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Garver Flying Circus

This black and white photograph shows members of the Garver Flying Circus in La Cross, Kansas. Kneeling from left to right: J.O. Lewis, Geo. Ellers, Karl Garver, Ralph Anderson, J.M. Moellendick, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Martin (?), Bertha and Cyle Horchem. The Garver Flying Circus, established around 1920 or 1921, by Karl Garver from Attica, Kansas and Cyle Horchem and ex-army flyer from Ransom, Kansas, performed spectacular aerial stunts across the Kansas sky. The group of daredevils successfully entertained the crowds of spectators with death defying acts until tragedy struck in 1924. On March 2, Bertha Horchem fell to her death during a loop stunt in San Antonio, Texas. On October 12, Ruth Garver "Champion Lady Parachute Jumper", fell to her death from one thousand feet in the air with a tangled parachute. Later that same year on November 12, Cyle Horchem slipped and fell to his death as he attempted to climb onto a wing while in flight. Karl Garver continued to perform at air shows but eventually sold his airplanes and died of alcohol poisoning in 1926.

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