

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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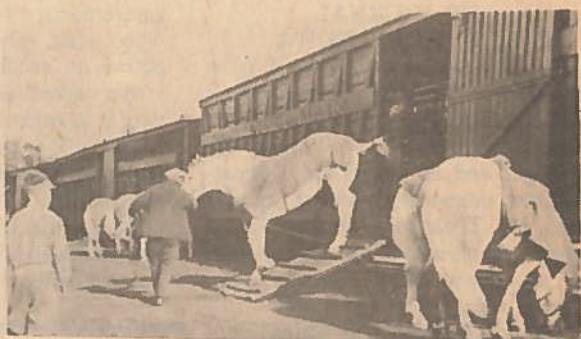
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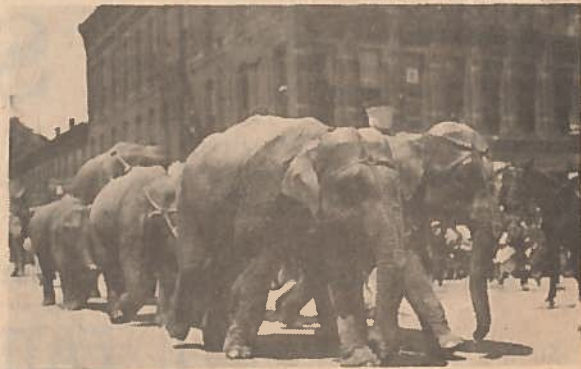
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THE CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN

These three snapshots were taken by the late Ed Holt in the 1920s. Horses are seen being loaded from an animal car at a railway siding between Clinton Street and West Academy Street in Albion. The other pictures show the circus parade which followed. Zebras and elephants plodded through the four corners in downtown Albion as we see the Marine Bank building in the background. Years ago whenever the circus came to town, there was always a circus parade to show off before the big show. The animal cars at the siding indicate "Walter L. Main Shows." The Orleans County Fairgrounds on West State Street was here such events took place in Albion.



Seeing the elephants on parade here I'm reminded of a story my second grade teacher Miss Marian Hassett, told about an elephant. It seems at a circus parade occurred somewhere and a small boy standing at a corner did something mean to the elephant who passed by. Several years later when the boy was much older the circus returned to his town and he stood at the same corner as the same elephant on parade passed by. The elephant had never forgotten that cruelty and remembering it, lunged out with its trunk and trapping it around its victim, threw him upon the pavement. I guess when they say, "a memory like an elephant" this story illustrates it.



How strange it would seem to us today to see elephants and zebras on any of our village streets. The horses in the circus pulled the caravans that held other more vicious animals like lions and tigers caged in safely behind iron bars. Our present day parades and carnivals are meek and mild compared to the excitement of the good old days when the circus came to town.

