

Today in Columbus History:

On Wednesday, November 8, 1882, an article appeared in the *Columbus Daily Enquirer-Sun* about the "Largest Known Circus." It was no coincidence that it appeared along with a large ad for Adam Forepaugh's spectacular circus coming to Columbus the next day. Forepaugh's name may not be familiar today, but he was a fierce competitor in the circus business. One of P. T. Barnum's best-known quotes originated with Forepaugh. He attributed the saying "There's a sucker born every minute" to Barnum, though Barnum never said it. As the falsehood spread, Barnum thanked Forepaugh for the free publicity.

Forepaugh's wasn't the only circus in Columbus that Autumn. The competing Sells Brothers Circus came to Columbus just two weeks earlier on October 23. Forepaugh penned an open letter to the citizens of Columbus and had it printed in both the *Daily Enquirer-Sun* and *Daily Times* imploring the people to wait for his show on Nov. 9 to avoid being humbugged. He also placed a large ad in the October 20, 1882, *Columbus Daily Times* warning that the Sells Brothers did not exhibit attractions as advertised. "Look out for lying show bills," and "To be forewarned is to be forearmed," said Forepaugh.

Reviews of the earlier Sells Brothers Circus were generally positive, but one writer complained that the hairy elephants didn't live up to the billboard advertising. We don't know the extent of Forepaugh's own billboards, however, he certainly did more print advertising in the days before his circus arrived.

Also prior to both circuses, Professor Erasme Abt, a stereopticon operator did a free show to advertise Forepaugh's circus. He arrived on October 18, before the Sells Brothers and then returned on November 4, for an encore performance. Stereopticons were a popular form of entertainment before the introduction of motion pictures. They consisted of a set of two magic lanterns that projected different images of the same subject in the same spot. By faded out one image and revealing the other, the image would appear to move. They attached a canvas to G. J. Peacock's Clothing store on Broad and Randolph (12th Street) while the stereopticon was set up at Crane's corner across the street. One reviewer commented that "the stag drinking at the brook is worthy of special mention," and "the skeleton dance took the cake for a comic performance." Included in the slide show were also pictures of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and James A. Garfield and his wife.

Forepaugh advertised Bolivar, the largest and heaviest elephant in the world along with twelve hundred men and horses, and a thousand wild beasts and rare birds. He also had "Four Menageries Combined, Three Great Circus Troupes, Mammoth Museum, Oceanic Aquarium, Adam Forepaugh, Jr.'s Great Congress of 22 Trained Elephants, Renx's Berlin Circus, Hippodramatic Sports and Gorgeous Oriental Displays. More than equaling in magnitude and cost nearly All the Shows on Earth Combined!"

In addition, Forepaugh promised "Four Great Circus Rings, Seats for 20,000 in the Cloud-Towering Pavilions! Between 9:30 and 10:30 there would be a Carnival Street Parade with the handsomest woman in America and Living Wild Beasts Loose in the Street, two great bands of music and "a real simon pure Troupe of Southern Camp-Meeting Melodists, singing as the procession moves."

At the time, Forepaugh's previous "Handsomest Woman in America" was in the process of suing him for \$10,000 in a Philadelphia court. Columbus clothier, H.J. Thornton, used this controversy and Forepaugh's name recognition in his ads running at that time. Thornton told his customers that if you shopped in his store, you could look good without paying as much as Forepaugh.

Starting on the evening of November 8, a crowd estimated at ten thousand began converging on downtown to see the parade of Forepaugh's performers and animals. Described as "an uneasy mass of humanity" they had to wait as the circus train was delayed until about eleven o'clock that morning. The *Columbus Daily Times* described the parade was "dazzling and beautiful, but as it was witnessed by nearly everybody in this section, we forbear giving a detailed description." On the circus itself, they did say that "On the whole, we have never seen the performance equaled, and it is the first circus we ever saw that exhibited all it advertised."

Forepaugh died in 1890 and his show was eventually merged with the Sells Brothers to become the Forepaugh-Sells Brothers Circus.

Compiled by Daniel A. Bellware, Muscogee Genealogical Society

Clipping from Georgia Historic Newspapers (GALILEO).

Our weekly snippets of Columbus history are usually based on a few days-worth of searching through the most popular sources for Muscogee County history. Meant to inspire readers to explore more about Columbus history, they are not exhaustive dissertations on the topic and may contain mistakes. If you have corrections or additional information, feel free to share them with the group.

The Largest Circus Known.

There are twenty-circuses traveling in America, fourteen in Europe, three in Australia, and several others in various parts of the world. Of these, the largest and best known is Adam Forepaugh's, which exhibits here November 9th. It was first started in 1854, and has constantly increased since that time, until now it represents more invested capital, employs more agents, artists and laborers, has more wild beasts, has larger tents, more seating capacity, and is altogether and in every respect twice as large as any other exhibition. Its cash value is said to be \$2,500,000, though it is doubtful whether Mr. Forepaugh would dispose of it for that sum.

Article on "Largest Known Circus" from the *Columbus Daily Times*, November 8, 1882,
<https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>.

NOT UNTIL NOV. 9.

WAIT FOR IT! WAIT FOR 4-PAW!

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO BE HUMBUGGED

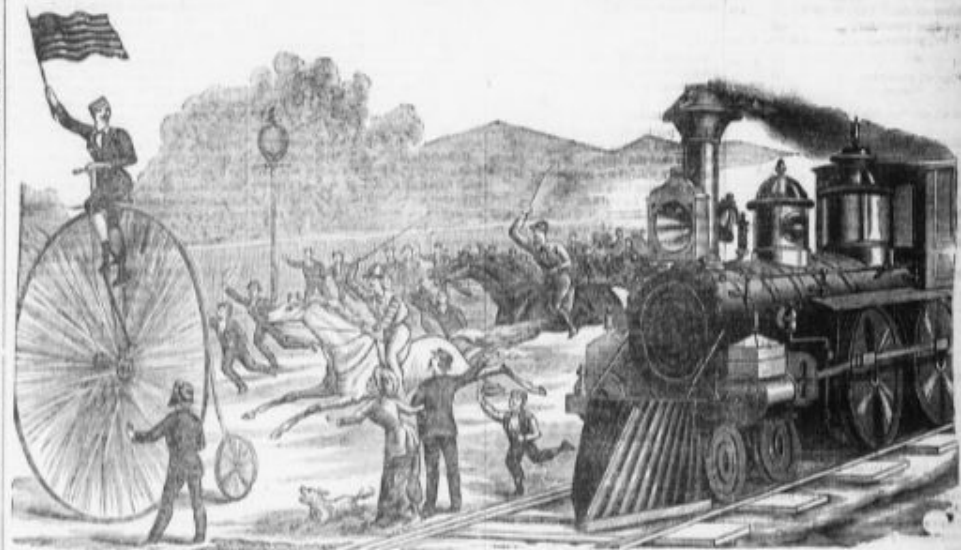
Wait for the Great Forepaugh Show.

Absolutely Many Times Larger than any Show that Has or Will Come
HERE THIS SEASON.

And the Only One Exhibiting Just What It Advertises.

Never Divides. Never Changes Dates.

20 TRAINED ELEPHANTS WITH THE GREAT FOREPAUGH SHOW.



WILL EXHIBIT AFTERNOON AND EVENING AT

Columbus, Thursday, November 9.

20 Trained ELEPHANTS WITH THE GREAT FOREPAUGH SHOWS.

WILL EXHIBIT AFTERNOON AND EVENING AT

Columbus, Thursday, November 9.

LARGEST IN THE WORLD WITH ANIMALS!

With two, three, and quadruple circus street displays.

1,200 Men and Horses, 1,000 Wild Beasts AND RARE BIRDS.

Special Parade! Three Miles, Grand Street Show of the Great Amusement Features.

Grandest of all—the new and the most detailed Great Forepaugh Show, Four Menagerie Circuses, Three Great Circus Troops, Menagerie, Grand Street Parade, John Forepaugh Jr's Great Troop of 13 Trained Elephants, Horse, Berlin Circus, Hippodromic Circus and Menagerie Grand Displays, None else equaling in magnitude and cost.

All the Shows on Earth Combined!

Daily regular grand, circus large, parade grand, and more, and in the most perfect, choice and very stable form they ever exhibited ever exhibited. Each of the apparatus and accompanying array of massive foreign fixtures. Free and only Great Show of 20 performing elephants, and the great parade.

BOLIVAR, LARGEST AND HEAVIEST ELEPHANT KNOWN TO EXIST.

20,000 will be invited if any where in the world can duplicate the exhibition in 1882. Parade, from 10 to 12, being open. Show up and see a special elephant parade in the city. In the evening, Grand Street, 10 to 12, in the city. In the evening, Grand Street, 10 to 12, in the city.

Grandest Circus Ever Exhibited in the World! London Show, from Berlin! Grand Street, from Berlin! Grand Street, from Berlin! Grand Street, from Berlin! Grand Street, from Berlin!

The show is located in Columbus, Ohio, at the corner of Third and High Streets, between 10 and 12.

Four Great Circus Rings

Seats for 20,000 in the Cloud-Towering Pavilions!

Three Great Bands.

Peerless, Poetic, Princely, Grand, Gorgeous FREE STREET PARADE!

Every Forenoon of Exhibition Day, between 10 and 12, on the grand and gorgeous

CARNIVAL STREET PARADE, in which is seen the Wonderfully Grand and Delightful Parade.

CLEOPATRA, Queen of Egypt.

LALLA ROOKH, Princess of Delhi

Handsomest Woman in America.

Presenting "Cala Book," and the Barge of Cleopatra, with Royal's Queen, the most magnificent

specimen ever beheld upon the streets of an American city, LIVING WILD BEASTS ROUNDED UP

THE STREET. A score of magnificent elephants, ALICORN sweeping along with her 4

foot high bicycle. A most choice pure Troop of Southern Long-Masting Hounds, singing as the

procession moves.

Two Great Bands of Music

And grand, new and novel FASCINATION OF INDUSTRY, the very largest, greatest, grandest, grandest, and most TWO MILLION DOLLAR PARADE ever seen on the streets. A GRAND

AS USUAL. Exhibition afternoon and evening at same place.

Admission Free. Free and only Great Show of 20 performing elephants, and the great parade.

ADAM FOREPAUGH, Sole Proprietor.

Ad for Forepaugh's show from the *Columbus Daily Times*, November 8, 1882, <https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>.

NOV. 9TH

22 TRAINED ELEPHANTS



WITH THE GREAT FOREPAUGH SHOWS

Will Exhibit Afternoon and Evening at

Columbus, Thursday, Nov. 9th

LARGEST IN THE WORLD! (18th ANNUAL TOUR)
With two, three, and requires over FOUR GREAT RAILWAY TRAINS.

1,200 MEN and HORSES, 1,000 Wild Beasts and Bred Birds.

CAPITAL INVESTED THREE MILLIONS.
EUROPE SWEEP CLEAN OF ITS GREAT AMUSEMENT FEATURES.
Greatest of All—the new and first time combined GREAT FOREPAUGH SHOWS. Four
the greatest combined. Three Great Circus Troupes. Mammoth Museum.
Durable Aqueduct. Adam Forepaugh. It's Great Circus of 22 Trained
Elephants. Best's Berlin Circus Hippopotamus Sports and Gir-
gones Greatest Spectacular Displays. More than equaled
in magnitude and cost nearly

ALL THE SHOWS ON EARTH COMBINED.

Daily exercises greater than any other. Parade grander, costs more, shows more, and is the most perfect, elegant, and respectable traveling tented exhibition ever organized. Look at the unparalleled and unsurpassed array of famous features: FIRST AND ONLY GREAT HERD OF 22 PERFORMING ELEPHANTS, and the just added

BOLIVAR, LARGEST AND HEAVIEST ELEPHANT KNOWN TO EXIST!

40000 lb. He defied if any circus in the world can duplicate the unparalleled act of Sir LEONARD
PERFORMING AND RINGING HOUSES! HIPPOPOTAMI! TRAINED LIONS! TIGERS!
MORE RARE ANIMALS THAN ALL THE SHOWS IN AMERICA! HANDSOME WOMEN! FAT
LADIES! BIG BABIES! TWO RACE TRACKS EQUAL TO ANY!

GREATEST LIVING LADY RIDERS IN THE WORLD! LOUISA RENZ FROM BERLIN!
LIZZIE DEACON FROM LONDON. BEHOLD! SEE! DO FEEL! PERFORMERS!
TALLEST GIANTS! SMALLEST DWARFS! ZOLA BLOWN FROM A CANNON! WILD MEN ZULUS.
PERFORMING AND RINGING HOUSES! HIPPOPOTAMI! TRAINED LIONS! TIGERS!
HYENAS! BABY CAMELS! WONDERFUL SAUCED CATTLE OF PERSIA!
MORE RARE ANIMALS THAN ALL THE SHOWS IN AMERICA! HANDSOME WOMEN! FAT
LADIES! BIG BABIES! TWO RACE TRACKS EQUAL TO ANY!

FOUR GREAT CIRCUS RINGS!

Seats for 20,000 in the Cloud-Towering Pavilions!

1000 OPERA CHAIRS ON THE GRAND STAND! THREE GREAT BANDS!

PEERLESS, POETIC, PRINCELY, GRAND GORGEOUS FREE STREET PARADE

Every forenoon of Exhibition Day, let us see 1853 and 1856, the Gently Grand and Gorgeous CARNIVAL STREET PARADE, in which is seen the Wonderfully Grand and Sublime Pageants,

CLEOPATRA, Queen of Egypt!

LALLA ROOKH, Princess of Delhi!

Handsomest Woman in America.

Presenting "Lalla Rookh," and the Barque of Cleopatra, with Egypt's Queen, the most magnificent spectacles ever beheld upon the streets of an American city. LIVING WILD BEASTS LOOSE IN THE STREET. A court of sun-bright, sumptuous chariots. ALBION, sweeping along with his 9 feet high bicycle. A real steam-pure Troupe of Southern Camp-Meeting Methodists, singing as the procession moves.

Three Great Bands of Music!

And grand, new and novel PROCESSION OF INDUSTRY, the very largest, longest, greatest, grandest gratuitous and only TWO MILLION DOLLAR FAIRBANK ever seen on the streets. Admission as usual Exhibition at noon and evening at the usual hours. Grand Hotels, Promenade Concerts one hour before commencing, by the through railroads. Low Rates and Excursion Trains on all railroads to see this Great Show.

ADAM FOREPAUGH, Sole Proprietor.

Why not see it daily on Nov. 9th?

NOT UNTIL NOV. 9.

WAIT FOR IT! WAIT FOR 4-PAW!

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO BE HUMBLED

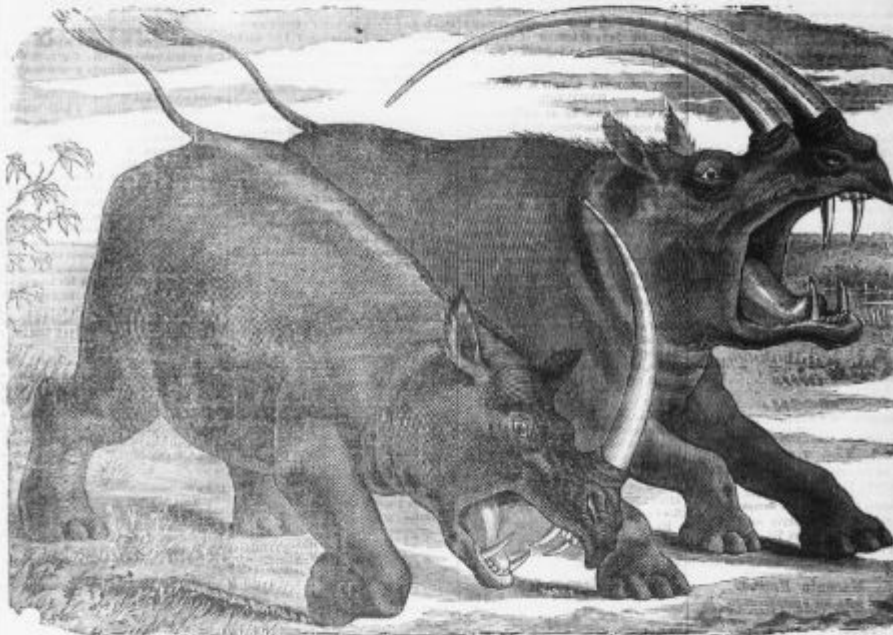
Wait for the Great Forepaugh Show.

Absolutely Many Times Larger than any Show that Has or Will Come
HERE THIS SEASON.

And the Only One Exhibiting Just What It Advertises.

Never Divides. Never Changes Dates.

20 TRAINED ELEPHANTS WITH THE GREAT FOREPAUGH SHOW.



WILL EXHIBIT AFTERNOON AND EVENING AT

Columbus, Thursday, November 9.

20 Trained **ELEPHANTS**
WITH THE
GREAT FOREPAUGH SHOWS.

WITH GREAT STRENGTH AND COURAGE.

Columbus, Thursday, November 9.

LARGEST IN THE WORLD (SEE ANNOUNCEMENT)

Will see, hear, and acquire after a short railway train.

1,200 Men and Horses, 1,000 Wild Beasts
AND RARE BIRDS.

Capital invested Three Millions. Europe's largest show of the great animal kingdom.

Special of all the new and the most valuable Great Forepaugh Shows. Four Mammoth Companies. Three Great Circus Troupes. Bachelors, Heralds, Lozenges, Agitators. Adam Forepaugh's Great Circus of 20 Trained Elephants. Best of the Best. The Great Forepaugh Show and the Great Forepaugh Show. Will see, hear, and acquire after a short railway train.

All the Shows on Earth Combined!
In this immense power, various tapers, parade grounds, vast spaces, and in the most perfect, clean and airy stable have the most valuable ever seen and heard at the unparalleled and un-
equalled of whose foreign features. Will see and hear about the most interesting Elephants, and
the best of all.

BOLIVAR, LARGEST AND HEAVIEST
ELEPHANT KNOWN TO EXIST.

Will see and hear about the most interesting Elephants, and the best of all.

Capital invested Three Millions. Europe's largest show of the great animal kingdom.

(In show in America! Handsomest Woman! The Largest! Big Shows! The Best Track Area! Light to see!)

Four Great Circus Rings
Seats for 20,000 in the Cloud-Towering Pavilions!

Each Open Chair in the Grand Stand!

Three Great Shows.

Peerless, Poetic, Princely, Grand, Gorgeous

FREE STREET PARADE!

Every Evening of Exhibition Day, between 6:00 and 8:00 o'clock the grandest and greatest
ANNUAL STREET PARADE, in which issues the Wonderfully Grand and Brilliant Pageant.

CLEOPATRA, Queen of Egypt.

AND

LALLA ROOKH, Princess of Delhi

WITH THE

Handsomest Woman in America.

Presenting "Lalla Rookh" and the Surge of Choptera, with Egypt's Queen, the most magnificent
spectacle ever heard upon the streets of an American city. LIVES! WILL BEATEN LIVES BY
TWO MILLION. A score of one-hundred elephants, starting in JERSEY emerging along with the
two 4 leg elephants. A real circus page Troupe of thousands of camp-following devotees, staying in the
procession during.

Two Great Bands of Music

And grand, new and novel PROCESSION OF DEVOTEES, the very largest, greatest, grandest
PROCESSION OF TWO MILLION DOLLAR PARADE ever seen on the streets. A WONDROUS
AS USUAL. Festive spectacles and evening at noon hours.

ADAM FOREPAUGH; Sole Proprietor.

Vertical text on the left margin: READY TO PRINT, 7 1/2 INCHES, 11 INCHES, 14 INCHES, 17 INCHES, 20 INCHES, 24 INCHES, 28 INCHES, 32 INCHES, 36 INCHES, 40 INCHES, 44 INCHES, 48 INCHES, 52 INCHES, 56 INCHES, 60 INCHES, 64 INCHES, 68 INCHES, 72 INCHES, 76 INCHES, 80 INCHES, 84 INCHES, 88 INCHES, 92 INCHES, 96 INCHES, 100 INCHES, 104 INCHES, 108 INCHES, 112 INCHES, 116 INCHES, 120 INCHES, 124 INCHES, 128 INCHES, 132 INCHES, 136 INCHES, 140 INCHES, 144 INCHES, 148 INCHES, 152 INCHES, 156 INCHES, 160 INCHES, 164 INCHES, 168 INCHES, 172 INCHES, 176 INCHES, 180 INCHES, 184 INCHES, 188 INCHES, 192 INCHES, 196 INCHES, 200 INCHES.

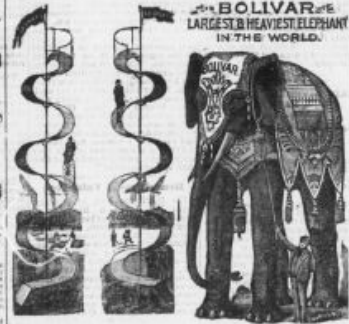
Ad for Forepaugh's show from the Columbus Daily Times, November 7, 1882, <https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>.

WAIT FOR THE GREATEST of all SHOWS

Little Shows Running Before the Advance of the **GOLIAH OF ALL SHOWS.**

THE GREAT 4-PAW SHOW!

Is Coming. Columbus, Thursday, (Nov. 9th.



BOLIVAR the LARGEST & HEAVIEST ELEPHANT IN THE WORLD.

THE GREAT FOREPAUGH SHOW does not only surpass in interest and variety every other show in the city, but it is also the most complete and perfect of its kind. It is a show of the highest order, and one that will interest every one who sees it. The animals are of the finest quality, and the show is well managed. The location is in the best place, and the show is well advertised. It is a show that is well worth seeing, and one that will interest every one who sees it.

IT NEVER DIVIDES!

Don't be misled by the false statements of unscrupulous managers of "split" shows, who are publishing lying and untrue advertisements that the Great Forepaugh Show has been divided. There is a positive advertisement to be seen here before **MIND THIS**, the advertisement of the Great Forepaugh Show, which is the only advertisement of the kind in the city. It is a show of the highest order, and one that will interest every one who sees it. The animals are of the finest quality, and the show is well managed. The location is in the best place, and the show is well advertised. It is a show that is well worth seeing, and one that will interest every one who sees it.

- 17 Flat Cars,
- 8 Stock Cars,
- 3 Box Cars,
- 3 Passenger Cars,
- 31 Cars in All.

Add one MIND THIS, The Great Forepaugh Show, which advertisement shall be only ONE SHOW, regular, same and more.

- 27 Flat Cars,
- 6 Box Cars,
- 10 Stock Cars,
- 6 Passenger Cars,
- 49 CARS in All.

Forepaugh's 49 cars, in size, are Equal to 75 ordinary cars.

As the reader will observe that ONLY 49 CARS are used or needed to transport the contents advertised as "The Excursionist's Show", which advertised in some cars before the Great Forepaugh Show is over, while

49 Cars are used by 4-Paw

In addition to TWO PALACE ADVERTISING CARS, all of which in size and construction are equal to twenty-five ordinary cars. As the public need not accept our statements in this matter, it is the Railway Station at the arrival of those shows and except the cars, and if we are not making a freight station, we will give \$1.00 to any body who can disagree what we have stated.

LOOK OUT FOR LYING SHOW BILLS!

As this notice is exclusively and rightly advertised "The Excursionist's Railroad Show" and advertise that it has 100 cars, 100 Cows, Deer, etc., including Deer and Wood-chuck, Guinea, Wholly English, 100 Performers, 40 Circus, White Horses, 10 in all of Maps, 1000 Pigeons, etc. etc. This is called "The Excursionist's Railroad Show".

DOES NOT EXHIBIT A SINGLE ONE of above FEATURES as ADVERTISED

To be Forewarned is to be Forearmed.

We have told you that this so-called "The Excursionist's Railroad Show" is advertising thousands of lying and untrue advertisements that they don't and can't exhibit. If you wish to examine both sides and satisfy yourselves and yourselves with lying advertisements, as this so-called "The Excursionist's Railroad Show" has been advertised to be, but if you wish to get away from the work of your money WATTS

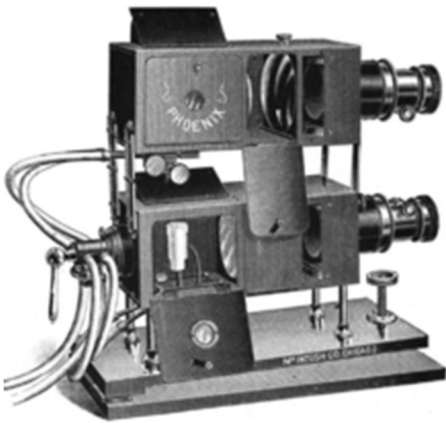
4-PAW!

Only Big Show Coming!

As all who desire to avoid the crowd surrounding the ticket wagon at the show ground, can secure Reserved Seats and General Admission Tickets at Thomas Carter's Book and Stationery Store, Columbus, O., all day during November 9th., during the day of Exhibition.

\$10,000 for a Handsome Lady
Is the fancy price paid by Forepaugh,
but this does not show that clothing
buyers must pay for good looks, on
which some stores rely more than on
selling goods cheap. You can save
money by calling on H. J. THORNTON,
southern clothier, where goods will be
cheerfully shown, whether you pur-
chase or not. o8-d&wtf

Ad for H. J. Thornton's from the Columbus Daily Enquirer October 11, 1882,
<https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>.



A Stereopticon from Wikipedia.org, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stereopticon>



Photo of Adam Forepaugh courtesy of Wikipedia.org, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam_Forepaugh