



“No man was earlier in his seat at church than he...” ***More about Joseph Mather Jr., Stephen Mather’s grandfather***

The title of this blog comes from an obituary for Joseph Mather, Jr. as it appeared in The Norwalk Gazette following his death on September 27th 1864.

Joseph was a son of Deacon Joseph Mather who built the Homestead in 1778 and was the grandfather of Stephen Mather. An earlier blog (“There are moments that words don’t reach...”) looked at Joseph’s tragic loss of his first wife and then his only daughter.

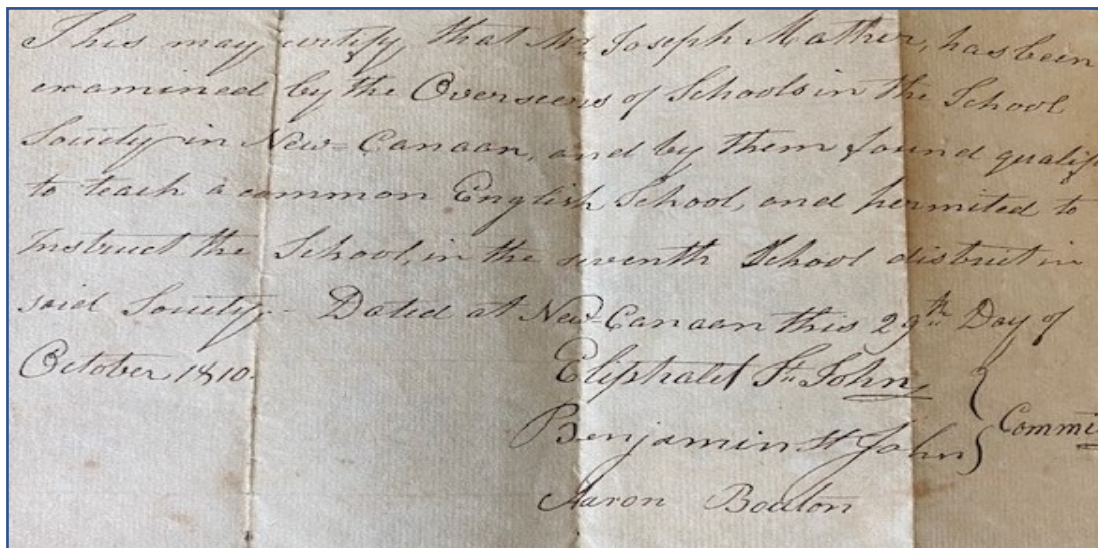
Documents and papers recently found in the basement safe reveal a bit more...

He was an elected town official. At the first Darien town meeting in 1820, after its separation from Stamford, Joseph Mather, Jr. was elected one of two Grand Jurors.

He served in uniform. In June 1815, Joseph was “chosen Sergeant in the Sixth Military Company” 34th Regiment of Militia, State of Connecticut.

He was an educator. The safe contained Joseph’s original licenses of 1808, 1810, and 1820 approving him to teach in school districts in Norwalk, Stamford, and New Canaan.

And of course, he was a farmer. From the 1816 “...List of the Polls and Ratable Estate of the Inhabitants of the Town of Stamford,” Joseph’s taxable possessions included “2 Acres Plough Land; 3 Acres Salt and Fresh (land); 1 silver watch.” From a deed in the safe, we know that in March 1829, Joseph purchased five acres, adjoining his current lands, from his father for three hundred dollars.



Joseph Mather’s
October 1810
License to teach
in New Canaan.

(Historical note: At the 1820 meeting, Joseph’s brother-in-law, Noyes Richards was elected as both Tithing Man and as a Hayward. A hayward was an officer in charge of hedges and fences around a town common, especially to keep cattle from breaking through and to impound stray cattle.)