



Portrait of the Month: February James Oldham Oldham (c.1751-1822)

by an unknown artist

Oldham, the Countess of Huntingdon's first Trustee, gave a bequest of £20 to each and every student of Cheshunt College. He was a philanthropist and ironmongery manufacturer who helped organise the College moving from its original site in Wales to Cheshunt.



James Oldham Oldham, by an unknown artist
Reproduced with permission of the Trustees of the Cheshunt Foundation,
Westminster College, Cambridge

James Oldham Oldham (1750-1822) was an ironmonger of Holborn. A great supporter of the Countess of Huntingdon, and a trustee and benefactor of her College from 1787, he was a key figure in the move of the College from Trevecca to Cheshunt in 1792 after the Countess's death.

The Heal collection of trade cards at the British Library include several for James Oldham Oldham's 'manufactory and warehouse' of stoves, grates, ranges and ovens, where he held letters patent from the Prince of Wales (and later His Majesty the King). Oldham was also made High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, where he had bought and rebuilt Missenden Abbey. He was married four times and is buried at Cheshunt, Herts.

His will, which is held at the National Archives in Kew, is a testament to his philanthropism and

dedication to the Countess and her Connexion: on his death in 1824, he bequeathed £1,000 in shares to the College (as well as £1,000 each to the British and Foreign Bible Society, to the London Missionary Society, and to a fund for the widows and children of Connexional ministers). He left further monies to the Spa Fields Chapel, and to its associated School, and sums to a long list of individual ministers. And finally, left £20 to each and every student then at Cheshunt College – which must have been a considerable blessing.

Portrait by unknown artist, 1821.

To see more of our paintings, visit the College page at [Art UK](#).

Helen Weller, Archivist
2020

Bibliography and Further Reading:

Will of James Oldham Oldham, at The National Archives at PROB11/1659/70
'The Heal Collection', at the British Museum website:

[http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/
term_details.aspx?bioid=192183](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/term_details.aspx?bioid=192183).