

Ringling center pole wagon on a Thrall flat during the early 1950's. Note Dave Blanchfield's jeep tucked under the overhang of the center poles. Quarter poles were also carried on this wagon. (Photo by Larry Baggett)

Painted Ringling Red and was of all steel construction. The floor of this wagon was NOT planked and was open except for a couple of steel plates.

Wagon No. 43 on the Ringling show always carried the center poles for the big top. These poles were made of Oregon Fur and each weighed nearly 2,000 pounds. Their length was 64'8" and they were 14" in diameter at the base. Five such center poles were carried on this wagon.

During the years of the five pole big top, 1951-1954, an extra center pole was carried on one of the flat car decks; however, in 1955 when the show again returned to the four pole big top, the extra pole on the flat car was eliminated since the space was already available on the wagon for a fifth or extra pole.

This wagon was built new in 1951 and was originally equipped with three rear axles. However, this proved very unsatisfactory as all of the weight was on the first set of rear axles when the wagon started down the runs during the unloading at the trains. As a result, it would cause the tires on this axle to blow out.

For 1952, the third axle was removed

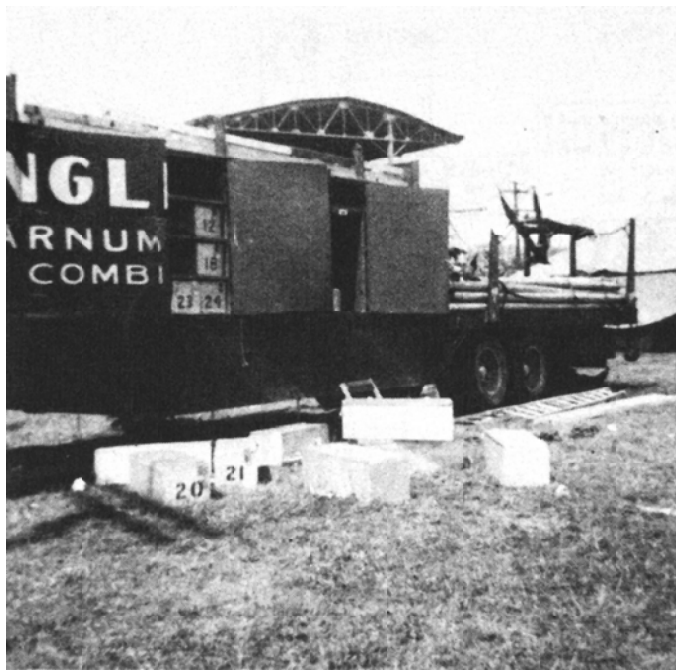
and the narrow box built on the side of the wagon. This box contained compartments for "crumb boxes," which were small boxes somewhat like footlockers, for the personal belongings of the canvas department personnel. All mud blocks, bale rings, etc. were carried in the possum belly under the wagon.

It was loaded on one of the 72' Thrall flat cars on the second section of the circus train. A small E14 Caterpillar was spotted in front of the wagon and since the poles extended over the rear, a jeep, which went under the overhanging poles, was loaded behind it. This would fill the entire flat car.

The wagon was moved to the Venice Quarters when the show relocated there in 1960; however, exactly what happened to the wagon has not been determined. It is presumed that it was eventually cut up for scrap.

(Text by Jim Caldwell)

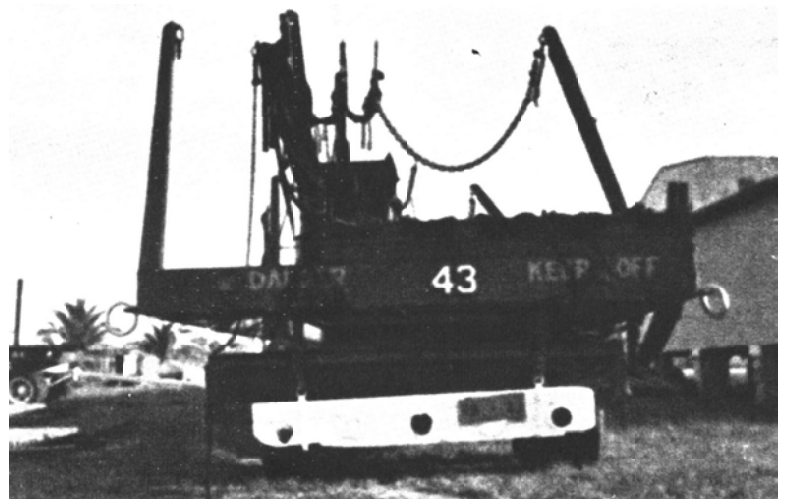
RBBB			
Center Pole Wagon No. 43			
DATE: 1952-56	SCALE: 1/4" = 1'	SCANNED & REVISED: 08/20/03	Pg 1 of 4
Circus Model Builders			
Drawn By Harvey Esto			DRAWING NUMBER #0286



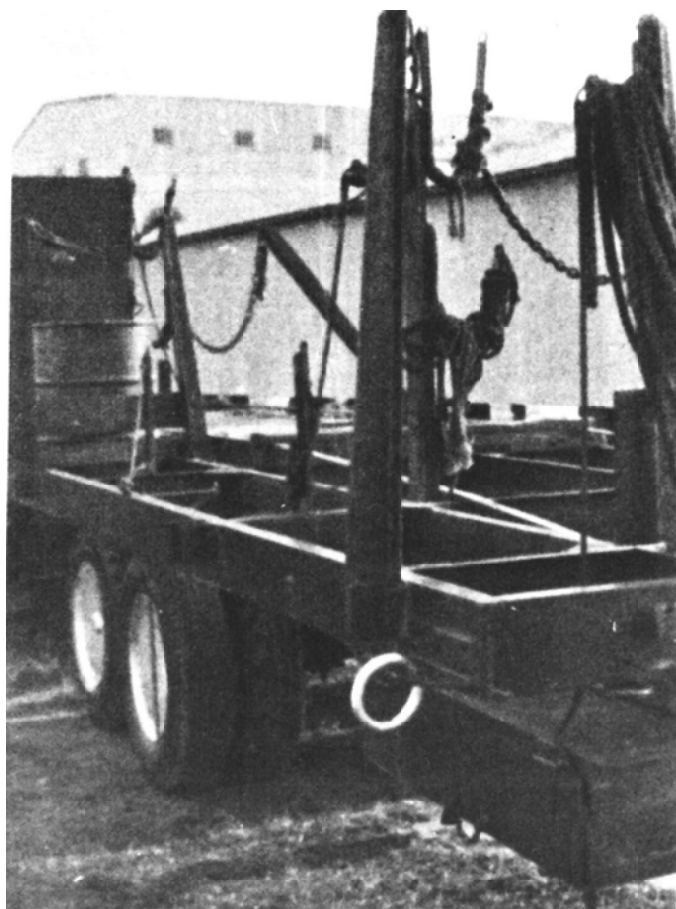
View showing crumb boxes, taken 1956 [Wilbert Bender Photo]



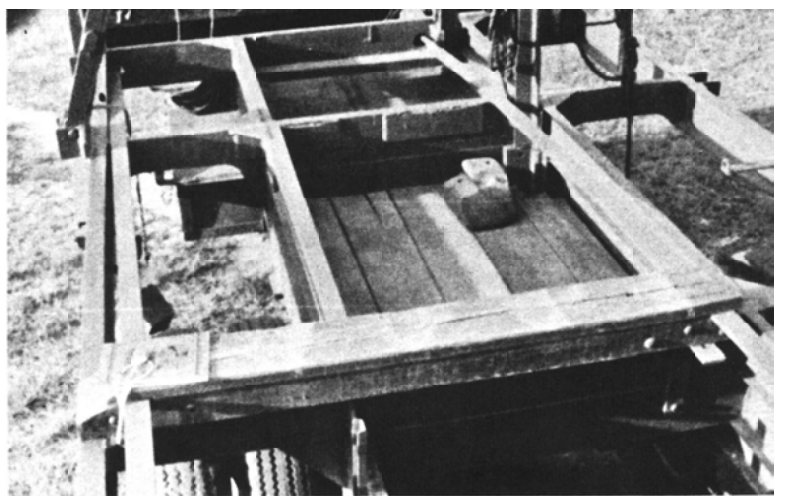
Three-quarter view of right front, 1952 [Caldwell Collection]



Rear of wagon showing reflector board and pole pockets. [Larry Baggett Photo]

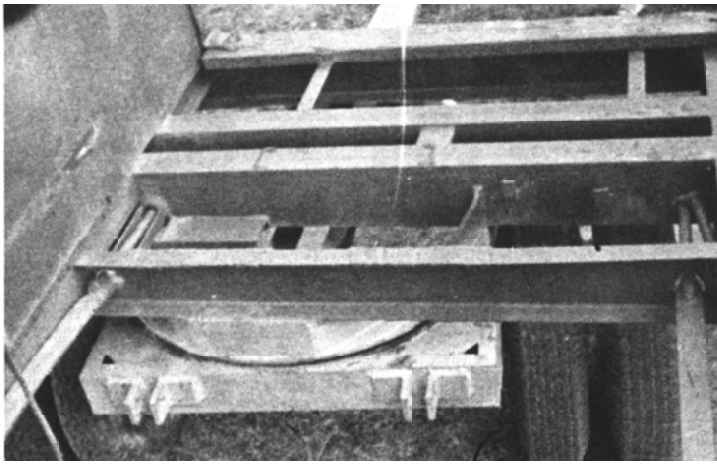


Left rear, showing beam construction. [Larry Baggett Photo]



Open frame wagon construction. [Larry Baggett Photo]

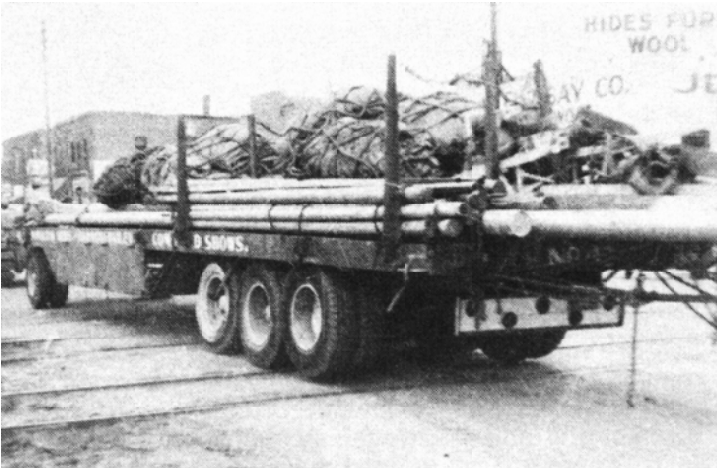
RBBB Center Pole Wagon No. 43			
Pg 2 of 4	SCALE: 1/4" = 1'	SCANNED & REVISED: 08/20/03	DRAWING NUMBER #0286



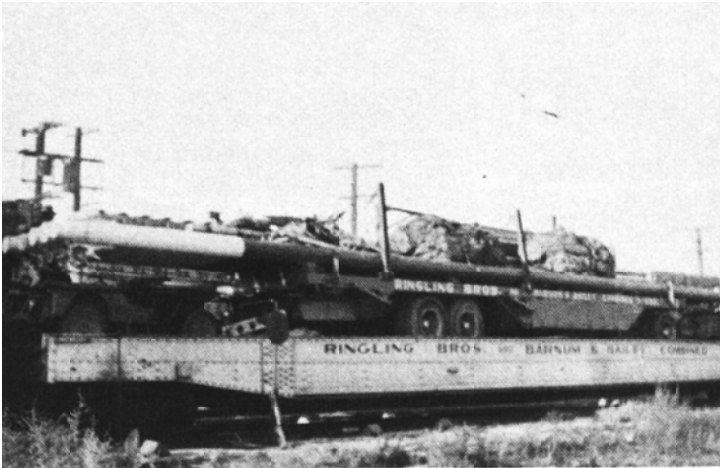
Fifth wheel and front wagon bed [Larry Baggett Photo]



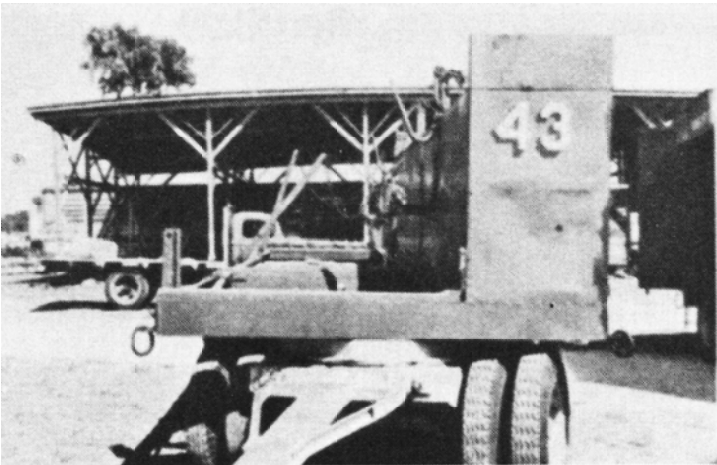
Three-quarter view from the right front side on the lot in 1953 [Caldwell Collection]



Taken in 1951, showing the 16-wheel configuration, with 12 on the rear. [Caldwell Collection]



Another view on the wagon on the flats. Again, note the jeep. This view taken in 1953. [Caldwell Collection]

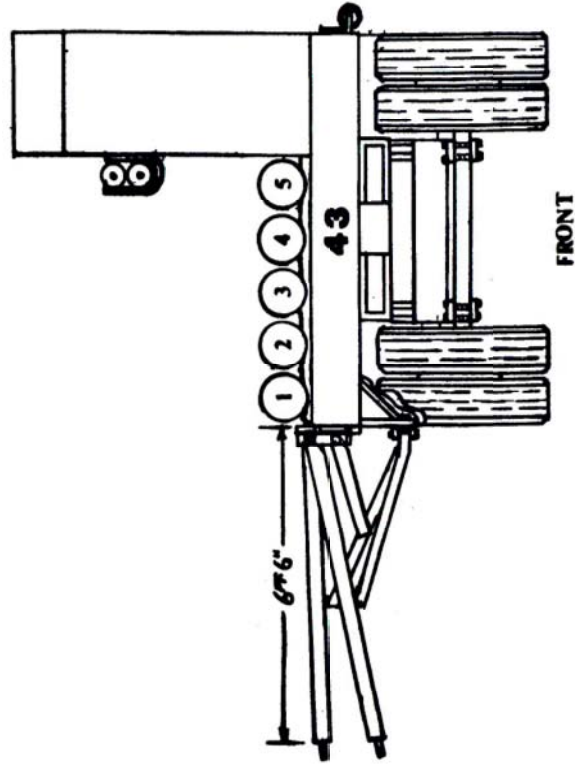
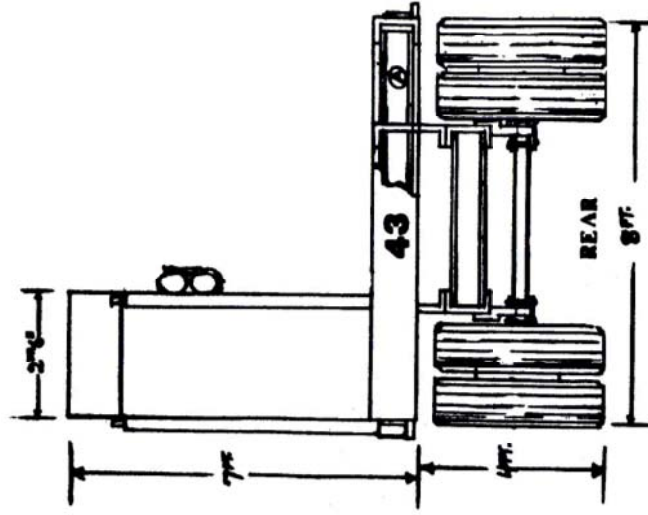
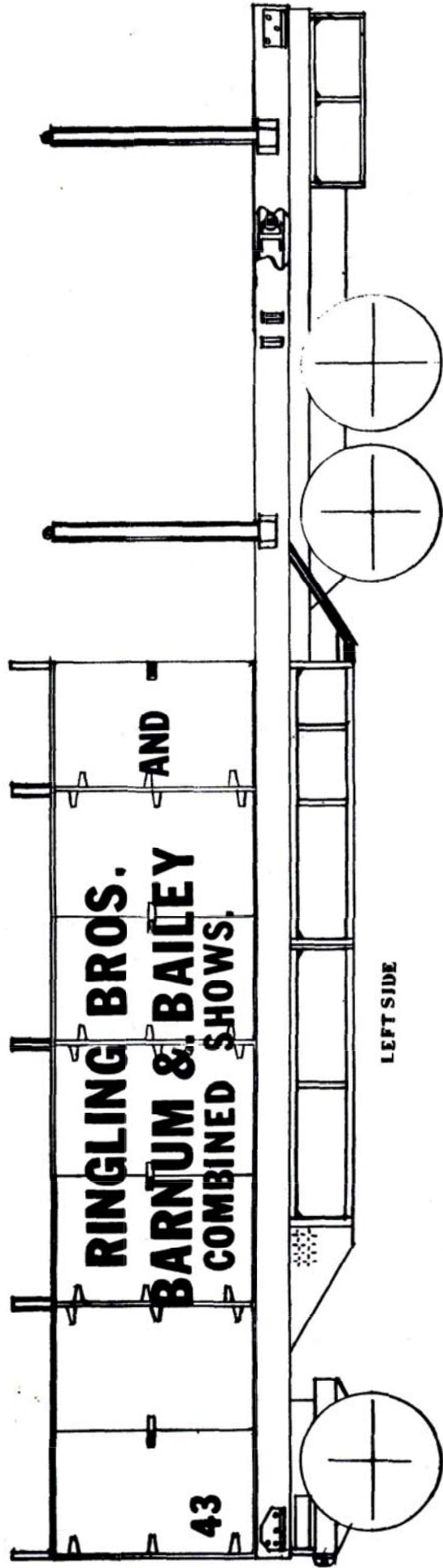


Front view of the wagon showing the fold up wagon pole. [Larry Baggett Photo]



On the lot, three-quarter rear view. Note ladder, plow, extra quarter poles and wheelless Georgia Buggy. [Caldwell Collection]

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RBBB

Center Pole Wagon No. 43

Pg 4 of 4

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'

SCANNED & REVISED:
11/04/2004

DRAWING NUMBER
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