

CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

October

1946

25c

# The BANDWAGON



E  
X  
T  
R  
A

E  
X  
T  
R  
A

FIVE ARE KILLED

VALUABLE PROPERTY DESTROYED

The wreck occurred on the Tyrone & Clearfield R.R.-Four miles from Tyrone-Five men killed and eleven injured-Fifty two of the horses and other animals met their fate-The Circus is a complete wreck-Clearing up debris to-day-Coroner's Inquest.

The most destructive and appalling wreck in the history of the Tyrone & Clearfield branch of the Penna.railroad occurred about 5:30 yesterday morning at McCanns crossing four miles northwest of Tyrone. The train containing WALTER L.MAIN'S CIRCUS and menagerie was derailed and piled in a confused mass, five men were killed out right and seven were seriously injured, and others suffered more or less minor injuries, over a half hundred horses with other animals were killed, a few of the animals escaped to the woods, fourteen cars were demolished, and the 25 handsome wagons and most of the other equipment of the Circus were destroyed.

WALTER L.MAIN'S CIRCUS exhibited at Houtzdale, Monday. Their train consisting of 10 flat cars, 3 stock cars, a combination car and 3 sleepers placed in the order named. The flat cars contained the wagons, calliope and other vehicles, with the caged animals; the combination car had a lunch compartment; the sleepers were used by the show managers and members. About 2 o'clock yesterday morning the loaded circus train left Houtzdale for Lewistown where the exhibit was to have been made Decoration Day, and the train was in charge of the following crew, with engine #1500 hauling it; :-Engineer M.S.CRESWELL, Fireman Harry MIESS, Conductor William SNYDER, Flagmen James BARGER and Brakemen William HEVERLY, John GRAZIER and Harry MYERS. Over 300 people, all total, members and attaches of the circus were on board.

The run was made without incident until in the vicinity of McCann's crossing, when the speed had become sufficient to alarm those riding in the cars, and it was evident that the train was not under complete control. Suddenly there was a terrific crash and the forward cars left the track, those in the rear with their heavy freight piling rapidly upon and around them. The engine became detached from the train and did not leave the track. The heavily loaded combination car swung around and directly across the track forming a providential barrier against which the sleepers rushed with a heavy thud and then came to a stand still, the occupants receiving a sudden severe jolt but suffering no further injury.

Not so well, however, did those unfortunate fare, who occupied the flat and stock cars. These cars, wagons, stock, wild animals and men were thrown in all directions. The scene of wreckage is beyond adequate description. An awful silence followed the crash, then the cries of the wounded, the rush of unrestrained animals, the crackling of timbers and the hurry to rescue sounded in the clear morning air.

It required two hours laborious work to extract Frank Train from under the heavy wagon and timbers where he lay. Brakeman Wm. Heverly was taken from beneath a mass of debris, and three laborers were taken from the wreck dead, besides a number of others who were injured in the catastrophe, and placed in as comfortable position as possible. The Tyrone wreck crew was early on the scene and carried on the work of rescue nobly aided by circus people. The casualties to human life were:-

## WALTER L. MAIN CIRCUS WRECK

DEAD--William Heverly, brakeman, Tyrone, Pa; Frank Train, treasure of the circus, Indianapolis, Ind; James Strayer, laborer, Houtzdale, Pa; Wm. Lee, laborer, Lincoln, Neb; Berney Multaney, laborer, New York, N.Y.

INJURED:-Joe Chambers, colored, aged 30, Mercersburg, Pa. right hand bitten by lion; Arthur Richards, Butler County, Pa. age 18, laceration upper left eyelid; George Corter, Holidaysburg, Pa. contusion of chest; Frank Barnett, Tarentum, Pa. aged 20, contusion of left arm and hand and laceration of thumb; Willis O'Bannon, Chambersburg Pa. age 30, wounds of scalp and face; David Jones, Harrisburg, Pa. age 33, sprain of right thigh; Frank Morse, Rochester, N.Y. age 18 eyebrow and scalp wounds; William Evans, Williamstown, Pa. age 19 laceration of right ankle and probable internal injuries, his condition is critical; William Patchell, Dubois, Pa. age 20, contusion left knee; James Haney, Alberton, Pa. age 27, contusion of right shoulder, and scalp wounds, right ear nearly torn off; Lou Champaign, Rochester, N.Y. serious internal injuries.

The bodies of the 5 dead men were brought to Tyrone and prepared for burial at the undertaking establishment of Burley & Graham. Tyrone doctors were early on the scene and furnished all possible relief to the wounded who were conveyed on a special train to the Altoona Hospital. There Chambers, Richards, Corter, Barnett, who were only slightly injured, received necessary treatment and left for their homes. The other 7 men remained at the hospital.

With the exception of the engine and 3 sleeping cars, the loss of rolling stock and freight is almost total. The cars and wagons were smashed beyond repair, among the property destroyed was a calliope that cost \$2500. Altogether 25 show wagons, chariots, buggies and other vehicles were wrecked. Sixteen cages containing the animals of the menagerie were broken open and the beasts were killed, maimed or escaped to the fields or woods.

Mr. Main had 130 head of horses, and better never travelled with an circus. The mortality among these was very large, no less than 52 having been killed in the disaster. Among the unfortunate animals were some of the most valuable in the show. SNOW FLAKE the intelligent leader of Joe Berriss 6 horse team was mortally injured and after every effort to save him was tried he died last night, he was the most valuable of the team and was valued at \$20,800. All the horses ridden by Tony Lowanda, the principal rider are dead.

The escape of wild animals from their cages created great consternation and it was in the midst of danger that friends of the killed and wounded went to the rescue. The big manslayer, a ferocious aoe, was captured and caged before he could do any damage. One elephant was injured about the hip, the other elephant safely withstood the shock. The camels dromedaries and many other animals escaped but the pair of sacred cows were killed. Of the escaped animals were 2 Bengal tigers, one of these was safely captured the second made his way to the farm of Alfred Thomas. Here Mrs. Thomas was milking the cows, when the tiger leaped up on one of the cows killing it instantly. The woman screamed for Mr. Thomas who appeared on the scene and shot the tiger.

Three lions escaped, one of which was shot and the other 2 captured. A silver tip panther was at large until last night when he was shot. The skins of these animals being valuable, they were removed from the dead. Most of the animals are either secure or accounted for now. Not to

mention the small animals, reptiles and birds which have escaped to the



HAGENECK-WALLACE CIRCUS 1937 Route  
(J. J. CROWLEY)

Winter Quarters, Peru, Ind. Owned by Ringling interests leased to HEBARY  
April 17 to April 25 was indoors at Chicago, Ill. Tour covered 22 states

Apr. 26	Marion, Ind.	Jun. 21	Quincy, Ill.
27	Kokomo, " (Lost-rain)	22	Springfield, Ill.
28	Mansfield, "	23	Peoria, "
29	Anderson, Ind.	24	Danville, "
30	Dayton, Ohio	25	Terre Haute, Ind.
May 1	Cincinnati, Ohio	26	Newcastle, "
2	" "	27	Kokomo, " (return date)
3	Columbus, "	28	Elkhart, "
4	Mansfield, "	29	Jackson, Mich.
5	Canton, "	30	Ann Arbor, Mich.
6	Alliance, "	Jul. 1	Battle Creek, Mich.
7	New Castle, Pa.	2	Lansing, "
8	Allegheny, "	3	Pontiac, "
10	Pittsburgh, "	4	Mount Clemens, "
11	" "	5	Flint, "
12	Greensburg, "	6	Grand Rapids, "
13	Washington, "	7	Cadillac, "
14	Wheeling, W. Va.	8	Petoskey, "
15	Zanesville, Ohio	9	Travers City, "
17	Charleston, W. Va.	10	Manistee, "
18	Parkersburg, W. Va.	11	Big Rapids, "
19	Clarksburg, "	12	Muskegon, "
20	Connellsville, Pa.	13	La Porte, Ind.
21	Cumberland, Md.	14	Hammond, "
22	Hagerstown, "	15	Kankakee, Ill.
24	York, Pa.	16	Champaign, "
25	Sunbury, Pa.	17	Lincoln, "
26	Williamsport, Pa.	18	Streator, "
27	Elmira, N. Y.	19	Rensselaer, Ind.
28	Ithaca, "	20	Crawfordsville, Ind.
29	Geneva, "	21	Logansport, "
31	Rochester, N. Y.	22	Richmond, "
Jun. 1	Syracuse, "	23	Hamilton, Ohio
2	Watertown, "	24	Connersville, Ind.
3	Rome, "	26	Louisville, Ky.
4	Gloversville, N. Y.	27	Lexington, "
5	Amsterdam, "	28	Paris, "
7	Auburn, "	29	Moysville, "
8	Corning, "	30	Achland, "
9	Hornell, "	31	Huntington, W. Va.
10	Olean, "	Aug. 2	Covington, Va.
11	Redville, Pa.	3	Staunton, "
12	Sharon, "	4	Charlottesville, Va.
14	Huntington, Ind.	5	Richmond, "
15	Lafayette, "	6	" "
16	Decatur, Ill.	7	Newport News, Va.
17	St. Louis, Mo.	9	Norfolk, "
18	" "	10	Portsmouth, "
19	" "	11	Petersburg, "
20	" "	12	Lynchburg, "

## HAGENBECK-WALLACE ROUTE (CONT)

Aug. 13	Roanoke, Va.	Sept. 24	Augusta, Ga.
14	East Radford, Va.	25	Sumter, S. C.
16	Bristol, Tenn.	27	Charleston, S. C.
17	Johnson City, Tenn.	28	Columbia, S. C.
18	Kingsport, "	29	Florence, "
19	Morristown, "	30	Wilmington, S. C.
20	Asheville, N. C.	Oct. 1	Wilson, N. C.
21	Knoxville, Tenn.	2	Kinston, N. C.
23	Chattanooga, Tenn.	4	Greenville, N. C.
24	Nashville, "	5	Elizabeth City, N. C.
25	" "	6	Washington, "
26	Clarksville, "	7	Rocky Mount, "
27	Bowling Green, Ky.	8	Durham, "
28	Hopkinsville, "	9	Goldsboro, "
29	Evansville, Ind.	11	Greenwood, S. C.
30	Paducah, Ky.	12	Anderson, "
31	Dyersburg, Tenn.	13	Gainesville, Ga.
Sep. 1	Memphis, "	14	Griffin, "
2	" "	15	Anniston, Ala.
3	Blytheville, Ark.	16	Rome, Ga.
4	Jonesboro, "	18	Huntsville, Ala.
6	Little Rock, Ark.	19	Decatur, "
7	El Dorado, "	20	Florence, "
8	Texarkana, "	21	Corinth, Miss.
9	Shreveport, La.	22	Columbus, "
10	Morroe, "	23	Greenwood, "
11	Alexandria, "	25	Greenville, Miss.
12	New Iberia, "	26	Clarksdale, "
13	Baton Rouge, "	27	Helena, Ark.
14	Natchez, Miss.	28	Pine Bluff, Ark.
15	Brookhaven, Miss.	29	Russellville, Ark.
16	Gulfport, "	30	Fort Smith, "
17	Mobile, Ala.	Nov. 1	Tulsa, Okla.
18	Pensacola, Fla.	2	Henryetta, Okla.
20	Tallahassee, Fla.	3	Durant, "
21	Bainbridge, Ga.	4	Wichita Falls, Tex.
22	Americus, "	5	Electra, "
23	Macon, Ga.	6	Fort Worth, "
24	Augusta, Ga.	8	Austin, Tex.

Arthur Hoffman, editor of the morning TRENTONIAN, Trenton, N. J.; which began publication as a daily on Jun. 12 of this year, announces that arrangements have been completed with Famous Circus Features, whereby Wendell Goodwin will do a daily column for that paper, and it will be devoted exclusively to the circus.

Hoffman said that the column will begin appearing Mon. Aug. 26, and that Goodwin had agreed that some of the material will contain true facts concerning the WPA Federal Theatre Circus which caused so much discussion on the floors of Congress several years ago.

MEMBERSHIP CONTEST STANDING:--JOE TRACY leading with 7 new members. Van Matre, Ed Holt, John Crowley all tied for second place with 6 each.

John Crowley, Sec. reports that to date only 35 members have sent in their money for membership pins, please send now or deal will be closed.

A DAY WITH THE GREAT WALLACE SHOWS  
by C.E. DOBLE

On Labor Day, 1902, the Great Wallace Shows (B.E. WALLACE, owner) exhibited in Louisville, Ky. at the old show grounds Preston & Oak streets. I saw the fine parade of elegant carved tab wagons, mirrored band wagons, dens, mounted people on beautiful horses, elephants, camels, steam calliope and all that made up the colorful street parade of that golden age of the circus. Those were the days when the names Murray & Co, Chicago; Kunkely, N.Y. and Thomson & Vandiveer, Cinn. were stencilled on circus canvas. Those firms made the tents for the big shows. All canvas was white. I do not like the kahki or blue colored canvas of these times. It lacks the flash. The gasoline lights, star burners, one known as the "Gale lights" were in vogue at that date and in my opinion the tents were as well lighted as the modern way electric lights. The dirt rings were in use with plenty of sawdust, now and then mingled with the blended odor of crushed grass, peanuts and lemons.

I saw the side show and museum of wonders and recall Col. Phil Ellsworth was manager, P.G. Lowery and his good band of colored musicians furnished the music and the Jubilee Minstrels. I remember his band played a rag time classic outside called Dixie Girl and Peaceful Henry. Real popular hits of that era. Lowery was the greatest colored cornet player of the colored race and for this accomplishment was awarded a gold medal in 1906. He was leader with all the big shows and colored minstrel troupes, his last appearance being with Cole Bros. I inspected the fine menagerie of the Great Wallace Shows, then into the big top in plenty of time for a choice seat. Show used a 4 pole big top, with wide hippodrome track, two rows of  $\frac{1}{4}$  poles, and their top would equal in size the one of Cole Bros. today. Performance in 2 rings and center stage. This fine performance impressed me as one of the finest I ever saw and recall C.Z. Bronson's Concert Band rendered several fine numbers preceeding the performance and the fine music for the program delighted all. Bronsons band had 26 men. I recall Blanche Reed, the Silverton Trio on the tight wire, an aerial performer Chas. Ellet, Lon Moore one of the clowns, and the revolving statuary put on by lady performers in white tights and wigs, in both rings and on center stage. Pop Sweeney was equestrian director, and the performance closed with real hippodrome races like all big shows of that day. If I am not mistaken J.W. Beatty made announcements. Newspaper ads carried these lines about this show - The Highest Class Circus In The World and The Finest Horses Of Any Show On Earth. The show had really beautiful ring and baggage stock and could proudly boast of it. B.E. Wallace's picture adorned billboard displays, heralds, passes and was also used on the letterhead of the circus. I have one of the passes in color of the 1902 season and signed by George J. Choffin.

-----

The Carl Hagenbeck Trained Animal Show, large railroad show (Carl Hagenbeck, John Havlin, Frank Tate and C. Lee Williams equal owners) toured the country 1905 and 1906. At the close of 1906 season this show was taken to Peru, Ind. and merged with the Great Wallace Shows, thus 1907 was the first year of HAGENBECK-WALLACE SHOWS, for 32 years one of the leading circuses of this country. Final year was 1938 when it was retired for good. Some of their original wagons still exist around the country.

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

NEW MEMBERS

C. AMIDON 200 A Lincoln  
J. Vogelsang 713 Oak  
S. Hlavenka 364 W. 3rd

Worcester 5 Mass.  
Niles Mich.  
Pittsburgh Calif.

BRANTFORD TROUPER  
E.W. CRIPPS

One of Brantford's real oldtimers, Charlie Hacker, who practically rode around the world on a bicycle, who toured thruout Canada, the U.S. Mexico, S. America, Australia and Europe before the turn of the century has vivid recollections of his days in show business.

His greatest act consisted of riding a high wheel bicycle with a partner balanced upside down on his head. Mr. F. Westbrook was an early partner in this act and died just recently here. Mr. Hacker was top man in the act.

Mr. Hacker has been a resident of Brantford for nearly 50 yrs. His parents came to Brantford after his sister was married to F. Westbrook in the late 1880's. At the time of this wedding Chas. was with the BAR-NUM CIRCUS in N.Y.

Mr. Hacker started his career in his teens as a professional roller skater in the 1880's when this was a highly popular sport and he gave fancy and trick skating exhibitions at nearly all the roller skating rinks in New England.

As bikes came to be popular, Chas. practiced trick riding. Meanwhile in Brantford F. Westbrook's mother had provided bikes and jockey suits for young Fred and for Harry Fair and Billy Patterson. They practiced a 3 bike act and had a contract to go on the road with their act but their fathers objected to this. Mr. Hacker and F. Westbrook then met and decided to team up and after one practice put on their first appearance. They were in partnership until Fred married Chas. sister. Fred's wife did not like travelling so Fred left the circuit.

At one time the pair travelled with Adam Forepaugh's Circus. Mr. Hacker showed me the contract which he and Fred had signed with Adam Forepaugh for bike riding and acrobatics during the season of 1886. The contract stated that the performers were to furnish their own crush opera hats and high top boots. He also has a book of press clippings which his mother kept for him. I also saw a couple of beer mugs he had made while touring Europe on which is hand painted pictures of his act.

Mr. Hacker played in Mexico with the Orrin Bros. Circus. He spent 3 months in Brazil in the interior with the Eddie Silbon Circus who is now living in Calif. In England he played at the Empire in London, the Follies Bergere in Paris and the Winter Garden in Berlin. On some occasions Emperor Franz Joseph was in the audience. The King & Queen of Belgium saw the performance in Brussels. In London he met the Prince of Wales who presented him a cigar and on his saying he would keep it for a souvenir his Royal Highness gave him another and told him to smoke it.

Mr. Hacker returned to America in 1893 to fulfill a contract with Plo Ziegfeld's father at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago but fire destroyed the building where the performance was to take place and he then joined Gus Hills World of Novelties for the 1894 season and 95. In 1903 he gave his last performance and with F. Westbrook opened up the Westbrook & Hacker Brewery later known as the Brantford Brewing Co.

The American Circus Corp. put out 3 different letter heads. On the inside in the square the one had DO YOU OWN 66 ELEPHANTS  
one had A CIRCUS WITHOUT A TITLE  
one had REALLY UNCENSORED

Has any Circus fan any American Circus Corp. letterheads that are any different from the above 3 types?

\*\*\*\*\*

RAMOND-LEE CIRCUS  
by JAMES L. HARSHMAN

The fact that the new Ramond-Lee Circus was created and built in just one month (April) is the best tribute we know to the astute capabilities of its founders and owners, Ray and Claire Brison and their sons, Raymond and Lee. Since leaving Chambersburg, Pa. winter quarters late in Apr. show has enjoyed good biz. A one ringer, show features Sam Dock's trained animals. One of the biggest days to date was in White Sulphur Springs N.Y. where 3 performances were given in one day.

The Ramond-Lee Circus moves on 3 trucks and 4 trailers. The Side Show top is brand new. It is 20x70 and of olive drab color. Light plant is also new and is Army surplus equipment. Side show consists of animal lecture by Ray Brison, the animals consisting of a coati mundi, honey bear, porcupine, wild pig, and den of snakes. Magic by Brison, Punch by Lee and Brison, fire eating by Brison. Show has nice banner line formerly used on Bell Bros. Ray Brison handles bally and Fred Keely sells tickets Show goes for 25¢

The big top is a 50 with two 20s and contains seats for 100 on the reserve chairs and 400 on the blues. Performance is as follows:-

Riding monkey presented by Sam Dock

Clowns

Trained goats by Sam Dock

Clowns

Candy Pitch

BLACK BEAUTY pick out pony by Sam Dock

Clowns

Magic by Fred Keely

Rings by Claire Brison

High jumping mule by Sam Dock

Revolving ladder by Jane Brison

Trained monkeys by Sam Dock

Vent by Fred Keely

Trained dogs by Sam Dock

Performance is sparked by circus music via records. Ray Brison uses 3 different costumes for his clown numbers and Sam Dock and Fred Keely work in full dress suits. General admission to the big top is 60¢ and 40¢ with 15¢ extra for reserves. Midway has concession stand and ball game. R.L. STAVER is general agent. Animals consist of 3 goats, 2 ponies, 1 mule, 6 dogs, 2 monkeys, all of which were trained by Sam Dock now in his 83rd year and still going strong. Show is not adverse to long jumps of 200 miles and is heading south fast. Show needs marquee and has been trying to buy a bull. Show was caught at Boonsboro, Md. Sept. 12.

\*\*\*\*\*

NEW MEMBERS

P. LUTH

P.O. BOX 2229

HOUSTON, TEXAS

S. HILLS

R.F.D.

AVON, CONN.

Rev. Sparks Melton 1117 Cambridge Crescent Norfolk, Va.

The Editor has just received from Japan some very nice circus items for his collection, they include litho's from the DONGAH CIRCUS and the complete musical score of the Dongah Circus, after trying for 3hrs. to make some head or tail out of the music he gave it up and put it away also received 2 rolls of film (16 photos and negatives) of the DUNNINGTON Circus and from the looks of the one photo they use a square tent, this though may be an illusion or an angle from which the photo was taken.