke's perspicuity exerted a permanent influence on his mind, and evoked his intolerance [*quaere*, the right word] of mock-learning and scholastic pedantry.' Locke is the most-often cited author in the whole of *Tristram Shandy*, and appears no less than eight times in the *Catalogue*, which includes four copies of the *Essay*. Berkeley and Hume also appear in it, not surprisingly, and, more so, Spinoza.

Other favourite books include a much-borrowed-from Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 6th edition, '1s 6d 1652' and, of course, Montaigne, Rabelais, and Cervantes. Montaigne he had in French<sup>9</sup> and in the English translation of Charles Cotton (1685), Rabelais also in French and in the English translation of Urquhart and Motteux (1708) and Ozell (1737), who also translated *Don Quixote* (1746), of which a set and an odd volume appear in the *Catalogue*. Tristram's father's letter *in re* the widow to Uncle Toby advised

suffer her not to look into Rabelais, or Scarron, or Don Quixote –  
 – They are all books which excite laughter; and thou knowest, dear  
 Toby, that there is no passion so serious, as lust.  
 Stick a pin in the bosom of thy shirt ... (*TS*, VIII. 34)

---

London did the 1780 10-volume edition; but the Tauchnitz, Dr Browne, Saintsbury, Cross and lots of later 'editors' plumped for Spenser until 1926 when Shakespeare Head for once followed an OK text. Work did too of course, and Florida, even Campbell Ross, and the Penguin paperback. But there were still offenders, Monk for instance as late as 1962. Doubtless there are others still today, depending on where the 'editor' or simply the printer took his text from.

9 As to which edition Sterne read, I owe the following observation to Dr Day:

The Greek epitaph to Volume I is paraphrased by Montaigne as the opening sentence of *Essais*, I, xl, 'Men (says an ancient Greek Sentence) are tormented with the Opinions they have of things, and not by the things themselves' (Cotton's translation). The Greek does not appear in any edition of Cotton's translation, or in Coste's version, or, with one exception, in any of the French language editions I have managed to check. The exception is that published by John Nourse (London, 1739) and this particular edition is in the *Catalogue*, no. 2210.

THE LIBRARY CATALOGUE OF LAURENCE STERNE

Perhaps the three volumes of no. 2266 of the *Catalogue*, 'Roman Comique de Mons. Scarron, 3 tom. *bien relie*, 6s Paris 1733' in the same place would have done as well.

Of modern writers, Pope, Dryden, Addison, and other poets and essayists figure in the *Catalogue*. Of contemporary novelists, only Fielding (the *Miscellanies*, *Amelia*, and the *Voyage to Lisbon*) makes much of an appearance, though Sterne had the abhorred Smollett's *Travels*, as well as odd volumes of *Sir Charles Grandison* and *Peregrine Pickle*, and a complete set of *Memoirs of a Coxcomb*. Other works of fiction pop up in the *Catalogue* in odd and suggestive collocation, as nos 1507-8 'Memoirs of the Royal Academy of Surgery of Paris' and '— of Miss Betsy F.T. 2 vols. *lettered*, 3s 1761', or nos 1570-1 'History of Miss Jenny Salisbury' [my dearest Jenny] and '— of Sieges and Battles by Sea and Land, 13 vols. in 7, *neat*, 15s 1762'. Nothing more sentimental of Rousseau the arch-sentimentalist is to be found than the translation of 'Emelius, or a Treatise of Education, by Rosseau [*sic*] 3 vols., *lettered*, 6s 1763'. Among plays, Terence, Etherege, Congreve, Farquhar, Shakespeare, in modern editions, are there, and — provokingly — no. 1679 'Plays, viz. Tamerlane, Hamlet, and Julius Caesar, *half bound*, 1s'.

Now this brings up the whole question of whether Sterne was in any sense a bibliophile. These are in fact all seventeenth-century pieces, Tamerlane not by Marlowe but by Nicholas Rowe, the others Davenant's drastic revisions of his non-putative father's works, but — even if Todd and Sotheran took a dimmer view of Sterne's old books than their own — there are in the main part (nos 192 and 252) two different 1550 folios of Chaucer and nos 104-5 are 'Buck's 65 Views of the Cities and principal Towns of England and Wales, *fine Impressions, and elegantly bound, a broad Border of Gold, &c.* 21 12s 6d' and 'Beaumont and Fletcher's Plays, *best Edition in Folio, fair and gilt*, 15s 1679'. The 'best edition' of Guillim's *Display of Heraldry*, 1724 (no. 123) was well bound and Peter Lombard's works, 1516 (no. 367), is '*exemp. pulch. in tegm. antiq. curios.* 4s', dog latin for 'a fine copy in a curious old binding', a most unusual description at that time. There are sixteenth-century English editions of Guevara, Florio's Italian dictionary and St Augustine, a 1503 *Legenda Sanctorum* and the 1533 York missal, '*Lib. rar 11* 1s', rare even in those days. There are a number of works on large paper or in fine morocco bindings, and among contemporary bibliophila, the Strawberry Hill Press editions of Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting* and *Catalogue of Engravers*, 'sewed' but still '3l 3s', and Toland's *Life of Milton* '*handsomely bound in Russia Leather Marble Leaves, &c.* 5s', which I think can only be one of its editor's Thomas Hollis's own bindings.

I could go on. I have said nothing about the 285 quarto sermons or the octavos, which I cannot count. There is Lucian's *Pseudosophista* (with the notes of Graevius), the ancestor of all explosions of mock-learning, the scabrous case of Fr Girard, 'Chansons joyeux par un Ane-onyme', the work of the Cavalier Lunadoro. There is the odd fact that, of the two books cited in full in *Tristram Shandy*, Bishop Joseph Hall's *Decads*, 'at the end of his divine art of medit-

THE LIBRARY CATALOGUE OF LAURENCE STERNE

ation, imprinted at *London*, in the year 1610, by *John Beal*, dwelling in *Aldersgate-street* (*TS*, I.22), and the 'Book of French post-roads, page 36. edition of 1752' (*TS*, VII.10),<sup>10</sup> neither is in the *Catalogue* – did Sterne find them in the well-stocked library of his bosom friend John Hall Stevenson with whom he now shares, not a grave, but the same volume (L.IV) of the *DNB* – have you ever realized that more authors whose names begin with the letter S are cited in *Tristram Shandy* than any other letter of the alphabet? From A for Avison's *Essay on Musical Expression* of 1752, two copies in the *Catalogue* to flesh out that improbable genius of the keyboard, Avison Scarlatti, to Z for Zoroaster, *Travels* of no. 1633, '4s 6d, 1753', there are 73 authors in the *Catalogue* of the 208 cited in *Tristram Shandy*.

I ought, in all seriousness, to remind those of you still worried by the number of multiple copies in the *Catalogue* – three copies of Lord Bolingbroke's *Letters on the Study of History*, two on royal paper, 3s, 6s and 5s, and all 1752? – that a country parson's library was not only his, but the lending library of the parish, whose interests, as much as Sterne's, are reflected in the number of works on husbandry, farriery, and popular devotion. But I will not.<sup>11</sup> My voice sinks 'to the lambent pupillability of slow, low, dry chat, five notes below the natural tone – which you know, madam, is little more than a whisper', only adjuring you 'By the tombstone of Lucian – if it is in being – if not, why then by his ashes! by the ashes of my dear Rabelais, and dearer Cervantes, that the petulance of time' – 'Pray, my dear, have you not forgot to wind up the clock!' – 'of Time and Eternity . . . is a robbery of the ontologic Treasury of such a jewel, as no coalition of great occasions and great men are ever likely to restore to it again'.

10 Sir H. George Fordham, 'The *Listes Générales des Postes de France*, 1708–79, and the *Jaillots, géographes ordinaires du roi*', *The Library*, 4th ser., III (1922), pp. 115–36, records the survival of no edition of this date (p. 124).

11 Nor will I remind you that all the books I have been unable to find may have belonged to Sterne and been burnt, along with the parsonage and all its contents, at Sutton on the Forest, on 2 August 1765, a loss that Sterne computed at 'upwards of two hundred pounds, with some books, &c. &c.'; the latter, perhaps, with 'all my projects, for some time to come, were *burned* to a cinder; or, which is the better expression of the two, had evaporated in *smoke*' (*Original Letters of the Late Mr Laurence Sterne*, 1788, pp. 45–6).