



Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus 1940 season.

This plan brings you sketches and helpful hints on how to furnish the interior of Baggage Stock Tops. The sketches Mr. Robinson makes are most artistic and his data on the various items should prove most helpful and required a very minimum of changes or additions by your Supt. of Construction. We again wish to thank Mr. Robinson for this material as it is most appreciated.

Mr. Robert C. Robinson wrote: "Frankly, I did not wait for answers or information as common sense and utility was the basis for my beginning. As a lad, I had grown up with horses, in the sense that both my father and an uncle owned horses. The latter operated a 500-acre farm and his own black smithy as well. Unfortunately, my knowledge does not extend as deeply into the life of the Circus horse as I would like. All I can do is tell how I built my own Baggage Stock Department."

OIL DRUMS: These are 3 ft. high and 20" in diameter. I made these of a rolled cardboard cylinder with cardboard bottom glued in. The rings (see sketch) were made of soft solder that can be found at the Dime Store in coils. These rings are glued on with Elmer's Glue. Some drums should be painted red with "FIRE ONLY" lettered in white there should be a number of these and they should be placed strategically clear around the Top. The number to use of course would depend on

size of the Top. Some drums should be painted black with "WATER" lettered in white, these are used for watering some horses that are not taken to the trough and these horses are watered by buckets from these drums and on shows where Ponies are used for Cross Cages and the like and are not used in performance but kept with the Baggage Horses, these ponies were generally watered by bucket getting the water from the drums. The grooms also got their bathing water from these drums.

KEG FOR DRINKING WATER: Use a small wooden keg mounted on a rather roughly constructed stand. (See sketch.) Add long-handled dipper. Paint to suit. This keg can be whittled or a better job done on a wood turning lathe.

CANVAS WATER TROUGH: This is a folding affair made much like a canvas box only rounded at bottom. (See sketch.) This can be made of khaki shirt material and is either sewed or glued over wire rods that are embedded into wooden "scissor" frame and pieces. Longitudinal strength is provided by a third wire rod (under the trough)

that extends through the center of the end pieces. A water effect can be obtained by cutting clear plastic to the shape of the trough and setting in about 6 scale inches down from top; this is installed merely by placing it there. If you would like the trough to appear "saturated" use a bit of brown liquid shoe polish painted on outside of trough from water level down. Use one of your horses to determine correct height in construction of trough and scissor frames. The length can be 8 to 10 feet.

FOLDING COTS: These can be made in similar manner as the water trough just described except that the material stretches straight across, there are end sticks and 3 scissor frames (one in center of cot.) (Sketch may be helpful.) There should be about four cots in the top (more or less depending on size). The guards of the horses use these; the other handlers usually have a groom's top or rest top on larger shows and the Boss Hostler has a private top or a cleared out wagon for his headquarters. At each cot there should be a trunk and 2 water

Tent Horse Top Interior

DATE: None

SCALE: None

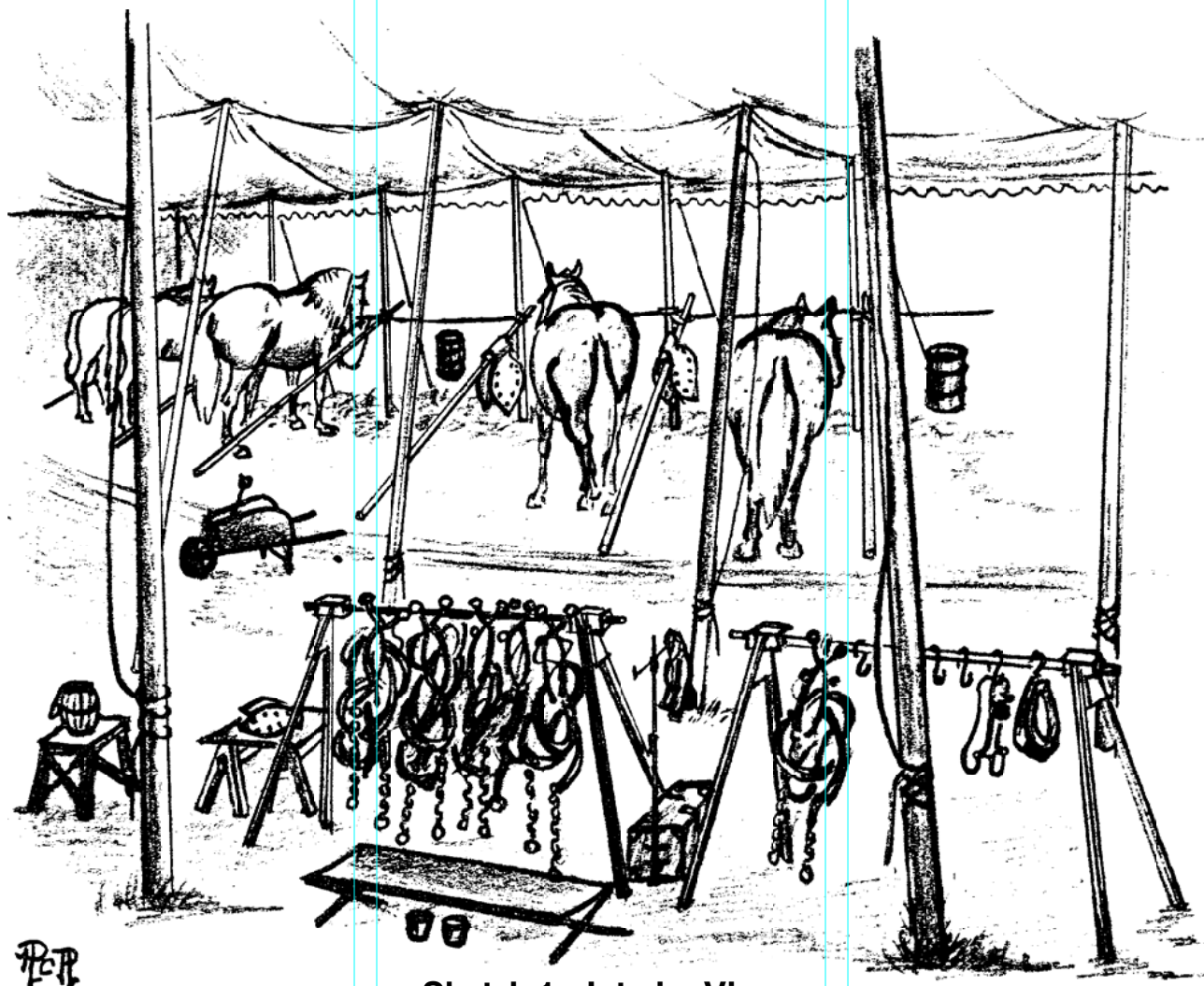
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Circus Model Builders

Drawn By
Robert C. Robinson, CMB 942

DRAWING NUMBER
#0186

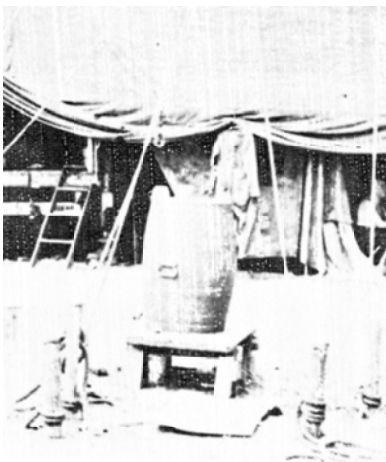


Sketch 1 - Interior View

pails. Note: The trunks for this type of personnel were not full size but were usually box affairs measuring about 16 x 16 x 28 inches. Paint to suit your decorating scheme and letter these personnel items with the owner's name.

Note: The use of a horse or figure in your scale can help to determine the relative size of the objects being constructed.

PACKING CASES: These can be of different sizes depending on what may be packed into them. For example, take 6 or 12 Hame Covers and make the case of a size to carry them. The same can be done with plumes and case should be large enough to hold 3 doz. plumes. Harness was seldom put in cases as it stayed on the horse over the jump and was rung on racks in tent during rest period. Make cases for any equipment you may think should be placed in cases on the jumps. There should be plenty of packing cases



RBBB 1940 - A John McCurdy Photo see sketch No. 3 for drawing.

about the top but none with rounded tops as these don't pack well in wagons and would probably "Red Lighted" (Thrown off the Train) very quickly. Reinforce them for

heavy rough treatment, put rope loop handles on some and don't forget to label their contents. Trunks are usually distinguished by there metal corners with longitudinal slats across top, sides and ends. They have leather lifting handles at ends, hinges and locks. (See sketch for installing clothing racks).

BALES OF HAY: Make wood blocks of size to fit your own scale, cover with Elmer's Glue and roll in real finely crumbled, well dried, grass. Bale with fine wire - 2 strands are enough.

WHEEL BARROWS: (See Sketch) These are used for transporting hay, feed bags, packing cases, etc. These need sides for carrying out manure; don't forget the manure pile. Have plenty of pitchforks, shovels and several rakes.

Tent Horse Top Interior



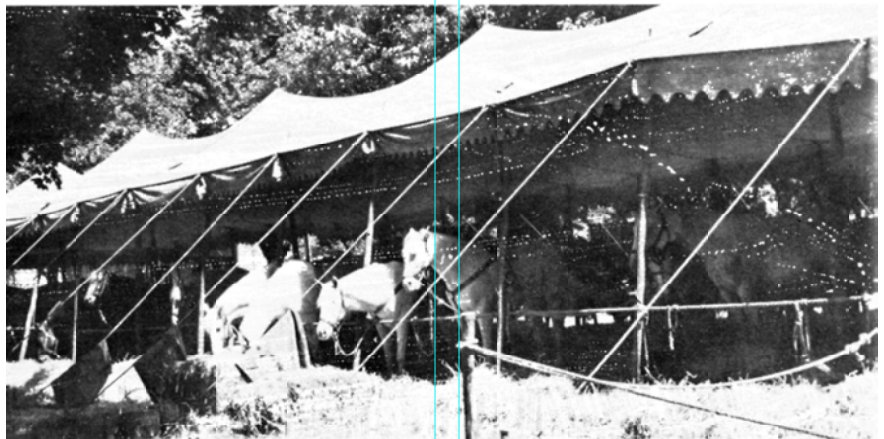
Sketch 2 - Side View, Looking into Top No Side walls - Prop View

Paint them all one color to distinguish them from ones used for ring stock.

BAG OF OATS: Make bags of fine cloth, paint or stamp "OATS" on the outside, fill with a fine granulated material and sew top shut by hand, then tie "ears" on corners which will give more of a feed bag affect. The number of bags to make will depend on the number of horses carried.

FEED BAG: Make from khaki cloth. Form it around a horse's mouth, and then add narrow strap or rope to go over the head of animal.

CURRYCOMBS: These can be made from a thin piece of wood, cutting four grooves crosswise deep enough to take four pieces of coping saw blades cut to length, these may be cemented or glued in and serrated edge of blade must point outward. Form handle from wide with open elliptical loop on one end and "Y" shape on the other for gluing to the wood on backside. (See Sketch by



RBBB. Allentown Fair Grounds. 1945 Season. While the above Photo shows a Ring Stock Horse Top the sketch above shows there is very little difference between the two different Tops.

Tent Horse Top Interior

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SCALE: None

SCANNED & REVISED:
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RBBB 1943 Season. Philadelphia. Pa. During this Season a large round end Bale Ring Top was used.



RBBB 1945 Season now as the stock started to dwindle they switched to square and Push Pole Tops.

Hay Pile) Paint Silver.

BRUSH: These can be made from a thin piece of wood with strap of Leather for insertion of hand. For the hair you may take a scrap of velvet and glue to wood or perhaps your ingenuity will come up with a better idea. (See Sketch by Hay Pile.) Paint a light brown.

CLOTHING HUNG OUT TO DRY: I cut mine in the shape of shirts, undershirts, shorts, etc. Use your ingenuity here.

HAME COVERS: Make several extras for effect. These can be made of cardboard or leather or plastic, cut to shape and insert pin heads to represent studs. (See Sketch.) Supt. Note: These are usually called "Collar Housings".

FLAT WOODEN PLATFORMS: Make these of thin wood with battens placed crosswise. Make size to suit your needs. Paint as desired, however these are usually blue or not painted at all. These are used on muddy ground for placement of harness and trappings.

HARNESS RACKS: Nothing outside of the horses will add to the Top like a number of racks filled with harness and collars. Sketch should be self-explanatory. Cross bar is removable and sets on 2 high jacks. Note "S" hooks; Harness is usually hung first by the hame strap, then by top part of belly band then by top part of breeching. Racks should be high enough to keep harness off the ground but not too high for lifting heavy rain-soaked leather. Paint to suit.

HARNESS FOR RACKS: Make

the harness on the horse so that it may be removed to be hung on racks. (See Sketch) Supt. Note: This is a very effective item in a horse top and for those who may have seen Mr. Robertson's Display in Greensburg, Pa. I am sure you will agree.

OVERALL EFFECT: You should have a set of harness, collar and bridle for each horse. Halter all horses and tie each to the restraining rope. Spread loose hay in front of the horses and straw in the stalls for bedding. Barrier poles may be tied between the horses that are troublesome. Above all, use your

own ingenuity and imagination for placing people and animals in poses and scenes reminiscent of the Circus; leading horses to water, unharnessing, currying and brushing, cleaning a foot, washing a white horse, perhaps the vet giving a shot, etc. There should be a number of rubbernecks on the lot. Supt. Note: We called them "Lot Lice".

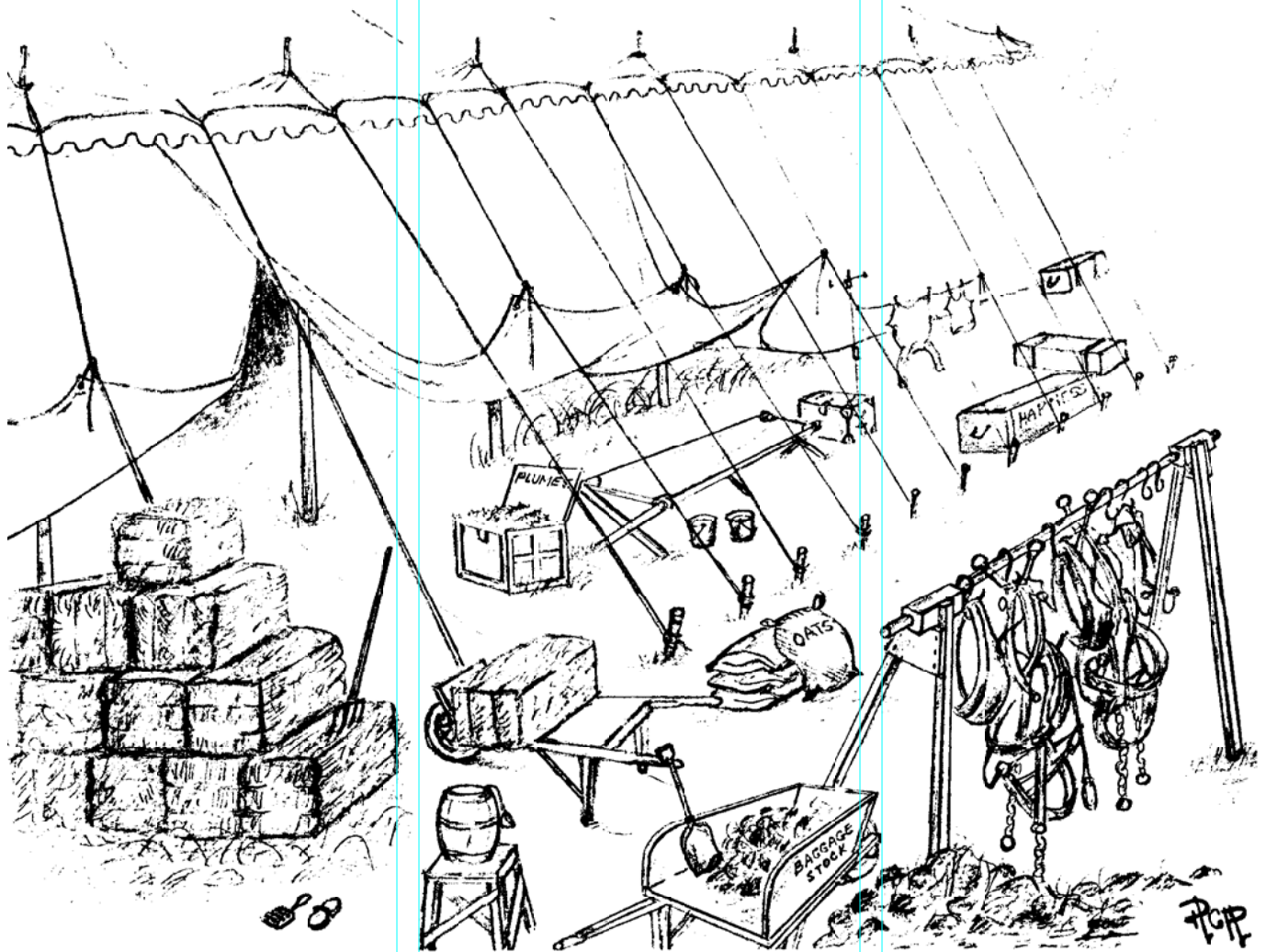
BAGGAGE HORSE TOP: Mine is an 80' Round with 3 - 30' Middles and one row of quarter poles built to 1/2" scale. I install sidewall at rear and roll the rest.

At the Greensburg National



RBBB Easton, Pa. 1947 Season. Note the lack of Top. This type of set up was common during the war years, on good days with no rain in sight. This was done to save time because of manpower and travel problems. During day and a half stands the Top was set up the first day, then weather permitting taken down over the horses, with stock left as shown above. (Ring Stock Show).

Tent Horse Top Interior



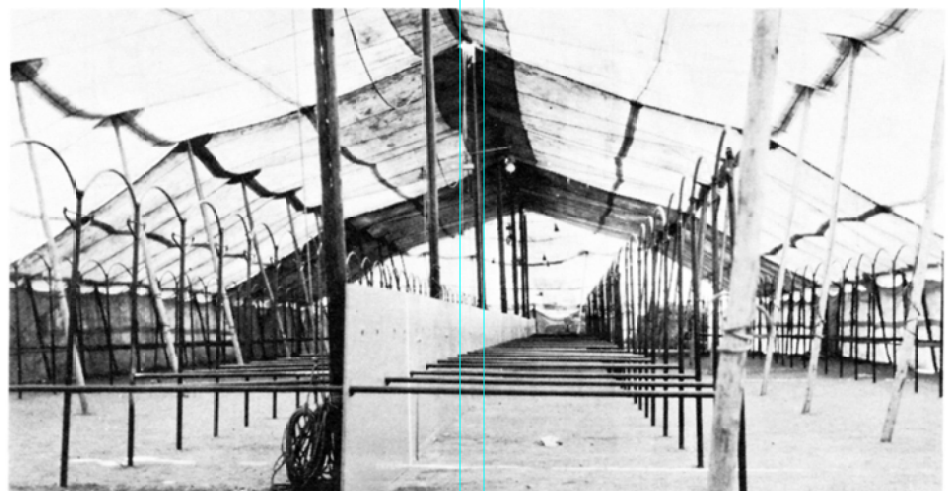
Sketch 3 - Outside View - Top Side-walled - Props shown for construction purposes.

Gathering the question was raised as to whether quarter poles were ever used in the Horse Top. Frankly, I was disturbed, because in later years R.B.B.B. did not. Since John Lower is quite expert in the canvas department I had depended upon his judgment when ordering my top. Let me set our minds at rest. July/August Issue of "White Tops" - Page 10 shows such a horse top being used and is dated May 4, 1925. Again we find such a top in "A Ticket To The Circus" by: Chas. P. Fox, the picture is on page 153 and is dated 1946.

HORSES: Since I am working in 1/2" Scale, I used John Lower horses and filed the collars off. I hand carved several with heads down to get different poses.

NOTE: For illustration purposes, the harness racks, bags of oats, drinking water, open box of plumes, and several other items are shown outside of the Top. They should of course be inside. I place my harness

racks in two long rows down the center along with sleeping cots, trunks, currycombs, feed bags, etc.



RBBB European Type Ring Stock layout of Horse Top. Photo taken during 1939 Season at Long Island City. New York. The size and number of stalls will give some idea of the number of horses carried by this show.

Tent Horse Top Interior