

RINGLING BROS. BARNUM AND BAILEY PROPERTY WAGON NO. 42 circa 1941

It appears that all through their history the Ringling's had very strong views on all aspects of circus operation! This was true in how they bought their horses or booked the acts for the big top and how they designed and built their wagons! In the early years they didn't build them, they bought them from wagon builders that would meet their specifications! However, due to the rise of the automobile and truck transport during the 1920's wagon builders came to be in short supply. Sometime during this period the Ringling's started building their own baggage wagons and so began an evolution of wagon design and development that has lasted with but a few gaps to this very day! The wagons on today's Ringling Show have very little resemblance to those of the earlier years, but you can still see a strong commitment to functional building practice and consistent design.

As I said it appears the Ringling's had strong views on building wagons. They had to be spacious and strong enough to carry the load and yet limber or springy enough to meet a whole variety of problems going to and from the trains using the minimum of horse power, in other words the wagon was used to carry the load and the load was not supposed to be the wagon! For instance, when the Ringling's bought the Barnum and Bailey show they thought the baggage wagons to be heavy and cumbersome and not at all satisfactory from their point of view.

In reviewing the LCW issues I have, it appears that Ringling wagons from the mid 1940's - 1956 period are well documented, so for those CMB's that wish to model the Ringling show during the 1930 period these plans will be for you! Each one has been picked because it has unique features and yet the strong Ringling design sense and building practices are apparent in each one of them. As modelers you should be able to go to any number of published pictures of the Ringling show during this period and by using the basic details of these plans duplicate many sister wagons with authenticity.

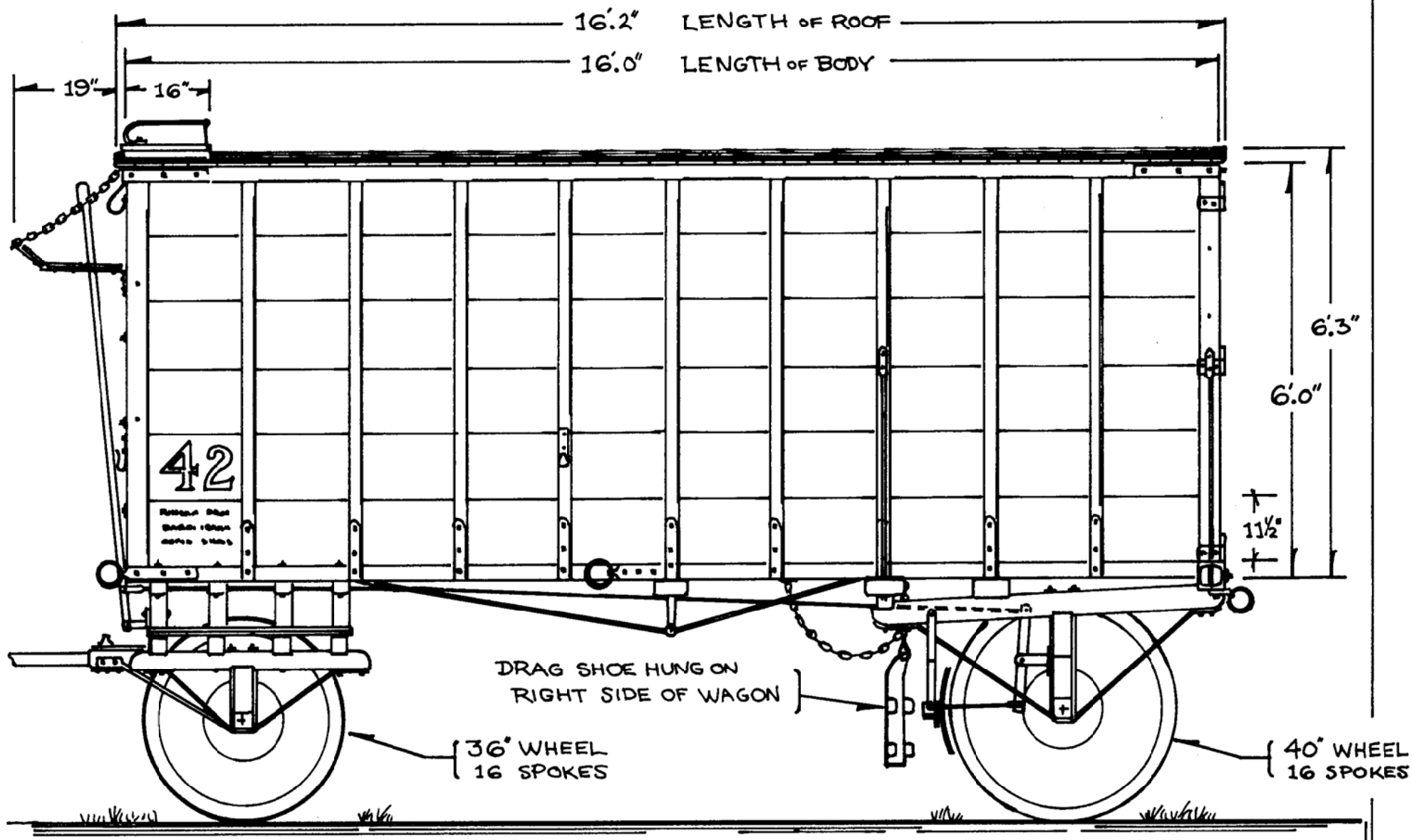
With regards to property wagon #42 you might take note that the right and left sides were almost exactly the same except mainly for the addition of pole racks to the right side. The front and rear views show you the size and position from the wagon bed of these racks. For spacing along the side of the wagon put the first one on the third vertical frame member and the second on the seventh - this being from the front of the wagon on the right side.

Wagon #42 shows some unique items - firstly it was an all wood frame wagon, except for the rear cross member under the doors. This was two pieces of channel iron, bolted or welded together and probably it represents the first beginnings of the transition to all steel frame wagons. Next this wagon had a pair of truss rods added to it in order to give it additional strength, also the single drivers foot rest is chain supported, which was not the usual Ringling practice. Take note of the license plate and reflectors on the back. Wagons #42 had a trailer hitch but I could not get enough detail to draw it properly - so I left it off.

The roof would have been covered in painted canvas, which was stretched over roof planks and the edges of which would have been held by a 1/2 round molding nailed or screwed around to all four sides of the roof. The wagons colors would have been Ringling red for the body, with standard Ringling red and blue on white frame stripping and wheel decoration, the wagon numbers were probably white with the possibility that the danger keep off stencils were yellow.

You can find some fine pictures of property wagons #42 in the 1976 Nov.-Dec. issue of the LCW.

RBBB			
Property Wagon No. 42			
DATE: 1941	SCALE: 1/2" = 1'	SCANNED & REVISED: 01/20/03	Pg 1 of 3
Circus Model Builders			
Drawn By Mike Hartigan			DRAWING NUMBER #0358



Left Side View

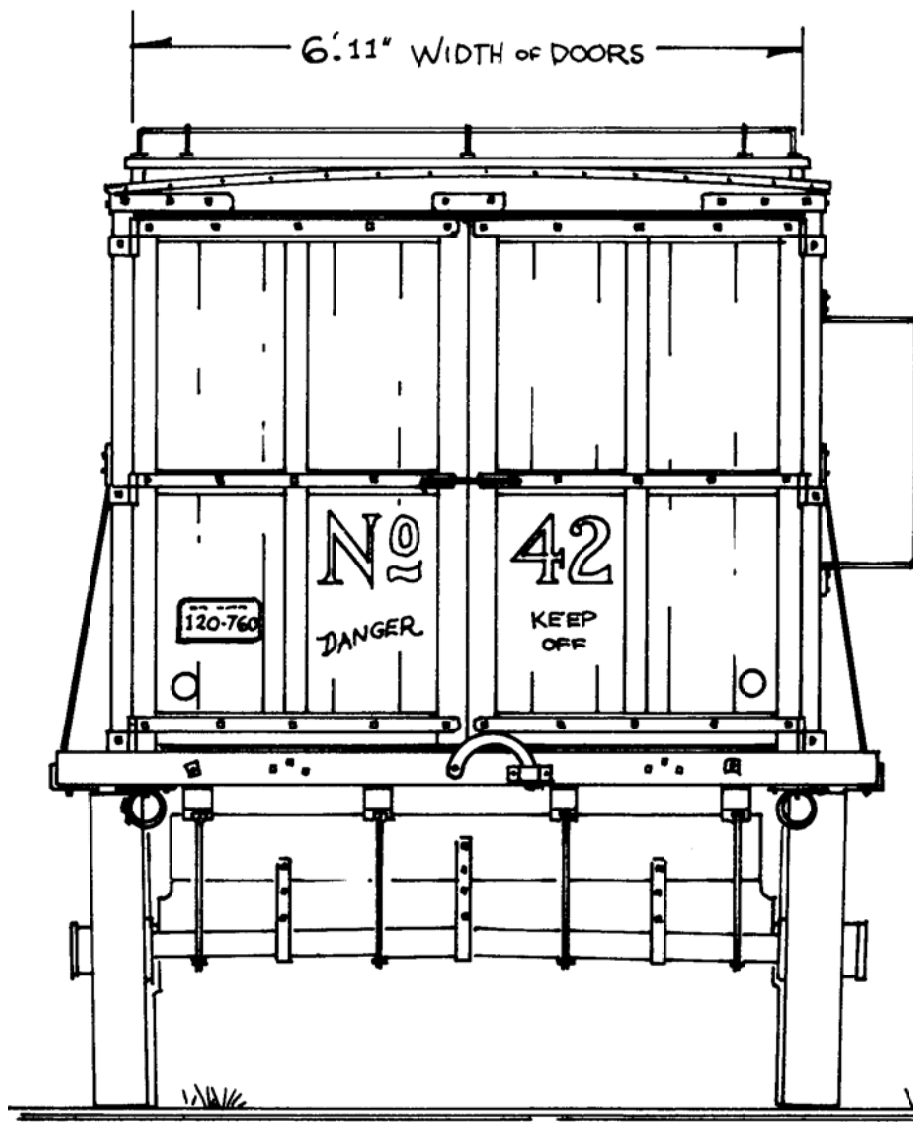
RBBB
Property Wagon No. 42

Pg 2 of 3

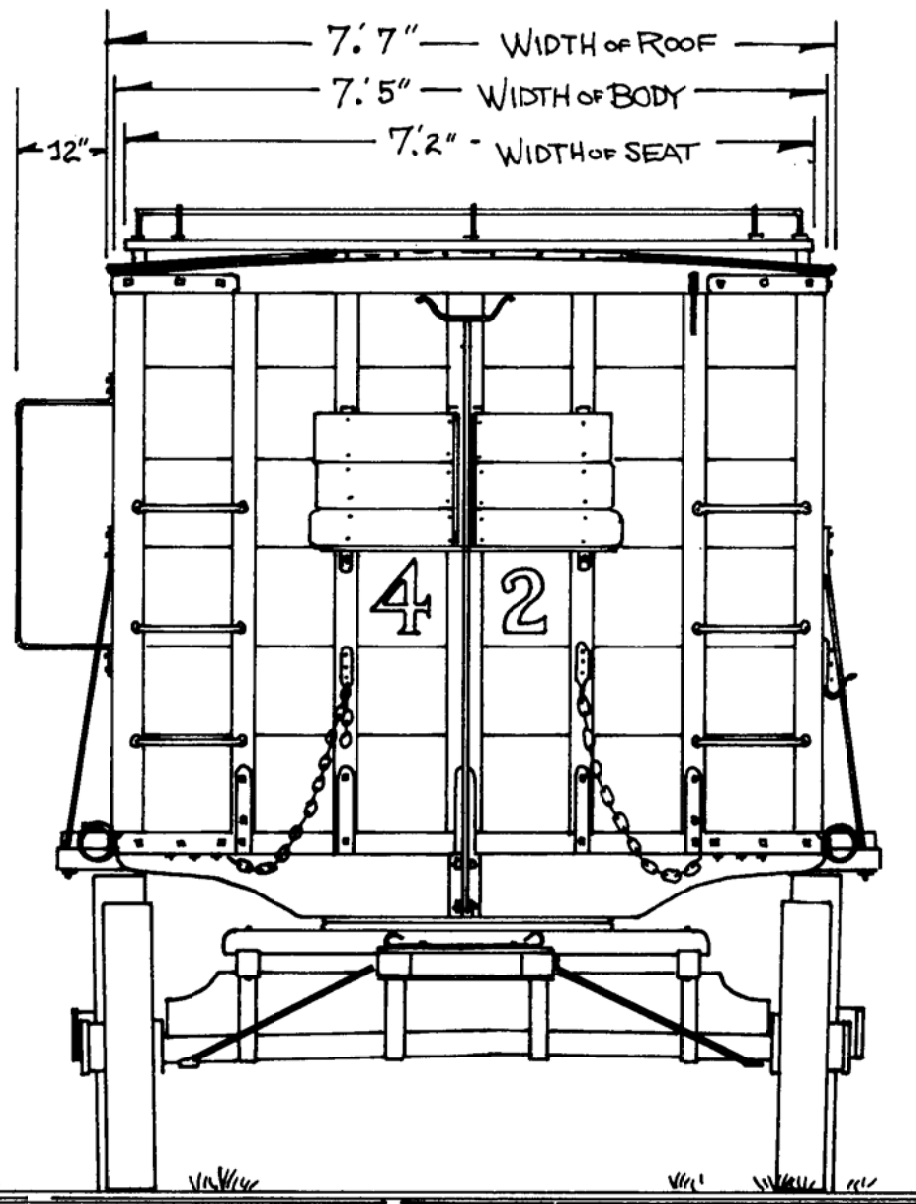
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'

SCANNED & REVISED:
01/20/03

DRAWING NUMBER
#0358



Rear View



Front View

RBBB
Property Wagon No. 42

Pg 3 of 3

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'

SCANNED & REVISED:
01/20/03

DRAWING NUMBER
#0358