**Dereka Smith**

I like to call myself an independent researcher scholar. I am a retired librarian (Catholic University - MLS) and worked for the National Genealogical Society in Arlington, VA, for 11 years -- a job that I loved.  While my job was primarily a librarian, not a genealogist, I did extensive research on my own ancestry and that of my husband. For nine years I co-led a group of researchers to the LDS Library in Salt Lake City.

When we moved to Maine I continued to dabble in history and genealogy (I do not consider them separate pursuits), but when we moved to Massachusetts my interest in the people and history of Whately became an overriding passion. I researched the history of my parental home in West Whately, then began to prepare genealogical sketches for publication in the New England Historic Genealogical Society's project called *Western Massachusetts Families in 1790. (*three of these are completed and available on the NEHGS website-- they will be published in the fourth volume of the series).

In the process I realized that one of the primary sources for Whately history, James Monroe Crafts’ *History of Whately, Massachusetts* (1899) contained omissions and errors that could be remedied using modern sources.  Little realizing what I was getting into (and that is a good thing), I decided to update Crafts.  After a year’s work, I thought I had finished, but on consideration decided to go through my work again adding detail, in particular researching available wills and probate records.

Next I discovered that the Whately Historical Society had an unexamined collection of loose papers, including many deeds, mortgages and other records. I found two previously unknown prenuptial agreements and several records about criminal cases, including an alleged murder.  Now, three years after beginning this project, I again think I see the light at the end of the tunnel.  My working title for the book, which is about 400 pages of typescript with thousands of footnotes, is *Additions and Revisions to Crafts' Whately Genealogies.*