

# Waterford Is Elephant Graveyard

By BILL FELCH  
Press Staff Writer

WATERFORD TWP. — Little Jennie, star of the silver screen and the sawdust trail, died at 10 a.m. Friday of old age.

She was 60.

Funeral service was held at 4:30 p.m. by the Pontiac Mall at the corner of Telegraph and Pontiac Lake roads.

It was presided over by Waterford Police officers H. Rosner and E. W. Meredith.

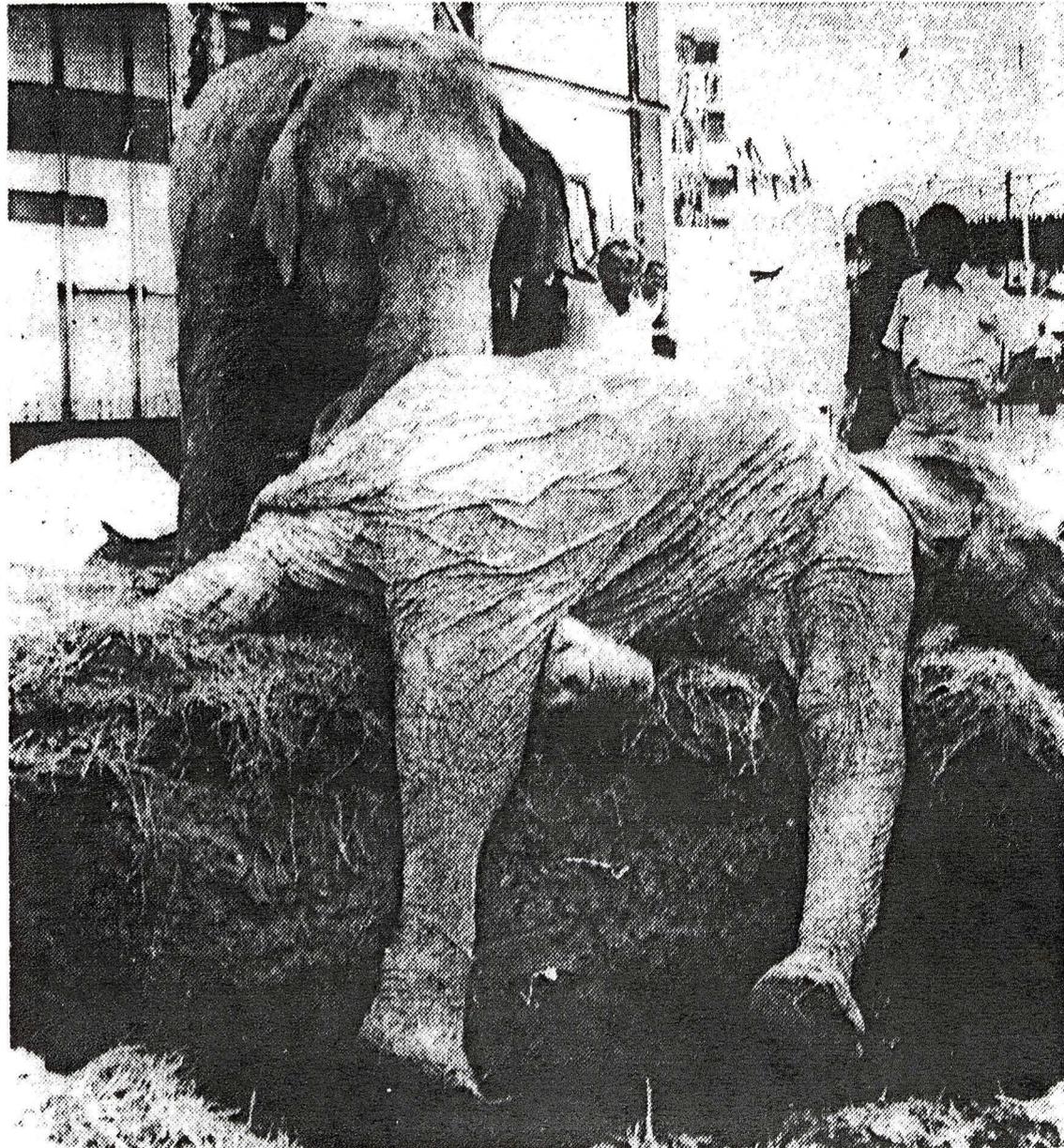
Surviving are Jennie's longtime companion Babe, rising six-year-old star Jimbo, and children and circus people who remember Jennie's days of glory.

Burial followed immediately next to the spot where Jennie breathed her last.

Little Jennie, Babe and Jimbo are elephants on contract to a carnival-circus owned by Link Shows playing until Sunday at Pontiac Mall.

Friday night Babe and Jimbo went on without Jennie, who lay six feet under the ground thirty feet away.

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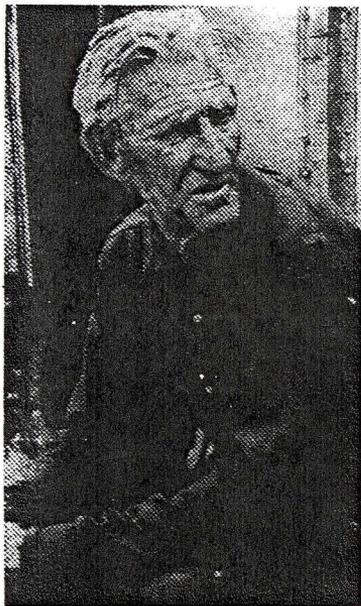
Oakland Press photo by Kingsley Cotton

Little Jennie goes to her last resting place

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# More about... The death of Little Jennie



**BILL WAITE**

He misses Jennie

(Continued From Page A-1)

Bill Waite, a toothless old circus hand who fed and groomed Little Jennie and Babe for the last 14 years said after Jennie's death, "I don't feel so good."

Bill clearly didn't feel like talking, but shared a few reminiscences of his four-ton child's past.

He described how Jennie and Babe costarred with Elizabeth Taylor in the movie "Elephant Walk."

Babe, who is slightly older than Jennie was, is the only one of ten elephants that appeared in that film that still survives.

Bill said he has toured the entire country with the two elephants, most recently with Cole Brothers Circus before joining the Link group three years ago.

When Little Jennie stopped eating Tuesday, circus officials called a Waterford veterinarian who gave her 100 c.c.'s of penicillin.

They called Dr. Wilson at the Detroit zoo Thursday and he said Little Jennie probably had pneumonia and that there was nothing they could do except to continue to try and feed and water her. Like humans, elephants live to 60 or 70 years.

Then early Friday Little Jennie slumped to the ground and quietly died.

Soon after, The Oakland Press and the Waterford Police began receiving calls from motorists who had passed the dead elephant.

Representatives of the Humane Society showed up charging cruelty to animals and

blaming the circus for keeping the animals out in the heat.

But Bill Waite and others explained to those who did not know elephants as well as they do, that the animals come from the tropics and can be felled by old age, but not heat.

The circus folks wanted to have Little Jennie carried away but Waterford Police said there was no one in Oakland County who could lift her. They said she would have to be buried there.

A circus spokesman said he would have to contact Little Jennie's owner in Illinois.

At 3 p.m., the police said they would obtain a warrant from the prosecutor's office and close the circus if she wasn't buried immediately.

Finally, the owner was contacted, permission was obtained from the owners of Pontiac Mall, and a back hoe began digging a nine foot hole for Little Jennie at 3:45 p.m.

At 4:30, when the back hoe operator lifted the shovel and nudged Little Jennie toward the pit, a cry went up from the circus hands.

Waite quietly walked over and unchained Babe and led her over to her dead companion.

The elephant trainer Guy Gossing shouted in a heavy Belgian accent, "Push, Babe. Push her Babe." And the huge elephant toppled Little Jennie into her grave.

The circus spokesman said it would cost about \$5,000 to replace her, but Bill Waite's eyes said she meant more than that.