

BETSEY JANE TENNEY LOOSE
Maurine Carr Ward

Betsey Jane Tenney, born in New York State, was the oldest daughter of William Tenney and Eliza Webb. While living in New York, she joined the Mormon Church, along with her parents, in 1834. The family moved to Kirtland, Far West, and finally to Quincy, Illinois about 1840, living there during the unsettling period of church history when persecution and mobbings resulted in the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. Her father died in Quincy in 1844.

While in Quincy, Betsey married non-Mormon Robert Loose, a successful merchant who never joined the church. He managed a general store at the head of the Raft River, near Shreveport, Louisiana, often spending up to eighteen months there without coming home to Quincy. He died in St. Louis in 1854 after becoming ill with cholera. Betsey remained in Quincy until 1860 then emigrated to Utah with her three children.

Betsey settled in Payson, Utah, where she became the second wife of Orawell Simons, by whom she had two additional children. She also taught school there, as she had done previously in Quincy. In 1865 her husband was called to establish a grist mill at the Muddy Mission in southern Nevada. She and her children accompanied him. They established the first mill in what became known as Simonsville or Mill Town. Simons returned to Payson, leaving Betsey, their one-year-old son, and her three older sons to run the mill. While there she kept a six-month diary detailing life on the Muddy.

All of Betsey's sons by Loose left the church and often requested their mother to leave religious statements out of her letters to them. They all lived in the gold camps of Northern Nevada and California.

Betsey divorced Simons in the 1890s, however, she continued to reside in Payson. She died there in 1904, a devout Latter-day Saint.

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

[written in her own hand]

Of Betsey Jane Tenney Simons
Resident of the Relief Society
Payson, Utah Co U. T.
March 21 A. D. 1881

My Fathers name was William Tenney, The eldest son of Wm Tenney Sen & Judith Reed a native of New Hampshire He was born the 10 of March 1802 in Grafton State of N.H.-he was married to Eliza Webb in 1819 & I am their Eldest child was born on the 1 of Dec AD 1824 in the Town of Hanover Chatanque Co State of New York I had two sisters & 3 Brothers, namly Warren Reed, William Rush, Edwin Rich, Tenney my sisters names were Emma Victoria, Eliza Lamercia Warren the eldest is now in Arizonia he is the Father of Eleven children--two Brothers Wm & Edwin U my sister Emma died in Quincy Ill

When calling to mind my child home In contrast to many it has been my privilege to enter I feel that mine was a home where love indeed reigned Such a thing as a discordant jar I never heard beneath our unpretending yet ever neat and tidy dwelling. God be praised for all such Homes for I feel tis impossible for any but Godly Parents to make such a home--The above

sketch of my home plainly shows my Parents were prayerful God fearing people & early taught me to pray Indeed I cannot remember when or how old I was They belonged to the Methodist church when I can first remember, but for two or three years prior to hearing the Gospel they stood alone waiting (as they said) for something to come. In the mean time my mother had many remarkable dreams & also the word of wisdom nearly the same as twas given to the Prophet Joseph. She told her friends & neighbors who said she was crazy. In the winter of 1833 & 4 the Elders came to our neighborhood, a short time before this my Father & mother with two or three others went to hear the Prophet Josep & Oliver Cowdry speak 7 or 8 miles from our place. on their return I remember hearing them say after their return It was impossible for men to speak with such earnest candor if they were telling a falsehood. when Gospel came they were ready to receive it with joy & rejoicing. they were well respected by all their neighbors till they believed & were baptized, which occured in September 1834 my Father mother & my self being baptized the same afternoon by Elder Truman Weight. The Gifts of the Gospel were made manifest in great power--

Some months after we joned the Church my brother Wm then about 2 years old was sick nigh unto death & the only one yet ordained an Elder was Grand Father Webb & he when sent for was abscent from Hom. I watched the anxious Tearful faces of my dear parents with intence axiety. brother had not spoken or taken any notice of any one for two days with evry symptom of the near approace of death. My faith was strong that through the laying on of hands he would be heald I therefor asked my parents to let me go for gandPa about one mile across lots, there were two foot paths one through a grove the other across the meadows. I took the last [unclear] it lying near Farm houses & not so lovoly Grand Pa came through the woods & reached my home shortly after I left on reaching his place Grandma told me He did not set down when he got hom But started for our House imediately he was informed how very sick my brother was but as he took the path throug the woods, we did not meete

I only stoped long enough to learn the fact above stated then hastened Home. just as fast as possible--Imagin my Surpris & joy on entering on the sick room to see my brother sitting in his little chair by the fire whittling with [unclear] knife--he was mad whole from that very hour. We felt to thank & Prais the Lord that we wer permitted [to] here the Gospel in this last dispensation & know of a surety that we were being mad partakers of its promises & blessings.

In June 1835-Six of the Twelve Apostels came to our house namly Brigham Young Heber C Kimball Orson Pratt & 3 others

In the winter of 1835 moved to Kirkland living next door to the Prophet Joseph, had the privilege of seeing the Prophet almost daily of attending a [unclear] school kept by Sister E R Snow in one of Br Josephs rooms-My Father worked on the Temple doing carpenter work or Painting till it was finished near enough to be dedicated, I was a member of the choire, ther being two or three others about my age. My Father had his Endowments when the other Elder did, was a member of the Second chorom of Seventies-

In the Spring of 1838 mooved to Missouri reached Farwest on the 5 of July My Father Bought a farm 8 miles from Adam-ondi-ahman was driven out withe the rest of the Saints-we settled near Quincy Ill where I was marid in Jan 24 AD 1844 to Robert Loose, of London, Eng--

Joseph & Hyrum wer slain the 27 of June, My Father Died on the 9 of Oct of the same year. My Husband did not belong to the church but felt sure he would embrace the Gospel. he did not, but long as he lived said he was proud of his Mormon wife, would not have me any thing else for the world & in May before he died, one Sunday after noon while reviewing our Ten Years of Married life, He said Jane you have taught me what no other mortal could have done to controle my self. I felt I had performed quite a mission. At the Same time felt deep regret at being deprived of the Society of the Saints.

We had three Sones Robert Warren, Wm A, Charles Edwin. the younger being only 9 months old when my Husband died the 4 of July 1854.

For 6 year 9 months in a year I had a position in the Public School in Quincy by which I obtained support for my little ones My Mother also lived with [us] which was a great help I sold my House & Lot in the spring of 1860 crossed the Plains with 2 waggons & 8 Oxen the Team No 35 waggons-arrived in Salt Lake Aug 9 taught School 2 terms was Sealed second wif to O Simons by Pres Young in the Endowment House Aug 24 1861-Hav had 2 children Emma Eliza & George Grant.

My Husband took a third wife July 3rd 1864 [lists number of her children]

May 7 1868 R Society Organized by Bishop John Fairbank assisted by first councilor Orrawel Simons, F M Coombs. sect. I was called to Preside, by the Bishop. I chose Agness Douglass for my first Councilor, bishop made choice of Mary Moore for second. It would have been hard to find one more inexperienced than myself or who felt their weakness more. It is now thirteen years since the date of organization. we have worked together unitedly accomplished a great deal of good to & for others & been reaping untold benefits ourselves. God has blest the Relief Society & will continue to bless them. It will soon be Twenty years since entering celestial Marriage I feel the principles are holy & have & will, continue to prove a great blessing to all who will be governed thereby. Now God hath set in the church Apostles Prophets & all the other Chorums of the Priesthood, for the work of the ministry for the edyf[ying] of the body of christ. So the Relief Society as is the Mutual improvement [unclear] association has [unclear]. that both old & young may receive instruction.

LETTER TO ROBERT

Quincy, Adams Co. Ill
May 12th 1844

Dear Robert

I hardly know how to express the pleasure and gratification I feel, at receiving the third letter. which came to hand yesterday, conveying the interesting intelligence that you had arrived at your journeys-end, with good health, the greatest and best blessing which heaven can bestow upon man except peace of mind which I trust you dear will enjoy, when you hear that things are not in as bad a predicament, as you have feared. the Storm that was or seemed impending, shortly after you left has nearly blown over, without doing a great deal of damage to the church, and though wicked men and Devils, exert themselves to overthrow it, like a stalk of Mustard the more they kick and scatter it the wider it will spread, for there is a God in Heaven who rules the destinies of men. And if it is his Church (which I believe most assuredly) he will carry it on in righteousness until like the little stone, that "Daniel saw cut out of the Mountain without hands it will fill the whole Earth, Pardon me dear Robert for expressing my sentiments so plain. you new them before our union which gives me more boldness in communicating them to you, one thing more and I will desist and trouble you no more with the preamble. Joseph [Smith] will run for the Presidency at the next election which may seem strange to you, I have heard there are many who do not belong to the church, who think he will meet with good success.

I wrote a letter more than a month ago and mailed it with 2 Nauvoo Neighbors the 17 of Apr but fearing you will not receive it I will briefly state some of the contents. it contained a letter from Andrew written in full [contains quotes and information from either a friend or relative of Robert's named Andrew]

Dear Robert I cannot express my gratitude to God for preserving your life while on your journey and may it please him to preserve it for many years in health and peace. I trust you will not delay coming any longer than is necessary, but I would not hurry you from business by no means, for I wish you to consult your own judgment in every thing, I would calm if possible your agitated bosom by telling you that I am happy in the anticipation of shortly beholding

you, when we meet I have many thing[s] to tell you concerning what has passed since you left. some of the Morris Crew and others said they had no idea you ever meant to come back, all you wanted was to deceive me &c but as it happened it did not have the desired effect, for I did not care for them or their slang--I am now out of their reach and they must hunt another subject to pic and slander, I hope noone for the futur will get so larg a portion as I have had to take, those who ar acquainted with them will not heed what they say, which is som gratification I will forbear telling you mor lest it should vex you.

I beg that it may not for it is not worth minding and I only mention it to let you know your preditions wer correct, but I will drop that subject and inform you of our residenc, we live about 3 miles from Quincy in the Merchant Whitnys farm in sight of his own dwelling and although he has taken pains to nearly hide the hous by building it backside of his field yet it is a pleasant situation rendered doubly agreeable by its being out of the reach of the inquisitive I presume it is a good neighborhoöd although I have no particular acquaintanc, as far as I can hear the neighbors ar agreed and speak well of each other which is as good a singn as we can aske

We are all well at presant my health is good for me and I trust it may continue so. My fears are now for you, being in a sickly country without kindred to be sure you may have warm friends but they cannot feel like a companion a Mother or Sister. I will banish the thought of sickness, and pray that you may be preserved from all harm, and I hope you will be careful of your self and preserve your health, I am confident you will

I shall live in anticipation till you return to yours

Betsey Jane L

PS I had almost forgoton there was any on to put in [wax seal covers words] but myself, the family one and all join in sending [hole in paper] and best respects even to Emma she says she will love Brother Robert when he comes back, and she frequently kisses me for you as she says.

Mr McCash says he is going to send you a long letter and make you laugh for onc, his family is well. Mr Reed and family have moved to Nauvoo and I have not heard from them in som time, when I last saw them (Mr and Mrs Reed and Helen wished me to send their best respects to you, Helen had not heard from [3 initials, unclear] they fear some thing has befallen him, Delia has paid me a long visit Mr Hatton has just returned from the south, he is going to board with my Uncle and how the match will terminat I do not know.--Your Lady-friend Mrs Hardy is quite a stranger I have not heard how she received the information of our Marriage, I presume she thought her talk was time and breath spent in vain.

I have nearly covered The sheet and have not begun to write all I wanted to but I will save the rest for the next time or untill we meet which hope wil be soon if the Lord will, and accept warmest wishes of BJL

I send a paper with this for your perusal thinking it might be interesting

[addressed to Mr Robert, Loose, Esq
Head of Raft,
near Shrevesport, Louisiana]

Cooley,	John W.		1847		
	Mary	mother	1847		
	Genet	daughter	1847		
(John W. was expelled on September 12, 1847.)					
(Genet was baptized on April 6, 1848 at Garden Grove.)					
Critchlow,	William		1850	41	46
	Harriet		1850	44	
	Benjamin		1850	14	
	Charlotte		1850	13	
	William		1850	11	
(Wm. Fuller was baptized on June 16, 1849 at Garden Grove.)					
(William was listed as a teacher in the 1850 census.)					
Crooks,	Thomas		1850	33	27
	James		1850	6	
	George		1850	25	
	Elizabeth		1850	18	
(George was listed as a wagon maker in the 1850 census, born in Scotland.)					
(Thomas was listed as a blacksmith in the 1850 census, born in Scotland.)					
Crosby,	Jonathan		1847		
Crosby,	Marie	widow	1847		
	William	son	1847		
	Davis	son	1847		
Davis,	John		1847		
	Charles	son	1847		
	Lydia A.	daughter	1847		1847
	Ellen	daughter	1847		
	Nephi	son	1847		
	Lehi	son	1847		
Davis,	William		1847		
	Jane	wife	1847		
DeForest,	Josiah L.		1847		
	Mary	wife	1847		
Benedict,	Sarah A. daughter		1847		
Demick,	Jefferson		1847	1850	45
	Maryann	wife	1847	1850	41
	Cynthia			1850	21
	Albert	son	1847	1850	19
	Ephraim	son	1847	1850	17
	James			1850	12
	Eliza			1850	8
	Alma			1850	3
	Maroni			1850	3
	Rachel			1850	6
Derby,	Erastus H.		1847		
	Ruhamah K.	wife	1847		