

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

HOLLAND, William Langford

Ireland c.1757 – London 30.IX.1815

The Irish miniaturist William Langford Holland trained at the Dublin Society school, winning prizes in 1774 and 1776, and a medal in 1779 (implying a likely date of birth of around 1760). He established a studio at 12 Suffolk Street, making silhouettes, profile miniatures and portraits on glass (7s.; by 1786 he charged between 1 and 5 gns). He was also recorded at 46 Capel Street. A notice in the *Dublin evening post*, 12.IV.1783 advertised that–

HOLLAND, PORTRAIT AND MINIATURE PAINTER,
Takes striking Likenesses in Miniature at one Guinea each; he also paints Likenesses in Oil and Crayons. Ladies and Gentlemen have not the trouble of leaving their Apartments, as he waits on them, by directing for him at Mr Armstrong Fitzgerald's, No. 27, Skinner-row. He continues to teach Drawing and Painting in different Branches.

Similar advertisements continued until 25.V.1784. There is no evidence that he produced any pastels after 1777. According to Strickland, in 1787 he was in Kilkenny, as a “Miniature painter in profile à la Marlborough”; this was a form of glass painting, “being the invention of a foreign gentleman who has brought this art to a perfection never before known”, a C. H. Sandhegan whose address, Marlborough Street, gave rise to the name. Other examples are known, but they are undated.

A print-seller known just as William Holland is well documented as a publisher of satirical and coloured prints from Drury Lane (initially in partnership with George Peacock, issuing pornography from the mid-1780s), from 50 Oxford Street and from 11 Cockspur Street from 1803 on; his marriage to the colourful Mrs Clifford, née Mary Chute, from Kerry, took place in St-Martin-in-the-Fields on 26.III.1803. Apart from his Irish background, the connection with the Irish silhouettist is not immediately obvious; but a single advertisement by William Holland of 50 Oxford Street in *The World*, 1.II.1788 offering silhouettes etc. in similar terms to the Dublin advertisements confirms the conflation (Brian Wellings, pr. comm. 23.IX.2023). The age in the obituary notice is the only guide to his date of birth.

Bibliography

Breeze 1985; Foskett 1987; *Gentleman's magazine*, LXXXV/2, 1815, p. 380; McGuire 1939, p. 15; Strickland 1913; Peggy Hickman, “The art of the silhouette in Dublin”, *Country life*, CXXX, 27.VII.1961, p. 189; Nevill Jackson 1938; profilesofthepast.org.uk

Pastels

J.4012.101 Three crayons, Dublin 1777