

**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







