

## ROMANCE OF A CIRCUS RING.

### Like Many Another It Resulted in an Unhappy Marriage.

#### Bareback-Rider Annie Snow Now Seeks a Divorce from Her Clown.

"A Romance of the Circus Ring" might well be substituted for "Annie Carroll Snow against Eddie Snow, action for divorce," the prosaic title of a suit just begun in the Supreme Court of Westchester County, and which has set the army of employees of Barnum & Bailey's Greatest Show on Earth to talking.

Annie Carroll is one of the best known bareback riders in the country. She won the plaudits of thousands in the old Madison Square Garden, and she has ridden in all the big shows organized during the past twenty years.

Eddie Snow, her husband, whom she is suing for absolute divorce, is a Roman rider and all-round performer. The co-respondent was until recently a chorus girl with the Barnum and Bailey show.

The name of Carroll has been a familiar one on circus posters for half a century. A score of years ago the Carroll family was the most noted equestrian family in America.

William B. Carroll on the bills—"Barney" Carroll among his friends—was in his day the greatest bareback rider before the public. He was born in Knoxville, Tenn., in 1813. He was a farmer's boy, and ran away from home at the age of twelve with a small circus company which had visited the neighborhood. He rose in the profession and became celebrated as a circus performer, manager and proprietor.

He married a young Quakeress from Long Island in 1843, and a year later had taught her to ride in the ring with skill. Together they travelled all over the country, earning much money, for in those days bareback riders were the highest salaried people in the profession.

In 1850, when La Belle Carroll, as the young Quakeress was then known, appeared with the Crystal Palace show, where the Forty-second street reservoir now stands, her

dashing riding created a furor. Her last appearance was with the Great Eastern Circus in 1870.

Upon her retirement Mme. Carroll purchased the home in Westchester village, which she now occupies with Annie Carroll and the latter's children. There "Barney" Carroll built a circular barn for training ring horses, and the place became a rendezvous for performers during the Winter season. Barney himself continued to ride publicly until 1876, his last public appearance as a bareback rider being with the Van Amburgh show in 1876. Almost to his death in July, 1879, however, he was engaged as equestrian director and ringmaster.

Although the Carrolls never had any children of their own, they reared several that they adopted, nearly all of whom became good riders. The most noted of these were Willie O'Dell, Marie Milze, who became the wife of Actor Ben Maginley, and before her death, fifteen years ago, was acknowledged to be the most accomplished and graceful rider that ever danced upon a horse's back; and Annie, the plaintiff in this divorce suit.

Annie was only two years old when she was adopted by the Carrolls. She grew up in the circus ring, and her first recollection is of being carried around the ring on her father's head while he did his act on the bare back of a horse. This was in the Forepaugh show in Philadelphia in 1870, when she was four years old.

While on the road with old-time wagon shows she was taught to ride, and at the age of nine did a scarf act, and two years later discarded the pad and appeared as a bareback rider.

Since then she has had a successful career, earning as much as \$125 a week. She appeared with old John Robinson's show, Van Amburgh's, the Great Eastern, John A. Murray's, W. C. Coup's, John H. Bort's, Forepaugh's and Barnum's, doing a principal equestrian bareback trick act.

Annie Carroll was a pretty girl, plump and graceful, with sweeping black eyes and hair like a raven's wing. Old "Barney" Carroll kept a watchful eye over her, however, and never permitted her to have a lover.

It was in 1883 that her first and only romance began. She was travelling with W. C. Coup's show. In the company was Eddie Snow, a handsome young fellow, a couple of years her senior. He was principal leaper, clown, the human cannon ball and a generally useful performer.

He played clown when Annie Carroll rode, and as she bounded into the ring would merrily cry out:

"Who have we here? Miss Annie Carroll, the greatest living bareback rider."

Then, as she placed her foot in his outstretched hand and he lifted her on the horse, he would look into her eyes with a glance so tender that Annie Carroll's heart thrilled and the ringmaster cracked his whip and she chirruped to her caracoling steed.

That summer was like a dream to Annie Carroll, and at its close Eddie Snow went to the Westchester home of the Carrolls and obtained quarters for the Winter. His wife

ing was continued, and in the Spring both got engagements with the P. T. Barnum show.

They opened in the old Madison Square Garden March 25, 1884, and after the performance the following night went to a Methodist minister and were married. It had been understood that the wedding was not to occur until Fall, but Annie could not refuse her ardent lover and consented to the hasty marriage.

They were with the Barnum show in London and other places until last season on the Polo Grounds. Children were born to them, but Annie Carroll's life was not a happy one.

Her husband was jealous and abused her, she says. He could not bear the plaudits she received or watch her bowing and smiling in the ring without accusing her of unfaithfulness.

Last year she started out with Dan Rice's show, but it failed, and she returned home. It continued with the Barnum show, but unexpectedly returned to Westchester before the close of the season.

New Year's Day, she says, he abused her, and then she determined never to live with him again. She placed her case in the hands of Lawyer David Hunt, of White Plains. He learned, it is alleged, that during the engagement of the Barnum show in Chicago last summer Eddie Snow became enamored of a chorus girl named Annie Gray, and that both were discharged for their conduct.

There are other charges of misconduct during the tour of the Barnum show last year made against Snow, and Lawyer Hunt assures Annie Carroll that she will surely obtain an absolute divorce.

The couple have had four children, two of whom are living, one a baby fifteen months old and the other a girl eight years old. Miss Carroll, the once famous performer, cares for them as though they were her own grandchildren.

Annie Carroll is still a handsome woman and a dashing, graceful rider. Circus performers speak kindly of her and say her husband's jealousy was unfounded. She leaves for Rockford, Ill., to-morrow to join W. S. Reynolds's circus. Her husband is believed to be with the Irwin Bros. show in Buffalo.

performer, cares for them as though they were her own grandchildren.

Annie Carroll is still a handsome woman and a dashing, graceful rider. Circus performers speak kindly of her and say her husband's jealousy was unfounded.