

George Oldham (1770/80-1843/44) of Shelby & Daviess Counties, Ky.

By Jerry Long, Owensboro, Ky., 1990

George Oldham was born between 1770 & 1780. By 1820 he was residing in Shelby County, Ky. About 1823 he moved to Daviess County, Ky., where he died in 1843 or 1844. He was probably a brother of Chloe Ann Oldham Dodson & James T. Oldham, who were near neighbors to him at the time of the 1820 Shelby County census. George Oldham of Scott County, Ky. (listed there in the 1800 tax list & 1810 census) may be the father of Chloe Ann, James T. & George (Jr.). Chloe Oldham, wife of Eli Dodson, between 1805-1808 had moved to Shelby County, Ky. from Scott County, Ky., also on an 1853 Ohio County, Ky. death record her father was listed as George Oldham. Chloe Oldham was born 3 February 1770 in Virginia, married Eli Dodson 28 June 1787; about 1823 she moved to Daviess County, Ky. and by 1830 moved to Ohio County, Ky., where she died. Several neighboring & interrelated families of Shelby County, Ky., including the Dodson, Martin, King, Sharp & Oldham families, moved about the same time to the Bethabara area of Daviess County, Ky., several of these families later moved to the nearby Bells Run neighborhood of Ohio County, Ky.

James T. Oldham of Shelby County, Ky. was about the same age range as George Oldham. James T. Oldham was enumerated in the 1810 & 1820 censuses of Shelby County, in 1820 he was listed near George Oldham. James T. died about 1825, he was last listed in the tax lists in Shelby County in 1824 & in the following year his widow, Margaret, was first listed, she was enumerated in the 1830 & 1840 censuses of Shelby County. The Oldham family of Barren County, Ky. may be related to the Oldhams of Shelby County. Tapley/Tarpley Oldham, born 24 August 1765 Virginia, settled in Barren County by 1810, he had earlier resided in Bourbon County, Ky., an adjoining county of Scott County, where the Shelby County Oldhams had prior connections. Tarpley Oldham died in Barren County on 21 May 1837 (see Tarpley Oldham bible record in the Kentucky Family Records, Vol.1, 1969, p.65, West-Central Kentucky Family Research Association, Owensboro, Ky.); his son, James Tapley Oldham in 1849 moved to Daviess County, Ky. Eli & Chloe Oldham Dodson of Shelby County had a grandson named James Tapley Dodson.

On an 1854 marriage record in Daviess County, Ky., of Susan Oldham, a daughter of George Oldham, it is recorded that she was born in Shelby County, Ky. about 1820. George Oldham is last listed in the Shelby County tax lists in 1823. He is first listed in the Daviess County, Ky. tax books in 1824. In the 1824-25-26-27 & 1829 Daviess tax lists he was taxed on 1900 acres on the Ohio River in Meade County, Ky. Meade County was formed in 1824 from

Hardin County, Ky.; in the 1820-1824 tax records of Hardin County no Oldhams were listed, in the 1800 Hardin tax list a Tapley Oldham was listed.

George Oldham was enumerated in the 1830 & 1840 censuses of Daviess County, Ky. In both censuses he appears to have been residing in the western or Curdsville Precinct area of Daviess County (judging by the family names of his neighbors - Glenn, Travis, McFarland, Galloway, Waltrip...). He apparently never owned any land in Daviess County, in the tax records he was not taxed on any Daviess lands and he was not listed as a grantee or grantor in the Daviess County deed books. On 11 March 1844 William H. Howard was appointed administrator of the estate of George Oldham, deceased, security was by E. T. Allen (Daviess County, Ky. Order book D, p.435). George Oldham was last listed in the Daviess County tax lists in 1843. In the 1845 tax list his widow, "Mrs. Elizabeth Oldham" first appeared. No will, estate, settlement or equity record of George Oldham, deceased, was found in the Daviess County records (the counties first two will books have been lost).

George Oldham's widow, Elizabeth, age 54, born KY, was listed in the 1850 census of Daviess County, Ky.; she was enumerated 2 households from the family of Joseph Freels, two of her sons, John D. & Henry, subsequently married into the Freels family. Judging from the census records & the ages of their children George & Elizabeth were probably married between 1810 & 1820 (not recorded in Shelby County or Hardin County, Ky., did not check Scott County, Ky.). Mrs. Elizabeth Oldham was not listed in the 1860 Daviess County census (or in subsequent censuses there).

George & Elizabeth Oldham appear to have had at least six children, viz: Susan (born c1820), Thomas R. (born 1822), James H. (born c1824), George M. (born c1826), John D. (born 3 July 1828) & Henry (born c1833). No record was found that named the heirs of George Oldham but the above are strongly suggested as his children by the fact of their interrelationships in the Daviess County records. Several of the above resided in the Curdsville Precinct of Daviess County, where George Oldham was the only Oldham household listed in previous census records, the above correspond to the ages of members of the George Oldham household in earlier census records. Three of the above, Susan, John & Henry, were living in the household of George Oldham's widow, Elizabeth, in 1850. When the above males attained the age of 21 & were listed in the Daviess County tax books they were grouped together & were either next to or in close proximity to Mrs. Elizabeth Oldham. James H. & George M. Oldham were also linked by an 1851 Daviess County Circuit Court suit (#196) in which they were contesting the ownership of a horse. Three of the above are also linked by their interconnections with the Freels family, who resided near the Daviess-Henderson County line. Thomas R. Oldham at the time of the 1850 Henderson County, Ky. census was enumerated in the household of James M. Freels; Thomas R. had been listed in the 1843-44-45-48-49 Daviess County tax lists. John D. & Henry Oldham married sisters, Cordelia & Susan Freels, daughters of John Freels.

Susan Oldham on 26 September 1854 married Elijah Fortner in Daviess County, Ky. On their marriage, record it was recorded that she was age 34(in 1850 census she had been listed as 30) and born Shelby County, Ky. She was not found in the 1860 or later censuses of Daviess County. James H. Oldham married Julia Wade in Daviess County on 8 April 1845, he was listed in the 1850 Daviess census, his wife was widowed by the time of the 1870 Daviess County census. Henry Oldham married Susan Freels in Henderson County, Ky. on 8 August 1859, he was listed in the 1860 Henderson County census & may have died by 1870, when his daughter, C. Oldham, age 10 was living in the home of her grandfather, John Freels in Henderson County. Henry Oldham was not found in the 1870 Henderson census. John D. Oldham married Cordelia Freels in Daviess County on 28 February 1856, in the same year he purchased a lot in Curdsville, Ky., and starting in 1859 operated the ferry across the Green River at Curdsville, from Daviess to Henderson County (see History of Daviess County, Kentucky, 1883, p.560). He died at Curdsyule on 6 December 1884, a death notice appeared in the Owensboro Semi-Weekly Messenger on Tuesday, 9 December 1884:

“John D. Oldham, age 56 years, died on the 6th at Curdsville, of pneumonia. He was buried Sundan at Bethel chapel in Henderson county.”

He was buried in the Bethel Chapel Cemetery in Henderson County, where members of his wife's family, the Freels, had long been buried.