

The Traveling Salesmen: Ansel B. and Howard H. Donohoo, Part II

Brothers Ansel B. and Howard H. Donohoo were born the ninth and tenth children of Michael and Caroline (Green) Donohoo. They were grandsons of Patrick and Sarah Donohoo (although they would have been very young when their grandparents died). They grew up in a Catholic family that ran a temperance tavern in Bardstown, Kentucky. Both men enjoyed entertaining friends through musical and dramatic performances, both at church and other social occasions. They moved together to St. Louis as young men in their 20s and worked for several of the same companies as traveling salesman. Both brothers married, but neither had children. Their story has been traced through numerous newspaper mentions of their travels and theatrics.

Part 2: Howard Hynes Donohoo (AKA H.H. Donohoo)

Childhood

Howard H. Donohoo was born in June of 1859, in Nelson County, Kentucky to Michael and Caroline (Green) Donohoo [1]. In the 1860 Census, one-year-old Howard resided in Nelson County, Kentucky, with his parents Michael and Caroline, four brothers, three sisters, his maternal grandfather and five boarders [2].

By 1870, Howard was 11 years old, residing in Nelson County, Kentucky, with his parents Michael and Caroline, four brothers, two sisters, and three boarders [3]. By 1880, Michael Donohoo had died, leaving Caroline as the head of household, with 21 year old Howard, four other sons and one daughter living in the household. Howard worked as a clerk at a wholesale grocery [4].

Adulthood

By 1882, H. H. Donohoo is listed in the St Louis city directory, as a traveling salesman for Yarnall Bros. [5]. On April 23, 1884, Ansel B. Donohoo married Ada Wood in Nelson County, Kentucky. His brother, Howard H. Donohoo, acted as surety [6]. By the next year, Ansel is also in St. Louis working for Yarnall Bros.[7] Thus begins the brothers' circuitous routes for their business travels, as documented in hotel patron newspaper lists:

Between 1882 and 1891, Howard's sales circuit includes: Memphis, Tennessee [8]; Louisville, Kentucky [9]; Atlanta, Georgia [10]; Wilmington, North Carolina [11]; and Charlotte, North Carolina [12].

In the 1891 St Louis city directory, Ansel B. and Howard H. Donohoo are listed consecutively as traveling for the Taylor Manufacturing Company [13]. In April 1891, Ansel and Howard visited their mother, Caroline, in Bardstown [14], as was their annual tradition [15]

Howard's social engagements and entertaining nature made note in the newspapers during these years as well: [16]

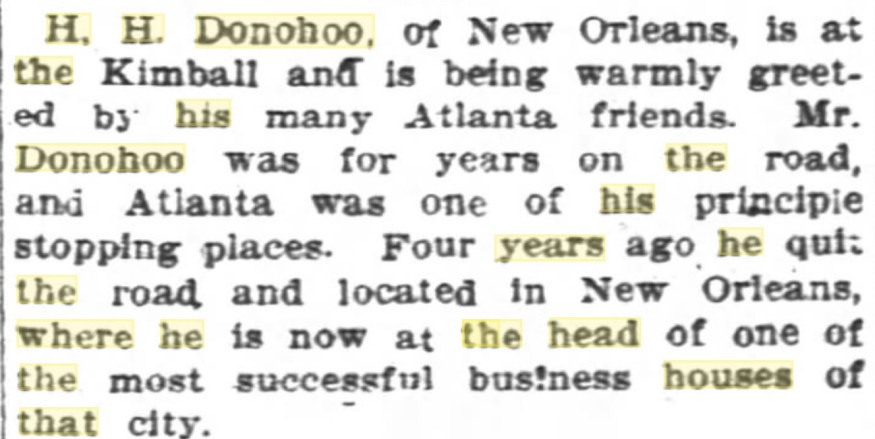
H. H. Donohoo—the only one of the family who has four o's in his name—is at the Kimball. Mr. Donohoo hails from St. Louis, and bears a striking resemblance to Salvini, and is a great amateur tragedian. After entertaining friends with selections from Shakspeare last night, he said: "I have been through the Haymarket riot in Chicago, the Charleston earthquake, the Augusta flood and the Jacksonville yellow fever, and I must say I got through them all easier than I did Chattanooga. Those people are frightened, and a man must show that there hasn't been a death in his family in the last 1,000 years or he will be turned away."

Between 1891 and 1900, while still anchored in St. Louis, Howard's sales circuit included: Wilmington, North Carolina [17]; Asheville, North Carolina [18]; Raleigh, North Carolina [19]; Houston, Texas [20]; and New Orleans, Louisiana [21].

Sometime around 1901, H.H. Donohoo changed to a non-traveling sales position based in New Orleans, Louisiana with the Preston & Stauffer tea department [22], and then with the N.O. Import Co., Ltd.[23].

In April of 1905, Howard visited friends in Atlanta, who, by newspaper account, had missed his company: [24]

By this time, H.H. Donohoo was 45 years of age, widely known and traveled throughout the South, and still single.



H. H. Donohoo, of New Orleans, is at the Kimball and is being warmly greeted by his many Atlanta friends. Mr. Donohoo was for years on the road, and Atlanta was one of his principle stopping places. Four years ago he quit the road and located in New Orleans, where he is now at the head of one of the most successful business houses of that city.

Source Citations & Research Notes:

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[3] United States Census, Year: 1870; Census Place: Bardstown, Nelson, Kentucky; Roll: M593_491; Page: 73B; Image: 150; Family History Library Film: 545990. Ancestry.com. 1870 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT,

USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009. Images reproduced by FamilySearch. Original data: 1870 U.S. census, population schedules. NARA microfilm publication M593, 1,761 rolls. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.

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[7] St Louis, Missouri, City Directory, 1885. Ancestry.com. U.S. City Directories, 1821-1989 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011. Ansel Donohoo, page 332.

[8] "H.H. Donohoo, St. Louis." Memphis Daily Appeal (Memphis, Tennessee). 29 January 1884, Tues. Accessed at chroniclingamerica.loc.gov on 21 January 2015.

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[10] "H.H. Donohoo..." The Atlanta Constitution (Atlanta, Georgia). 26 September 1888, Wed. Page 5. Accessed at newspapers.com on 26 December 2015.

[11] "At the Orton, H.H. Donohoo, New York." The Wilmington Messenger (Wilmington, North Carolina). 30 December 1888, Sun. Page 4. Accessed at newspapers.com on 21 January 2015.

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