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# Rev Joseph Perkins Sneed

**BIRTH** 10 Jan 1804  
Davidson County, Tennessee, USA

**DEATH** 21 Nov 1881 (aged 77)  
Milam County, Texas, USA

**BURIAL** Sneed Cemetery  
Milam County, Texas, USA

**MEMORIAL ID** 64644370

"Joseph Perkins Sneed, pioneer Methodist preacher, son of James and Bethenia (Perkins) Sneed, was born in Davidson County, Tennessee, near Nashville, on January 10, 1804. He ranks among a small group of men who laid the foundations of Methodism in the Republic of Texas. He also devoted a decade of his ministry, far more than any other white preacher during the development of Texas statehood, to black slaves. He was converted at a camp meeting in 1824, and joined the Mississippi Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1829. After serving his probationary period on circuits in Mississippi and Alabama, he was ordained a deacon in 1831, admitted into full connection and appointed to a circuit in Louisiana. He was ordained an elder in 1833, by Bishop John Emory. In the summer of 1834, during his ministry in Louisiana, he assisted Rev. Henry Stephenson in a famous revival at Samuel Doak McMahan's place near San Augustine, Texas. As a result of that experience, Sneed volunteered for service in the newly established Texas Mission in December 1838. Bishop Thomas A. Morris appointed him to Brazoria in the Texas Mission District of the Mississippi Conference and sent a letter by him to Littleton Fowler, the superintendent of the mission, declaring: "We have sent you Brother Sneed, a man who is not afraid to die or sleep in the woods." Traveling by horseback, Sneed entered Texas at Gaines Ferry on February 8, 1839, and reported to Fowler at McMahan's. Fowler changed Sneed's appointment to the Montgomery Circuit, which comprised all the territory between the Brazos and Trinity rivers from San Felipe on the south to the site of present-day Waco. Four months later, Fowler increased Sneed's labors to include the Washington Circuit, thus adding the territory from Houston and Texana to Bastrop and Caldwell. Sneed's succeeding appointments included the following circuits: Nashville, 1839-40; Victoria, 1840-41; Liberty, 1841-42; Washington, 1842-43; and Rutersville, 1843-44. Sneed took an honorable location for ten years, while he farmed near Gay Hill in Washington County and subsequently above Port Sullivan in Milam County. In December 1855, he was readmitted to the Texas Conference and began his unique ministry to black slaves at the Port Royal African Mission (1855-61, 1862-65). He served the Lampasas-Florence Circuit in 1861-62 and the White Rock Circuit in 1866-67. He superannuated in 1867, and lived the remainder of his life on his farm. Sneed married Achsah Bond Harris on October

12, 1842, in Nashville, Tennessee, and they had three children. She died on January 15, 1860. He died on November 21, 1881, at his son's home in Milam County and was buried in the family graveyard."

BIBLIOGRAPHY: from Oscar Murray Addison Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. Macum Phelan, History of Early Methodism in Texas, 1817–1866 (Nashville: Cokesbury, 1924); A History of the Expansion of Methodism in Texas, 1867–1902 (Dallas: Mathis, Van Nort, 1937). Homer S. Thrall, History of Methodism in Texas (Houston: Cushing, 1872; rpt., n.p.: Walsworth, 1976). Walter N. Vernon et al., The Methodist Excitement in Texas (Dallas: Texas United Methodist Historical Society, 1984). Norman W. Spellmann, "SNEED, JOSEPH PERKINS," Handbook of Texas Online (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fsn10>), accessed January 22, 2011.

From "Story of Religion in Waco", written by Mrs. R. Spencer Wood and printed in the publication, "First Methodist Church 1850 – 1950 One Hundredth Anniversary". In the year 1849, an ardent Methodist missionary from the Tennessee Conference, Rev. Joseph P. Sneed, came to Waco and became the first man to preach a sermon. He was the father of Methodism in a little log cabin on the banks of the Brazos River at the foot of Jackson Street.

After preaching, he spent the night under a tree, sleeping on his saddle blanket, being awakened many times during the night by the howling of wolves. He was a great friend of the [Indians]; everybody loved him and followed willingly his teachings. He organized a small group of fifteen couples and together they formed the First Church, The Log Cabin Methodist Church, in Waco during the year of 1850."

Waco's First Church was later named Fifth Street Methodist Church, later named First Methodist Church, and currently First United Methodist Church.

Thanks to heavensdelight (rhonda bruce) (#47578333) for the following:

Father: James Sneed (1764 - 1853)

Mother: Bethenia Hardin Perkins Sneed (1770 - 1812)

## Family Members

### Parents



James Sneed  
1764–1853



Bethenia Hardin *Perkins* Sneed  
1770–1812

### Spouse



Achsah Bond *Harris* Sneed  
1824–1860

### Siblings



Maj Constantine Perkins Sneed  
1790–1864



Charles Ellis Sneed  
1792–1838

### Children



Joseph Tyre Sneed Sr  
1848–1912





James Pleasant Sneed  
1794–1865



Martha Nance *Sneed* Simmons  
1796–1835



William Temple Sneed  
1801–1869



Bethenia Harden *Sneed* Nance  
1807–1865



Alexander Ewing Sneed Sr  
1812–1852

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Added: Jan 24, 2011

Find a Grave Memorial ID: 64644370

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([https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/64644370/joseph\\_perkins-sneed](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/64644370/joseph_perkins-sneed): accessed June 13, 2024), memorial page for Rev Joseph Perkins Sneed (10 Jan 1804–21 Nov 1881), Find a Grave Memorial ID **64644370**, citing Sneed Cemetery, Milam County, Texas, USA; Maintained by N (contributor 46879854).