

Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*

Online edition

WORLIDGE, Thomas

Peterborough 1700 – Hammersmith 1766

Portraitist and engraver. A pupil of Grimaldi, whose daughter Arabella was his first wife, he started his career in Bath making plumbago miniatures. He then moved to King Street, Covent Garden where he is said to have made portraits in pastel as well as oil, but as these met with little success he turned to etching. He continued to maintain his contacts with Bath, and in particular with the seal engraver, John Wickstead or Wicksteed, whose family ran the celebrated Toy Shop in Orange Grove, Bath, where Worlidge's engravings were sold. There is some confusion over Worlidge's two subsequent brides: it seems that he married his second wife Mary Wickstead in Widcombe, near Bath on 12.III.1743 and his third, Elizabeth Wickstead (*q.v.*, *s.v.* Ashley), in 1763; but no record of the third marriage has been located, and it may be that Mary and Elizabeth were the same person rather than sisters. He exhibited at the Free Society (1762–66) and the Society of Artists in 1761 and 1765. There is a memorial in St Paul's Hammersmith. His widow and an M. Wickstead are named on the title-page of the first complete edition of Worlidge's *Collection of drawings from curious antique gems* which appeared posthumously.

Bibliography

Bryan 1905; Charles Dack, *Sketch of the life of Thomas Worlidge, etcher and painter, with a catalogue of his works*, Peterborough, 1907; Foskett 1987; Grove; Oxford DNB; Strange 1907; Walpole 1828; Waterhouse 1981; Wright 2006