

tive while their competitors advanced aeronautical engineering at a rapid pace. An historical debate continues to surround the Wright patent battles: did aggressive litigation pursued by the Wrights retard the development of the U. S. aircraft industry? Roach addresses the issue and shares a bit of the historiography. While the case for the Wrights having stunted American aviation development remains weak, in my view, Roach establishes that the brothers' focus on patent litigation at the expense of research and development *within* the Wright Company doomed the firm to irrelevance only a couple of years after its formation. With Wilbur's early death in 1912, and Orville's sale of the company in 1915, Wright designs were all but gone from the skies little more than

five years after the Wright Company began operations. Roach makes a fine contribution to the literature by documenting the history of the commercial period of the Wright story. Beyond that, this concise history of a foundational firm of what would become one of the world's most influential industries is a lesson in hubris. Roach shows that Wilbur and Orville, immensely talented and the source of a world-changing invention, were also very human.

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### *Duncan Hines: How a Traveling Salesman Became the Most Trusted Name in Food*

By Louis Hatchett

(Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2014. Pp. iv, 325. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Paperbound, \$19.95.)

In his prime, Duncan Hines was one of the most famous men in America, teaching Americans how to eat well and find suitable lodgings at a time when traveling the country was risky. Hines grew up in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and worked at various jobs before finding his calling as a salesman for printing companies, a job that required extensive travel and a reliance on restaurants and hotels. What began as a hobby—taking notes

on the whereabouts of good, clean restaurants and decent lodgings—turned into a career as he began self-publishing annual guidebooks that the public grew to trust.

In *Duncan Hines: How a Traveling Salesman Became the Most Trusted Name in Food*, Louis Hatchett tells the story of a man who attained the American dream through hard work and a personal vision. When he began traveling in the 1920s, roads in

America were crude, so Hines traveled by train to meet with customers. He developed the habit of recording his opinions about the meals he ate and hotels he patronized. In the next decade, he bought an automobile for his sales calls, but he also began to travel weekends with his wife in order to explore still more restaurants and places to stay. He developed a list of good places and shared it with family and friends. As news of Hines's list spread by word of mouth, requests for the list exceeded his ability to provide, and in 1935, Hines decided to publish a guidebook. He printed a first edition of 1,000 copies, but the book grew so popular that by the mid-1950s its many revisions had sold millions of copies.

Hines insisted upon high standards of sanitation in every public eating place, never before a priority in many establishments, as well as tasty food at a fair price. Hatchett points out that Hines garnered respect because his integrity led him to turn down lucrative payments from restaurants that wanted his recommendation; he also turned down advertisers, so that his readers would know that his evaluations were based solely on merit. He paid for his meals and never accepted gifts. Hines was interested only in keeping his judgments honest and up-to-date, and in educating the public to demand good food cooked and served under sanitary conditions.

To maintain his standards, Hines also rejected requests from commer-

cial publishers, who he felt would not understand the need to update his information frequently. Knowing that restaurants sometimes closed or lost quality because of new owners or chefs, he continued to self-publish his guidebooks throughout most of his career. Hines also worked with what he dubbed his "dinner detectives," trusted individuals around the country who volunteered their services to visit and evaluate places Hines himself could not get to. They sent him reports, and he and his secretaries spent weeks organizing the next planned revisions of his guidebooks.

In his later years, Hines established a partnership to oversee the Duncan Hines operation, which eventually included a product line. With proceeds going to his foundation, the Duncan Hines brand became especially well-known for the cake mixes that bear his name. Ironically, though these mixes gained popularity because of Duncan Hines's widespread fame, today his achievement as a crusader who raised the standards of American restaurants and lodgings is all but forgotten. But thanks to Louis Hatchett's highly readable and informative book, the accomplishments of this remarkable American will again be valued and understood.

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