



From the Deacon to Stephen...

Tracing the ownership of the Homestead from 1840 to 1905.

We recently found transcriptions of the wills of Deacon Mather, Rana Mather, Phebe Mather, and Joseph Wakeman Mather along with summaries of Probate Court proceedings. This has provided a clearer view of how ownership was transferred through several generations.

A prior blog examined the will of Deacon Mather. In it he bequeathed the Homestead with 12 adjoining acres to Rana and Phebe, his two unmarried daughters.

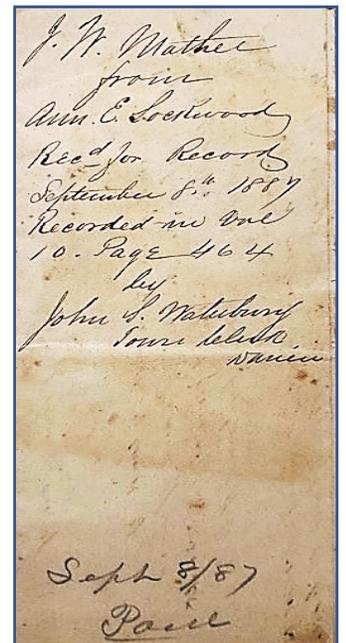
Rana died in 1880, and in a will drafted in 1873, directed that at Phebe's death, the unsold portion of Rana's estate be divided among various nephews and nieces. In September 1880, her half interest was valued at \$900. In March of 1881 the executor listed Rana's debts at \$889.75 and the court ordered the sale of land to raise that sum. And interestingly, the 12 acres were sold at auction the very next month to -- Phebe Mather for \$900!

Phebe's will was much simpler: "...in consideration of the affection I bear for my dear niece, Ann Elizabeth Lockwood, and for her long and faithful services rendered both to my sister, Rana, deceased, and to myself, I do give and bequeath to the said Ann E. Lockwood all my property, both real and personal..."

On September 8th 1887, Ann Lockwood sold "12 acres more or less and inherited by me...by will from Phebe Mather." She sold the property to her cousin, Joseph Wakeman Mather for one thousand dollars.

When Joseph died in 1905, he bequeathed "...all of my estate of every name, nature and description whatsoever and wheresoever situated, to my son, Stephen T. Mather, and my niece, Bertha C. Mather, share and share alike..."

At that time, the property had expanded to 22 acres and was valued at \$3,000. Shortly thereafter, Stephen purchased Bertha's portion and became sole owner of the Mather Homestead.



*Deed of J.W. Mather's
Purchase of Homestead
from Ann E. Lockwood*