

It was one of those seasons. Non-stop rain. Trouble is, edges of our roads would get soft. Well, I suppose that made it possible for us to see the elephants. They would have passed right on through otherwise.

It was 1950. Circus was going through town when one of the trucks overheated. Came to a stop across from Jack Olson's farm. As they got water, the truck slipped sideways. Sunk to its axles. It was getting late, so we got up early to pull them out. Well, wouldn't you know it, a coupla circus fellas came along with two elephants.

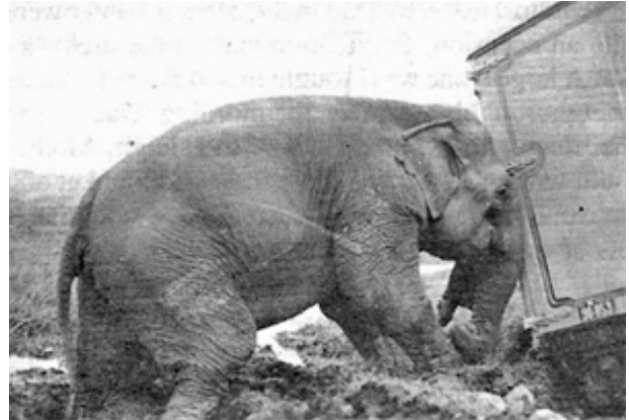
We don't see elephants much out here. Massive creatures. Smart too. They seemed to understand what was needed. The handlers harnessed the beasts with wide belting, around their chests and over their backs. They strained with their impressive might, but the truck hardly moved. The fellas then got their elephants to pull the back of the truck around into the ditch, thinking they'd get it going in the other direction. Well, they pulled it around alright, but the truck sunk even further. And the harness broke, t'boot.

Now we had two elephants moving around without harness. Somehow, they understood their jobs though. They put their foreheads up against the back of the truck and pushed. I suppose galloping across the prairie free as bygone bison didn't come to mind. Good thing.

As luck would have it, a loaded fuel truck came along. He couldn't get past. So, we chained him to the circus truck, to pull backwards. A trainer motioned to the largest elephant. He put his head against the front bumper of the fuel truck. Shucks if he didn't dent in the bumper, pushing it right into a front tire!

Fortunately, by this time, farmer Jack saw the performance. He chugged up with his 22-36 International, steel lugs 'nd all. He first pulled the bumper off the tire. Then he hooked to the back of the fuel truck. The elephants weren't to be sidelined. Needed to see the job through. One pushed on the down side of the mired

truck. The other pushed the rear. Lo and behold! The combined power got the truck out. Quite the site! One of those times you pinch yourself to make sure you're seein' right. We had to admire the intelligence and stick-to-itiveness of those elephants!



I was hauling fuel those days as well. So I was around when the driver told our boss that his bumper was bent out of shape by an elephant. The boss accused him of falling asleep at the wheel. Why else would he cook up a story like that! Since I was within earshot he called me over. Boy, am I glad to see you, he said. Tell these fellas about the elephants. They don't believe me.

What elephants? I said. Just to add some fun!

Elephants in Melita was first written by Jerry Drier. David Neufeld adapted it from a version in Vantage Points 5.

See ya later!