

The Slayback Brothers and the Origin

of

the St. Louis Veiled Prophet Parade

Immediately following the war, Charles Slayback (the Colonel's brother), became quite wealthy in the grain business in New Orleans, Louisiana. It was here that he became well acquainted with the Mardi Gras festivities of that city. After Alonzo returned to the United States (from exile in Mexico), Charles moved his grain business to St. Louis, where Alonzo was establishing his law practice. Both brothers took an active interest in developing St. Louis' economy which had been damaged due to its occupation by Union forces during the late war. Charles Slayback noted that while the annual Mechanical and Agricultural Fair was very beneficial in bringing tourism St. Louis, it lacked the splendor of the Mardi Gras festival that attracted countless more down in New Orleans. Unhappy with the city's entertainment, Alonzo and Charles went to New Orleans to get ideas, to purchase floats and decorations to enhance the St. Louis festivities.

At the Lindell Hotel in St. Louis, (on March 21, 1878) the Slayback's gathered, twenty of the leading citizens of the city to plan activities, create a committee and decide upon a proper theme. It was Alonzo Slayback that coined the organization as the "Order of the Veiled Prophet". While the existing Mechanical and Agricultural Fair honored young ladies of the city with its "Court of Love and Beauty", but the maiden's names were always kept secret. This was seen as a significant drawback, as these belles were the jewels of St. Louis, certainly the main attraction of the festivity. Not only would newspapers of the city be encouraged to print the names of the Veiled Prophet's selections as the "Belle of the Ball" ("Queen"), but photos were published revealing her beauty as well. Instead of being an event controlled by trade unions, the V.P. committee made it possible for ladies with a non-union white collar parentage to be recognized. When the Mechanical and Agricultural Fair ceased in 1894, the Order of the Veiled Prophet adopted the "Court of Love and Beauty" into its phraseology. Charles Slayback wrote that "The Veiled Prophet was conceived as a social organization with a broader vision of citizenship---a purely altruistic order" compared to its predecessor. In addition to the Veiled Prophet Queen, other ladies are honored by being selected as Maids of Honor and Special Maids of Honor.

The very first arrival of the Veiled Prophet arrived at the St. Louis riverfront by barge at twilight on Oct. 8, 1878. The event was timed to immediately follow the arrival of the "Robert E. Lee" riverboat, which certainly reflects the widespread admiration the people of St. Louis had for the noble Confederate leader of the same name. Thousands turned out for the event, reportably not a cobblestone could be



seen on the river front pavement due to the size of the crowd. Bands played as rockets exploded and bright torches illuminated the event. Colorful floats and prancing horses thrilled the crowd composed of children and adults alike. Riding on the floats including the hooded members of the "Order of the Veiled Prophet", their identities kept secret for fifty years. [The first prophet being John G. Priest, with later ones being: Col. A.W. Slayback, Capt. Frank Gaiennie, John A. Scudder, Henry C. Haarstick, George Bain, Robert P. Tansey, George H. Morgan, Col. J. C. Normile, Wallace Delafield, John B. Maude, Dr. D. P. Rowland, Charles E. Slayback, Leigh I. Knapp, David B Gould, Henry Paschell, H.I. Kent, Dr. E. Pretorious, Win. H. Thompson, Win. A. Hargadine]

During the Ball, which often has as many as 10,000 invitations, the Veiled Prophet "descends from his lofty seat to the dance floor, finds his partner and escorts her from her seat to the floor where he presents her with a very pretty pearl necklace." The dance has become known as the "Royal Quadrille". While in the beginning, the honored queens only received a pearl necklace, later recipients (Special Maids of Honor and the Queen) were awarded "silver diadems centered with platinum crowns bearing diamonds, emeralds, sapphires, and pearls." Later these became "treasured family jewels", passed down through the generations. Also, through the years the celebrations surrounding the event increased considerably. In more recent years the "V.P. Fair" as it became known, has attracted crowds in the tens of thousands and has including air shows, amusement park rides, vendors from across the country, lavish firework displays, and concerts by well known musicians. Most recently the fair has been renamed, "Fair St. Louis", but the V.P. parade continues to be one of St. Louis most popular events in the Soulard neighborhood and is celebrated for its french Mardi Gras connections that the Slayback brothers imported from New Orleans. Over the many years of its existence, the V.P. festivities have brought untold millions of dollars to the St. Louis economy. With all this in consideration, St. Louis owes much to Col. Slayback and to its rich southern roots, all of which have been forgotten by recent generations.

A Partial List of the Early Queens:



Miss. Susie Slayback, daughter of Col. Alonzo Slayback

(College photo). Susie received the honor of being the first Veiled Prophet Queen.

1878 Miss Susie Slayback

1885 Miss Virginia Joy

1886 Miss Louise Scott

1887 [No Queen nor Royal Quardille due to visit of Mr. and Mrs. Grover Cleveland (U.S. President)]

1888 Miss Louise Gaiennie

1889 Miss Wain (from Cleveland)

1890 Miss Kate Hill

1891 Miss July Thompson

1892 Miss Ellen Sturgis

1893 Miss Florence Lucas

1894 Miss Hester Bates Laughlin (the first of the crowned queens)

1895 Miss Bessie Kingsland

1896 Miss Louise McCreery



*Miss Louise McCreery, 1896 Queen of the Veiled Prophet
[Daughter of Wayman Crow McCreery and Mary Louise Carr.
Miss McCreery was a niece of Maj. Atreus J. McCreery of
Gen. Sterling Price's staff. She later married Mr. Oscar H. McVeiths.
She is a McCreery kin to page author, Scott K. Williams.]*

*Sources: "The Prophet's Pearls", by Katherine Darst; The St. Louis Magazine, Vol. 1,
No. 4, Sept. 1963. "St. Louis The Fourth City, 1764-1909", by Walter B. Stevens, S.J.
Clarke Publishing Co., 1909.*

Col. Alonzo W. Slayback



**Confederate Hero and Founder of St. Louis' V.P. Fair,
Murdered By Editor of *Post-Dispatch***

*"Few men of his age left the battle-scarred ranks of the fallen Confederacy
with a higher record for bravery and promptness upon the field than
Colonel Alonzo Slayback."*

This sketch on Col. Slayback could not have been written without the generous amount of information and photos contributed by Deanna Adams Holm, Colonel Slayback's great granddaughter.
-- Scott K. Williams, author

Alonzo Slayback was no ordinary soldier and for that matter, he was no ordinary boy growing up in the western Missouri town of Lexington. At the early age of ten years, Slayback attended Lexington's Masonic College, graduating June 1856 at the top of his class. At age eighteen, to further his education, Slayback went to St. Joseph, Missouri to teach school and study law. It was at this city in September 1857, that he was admitted to the Missouri bar and started his law firm with partner, Joseph P. Grubb. After a June 1858 visit to his Lexington home, he became engaged to his childhood sweetheart, Alice Amelia Waddell (d/o of Wm. Bradford Waddell). On April 14, 1859 they were married and Alonzo setup a new law practice in his hometown of Lexington. All were content until the winds of war sounded in June of 1861 when Slayback tendered his services to Gen. Sterling Price, then Commander of the Missouri State Guard.

In July, Alonzo Slayback decided to return home to visit his wife before the army proceeded further south. During this visit, his house became surrounded by a Federal patrol and he was made a prisoner. For three weeks he stayed at the Masonic College at Lexington, then being used by the Federals as a fort. Knowing the terrain from childhood, Slayback planned to escape during a routine trip to a spring for water. Instead of plunging a wooden bucket into the spring, he struck the guard in the head and made a run for it. Bullets whistled all around him as the guards were alerted but he managed to make it into the woods without being hit. Arriving at a friend's home, after travelling the woods at night, he obtained a pair of shoes and a good horse for his journey back to Price's army.

On 23 Sept. 1861, after the victorious battle of Lexington, Slayback was elected Colonel of a Missouri State Guard Cavalry Regiment and was commissioned by Gov. Claiborne Jackson. After transferring to regular Confederate service, he was soon appointed Captain of ordnance on staff of Gen. Martin E. Green. "After skirmish at Farmington was recommended for duty in line and for promotion. He reported to Gen. Hindman, was sent to Cav. front under Gen. John S. Marmaduke with whom he remained about a year after the Conf. Forces were driven into Ark. participating in many battles and skirmishes." Due to typhoid fever, he missed Shelby's 1863 Missouri raid. His wife, Alice Slayback, attempted to obtain a pass through Federal lines, to visit him, but her request was refused. Being very determined to make the journey, Mrs. Slayback, obtained "banishment papers" so

she would be expelled from Federal territory. First arriving at Washington, Arkansas she learned that her sick husband was moved to Shreveport, Louisiana where his condition had continued to deteriorate. Once Slayback was located it was found that he was too weak to even raise his head off his pillow. After three months of illness, Col Slayback was able to return back to active duty, thanks to the nursing of his faithful wife.

"In March 1864, Gen. Kirby Smith...made Slayback bearer of special dispatches to Richmond, to the Secretary of War." Soon after this Gen. Smith ordered Slayback to "recruit a regiment of Cavalry in southeast Missouri, of which he was elected Colonel. This regiment, "The Slayback Lancers", was attached to Shelby's old brigade, and so remained until the close of the war."

Astonishing accounts about Col. Slayback from the book:

"Shelby and His Men; or The War in the West"

By: John Newman Edwards.

(Page 128 Battle of Prairie Grove, Arkansas.)

A romantic little incident occurred late in the fight of the 7th, which will serve to illustrate that spirit of personal daring and prowess possessed in such an eminent degree by the Southern soldiers. Colonel A.W. Slayback, then attached to the staff of General Marmaduke, and a most dashing and gallant officer, too, concluded to try an adventure thought of many centuries ago by thousands, no doubt, when knights wore greaves and vizors, and when that war-cry rang over the won field of Bannockburn--"St. James for Argentine"--but not latterly in the days of rifled cannon and rifled muskets. Slayback, however, rode deliberately from his own lines toward some Federal cavalry in his front, and challenged any one to single combat. Quick as lightning, Captain Wilhite, a renegade Arkansan, belonging to a regiment of renegade Arkansans, came boldly forth to within twenty paces and fired at Slayback, who returned it immediately. Neither one struck, however, the first time, but upon the second shot, Slayback's bullet inflicted an ugly wound in his antagonist's leg, and Wilhite retired. Two other champions dashed out for the honor of thier dishonored regiment--and Major Robert Smith, likewise upon the staff of General Marmaduke, and brave as a lion, went gallantly to Slayback's rescue, when another round was fired without additional damage. A third officer rode down from the Federal lines, and to make the contest even, Lieutenant James T. Walton, of Marmaduke's escort--chivalrous as Bayard--fell in beside

Slayback and Smith. Two rounds were now fired, another Federal fell, the two others retreated, and strange and true to say, neither of the Confederates received a scratch.

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The army again reunited at Union, which had been attacked before Shelby arrived, by General Clark, who permitted the garrison to escape probably because he did not know how to capture it. And why should he? Recently promoted from the infantry, he had little of that sprightliness and dash so essential for a cavalry officer. At this place the division was strengthened by a regiment recently recruited in Southeast Missouri and commanded by Colonel Alonzo W. Slayback. It was composed of a lot of dashing, fighting young fellows, and led by a young and brilliant officer whose exploits before had been noted, and whose daring actions upon the battlefield had been conspicuous. He liked war for its pomp and circumstance, and courted danger for its fascination and its perils. Thoroughly devoted to the cause; every feeling of his heart and every idea of his active mind thoroughly alive to the struggles and intentions of his country, he aimed constantly at that which would give her the most advantage and her arms the most renown. Braving many dangers and making many sacrifices, he penetrated with a few chosen spirits into the very heart of Missouri--far into the enemy's lines--and harassed, surrounded, fought and outlawed--he yet rose superior to his enemies, gathered around him a good, brave regiment (Slayback's Lancers) and brought it to General Shelby that he might place it side by side with the tried and scarred veterans of the old brigade. Shelby knew that the men commanded by Slayback would soon come up to the proper standard, and this confidence was never betrayed. On many bloody fields their deportment and devotion were remarkable. They immediately began the arduous detail duties of veterans, drilled on the march, and in the hurry and fatigue which marked nearly all the rest of the campaign, they never once faltered in the fight, nor failed to keep up their end of the line. They readily assimilated themselves to the men of the other regiments, and shared with them their characteristic devotion to the cause and their cherished leader--for Shelby had a magic power over the hearts and the affections of his soldiers which was as powerful as it was mysterious.

----- **When the war was over, Col. Slayback accompanied Gen. Joe Shelby and his remnant command on his expedition into Mexico. When the command crossed the Rio Grande at Piedras Negras, the Confederate battle flag was gently buried under the river current. It was here that Alonzo Slayback composed his poem relating to the event.**

The Burial of Shelby's Flag

By Alonzo W. Slayback, Piedras Negras, on the Rio Grande, July 4, 1865

A July sun, in torrid clime, gleamed on exile band, who in suits of gray
Stood in mute array On the banks of the Rio Grande.
They were dusty and faint with their long, drear ride, And they paused when they
came to the river side;
For its wavelets divide
With their glowing tide

Their own dear land of youth, hope, pride And comrades graves, who in vain had
died, From the stranger's home, in a land untried.
Above them waved the Confederate Flag, with its fatal cross of stars, That had
always been
In the battle's din
Like a pennon of potent Mars.
And there curved from the crest of their leader a plume
That the brave had followed in joy and gloom That was ever in sight
In the hottest fight

A flaunting dare for a soldier's tomb, For the marksman's aim and the cannons
boom, But it bore a charm from the band of doom.

Forth stepped that leader then and said to the faithful few around:
"This tattered rag
Is the only flag
That floats on Dixie ground;
And this plume that I tear from the hat I wear
Of all my spoils is my only share; And brave men! I swear
That no foe shall dare
To lay his hand on our standard there. It's folds were braided by fingers fair, 'Tis
the emblem now of their deep despair.

It's cause is lost. And the men it led on many a glorious field In disputing tread
Of invaders dread, Have been forced at last to yield
But this banner and plume have not been to blame, No exulting eye shall behold
their shame;
And----these relics so dear
In the waters here,
Before we cross, shall burial claim;
And while you mountains may bear name
They shall stand as monuments of our fame.

Tears stood in eyes that looked on death in every awful form Without dismay;
But the scene that day Was sublimer than mountain storm!
'Tis easy to touch the veteran's heart
With finger of nature, but not of art, While the noble of soul
Lose self control, When called on with flag, home and country to part, Base bosoms

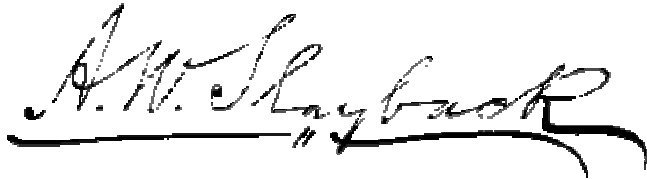
are ever to callous to start

With feelings that generous natures can smart. They buried then that flag and plume
in the river's rushing tide, Ere that fallent few

Of the tried and true Had been scattered far and wide.

And that group of Missouri's valiant throng, Who had fought for the weak against
the strong-Who had charged and bled where Shelby led- Were the last who held
above the wave

The glorious flag of the vanquished brave, No more to rise from it's watery grave!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. W. Slayback". The signature is written in black ink and is underlined with a decorative flourish.

During Slayback's arrival in Mexico, he became violently ill in the town of Lampass. While being sedated with morphine, he was robbed by a fellow ex-confederate that was charged with caring for him. Taken from him was every cent he owned, all except his horse, saddle and pistols. Making his way alone in hostile territory (Mexico was then in civil war), he eventually (Oct 8th 1865) made it to San Potosi where he was put up at the San Carlos Hotel. "Gen. Thomas O'Haran, Prefect of the City of Mexico under Maximilian, hearing of the Colonel's condition, kindly sent his carriage for him and removed him to his residence, 13 miles from the city, where every attention possible was bestowed on the distinguished American. Here Col. Slayback remained, enjoying the hospitality of this noble gentleman, meanwhile perfecting his Spanish studies, until Jan 23, 1866." In return for Spanish lessons, Slayback taught Maximilian lessons of English and the two became good friends. It was during this time in Mexico that Slayback was awarded the title of Duke of Oaxaco.

Col. Slayback's mother, anxious for his return to Missouri, traveled to Havana, Cuba in an effort of locating her son. She had forwarded him a "certificate of deposit for \$150.00" and a message, "*You come home immediately*". Slayback returned his mother's money and not only made plans to return home at his own expense but also paid the way for Capt. Jim Ward (who was out of money and working hopelessly hard to return home). He then made his way to Vera Cruz, but first visiting on Jan. 26 1866, the Confederate colony at Cordova where Generals Price and Shelby resided. On Feb 9th 1866 he writes, "*I stopped to see how my*

American friends were prospering and remained at the house of Gen. Shelby, where I fell very much at home. Mrs. S. and the children are here, and the General seems contented: is opening a farm, preparing to plant coffee and sugar, cotton and rice. The plantain and banana, with their broad tropical leaves and delicious clusters of fruit-----the oranges and lemons, the mango and lime, pine--apple and palm----fill the air with delicious odors, and offer to the sight a constant variety of romantic and interesting scenery. "

By Feb 11, 1866, Col. Slayback arrived in Havana, Cuba where his mother awaited him at the Santa Isabel Hotel. The Colonel writing describes the moment, "...after waiting about twenty minutes in the parlor Ma came in, very little changed apparently in the five eventful years which had changed me so much. I felt that she had grown younger and I so much older. After the 'preliminary scene', and all that, we had a conversation to the point. She urged me to go home. I did not wish to. She persisted that I must accompany her. I was induced to return with her, depending on the promise that you made to me, that you and your child would return with me to my exile if I could not remain in that country. "
On Feb 18th the Colonel and his mother arrived in New York, where they parted as he needed to go to Washington to secure a pardon from the government.

Soon after Col. Slayback returned to Missouri, he set up a law practice in St. Louis with Union army veteran, Herman A. Haeussler. Slayback soon became very active in the city's social, business, and political arenas. Besides being a delegate from the Second Congressional District of Missouri to the Democratic Presidential Convention of 1876, he was elected President of the Law Library Association, two-term Vice-President of the Bar Association of St. Louis, member of the University Club, Merchant's Exchange, Merchant's Benevolent Society, Legion of Honor, Elks Club and an honorary member of the Knights of St. Patrick. Highly regarded as one of the best lawyers in St. Louis, Slayback is reported to have lost only one case, out of forty he has represented. In the book, "St. Louis, The Future Great City of the World" (1875) it is written: "Where he fails to convince, he captivates. Should he live out the allotted span of man, it requires no prophet's pen to predict for him an exalted and enduring place in the history of his city, State, and Republic." In 1876 Col. Slayback became a Democratic candidate for Congress, but due to party division he failed to be elected.

In addition, Col. Slayback was one of the founders of the mystical St. Louis celebration known as the Veiled Prophet's Ball.

It has been stated, "No man in St. Louis was more frequently called on for a speech on public occasions...whether addressing a society, delivering a eulogy on the patriotic dead, standing before a school of young ladies inculcating the highest sentiments of true womanhood that would lead the nation on to prosperity, or standing before a jury to urge the cause of right, he was ever the noble man, distinguished for honesty of purpose, full of generous impulses, convincing and captivating."

Regarding religion, "he was a firm believer in the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ and of a man's need of salvation. He had a high reverence for the religion of those who manifested faith in God...detested shams and shows...[and] readily detected departures from revealed truth."

In 1878, James O. Broadhead became Slaybacks' law partner. Broadhead was a Democratic candidate for Congress in 1882, prominent member of the St. Louis Bar Association (its 2nd president), American Bar Association (1st president) and an old friend of Col. Slayback. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch was a longtime supporter of John Glover who opposed Broadhead in the 1882 Democratic party nomination for Congress. Glover was an old enemy of Col. Slayback and a man of poor character.. Glover had a card published in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Nov 11, 1881), accusing Slayback of cowardice and that he won his title by his "gallant manners in which the colonel once marshalled a female sewing society." [Note: Glover's insinuation that the Confederate Army was nothing more than a "female sewing society", was also insulting to all the Union soldiers that fought with valor but perished fighting Col. Slayback and other soldiers in the southern army.] Fortunately, Joseph Pulitzer considered this card was so derogatory that he removed it himself from later editions. During an earlier courtroom address, Slayback had most appropriately referred to Glover as a "insolent puppy, whose face I would slap were it not for the presence of these ladies".

After the Post-Dispatch began publishing articles attacking Broadhead's character during the 1882 campaign, the old feud began heating up once more. Besides attacking Broadhead, the paper began making unfounded hostile remarks describing the bar association as one

that "permits the bar to be infested by not less than twenty-five men who ought to be in the penitentiary and who could be there if the bar were as sensitive to the honor of the profession as it should be." Col. Slayback, fiercely loyal to his friends, bluntly declared at a "Democratic meeting" (Oct 12, 1882) that the Post-Dispatch was a "blackmailing sheet". The editor of the Post-Dispatch, John Cockerill, (who was a Union Army veteran) took personal vengeance on Slayback by republishing Glover's card which was so scandalously printed the year before. It was a direct and malicious attack on Slayback's gallant military record that was a criminal act in itself.

Slayback and another fellow attorney, William Clopton, stormed into Cockerill's office with the intention of slapping the editor and demanding an apology. Instead Cockerill "picked up a revolver that he kept on the top of his desk and shot Slayback through the heart." William Clopton, testified that Slayback, unarmed, was pulling off his coat when Cockerill shot him. This explained why the bullet hit him, three inches below the armpit.

After the shooting, a pistol was allegedly found in Slayback's coat pocket. This pistol was not one which Slayback owned and could not be "produced for the grand jury", as it was locked in the Post Dispatch's safe. Cockerill, regardless of Clopton's testimony to the contrary, pleaded that he acted in self-defense as Slayback was armed with that pistol. Fortunately for Cockerill, Pulitzer made sure his editor was represented by Charles P. Johnson, considered by many to be the best criminal attorney in the city. As a result, the grand jury refused to indict John Cockerill for second degree murder or for any charge for that matter. This decision also may have been influenced by the jury's familiarity with Cockerill, who was considered to have been the Post Dispatch's most popular editor of the day.

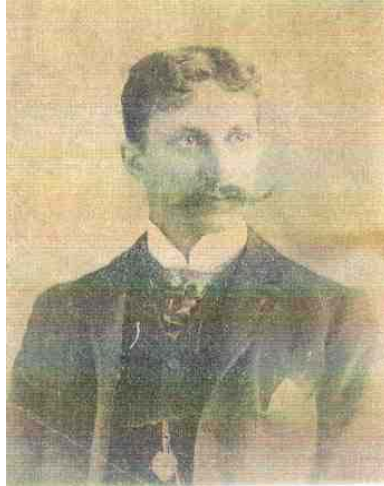
A large segment of the population of St. Louis were not content with this mis-application of justice. There were over 1,300 subscription cancellations of the Post-Dispatch. Many businesses and the Merchant's Exchange stopped advertising in the paper. The Missouri Republican newspaper condemned the Post-Dispatch as did many others. When the cash flow began hurting the paper, Pulitzer finally made changes. In May of 1883 he had editor John Cockerill transferred to New York to manage Pulitzer's other paper, the "New York World". The endorsement of John Glover by the Post Dispatch failed to sway St.

Louisians who elected in Nov. 1882, James Broadhead as their representative in Congress. Slayback's companion, William Clopton would be appointed U.S. Attorney. Charles Slayback, due to personal outrage at the way his brother's murder was handled in the court, sold his business in St. Louis and retired from public life.

Decades later (July1, 1920), the truth concerning the pistol found on Slayback's body was finally disclosed by an ex-Post Dispatch employee that was near death. This employee (a Mr. Jones) reported that "to aid Cockerill in his plea for self-defense", he obtained "a pistol with the connivance of a member of the Police Department", and had the pistol planted in Slayback's coat pocket. This account was reported in the book, "The St. Louis Reference Record", page 148. It was only revealed for the "justice of Col. Slayback's memory and his descendants", and explicitly requested that it not be released to the newspapers.

According to Alonzo W. Slayback, Jr., the Colonel's funeral was "the largest ever known in St. Louis. The throngs that filled the old family mansion and crowded its grounds, and blocked the street as far as the eye could reach, composed of all nationalities and classes--ministers of the various denominations, judges, artists, teachers, men of business, clerks, all professions and ranks--attested the high esteem in which our noble citizen was held...For more than three hours an unbroken line of mourners filed past the bier, to gaze for the last time, on the still form and pale face of him they had known and loved in life, and now sincerely mourned in death. The body was escorted to its temporary resting place in Bellefontaine, and afterward removed to Lexington, the home of his childhood. It now reposes in Macpelah cemetery, beside that of his father."

Colonel Slayback left his mother, wife and six children: Susie, Minnette, Katie, Mable, Grace, and Alonzo. Also surviving was his two brothers, Charles E. Slayback of St. Louis, and Preston Trabue Slayback of Denver City. Also his only sister, Minnie, wife of Dr. Y.H. Bond, of St. Louis.



*A. W. Adams, M.D.
(Son-in-law of Col. A.W. Slayback)*

In a curious twist of events, Col. Alonzo Slayback's daughter Suzie would eventually become an employee at the Post Dispatch. This was after the family lost considerable wealth, losing her husband on Dec. 19, 1898 [Arthur Wellington Adams, M.D., who had owned Adams Electric Co., which went bankrupt] and because of poverty being compelled to place four of her six children in a orphanage. By 1910, the family, including Mrs. Alice Slayback was back together living in their own home.



Alonzo W. Slayback, Jr. (1879-1969) The only son of Col. A. W. Slayback. Much of the information for this sketch comes from his biographical sketch about his father.

Genealogy Note on Col. A. W. Slayback's ancestry:

"His paternal great grandfather, Solomon Slayback, was a soldier under Washington (one of the Jersey recruits from near Princeton, New Jersey. Originally the Slaybacks were from Amsterdam, Holland. Dr. Abel Slayback of Cincinnati, Ohio was the son of Solomon Slayback and father of Alexander Lambdin Slayback, of whom the subject of this sketch was the eldest child." Alexander L. Slayback was a lawyer who moved west to Lexington, Missouri. Dying at the age of 30, he left a widow, one daughter and three sons (one of which was Col. Alonzo Slayback, born July 4th, 1838 at Plum Grove, Marion County, Mo.). "The maternal grandparents of Alonzo W. Slayback were Jeremiah A. Minter and Sallie Minter (nee McDowell), both of Kentucky. Sallie McDowell's father was a son of Colonel Samuel McDowell, an officer of the American Army in the war of the Revolution. The McDowells were of Scotch descent." Jeremiah Minter was of French Huguenot ancestry, being a direct descendant of Countess Susanna Lavillon and Bartholemi Dupuy (who was a Royal guardsman of Louis XIV).

Sources:

- "The Fatal Temper of Alonzo W. Slayback", by Marshall D. Hier; vol. XL, No. 3 (Winter 1994) St. Louis Bar Journal.
- "Alonzo William Slayback-Biographical Sketch of a Huguenot", by Alonzo W. Slayback, Jr.
- "The Duke From Missouri", Article by The Hartford Courant Magazine, Sunday June 16, 1940.
- Deanna Adams Holm, great grand-daughter of Col. A.W. Slayback

Col. Slayback's Brother's Reaction

Headlines:

**Col A. W. Slayback Murdered Oct 13, 1882 by John
A. Cockrill**

(Managing Editor of St. Louis Post Dispatch)

THE REPUBLICAN - JUNE 6, 1883

Mr. C.E. Slayback Gives His Reasons for Retiring - Exchange Notes

A REPUBLICAN reporter called yesterday afternoon on Mr. C.E. Slayback to make some inquiry concerning his reported retirement from business and the reason thereof. "Yes," said Mr. Slayback, "I have determined to discontinue business--at least temporarily--and I have arranged to transfer my affairs to C.H. Albers & Co."

[Reporter] "Have you any objections to stating your reasons?"

[Slayback]: "They are in a measure private. The events of the past few months, as you must know, have been calculated to unfit me for business duties. Under circumstances which were most revolting to me my brother was consigned to an untimely grave, and his murderer, instead of being punished, has been parading the streets in an ostentatious manner, as though murder was a thing to be proud of. By his cunning management and the manipulation of his friends public opinion, which at first vindicated my brother, has been so influenced as to absolve the murder from all legal and moral responsibility. This influence has been so strong as to control even the courts and juries whose duty it was to carefully examine the facts and circumstances of the bloody crime. The thought that a man of such good reputation and standing in the community as Alonzo W. Slayback could be shot down, and that no trial of the facts should ever be attempted by any court, is a most painful one to me. I am unable to comprehend how in the face of public opinion which condemned and denounced what was clearly a cold-blooded murder, the courts of the state should so deliberately connive at the escape of the criminal. These facts have been harassing me since November, and my mind, by dwelling on them, has become utterly unfitted for business. Realizing this, I have determined to retire."

[Reporter]: "Have you arranged to engage in any other calling?"

[Slayback:] "Not definitely; but I will not remain out of active business."