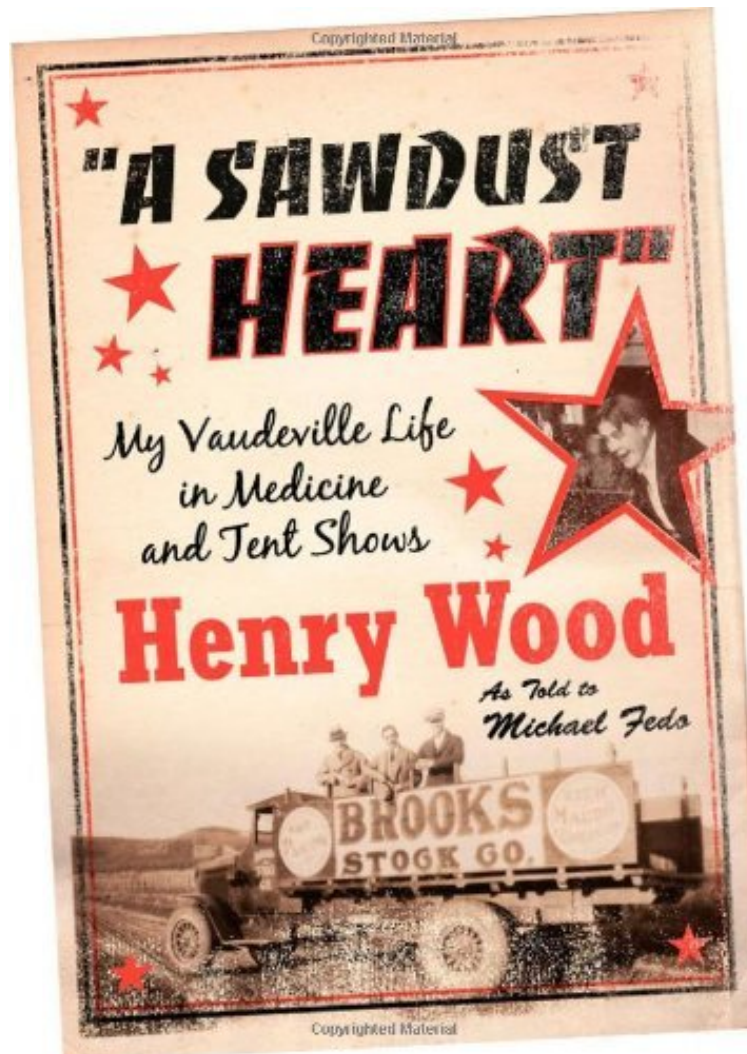


A Sawdust Heart: My Vaudeville Life in Medicine and Tent Shows

Henry Wood

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Henry Wood : A Sawdust Heart: My Vaudeville Life in Medicine and Tent Shows before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Sawdust Heart: My Vaudeville Life in Medicine and Tent Shows:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A tent rep or medicine show fan will like thisBy Arkansas RedWritten by a real "trouper", this book tells it like it is. A fine true story of "life on the road" back in the days of the traveling tent rep and medicine show. Highly recommended.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A peek into early 1900 entertainment in rural America.By SwidogThe Sawdust Heart reveals the nature of the beating hearts and minds of Americans living in the rural northwestern states in the pre and post WW 1 years. The primary character, Henry Wood was born in 1898.His report on the nature of entertainment, medicine, and alternative economic opportunities available to those people is gripping. It clearly illustrates the culture of those times so different from

today. It touches on the sentiments embraced by the culture regarding alcohol, suffrage, hobos, entertainment, and transportation. The heart of the story is Henry Wood's life-narrative taped by Mike Fedo after the death of Henry's wife. Henry tells what motivated him to leave an abusive father in his agrarian home at 12 years of age. He departed by rail to join a traveling Tent-stage Show initially working as a roustabout and earning the right to become an actor in the drama, minstrel, comedy, and musical troupe. He was introduced to the magic and sale of the medical elixirs of those days. His love of the profession claimed his interest throughout his entire life. He kept his family cared for by expanding his employment opportunities by learning the basics of being an electrician in spite of never completing elementary school. As is said in show business, I found this historical offering... "Simply marvelous!" 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A voice from the past brought to life. By Dan Kossoff Henry Wood's remarkable life is wonderfully captured by Michael Fedo in this engaging, breezy and frequently hilarious memoir. It will appeal greatly to those of us who, at some point in our lives, yearned to either run away and join the circus, head out to make a career in Hollywood or hit the road with guitar and mouth harp in hand. Fedo is pitch-perfect in bringing Wood's personality to the fore and he moves the narrative forward quickly and entertainingly - pretty much like those old medicine and tent shows must have been. Wish I had been there!

In the early twentieth century, before radio and motion pictures became widespread, rural Americans had few options for entertainment. While vaudeville theaters were prominent and popular in the cities, they were scarce in rural and small-town America, which was hungry for both diversion and news from the rest of the world. It was here that the traveling show thrived.

About the Author Henry Wood spent more than thirty years as a performer and director in old-time medicine shows and touring vaudeville troupes in the Midwest. Michael Fedo is the author of several books, including *The Lynchings in Duluth*, *The Man from Lake Wobegon*, and the novel *Indians in the Arborvitae*.