

JOHN C. AND MARY S. SMITH COLLECTION
BIOGRAPHIES OF JOHN AND MARY SMITH AND THEIR CHILDREN

by Elizabeth C. Stevens
2008

JOHN CURTIS SMITH

John Curtis Smith was born in Williamstown, Vermont, 24 September 1812, the son of Asa Smith and Polly Waller Smith. He grew up on his family's farm in Middlebury, Vermont. Smith prepared for college at Burr Seminary in Manchester, Vermont and graduated from Middlebury College in 1838, when he was twenty-five years old. After Middlebury, Smith entered Andover Theological Seminary. He graduated in 1841 and was ordained to the ministry on September 29th of that year. He married Eunice Morse, of Paxton, Massachusetts around this time. John C. Smith and his new wife, who was in poor health, embarked for Ceylon in the company of other missionaries on October 14, 1841, aboard the ship *Brenda*. An invalid on the voyage, Eunice Morse Smith died shortly after their arrival in Jaffna, Ceylon, on April 1, 1842.

For his first posting, Smith was stationed at Manepy, Jaffna, Ceylon. It was at this time that he became acquainted with Mary Snell Steele, an American missionary whose husband, Dr. John Steele, had died in October 1842. Mary Snell Steele and John Smith married on October 13, 1843. He was sent to Varany in March 1844, where his first child, Thomas, was born in January, 1845. The family moved to Panditeripo in May 1845. Five children were subsequently born while Smith was stationed at Panditeripo. He returned to the United States on leave, departing from Ceylon in late 1856, accompanied by four of his six children (the two eldest children had traveled to America two years earlier) and his wife. While in the United States, between May 1857 and October 1860, Smith and his family traveled widely, visiting relatives and friends. They spent time with Smith's brother, former missionary Asa B. Smith, in Buckland, Massachusetts, with Smith's family in Williamstown, Vermont and with various relatives of Mary Snell Smith in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. At some point during their sojourn in the States, John and Mary Smith traveled to Illinois to visit his sister, Laura Parkhurst and other relatives, and to Minnesota to see Mary's brother, Eben. They also traveled to New York City, Boston, and other parts of the Northeast, visiting missionary friends and their families, and their own siblings and cousins. During this time, the Smiths arranged placements for their five oldest children whom they left behind in America when they embarked in Boston for Ceylon aboard the *Sea King* at the end of October, 1860.

After a perilous sea voyage (in which they passed through "three gales and a hurricane"), Smith with his wife and youngest daughter Mary arrived in India on March 11, 1861. Smith received a new assignment, to Udupitty (sometimes spelled "Oodoopitty") in May, 1861. After his return to Ceylon from the United States, Smith was instrumental in planning and building a school for girls at Udupitty and in supervising the erection of a church, there. He traveled continually among the missions in his district, visiting and

holding periodic examinations at schools run by missionaries. Smith also attended various regular business meetings of the area missionaries and other special gatherings and worked on raising funds in Ceylon and abroad, for the work of the missions. He preached, both in England and Tamil, to indigenous people, both in churches and in outdoor settings. His "Memorandum Book," begun in June, 1861, and now in the John C. and Mary S. Smith Family Papers at Yale Divinity School records Smith's labors on behalf of the missionary cause in Ceylon between 1861 and 1865.

Smith appears to have been a loving father, who wrote to his children in the United States when he was able; Smith's wife was the principal correspondent. He seldom discussed his own missionary work in his letters but rather gave his children gentle admonitions and encouragement in their spiritual and educational journeys. His youngest daughter, Mary, left Ceylon in January, 1865 at the age of twelve, to live in the States. Laura, another daughter who was ill with tuberculosis, came out to Ceylon in 1870. His son, Thomas became a missionary and was posted to Ceylon with his wife, arriving at Uduppity in September 1871. Laura's health deteriorated and Smith and his wife, Mary, embarked with Laura on the *S. S. Stevenson* in March, 1872; Laura died on board ship before they reached England.

Shortly after John and Mary Smith's arrival in the United States, their oldest daughter, Eunice Smith Harmon, died at the age of twenty-six in Winchester, New Hampshire. The Smiths apparently lived in Winchester after their arrival in America in 1872; Mary Smith died in 1873. At some point after Mary's death John Smith was re-married to Charlotte Alexander, and continued to live in Winchester. He died in Hartford, Connecticut on March 21, 1884 at the age of 71. A printed copy of the Memorial Sermon preached at his funeral in Winchester, New Hampshire, by son-in-law Rev. Elijah Harmon, is in the John C. and Mary S. Smith Family Papers at Yale Divinity School.

MARY SNELL STEELE SMITH (see also, "JOHN CURTIS SMITH")

Mary Snell was born in Plainfield, Massachusetts on September 21, 1814, the daughter of Ebenezer Snell and Deborah Porter. Her mother died when Mary was eight years old and she was raised by her father and stepmother, Lydia Richards Snell (d. 26 June 1846). Although it appears that she came of age in fairly modest circumstances, Mary was closely related on her father's side to several eminent nineteenth-century New Englanders. Her first cousin (son of her father's sister, Sarah Snell) was the poet William Cullen Bryant, her father's brother, Dr. Thomas Snell (1774-1862), was a revered Congregational clergyman who held the same pastorate in Brookfield, Massachusetts for fifty years, and Thomas's son, Ebenezer Snell, Mary's first cousin, was the first graduate of Amherst College (1822). He became a well-known professor of mathematics and science at Amherst.

Possibly educated at, or a teacher at, Ipswich Academy where she may have known pioneer educator Mary Lyon, Mary Snell met Dr. John Steele, a medical missionary,

when she was working at a shop in Plainfield. The two were married on November 11, 1836 after what Mary termed a “rushed courtship,” and they embarked for Ceylon where her husband was posted to the Madura Mission. They left Boston on 23 November 1836 on the *Saracen* and landed in Madras in March, 1837. In later years, Mary would note that she was in the “fourth company of missionaries to leave for Ceylon” from America. Nothing is known of Mary Steele’s missionary activities while with her husband in the late 1830s. When they were in Ceylon, Dr. Steele suffered a protracted illness and died in October, 1842. Shortly thereafter, Mary Snell became acquainted with the young widower, John Curtis Smith who was at the Manepy mission, Jaffna, Ceylon. Mary and John married on October 13, 1843. Smith was then posted to Varany where their first child, Thomas Snell Smith, was born in January, 1845. The Smiths moved to the Panditeripo mission in 1845, where Mary gave birth to five more children. Their youngest child, Mary Elizabeth Smith, was born in 1853 when Mary Snell Smith was thirty-nine years old.

Firmly believing that a cold climate was more advantageous to her children’s health than the tropical climate of Ceylon, and following standard American missionary practice about the education of their children, Mary S. Smith sent her two oldest children back to America in 1854. Two years later, she and her husband embarked on a voyage to the United States with their youngest four children. They arrived sometime in April 1857 and were united with all their children in Central Village (CT or MA) around that time. During the two and a half years that Mary and John Smith were in the United States, they traveled extensively in New England. They are known to have visited friends and relatives and attended gatherings in Buckland, Athol, Granby, Plainfield, Winchendon, South Hadley, Amherst, Monson, Springfield and Boston, Massachusetts and well as Southbury and Stafford, Connecticut, Gilsum, New Hampshire, Williamstown, Vermont and New York, New York. In 1858, John and Mary Smith went out West on their own to Princeton, Illinois and St. Paul, Minnesota, visiting siblings and others relations and friends. During this time, the Smiths made living arrangements for five of their six children whom they would leave behind when they returned to Ceylon.

Although Mary Smith did not like to be separated from her children by thousands of miles, she felt secure in her faith that God would care for them better than she could if they were in her home. In her letters from Ceylon, she continually urged her offspring to officially convert to Christianity so that the family could be re-united in their “eternal home” in “heaven.” Mary Smith became the principal correspondent with her family, sending journal letters to her children on a regular basis throughout their years of separation. The journal letters were general accounts of John and Mary Smith’ activities and daily life in Ceylon with questions for her children about their whereabouts and their activities; she also wrote private letters to her children somewhat less often.

Fully identified as a missionary, Mary S. Smith lived and worked alongside her husband. After a harrowing voyage out to Ceylon in April, 1861, they were stationed at Uduppitty (sometimes written, “Oodoopitty”). There, Mary S. Smith tutored and cared for her daughter, Mary, and assisted with preparations for the opening of a girls’ school at their mission station. She and Mary sometimes accompanied John C. Smith when he traveled

to meetings, gatherings and services at other mission stations in the area. Mary S. Smith was immersed in the network of American and English missionary families who served in her area. She visited other missionary wives, some in ill health, and provided hospitality to missionaries and their families who were traveling in her area or who came to pay calls or stay for a period of time. A seaside bungalow, not far from their house in Udupitty, was used by missionary families for rest and recreation. She viewed the "heathen" religious and cultural customs and practices of the "natives" of Ceylon with disdain, and looked beneficently upon indigenous people who had converted to Christianity.

When Mary Snell Smith's daughter, Mary Elizabeth Smith was twelve, she left Ceylon to live in the United States. The separation, in 1865 marked the end of an era for Mary Smith as she no longer had the duties of caring for any of her children in her home. After Mary's departure, she continued her work at the mission in Udupitty, providing a comfortable home for her husband, nursing him if unwell, performing teaching and other duties at the girls' school and carrying on an active social life with other missionary families in the area. Mary Smith welcomed missionary, Harriet "Hattie" Townshend, as a surrogate daughter, into her home when Townshend was sent out to Ceylon from America, arriving in March, 1868. In 1869, at son Thomas's instigation, Laura P. Smith, Mary's third child, who was ill with tuberculosis, traveled to Ceylon to be with her family. Mary cared for Laura and tried to find appropriate treatment for her after her arrival in Udupitty in June, 1870. Mary was overjoyed at the arrival of son Thomas and his wife, Emily, at Udupitty in September, 1871, and at the birth of her first grandchild at Udupitty in January, 1872, named Mary. The family's efforts to help Laura were to no avail, however, and Mary and John Smith finally embarked for the United States via England with Laura in March 1872. After suffering intensely, Laura died on shipboard on June 3, 1872 with her parents by her side. Her body was buried at sea.

Mary and John Smith arrived in the United States in July 1872. To add to their terrible grief, daughter Eunice, who had married clergyman Elijah Harmon the previous March, died in Winchester, New Hampshire in August, just days after being reunited with her parents following eleven years of separation. The deaths of her daughters were undoubtedly devastating for Mary Smith whose own health was intermittently fragile. She may have suffered from some type of respiratory difficulty; she wrote in a letter in the 1860s that a cough had been her "daily companion for sixteen years." Mary Snell Smith died of pneumonia in 1873 in Rocky Hill, Connecticut.

THOMAS SNELL SMITH

Thomas Snell Smith, oldest child of John C. and Mary Snell Smith, was born in Varany, Jaffna, Ceylon on January 24, 1845, where his missionary parents were stationed. He moved with his parents to the mission at Panditeripo, Jaffna, Ceylon, the following year. In December 1853, Thomas and his younger sister, Eunice, were sent to the United States

with a missionary couple, Susan and Cyrus Mills, to live with relatives and to be educated. After a two-month stay in Cape Town, South Africa en route, they arrived in Boston on May 15, 1854, and were taken to the home of Eliza and Leavitt Halleck in Amherst, Massachusetts. (Eliza Halleck was the older sister of Mary Snell Smith.) The Hallecks had four children; their youngest, Leavitt, was just a few years older than Thomas. Thomas lived with the Hallecks for one year. In the summer of 1855 he went to live with Thomas Snell and Lucretia Porter Snell in North Brookfield, Massachusetts. (Thomas Snell was the first cousin of Mary S. Smith, the son of her father's brother, Rev. Thomas Snell.) At both the Hallecks and the Snells, Thomas attended school and did farm chores in exchange for his board. In September, 1856, Thomas returned to live in Amherst with the Hallecks. It is not known exactly where Thomas lived during the time that his parents, who arrived in May 1857, visited America. It is known that the family reunited in Central Village (CT or MA) prior to April 1858. Thomas was in Billerica, Massachusetts in December 1859. John C. and Mary S. Smith left America to return to Ceylon with their youngest child, Mary, at the end of October, 1860. Thomas's other siblings were living at various locations around New England (see their biographies in this Finding Aid).

Thomas probably entered Monson Academy at Monson, Massachusetts in the Fall of 1860. He was a student there by March 1861, and spent the summer of 1861 in Monson, earning money by haying and other farm chores. He also did janitorial work at the Academy during the term. Thomas graduated from Monson Academy, where he was president of the "Linophilian Society," in June, 1862, and entered Amherst College that fall, boarding at his Aunt and Uncle Halleck's home. Thomas lived in Winchendon, Massachusetts in the summer of 1863, earning his board by haying and doing other farm work. He began his sophomore year at Amherst College in September 1863, living in North College, and boarding at "Miss McDermott's." Thomas taught at Monson Academy for a term in December, January, and February 1863-1864. He returned to Amherst College in the winter of 1864 and spent that summer in Brookfield, Massachusetts working at haying and other farm labor at the farm of Mr. Brigham to pay his expenses. (Brigham's farm was adjacent to the Hyde family farm where siblings Laura and Henry lived.) In the summer of 1865, he worked as a night "watchman" at Amherst College. At Amherst, Thomas was a bright and eager student, who earned distinction in public speaking; he graduated in July 1866.

During his senior year at Amherst, Thomas decided to follow his father's footsteps into ordained ministry and the missionary field. After graduating from Amherst, Thomas spent the rest of the summer visiting various family and friends in, among other places, Winchendon (MA), Gilsum, (N. H.), and Williamstown, (VT). He obtained a job teaching at an academy in Easthampton, Massachusetts (now Williston Academy) where he worked from the Fall of 1866 until March, 1867. Thomas entered Bangor Theological Seminary in Bangor, Maine in the spring of 1867. He studied at Bangor until July 1867, traveled to visit various relatives in August, and entered Andover Theological Seminary in Andover, Massachusetts in September 1867. In March, 1868, during the spring break from his studies, Thomas went to Tysons Furnace, Vermont where he boarded with a

Mrs. Howard and took the pulpit of the local church. It was his first experience leading prayer meetings, going on pastoral visits, and preaching.

Thomas graduated from Andover Theological Seminary in the summer of 1869. Although he had decided to be a missionary, and hoped to return to Ceylon, he was hampered by his lack of a wife. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions did not approve of sending young, single men into the field. In the months after graduation from theological seminary, Thomas took many short jobs supplying pulpits in Massachusetts and Maine. He apparently supplied a pulpit at Charlemont, Massachusetts for a number of months during 1869 or 1870. In the Fall of 1869 or sometime in 1870, Thomas made a trip "West" to visit friends and relatives. He also worked as a "home missionary" in Lincoln, Illinois. It was on his trip that Thomas apparently became acquainted with Emily Maria Fairbanks (b. November, 1846) of Concord, Illinois. Emily's father, Samuel B. Fairbanks, was a Congregational missionary to India for some fifty years. She had been sent home from India when her mother, Abby Allen Fairbanks died in the mid-1850s (Emily traveled back on the same ship as Eunice and Thomas Smith, leaving India in December, 1854.) Thomas and Emily were married in Concord, Illinois on March 21, 1871; Thomas was ordained a minister on the same day.

Thomas and Emily Smith went out to Ceylon, leaving the United States in May 1871. They arrived at John C. and Mary S. Smith's home in Udupitty (sometimes spelled "Oodoopitty"), Jaffna, Ceylon, in early September 1871, while Thomas waited for an assignment. Thomas took over the mission in Udupitty when his father and mother returned to the States in [March] 1872; his first child, Mary (Sadie), had been born the previous January. He also held a post at Manepy, before settling at the mission at Tillypally in 1878. He and his wife had six children: Mary, b. 19 January 1872, Emily Maria, b. 10 July 1874, Tirzah Snell, b. 16 March 1878, Abby Allen, b. 1882, Allen Fairbank, b. 1884, and Herbert T. Smith, b. 1885. Thomas remained at the Tillypally mission from 1878 until he returned to America in 1899 due to ill health; he died on 16 December 1900 in Winchester, N.H. An obituary describing Thomas's work in Ceylon appeared in *The Missionary Herald*, Feb. 1901; there is also correspondence related to Thomas's missionary endeavours in the Fairbanks Family Papers at Duke University (the papers are available on microfilm at the Yale Divinity School).

EUNICE MORSE SMITH

Eunice Morse Smith, the second child of John and Mary Smith was born on February 11, 1846 at Panditeripo, Jaffna, Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Eunice spent the first seven years of her life with her parents, American missionaries John Curtis Smith and Mary Snell Smith, at the mission station in Panditeripo. In December, 1853, Eunice and her older brother, Thomas Snell Smith, embarked at Madras for America under the care of a missionary couple, Susan and Cyrus Mills, who were also returning to the United States. Their vessel stopped in Capetown, South Africa at the end of January 1854, where Eunice spent two months with her brother and their escorts. The group left Capetown on 25 March 1854, and arrived at Boston on May 15th.

Eunice and Thomas traveled from Boston to the Mills home in Ware, Massachusetts and then, on May 18, 1854, to the home of Eliza and Leavitt Halleck in Amherst, Massachusetts. While living in Amherst, Eunice attended school and did housework chores for her uncle and aunt. (Eliza Snell Halleck was the older sister of Eunice's mother, Mary Snell Smith). In the summer of 1855, Eunice traveled with her brother and older cousin, William Halleck, to visit Smith relatives in Williamstown, Vermont. Eunice apparently lived with the Hallecks until the arrival of her parents and siblings in America, sometime in the spring or summer of 1857.

It is not known whether Eunice continued to live with her uncle and aunt in Amherst while her parents were in the United States (1857—1860) since there is almost no extant correspondence between the Smith parents and their children during this time. John C. Smith and Mary S. Smith traveled extensively while in America and left their children with various friends and relatives. It is known that the Smith parents and children reunited for a time in 1858 in Central Village (MA or CT) while the parents made arrangements to leave their children, Laura, William, and Henry with relatives and friends in America. Eunice was staying with a family called "Work" in July 1859, as was her younger brother, Henry. Eunice also visited in Brookline Massachusetts in November, 1859, with her mother's cousin, Tirzah Snell Emerson. By June 1860, three months before her parents returned to Ceylon, Eunice was settled with relatives, Moses and Janette Fish, in Gilsum, New Hampshire. Her younger brother, William, was also in Gilsum at the nearby home of relatives Elisha and Mary Fish and their adult daughters, Hannah and Mary.

In August 1861, Eunice left Gilsum to attend the high school in Winchendon, Massachusetts, where she boarded with family friends, Dr. and Mrs. Mary W. Godding. After a visit in Amherst, Massachusetts in the summer of 1862, where she had whooping cough, Eunice returned to the Gilsum, New Hampshire household of Moses and Janette Fish in August, 1862, where she attended the "district school" and assisted with various household chores and tutored her younger brother, William. In September, 1863, Eunice entered Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary at South Hadley, Massachusetts or "the Sem," also referred to in her letters as "M.H.," (now Mt. Holyoke College). She returned to Gilsum for her summer vacations in 1864 and 1865, while spending shorter vacations with relatives in Massachusetts, and Vermont. From early in her career at Mt. Holyoke, Eunice suffered from pain in her head and back, which she attributed to a fall she had taken in her dormitory room at Mt. Holyoke during her first term there.

Eunice withdrew from Mt. Holyoke in the late fall of 1865 for medical reasons and returned to live in Gilsum, New Hampshire. She moved to the home of Dr. and Mrs. Godding in Massachusetts in March, 1866, where she sought medical assistance. During this period of time in Winchendon, Massachusetts, Eunice was seen by several doctors, who held varying opinions about the source of her pain; she was subjected to a number of examinations and treatments. Her suffering was intense, both from her symptoms and the treatments. There are dozens of letters in the collection between Eunice and her mother from this period.

In the summer of 1867, Eunice was forced to find a new place to live because Mrs. Godding was very ill. In mid August, she moved to the home of Mrs. Elizah Warner in Plainfield, Massachusetts, Mary Snell Smith's birthplace. Eunice remained at the Warner home until May 1868. Her younger sister, Laura, also lived with her there. In June 1868, her brother Thomas arranged for Eunice to be taken in by the Lockwoods, a prominent family in Lewiston, Maine. The Lockwoods included Eunice in their summer vacation in Harpswell, Maine, and arranged for Eunice to consult with their physician, Dr. Fitch, in Portland. She remained with them until February 1869 when she moved to the home of her cousin Martha Snell Rood (daughter of Mary Snell Smith's brother, Samuel Snell) and Martha's husband, Thaddeus Rood, in Plainfield, Massachusetts. Although she helped with "light housework," Eunice continued to suffer from physical debility. Eunice remained with the Roods at least until July, 1869. That summer, she felt well enough to travel to Gilsum, New Hampshire, and then to Proctorsville (near Tysons Furnace) Vermont, to see her younger siblings, Laura and Henry; during the same trip she continued on to visit with Smith relatives and her brother, William, in Williamstown, Vermont.

Due to gaps in the correspondence, it is not known exactly where Eunice lived from August 1869 until March 1871. She may have been in Gilsum, New Hampshire with relatives, or living during part of that time with Dr. Rebecca F. Hill, a female doctor who boarded patients at her home in Keene, New Hampshire. Eunice married Congregational clergyman, Elijah Harmon (b. 22 March 1835) in Keene, New Hampshire on March 4, 1872. Harmon, a graduate of Amherst (1861) and Hartford Theological Seminary (1866) had served in the Civil War and was the pastor of the Congregational Church in Winchester, New Hampshire. He had previously been married to the adopted daughter of Asa B. Smith, (John Curtis Smith's brother) Lucy Maria [Locke] Smith, who had died in June, 1871. Eunice Morse Smith died in Winchester, New Hampshire on August 14, 1872, some ten weeks after the death of her younger sister, Laura. Her parents had returned from Ceylon to the United States just weeks prior to Eunice's death.

LAURA PARKHURST SMITH

Laura P. Smith, the third child of John Curtis Smith and Mary S. Smith, was born in Panditeripo, Jaffna, Ceylon, on 31 December 1847. She left Ceylon with her parents and three siblings in December 1856 (Her older siblings, Thomas and Eunice had left in December, 1854) and arrived in the United States, ca. April 1857. It is not known where Laura stayed during the years her parents were in America (ca. April, 1857 to October, 1860). The family was united in Central Village (MA or CT) for a time in April 1858, and in April 1860, she and her brother Henry were living with the Clark family in Winchendon, Massachusetts. In October 1860, just prior to their parents' return to Ceylon, Laura and Henry were settled with the John and Sarah Hyde family in Winchendon, Massachusetts. The Hydes owned a farm and were apparently family friends of John C. and Mary S. Smith. They had several children (see Henry H. Smith

biography), including a daughter, "Hattie," who was near Laura's age. After living in Winchendon for about eighteen months, Laura reported that she had been living there "nearly thirteen months longer than at any other place since I came to this country." Laura attended the "High School" in Winchendon while living with the Hydes in the early years of the decade. When the Hydes sold their farm and "removed" to Brookfield, Massachusetts in November, 1863, Laura and Henry went with them. Laura attended the district school in Brookfield and was tutored in Latin by a local clergyman. She did housework and other chores for the Hyde family to pay for her board.

In September 1864, Laura entered Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary; her older sister Eunice, already a student there, was her roommate. Laura spent her summer vacation, as well as other shorter school breaks "at home" in Brookfield. She returned to Mt. Holyoke for her second year in September 1865, where she belonged to the "Stellae Vigiles," a society of missionary daughters. After completing the academic year in June 1866, she attended her brother's commencement exercises at Amherst College. That summer she also spent several weeks at Williamstown, Vermont at the home of her father's brother, Oren Smith. Laura did not return to Mt. Holyoke Seminary in the fall of 1866; in August 1866, she was working for the Charles Hyde family in Globe Village, Massachusetts (Charles Hyde was the oldest child of John and Sarah Hyde; he and his wife had at least one small child). John and Sarah Hyde apparently moved to Globe Village in December 1866 to be nearer their oldest son and his young family.

Laura taught school for a term in Globe Village, beginning in January, 1867. In February, 1867, Laura announced to her siblings and parents that she had become engaged to Henry "Harry" Hyde (b. September 21, 1842), the son of John and Sarah Hyde, with whose family she had been living since her parents left to return to Ceylon in 1860. This announcement caught the family by surprise and Laura was somewhat defensive about her decision, since Henry Hyde was not a clergyman, but an uneducated businessman, although very much a professing Christian. After a term teaching school, Laura moved to Westville, Massachusetts where she spent the spring of 1867 assisting the Charles Hyde family with housework and childcare. In April and May 1867, Laura had an extended visit with her sister, Eunice at the Warner household in Plainfield, Massachusetts. By October, 1867, Laura had moved to Southbury, Connecticut, to the home of her uncle, Asa B. Smith where she remained helping her invalid aunt for some weeks; in December, she moved back to the Warner household in Plainfield, Massachusetts, where she and Eunice, assisted by Mrs. Warner and other women, sewed linens, quilts and clothing in preparation for her wedding to Henry Hyde, tentatively planned for the Fall of 1868.

By April 1868, it was clear to Laura's siblings that her health was deteriorating. Although, she consulted with a physician, there was no clear diagnosis or treatment. She moved to Tysons Furnace, Vermont in May 1868, to stay with a Mrs. Howard, whom her brother Thomas had met while preaching there. Several weeks later, Laura broke off her engagement to Henry Hyde. Although the full reason for her change of intent is not known, Laura apparently felt that Sarah Hyde, Henry's mother, and other members of the Hyde family did not approve the match because Laura brought no wealth or property to

the marriage. The rupture of her engagement was devastating for Laura and may have exacerbated her ill health and low spirits. She remained in Tysons Furnace throughout the summer and fall of 1868, until about February 1869. At that time, Laura moved to Andover, Massachusetts to consult with Dr. Stephen Tracy. In April, Tracy confirmed that he had found evidence of tuberculosis on Laura's right lung. The doctor recommended that Laura return to live with her parents in Ceylon, asserting that a voyage to a tropical climate would benefit her health.

In May 1869, Laura left Dr. Tracy's and moved to East Medway, Massachusetts to live with a Mrs. Wheeler. Laura spent most of the summer in East Medway. In August 1869, Laura's older brother, Thomas successfully petitioned the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in Boston to pay for Laura's passage out to Ceylon, designating her as a "missionary." (If she returned in a short time due to health reasons, the Board would not be responsible for her return passage.) While waiting to sail for Ceylon, the increasingly debilitated Laura lived with Mrs. John Walker in Auburndale, Massachusetts. Laura sailed to Ceylon aboard the *Winger Hunter*, leaving Boston around December 1, 1869 and arriving in Madras on April 28, 1870; she was in Udupitty with her parents by June 3, 1870. At the time of her arrival, the diminutive Laura (she was around 5 feet tall) weighed 85 pounds. In Ceylon, Laura was examined and treated by several missionary doctors, all of whom had different diagnoses and therapies. Her health further deteriorated, and her parents made plans to take her back to the United States. Laura, accompanied by John C. and Mary S. Smith, sailed from India sometime ca. April 1872 aboard the *S. S. Stevenson*. Laura became gravely ill on the voyage and she died on board ship on June 3, 1872. Her body was buried at sea, off Portugal.

WILLIAM HALLECK SMITH

William H. Smith, fourth child of John C. and Mary S. Smith, was born in Panditeripo, Jaffna, Ceylon on August 10, 1850. He spent his early childhood in Ceylon and left there with his parents and three of his five siblings for the United States in December 1856. While it is not clear where William lived during the time his parents spent in the States during 1857—1860, it is known that he was living in Plainfield, Massachusetts in November 1857, and that he spent some time at his Uncle Asa Smith's home in Buckland, Massachusetts. He was reunited for a time with his entire family in Central Village (MA or CT) prior to April 20, 1858 and visited his mother's cousin, Phebe Snell Thorpe, at her home in Athol, Massachusetts in December, 1859.

By April, 1860, William was living at the farm of Elisha and Mary Fish and their single adult daughters Mary and Hannah, in Gilsum, New Hampshire. Elisha Fish was Mary S. Smith's first cousin, the son of her father's sister, Abigail Snell Fish. William lived with the Fish family in Gilsum for several years; Mary W. Fish, the daughter, married and moved away from Gilsum in 1861; a short time later her mother died, leaving William alone with the elderly Elisha and the inflexible, religiously devout Hannah Fish. William worked hard and was much appreciated on the farm as there were no other male relatives to assist with farm labor. William maintained to his family that he was a "farmer boy"

and wished to be a farmer when he came of age. He had little use for schooling, although he attended district school and was tutored by his sister, Eunice who lived nearby at another relative's house. There was concern in the Smith family that William was being exploited by the Fish family who, it was felt, downplayed the advantages of an education so that William would labor full time on their farm. For this reason, the family arranged for William to go to Amherst, Massachusetts in August, 1865, to live with his older brother Thomas who was beginning his senior year at Amherst College. William paid for his board by "sweeping" and tending the furnace at the Amherst gymnasium, while he studied at the high school and under Thomas's supervision. This initiative failed and William returned to Gilsun in January 1866. Thomas tried again to provide an education for William, when he brought him to Easthampton in the Fall of 1866 to study at the Academy where Thomas had a teaching assignment. There, William also did janitorial work, while attending classes and rooming with his brother, Henry.

Averse to school, William returned to the farm in Gilsun in December, 1866. He remained there for several months and then moved to Williamstown, Vermont, his father's birthplace, to do farm work in the summer of 1867. He apparently worked as a "hired man" for a farmer named "Mr. Batchelder" near Barre, Vermont from October 1867 until sometime in the spring of 1868. William then moved back to Williamstown, to work for Smith relatives, including a "cousin Edwin," possibly the son of his father's brother, Oren Smith. When Thomas, William's brother, made a trip to the West in 1870, William apparently accompanied him. Thomas had hopes that William could attend agricultural college in Michigan; it is not known if he did so. William eventually became a farmer and settled in Aurora, Illinois. He apparently served as a Home Missionary in the west and southwest of the United States. He had one child, Charlotte Jewell Smith.

HENRY HILL SMITH

Henry Hill Smith was born on 6 December 1851 in Panditeripo, Jaffna, Ceylon. He was the fifth child of John C. and Mary S. Smith. Henry spent his first years at the mission station in Panditeripo. He left Ceylon in December 1856 with his parents and four of his siblings to travel to the United States (his oldest siblings, Thomas and Eunice had gone to America in 1854). John and Mary Smith remained in the United States for almost three years. During this time, they made arrangements for their children to live with various relatives and friends in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, while they traveled around New England and out to Minnesota. The family was reunited for a time in Central Village (CT or MA) in the spring of 1858, and they were together for a period of time in Buckland, Massachusetts, at the home of John Smith's brother, Rev. Asa Smith. Henry and some of his siblings lived, perhaps briefly, with a couple named "Mr. and Mrs. Work" around this time, and he and his sister, Mary stayed with relatives in Gilsun, New Hampshire. In April, 1860, Henry was living with the Clark family in Winchendon, Massachusetts.

By the time Henry's parents returned to their mission duties in Ceylon at the end of October 1860, eight-year old Henry had moved in with John and Sarah Hyde in

Winchendon. His sister, Laura, also lived with the Hydes. (The Hydes were family friends, not blood relatives.) The Hydes had several children of their own around the ages of the Smith children, including sons named Henry and Herman, and a daughter named Hattie. (An older child, Charles Hyde, lived away from home.) Henry Smith attended school and helped the Hydes with farm chores and outdoor work at their home. He was described by Mrs. Hyde as “a very good boy, very conscientious.” John Hyde wrote of Henry that he was “a very kind-hearted obedient truthful boy.” In March, 1863, he suffered a broken leg, when he was apparently attacked by a group of older boys. In November 1863, the Hyde family sold their farm in Winchendon and moved to Brookfield, Massachusetts, taking Laura and Henry with them.

Henry lived with the Hydes at Brookfield, attending school and working on the farm until early 1866, when he went to stay with his brother, Thomas, then in his last semester at Amherst College. In September 1866 Henry began a course of study at an academy in Easthampton, Massachusetts, where Thomas was a short-term teacher. Henry’s brother, William, also came to Easthampton to go to school and the two boarded together. Henry spent the summer of 1867 at the Hyde’s farm in Brookfield, helping with farm chores. In the Fall of 1867, Henry began studying at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, where his brother, Thomas, was then a student at Andover Theological Seminary. While studying at Andover, Henry earned money for his board by working at the school gymnasium as a janitor, sawing wood, and caring for horses and stables belonging to professors at the Theological Seminary. Although the family and Henry himself had some hopes that he would follow his older brother’s path into the ministry, Henry did not like studying and was a poor student. He was “at the bottom of his class” at Phillips Andover Academy. His aversion to schooling may have been due to sporadic school attendance during his primary years; he also did not like writing letters to his parents as a youngster as he claimed he couldn’t “think of anything to say.”

When the school year at Andover was over, Henry spent the summer of 1868 working in Tysons Furnace, Vermont, for farmers named “Tarbell” and “Joe Pollard.” Henry’s sister, Laura, lived in Tysons Furnace with the Howard family at this time. Henry also attended a reunion with four of his five siblings at the Smith family homestead in Williamstown, Vermont in the summer of 1868. In the Fall, Henry moved to Proctorsville, Vermont, where he lived with a family named Bigelow. The Bigelow home was about four miles from the Howard house in Tysons Furnace where Henry’s sister Laura boarded. Henry was still living in Proctorsville, Vermont in May 1869. John and Mary Smith returned to the United States in the summer of 1872; their daughter, Laura had traveled out to Ceylon in 1870 to be with her parents due to ill health, and Laura died en route back to America with them. She was buried at sea. Laura was Henry’s closest sibling as they lived together for much for the 1860s. Mary S. Smith, Henry’s mother, died in 1873 just months after she returned to the United States.

Henry Hill Smith eventually settled in Gardner, Massachusetts. He married Florence Isabell Morse on September 2, 1879. According to a family genealogy, Henry “worked most of his life in the seating department of Heywood Bros. & Wakefield Co., chair manufacturers” in Gardner. He was a deacon in the First Congregational Church and was

known as “Deacon Smith.” Henry and his wife had six children: Bernice Clara (13 May 1880—7 February 1971), Sybil Laura (5 July 1882—13 July 1963), Florence Charlotte (16 Nov. 1888—2 Nov. 1889), Sidney Morse (9 January 1894—9 January 1894), Philip Henry (17 Dec. 1894—2 May 1895) and Richard Wellington (3 October 1898 – 6 January 1982). The family of Richard W. Smith, led by his son, Philip, donated the contents of the John C. and Mary S. Smith Collection to the Yale Divinity School Archives in 2006; John K. Smith, a great-grandson of Henry H. Smith subsequently donated a printed copy of a memorial sermon for John C. Smith and some genealogical material, and Tammy Smith Coburn, great-granddaughter of Henry H. Smith donated family photographs.

MARY ELIZABETH SMITH

Mary Elizabeth Smith, the youngest of John C. and Mary S. Smith’s six children, was born in Panditeripo, Jaffna, Ceylon on 25 March 1853. She departed from Ceylon with her parents and three siblings in December 1856 (her two oldest siblings, Thomas and Eunice, had left for America in December, 1853) and arrived in the United States ca. April 1857. It is not known where Mary lived during her parents’ sojourn in America, although the entire family was apparently united in Central Village (CT or MA) in the spring of 1858. She also stayed with relatives in Gilsum, New Hampshire and at her Uncle Asa Smith’s home in Buckland, Massachusetts. Mary embarked with her parents on 29 October 1860 to return to Ceylon aboard the “Sea King.” After a horrific voyage in which the passengers barely survived several gales and a hurricane, the ship landed in India in April 1861. The Smiths did not return to their previous mission at Panditeripo, Ceylon, but were assigned to Udupitty (sometimes written, “Oodoopitty”) in the same district. At Udupitty, Mary was tutored by her mother, kept birds, a squirrel, chickens and other pets, and played with the children of missionary families.

Mary left Udupitty with her parents in January 1865 and traveled to Batticotta and Madras. Taking leave of her parents, twelve-year-old Mary, accompanied by members of a missionary family, the Sanders, embarked for America from Madras aboard the “Lord Warden” on 28 March 1865. She arrived in London at the end of June and spent two or three weeks in England, before boarding the “City of London,” for the United States. She was met by her eldest brother, Thomas, in New York City when she arrived, around July 23, 1865. Thomas brought Mary to live in North Brookfield, Massachusetts with her mother’s first cousin, Deacon Thomas Snell and his second wife, Mary Fish Snell (the daughter of Mary S. Smith’s first cousin, Elisha Fish). Snell and his wife were childless when Mary arrived; their only child, Thomas, had died some months before her arrival at their home. While living at the Snell home in North Brookfield, Mary took on many household responsibilities, and attended the village school. She helped to take care of a new baby, Luther Snell, after his birth in March, 1866. Mary remained with the Snells in North Brookfield at least until 1869. An eager student, she entered Mt. Holyoke sometime in the early 1870s, although she apparently never graduated. At some point after the return of her parents to the United States in 1872, Mary moved to their home in

Winchester, New Hampshire. (Her mother died in 1873). Mary continued to live in Winchester with her stepmother after the death of her father in March, 1884. According to family records, she married Harry Balch Holmes, an employee of her stepmother who was some twenty-five years her junior, in 1904. Mary died in Winchester, New Hampshire in December, 1929.