

# Sensebach Heritage

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**A family history newsletter for:**  
Sinsabaugh Sensibaugh Sensenbaugh Sinsebox  
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Sinsebaugh Sencebaugh Sincerbeaux Sincerbox  
Sensabaugh Sencibaugh Cincebeaux Sensaboy  
Sensebaugh Cencebaugh Cincebox Senciboy  
**and other variations of the name**

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## Investigating Simeon Sincebaugh

By Steven L. Sinsabaugh

On the 21<sup>st</sup> day of August 1865, just a few months after the end of the Civil War, Simeon D. Sincebaugh of Ithaca, New York, appeared before the Tompkins County Clerk of Courts to apply for an disability pension. He stated that he had enlisted on 11 August 1862 and was discharged on 4 June 1865 from the 11<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteer Infantry. He claimed disability because, "while in the service as aforesaid at the battle of Spottsylvania in the state of Virginia on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of May AD 1864 he received a gun shot wound in the left arm, rendering him in part unable to earn his living by manual labor."

Simeon was the youngest son of Solomon and Catherine (Deyo) Sincebaugh of Tompkins County, New York. Solomon was born in 1784 and baptized at the Brick Reformed Church in Montgomery, New York, where the Sensebachs first settled in New York. He was the son of Frederick and Elizabeth (Suss) Sinsabaugh. Frederick died about two years after Solomon was born. Frederick's parents were Johann Christ and Anna Catharine (Weber) Sensebach and his grandfather was Friederich Sensebach, founder of the family in New York.

This application for a disability pension begins a long series of depositions, questionnaires, interviews and letters in Simeon's pension file. Over the decades, from 1865 through 1912, Simeon's life and background are slowly unfolded. Various claims and counterclaims, special investigations, and contradictory answers left the Pension Office investigators (as well as future genealogists) stumped on several issues, including what wounds he received in battle, and how many marriages he had. The apparent conflict with his own family

and his in-laws (often the same individuals) further muddied the waters. In this article Simeon's pension case is reviewed. The case is followed to see how it evolved over the decades from just after the Civil War to a few years prior to World War I.

The rest of this article focuses on the words of the primary players in this case, in the various pension documents. Brief segues, in italics, have been included between documents to provide continuity.



### Application for a Pension

*To support his claim that he was wounded in battle, Simeon also submitted an affidavit by Lewis W. Husk, an officer in the 11<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteer Infantry:*

"...I am well and personally acquainted with Simeon D. Sincebaugh late a Sergeant of Company C 11<sup>th</sup> Regt. N.Y. Vols. I further declare that said Simeon D. Sincebaugh was while in actual service and in the line of duty, Viz: At the battle of Spottsylvania in the State of Virginia on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of May AD 1864 said Simeon D. Sincebaugh received a gun shot wound in the left arm which disabled

him from further duty and he was sent to Hospital."

*The disability pension was initiated at \$ 4 per month. The Pension Office required a surgeon's examination in February 1867. Dr. Sumner Rhoades examined Simeon. In his report Dr. Rhoades described the wounds:*

A minie ball appears to have passed through the middle of the left forearm. There has been considerable loss of bone. The flexion of the elbow and the rotary motion of the forearm are diminished. From injury of the radial nerve there is a great impairment of strength, motion and sensation in the thumb and the two fingers nearest it. These fingers cannot be fully closed... [he has] no vicious habits.

*By 1871 his pension was \$ 8 per month. All in all a fairly straightforward disability pension case. But not for much longer.*

### Skeletons Appear

*A letter arrived at the Pension Office on 3 January 1879:*

Ithaca, Tompkins Co. N.Y.  
January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1879  
To the Commissioner of Pensions  
Dear Sir:

There is a man here, Simeon D. Sincebaugh, by name, living, I think at the time he got his pension, in Danby, but now living in the town of Newfield, this county, who obtained his pension by false swearing. He claims that he was wounded in the left arm between the elbow and wrist. His brothers Isaiah Sincebaugh and Saul Sincebaugh will swear that they know the arm was hurt by an animal that he was going to kill while in the butcher business in Auburn before the war began and they will also swear that at the time he

*continued on page 4*