WISCONSIN CIRCUS LORE

FEDERAL WRITER'S PROJECT, W.P.A.

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W I S C O N S I N C I R C U S L O R E

Folklore Section

Women's & Professional Projects

Federal Writers' Project

Works Progress Administration

Madison, Wisconsin

1937

WISCONSIN CIRCUS LORE

STORIES OF THE BIG TOP, SAWDUST RING,
MENAGERIE, AND SIDESHOWS

COLLECTED IN THE FORMER CIRCUS TOWNS OF DELAVAN,
EVANSVILLE, JANESVILLE, WHITEWATER, WATERTOWN,
AND BARABOO

SHOWMEN, EQUESTRIANS, AERIALISTS, ACROBATS,
CLOWNS, AND FREAKS
ELEPHANTS, HORSES, MONKEYS, BEARS, AND "CATS"

1850-1908

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D E D I C A T I O N

To those interested in the collection, preservation, and use of American Folklore we wish to dedicate this volume of Wisconsin Circus Lore gathered by the Folklore Section, Wisconsin Federal Writers' Project.

Acknowledgment and appreciation is given to those who have made this little book possible.

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Supervisor of Folklore Section

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State Director, Federal Writers' Project

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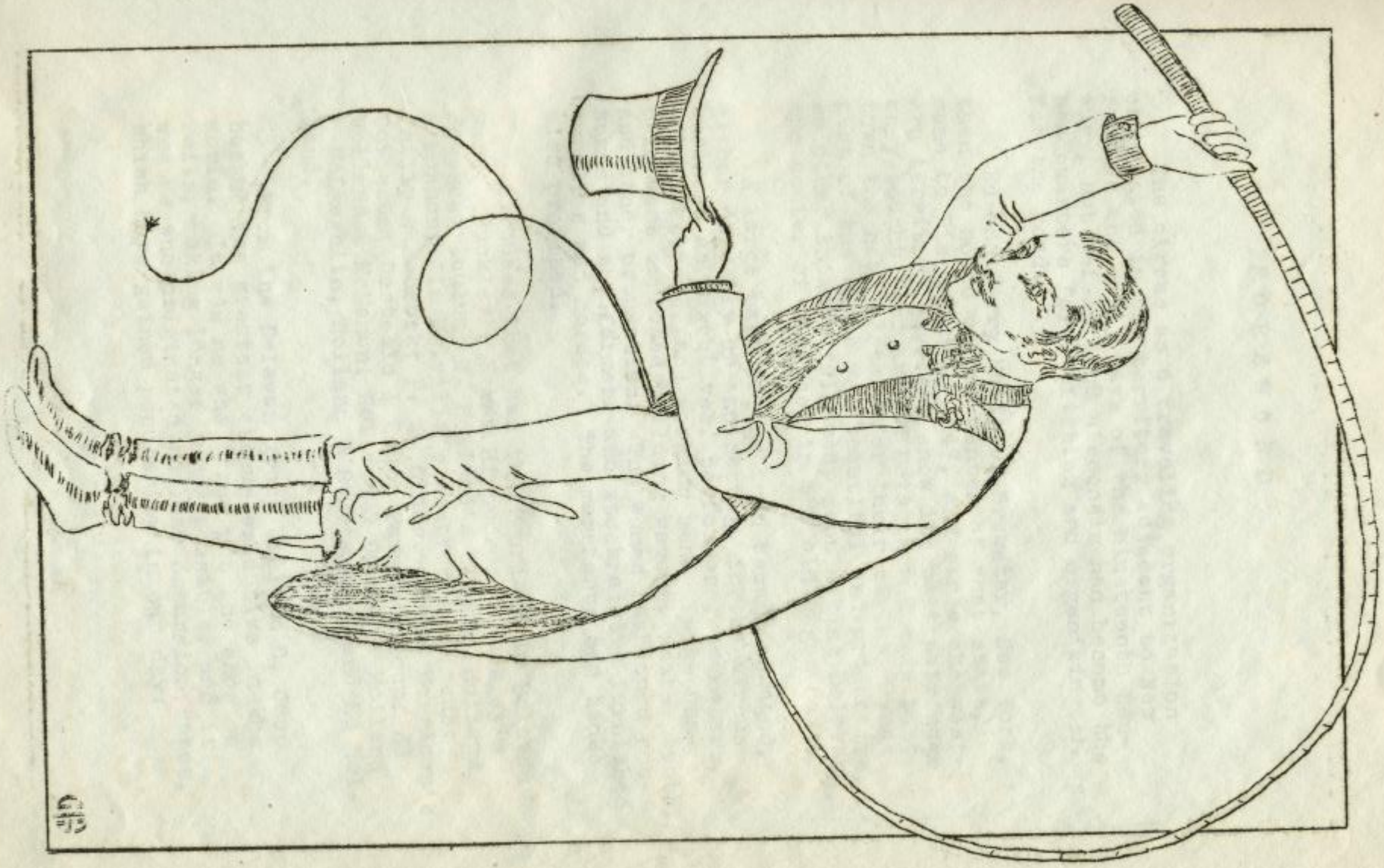


F O R E W O R D

The circus as a traveling organization originated in the territory adjacent to New York in the early days of the nineteenth century, but before 1850 Wisconsin had become the headquarters for outfitting and organizing shows for the road.

Ed and Jerry Mabie of Brewster, New York, then the noted circus center of that state, came to Wisconsin in 1847, and since the western territory gave the show its best patronage they bought land around Delavan and made that town the headquarters for their circus. That part of the state was beautiful and productive, so other showmen followed, soon making Delavan the center of circuses in the old wagon days.

A large part of the town became engaged, either directly or indirectly, in the circus business as executives, performers, teamsters, animal keepers, and working men. Large numbers were employed building wagons, seats, tents, and other properties. The women fashioned costumes and the farmers and stockraisers furnished supplies and horses. The merchants and banks also profited.

Circuses that had their origin in Delavan were: Buckley's Roman Hippodrome; Buckley's Equescarriculum; J. Holland's Circus; Holland & Mosher; Jim Melville's Australian Circus; Philip & Babcock; P. A. Older; George Morrison's Coliseum; Castello & Coup; Barnum & Coup; Ed Holland & McMahon; Holland & Gormely; Holland & McLaughlin; Holland & Sturtevant; and Ed Holland.

From the Delavan group William C. Coup became the greatest circus executive in the world. It was he who first put the show on rails, making longer jumps possible, and it was he who originated railway excursion rates, which have gained popularity in our day.

Janesville became the next circus town of importance when Burr Robins, then a famous and wealthy owner, wintered his circus there in the 70's and 80's.

Prairie du Chien, Delavan, and Baraboo claim to be the birthplace of the Ringling Brothers famous circus. The Ringling family lived for six years in Prairie du Chien when the boys were all very young. Their first attempts at a circus were described as follows: "The old gray mare pulled a light wagon on which were eight cages--dry goods boxes--containing parrots, pigeons, raccoons, snakes, guineas, a red fox, a bob cat, white rats, and mice. The 'caravan' of beasts also boasted of a pack of fourteen dogs, two educated pigs, a four-pronged deer, and two billy goats with a mate each. Garry Demott and Bobby Williams were clowns and George Hall did all the heavy acrobatics. Al was head manager and treasurer."

Later, when George Morrison's Coliseum took to the road, Al Ringling was the strong man and juggler, while John Ringling was the black-faced comedian. It is said that Al bought some of the properties and menagerie of this show and thus got his start.

However, it is generally conceded that the Ringlings started their first real show out of Baraboo in 1882. It was known as the "Ringling Classic and Comic Concert Co." It gave its first performance in Mazomanie, November 22 of that year. All five of the brothers performed. One was a ring master, one a tight rope walker, another a clown and fire eater. Al's act was juggling and rolling cannon balls up and down his arms and around his neck. For a menagerie they had three or four horses, a monkey, and a hyena. The hyena was called a "grave-robbing man eater" and as such he was a great success.

Another Wisconsin product was the Colonel George Hall Circus of Evansville. George Hall was one of the greatest circus characters of his day. His son, George Hall, Jr., also owned

a circus, and at the present time his grandson, Frank Hall, runs a show under the name of the Vanderburg Brothers Circus. Mabel Hall Campbell, daughter of Colonel George Hall, was in her day known as the only woman elephant trainer, while her mother, Lou Hall, was a snake charmer and tiger trainer.

In the old circus days in Delavan the Holland family was among those making circus history. The first Holland who came to America was the famous pantomimist and tumbler, John Holland. George Holland and his wife, Kate Holloway, were famous equestrians as far back as 1873.

Elise Dockrill, who made her home in Delavan when she was not traveling with the circus, was acclaimed by Barnum as "Empress of the Arena." Barnum and Bailey even went so far as to offer $10,000 to anyone who would be able to contradict the wager:---"There is only one Mme. Dockrill. No one will ever ride as she does."
Of the present generation Rose Dockrill, daughter of Elise Dockrill, and her husband, George Holland, carry on the circus tradition of these two families, both being famous riders.

Other noted performers from Delavan were:---
Ed Austin, who fifty years ago won fame for his ability to handle big teams and spirited equines; Mathew Buckley, a well known clown and vaulter as well as circus owner; P. A. Palmer, who had a hot air balloon act with the Roman Hippodrome, performed on a trapeze below the bag and was killed in 1872 during a performance. Dan Rice was a famous clown with the Harry Buckley and E. W. Colvine Circus. It is said that he received a salary of $1,000 a week, a fabulous sum for those days.

Fred Wilson was a nationally known clown and jester with Buckley and Company's National Circus of Delavan. George Madden was a sleight-of-hand performer with George Morrisons Coliseum.

One of the most colorful and world renown characters of the Ringling big top of Baraboo was the late Lillian Leitzel, world's greatest aerialist. Her ambition was to be a rider rather than a trapeze performer, but though she practiced diligently, she never became adept enough for public performance. May Worth, Rosie Rosalyn, and the Rooney family were riders from Baraboo who ranked high among the royalty of the circus world. Charles Hampten (Baraboo Red) was a bull man (elephant trainer) with the Ringling Brothers for twenty years.

Other circuses that had their origin in the state were the W. W. Coles Circus and the Miles Orton Anglo-American Four Combined Railroad shows of Portage; the Dode Fiske Show, Wonnewoc; Wintermute Brothers Circus, Whitewater; the Seible Brothers Dog and Pony Show, Watertown; and many others.

The selection of tales presented in this book are but a small presentation of the circus lore representing the life, color, and glamour of the sawdust ring. This collecting, classifying, and preserving of circus folklore and folk ways has never been undertaken before and offers a rich Wisconsin legacy.

The Federal Writers' Project wishes to thank those who have so generously contributed the tales and historic information that have made this book possible.

THE CIRCUS

"I love the name of circus;
There is a magic in the word.
From a boy I've allus loved it
And my heart is allus stirred.
By the big top an' menag'rie;
By the gorgeous street parade;
By the razzle - dazzle - dazzle
An' the cool, red lemonade.

What's the use of me here fibbin',
Saying that it don't appeal,
When the name o' circus sets me
Tinglin' from head to heel?
Though I'm borderin' on fifty,
An' to work a willing slave,
When the circus hanker leaves me
Then I'll know I'm near the grave.

Don yer finest bib and tucker,
Get the kiddies all in line.
Whoop! Hooray! The band's aplaying!
Gosh, all spangles! Ain't it fine?
Elephants an' clowns an' horses,
Ringlin' Day's here. Ain't it joy?
Takes me back - back to th' happy
Times when I was but a boy."

W I S C O N S I N C I R C U S L O R E

THE CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN

Before a circus comes to town there is an almost infinite number of arrangements that must be made. First the general agent chooses the location, checking first on industries, pay rolls, outlying districts, and public officials. The town must be in a thriving part of the country and yet must not be shown so often that the circus will become tiresome to the public.

When the town has been chosen along a well-thought-out route, the railroad contractor makes arrangements for the railroad moves. If the circus is a large one there will be several sections of the train, and these must move with speed so that no section will be sidetracked or held up when transferring from one railroad to another.

Next the general contractor arrives to contract for the license, lot, water, ice, grain, feed, fuel, and straw. The date is then set, and soon the advertising or billing, car arrives, and before long the public learns for the first time that the circus is coming. If the circus is a large one a "checker-up" arrives a few days before the show, but if it is a small one he may do his checking up early in the morning on the day of the performance. It is his duty to see that none of the posters or lithographs have been removed from the windows, buildings, or billboards. If the advertising has been in the least defaced, passes granted to the owners of the windows or buildings will be cancelled.

The publicity agent is another who enters the town before the show arrives. He takes care of the newspaper publicity. The larger circuses have press representatives who go ahead of the

show besides those with the show, also directors for radio activity.

The last man to arrive before the circus is the "twenty-four hour man." It is his duty to make all final arrangements. First he goes to the railroad agent to see that the circus trains can be "spotted" as near the lot as possible. It is necessary, too, to avoid unloading on a main line where fast trains might interfere. Next the "twenty-four hour man" goes to the chief of police for permission to haul over the streets and to get the best possible route, one that will avoid bad streets and hills.

After checking up on the provisions that have already been contracted for and seeing that they will be delivered on schedule, the "twenty-four hour man" marks the telephone or electric light poles with arrows to direct the drivers to the lot.

At midnight the show leaves its last stand and is on its way to the next place of exhibit. It is loaded on several trains, each section leaving at half-hour intervals. The last section, known generally as the "cage" but called the "monkey section" by the roustabouts, is comprised of the elephant cars, camel cars, and animal cages---also the cars used by the performers, musicians, and the managers.

By the time the "monkey section" arrives the first trains, with their heavy wagons, chariots, horses, and properties, have been unloaded. The first train unloaded is the commissary department, which includes the refrigerator, kitchen, canvas, and water wagons. They are immediately taken to the lot where the superintendent of canvas has already designated the part of the lot they are to occupy.

While breakfast is being prepared, the other trains are being unloaded, and at the circus grounds the boss canvasman is "laying out the lot." He has a diagram of the grounds, and he and his assistants have measured the distance where each tent is to be erected and have

iron pins placed where each stake is to be driven. The pole wagons arrive and the center poles are unloaded at the places they are to be raised.

The stable wagons have also arrived and the cloth stables have been placed by the "stablemen." The heavy duck mangers are placed inside, and as soon as the horses have cooled off after their work, they are fed.

The last train is switched into position, the "runs" (gang-planks) are placed at the end of the last flat car, and the unloading is begun. The "razor-backs," who load and unload the cars, have a system of almost military preciseness.

First the elephants and camels are unloaded. The long runway is taken from beneath the car and placed at the bottom of the side of one of the elephant cars. The hobbles are removed from the feet of the elephants and one by one they file down the runway. Next come the camels, water buffalo, curious cattle, and other animals.

While all this activity is going on at the lot, the "razor-backs" and "polers" are busy unloading the trains. Unloading the heavy cages requires skill and dexterity. First the "razor-backs" remove the barbed blocks of wood that fasten the wheels of the cage to the flat cars and place large iron slabs from car to car, making a continuous runway across the long line of flat cars. A rope is attached to the rear of the cage next to the end of the train from which the unloading is to be done, a pole is inserted, and taking hold of it, two men known as "polers" guide it down the runway, while a third, with a rope at the rear wound around an iron bar attached to the car, prevents the cage from running down too fast, yet he controls the force of its descent in such a way that as it reaches the ground there is impetus left to carry it out of the way, where harnessed teams are hitched to it and take it to the show ground.

After breakfast the show is put into final shape. Poles are erected, stakes driven, canvas unloaded, animals cared for, horses curried, their tails and manes washed, and provision

wagons of all descriptions deliver various supplies. A sledge gang is busy, six men driving one stake at a time. The sledges strike in such rapid succession that it hardly seems that one sledge could be with-drawn before the next one descends. In a short time the tents are up and occupied by the performers, musicians, and side-show people.

The Cook Tent

In the dining tent, or "cook house," each table is in the same position each day and every member of the personnel has his customary place. Each table has its own waiter, who has a box on the ground at the end of the table in which is kept the dishes for serving.

All meals are served on a regular schedule and are announced by a flag hoisted to the top of the cook house. When the flag is lowered no more meals will be served.

Dressing Room Tents

The part of the circus lot given over to the "private" lives of the performers contains several tents. At the farther end of the lot is the dressing room tent. To the right is the wardrobe tent in which is kept the wardrobe used in the tournament, or "spec." To the left is the band tent, and a short distance away is the dog wagon-home of the performing dogs. Between the guy-ropes of the dressing room tent, clotheslines are stretched and filled with washing. Back of the dressing room are the large tank wagons providing water for the necessities of the performers.

The dressing room tent is made up of three parts. At the right is the women's dressing room; at the left is the men's. The space between has four rows, or lines, of horses which compose the ring stock---the horses used in the big show. This space is called the "pad room." Saddles and trappings are also kept

here. The half of the big room next to the entrance is used to assemble all the various features and acts that are to follow next on the program.

In the men's dressing room the principle equestrians' trunks, ranged in even rows, one after another, follow the line of the large partition wall until the cross partition is met. Then the line follows the curtain wall and occupies the long side of the room back to the rear wall of the big tent. In the angle marked by the junction of the two walls sits the equestrian director, who is in charge of the dressing room and is responsible for the peace and order of the riders. An additional row of trunks faces the two rows, leaving a passage about six feet wide through which the performers go to and from their places. In front of each trunk is a folding camp stool which the owner sits on while he is dressing for his various acts.

Circus Trunks

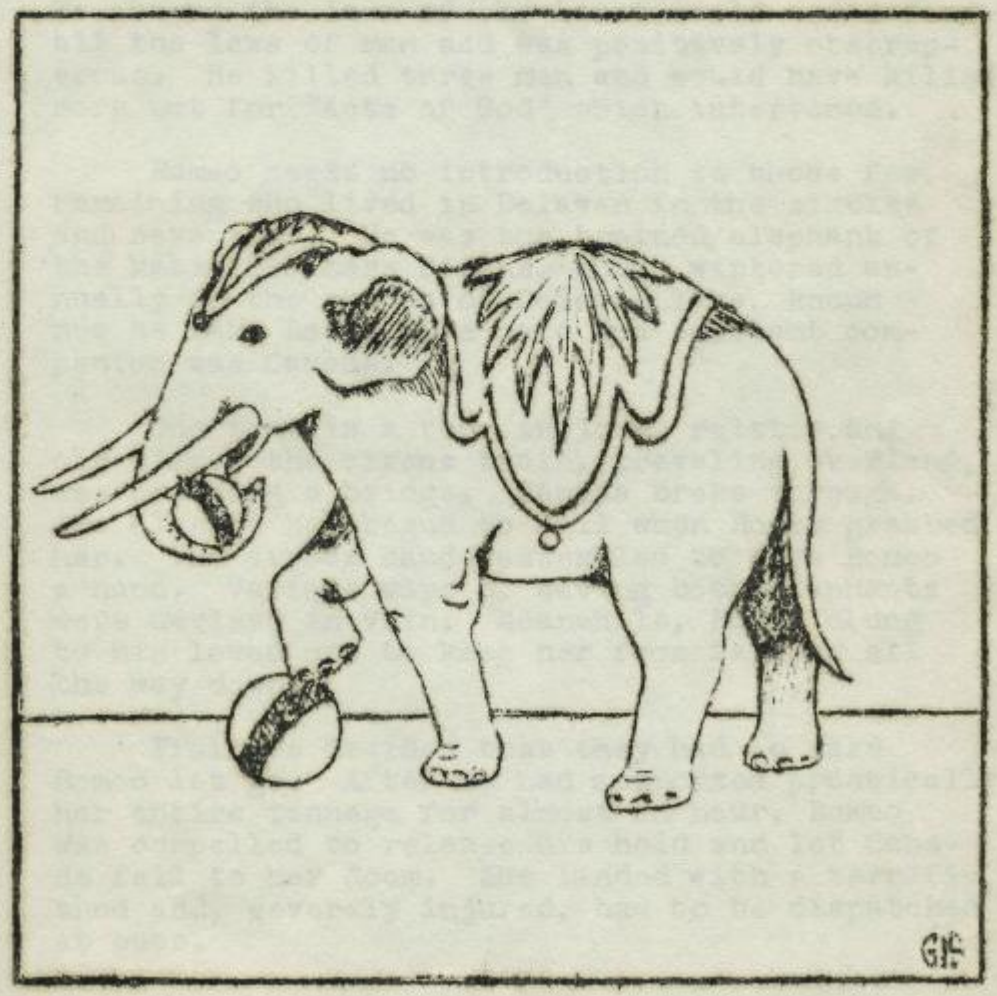
The circus trunk is each performer's individual spot on the circus lot. The standard trunk has a flat top, is twenty-eight inches long, and has a split tray. When the top is raised, one part remains in the cover, partitioned off from the tray that is just below. Besides this trunk, performers are allowed a smaller trunk for their hats. The trunks are for the purpose of carrying circus wardrobe, not street clothes. On top of each trunk is printed the owner's name. On the lower left hand corner may be found the letters L.D.R., meaning the Ladies Dressing Room. On the right hand corner of the cover is a letter and a number. If the letter should be C and the number 6 that would mean this trunk as the sixth in the third row. On the opening day of the circus the trunks are given their position by the equestrian director and are placed there every day by the property man.

Clown Alley

There is a circus custom---which has become a circus law---that the clowns have their trunks at the extreme left of the line. To get to them one must pass all the way along the aisle. When this is necessary it is permitted, but custom has decreed that it is never necessary for an acrobat or a bareback rider, whose trunks are located near the entrance, to pass along this aisle between the trunks at the end of the line. "Clown Alley" is sacred to clowns, contortionists, comedians, et cetera, and woe be it to the gymnast who walks along it. There is no warning whatever, but every clown in the "alley" jumps upon the intruder and throws him out bodily.

Adopted from Janesville Gazette article by Rose Collier and a Ringling Circus Route Book.

ELEPHANT STORIES



ELEPHANT STORIES

ROMEO

Romeo was an elephant brought from England by the Mabie Brothers to Delavan, Wisconsin. He was not the largest elephant ever to be displayed but at that time was considered the longest. Romeo made his debut into Delavan society sometime around the year 1870 and had a reputation for being a "bad actor," due to his proclivities to occasionally get loose and cause no little disturbance.

Romeo was a real lover even though he was Delavan's worst citizen and a killer of men. He obeyed the laws of the beast world and defied all the laws of man and was positively obstreperous. He killed three men and would have killed more but for "acts of God" which intervened.

Romeo needs no introduction to those few remaining who lived in Delavan in the sixties and seventies. He was the trained elephant of the Mabie Brothers Circus, which wintered annually on the shores of Delavan lake, known now as Lake Lawn. His mate and constant companion was Canada.

One time in a town in Iowa, relates an old timer, the circus train, traveling overland, was crossing a bridge. Canada broke through. She already had begun to fall when Romeo grabbed her. The circus hands assembled to give Romeo a hand. Various ways of saving both elephants were devised in vain. Meanwhile, Romeo clung to his loved one to keep her from falling all the way down.

Trainers decided that they had to make Romeo let go. After he had supported practically her entire tonnage for almost an hour, Romeo was compelled to release his hold and let Canada fall to her doom. She landed with a terrific thud and, severely injured, had to be dispatched at once.

From then on, Romeo went through life with a grudge against all mankind except his trainer.

On one occasion the circus cook made several pies, and when they were baked he had them put on a rack made for the purpose on the window ledge where they were left to cool. Romeo, smelling the warm food, lifted the latch of the door in the barn and made for the pies. Everything might have remained peaceful, except for the cook, if the pies had not been hot. Romeo, in his haste to devour as many as possible before being caught, burned his mouth and in his pain and anger began to stampede. His trainer tried to calm him, but Romeo was made and in no mood to be pampered so he treed the trainer. Then Romeo set to work to pull down the small tree and teach his keeper a lesson in minding his own business.

On the property and connecting two buildings was a drop-trap built for the purpose of catching animals who wandered from their private quarters. The trap would hold the weight of a man, but a heavy animal crossing would cause it to drop several feet into a pit. It was across this that one of the men encouraged Romeo to chase him. The elephant fell through the trap as anticipated. They raised him by means of pulleys, and when he was back on level ground once more he was punished with hot irons until he squealed. This experience kept the big pachyderm tractable for some time after that.

One time Romeo went on a rampage and broke out of his enclosure. News traveled rapidly that Romeo was loose and that it was not safe to travel to Lake Geneva by way of what is now Highway 50. It chanced, however, that a doctor received an emergency call. Instead of following the detour, he decided to take a chance at not being discovered by Romeo and went by the main highway.

The irate Romeo spied him and took after him with all speed. "Doc" whipped his horse to full speed. As he neared the inlet bridge the elephant was lumbering along only a few feet

behind him. The physician whipped his horse into a final spurt. Romeo started to follow but stopped abruptly as he saw the planks of the bridge, and the doctor reached the other side in safety.

The incident aroused the community, and the Mabie Brothers finally agreed to send for Romeo's trainer. He came, and it was decided that the way to get Romeo was to make him chase somebody through a stable door. Some one volunteered. He was given the trainer's calico horse to ride. To stop Romeo from smashing through the exit after them two boards were laid in the way to give him the idea of unsafe flooring and cause him to stop. The plan worked perfectly and Romeo was neatly made a prisoner.

QUEEN IN THE CEMETERY

Queen was a female elephant owned by "Popcorn" George Hall. As a rule female elephants are docile, but at times Queen would go on a rampage and cause a great deal of damage.

One time in Albany, New York, Queen wandered away from the circus grounds. A futile search by circus hands was made of her old haunts where she had previously gotten into mischief. Her keeper also searched unsuccessfully for a time, but he finally discovered her having the grandest time. She had wandered into a cemetery, where she was amusing herself by tearing up gravestones. This, however, was not her last spree.

She had caused so much trouble at different times that "Popcorn" George finally changed her name and sold her to a man in Illinois. En route she squeezed her keeper against the side of the car and killed him.

After Queen left Hall's circus she killed three or four men and was sold twice again, each time under a different name.

BIG CHARLIE

Charlie was a huge elephant weighing about three tons and thirteen feet tall. He was bought from Ringling Brothers by Colonel George Hall. At the time he was purchased he was the "lead" elephant of the herd.

Usually Big Charlie was gentle and friendly. His best friend was his trainer, Mabel Hall; in fact, she was the only one who handled him from the time of his purchase until his death, in Evansville, Wisconsin, some years later.

There are many stories told of Charlie's misdeeds. One time the great pachyderm got a splinter in his foot and suffered so from the effects that a veterinary was called to remove it. During the operation Big Charlie took him, wrapping his great trunk around the man's waist, and threw him some distance away from him. As far as the veterinary was concerned the operation was finished at that moment. He vowed never to go near the elephant again and he never did.

On another occasion a keeper entered Charlie's quarters and the animal resented his being there. Grabbing the man with his trunk, he forced him against the side of the building, then pinned him in with his tusks, which he dug into the siding of the building. The keeper, however, before he could be crushed by Charlie's mammoth head, slid to the floor and escaped.

One time before Colonel George Hall's circus took to the road, an exhibition was given at the park in Evansville, the home of the circus. Big Charlie was chained in the park, but he decided he would rather be home, so he pulled his stake and set out for his own quarters across town. The keeper tried to reason with Charlie, but to no avail, for he had definitely made up his mind that he didn't like the park. The

keeper, fearing that the animal would become angry and charge, grabbed hold of Charlie's tail and held on. On through town went Charlie, gathering speed as he lumbered along; and still hanging to his tail was the keeper.

Around the circus quarters was a fence, and as Charlie, in his untrained act, arrived, there was nothing for him to do but tear off the gate and enter. As he went past the house in which the help lived, the keeper let go of the tail and made haste to get into the house. Charlie, feeling the weight lifted from his rear appendage, stopped a moment to contemplate his next move. Near him was piled some cord wood and from this he picked up a good sized piece and flung it through the kitchen window of the building, breaking not only the glass, but the frame and sash as well.

Feeling that he have evened his score with the keeper, Charlie went straight to his own building and at once forgot his grudge. When Colonel Hall and his trainer arrived Charlie was again friendly and gentle and acted as though nothing at all had occurred.

As the years went on, Big Charlie became more unmanageable. One time he threw his trainer, Mabel Hall, and caused her many weeks of painful injury. This was the first time the elephant had ever shown unfriendliness toward her, and so for the first time she became frightened of him. Hall wanted to change Charlie's name and sell him, but the elephant had grown so hard to handle that everyone thought it advisable to kill him before he caused more damage. Charlie was made to wear brass balls on the end of his tusks to keep him from goring those who handled him and also to keep his beautiful tusks from being split.

They tried to do away with the elephant by giving him strychnine in a potato or an apple, but it had no effect on him aside from making

him slightly uncomfortable. Old Charlie began to be suspicious of this dainty fare and refused further appetizers.

He was finally given potassium cyanide in a sweet potato, a delicacy he could not resist, and in two hours he was dead. His grave was dug a short distance from the circus quarters, and after his tusks had been removed he was buried.

COCO'S PRANKS

Coco, a little elephant which the Ringlings acquired with the Barnum circus, was a ringleader in nightly pranks, and the cunning he showed was amazing. All elephants, when caught out of order, resume their places as quickly as possible. But Coco was not satisfied merely to be found in his place. He would slip his stake in just where it had been when he pulled it out and would even coil his chain around it. Then he awaited developments with the utmost composure.

Coco's superior intelligence was soon recognized by his trainer, who taught him to mount a tub seven or eight feet high and stand on it on his hind legs. One day when he was being broken in to do this act, Coco slipped and fell from the top of the tub. He lay on the ground dazed, and the men feared for a moment that he had been killed by the fall. But suddenly Coco jumped up and without waiting for a command he astonished them all by mounting the tub and doing his stand perfectly.

LITTLE CHARLIE

Charlie was a baby elephant which the Ringling circus had imported with fourteen others from the Hagenbeck-Wallace farms in Germany to be trained by Hampton for a series of baby elephant acts. From the time he was unloaded, however, he was observed to be sick, but he was the gamest little elephant on the lot. When the other babies were running around the arena, trunk clasping neighbor's tail, little Charlie couldn't bear to stand on the side lines. Sick as he was he would rush in, seize a tail, and run around the ring once or twice, falling out when he became too exhausted to continue.

With Charlie, discipline was needed to counteract his self-imposed rigor and he was kept from over doing, but he soon died despite the care given him. In his short life he won the hearts of all the elephant men.

MODOC THE BABY RASCAL

There is a belief among the negroes of the south to the effect that elephants are re-incarnations of departed African monarchs and that their wisdom, sagacity, instinct, or whatever it is that gives an elephant so wise a look, comes from a spirit that has taken up its dwelling place within the huge pachyderm.

Some of the things elephants do show they must have some means of communicating with one another.

Modoc was a baby elephant weighing only six or eight hundred pounds. He liked to eat and would consume his weight in oats if they were accessible to him. Food was kept away from all the animals, however, and given to them only at meal time. One night when the elephant house was dark, the superintendent of the big herd heard a subdued rasping noise, apparently coming from the further end of the herd. He sneaked around in back of the herd and peered cautiously over some bales of straw where Modoc was chained and there he saw Modoc lifting his stake out of the ground. It could be seen in an instant that the little rascal had had the stake out before, for all he had to do was to lift it up and out it came easily. He slipped his foot chain down over the tapering end of the stake and was free. The superintendent suspected whatever activities were about to go on had happened many times previously, but he could not understand how the young elephant was always found chained in the morning, so he decided to watch the thing through.

About twenty feet or more from Modoc's place were piled some sacks of grain weighing about one hundred pounds each. Picking up his floor chain very carefully with his trunk so that it would not rattle or jangle on the floor,

he began a most painstaking, sinuous, gliding motion across the space that separated him from the grain. When he arrived, he laid his chain down and picked up a bag of oats with his trunk. His journey back was even more cautious because he had to drag his chain without making a noise. When he reached the herd he went to great big "Babylon," who stood like a bronze statue, her massive sides looming up like the walls of a house in the gloom. Modoc stopped and Babylon took the oats. They got into the bag in no time and began their feast. Modoc filled his mouth and munched away like a man eating dry crackers on a wager. He seemed to know that his big companion in crime would eat most of the oats if he lost any time. Babylon took almost half of the bag the first time, and poor Modoc, with his mouth so full he couldn't speak, looked at her with watery eyes as much as to say, "Oh, what a hog!" and gulped oats down at the risk of choking to death.

The superintendent went back to his sleeping room and purposely made a noise. He immediately heard the shuffling of sly little Modoc as he shambled back to his place. He picked up his stake, put it down on the ground, and would have put it through the ring in the chain if he had had time. When the superintendent came along, Modoc was leaning against the wall fast asleep. He gave him a gentle prod, and he awakened suddenly, looking at the superintendent with a sleepy stare. He was ordered to open his mouth but refused to do so. Finally he obeyed, and there were the oats. His keeper didn't do anything to Modoc but went over to Babylon, who was playing possum too. He had trouble in waking her and more trouble in making her open her mouth. She did, however, much to her chagrin. Her mouth was full, not only of oats, but she had the empty sack closely rolled up and packed in too! For punishment she was ordered to sit down and open her mouth while her keeper made a motion as to pass a great pair of forceps into it. She had had a painful operation sometime before and was very fearful of the forceps. She shut her mouth and cried like a baby and was so thoroughly frightened that she never trespassed again, but that rascal Modoc continued to get loose and get into mischief whenever he could.

SNYDER THE CLOWN

One of the favorite baby elephant acts in Ringling Brothers Circus was one that a German trainer taught to Snyder, who later grew to be the famous killer and was shot. The act was done with a special little bed which had been made for him. He was trained to get into it, lie down, and pull the sheet and blanket over his head. In a few seconds he would begin to slap himself, kick off the covers, get up, and run about in frenzied fashion. Then going back to the bed the baby elephant would remove a large wooden "bedbug," drop it on the floor and step on it. This stunt was very popular with circus audiences.

The usual baby elephant stunts were to have the animals trot around the arena and come to a halt at the entry, each one raising his right foot and putting his trunk on the back of the one ahead of him. They were also trained to walk in line, each one holding on to the tail of the preceding one; this was the parade procedure.

INGENIOUS BALDY

"Baldy, the largest elephant ever known in captivity, has half a car to ride in himself. The elephants are usually loaded by means of a huge gangplank, or runway, fastened to the door sill of the car and reaching to the ground, a distance of thirty feet. Up this incline the elephants walk and take their places in the car. Baldy found that he could get into his car much easier in his own way than in the way that had been provided, but not being able to talk, there was nothing he could do about it. He couldn't explain that the roof was too low and that he bumped his head every time he went in. Despairing of being able to explain these things, he reasoned out a plan. He simply stepped off the gangplank one night, put his huge head under it, and shoved it out of the way. Then, before the keepers could imagine what he was about to do, he walked to the car door, raised his forefeet in the air, planted them firmly within the car and slowly climbed in. By removing the gangplank he had all the height from the ground to the door sill gained. He could then put his head in first, then his forefeet, and then scramble in at ease without bumping his gigantic head. Since that time he has always loaded himself into the car in his own way.

"The spirit of emulation is strong in an elephant. The smaller members of the herd saw Baldy get into the car that way and they all wanted to try it. It wasn't necessary for them, but nevertheless they wanted to do it that way. The only trouble was that they were not big enough to do the trick, so they were satisfied to take the big plank back again after they had tried it once.

"The elephant herd walks up the runway by its own volition and invariably takes its place in the line. If the leader is not there, not

having arrived from the lot, the others will wait until he comes. As soon as he goes up the walk, the others will follow him like so many sheep."

From Route Book 1897

BALDY TO THE RESCUE

Bessie Rooney, the ten year old sister of Mike Rooney, the rider, came near being hugged to death by a bear when Baldy, the largest of the elephant herd, knocked the big brute down and saved the child's life.

The bear, who was known as "Growler," had a vicious temper. He was chained near the elephants. The little girl had made friends with the elephants and was romping with some of them when "Growler" seized her and closed his paws around her slender form.

Baldy, who had been an interested spectator, brought his trunk down with crushing force on "Growler's" head. The bear was stunned by the blow and released the child, who had fainted. The elephant picked her up and placed her out of harm's way.

THE WALTZING ELEPHANTS

Mr. Charles Hampten's predecessor with Ringling Brothers had trained a group of eight older elephants to do a waltz step around the arena together. As they grew older, however, and as younger animals replaced them, the stunt was abandoned and they were used only to march in the parades.

One day just for fun Mr. Hampten took the old waltzing group into the arena and gave them the old commands for their stunt. Much to his surprise they remembered all of it, began to waltz, and enjoyed it so much that they kept going around and around the circle, loath to stop. Finally the delighted Hampted put them back with the herd and, on seeing the old trainer, told him of the accomplishment. He was amazed that the old animals should have remembered the act after the many years that had elapsed. He asked Hampten to bring them out again that evening, and when he, too, saw how well they remembered their act he was delighted and decided that they should be allowed to repeat it as often as they wished.

THE ACHING TOOTH

The circus veterinary has to be a very versatile person, picking up many tricks in the treatment of wild animals as he cares for them. But much of the treatment bears some resemblance to that to which human beings are subjected. Even the teeth of the elephants are filled or pulled, but with forceps as large as ice tongs and augmented with power. One time one of the Ringling Brothers' big bull elephants was observed to have a seeming appetite, but great hesitancy in eating. Examination revealed a swollen gum surrounding a rotten tooth, which the veterinary thought would have to come out. An elephant hasn't many teeth; however, each tooth is about the size of a man's fist, or larger, so they are very hard to pull. The elephant often resents the treatment and goes on a rampage.

Therefore, this particular time it was thought best to fill the tooth. Huge instruments, which required both hands to handle, were brought out, and the elephant was taken out of the menagerie tent so that his uneasiness would not alarm the other members of the herd. He seemed to know that something was to be done to relieve his pain, and after a few kind words from his keeper he was told to sit down on the ground almost in a recumbent position and he obeyed. Then he was commanded to lift his head and raise his trunk, but he dropped it when he understood that he was to open his mouth. His pitiful little trumpeting told how he was suffering and begging his keepers not to add to his pain. After much coaxing and petting he opened his mouth and the veterinary cleaned the cavity very carefully. It would have held a good sized lemon easily. The nerve was almost exposed and pain must have been almost maddening, but although he trumpeted shrilly at times and whined almost incessantly,

he never offered to strike his doctors with his trunk, nor did he show any inclination to flinch from the ordeal.

Amalgam was put into the tooth as rapidly and gently as possible till it was filled, the inflamed gum was washed with a soothing carbolic lotion, and the job was done. The big pachyderm seemed to realize that his troubles were over, for he trumpeted his joy in a very different note as he trotted back to his place in the herd.

ELEPHANT TRICKS

When the elephants retire for the night the herd spreads out to such an extent that often there is not room for all to lie down. When this happens, the one left standing waits until his neighbors are asleep. Then he reaches out a sly foot and stamps on the ear of the one nearest him. Up jumps the terrified elephant, and perhaps one or two others are roused by the sudden commotion. This gives the guilty party his chance to grab a bed for himself and let someone else be "it."

On Sunday nights the show stays on the lot, and invariably some mischief results in spite of the watchfulness of the attendants. Sometimes two or three elephants pull their stakes and sneak over to the cookhouse, where they eat all the bread they can find and any orangeade that may be left in the barrel. If they are caught in their stealing they run back to their places with guilty hast, and they usually get punished.

The night attendants make a bed for themselves by shaking out seven or eight bales of hay which are to be used the next day and spreading their blankets upon it. They go to bed hoping that the elephants will sleep so they can too. But more than likely they will soon be awakened by feeling their "mattress" slowly oozing out from under them. As soon as he sees he has been detected in his hay-stealing, the culprit shambles back to his place in the herd.

One time, "hustlers" who accompanied the Holland and Gormely's Circus through Iowa slept in the end of the animal car and had some queer experiences the first four nights. An elephant kept putting his trunk through the doorway and pulling the quilts off and shoving the boys onto the floor. His chain was shortened after that, and the boys slept undisturbed.

THE AGE OF ELEPHANTS

Contrary to the popular conception, elephants do not attain a much greater age than do human beings; they rarely live longer than 80 or 90 years, though instances of their living to be 125 years old have been known.

The life cycle of the elephants also correspond in general to that of the human being. Youth extends to about twenty years, middle life to about fifty or sixty years, and old age sets in thereafter. One old elephant in Ringling Brothers Circus became unable to lift her trunk to her mouth, so the keepers stood by and lifted it for her when she had filled it with water or had picked up a mouthful of food. Like humans, the elephants become stiff and slow as they get older. They are then used only for parades and pensioned off, as it were, for the balance of their lives.

The way to tell the approximate age of an Indian elephant is to observe the ear at the top where it turns over. Every inch that the ear is folded forward represents about thirty years' growth.

ELEPHANTS FEAR MICE

In India, the natural habitat of the circus elephant, there is a small animal resembling our mouse, which feeds on the berries of the same lowland bush from which the elephants graze. The tiny rodents, unlike the mice of America, have barbed claws, arrow tipped like a bee's stinger. When the unwary elephant thrusts his trunk into the bushes and contacts one of these small "mice," the terrified little animal will often run up the inside of the trunk. His barbed claws sink deep into the sensitive tissues of the elephants nose. The frightened pachyderm rushes about trying to blow the obstruction out, but it is stuck fast. It rots and then causes the death of the elephant if he has not already killed himself in his insanity. Because of his fear of this small Indian rodent and his terror of anything getting into his trunk, elephants are said to be afraid of mice.

"OUR ANNIE"

When Al Ringling gave the Madison Zoo its elephant, one of Ringlings' bull trainers, "Baraboo Red" Hampten, was called over to the railroad siding near Coney Island to load the animal selected for shipment. It had been decided to give the zoo a middle-aged female named Alice. She was separated from the herd and boarded into a box car where Hampten left her for the night. The next morning the trainer was called again to come down and see the damage Alice had wrought. As is often the case, she had become lonesome for the herd and had smashed the side of the car and returned to the other animals. Thereupon it was decided that it would be more practical to ship a smaller elephant, and so a young female of sixteen years, named Annie, was successfully loaded and sent.

This was in July, 1918. Annie's life story is not one of color and glamour. She was never trained for the sawdust ring, but had a more prosaic duty of pulling stakes and pushing wagons. Yet, in the years she has lived in Vilas Park her gentle manners and good humor have given amusement and joy to a legion of annual visitors.

When Annie arrived at her new home she was put in the same building with the lions and tigers and at first resented their growls and roars, but in time she became accustomed to her new surroundings and even became less lonesome for the herd as the attention of the public took her interest.

At times Annie would lose her good nature and become just a little less friendly toward her admirers. At such times she would be given an oil bath in two gallons of oil to soften her skin and make her more comfortable. But though this treatment was soothing it made her

cold, and she would shiver for a day or so afterward. In 1924 the zoo solved the problem of keeping Annie completely happy at all times by building a summer yard for her. Here she could dig into the dirt to her heart's content. Every day she would give herself a complete mud bath and rinse herself off with the fresh running water that was installed for her special use. Since that time her skin has become softer than the oil treatments made it and she has not had to run the risk of catching cold due to them.

The only time Annie ever caused her keepers any inconvenience or trouble was one spring when she was to be moved to her summer yard for the season. There is a step down of about ten inches from her winter quarters to the ground and Annie refused to take it. She was coaxed and teased to leave but would not budge. Finally she was forced out, inch by inch, with the help of a block and tackle. It was believed that she had stumbled on the step the preceding fall when she was being taken inside and she had not forgotten.

During the winter months Annie has a voracious appetite and thinks of nothing else but food. The zoo buys her food in large amounts, and the cost of feeding her is about sixty-five or seventy cents a day. Each day she consumes one hundred pounds of timothy hay, one-half bushel of carrots or sixteen quarts of ground oats, ten or twelve loaves of bread, and all the peanuts and crackerjack the public will feed her. In the summer time the public takes her attention from her stomach and she eats a little less.

Despite Annie's few human frailities, she is, in the words of her keeper, "One of the quietest and most agreeable elephants in any zoo."

MENAGERIE STORIES

MENAGERIE STORIES

DOONEY THE LION

Dooney was a lion cub raised on a bottle by Popcorn George Hall. He slept behind the stove just as peacefully as any domestic cat and grew to be a beautiful and enormous animal as well as a very friendly one.

A man by the name of Devendorf, who was one of the circus personnel, became one of Dooney's special friends. One time when the circus was out on the road it did not return to Evansville for two years. When it did come in for a winter season Devendorf went down to see Dooney. He stopped near the cage first to talk with a keeper. As he did so he heard a great howling and fuss coming from Dooney's cage. When he went up to the lion, which had recognized his voice before seeing him, the huge cat seemed overjoyed. Devendorf went inside the cage, and the lion put his paws on the man's shoulders and licked his face in affection.

In the cage next to Dooney's were three vicious inbred lions. As Devendorf backed out of the cage one of these ferocious animals reached out and clawed him, literally tearing off his trousers.

Dooney was later sold to the New York Zoo.

TIGERS ON A LARK

One time when the Hollands were with the Hagenbeck Circus they were riding in the parade directly behind a cage that held two Bengal tigers. Suddenly a wheel came off the tiger wagon and spilled the two big beasts into the street. Since tigers will attack animals first, all those driving horses drove away to shelter as fast as they could.

A short distance from the parade grounds a washing hung on the line. The two tigers walked over to the line and lay on their backs clawing the washing until there was nothing left of it. Then one tiger spotted a woman standing in a window watching the performance. He walked over to the house, put his paws on the window sill, and stared back at the frightened woman.

Trouble was anticipated in recovering the animals. All roustabouts available were given a side wall of canvas to hold, and gradually they surrounded the tigers and closed in on them. They guided the canvas back to the wagon, and the beasts walked into their cages without further ado. The wheel was replaced and the parade continued with only twenty minutes lost.

BISMARK ON A SPREE

What would have been only a funny incident, had it not been for the imminent danger that attended it, resulted from the combination of Bismark---a big black bear---and a quart of brandy.

Shortly after the animals and trappings of the circus had been moved from the trains to Tattersalls in Chicago, it was discovered that Bismark was rolling about the bottom of his cage in apparent agony, moaning and groaning like a human being. The veterinary was called, and he diagnosed the case as a severe attack of colic and prescribed brandy and peppermint. In the meantime the bear had been taken out of the cage and chained to an iron girder in the menagerie building, where he could be more easily treated. The assistant who was to administer the medicine misunderstood the directions and gave the entire prescription. The bear immediately seemed to be much relieved by this heroic treatment and lay contentedly with his nose on the ground for a few moments. Then, without the slightest warning, Bismark let out a mighty growl, leaped from the ground, jumped forward, his tremendous weight breaking the chain, and went cavorting against a cage. Then he picked himself up and went on a wild, staggering run around the side of the building, knocking against everything in his way and all the while setting up great howls of joy.

The noise soon brought everybody to that part of the building where Bismark was holding his celebration. Since it was hopeless to try to capture the inebriate in such a condition, the attendants armed themselves with clubs and after the bear had reeled about for more than a half-hour, managed to worry him back and forth against the side wall until he sought a corner

and went to sleep. After he had gone to sleep he was rolled up in a tarpaulin and deposited in his cage.

During the drunken spree the bear acted very much like an intoxicated man. He leered cunningly and hiccoughed, and only by the dexterous use of their clubs were the attendants able to keep the big brown toper from hugging them. One of Bismark's circus tricks was to carry a gun while walking on his hind legs, and this trick he performed with a pole during the course of his spree.

JIGS THE APE

Jigs was a great ape owned by the Al G. Barnes circus. One time one of the girl performers going past Jig's cage noticed that he was holding his hand on his jaw, apparently in pain. She told the trainer, who promised to take care of Jigs right away. The next day, however, Jigs was still holding his jaw when the girl passed and she again notified the trainer. The following day, seeing the ape still in pain, the girl went to the blacksmith shop, got some pliers, and extracted the tooth. From then on Jigs was devoted to the girl.

Often during the morning Jigs was let out of his cage and allowed to roam about the lot. He always made directly for the girl who had helped him, and as she sat writing letters or mending her costume Jigs would climb into her lap and enjoy himself. One day the girl was dressed in street clothes, and when Jigs hopped onto her lap she pushed him off. The ape fell to the ground, squealing and crying. He soon collected himself, and realizing why he could not sit upon her lap on this occasion, he disappeared, soon returning with a newspaper, which he spread upon the girl's lap and then jumped up with a clear conscience.

POP LOSES PATIENCE

In Popcorn Hall's menagerie were three ugly tigers. One time one of these big cats got loose and took refuge under the cage. This was during the winter when the cages were housed in a building. An attempt was made to get the tiger into a "run-box" and thence back into his cage. This was at first of no avail, and besides, everyone was afraid to move for fear the cat would leap. Finally Pop lost his patience and demanded his shotgun. It is an old trick of trainers to frighten lions and tigers by firing a blank cartridge or gun powder into their eyes to temporarily blind them. But Pop didn't take into consideration that shooting off gunpowder might start a fire in the building. It took some argument to keep the angry owner from firing his gun. Finally, three keepers managed to corner the animal and force it into the chute and back to the cage.

LEOPARD ESCAPES

One time a leopard owned by the Col. George Hall Circus escaped. Several people saw him, and soon an armed posse of local men was formed to run him down. "Pop" Hall warned the men to be careful since they did not know the habits of the cat. The leopard finally took to a tree in a woods near Magnolia, Wisconsin. The woods was on the property of "Old Man Hess." He was a cantankerous old soul and resented the intrusion of man or beast on his property. Despite warnings, he took his axe with the intentions of chopping down the tree and the animal. He hadn't gotten far with his chopping when the leopard leaped from the tree and landed on him, clawing him severely. The cat was finally shot. As soon as "Old Man Hess" recovered he brought suit against Hall but was not successful.

THE TIGER AND THE LAW

One time when Mr. Al Priddy was traveling with the Hagenbeck Circus and showing in Brooklyn, New York, he was asked to bring a circus animal with him and to speak to about 4,500 school children. So he went to the manager and said, "I'd like a tiger, please." "All right," said the manager, "help yourself."

Priddy took a twelve months old tiger cub in his arms without bothering to put a collar on it. He walked to the gate, and seeing a small coupe waiting there, he assumed it had been sent to pick him up. So he got in with the cub on his lap and waited for the driver. Soon two men came out. The driver spied the cub and climbed forthwith into the rumble seat. He had originally intended the circus man and the cub to sit there. The other man had not yet seen the tiger and said to the car owner, "Do you want me to drive?" The other assured him that he did.

When the driver spied the cub he was too frightened to move. He asked Priddy if the cub was perfectly safe and well in hand. Priddy said everything was all right with him and the cub; and he asked the driver if he had the car well in hand, meaning that he should mind his own business and drive on.

They started off and when they had gone about two miles a parade appeared with its band playing lustily. The cub became excited, and with its paws up on the dash board and its head out of the window it growled in satisfaction and delight.

At that moment the driver stopped his car just where he was, almost in the middle of the street, and made some excuse about getting some

cigarettes. He was gone a long time, and after a while the clatter of hoofs was heard approaching the car. The horse stopped and, looking out, Priddy saw the biggest Irish cop he had ever seen in his life. The cop roared, "DON'T YE KNOW YE CAN'T PARK HERE? WHY DON'T YE GET MOVIN'? ALL RIGHT, DRIVE OVER TO TH' POLICE STATION!" In answer to the police threats Priddy tickled the stomach of the young tiger, who spread out its paws and hissed and growled in the direction of the law. In less than a second the horse's hoofs were heard fading in the distance.

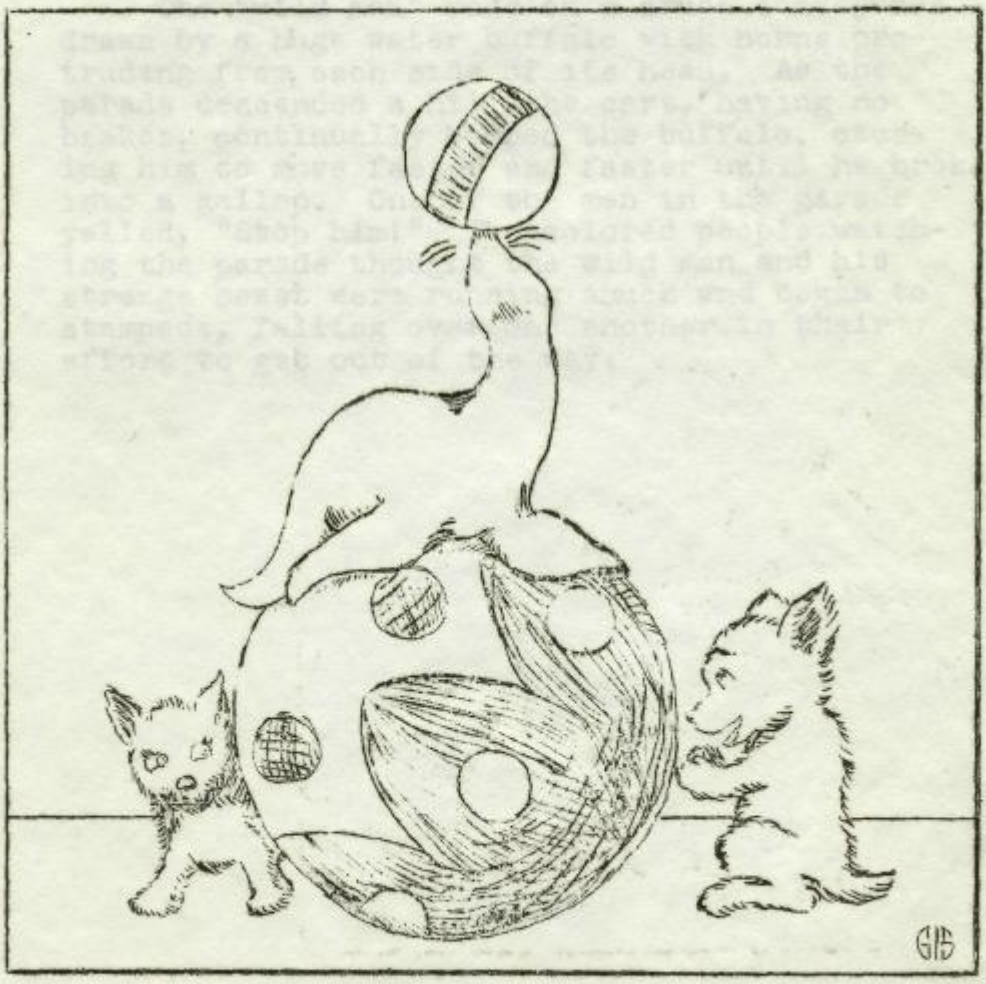
PYTHON AT LARGE

Old "Popcorn" Hall of Evansville spent one winter in bed as the result of a broken hip administered by the wrath of Charlie, his elephant. Among Hall's circus stock was a twenty-three-foot python and a marmoset, which he kept in the house where it was warm. The snake was kept in a box behind the stove and it awakened about once a month to eat. On such occasions it was fed a few pigeons.

One time the local doctor came to see how Pop was progressing. During his call the python awakened, and since he received no attention he set about to create some. The doctor, hearing a noise coming from behind the stove, saw a blanket rising up over the top of the box. Soon the blanket stretched out over the edge, and in a moment the head of the python emerged. The doctor made haste for the first exit and in doing so knocked over the monkey cage. Monkeys are frightened to death of snakes, and this little marmoset set a speed record in alighting on great-grandpop's picture, where he chattered the insult to anyone who would lend an ear. The room was vacated except for Pop, the python, and the chattering marmoset. And the circus man, not being able to move, could do nothing but call for some of the animal keepers to come to his aid. One man heard his calls, but when he found the python loose he refused to assist in re-incarcerating the wanderer. The scene that followed continued to be hectic. Pop was swearing at the keeper and telling him that the *!!--***! snake was harmless, that Lou (his wife) had handled it hundreds of times and had never been bitten. The monkey, who had transferred himself to the chandelier, was screaming and chattering as loud and fast as he could. With threats and imprecations Pop finally induced the man to get the snake into its box. When the helper picked it up, the snake

struck its head against his hand, and thinking he had been bitten, the man threw the snake into the box and ran out the door screaming after the fast departing doctor.

OTHER STORIES



OTHER STORIES

ZULA THE WILD MAN

One season when the John Robinson Circus was showing in Georgia, it had a giant colored fellow made up as Zula, the wild man, with a ring in his nose, big earrings, red rings around his eyes and lips, and with his hair standing on end. He had two huge teeth hanging down. These had been made from tooth brush handles. Except for a leopard skin, he was naked.

The "wild man" rode on a crude conveyance drawn by a huge water buffalo with horns protruding from each side of its head. As the parade descended a hill the cart, having no brakes, continually bumped the buffalo, causing him to move faster and faster until he broke into a gallop. One of the men in the parade yelled, "Stop him!" The colored people watching the parade thought the wild man and his strange beast were running amuck and began to stampede, falling over one another in their effort to get out of the way.

CAPTAIN SIGBY'S HORSE

Captain Sigby was one of the greatest horse trainers in the show world. At one time he trained ponies for the Seible Brothers Circus at Watertown, Wisconsin, and later trained horses for Joe Greer. At one time he gave Greer a high school, or trained, horse which for years put on the most unusual act ever seen in the ring.

One of the animal's accomplishments was picking cards off a rack, the numbers being called by the trainer. Here the horse depended on the trainer's finger for his cues, and so delicate was his nervous mechanism that the movement of the finger one inch to the right or left sent him the length of the rack.

This amazing animal also rang chimes, playing three tunes by pressing his nose on pads. He played the last three notes in one tune faster than the trainer could give the cues. His next feat was working a cash register, picking out with his teeth the money called for and carrying it to his trainer.

The most unique trick in his repertoire, however, was telling colors blindfolded. His trainer would pass among the crowd and ask the horse whether the coat he had picked out was red, black, blue, or white. At the right color the horse would nod his head. The inflection of the trainer's voice gave the animal his cue.

ZAZEL "THE HUMAN BULLET"

History repeats itself in the circus business as well as in anything else, according to a scrap book, musty with age, owned by Mr. and Mrs. George Holland of Delavan, Wisconsin. The book contains a double page of clippings about Zazel, who did the cannon act back in the eighties. The present cannon act of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus is a sensation, but in those old days it must have been ever more sensational to see a woman shot into the air, catching a bar at the top of the tent.

Many were the "wise cracks" told and asked about Zazel at that time. An inquisitive visitor at Barnum's circus asked whether Zazel "powders in a cannon." He was questioned, "Why?" To this he answered, "Because she comes out with a puff." Another "wise crack" was, "Does she complete her toilet in the cannon?" The answer was, "Yes, she must. She comes out with bangs."

The success of this daring act required that the person in the cannon hold himself stiff, or else the body might double up in there due to the force of the explosion.

"BIG BEAUTIFUL BOY"

Babe, a horse owned by Marshall Field & Company in Chicago, was often referred to as "big beautiful boy." He used to take the money wagon back and forth from the wholesalers to the retailers and to the bank. He was bought when very young and spent his life in the loop, hearing nothing but the roar of traffic and seeing nothing but tall unfriendly buildings about him.

While George Holland and his wife, Rose Dockrill, were showing a horse act at the Great Northern Theater in Chicago, then known as the Great Northern Hippodrome, they saw Babe on the street. He was such a beautiful, finely built fellow that they followed him to Field's. The next morning Holland went to Field's to see if he could buy the horse for his act. The driver said he was not for sale, at the same time taking out the daily apple that he had brought for his pet. Holland persisted, going to the store every morning for several days.

Finally, the Vice President said he would talk to him. Asking Holland how much work the horse would have to do, he learned that he would be ridden by Mrs. Holland and that the act lasted only ten minutes, showing twice a day. That night the executive went to the theater to see the equestrian act and was so pleased that he promised to sell Babe. He sold the animal at a ridiculously low price and during the transaction said that he had planned to replace Babe with a truck and that he didn't want his "big beautiful boy" to work hard.

Babe's first trip out of Chicago was to Carthage, Ohio, just outside of Cincinnati. Here Holland took him out of the railroad car

to walk him around so that he might get accustomed to space. Because of the great space and the glare of the sunlight, which the animal had never before known, he became so frightened and bewildered that his legs spread out so that he literally walked on his stomach. Every muscle in his body quivered. The animal was wringing wet, and Holland thought he would die of heart failure before he could get him back to the car again.

With continued patience and kindness Babe was eventually trained, and he made his initial performance at the Toronto Fair. The Hollands expected him to be frightened and forget his act, for he was a high-strung horse. But as the curtain rose, Babe stood perfectly still, watching it disappear from sight. He did his act as perfectly as a correctly timed machine.

Babe was the only horse Holland ever knew that would raise his head to watch things. He would stand for hours watching the fireworks at the fair; or he would see the reflections of people walking over transoms and would watch them go by; or if he happened to be led past the hotel in which his mistress was staying, and she called to him, he would look up, tracing her voice until he found her.

In the ring on one occasion Babe fell, throwing his rider. Holland was pinned under one of Babe's legs, and to avoid crushing his master Babe held his other leg in the air until someone arrived to rescue the trainer.

Three years after Babe had been purchased by Holland he was struck by lightning while playing at a fair in Watertown, Wisconsin. The fair was supposed to have ended on Friday and the horse act was to have moved for the next stand, but due to the popularity of the equestrian attraction the manager persuaded Holland to remain and give a performance on Saturday.

During breakfast the next morning a terrific storm came up, and as Mr. Holland looked out of the window he saw a bolt strike, knocking

the chickens head over heels in the farm yard. A few minutes later the groom came running from the stables,---Babe had been struck by lightning!

FRANK'S ANIMAL CIRCUS

For years George Hall, Jr, featured a talking pig act. He was the only trainer to have such an act, and so well did he keep his secret for training the pigs that not even his sons could learn it.

Finally one of the sons, Frank, made up his mind that he was going to have a talking pig act too, and he went ahead and trained his hogs. His father knew nothing of it until he attended his son's opening stand. He asked Frank how he learned to train pigs, and Frank confessed that he had learned by watching his father through a knot hole in the barn. Training domestic animals became a specialty of Frank's after that.

There were two acts performed by domestic animals in Frank's Animal Circus. In the first were two hogs, a sheep, a goat, and an airdale dog. The high light of the act was the goat walking a tight rope high in the air. She would walk all the way across and back, then walk out to the middle again and make a complete turn. In the same act the hogs jumped hurdles, the goat rolled a barrel, and the sheep and goat seesawed. For the grand finale all the animals climbed a tall ladder and slid down a chute.

The second act was performed by four dogs and three ponies. It opened with equestrian dogs jumping from the ring onto the backs of ponies. Next the ponies jumped hurdles, the dogs jumping bars and landing on the ponies' backs while they were on the dead run. Both of these acts in "Frank's Animal Circus" were considered very unusual.

THE PARADE PASSES

W. C. Coup's circus was scheduled to appear in an eastern city. The press man had gone before, putting up gay, glamorous billboards and streamers, which declared to big-eyed, wonder-filled little boys that upon a certain day the circus was coming to town.

Not the least to be excited and thrilled was a wee lad who had counted much on seeing the circus. In fact, he had not only counted the days, but his pennies too, for a long long time; and now only a few days were left to count! Many a lollypop he had gone without, but wasn't this glorious event worth it? There would be the tigers, the elephants, the ponies, and the band, to say nothing of the trapeze artists and the clowns. And best of all there would be the parade!

At last only a week remained, and then--- But alas, all his dreams came tumbling down; the pennies were no longer needed---He was sick abed.

So keen was his disappointment that he wrote a letter to W. C. Coup, manager of the circus, and asked if he might have just a picture or a billboard to "kinda make up for missing the circus."

W. C. Coup, upon receipt of the heart-tugging letter, ordered the entire circus parade to march two miles out of its regular route so as to pass by the home of the sick lad.

WISCONSIN CIRCUS OWNERS AND PERFORMERS

BARABOO

Al Ringling

Al Ringling was the oldest and most loved of the Ringling Brothers. In Baraboo, the town which has seen him evolve from a small boy holding "pin shows" on a Saturday afternoon to the greatest power in the circus world, his name is highly respected. Al believed that the roughest canvas-men helped him make his shows a success; and he never turned away from them lest, in so doing, he might be guilty of an injustice to one of the innumerable roustabouts who, for thirty years, helped to make Ringlings known throughout the world.

One time in the early days when Al and a performer were traveling together, they came to a small town on the shores of the Mississippi in northern Wisconsin. They had given a performance the previous night and it had not been very successful financially. They were unable to pay their hotel bill, so the proprietor attached their baggage, one trunk. A boat was about to leave and the actors wanted very much to be passengers on it; but unless they could take their necessary stage properties, which were housed in the trunk, it was useless to think of it. The proprietor, suspecting their desires, kept an eagle-eye on them. Suddenly Al conceived an idea and asked, "Wasn't that awful about the man being murdered here in town last night?" The old eagle-eyed one said he hadn't heard the news. "You'll find out all about it in the paper," Al told him. As the

old proprietor entered a nearby room to get the paper, the two artists grabbed their trunks, ran post-haste, and made the boat.

The First Showing In Baraboo, As Told By Al Ringling

"I started out a small hall show with a few people and playing small towns, and at times it was something of a struggle to get from one town to another. At that time I would send a man ahead two or three days before the show and post small dodgers about four inches wide and six inches long. He would leave about a dozen in each of the stores. This was the only billing the show got.

"Along in the season we showed Oregon, Wisconsin, and from there we were going to Baraboo. Well, we landed Oregon with little money and after the show had only enough to pay for our hall and hotel bill and nothing to get to Baraboo on. I did some talking with the agent, who finally agreed to let us "go on our trunks," the trunks to be held by the railroad company until the money was paid. There was no possible way to get the trunks until the doors opened for the evening, and then we had to take chances on the receipts. I opened the doors early and had a dray near the entrance, and as soon as we had taken enough I went to the depot with the old horse and dray to get the baggage. Of course we were late in opening and the boys were stamping their feet and whistling. As soon as the baggage arrived we announced there would be a delay because of the baggage not arriving on time, but of course I didn't tell them the real reason."

John Ringling

John Ringling was reputed, according to Dunn and Bradstreet, to have been worth $90,000,000 fifteen years ago. He was the advance agent of the show and knew every little town and hamlet in the United States. He was a shrewd investor, and among his enterprises was a road

connecting two belt lines through Texas. This road ran through oil fields which Ringling developed. He built the town of Ringling along this road.

One time when John Ringling happened to be in the town of Ringling, he was sitting around the hotel lobby talking with eight other men. Staying at the hotel was a prospector who came to John and said that he was down and out, but had an option on an oil field, which he would sell for one thousand dollars. John did not have much faith in the worth of the field but got busy and talked each of the men into buying a share at one hundred dollars. The eight hundred dollars was offered the prospector, who signed over his rights to the field. In less than six weeks this field was sold for one million dollars.

Henry Ringling

Henry Ringling, one of the younger brothers, took Otto's place as treasurer and head ticket man when that brother died. Mr. Foley of the Great Northern Nursery Co., Baraboo, returned to that city one fall and found the weather to be unusually cold and a frost threatening forty-two thousand small apple trees about two feet tall. If they were to be saved for early spring delivery it was necessary that they be dug up instantly and put into a sheltering warehouse. Only that afternoon remained, and he had only a team or two. They could not possibly operate the heavy mechanical digger, which had to be drawn under the trees to a depth of eighteen inches, thus severing still deeper roots. It so happened that day the circus arrived in town, its winter quarters. Mr. Foley went to Henry Ringling and related his troubles. Henry loaned him all the heavy working horses and laborers he needed. Before night every one of the forty-two thousand trees was safely sheltered in the warehouses. The next day Mr. Foley returned to Henry's home and asked for the bill. Henry asked that a box of twelve cent, not five

cent, cigars be given to the laborers who had helped to take in the trees. "Take 'em down to the boys; that'll do," he said.

DELAVAN

William C. Coup

It was W. C. Coup of Delavan, Wisconsin, not Barnum, who first conceived the idea of the three-ring circus. Coup began his circus career by working with small circuses. Later he joined the Mabie Brothers Circus of Delavan, obtaining side show privileges. In 1868 he went with the Yankee Robinson Show, becoming assistant manager.

In 1870 Coup was inspired to put on a mammoth circus larger than anything that had been attempted. This great undertaking could not be done without financial aid and the name of a well-established circus executive and owner. Thus it was that he wrote to Barnum, then in semi-retirement in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Barnum was sixty years old at this time and did not feel inclined to organize a great traveling attraction. But Coup worked upon his vanity and gained the desired result.

Receiving Barnum's letter of encouragement, Coup went to New York and as general director and manager put together the greatest circus ever seen under the largest spread of canvas.

The show opened in Brooklyn on April 10, 1871, and that season it broke all records to date for profit, making four hundred thousand dollars. Coup's idea being a success, his prolific brain gave birth to more ways of expanding the show business, and he made arrangements with leading railroads to run excursions from towns within a radius of seventy-five miles to New York and the New England states. Now

attendance possibilities were tremendously increased, and for the first time the railroad entered the story. Thus had Coup put his finger unerringly on the disadvantage of wagon show transportation. It was impossible to always go from one large town to another, and he reasoned that if receipts in towns of all sizes varied from one thousand to seven thousand dollars daily, the intake in larger places was often three or four times as much. He thought that if they could put the show on rails they would be able to make the larger towns and could then expect the smaller surrounding towns to come to them.

When he had interested railroad officials in the proposition, the idea was given a trial, and New Brunswick, New Jersey, was fixed upon as the first loading place. Sixty-one cars were contracted for. The first attempts were almost a failure because the cars were not uniform in size and many were not large enough to hold the heavy wagons. Barnum wanted Coup to abandon the innovation, but Coup insisted on going through with it. During that first week Coup declared that he never took his clothes off his back from the first day until the show reached Philadelphia. All during this hectic week the railroad departments did everything in their power to put this new type of transportation across. Soon special cars were built and the circus was revolutionized.

After two record breaking seasons of Barnums Greatest Show on Earth, Coup planned a great indoor Hippodrome in New York City. He secured an option on a site between Madison and Fourth Avenues and Twenty-Sixth and Twenty-Seventh Streets and sold stock in what he called the New York Hippodrome, later to become famous as Madison Square Garden. The New York Hippodrome opened April 27, 1874.

The next spring Coup was obliged to take a continental trip for his health. When he returned he found that Barnum had allowed two different showmen to use his name; this confused the public and proved bad for business.

Coup's next enterprise was to build the New York Aquarium in partnership with Charles Reiche, a famous animal dealer. The two men could not get along, however; and finally, failing to agree, Coup lost his entire holdings on the toss of a coin and calmly walked off the property.

For several years Coup ran his own shows with some success until 1882, when, with his W. C. Coup's Monster Shows, at the time one of the largest on the road, he ran into terrifically bad weather. Then on August 19 a railroad smash-up placed him in a bad way financially. From this blow Coup never fully recovered. His shows degenerated until he ended his brilliant career by running a ten cent museum on the small town sidings. In 1891 he retired to his home in Delavan and later died in poverty in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1895.

Barnum's name lives for posterity because he took credit during his lifetime for everything glamorous and symbolic of the show man's world, the sawdust ring. He thrived on publicity. He was such a unique, picturesque character that those about him, no matter what their status, paled alongside the color of his conversation, his perseverance through repeated failures, his kindly deeds, and lovable personality. Coup, on the contrary, avoided personal publicity, and for that reason his name is unknown except to students of circus literature, now mostly out of print and unattainable to the general public.

Adopted from Railroad Man's Magazine. Published by the Frank A. Munsey Company, New York.

Elise Kennebel Dockrill

Elise Dockrill was acclaimed---by Barnum and Bailey---the "Empress of the Arena." She was the greatest bareback rider the world has

ever known and was born in France, where her family traveled with the Franconi Circus. She learned to ride when she was very young and soon became the star performer with the circus, traveling all over Europe. In 1870 she married Richard Dockrill, an Irish lad from Cork, Ireland, who was a bareback rider traveling with a circus in France.

The young couple combined forces and became known as the "Great London Show." Two years later they brought their show to America and joined P. T. Barnum just a few days before the great fire that burned the museum and animal quarters to the ground. At this time Richard Dockrill's special feature was the exhibition of ten remarkably trained stallions. Mme. Dockrill drove four galloping horses at one time, riding bareback or standing astride them.

While loading the company's stock on board ship at Brest, France, one of Elise Dockrill's favorite horses had its back broken, and on the way over, the crated horses were washed overboard by the high seas. With the burning of properties and costumes and the severe loss of the horses, the young riders were badly handicapped at the start in a new country.

They took a position with the John Wilson Show in San Francisco, where they remained until Barnum had reëstablished his circus. They returned to him, and Mme. Dockrill became a headliner, while her husband was equestrian director.

In 1880 the Dockrills set out for South America with a show of their own. For finances they took one hundred thousand dollars in currency in a small trunk. Though the show was well received, their expenses exceeded their profits, and they returned with the little trunk empty and the whole circus personnel ill with yellow fever.

During a performance in Venezuela, programs were printed on white satin, in honor of the president's attendance. Mme. Dockrill went successfully through her sensational perform-

ance, dashing through paper balloons and over banners, winning thunderous applause for her skill. The act ended with her springing on and off her horse as he galloped at full speed around the ring. Making her final jump from her horse, Elise suddenly crumpled to the ground. She had stepped into a small depression made by her horse and had dislocated her knee. It was never again strong enough to support her during strenuous bareback riding.

The Dockrills came home, and Richard again became equestrian director for the Barnum & Bailey show and later for several others.

During the time Elise Dockrill was a feature of Barnum's circus, she received five hundred dollars a week throughout the year and had one-half of P. T. Barnum's private car for her own use. She also had a carriage, team, and driver at her disposal at all times and stopped at the best hotels.

Mr. Albee of Keith-Albee vaudeville circuit, now RKO, said in tribute of Mme. Dockrill, "I traveled with Mme. Dockrill many years and she was the Bernhardt of the circus."

The life story of this famed woman could be told from press clippings of her performances before European Royalty, her triumph with P. T. Barnum's Circus, and her great success in South America.

Richard and Elise Dockrill claimed Delavan as their home, and they rest there now in the Spring Grove Cemetery.

Adopted from the Milwaukee Journal, April 13, 1930

EVANSVILLE

Colonel George Hall

About eighty or more years ago the Howe & Cushing Circus arrived by wagon in the little city of Manchester, New Hampshire. When the circus arrived young George Washington Hall was on the lot waiting for it, and all that day he watched every move of the mysterious nomads who traveled by night and showed by day. That night when the circus left for its twenty-mile haul to the next town, George was stowed away under a roll of canvas.

Thus began George Hall's circus career, which continued through seven decades. He acquired the title "Colonel Hall," it is said, down in Mexico during a revolution many years ago when his show was attacked by rioters.

To the circus men of his day and the succeeding generations Hall was, and is, known by the endearing title of "Popcorn George." It was a title justly earned and one of which he was proud. His first work with the Howe & Cushing Show was with the "candy butcher." George used to take huge baskets of freshly popped corn around the tent and sell it. Even Solon Robinson, then one of the editors of the New York Tribune, ate some of the popcorn from George's basket. He praised it and told the youthful vendor to look him up if he ever came to New York.

Horace Greeley, of the same paper, also ate of it and gave sage advice and encouragement. When summer was over young George went to New York. He sought out Mr. Robinson, borrowed ten dollars, and became a popcorn vendor in the Metropolis. On some days the corn would not sell. He tried various expedients, but some way he always managed to have a supply left at night. Finally the brilliant idea of making it into bricks evolved itself through

necessity, and he took one of the first bricks to Horace Greeley, who ate, enjoyed, and wrote of it in the great Tribune of those days.

He was thirteen years old then and might have become a leading merchant of New York had he remained there, but his one season with the circus had unfitted him for home life, and when the call of the sawdust came in the spring he found himself again trouping.

The young man was promoted and became a "barker" for the side-show. Later he exploited the free show in the "big top."

Winter saw him again in New York manufacturing his popcorn bricks in an attic which he had rented and selling them on the streets and in offices. His first loan from Solon Robinson had long ago been repaid. He had paid it by delivering one of his bricks daily at the Tribune office, and one of his choicest possessions was the receipt in full signed by Mr. Robinson.

Hall belonged to the days when the circus was distinct from the menagerie show and was a one-ring affair. The lighting was effected by tallow tips set in tin cups with tin reflectors about the ring. The circus carried seats for patrons and gave a ring performance. The menagerie did not, but the genial "Professor" explained the wonders in each cage or elevated stand. A menagerie act completed the performance.

In 1860 Hall came to Wisconsin and ran a side-show for one season. Then for several years he worked for Jerry Mabie of Delavan.

In 1886 he took his own show on the road, making Evansville his headquarters. About this time he bought Big Charlie, the elephant, from the Ringling Brothers. Big Charlie was reputed to have outweighed the famous Jumbo. Under the dexterous training of Hall's daughter, Mabel, he became tractable and proved a good investment for many years. In later years he became more and more unmanageable and had to be killed.

Hall was the first circus owner to take his show out of the country. Later he chartered the schooner "Emma Fox" and carried his circus to the West Indies and South America. He showed in the Brahamas, Trinidad, and back to the mainland, having stands in many of the cities in the Amazon region. The outbreak of the Spanish American War found him showing in old Mexico.

Among the performers whose talents contributed to making "Popcorn George" Hall's name known in circus history was Lou, his wife, known professionally as Zula Zangara, a snake charmer, who was especially adept in training "cats." She was known to have trained many "outlaws." On one occasion Mrs. Hall took her husband's circus to the West Indies alone and carried on some time before the Colonel joined her. Hall's daughter, Mabel, won fame as the only woman elephant trainer; she also rode "high school," or trained, horses.

Dolores Vallecita, Spanish lady, trained six leopards to do the following acts for Hall: the rolling globe, the seesaw, the electric wheel, pyramids and pictures, ending the act by playing chimes as she played the piano.

One of Hall's biggest attractions was Captain Bates and his wife. Captain was eight feet tall and weighed 550 pounds. Mrs. Bates was eight feet two inches tall and weighed 480 pounds. They were the tallest married couple ever on exhibition.

"Popcorn George" was the last of the old showmen. He taught all his children to be circus performers and managers, and for three generations there was a "Hall" circus to set up its big top and entertain the multitude of people who each summer succumbed to the lure of the sawdust ring.

CIRCUS MEMORIES

The grass was green on the vacant lot
Where the circus used to show;
And they made the ring with a one-horse
plow
When they made it years ago.

S-a-y, I carried water for the elephant,
So I guess I ought to know;
And while they only had one pachyderm,
We thought it was some show.

The grand entry wouldn't be much now;
They just rode around one ring,
But it was the triumphant cavalcade
Of romance's challenging.

On the blue stringer seats we drank
it in---
Adventure and romance, all---
While something in the lilting tunes
of the band
Seemed to voice a siren's call.

There was thrill in the leapers' sommer-
saults;
At the end a little chap turned two.
Some kids said he traveled with Barnum
once,
But I don't believe they knew.

The clown sang a song and they all joined
in;
Then a guy that was drunk rode a horse.
That is, he pretended to ride at first;
He was pretending to be drunk, of course.

A chap walked with a wire, and a man---
an awful liar---
Promised things in the concert that were
new;
But I found out he was wicked, for when
they got my ticket
He'd told a lot of things that weren't
true.

There is something that lives in a favored
spot,
Where youth's memories still grow,
That answered a quest when the world was
young
And I went to a one ring-show.

From the Gormely Collection

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