

Sensebach Heritage

A family history newsletter for:

Sinsabaugh Sensibaugh Sensenbaugh Sensebox
Sinsapaugh Sencabaugh Sencenbaugh Sencerbox
Sincebaugh Sencebaugh Sincerbeaux Sincerbox
Sensabaugh Sencibaugh Cincebeaux Sensaboy
Sensebaugh Cencebaugh Cincebox Senciboy
and other variations of the name

Restless Feet: The Six (not Seven) Sons of Simeon Sinsabaugh (part I)

by Steven L. Sinsabaugh

Perhaps they would have been easier to trace if they had just stayed put. But they all resided in at least two, and typically three or four, states throughout their lives. Perhaps if there were better records of their births and marriages, the family units could have been better defined. But it was the era before such records were well kept, and they always lived on the frontier where such records were even scarcer. Perhaps the family structure could have been definitively proven if the father's estate records, with list of legal heirs, had been found. But those burned in a courthouse fire. Perhaps if they were been the only ones with their unique surname in the area, there would have been less concern about thorough proof. But the convergence of canals and the National Road had brought Sensabaughs and Sinsabaughs among the Sinsabaughs.

Perhaps...but all is wishful thinking for the genealogist trying to prove beyond reasonable doubt the descendents of Simeon Sinsabaugh.

Simeon certainly was a traveler. He was born and married in New York, later settling in the furthest southwest corner of Pennsylvania, later still living in the new state of Ohio. His migratory instincts lived on in his descendants, whose restless feet took them down the National Road to Illinois, and on further trails to Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Tennessee, Colorado and California. Within 40 years of his death in 1853 one grandson was attending banquets at the White House, another was president of Los Angeles City Council, and a third had a town named after him in Missouri.

Yet for the genealogist a century and a half later, just proving the identity of Simeon Sinsabaugh's sons is no trivial task.

It hasn't been for lack of trying. Rathbun lists five sons: David, Hiram, George, Isaac K. and Jacob H., born between 1803 and 1826.¹ The Horn Papers, which mixed moderately reliable data of that era with total fabrications from earlier eras, lists four sons: Hiram, George, David and Isaac.² A recent history of Licking County, Ohio, speaks of five sons, but only names George.³ This author's initial efforts uncovered two other probable sons: John and Joseph. Combined all these together and there are seven apparent sons: David, Hiram, George, John, Joseph, Isaac and Jacob.

There is no simple record that explicitly proves who the sons of Simeon were. By the time of the 1850 census, which was the first to list everyone's name instead of just the household head, Simeon (age 70) and his wife Hester (age 65), had no children still at home. Any estate records listing heirs at their deaths in 1853 and 1854, respectively, were lost in the Licking County courthouse fire of 1874. No birth or baptism records, save one, have appeared.

So we are left to take other types of contemporaneous evidence to examine potential sons of Simeon. The purpose of this article is to establish what can be proven, by preponderance of evidence, of the relationship between Simeon and these other Sinsabaughs. Let us begin by examining our candidates.

David Sinsabaugh

David is the easiest of the Sinsabaughs to prove as a son of Simeon. On 21 May 1803, he was baptized at the Shawangunk Reformed Church in Ulster County, New York.⁴ This was the same church where his parents were married the previous September. New York church records list no other children of Simeon and Hester.

David showed early signs of restless feet. In 1827 he first appeared in Greene County, Pennsylvania, tax records, near Simeon. He owned three horses and his occupation was as a 'peddler' – i.e. a traveling salesman. He soon left, bought land in Norwich, Ohio, where the National Road was just being built, and became a tavern keeper. His story is told in detail elsewhere.⁵

David is not buried beneath the gravestone in Muskingum County alongside Mary Simpkins, his wife.⁶ The spot for his date of death is blank. A year after Mary died of typhoid in 1862, David remarried. His second wife was Eliza Neilson, a widow with at least two children: Mary and Lucy. David sold off his remaining Ohio lands and by 1870 was living in Des Moines County, Iowa, where he was a dealer in real estate.⁷ At that time the household included Eliza, her daughters Mary and Lucy Neilson from a previous marriage, and an "M. Sinsabaugh", a five year old daughter, who was born in Iowa.

David and his second wife Eliza had two children together: Minerva and Charles. David died on 11 September 1872.⁸

David's Family

DAVID SINSABAUGH was born 21 May 1803, Shawangunk, Ulster County, New York, married (1) 22 June 1829, Muskingum County, Ohio,⁹ MARY SIMPKINS, born 3 February 1807, Maryland,⁶ died 13 October 1862⁶ married circa 1863, (2) ELIZA N. [—?—]¹⁰ born about 1833, Ohio. David died 11 September 1872.⁸

Children of David Sinsabaugh & Mary Simpkins:

- i. MELINDA SINSABAUGH, born 14 January 1830, married 10 December 1850 GEORGE SHIPLEY. They lived in Iowa.

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