

### 385 SIDDALL, WILLIAM

**Bookseller, Bookbinder**

**Williamsburg**

Bookbinder in Williamsburg (1766-67) in partnership with Thomas Worrall (461).

Siddall is a fleeting figure in the American print trade, a London-based book-binder who apparently practiced his craft in two distinct year-long residences in North America during the decade before the Revolutionary War – one in the capital of the Virginia colony, and another in the capital of the Rhode Island colony.

Williamsburg was the first colonial setting for Siddall. In July 1766, he established a bindery and retail store opposite the Raleigh Tavern on Duke of Gloucester Street. His advertising in the *Virginia Gazette* of William Rind (358) suggests that he had perceived an opportunity in the colonial capital with the expansion of press offices there after the death of Joseph Royle (368) that January, and that he hoped to take advantage of the customers employing Rind's press. He also offered his services as a paper-hanger, as many binders then did as well.

Local records indicate that Siddall conducted the business in partnership with one Thomas Worrall, a London bookseller; he was the brother of John Worrall, a celebrated bookseller in the imperial capital who conducted a large store in Bell Yard near the Temple Bar; but as Thomas "labored under a mental derangement," it appears that he never came to Virginia, serving instead as the financier and supplier for the Williamsburg firm of Siddall & Worrall. Their pairing also suggests that Siddall had been a part of John Worrall's London office and that this Virginia venture was a way for Worrall to provide for an invalid relative. However, the alliance came to an abrupt end in the fall of 1767 with Thomas Worrall's death in September of that year. At that time, Siddall disappears from Virginia records, suggesting that he returned to England to settle up with the Worrall family.

Newport, Rhode Island, was the subsequent colonial setting for Siddall. As in Virginia, the only trace of his presence there is in the advertisements he placed in the *Newport Mercury*; his initial presence there came in June 1771 when he publicized the opening of his bindery and retail store on the Long Wharf there; the next notice came in January 1772, announcing the relocation of his business to a locale "near the Hay Scales" in Newport; his last notice appeared in August 1772, suggesting that Siddall again returned to London that fall, as he is not seen again in American records. His fate is unclear, given a continuing inaccessibility to English records.

***No Personal Data yet discovered.***

Sources: MESDA Index no. 35413; Williamsburg People file for Siddall, Research Dept., Colonial Williamsburg; *Rhode Island Book Trade Atlas*; Timperley, *Dictionary of Printers and Printing* (1839); notices in Rind's *Virginia Gazette* (1766).