

FRIDAY, OCT. 3, 1884

The Barr Oak Tragedy.
On Friday last Orton's Anglo-American four combined swindles arrived here as advertised. The tents were pitched, and after the usual street parade they were rapidly filled with people. All went well except for ill feeling of some toward the gang of thieves and sharpers, who plied their business vigorously, both within the tents and out. At, or rather after, the evening performance, however, a disturbance took place which will long be remembered by our citizens. The particulars in the case are as follows:

During the concert in the evening one Clint Elliot, of Mankato, who was drunk, made a good deal of noise by sneering at the thinness of the entertainment, and in consequence got into an altercation with Claude Powers, adopted son of Miles Orton, the proprietor. Officer L. Lacey came up in time to prevent blows, and ordered Elliot to be quiet, which order he obeyed, but not till the showman had told him that he was "spotted" and would be "attended to after the performance." True to the threats made, as soon as the performance was ended, Orton's men began hurrying the audience from the tent, telling them that there would be a fuss. Just as Elliot, still in the charge of Lacey, emerged from the tent, he was struck on the head with a tent stake in the hands of one of the showmen, and as Lacey was stooping to help him up, he, too, was hit twice in the back with a sand bag. Thinking it was going to be pretty hot for him Mr. Lacey made tracks for town to procure help. Upon his return he was greeted with oaths and threats from the showmen, but it is probable no open fight would have taken place, had not two or three unauthorized persons, among them George Evans, our half crazy ex-restaurant keeper, commenced to rail back at the circus men threatening to cut the ropes. This appeared to enrage Orton's roughs beyond all bounds, and with the circus cry of "Hey Reube!" they grabbed tent stakes and proceeded to deal about them right and left. Several bystanders, in all about twenty, were knocked down, and Evans was pretty badly pounded, a punishment he well deserved. As the showmen were in the majority they succeeded in making the crowd outside the tents take themselves to a distance of safety. They however followed the circus men to the depot, where they were loading their wagons and tents on the cars, and another war of words and clubs followed, in which Lew Hawley, who should have been in the jug for drunkenness, was pretty roughly handled. Mayor Mann was sent for to use his influence to quiet the crowd, and had succeeded in doing so, but just as the train started Evans, who had been home and got his shot gun, arrived on the spot and fired a shot at the train. At this the showmen began shooting at the crowd about the depot, most of whom were spectators attracted by the disturbance. At the first volley Zig Longnecker, a hard working blacksmith, and a man wholly innocent of taking any part in the disturbance, was shot through the brain and fell unconscious upon the platform. At the second volley Mayor Mann was shot in the back, and a young man named O'Neal, from the country, was shot in the heel. The firing by the showmen was kept up as long as they thought they could hit any one at the depot. The circus train stopped for the regular train to side track, but when they started on they resumed firing and kept it up till they were fully half a mile from the depot. There are parties here who say they heard Orton order his men to get their "guns" and fire low, just as he stepped aboard the train. Upon examination it was found that Longnecker was shot through the brain, the ball entering the right temple and coming out just above the cheek bone on the left side. He died in less than an hour, being wholly unconscious after his fall. Young O'Neal received only a flesh wound in the heel, and is doing as well as could be expected. A. W. Mann was shot in the back, the ball entering just below the shoulder, close to the back bone, and lodging within the body. He is now in a critical condition, only his extra strong constitution being in his favor. His physicians say that should he recover, his lower extremities will always be paralyzed, making him a helpless cripple.

Sheriff Johnson started on Saturday morning's train for Washington, Kan., whither the show had gone, to arrest the outfit. Sixteen were arrested and brought to Mankato. The rest were allowed to go their way to Sedalia, Mo., where the show was billed to appear. The parties arrested are no undergoing a preliminary examination. It is probable that two or more among them took part in the shooting.—*Burr Oak Herald*.

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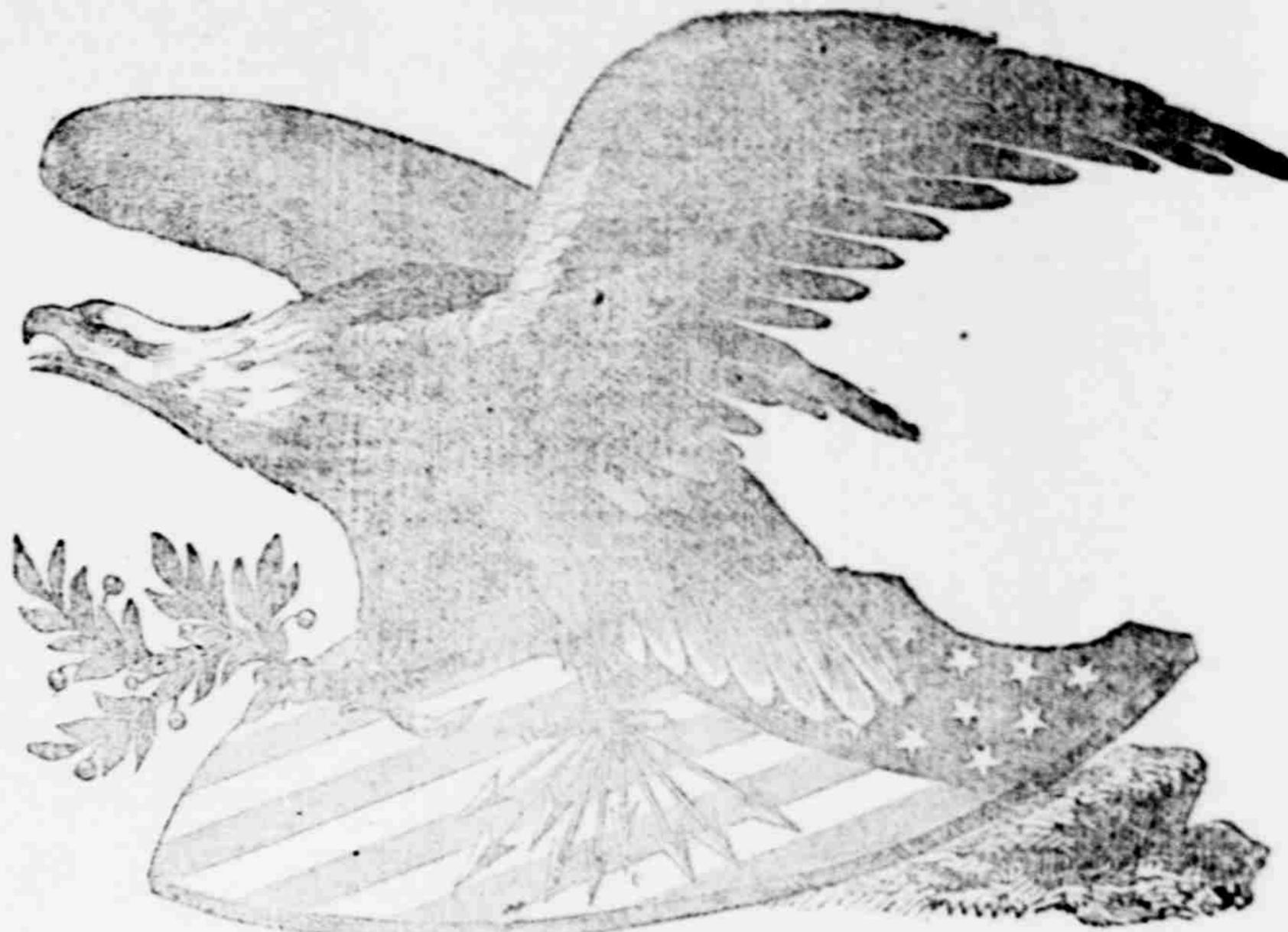
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