

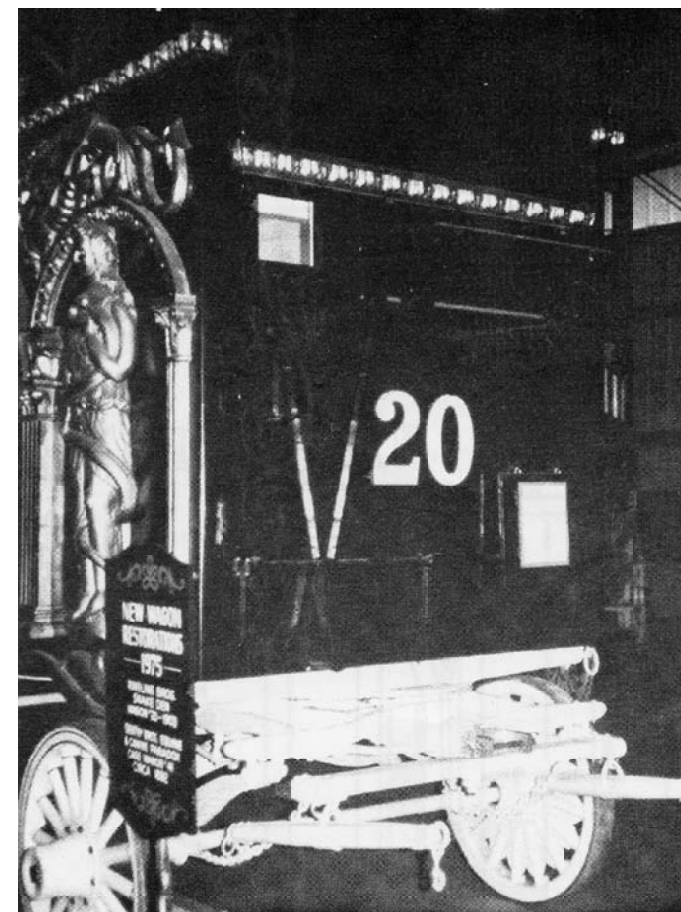
This photo shows the snake den before being shipped to the Ringling Bros. at Baraboo in 1903. The wagon was photographed at the Bode Wagon Works. Snakes, dragons, snake charmers, and a Medusa's head decorate the sides of the wagon. [The photo is from the R.E. Conover collection.]

The original Ringling Bros. Snake Den was built by the Bode Wagon Works in Cincinnati, Ohio, during the winter of 1902-03 and first appeared in a Ringling street parade in 1903. It continued to be a parade feature at least through the 1910 season. Thereafter, it was displayed in the side show through the 1920's and perhaps into the early 1930's.

During the next 40 years, there is no record that the wagon was used and it was assumed that it had become just another victim of the ravages of time.

However, the carvings from one side survived and were shown at a New England art show in 1970. Two years later, these carvings were purchased by the Circus World Museum from Jared French of Rome, Italy.

Bill Thalmeyer was commissioned to recreate the missing carvings and, in 1973 and 1974, work progressed on the wagon itself. The project was completed in early 1975 and Ringling Bros. Snake Den No. 20, in all its original gild and ornate splendor, may be seen at the Circus World Museum.



Front View

## Ringling Bros. Snake Den No. 20

DATE: 1903

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'

SCANNED & REVISED:  
01/06/03

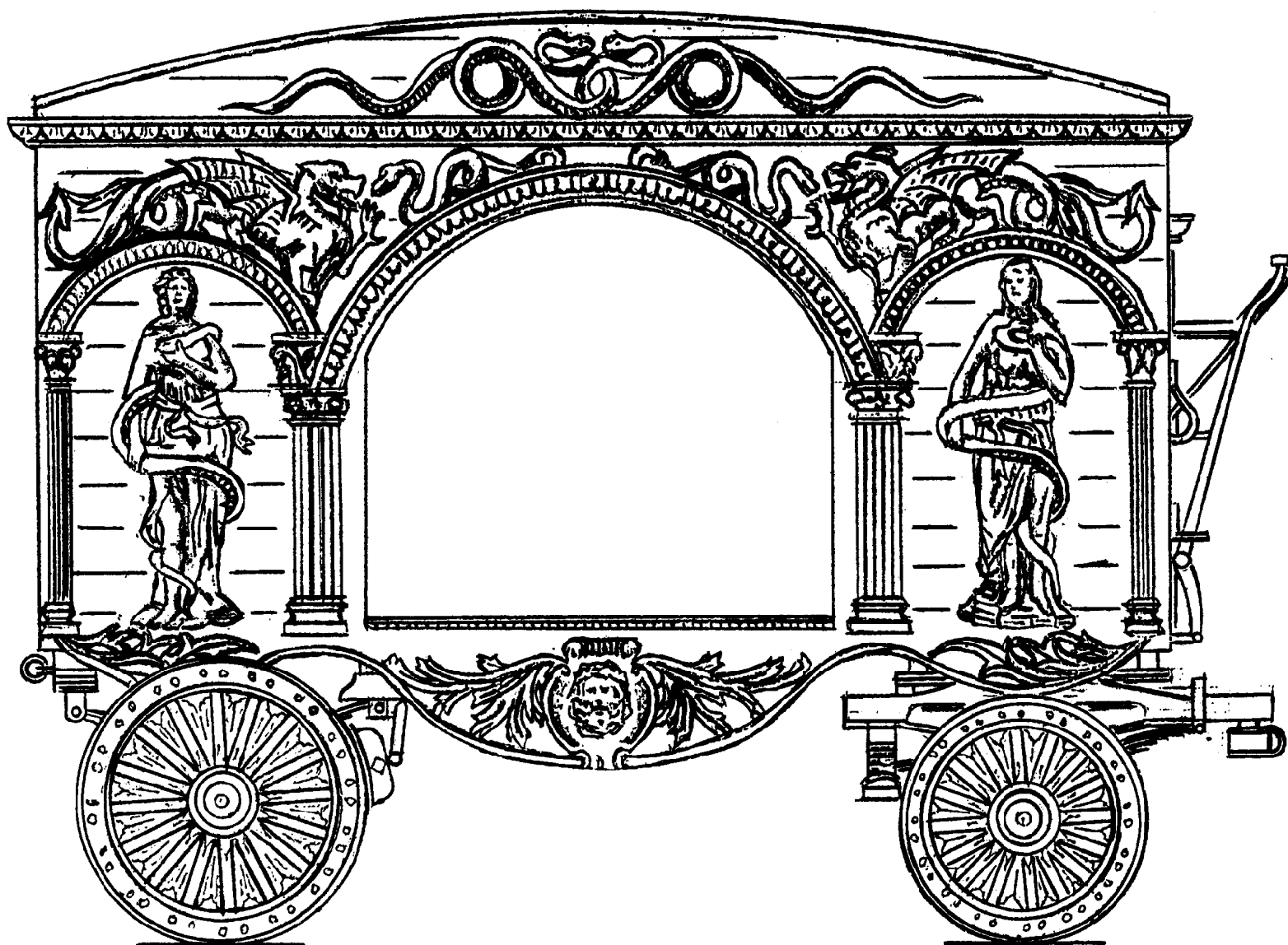
Pg 1 of 4

## Circus Model Builders

Drawn By  
Charles L. Shaffer

DRAWING NUMBER

#0279



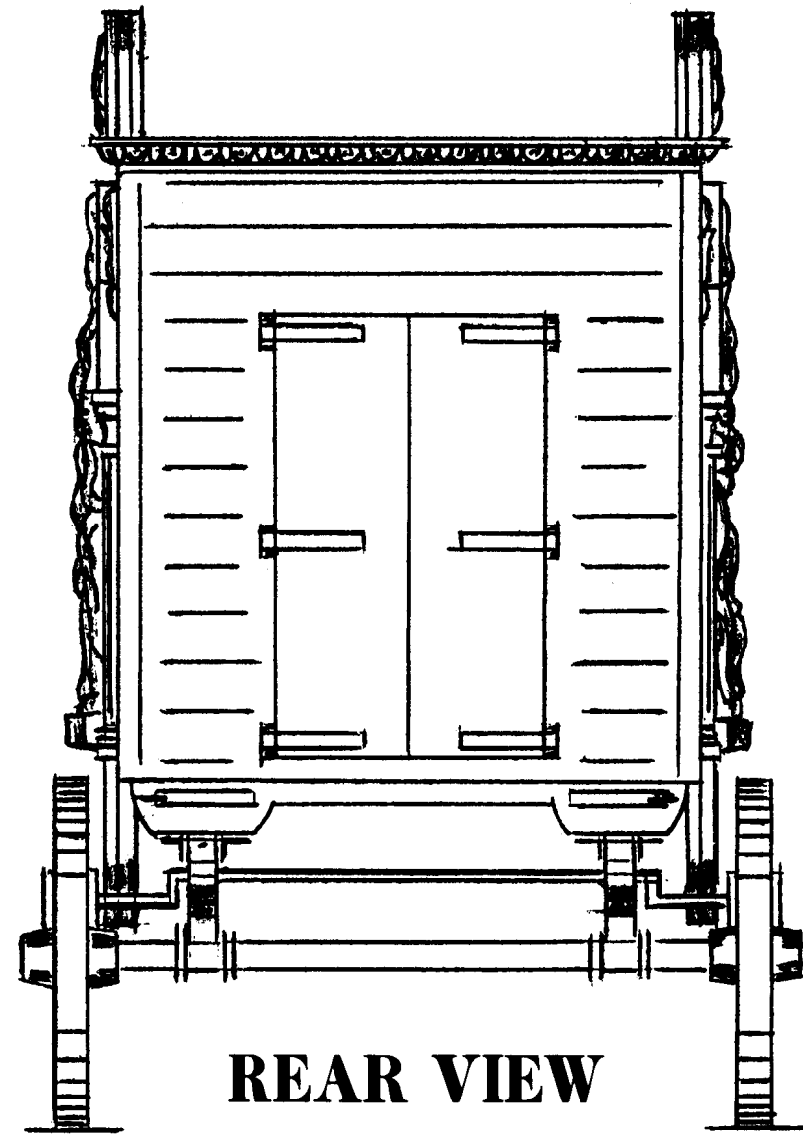
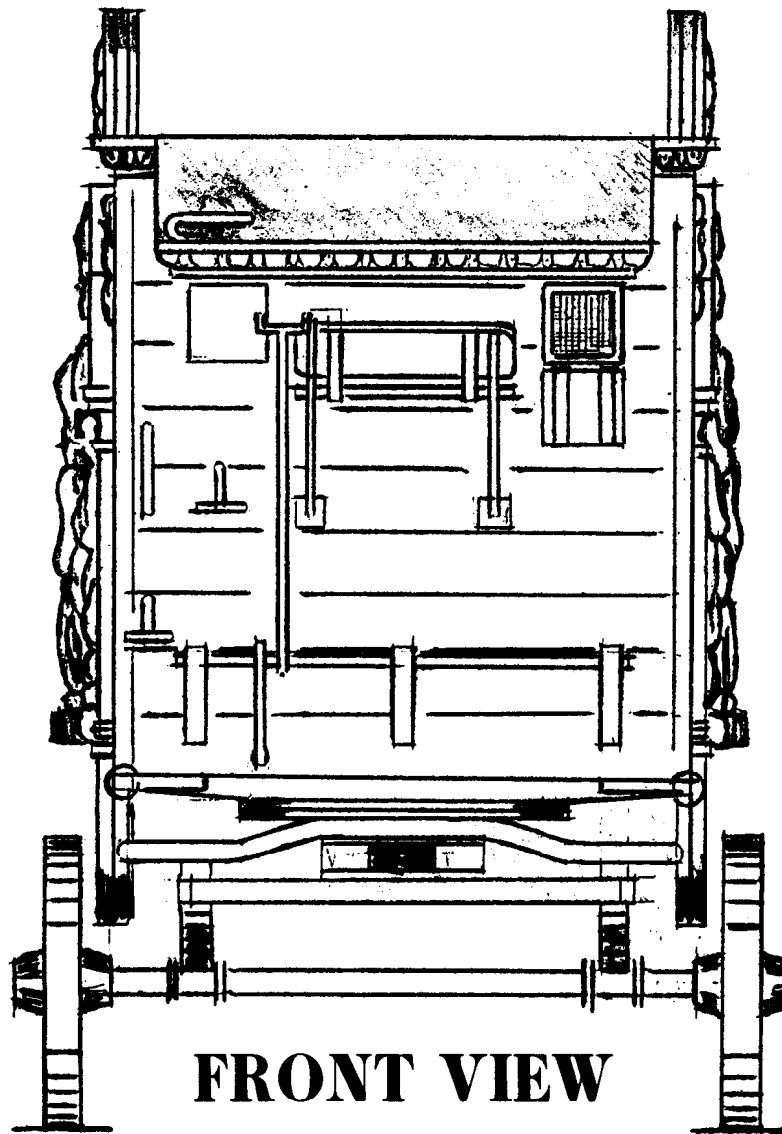
**Ringling Bros.  
Snake Den No. 20**

Pg 2 of 4

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'

SCANNED & REVISED:  
01/06/03

DRAWING NUMBER  
**#0279**



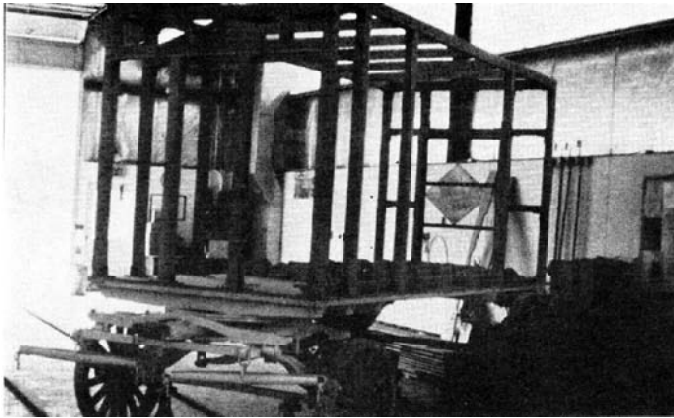
**Ringling Bros.  
Snake Den No. 20**

Pg 3 of 4

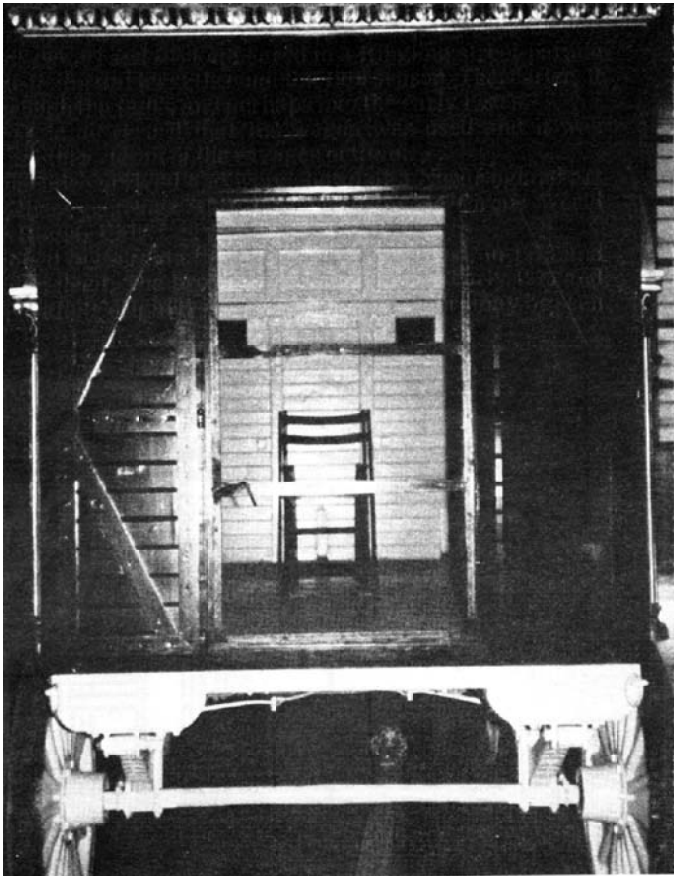
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'

SCANNED & REVISED:  
01/06/03

DRAWING NUMBER  
**#0279**



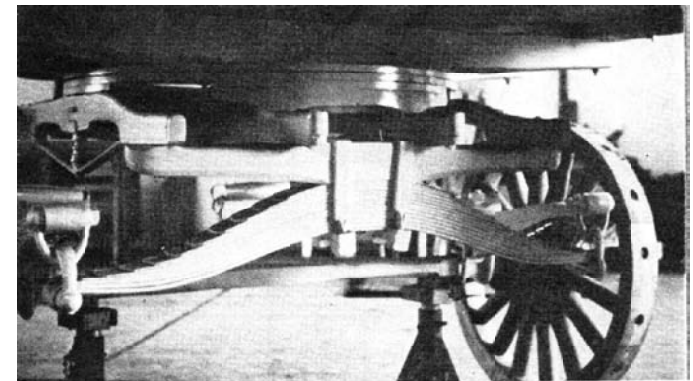
View of the wagon frame taken during rebuilding. [Chuck Meltzer photo]



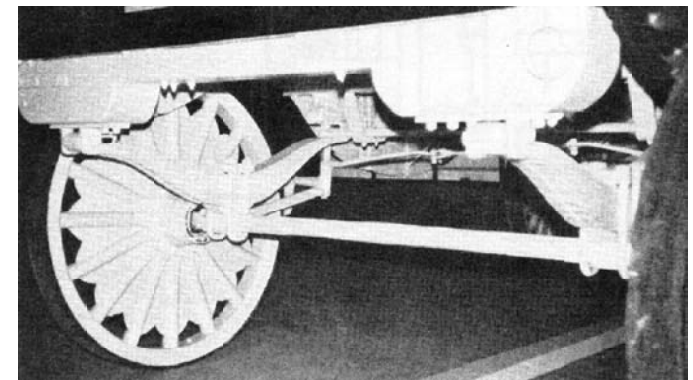
Rear View



Side View of restored snake den taken at the Circus World Museum



View of front undercarriage taken during restoration. [Chuck Meltzer photo]



View of rear undercarriage.

**Ringling Bros.  
Snake Den No. 20**

Pg 4 of 4

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'

SCANNED & REVISED:  
01/06/03

DRAWING NUMBER  
**#0279**