

WINK BLAIR, President

My Grandfather, Civil War Veteran By Wink Blair Sutz (425 Words)

As a former resident of Louisiana, and now a long-time resident of Arizona, I was excited to learn of the existence of the popular Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable, and have now been a member for several years.

Because of my special relationship with my own grandfather, Civil War veteran Judge Louis B. (“Biz”) Claiborne native of Natchez, Mississippi and later longtime resident of New Roads, Louisiana), that period of our country’s history took on a special meaning for me.

As a nine-year-old child, I was asked by my 92 year old grandfather to read the morning newspaper to him, as his eyesight was failing. This daily task developed into a delightful plan to also have him dictate to me highlights of his own fabulous career.

Being a descendent of **WILLIAM CHARLES COLE CLAIBORNE** (not only first Governor of both the **TERRITORIES** of Mississippi and Louisiana -- appointed by Thomas Jefferson-- but also Governor of the eventual **STATE** of Louisiana), my grandfather had many stories.

A couple of examples: During the time “Biz” was a student at Georgetown Military Academy in the District of Columbia, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated as President of the United States, “Biz” was a member of his college military company and a member of the military parade at the inaugural ceremonies, standing only a few feet away from President Lincoln!

Interestingly, “Biz” was at the time serving at his military academy as “Student Mentor” to Abraham Lincoln’s son, Robert Lincoln!! This was the current custom whereby an older student would serve as a kind of “advisor” for each new student for a brief period.

Earlier, during the administration of President Buchanan, “Biz”, (through the intervention of his own father who was a friend of the President), was invited to the White House during the first visit to this country of the Prince of Wales who afterward became King Edward of England. My Grandfather joined the group for a tour of the White House where refreshments were served and members of the President’s family served as hosts.

My old notes, carried stories of my grandfather’s military service (as a member of the Pointe Coupee Militia) during The Siege of Vicksburg and many other battles. I somehow managed to carry around these childish notes with me through the years, finally consolidating them in my little book “Conversations With My Grandfather” (under the authorship of **Wink Dameron** --my maiden name—a name more familiar in my native Louisiana where I spent my formative years). Published in 2011 by Xlibris.

