

Erastus Francis Brian, E. Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana
Submitted by Mike Miller

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Erastus Francis Brian. There was all of consistency in the appointment of Captain Brian, in 1898, to his present office, that of secretary and treasurer of the Board of Pension Commissioners of the State of Louisiana, for not only had he served with gallantry as a soldier and officer of the Confederate army in the Civil war, but also is the son of a father who represented Louisiana as a valiant soldier in the War of 1812, the family name having been identified with Louisiana history since 1805.

Captain Erastus F. Brian, whose residence and official headquarters are in the capital city of Baton Rouge, was born in East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, March 28, 1846. He is a son of the late Colonel Solomon Morgan Brian, who was born in Darlington District, South Carolina, December 26, 1792, and who died in East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, January 26, 1864. Colonel Brian was a lad of about twelve years at the time of the family removal to East Feliciana Parish, in 1805, and there he was reared on the old-time plantation of his father. He became a skilled mechanic, but the major part of his active life was given to the supervision of his extensive plantation interests, in connection with which he owned a number of slaves. He was affiliated with the old whig party, was a colonel in the State Militia, and as a soldier in the War of 1812 he was a lieutenant at the time of his participation in the battle of New Orleans, he having received his honorable discharge February 11, 1815. He was a man of fine mentality and sterling character, was influential in public affairs in his home parish, and was an

earnest member of the Baptist Church. The maiden name of the first wife of Colonel Brian was Mary Rogillio, and she passed her entire life in East Feliciana Parish. Of this union were born four sons and four daughters. After the death of his first wife Colonel Brian wedded Miss Ann Menard Case Sands, who was born in Rhode Island, in the year 1820, and whose death occurred on the old homestead in East Feliciana Parish in March, 1878. Of the children of the second marriage Nina became the wife of Milton Chase, and her death occurred in East Feliciana Parish when she was forty-five years of age, her husband having passed the closing years of his life in the State of Louisiana and having been more than eighty years of age at the time of his death; Captain Erastus F., immediate subject of this review, was the next in order of birth; and William S., who was born in 1854 and became a prosperous merchant in the State of Texas. His death occurred in 1918 at Jackson, Louisiana.

Captain Erastus Francis Brian found the period of his childhood and early youth compassed by the influences of the old home plantation, and his early education was obtained in private schools, he eventually inherited a portion of the old homestead, and after the death of his mother he purchased the interests of the other heirs and became sole owner of the plantation. He sold this valuable property in the year 1890, and in 1892 established his residence in Baton Rouge. Here he followed various occupations until September, 1898, when he was chosen to his present office, that of secretary of the State Board of Pension Commissioners. In this position his administration has been marked by characteristic loyalty and efficiency, and he has been specially zealous in safeguarding the interests of his old comrades of the Civil war and those of their families.

But when civil war was precipitated on the nation the Brian family were members of the Whig party. Captain Brian promptly tendered his services in defense of the Confederacy. He enlisted

in Company A, Twenty-seventh Louisiana infantry. and was mustered into the Confederate service March 29, 1862. With his command he took part in the siege of Vicksburg, and while taking part in the rear-guard action near Port Hudson, Louisiana, he received a wound that necessitated the amputation of his left leg, and that necessarily terminated his active service, he having participated in various other engagements before receiving this lamentable injury.

In the ranks of the democratic party Captain Brian has worked loyally for the cause of this great political body, he is actively affiliated with the United Confederate Veterans, and in the capital city he is a zealous member of the First Baptist Church.

April 3, 1867. recorded the marriage of Captain Brian and Miss Tallulah Slaughter Merritt, who was born in East Baton Rouge Parish, August 20, 1848, and who was the daughter of the late Turner and Ann (Bogan) Merritt. In conclusion is given brief record concerning the children of Captain and Mrs. Brian: Anna E. is the wife of H. M. Arbour, who is associated with the Fuqua Hardware Company of Baton Rouge; George Craft is a skilled electrician and is a stockholder in the Baton Rouge Electric & Repair Works; Patti Willard is the wife of Victor H. Eckard, a consulting sugar chemist at Baton Rouge; Erastus Frank is a progressive representative of plantation industry in East Baton Rouge Parish ; William L. owns and operates the line of yellow taxicabs in the city of Baton Rouge.

Relative to the ancestry of Captain Brian, it should be noted that his paternal grandfather, Hardy Brian, was a representative of a family, from Ireland, that was founded in New York State in the early Colonial days. Hardy Brian was a patriot soldier during the entire seven years of the war of the Revolution, in which he served under Generals Marion, Moultrie and Greene, he having been seven times wounded in battle. He was present at the historic meal given by General Marion to various British officers. In 1805 he established his residence in East Feliciana

Parish, Louisiana, where he passed the remainder of his life, as one of the representative planters of his day in that parish.

NOTE: The referenced source contains a black and white photograph of the subject with his/her autograph.

A History of Louisiana, (vol. 2), pp. 67-68, by Henry E. Chambers. Published by The American Historical Society, Inc., Chicago and New York, 1925.