

Robinson Cage No. 31. Photo from the Collection of the late Richard Conover.

This Robinson cage No. 31 was built in Cincinnati by either the Bode Wagon Company or George Schmidt. Both these firms made contributions to the big "Cottage Cage Expansion" of the Robinson Show in 1900 and 1901 and, so far, no documentation has turned up to help us identify which of these two shops built any one of the thirty cottage cages that appeared about this time.

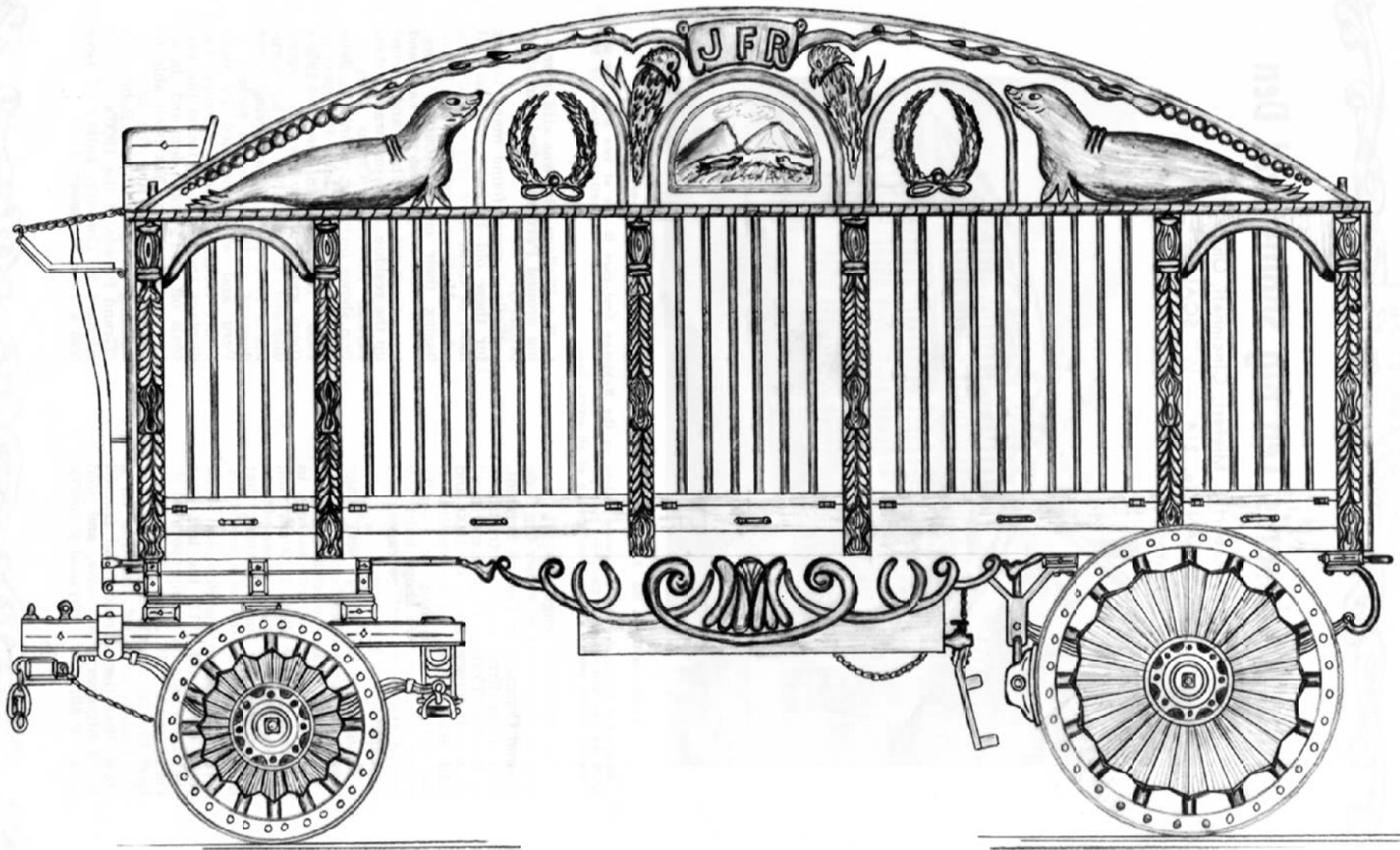
Designating this as a "seal" cage must have come about because of the two carved seals on either end of the domed roof. As will be seen in this rather early photo it is carrying pelicans. Nor does any other picture of it reveal, for sure, anything that might be interpreted as a seal tank.

It was used on the Robinson show from 1900 until 1911, the last year that the Robinson family operated it. On March 6, 1916, Jerry Mugivan and Bert Bowers bought the circus from the family, installed the title on a show that they already had framed in Montgomery, Alabama, and sold most, or all, of the physical property to Ben Wallace who was still operating around Peru as a dealer in show property.

Wallace never found many buyers for these old Robinson wagons and most of them were still around Peru when Mugivan and Bowers began basing their circuses out of there. About 1923 they saved this cage and two others out of the heap and burned up the residue. This one was used on various American Circus Corporation shows including, definitely, Sells Foto in 1929 and John Robinson in 1930. Sometime in the mid-1930's there were quite a few old wagons disposed of, but unlike the big burning in 1941, quite a few carvings were donated to the historical society at Peru and were installed in their Court House Museum. Among the displays there can be found the two seals off this "Seal" den and, in so far as this author has been able to determine, those are the only remaining fragments of Robinson's "Grand Parade of the 1900's." - By Richard E. Conover, author of "Give 'em a John Robinson," 1965.

John Robinson's Ten Big Shows Seal Den

DATE: 1900-41	SCALE: 1/2" = 1'	SCANNED & REVISED: 02/11/03	Pg 1 of 3
Circus Model Builders			
Drawn By Robert Miefert			DRAWING NUMBER #0214



Side View

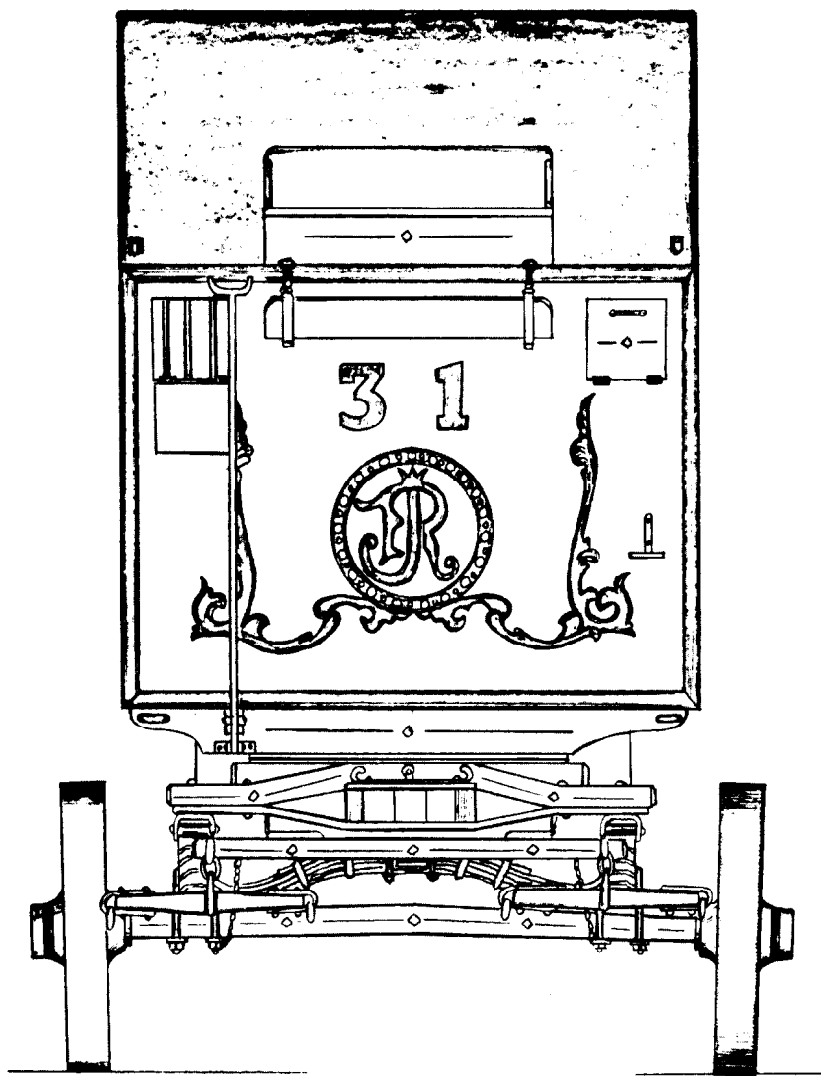
**John Robinson's Ten Big Shows
Seal Den**

Pg 2 of 3

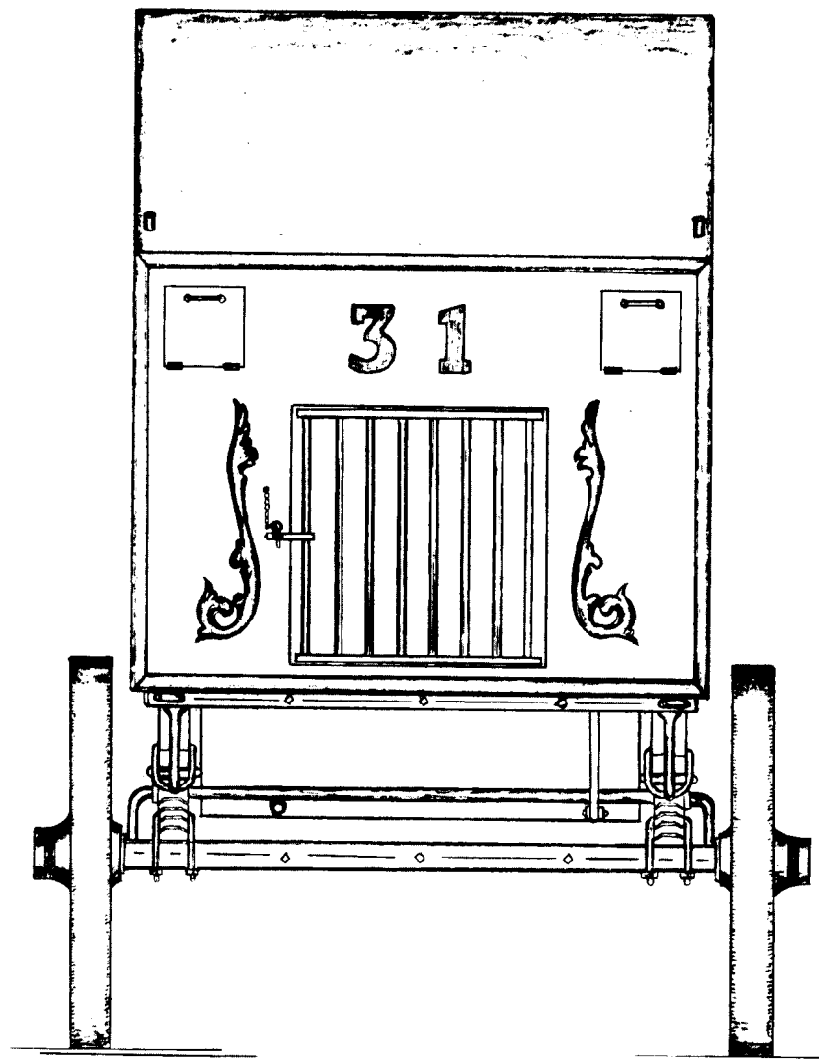
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Front View



Rear View

**John Robinson's Ten Big Shows
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Pg 3 of 3

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