

# *Descendants of William Oldham*

## *Generation No. 1*

1. WILLIAM<sup>1</sup> OLDHAM was born Jun 26, 1568 in All Saints Parish, Derby, Derbyshire, England, and died Jun 26, 1636 in Derby, Derbyshire, England. He married PHILLIPA SOWTER Nov 17, 1588 in Parish of All Saints, Derby, Derbyshire, ENG<sup>1</sup>, daughter of THOMAS SOWTER and ALICE TURNER. She was born Jul 06, 1568 in All Saints Parish, Derby, Derbyshire, England, and died About 1602 in prob Derby, Derbyshire, England.

Children of WILLIAM OLDHAM and PHILLIPA SOWTER are:

- i. THOMAS<sup>2</sup> OLDHAM, b. About 1590, Derby, Derbyshire, England; d. Unknown; m. ELIZABETH RHODES, Jan 20, 1614/15; b. About 1595; d. Aft. 1631, prob Derby, Derbyshire, England.
- ii. JOHN OLDHAM, b. About 1592, Derby, Derbyshire, ENG; d. Jul 1636, Block Island, RI<sup>2</sup>.

Notes for JOHN OLDHAM:

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Oldham, John

(ol'dem) , c.1600-1636, colonist in New England, b. England. A trader, he emigrated to Plymouth in 1623 but was banished (1624) because of his opposition to the strict government. Later he was involved in establishing the unsuccessful settlement on Cape Ann (1626), several of the settlements in the Massachusetts Bay colony, and Wethersfield, Conn. His murder by the Pequot on Block Island was one of the events leading to the Pequot War (1637).

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NEHGR LXXXIX, July 1935 pg 280:

One cause of the Pequot War had been the killing of Mr. John Oldham of Watertown by the Indians at Block Island in July 1636. Mr. John Oldham, with his wife and Lucretia Oldham, arrived at Plymouth in the ship Ann on 7/10/1623. Lucretia Oldham "of Darby" was married 4/10/1624 to Elder William Brewster's son, Jonathan Brewster, who had arrived at Cape Cod 11/9/1621 in the Fortune, not in the Mayflower. Born at Scrooby, Nottinghamshire 8/12/1593, and reared at Leyden, in the Protestant Netherlands, Jonathan Brewster spoke Dutch fluently. "Mungrel Dutch," Samuel Maverick called the Plymouth Pilgrims. The youngest daughter of Jonathan and Lucretia (Oldham) Brewster, Hannah Brewster, was married at New London, CT 12/23/1664 to Dr. Thomas Starr's son, Samuel Starr. At first one of the leading men at Plymouth, Mr. John Oldham finally was expelled, moved to "Natascot" (Hull), and, allying himself with the fortunes of Sir Ferdinando Gorges and his sons, later moved across the Bay, when Rev. William Blaxton and Mr. William Jeffries as agents of Georges put him in possession of the territory along the seacoast from the Saugus River to the Charles River--years before Winthrop arrived--including Charlestown and a large part of Watertown. /P/ In 7/1636 John Gallop of Dorchester was at Block Island, and there learned that Indians had killed Mr. John Oldham and seized his boat and goods and also his gold, amounting, says Lion Gardiner, to £60. Bradford wrote (p. 131): "2 little boys that were his kinsmen [John Oldham, 13, and Thomas Oldham, 11, no doubt] were saved." Gallop at once retaliated by killing many Indians--Narragansetts, Block Island being in their territory, seven of whom the Narragansett sachem Miantonomah in 1636 said were Indian chiefs....

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from The Great Migration Begins

JOHN OLDHAM

ORIGIN: Derby, Derbyshire

MIGRATION: 1623

FIRST RESIDENCE: Plymouth

REMOVES: Nantasket 1624, Watertown 1630

RETURN TRIPS: Returned to England 1628, and back to New England 1630

OCCUPATION: Trader.

FREEMAN: 18 May 1631 (as "Mr. John Oldeham") [ MBCR 1:366].

EDUCATION: Could certainly read and write, since he sent many letters to England at the time of his connivance with Reverend JOHN LYFORD , but Bradford attests "he was so bad a scribe as his hand was scarce legible" [ Bradford 151].

OFFICES: "Mr. Oldeham" was one of two delegates sent by Watertown to the General Court to consult on raising money, 9 May 1632 [ MBCR 1:95]; Watertown deputy to General Court, 14 May 1634 [ MBCR 1:116]; on committee to survey land at Mount Wollaston for enlargement of Boston, 14 May 1634 [ MBCR 1:119]; committee to oversee powder and shot, "Mr. Oldham for Waterton & Meadford," and committee to set out bounds of towns, 3 September 1634 [ MBCR 1:125]; committee to examine defacing of colors by John Endicott, 6 May 1635 [ MBCR 1:145].

ESTATE: In 1623 Plymouth land division "Mr. Ouldome & those joined with him" were granted ten acres as

passengers on the Anne in 1623 [ PCR 12:6]. Three of those "joined with him" were his sister Lucretia, his wife (unnamed) and his stepson, William Bridges. The other six remain unidentified, although there were probably some servants among them.

1 April 1634: "There is five hundred acres of land granted to Mr. Jo: Oldham, lying near Mount Feakes, on the northwest of Charles River" [ MBCR 1:114]. This land was later laid out to Mr. Craddock, near "Mount Feake" [ MBCR 1:330] and on 18 March 1647 Nicholas Davison of Charlestown, attorney to Mrs. Rebecca Craddock alias Glover, sole executrix of Matthew Craddock deceased, granted to Thomas Mayhew, merchant, this same five hundred acres of land [ SLR 1:91].

Presumably the proprietary share held by WILLIAM BRIDGES in the late 1630s in Watertown had earlier been held by Oldham, which would mean that he had been granted by the town a houselot and one or two other parcels of marsh or arable land.

On 28 July 1636, the Massachusetts Bay General Court issued orders to Watertown in Connecticut [i.e. Wethersfield] "to seize and inventory Mr. Oldham's goods for payment of his debts" [ WJ 2:423]. Oldham's was the first estate probated in Connecticut, where an unsatisfactory inventory was presented at the court of 10 September 1636. After much wrangling, a satisfactory inventory was delivered to the court on 6 February 1639/40, which showed £504 9s. 3d. in debts, and £136 6s. 21d. [sic] in assets. A year later, on 6 January 1640/1, the accounts had still not been settled; the suggestion was made that the paperwork be sent to the Bay in case anyone there wished to make a claim, and nothing more is heard of the matter [ CCCR 1:43; Manwaring 1:25-28].

BIRTH: Baptized All Saints, Derby, Derbyshire, 14 July 1592, son of William "Ouldham."

DEATH: July 1636 near Block Island [ WP 1:225].

MARRIAGE: By 1623 \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_) Bridges, mother of WILLIAM BRIDGES , later seen at Watertown and Charlestown; her date of death is unknown. "...his wife and family had liberty to stay all winter or longer" [ Bradford 157]. She may have predeceased her husband, since no provision was made for her in his estate proceedings.

CHILDREN: None recorded.

ASSOCIATIONS: His sister Lucretia Oldham, bp. All Saints, Derby, Derbyshire, 14 January 1600/1, married at Plymouth (as "Lucretia Oldam of Darby") on 10 April 1624 Jonathan Brewster [ MD 1:8]. John and Thomas Oldham, aged twelve and ten, passengers to New England in 1635 on the Elizabeth & Ann, were probably his kinsmen, perhaps nephews [ Hotten 78].

COMMENTS: John Oldham was a fascinating personality, with many talents, and the ability to influence others, both favorably and unfavorably. During his time in New England, totalling not much more than a decade, he managed to involve himself in three important episodes in early Massachusetts history: the revolt of the Reverend JOHN LYFORD and others against the Pilgrims at Plymouth; conflict with the Massachusetts Bay Company over its patent; and his death at the hands of the Indians in 1636, which precipitated the Pequot War. Each of these incidents will be discussed briefly here, with references for further reading.

Not long after Oldham's arrival in Plymouth, Bradford tells us, he began to stir up trouble among the discontented [ Bradford 148-57, 165-66]. This activity increased in 1624, with the arrival of Reverend John Lyford, who soon began to exert his Church of England views against the church established at Plymouth. For Oldham the upshot was that he was banished from Plymouth about the middle of 1624, perhaps in July or August. His movements between then and his return to England are shadowy, and have been described in various ways, not all accounts agreeing. Bradford at one point says that Oldham commenced a trip to Virginia, which failed, but later says that he travelled to Virginia and returned to New England by the time of the arrival of Winthrop, but says nothing about the return to England. Adams, writing more than two centuries later, places Oldham at Nantasket (Hull) for much of this time (and not at Cape Ann), but without providing documentation [ Three Episodes 183-93]. At any rate, Oldham was soon back in the good graces of the leaders at Plymouth, and in June of 1628 he was assigned the task of escorting THOMAS MORTON back to England [ Three Episodes 207-08].

This leads directly to the second of Oldham's major conflicts. Taking Morton back to England, he had to deliver him to Sir Ferdinando Gorges, and this gave Oldham the opportunity to gain from the Council of New England (then controlled by Gorges and Captain John Mason) a grant for much of the land at the bottom of Massachusetts Bay which had just been granted by the King to the Massachusetts Bay Company. Exactly what Oldham had in mind is not clear, but he was apparently trying to trade this grant for some influence in the Massachusetts Bay Company. The progress of these negotiations can be followed in the court records and letters of the Company, and ultimately Oldham failed in his larger purpose (although the mere existence of his patent apparently forced the settlement of Charlestown in 1629 as a pre-emptive strike) [ MBCR 1:28, 29, 34, 39, 388, 389, 398; Three Episodes 212-17]. He did, however, obtain a grant of 500 acres in Watertown, perhaps a token compensation for his forlorn grant from Gorges, and he did become a leading citizen of Watertown in his few years in residence there. In Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay, Oldham had overreached himself and aroused the ire of the leaders, but eventually, in each instance, he regained their confidence and made a useful contribution to both settlements.

As may be seen in the correspondence of the Winthrop family, John Oldham was active in his business of coastal trading early in 1636, mostly about Long Island Sound and Narragansett Bay [ WP 3:235, 244, 256, 258, 276], and about the same time he had obtained a grant of Prudence Island in Narragansett Bay from Canonicus [ WP 3:502]. On 20 July 1636 JOHN GALLOP , another coastal trader, was sailing in the vicinity of Block Island and Fisher's Island, and saw a shallop that he recognized as Oldham's, but he could see only

Indians on board. Winthrop tells the story of Oldham's gruesome death in great detail [ WJ 1:225ff.], but only one point need detain us here. Winthrop tells us that Oldham "had been long out a trading, having with him only two English boys, and two Indians of Narragansett." Bradford, in his much briefer account of this episode, says that "two little boys that were his kinsmen were saved, but had some hurt" [ Bradford 166]. These two kinsmen were apparently Thomas and John Oldham, passengers to New England on the Elizabeth & Ann in 1635 (then 12 and 10 respectively), presumably nephews of John Oldham. But there may be some doubt whether the two boys who were with Oldham on his last trading voyage were John and Thomas Oldham. Winthrop, who is usually more reliable in matters of this sort, does not state a relationship; and in some notes which Winthrop took of some court actions which did not get recorded in the official records of the General Court, we find that on 11 August 1636 (less than a month after Oldham's death) the court dealt with "[Blank] a boy of Mr. Oldham's, whom he bought of [blank] for £8, we restored to his old master for £4, in regard he had no clothes, and had spent the most of the summer with Mr. Oldham, etc." [ WJ 2:423]. This unnamed boy would not be one of Oldham's kinsmen, but it does seem that he was with Oldham on some of his trading missions, and perhaps on the last one.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE: Bond wrote at length about John Oldham, especially in his second edition [ Bond 382, 861-64]. A recent treatment by Threlfall adds information on the maternal ancestry of the immigrant [ GMC26 215-22].

More About JOHN OLDHAM:

Baptism: Jul 14, 1592, Parish of All Saints, Derby, Derbyshire, ENG<sup>2</sup>

2.       iii. LUCRETIA OLDHAM, b. About 1599, Derby, Derbyshire, ENG; d. Mar 04, 1678/79, Norwich, New London Co., CT.

#### *Generation No. 2*

2. LUCRETIA<sup>2</sup> OLDHAM (*WILLIAM*<sup>1</sup>) was born About 1599 in Derby, Derbyshire, ENG, and died Mar 04, 1678/79 in Norwich, New London Co., CT<sup>3</sup>. She married JONATHAN BREWSTER Apr 10, 1624 in Plymouth, Plymouth Co., MA<sup>3</sup>, son of WILLIAM BREWSTER and MARY ?. He was born Aug 12, 1593 in Scrooby, Nottinghamshire, ENG<sup>3,4</sup>, and died Aug 07, 1659 in Norwich, New London Co., CT<sup>5</sup>.

Notes for LUCRETIA OLDHAM:

More About LUCRETIA OLDHAM:

Baptism: Jan 04, 1599/00, Parish of All Saints, Derby, Derbyshire, ENG<sup>5</sup>

Burial: Preston, New London Co., CT<sup>5</sup>

Notes for JONATHAN BREWSTER:

Mayflower Increasing's pg 24:

Jonathan Brewster b 8/12/1593 Scrooby Eng d 8/7/1659 New London Ct bur Preston Ct; m 4/10/1624 Plymouth Lucretia Oldham (dau of William Oldham & Phillipa Sowter) bpt 1/14/1600 Parish of All Saints Derby/Darby Eng, d 3/4/1678-9 Norwich Ct bur Preston Ct.

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Per SAVAGE'S Genealogical Dictionary of New England Settlers, v. 1

BREWSTER, JONATHAN, Plymouth, eldest son of Elder William, born at Scrooby, in County Nottinghamshire, on the road to Doncaster in Yorkshire from which it is only 12 or 13 miles distant in a manor belonging to the archbishop of York, under which his grandfather was tenant on long lease, had been instructed only by his glorious father either in his native land or the dozen years resident in Holland, where he was left by the Elder to take care of two sisters with his own family. Without the sisters, he came in the Fortune 1621, in June 1636, was in command of the Plymouth trading, housed on Connecticut river and gave notice to John Winthrop, governor of the fort at Saybrook, in a letter in my possession of 18 June, of the evil designs of the Pequots; removed to Duxbury, of which he was representative 1639, the earliest assembly of deputies in that Colony, thence to New London, before 1649, there was selectman, died before September 1659, having in September 1656 projected to return to England with his family. By wife Lucretia, he had William, and Mary, both, probably, but the first, certainly born in Holland; Jonathan; Benjamin, before mentioned; also, Grace, Ruth, Hannah, and perhaps Elizabeth, some of these born probably at New London. Mary married 12 November 1645, John Turner of Scituate; Elizabeth, married about 1654, Peter Bradley; Grace married 4 August 1659, Daniel Wetherill; and Ruth married John Picket, and next, Charles Hill, and died 30 Apr. 1677.

More About JONATHAN BREWSTER:

Burial: Brewster Cemetery, Preston, New London Co., CT<sup>5</sup>

Child of LUCRETIA OLDHAM and JONATHAN BREWSTER is:

- i. BENJAMIN<sup>3</sup> BREWSTER, b. Nov 17, 1633, Plymouth, Plymouth Co., MA<sup>5,6</sup>; d. Sep 14, 1710, Norwich, New London Co., CT<sup>7,8</sup>; m. ANN ADDIS, Feb 28, 1659/60, Norwich, New London Co., CT<sup>9,10</sup>; b. About 1627, Frampton on Severne, Gloucestershire, ENG; d. May 09, 1708, Norwich, New London Co., CT<sup>11,12</sup>.

Notes for BENJAMIN BREWSTER:

Per SAVAGE'S Genealogical Dictionary of New England Settlers, v. 1

BREWSTER, BENJAMIN, New London 1654, son of Jonathan, married February 1659, Ann Dart, sister perhaps, of Richard of the same, had Mary, born probably at New London December 1660; at Norwich, Ann, September 1662; Jonathan, November 1664; Daniel, March 1667; William, March 1669; Ruth, 16 September 1671; Benjamin, 28 November 1673; and Elizabeth 23 June 1676. He died 10 September 1710. Caulkins, History of Norwich, 115.

More About BENJAMIN BREWSTER:

Burial: Brewster Cemetery, Preston, New London Co., CT<sup>13,14</sup>

Estate Inventory: Sep 14, 1710<sup>14</sup>

Will Dated: Jun 28, 1709<sup>14</sup>

Will Proved: Nov 20, 1710<sup>14</sup>

More About ANN ADDIS:

Baptism: Mar 17, 1627/28, Frampton on Severne, Gloucestershire, ENG<sup>15,16</sup>

Burial: Preston, New London Co., CT<sup>17</sup>

#### Endnotes

1. NEHGS Register, v. 111, p. 242 (July, 1957).
2. *The Great Migration Begins*.
3. Susan E. Roser, *Mayflower Increasings, 2nd Edition*, (Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc.; 1995).
4. Compiled by Barbara Lambert Merrick; Typed and Edited by E. Virginia Hunt, *Mayflower Families in Progress: William Brewster of the Mayflower and His Descendants For Four Generations*, (General Society of Mayflower Descendants, Revised 3rd Edition, c. 2000).
5. Susan E. Roser, *Mayflower Increasings, 2nd Edition*, (Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc.; 1995).
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17. Susan E. Roser, *Mayflower Increasings, 2nd Edition*, (Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc.; 1995).