

**MY LONG LIFE, AN
AUTOBIOGRAPHIC
AL SKETCH.**

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My long life, an autobiographical sketch. by Mary Cowden Clarke

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MARY COWDEN CLARKE

**MY LONG LIFE, AN
AUTOBIOGRAPHIC
AL SKETCH.**

TO MISS
ANNETTE



MARY COWDEN CLARKE

Mary Cowden Clarke

My Long Life

An Autobiographic Sketch

By

Mary Cowden-Clarke

Author of

"The Concordance to Shakespeare," "The Girlhood of
Shakespeare's Heroines," "The Iron Cousins,"
Etc., etc.

"I count myself in nothing else so happy,
As in a soul remembering my good friends"

SHAKESPEARE

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Dodd, Mead and Company

1897

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MY LONG LIFE.

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My Long Life.

HAVING been asked to write my reminiscences of myself and of my family, and of the persons distinguished in literature or art whom I have known, I have the rather consented because I have been blessed with a greatly privileged and happy life.

I was born on the 22d of June, 1809, in the same house where my father, Vincent Novello, was born — No. 240 Oxford Street, or, as it was then called, Oxford *Road*, for it still bore some traces of a somewhat suburban exit from that western quarter of London. Its vicinity to Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, its closeness to Edgeware Road and Bayswater Road, its commanding from its attic storey a distant view of the Surrey Hills, combined to produce a rural as well as urban effect to the

impression upon my earliest days. I used to watch the waggon that jogged past our door of an evening, with its tarpaulin cover and its lantern swinging at its rear, and thinking how delightful it would be to take a journey into the country lolling inside this comfortable conveyance. The early market-carts that rumbled by of a morning, with their supply of fresh vegetables and fruit, bringing a delicious air from the region of meadows full of buttercups and daisies, made me long to be out among the lanes and fields these carts came from. But even Hyde Park, where I was intrusted to convoy my younger brothers and sisters, supplied me with enjoyment of those fine old elm-trees, those stretches of grass I beheld. Such things as half-penny little mugs of curds and whey were extant in those days,—sold near to the Park entrance, then called Cumberland Gate, now known as the Marble Arch; and which dainty refection seemed properly rustic and appropriate. The railing