

**W. Ezekiel Blanks & Temperance Riley**  
**of**  
**Orange County, North Carolina,**  
**Greene County, Georgia,**  
**Alabama,**  
**&**  
**Hillsboro, Union County, Arkansas**

**by Timothy Dean Hudson**

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## Introduction

Ezekiel Blanks grew up in southern Greene County, Georgia. Other than his parents' brief foray into the rich Oconee River Valley when he was a toddler, he lived there until his mid-thirties. He lost his mother when he was eleven and father when he was eighteen. Afterwards, he lived with his maternal aunt and her husband.

Temperance Riley was born in Orange County, located in central North Carolina just south of the Virginia line. While most of her father's siblings had immigrated to Greene County, Georgia in the 1790s, her family remained in the Tar Heel State until several years after the 1812 death of her grandfather, Jacob Riley. When Tempey was fourteen, her family settled along Richland Creek in Greene County, southwest of the county seat of Greensborough. In the 1820s, she married twice and had one son who survived infancy, but her both of her husbands appear to have died young. About 1828, now a single mother with a toddler, Tempey moved back in with her father, Peter Riley.

Temperance's first cousin, Thomas Riley, had moved to Greene County about 1795 with his father, Peter's brother, Revolutionary War veteran John Riley. Thomas became a successful planter, and in 1808, he married Ezekiel's aunt. After Zekiel was orphaned at the age of eighteen, Thomas served as his guardian. Acquainted through these family connections, Tempey and Zekiel married in March 1832, when he was twenty-seven and she, thirty.

Ezekiel and Temperance Blanks settled in Greene County, where he presumably farmed. He became involved in a controversy with a neighbor in 1837 that resulted in criminal charges, but a jury exonerated him. The following year, Zekiel and his father-in-law, Peter Riley, had a squabble that dragged their family business before the county courts. After lingering in the legal system for a year, they resolved their disagreement to the court's satisfaction.

These disputes, plus the economic hardships associated with the Panic of 1837, probably led Zekiel and Tempey to emigrate from Georgia in late 1839. After a few years in central Alabama, they moved on westward to Hillsboro, Johnson Township, located in southern Union County, Arkansas, where they spent the remainder of their lives.

Ezekiel Blanks' father, William Blanks, and maternal grandfather, John Hill, both fell into the upper-middle class strata of Georgian society, as did Temperance's father, Peter Riley. The latter three men owned large farms along Beaverdam and Richland Creeks in southern Greene County, a region of extremely agriculturally rich farmland that produced significant amounts of cotton. However, the deaths of the elder Blanks and Hill and distribution of their estates left Zekiel with limited financial backing after he was orphaned at eighteen years of age. Meanwhile, Peter Riley

had a second family to provide for, and in the typical standards of the day, he gave portions of his valuable farm to his sons, leaving other property to his daughters.

These circumstances helped dictate Ezekiel and Temperance's decidedly middle-class lifestyle. They owned no real estate in Georgia or Alabama, but several years after settling in south Arkansas, he had accumulated sufficient funds to pay \$200 in cash for a 160-acre farm. He grew cotton as his cash crop and corn to feed his family and livestock, but financial hardships forced him to sell his farm in 1855 to pay his debts. Afterwards, he farmed the lands of his son-in-law. Ezekiel Blanks died in 1864 at the young age of only fifty-eight.

Temperance Riley remained a widow for the next three decades. She and Ezekiel had six daughters, but tragically, four of them died young. In 1866, their younger surviving daughter married, and Tempey spent the rest of her life living with her son, Seborn Robins, a widower whose wife died childless in the 1850s. He acquired a small farm near Tempey's married daughters and near the Olive Branch Methodist Church where they all attended services. Tempey and her son died within two weeks of each other in 1894.

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## Ezekiel Blanks: Early Years Along the Oconee River in Eastern Georgia

W. Ezekiel Blanks was born on 31 August 1805 in Greene County, Georgia [1], the son of Capt. William Blanks [2] and his second wife, Jane, the daughter of [Capt. John Hill](#) [3]. Zekiel had strong Patriot roots on both sides of his family. His father was born about 1755 in Halifax County, Virginia to Henry and Naomi Blanks [4]. During the Revolutionary War, William Blanks moved south into North Carolina, where he commanded a company of Craven County Militia that served under Col. Richard Caswell in the early months of 1780 [5]. In June 1780, "*Capt. W<sup>m</sup> Blanks's Comp<sup>y</sup>*" received payment by United States Paymaster Joshua Blount for service by the officers and soldiers in the North Carolina Brigade [6]. After the Revolution, Capt. Blanks returned to Virginia and married in 1782 [7], but by 1785 he had settled in Wilkes County, Georgia along with his brother, James.

Ezekiel Blanks's maternal grandfather, [Capt. John Hill](#), had arrived in the "*Ceded Lands*," later Wilkes County, Georgia, in the early 1770s. As the British instigated the Creeks to attack Patriot settlers in Georgia during the Revolutionary War, Hill took his family to Randolph County, North Carolina about late 1779. Hill's stepson, Joseph Newton, later stated that "*this move was made in order to get rid of the Tories & Indians.*" About September 1780, John Hill began recruiting soldiers to serve in a militia company. Capt. Hill's company participated in the action at the Battle of Cowan's Ford and then the Patriot disaster at Torrence's Tavern on 1 February 1781. Capt. Hill's company regrouped and fought at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse on March 15<sup>th</sup>. After that battle, Gen. Nathanael Greene ordered the North Carolina Militia discharged, and Capt. Hill issued discharges to his men. Hill's stepson said,

*...notwithstanding we had received our discharges we were persuaded by our Capt. Hill to continue together for our own safety and that of the Country through which we had to travel, as the whole country was infested by the Tories, this was in the year 1781...*

Newton said that "*we returned to the State of South Carolina on our way to the State of Georgia, where this deponent left his Stepfather & Mother and proceeded on to the State of Georgia*" [8].

On 6 June 1785, Capt. John Hill received a warrant for an 862½-acre tract of land as payment for his services as militia captain during the war. [Gen. Samuel Elbert](#) and [Col. Elijah Clarke](#) both signed Hill's warrant [9]. Hill's vast tract of land lay in northern Washington County, a region that became Greene County, Georgia in February 1786. Hill and his family lived on his farm on Richland Creek until his death in late 1817.

Ezekiel's father, Capt. William Blanks, obtained a small tract of land in Wilkes County upon his arrival there about 1783 or 1784. He paid taxes on 52 acres of land in 1785 and on 80 acres in both 1786 and 1787 [10]. At the church conference of the Phillips Mill Baptist Church on Little River in

Wilkes County held on 12 May 1787, "*Moriah*" Blanks joined the church, followed by William Blanks a few months later, on August 10<sup>th</sup>. Both Blanks and his wife joined "*by experience*," or by experience of faith, with baptism following shortly afterwards [11]. On 18 February 1788, William Blanks witnessed a land transaction along with Meshack Turner, another member of Phillips Mill Baptist Church. The pair appeared in court on 7 August 1788 to make an affidavit that they had witnessed the February transaction [12].

At the Phillips Mill Church conference held on 11 December 1790, John Robertson charged William Blanks with swearing, but since he was absent, the church cited Blanks to appear at the next church conference. Blanks did not attend either of the next two conferences on January 8<sup>th</sup> or February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1791, probably since he had already moved from Wilkes to Greene County, Georgia. Clearly annoyed, church members criticized Blanks for "*neglecting to hear the church when requested to do so*." At the conference held on 12 March 1791, the church finally resolved the issue. The minutes of that conference recorded that

*Brother William Blanks, for taking God's name in vain and neglecting to hear the church, is excommunicated.*

Several years later, on 7 April 1798, the Phillips Mill Church dismissed Mariah Blanks along with several other members described as "*having for several years been absent and removed without letters*." William and Mariah Blanks had already settled in Greene County by 1791, and Mariah had probably already died before the church dismissed her in 1798 [13].

On 2 February 1791, William Blanks of Greene County sold a 150-acre tract of land on the fork of the Ogeechee River to Bennett Posey [14]. The transaction in which Blanks had obtained this land was not recorded, but he must have purchased it between 1788 and 1790, as he did not pay taxes on it in 1788 or 1789 [15].

William Blanks' precise occupation for the next fifteen years is uncertain. Tax records between 1793 and 1805 show him paying only his own poll tax and owning no property. This could imply that he could not afford to purchase his own land and either farmed rented land or worked as a farm laborer. However, since later records suggest he was a man of some means, and he may have engaged in an occupation other than farming during this period [16].

William Blanks' first wife died by the latter 1790s, and on 25 September 1799, William Blanks married Jane, the daughter of Capt. John Hill of Greene County, Georgia [17]. We know very little about Jane. Her birth must have occurred between 1775 and 1785, either in Georgia or possibly in North Carolina, where her parents evacuated during the 1779–1781 violence that enveloped Wilkes County, Georgia during the Revolutionary War.

In 1805, the year of Ezekiel's birth, William Blanks drew a 202½-acre tract of land in the first of Georgia's many land lotteries, the unique system by which the State dispersed lands acquired from the Creek and Cherokee Indians to settlers. The State of Georgia officially issued the elder Blanks a patent for his land in September 1805 [18]. The 1805 Land Lottery resulted in a land rush into the rich Oconee River Valley formerly occupied by the Creek Indians, and Ezekiel undoubtedly moved with his parents across the Oconee River into Baldwin County and settled on their new farm on Fishing Creek. Ezekiel's maternal uncles, Robert and Joseph Logan Hill, moved with them to Baldwin County, and Joseph L. Hill bought a farm that adjoined the Blanks'. William Blanks appears to have successfully operated his new farm in the rich Oconee Valley between 1807 and 1811 [19].

In late 1811 or early 1812, William Blanks sold his Baldwin County farm and moved his family back to Greene County. He only paid his poll tax for 1812, but by 1813, he had settled on a 220-acre tract of land near the Oconee River in western Greene County and paid taxes on it through 1815 [20]. On 6 May 1816, Blanks appeared before the Greene County Justices, including his brother-in-law, Thomas Riley, to petition for a survey for a 25-acre tract of land adjoining his own land [21]. He had apparently not officially obtained a title to his 220 acres yet, so on 28 October 1816, Blanks had a deed recorded showing him purchasing his farm from William Armor for \$650 [22]. The very next month, on November 20<sup>th</sup>, the State of Georgia issued him a patent based upon his warrant obtained the previous May. However, upon survey, the tract consisted of a mere six acres [23]. William Blanks must have developed his property into a valuable farm, for he sold it for \$1500 on 18 April 1818 [24].

On 26 October 1818, six months after selling his land along the Oconee River, Blanks paid \$1000 to Jacob Peeler for a 102.9-acre tract of land along Richland Creek [25]. Two years later, on 28 December 1820, William Blanks made three land transactions. He paid \$1000 to Matthew Houghton for a 200-acre tract of land, and another \$1000 to John Mann for an adjoining 110-acre tract of land on Beaverdam Creek. In his third transaction that day, Blanks paid Thomas Bell \$20 for an adjoining 4.7-acre tract of land on Beaverdam [26].

Beaverdam Creek lies in southern Greene County, flowing from its headwaters just east of the county seat of Greenesborough (later Greenesboro, and now, Greensboro) along a southwesterly course to its intersection with Richland Creek. William Blanks must have sold part of the 417.9 acres he had purchased in southern Greene County, for by 1822, he only paid taxes on a 294-acre tract of land on Beaverdam Creek [27].

His parents' migrations show that after his birth in Greene County, Ezekiel Blanks moved as an infant into the newly created Baldwin County, returning to Greene when he was about six years old. Afterwards, he must have grown up on his father's farms in southwestern Greene along the Oconee River and Beaverdam Creek. In about 1816 or 1817, when he was about eleven, Ezekiel's mother died, and his maternal grandfather, Capt. John Hill, died between August 1817 and January 1818 [28]. Within a few years, William Blanks remarried to Nancy, a woman considerably younger than he. In fact, Nancy was born only a few years older than Ezekiel, making her around forty years younger than her husband.

William Blanks died in late 1823, when Ezekiel was eighteen years old [29]. As a minor standing to inherit property, Zekiel needed a guardian. Given his age, the Greene County Inferior Court allowed him to choose his own guardian. On 10 January 1825,

*Ezekiel Blanks orphan of William Blanks over 14 years of age came in person in Open Court and made choice of Thomas Riley as his Guardian. Whereupon it [is] ordered that he be appointed accordingly and that he give bond and security in the sum of one thousand dollars for the faithful performance of his Guardianship and that Jacob Riley be receivd [sic] as his security on said Guardianship.*

Riley appeared with Blanks before the court that day and posted \$1000 bond to secure his service as Ezekiel Blanks' guardian. Thomas' brother, Jacob Riley, served as his security on the bond [30]. Thomas Riley was Ezekiel's uncle, for in 1808, he had married Sarah Hill, the sister of Ezekiel's mother, Jane [31].

William Blanks had three known children by his first wife who survived to adulthood, including one son, Joseph Blanks, who died as a young man, either about the same time as his father or soon afterwards. Joseph's administrator held a sale of his property on 3 March 1825. At the sale, Ezekiel Blanks bought his older brother's horse for \$70 [32].

Ezekiel Blanks had fortunate draws in two of Georgia's land lotteries, the unique means by which Georgia dispersed land acquired from the Creek and Cherokee to citizens. As a single young man over the age of twenty-one, he registered in 1826 as a resident of Robins' District, Greene County, for the lottery to be held in 1827. At the drawing, his entry was selected for a 202½-lot of land in Lee County [33]. Zekial owned the tract from the date of the drawing in 1827, paying taxes on it in both 1827 [34] and 1828 [35]. However, the State of Georgia did not issue him a grant for the land in Lee County until 7 August 1834 [36]. Given that Lee County lay in southwestern Georgia, a great distance from his residence in Greene County, Blanks probably never even visited his land. The early records of Lee were destroyed, so we have no record of his disposing of the

property. It appears that he sold it by 1834, probably even before he had received his formal grant of the tract from the state.

Zekial Blanks' aunt, Sally Hill Riley, died between 1825 and 1830. Given that Thomas Riley served as his guardian, Blanks was probably one of the younger males living in Riley's 1830 Greene County household [37]. Thomas Riley himself died at his Greene County home on 21 November 1830 at about forty-five years. At his estate sale held on 21 February 1831, Ezekiel Blanks bought only one minor item: he paid 6¼¢ for one "*Baging Needle*" [38].

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## Temperance Riley: Growing Up in North Carolina & Georgia

Temperance Riley (Tempey) was born on 15 April 1802 in North Carolina [1], the daughter of [Peter Riley](#) and Elizabeth Woods [2]. Tempey's birth presumably occurred in Orange County, where her grandfather, Jacob Riley, had settled in the early 1750s. Her father and grandfather's households were omitted from the 1800 federal census enumeration of Orange County, but other records show Peter Riley resided in Orange County through 1804 [3].

In late 1804, Tempey's parents moved from North Carolina to Greene County, Georgia to join Peter Riley's siblings, Mary Riley Gray, Catherine Riley Findley, and John Riley, who had settled there about 1793. In 1805, Peter lived in Capt. Dawson's District near his siblings. He paid his own poll tax and taxes on two slaves [4]. Soon after his arrival in Georgia, Peter Riley obtained a 122-acre tract of land on the Ogeechee River.

Tempey's grandfather, Jacob Riley, remained in Orange County, North Carolina, and on 28 November 1804,

*...for and in Consideration of the natural love and affection which he hath and beareth unto his said Son Peter Riley as also for the better support maintainance [sic] and preferment of him the said Peter Riley...*

Jacob gave Peter the 150-acre tract of land in Orange County, North Carolina "whereon the said Jacob Riley now lives" [5]. Instead of permanently remaining in Georgia with his siblings, Peter decided to return to North Carolina to their family farm. On 25 October 1805, as a Greene County resident, he sold his 122-acre tract of land in Greene County, Georgia for \$200 [6]. It is impossible to say with any degree of certainty that Temperance moved with her father to Greene County, Georgia as a toddler, for Peter could have left his young children in North Carolina with his parents during his brief foray to Georgia. However, his purchase of land in Georgia suggests that he initially intended to remain there, and he probably took Elizabeth and their young children along on the journey.

After selling his Georgia land in October 1805, Peter Riley then returned to Orange County, North Carolina, where he operated his father's old farm until several years after Jacob's death in 1812 [7]. On 27 July 1816, Peter Riley sold his 168-acre farm in Orange County for \$1320 and finally moved to Greene County, Georgia [8]. They had arrived in Georgia by 22 May 1817, when he paid \$1000 to Thomas Ware for a 194-acre tract of land located on Richland Creek, several miles south of Greensborough, the county seat. Peter's nephew, Joseph Riley, witnessed the transaction [9].

On 4 December 1821, at the age of nineteen, Tempey Riley married Thomas Deviney in Greene County, Georgia [10]. Deviney presumably died within a few years of their marriage, for on 8 January 1827, Tempey had a son, Seborn Robins [11]. No marriage record for Tempey and a Robins man has been located in Georgia, but the fact that her son went by the name of "*Seborn Robins*" throughout his adult life strongly suggests that she was married to Seborn's father prior to his birth. A few years later, Temperance was owed a debt by William Robins, son of Sarah Robins. The nature of the debt is unknown, but in 1849, Sarah Robins left a bequest to the heir or heirs of her deceased son, Thomas Robins. It is possible that he was the father of Temperance's son [12].

By 1828, Temperance Riley was "*solely & unmarried*" with a young toddler to care for, and she moved in with her father [13]. Peter Riley's 1830 Greene County household enumeration shows a young adult female and young boy the ages of Tempey and Seborn [14].

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### 1830s: Marriage & Conflicts

On 1 March 1832, Ezekiel Blanks married Temperance Riley, the first cousin of his uncle and former guardian, Thomas Riley. On their marriage license, the clerk recorded his name as *"Zekiel Blanks"* and hers as *"Temperence Leviney,"* presumably a corruption of *"Deviney,"* her first husband's surname. If she had legally married her son's father and he died shortly afterwards, then her legal name should have been *"Temperence Robins."* It is not clear if this were merely a clerical error, or if she never actually married her son's father [1].

As a married man, Ezekiel could register for the 1832 Land Lotteries even though he had a fortunate entry in a previous land lottery. In the Cherokee Lottery, he was again a winner, drawing a 40-acre tract located in the northwestern portion of Georgia. In 1834, Ezekiel paid taxes on his 40 acres, described as 3<sup>rd</sup> quality land in Cherokee County [2]. Georgia did not issue him a grant for his land until 19 May 1837 [3]. It lay in the portion of Cherokee that became Paulding County, but like Lee's records, those of Paulding County do not exist, so we have no record of his selling the property. However, in 1837, Ezekiel only paid his own white poll tax, so he must have already sold his tract in Paulding [4].

For the first seven years after their marriage, Ezekiel and Temperance Blanks farmed in Greene County. In 1834, he paid his taxes in Militia District #161, living near his first cousin, William Askew, and Tempey's brother-in-law, Robert F. Griffin. In 1837, he paid taxes in Militia District #163, where his father-in-law, Peter Riley, had lived until he sold his farm to Askew the previous year [5]. Both districts lay in southwestern Greene County, extending along Richland Creek from the outskirts of Greensborough southward to its juncture with the Oconee River.

Between 1837 and 1839, Ezekiel Blanks became embroiled in several unpleasant conflicts that put his personal business on display before the Greene County Superior Court. The first involved allegations made against him by a neighbor, accusations that resulted in Greene County officials accusing Blanks of committing several crimes. The second details an unfortunate quarrel with his father-in-law over money that he supposedly owed to Temperance. This family drama may ultimately have contributed to their decision to emigrate from Georgia in late 1839.

The legal action began in early 1837, when one of Ezekiel Blanks' neighbors claimed that he conspired to steal a \$100 banknote. The neighbor, Nathan Winfield, alleged that on 15 December 1836, *"...at the dwelling house of him the said Ezekiel Blanks...with force and Arms,"* Blanks took a banknote

*...the property of one Nathan Winfield of said County then and there being in the possession of a certain Negro man Slave named Simon the property of said Nathan Winfield the said Ezekiel*

*Blanks then and there did receive of said Negro man Slave said Bank note without written permission from the said Nathan Winfield the Owner of said Slave or any other person authorized to give such permission authorizing said Negro man Slave to sell & dispose of said Bank note to the great damage of him the said Nathan Winfield Contrary to the laws of said State, the good order peace & dignity thereof.*

Winfield next accused Blanks of committing “Simple Larceny” on December 18<sup>th</sup> and “Larceny from the House,” on December 20<sup>th</sup>, with the latter two incidents occurring at Winfield’s house. The two larceny charges were otherwise identical, with Winfield claiming that

*...the said Ezekiel Blanks...at the dwelling house of...Nathan Winfield...with force and Arms [took] one Bank note...the property of him...Nathan Winfield then and there being found in the possession wrongfully frauduently [sic] & feloniously did Steal take & carry away without the Consent of him the said Nathan Winfield and to the great damage of the said Nathan Winfield Contrary to the laws of said State the good order peace and dignity there.*

Winfield’s testimony gave a detailed description of the banknote allegedly taken by Blanks in all three incidents. It was Bank of Augusta banknote #257, for \$100, dated 5 April 1836, and signed by bank President John Moore and bank Cashier Robert F. Poe. Such banknotes were regarded as legal tender and the equivalent of cash [6].

Born about 1770, Nathan Winfield married in Oglethorpe County in 1797 and then settled in Greene County by 1803 [7]. He lived near Peter Riley, Blanks’ father-in-law, in 1830, and in 1834, Winfield paid taxes on thirteen slaves and on his 442-acre farm on Beaverdam Creek near Richland Creek. Winfield in the same area that Ezekiel Blanks lived in 1837 [8].

The court records indicate that Blanks and Winfield had a disagreement over a debt that focused on the \$100 banknote. The series of disagreements lasted at least from December 15<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup>, with incidents at both Blanks’ and Winfield’s houses. The precise distinction between the two larceny charges on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> is unclear.

The Greene County Superior Court opened their first session of 1837 on March 13<sup>th</sup> by impaneling a grand jury [9]. Several days later, on Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, Solicitor General Richard O. Davidson appeared with Nathan Winfield before the grand jury to present the charges against Ezekiel Blanks. Based upon Winfield’s testimony, the grand jury reported three true bills against Blanks, a misdemeanor for allegedly taking the banknote from Simon at Blanks’ own house on December 15<sup>th</sup>, and two felonies, “Simple Larceny” for taking the banknote from Winfield’s house on the 18<sup>th</sup> and “Larceny from the House” for again taking the note from Winfield’s house on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Based upon the true bills against him, either the Greene County sheriff or a deputy presumably arrested Blanks that day.

Either later on Thursday, the 16<sup>th</sup> or Friday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, officials impaneled a jury of twelve men to hear the three cases, *"The State vs. Ezekiel Blanks,"* and the jury heard testimony in the cases. Although the court proceedings gave detailed descriptions of Winfield's accusations against Blanks made before the grand jury, they recorded no details of the testimony of either Blanks or anyone else made in his defense at the trial. On March 17<sup>th</sup>, jury foreman Wiley M. White reported identical verdicts in all three cases against Blanks: *"We the Jury find the defendant not Guilty"* [10].

The next year, a dispute that Ezekiel Blanks had with his father-in-law over money that Riley supposedly owed to Temperance became public knowledge. Riley repeatedly refused to pay them money, and Blanks filed a lawsuit against Riley. Although court records can be difficult to interpret, they suggest that Zekiel himself pressed the matter against Riley, even though his attorneys included Temperance as one of the plaintiffs.

By mid-1838, Ezekiel and Temperance Blanks were in their mid-thirties and had been married for six years. In addition to Tempey's son, aged eleven years, they had two young daughters aged five and three years, and Tempey was pregnant, delivering her third daughter on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Meanwhile, her father, Peter Riley, was in his sixties, married to his second wife, Nancy Finley, a woman only about three years older than Tempey. Peter and Nancy had one young son, born the same year as Tempey's eldest daughter.

On 19 August 1838, Greene County attorneys Francis H. Cone and Y. P. King filed a lawsuit against Peter Riley with the Greene County Superior Court on behalf of *"Ezekiel Blanks & Temperance Blanks his Wife formerly Temperance Riley."* They alleged that Peter Riley *"owes and from your Petitioners unjustly detains"* a total of \$200 plus interest. Their attorneys filed this as an action of *"assumpsit,"* an implied promise or contract that had been breached.

The petition claimed that on 5 March 1831, while Temperance was *"solely & unmarried,"* her father received \$100 from the late Irbane Leonard, who paid the money to Riley on behalf of William Robins, who was indebted to Tempey [11]. The Blanks claimed that Peter *"borrowed"* the money from Tempey and that he

*...then and there promised and agreed to hold and keep the said sum of money for [Temperance]...untill [sic] she called for it at which time...when called for he the said Peter was to give your Petitioner a good note or the money with interest.*

Blanks' petition averred that on 1 June 1838, the \$100 plus interest

*...was demanded of the said Peter who then and there failed and refused to pay the same or any part thereof or to give your petitioners a good note...*

By his refusal, they claimed that Riley breached his verbal contract, since he had previously “faithfully promised your Petitioner” to pay her when requested. Next, Blanks’ attorneys claimed that also on 5 March 1831, Peter Riley borrowed another \$100 from

*...Temperance whilst She was Sole & unmarried and being so indebted he the said Peter undertook and then & there promised to hold & keep said sum of money untill [sic]...Temperance wanted or Called for it at which time...when called for the said Peter was to pay it or give a good note for it...*

As with the first sum, they stated that on 1 June 1838, the \$100 plus interest “was demanded of the said Peter who then and there failed and refused to pay” any part of the sum. The petition stated that Riley,

*Although so indebted and often thereto requested hath not paid the same nor any part thereof but...hath hitherto refused and still doth refuse to the damage of your petitioner three hundred dollars.*

Since Blanks’ attorneys detailed two separate sums of \$100 that Peter Riley borrowed from his daughter, it is unclear how they arrived at total damages of \$300, a sum much larger than the \$200 plus the accrued interest.

Upon their attorneys filing the “action of assumpsit” with the Greene County Superior Court on 19 August 1838, Judge John G. Polhill ordered that Peter Riley be summoned to appear before the Court in September. On August 23<sup>rd</sup>, Deputy Sheriff William L. Skain left a copy of the summons for Peter Riley “at his noted place of abode.”

Peter Riley’s attorneys, Thomas F. Foster and Henry Sanford, filed Riley’s answer to the Blanks’ petition at the September 1838 session of the Greene County Superior Court. They acknowledged Riley’s receipt of the declaration but filed a cause of exception, arguing

*...that the said action is brought in the Joint names of Ezekiel Blanks & Temperance Blanks his Wife when the right of action if any exists[s] is in the said Ezekiel Blanks alone and therefore there is a misjoinder of plaintiffs wherefore this defendant prays that said writ may be quashed.*

To answer the Blanks’ declaration, Riley stated that

*...he never did assume [or] promised [sic] in manner & form as the plaintiffs hath declared against him and of this he puts himself upon the County &c.*

Furthermore, Riley stated that he

*...admits that he may have owed the plaintiff one cent but says & pleads that said Plff. Ezekiel Blanks was indebted to this defendant in a much larger sum to wit in the Sum of Two hundred and twenty dollars according to an account & Bill of particulars hereto annexed which the said defendant pleads as a sett [sic] off and on the trial of said case will insist on a Judgement for the amount due him and this he is ready to Verify and prays Judgement & also puts himself upon the County.*

Finally, Riley stated that “...if he ever did assume and promise as...” the Blanks’ lawsuit claimed, then “such assumption & promises were not made within four years” before filing of their suit. Thus, such action is “bound by a Statute of limitation.”

Along with his reply to Blanks’ lawsuit, Peter Riley’s attorneys filed the following account showing the debt that he claimed Blanks owned him:

*Bill of Particulars above refered [sic] to*

*Ezekiel Blanks To Peter Riley*

<i>1836 Jany 1. To board of his Wife the Said Temperance while Sole &amp; unmarried for three years @ \$60 P. year .....</i>	<i>\$180.00</i>
<i>1837 Jany 1. To Cash paid to J. Coley for eight hogs .....</i>	<i>40.00</i>
	<i>\$220.00</i>

Riley’s submitting a bill for caring for his own daughter, then widowed and with a young son, for the period in which she was unmarried seemingly reveals a complete breakdown in familial relations between Blanks and his father-in-law. It conflicts with other records that portray Peter Riley as a caring father who provided for his adult children and orphaned grandchildren.

The Superior Court took no additional action on the case at their September 1838 term after Riley’s attorneys filed their answer. When the case appeared on the court’s docket at the March 1839 term, they issued a continuance until the next session. At the September 1839 court session, the case appeared on the Superior Court docket on March 14<sup>th</sup>. Both the court minutes and proceedings merely mark the case as “*Settled*,” without recording any specific details of the settlement [12].

By the fall of 1839, Ezekiel Blanks had decided to emigrate from Georgia. Besides the resolution of his legal dispute with his father-in-law, he also finalized his other legal obligations. On September 27<sup>th</sup>, for an unspecified sum, he assigned his right and interest in his father’s old farm on Beaverdam Creek, now part of the dower of his stepmother, Nancy Blanks, to John G. Gaston, the husband of his younger sister, Martha P. Blanks. The original document shows that Ezekiel made his mark to it, indicating his lack of formal education as a child [13].

Shortly afterwards, Ezekiel and Temperance Blanks emigrated from Georgia. They headed westward, probably along the only available pathway at that time, the Federal Road, which connected Milledgeville, Georgia to central Alabama. In mid-1840, they lived in Perry County, where their household was enumerated on the federal census. Tempey’s son, Seborn Robins, was not enumerated in their household, which consisted only of Ezekiel, Tempey, and their three young daughters, with no one in the household engaging in agriculture.

Zekiel and Tempey did not remain long in Perry County and soon moved into neighboring Dallas County. On 1 October 1842, Temperance Blanks engaged in a transaction with Mr. William Seawell, who had resided in Perry County in 1840 [14]. On that day, Seawell sold and delivered to

*...Temperance Blanks Wife of Ezekiel Blanks a certain negro Woman named Jane about 16 Years Old to have & hold the Said negro Woman to the Sole and Exclusive use of her the Said Temperance during the natural Life of Said Temperance Without being Subject to the ownership or Control in any Shape of her present husband Ezekiel Blanks or any future husband She may have and Without being Liable to the debts of her present or any future husband and after the determination [sic] of the life of the said Temperance Blanks then the Said Jane to belong to and be equally divided between all the Children of Said Temperance Blanks by her present husband Ezekiel Blanks who shall be Living at the time of her Death Said Temperance...*

William Seawell made the transaction for the consideration of the sum of \$800, “to me in hand paid the receipt Whereof is hereby Acknowledged” [15].

This transaction proves curious, as the records give no indication that the Blanks had the financial resources to purchase an enslaved worker for \$800. That was an enormous sum for that era. Ezekiel presumably worked as a farm laborer and had very limited financial means. Tax records from the 1830s show him without any appreciable property, not even owning his own farmland in Greene County, Georgia before he emigrated.

The wording of the transaction with Seawell, specifically the manner in which Jane was conveyed to Temperance as her own property free from the control of Ezekiel, indicates that this transaction was part of the settlement with her father stemming from the 1838 lawsuit. Seawell’s 1840 household included eight enslaved females in Jane’s age range, and Riley had probably sent the money to him to make the transaction with Temperance.

1842 also coincides with the period in which Peter Riley made allocations of his property to his elder children, selling equal portions of his farm to his sons, William M. and James G. Riley. Peter sold each of them tracts of land valued at \$500 [16]. While Riley’s precise feelings towards Ezekiel Blanks are unknown, he clearly did not harbor lingering resentment towards Temperance, as he included her in his list of children to receive a portion of the final distribution of his estate after his death. The wording of his will, specifically, the money he left to his daughter, Susan, and to his orphaned grandson to “make all of my first children equall [sic] or nearly so,” further suggests that the enslaved woman given to Temperance came from her father, giving her a share of his estate equal to that Peter had given William and James about the same time [17].

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦



## Immigration to South Arkansas

Soon after the transaction with Seawell in October 1842, Ezekiel and Temperance Blanks moved their family from Alabama to Union County, Arkansas. They probably made the journey by water, heading first to a nearby landing on the Alabama River, where they boarded a steamboat with their children, Jane, and their animals. They would then have traveled southward towards Mobile, then connecting to another steamboat headed through the inner passage, a winding connection of bayous that avoided the open Gulf of Mexico and meandered towards the mouth of Lake Pontchartrain. After a brief trip through the lake and up Bayou St. John, they arrived at the bustling New Orleans wharfs on the Mississippi River. From there, travelers boarded another steamer headed northwards up the Mississippi and Ouachita Rivers. They may have disembarked at Alabama Landing, the northern-most river landing in Louisiana, or at the Champagnolle Landing in Arkansas, then the county seat of Union County, just recently created in 1836.

The Blanks' fifth daughter, Mary Ann, was born in Arkansas on 29 October 1843 [1]. Ezekiel was not assessed 1843 Union County taxes, so they presumably arrived there mid-year, with Temperance nearing the end of her pregnancy [2]. In 1844, Ezekiel paid his own poll tax, as well as taxes on one slave between eight and sixty years of age valued at \$400, undoubtedly Jane, one horse or mare, and one mule, both aged over three years and valued at \$25, and one cow valued at \$10 [3]. Ezekiel paid similar taxes in 1845, 1846, 1848–1849, and 1851.

A little over two years after his arrival in Union County, Arkansas, on 23 January 1846, Ezekiel Blanks paid \$200 cash to the State of Arkansas for a 160-acre tract of government land. His new farm lay about four or five miles west of Hillsboro, then a tiny village with only a few stores, and about eight miles southeast of the site chosen a few years earlier as the new Union County Seat: El Dorado. Today, the modern U.S. Highway 82 passes one mile north of Zekiel's old farm [4].

After his arrival in southern Union County, Arkansas, Ezekiel Blanks fulfilled his obligations to help maintain the local roads near his farm. On Wednesday, 14 January 1846, the Union County Court appointed Blanks as the overseer on the "*Luter Road*" from the Johnson Township line to "*Jas. Andrews*" [5]. The road was named for Bayou d'Loutre that passed several miles south of Blanks' farm. A few months later, on April 13<sup>th</sup>, the Union County Court created a new road leading from the Louisiana line northward to intersect the Champagnolle Road at James Andrew's farm. The Court appointed Ezekiel Blanks overseer of this new road beginning at James Andrews "*to where said rode [sic] intersects the Champagnolle road*" [6]. On 8 November 1847, Ezekiel Blanks petitioned the Union County Court for "*...the sum of four dollars for warning hands to work on the*

road 1846...,” which sum the Court ordered him paid [7]. On 7 May 1849, he petitioned the court and was paid \$30.00 “...for his services in viewing & marking out a new road...” [8].

In preparation for the Union County Circuit Court session scheduled to begin on 10 April 1848, the sheriff had summoned Ezekiel Blanks to serve on a petit jury, and he appeared in court and was impaneled to serve [9]. He apparently did not show up to serve on the following day as required, causing the Circuit Court to hold him in contempt of court and fine him \$1.00 for failure to appear. On the April 12<sup>th</sup>, Ezekiel appeared in Court:

*Came the said Ezekiel Blanks in his own proper person and the Court being satisfied [sic] that the act committed by him on a previous day of this term of this Court, for which he was fined the sum of one dollar + cost, was not intended to cast [sic] contempt. It is therefore ordered and considered by the Court that said Judgement for the sum of one dollar fine + cost as aforesaid be and the same is set aside and said Ezekiel Blanks go hence without day [delay] free therefrom.*

The court minutes do not record Blanks’ reason for failing to appear in Court [10].

In 1850, Ezekiel and Temperance Blanks were enumerated as residents of Harrison Township, even though all other records show their residence in Johnson Township. Their household consisted of their four surviving daughters, Temperance’ son, Seborn Robins, and two enslaved females, one an adult aged twenty-one and a toddler aged two. Both of them were described as “mulatto” [11]. The adult was undoubtedly Jane, and the young girl was probably her daughter. Since settling on his farm near Hillsboro, Ezekiel Blanks had managed to improve 45 acres, leaving 115 acres unimproved. His farm was valued at \$1200 and his farming implements and machinery worth \$75. The table below gives Blanks’ livestock on hand in mid-1850 and his 1849 crop production [12]:

1850 Union County, Arkansas Federal Census, Agricultural Schedule Farm of E. Blanks														
Livestock as of 1 June 1850								1849 Farm Production						
Horses	Asses/mules	Milch cows	Working oxen	Other cattle	Sheep	Swine	Value livestock	Bushels Indian corn	Bales, ginned cotton	Bushels, peas & beans	Bushels sweet potatoes	Pounds butter	Value, homemade mfg	Value, slaughtered animals
2	-	6	-	8	-	45	250	400	4	50	100	300	100	600

Farmers across the South routinely received advances of supplies from local merchants in the early spring to allow them to plant and tend to their crops until the harvest, when the farmer was expected to pay his debts with the proceeds from the sale of his cotton. Arkansas law required that farmers who received advances valued over a certain amount to record a mortgage with the

county clerk to guarantee their repayment. On 6 June 1853, Albert Rust agreed to furnish Ezekiel Blanks goods and supplies valued at \$144.06, with payment due by the following January 1<sup>st</sup>. In exchange, Blanks mortgaged to Rust

*...all the cotton which I may be able to raise this year, which I now have in a state of cultivation on the place on which I now reside. I am to pick, haul, and have said cotton ginned and to deliver the same at such place as said Rust may designate - and he the said Rust is to ship the cotton and sell it and after paying said debts and all necessary expenses incident to said Shipment and Sale, the residue if any he is to pay over to me...*

[Gen. Albert Rust](#) (c1818–4 Apr 1870) was an extremely wealthy planter from Virginia who later served in the U. S. House of Representatives and as a Brigadier General in the Confederate States Army during the Civil War [13].

Southern Arkansas lay in the greater Ouachita Valley, and the economic engine that developed in that region beginning in the 1830s relied upon steamboat navigation of the Ouachita River to deliver baled cotton to the New Orleans wharves. Seasonal rainfall in the Ouachita Mountains of west/central Arkansas led to an annual rise in water levels between November and June, when steamboats regularly plied the river as far north as Arkadelphia.

Beginning in the late summer of 1853, a series of unusual cyclical weather patterns developed across the Ouachita Valley that disrupted navigation of the waterways through early 1857. A cycle began with a prolonged drought that caused the water levels in the Ouachita River and her tributary bayous to fall low enough to prohibit steamer operation. Next, just enough scattered spring and early summer rains fell to grow that season's crops but insufficient to affect water levels. This caused episodes of repeated transportation interruptions on the Ouachita River, the region's only major thoroughfare, resulting in severe economic repercussions for the region's farmers.

The pattern began in the late summer of 1853, and by September 7<sup>th</sup>, the Ouachita had fallen too low for navigation north of Harrisonburg, Louisiana. By January of each year, steamboats typically made regular trips up the Ouachita to Camden, Arkansas, further north than the Champagnolle and Pigeon Hill Landings closest to Blanks' farm. However, in early 1854, navigation of the Ouachita remained closed. Steamboats finally reached Monroe, Louisiana on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, but lack of water stranded steamboats at Champagnolle, in Union County in mid-February [14].

During the summer and fall of 1854, dry weather persisted across the Ouachita Valley, dropping water levels in both the Ouachita and Red Rivers to extremely low levels. For the remainder of the year, steamboats could only make it as far north on the Ouachita as Harrisonburg, for the low water prevented boats from passing over the Catahoula Shoals a few miles above the

town. By late December, residents at Harrisonburg stated that the Ouachita River *"is lower now than was ever known before"* [15].

As a protracted drought persisted across the Ouachita Valley in mid-1855, the Ouachita River fell to the lowest level ever observed by *"the oldest inhabitant"* of the region, leaving farmers and merchants with *"a gloomy and foreboding thought,"* considering the large number of bales of cotton awaiting shipment downriver. Since merchants could not sell cotton to New Orleans merchants, they could not pay farmers cash for the previous year's crop. This caused a *"vast amount of destitution,"* with many families throughout the Ouachita Valley suffering *"for the want of the common necessities of life."* Monroe's *"The Register"* warned, *"This is not fancy nor rumor,"* for talk of the *"big hungry"* actually existed and openly stalked inhabitants of several nearby parishes and in southern Arkansas, with *"many families being entirely destitute of both bread and meat – living on roots, herbs, &c."* [16].

Farmers felt the effects of that year's drought early in the growing season, with farmers across the state line in Union Parish, Louisiana complaining in mid-April about the lack of rain. Many reported the ground *"as hard and dry as it is in June or July"* when they planted the cotton seed, causing the plants to not come up. The weather remained hot and dry throughout the summer, without any rain. By late July, it had severely affected all vegetation, especially cotton. The rains finally came in August and September, although too late to have any significant effect upon the crops, with September rains causing further damage to that year's cotton crop. The precipitation did bode well for navigational prospects, finally opening the Ouachita to navigation [17].

These dire economic conditions directly impacted Ezekiel Blanks, making it difficult for him to raise sufficient cash to pay his debts in 1853 and 1854. By mid-1855, Blanks had become indebted to Augustus C. L. Hill, an El Dorado merchant originally from Maine. Hill filed two separate lawsuits against Blanks in the Union County Circuit Court, but when the cases came before the Court on 26 September 1855, Hill's attorney requested that the Court dismiss them both, saying, *"the cost having been previously paid"* [18].

The payment that Ezekiel and Temperance Blanks made that day was to sell their 160-acre farm to Augustus Hill for \$600. This transaction points to a distinction between Ezekiel and Temperance, as he made his mark to the document while she signed her name [19]. This indicates that she received a sufficient education as a child growing up in North Carolina that allowed her to sign her name to documents as an adult, just like her father. On the other hand, Ezekiel was illiterate, making his mark to legal documents throughout his lifetime, just as his own father had.

After selling his farm in September 1855, there is no record of Ezekiel Blanks owning any other land in Union County, Arkansas. In 1851, Zekial and Tempey's eldest daughter, Elizabeth, had married Isaac Nathaniel Ogden [20]. Nathan owned a farm about three miles south of Ezekiel's, and Ezekiel and Temperance presumably lived on and helped cultivate the Ogden land.

On 26 September 1855, the same day that Ezekiel and Temperance sold their land to Hill, he engaged in other legal business. Along with his stepson and son-in-law, Seaborn Robins, and Nathan Ogden, Ezekiel signed a promissory note for \$478.25. They failed to pay that debt, and in early 1856, Augustus C. L. Hill, "*who sues for the use of Francis F. Greanleaf*," filed a lawsuit against Blanks, Robins and Ogden for nonpayment.

When the case appeared on the Union County Court docket on 17 April 1856, Hill's attorney requested that the Court "*discontinue*" the suit against Blanks and Robins. The Court proceeded with the case against Nathan Ogden, but as he failed to appear in Court, they decreed that Hill should recover the sum of \$188.32 plus damages of \$3.14 from Ogden [21].

Since his arrival in Arkansas in 1843, Ezekiel Blanks had paid taxes each year on livestock and on Jane, the enslaved woman given to Temperance in 1842. Curiously, after the 1855–1856 legal issues he faced, neither he nor Seborn Robins were assessed Union County taxes in 1856, 1857, or 1858. It is unclear if this resulted from poor accounting by the tax assessor, or if they temporarily moved elsewhere after he sold his farm in 1855. In any case, they had returned by 1859 [22].

Union County, Arkansas remained an isolated locale throughout the nineteenth century, and Ezekiel and Temperance appear to have led a relatively quiet life after settling there in 1843. Family records indicate that they had four daughters born in Georgia and Alabama, one of which perished the year before they immigrated to Arkansas. They had an additional two daughters born after settling near Hillsboro. Tragically, after their arrival in Arkansas, Zekiel and Tempey experienced the deaths of three more of their daughters, one dying at fifteen months in 1848, another at age eleven in 1852, and the third at age twelve in 1857 [23].

The remote nature of southern Union County kept most outsiders at bay well into the twentieth century, perhaps explaining the large number of local families missed by the men who enumerated the 1850 and 1860 federal censuses. Although their family was enumerated in 1850, the 1860 enumerator omitted both the Blanks and Ogden households.

W. Ezekiel Blanks died on 25 February 1864 at the age of only fifty-eight years. Temperance had him buried in the cemetery beside the Olive Branch Methodist Church near Elizabeth and Nathan Ogden's farm. She had a tombstone erected for him, the oldest in the Olive Branch Cemetery. Ezekiel's original monument was inscribed:

*W. E. Blanks*  
*Died*  
*Feb. 25, 1864*  
*Age*  
*58 Ys. 5 Mo. 26 Days*  
*May he rest in Peace*

Three decades later, Temperance's children had a tombstone erected for her, inscribed with, "*Temperance Wife of W. E. Blanks.*" No known evidence reveals Zekiel's first given name. His older brother was named, "*William Henry Blanks,*" so it seems highly unlikely that Ezekiel's first name was "*William.*" Throughout his life, he exclusively went by "*Ezekiel Blanks*" or its derivative, "*Zekiel Blanks.*" These two original tombstones are the only known source proving he had two given names.

By 1985, Ezekiel's original tombstone, probably erected in the 1870s or 1880s, had deteriorated significantly and broken into several pieces. In 2010, descendants erected a new double monument for Ezekiel and Temperance Blanks behind their original tombstones [24].

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Thirty Years a Widow

Temperance Riley spent the remainder of her life living in southern Union County, Arkansas with her son, Seborn Robins. He had married in 1854, but his wife died soon after their marriage [1]. They had no children to survive infancy, and Seborn did not remarry. Two years after Ezekiel’s death, on 19 July 1866, the younger surviving Blanks daughter, Mary Ann, married Reuben Searcy Breazeal, a veteran of the Confederate Army [2]. Mary Ann and Reuben settled on a farm near her sister and mother. All three families lived in Johnson Township, near the modern community of Caledonia that developed about 1900. In their era, the nearest village was Hillsboro, where they obtained supplies and delivered cotton for sale.

In 1867, Seborn Robins paid taxes on one horse or mare valued at \$50 and two cattle valued at \$10 each [3]. About 1866–1868, he began making improvements on a tract of vacant land that adjoined the farm of his sister, Elizabeth J. Blanks, and her husband, Nathaniel Ogden. Robins built a house on the property, and he and Temperance soon settled on the 120-acre tract of land.

In 1870, the census enumerator listed their farm in Temperance’s name, valuing it at \$300. It consisted of 50 acres of improved land and 70 acres of woodland. Their farming implements and machinery were valued at \$10, and during the previous year, they had paid \$55 in wages for farm labor. Their current livestock holdings and 1869 crop production are given in the table below [4]:

1870 Union County, Arkansas Federal Census, Agricultural Schedule Farm of Temperance Blanks															
Livestock as of 1 June 1870						1869 Farm Production									
Horses	Mules or asses	Milch cows	Working oxen	Swine	Value livestock	Bushels Indian corn	Bales, Ginned cotton	Bushels Irish potatoes	Bushels sweet potatoes	Pounds of Butter	Gallons of Molasses	Pounds of Beeswax	Value, Home Mfgs	\$ Slaughtered Animals	Total Farm Production
1	2	2	2	12	200	200	7	3	30	100	10	200	10	60	850

On 8 March 1872, “Sebbeon Robbins” signed a promissory note for \$300 due the following December 1<sup>st</sup> to William A. Coit, the Union County Clerk of Court. Coit had furnished Robins supplies “to enable me to make a crop.” To secure his payment of the note, Robins mortgaged this property to Coit [5]:

...All the growing crop of Cotton Corn and fodder, And one yoke of steers marked as follows crop in right ear and split in left ear. Two Cows and calves, same mark, and twelve head of hogs same mark, and one ox wagon...

On the 24 January 1874, Seborn Robins obtained title to an 80-acre tract of government land from William A. Coit, but the Commissioner of State Lands did not issue a patent to Robins for the tract until 24 May 1877 [6]. Two years later, on 19 April 1876, Seborn signed a promissory note for \$200 due 1 January 1877 with 10% interest to the firm of Williams & Smith. To guarantee his payment of the note, he mortgaged to them this property [7]:

*My entire crop of cotton that I may produce or cause to be produced through whatever source this present year, the same being in consideration of supplies [furnished to] me as an advance to inable [sic] me to produce said crop. The cotton to be delivered to said Williams & Smith at Hillsboro Ark or Pigeon Hill Landing in good order by the first day of January 1877.*

On 4 March 1880, Seborn Robins paid the county and state taxes on his 80-acre farm, which the county assessor valued at \$120 [8]. The federal census enumeration made a few months later in June shows Temperance and Seborn living near her daughters. Their farm, including buildings and fences, was valued at \$400, including 60 acres of tilled land, one acre of pastures or orchards, 30 acres of unimproved woodland, and 10 acres of unimproved non-wooded land such as old fields. He owned farming implements and machinery worth \$5, the total value of his 1879 farm production was \$250, and he owned livestock valued at \$100. His livestock on hand and 1879 farm production included the following [9]:

1880 Union County, Arkansas Federal Census, Agricultural Schedule "Seaborn" Robins, farm owner																			
Livestock as of 1 June 1880								1879 Farm Production											
Horses	Milch cows	Calves dropped in 1879	Cattle slaughtered in 1879	Cattle died, strayed, stolen	Swine	Barnyard poultry	Other poultry	Pounds of Honey	Pounds of Butter	Dozen Eggs Produced	Acres in Indian Corn	Bushels Indian Corn	Acres in Cotton	Bales of Ginned Cotton	Acres in Sweet Potatoes	Bushels Sweet Potatoes	Bushels Apples – 2 trees	Bushels of Peaches – Produced by 100 trees	Value Orchard Production
1	2	2	1	4	10	13	60	75	50	75	15	100	8	3	¼	25	1	25	15

Temperance and Seborn continued to operate their farm during the 1880s, when she was in her eighties and he in his fifties. Seborn’s farm, just like that of Ezekiel Blanks, was included in a vast tract obtained by the State of Arkansas in 1841, called “*Internal Improvement*” lands. Seborn obtained his initial 80 acres from the State of Arkansas in 1874, and he made improvements to an adjoining 80 acres in preparation for purchasing it from the state. Legal issues held up the transaction, but following an 1887 court decision in Little Rock, Seborn’s adjoining tract was auctioned at “*public outcry*.” Seborn offered \$127.75 for the land, and the commissioner officially



conveyed title of the property to him on 16 May 1888 [10]. In 1890, he paid taxes on his 160-acre farm that adjoined that of his sister, Elizabeth Blanks Ogden [11].

Elizabeth J. Blanks Ogden died in April 1891 at the age of fifty-eight, the same age at which her father perished [12]. Temperance turned ninety in 1892, and she lived until 6 March 1894, dying just one month short of ninety-two years. Her family buried her beside Ezekiel and Elizabeth in the Olive Branch Methodist Cemetery near her farm [13].

Seborn Robins only survived his mother by twelve days, dying on 18 March 1894. He was buried in the Bussey-Hearin Cemetery, presumably beside the grave of his wife, Elizabeth Jackson Robins [14]. His nephews probably cultivated his old farm for the next few years. On 26 January 1900, his heirs, including his only surviving sister, Mary Ann, and the children of Elizabeth Ogden, sold 116 acres of his old farm to Tony Martindale for \$116 [15]. It is unclear what became of Seborn's final 40 acres, as it was not included in the transaction.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

## **Seborn Robins (1827–1894)**

### **Son of Temperance Riley**

Seborn Robins (8 Jan 1827–18 Mar 1894) was born in Georgia, the son of Temperance Riley [1]. Seborn's father was presumably the second husband of Tempey, although no evidence of a marriage between Tempey and a Mr. Robins is known to exist. In 1831, William Robins of Greene County owed a \$100 debt to Tempey. He was the son of Sarah Robins, then a widow born about 1767 in New Jersey. Her will left a bequest to the orphaned children of her son, Thomas Robins, who may possibly be the father of Seborn Robins [2].

Seborn is undoubtedly the young male under five years of age living in the 1830 household of his grandfather, Peter Riley [3]. He may have remained in Greene County, Georgia with relatives after his mother and stepfather left for Alabama, for the 1840 Perry County, Alabama household of his stepfather did not include any young males. However, it does not appear that he lived with Peter Riley that year. In 1850, Seborn lived with his mother, stepfather, and sisters on their farm in southern Union County, Arkansas.

Seborn Robins married on 21 December 1854 in Union County, Arkansas to Elizabeth Jackson (c1839–1855/1870). The county clerk who issued their marriage license recorded that Seborn was aged twenty-six and Elizabeth was fifteen years of age [4]. Nothing further is known of her, but it appears that she died within a few years of their marriage. If Elizabeth had any children, then they must have died young. Seborn was omitted by the enumerator of the 1860 federal census, so all we know is that by 1870, Seborn and his mother lived together, apparently a widower.

Seborn Robins enlisted on 26 April 1862 at Hillsboro as a private in Co. D, 37<sup>th</sup> Regiment Arkansas Infantry. His regiment had several designations during the War, including the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment Trans-Mississippi Infantry, Pleasant's Regiment, and Bell's Regiment. He became ill and was admitted to St. John's College Hospital in Little Rock, Arkansas on June 13<sup>th</sup> and remained there through July 1<sup>st</sup>. He was discharged from the hospital soon afterwards and listed as present for duty from July 1862 through 31 August 1863. On 29 February 1864, Robins was absent on sick leave, and this is the last record for the 37<sup>th</sup> Regiment [5].

After the War, Seborn Robins returned to Union County and lived with his mother for the next three decades. Tempey Riley Blanks died on 6 March 1894, and Seborn Robins died less than two weeks later, on March 18<sup>th</sup>. He is buried in the Bussey-Hearin Cemetery, located in the Pleasant Grove community several miles north of his farm. That cemetery lay near the old farm of Ezekiel and Temperance Blanks that they sold in 1855, probably where his wife was buried. Seborn's

tombstone was recorded in cemetery surveys made in the 1970s, but in subsequent decades the cemetery has become overgrown and fallen into disrepair. His tombstone has broken into pieces, making his gravesite difficult to identify [6].

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

### Children of Zekiel Blanks and Tempey Riley

Ezekiel and Temperance Blanks had six daughters, but four of them died young, between the ages of fifteen months and twelve years. Family records provided by a great-granddaughter in 1988 give the precise dates of birth and death of their daughters you died young [1]. Their known daughters are all buried in the Olive Branch Methodist Cemetery, located today near Caledonia, in southern Union County, Arkansas:

1. **Elizabeth Jane Blanks** (1 Dec 1832–6 Apr 1891) was born in Greene County, Georgia. She married on 18 September 1851 in Union County, Arkansas to Isaac Nathaniel Ogden (28 Nov 1822–1 Jul 1877), son of Isaac Ogden (19 Aug 1797–28 Sep 1859) and Milinda Reed (21 Dec 1801–18 May 1860). Elizabeth and Nathaniel Ogden farmed in Johnson Township southwest of Hillsboro, Union County, Arkansas.
2. **Susan A. Blanks** (8 Mar 1835–25 Oct 1857) was born in Greene County, Georgia and died in Hillsboro, Johnson Township, Union County, Arkansas.
3. **Martha M. Blanks** (22 Sep 1838–20 Jul 1842) was born in Greene County, Georgia and probably died in Dallas County, Alabama, where her parents lived on October 1<sup>st</sup> a few months after her death.
4. **Louisa A. Blanks** (29 Jul 1841–29 Jun 1852) was born in Alabama and died near Hillsboro, Johnson Township, Union County, Arkansas.
5. **Mary Ann Blanks** (29 Oct 1843–7 Jun 1915) was born in Johnson Township near Hillsboro, Union County, Arkansas. She married on 19 July 1866 in Union County, Arkansas to Reuben Searcy Breazeal (25 Feb 1843–2 Feb 1917), son of Hosea Bright Breazeal (5 Apr 1813–19 Oct 1891) and Sarah Elizabeth Mayfield (17 Jun 1819–9 Jan 1888). Mary Ann and Reuben Breazeal lived in Johnson Township southwest of Hillsboro.
6. **Sarah C. Blanks** (6 Mar 1847–17 Aug 1848) was born and died in Johnson Township near Hillsboro, Union County, Arkansas.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

## Union County, Arkansas Tax Records

The tables below give tax records from Union County, Arkansas for Ezekiel Blanks and his son-in-law, Nathan Ogden [1].

Union County, Arkansas Tax Lists 1844-1846										
Year	Taxpayer	# Poll taxes	Horses/Mares 3 yrs & older		Cattle 3 yrs & older		Total Taxable Property	Poll Tax	County Tax	State Tax
			Number	Value	Number	Value				
1844	Ezekiel Blanks	1	1	\$25	1	\$10	\$460	50¢	57½¢	57½¢
		1 mule aged 2 years or above valued @ \$25								
		1 slave aged between 8 and 60 years valued at \$400								
1845	Z. Blanks	1	1	\$15	1	\$9	\$449	\$1	90¢	50¢
		1 mule aged 2 years or above valued @ \$25								
		1 slave aged 8 years and upwards valued @ \$400								
1846	Z. Blanks	1	1	\$25	2	\$20	\$470	\$1	94¢	59¢
		1 mule aged 2 years or above valued @ \$25								
		1 slave aged 8 and under 60 years valued @ \$400								

Union County, Arkansas Tax Lists 1848-1851										
Year	Taxpayer	# Poll taxes	Horses/Mares 2 yrs & older		Cattle 2 yrs & older		Total Taxable Property	Poll Tax	County Tax	State Tax
			Number	Value	Number	Value				
1848	E. Blanks	1	1	\$60	--	--	\$940	50¢	\$1.88	\$2.35
		160 acres land valued @ \$480								
		1 slave over 8 and under 60 years valued @ \$400								
	Nathan Ogden	1	--	--	1	\$10	\$370	50¢	74¢	92¢
1849	E. Blanks	120 acres land valued @ \$360								
		1	1	\$190	--	--	\$1070	--	\$2.64	\$2.67
		160 acres land valued @ \$480								
		1 slave over 5 and under 60 years valued @ \$400								
1851	Nathan Ogden	1	1	\$60	1	\$10	\$70	--	64¢	16¢
	Ezekial Blanks	1	2	\$130	--	--	\$1010	--	\$1.76	\$2.02
		160 acres land valued @ \$480								
		1 slave aged over 5 and under 60 years valued @ \$400								
	Nathan Ogden	1	1	\$75	2	\$14	\$729	--	\$1.45	\$1.41
		80 acres land valued @ \$240								
		1 slave aged over 5 and under 60 years valued @ \$400								

Union County, Arkansas Tax Lists 1853-1860									
Year	Taxpayer	# Poll taxes	Horses/Mares 2 yrs & older		Cattle 2 yrs & older		Total Taxable Property	County Tax	State Tax
			Number	Value	Number	Value			
1853	Nathan Ogden	1	2	\$100	5	\$25	\$365	\$1.11	91¢
		80 acres land valued @ \$240							
	Ezekiel Blanks not assessed taxes								
1854	E. Blanks	1	--	--	--	--	\$880	\$2.26	\$2.20
		1 mule aged two years or above valued @ \$50							
		160 acres land valued @ \$480							
		3 slaves aged over 5 and under 60 years valued @ \$350							
	Nathan Ogden	1	1	\$60	3	\$24	\$724	\$1.95	\$1.81
		80 acres land valued @ \$240							
		1 slave aged over 5 and under 60 years valued @ \$400							
	Seaborn Robbins	1	--	--	2	\$16	\$61	62¢	15¢
		1 mule aged two years or above valued @ \$45							
1856	Neither Ezekiel Blanks nor Seborn Robins were assessed 1856 taxes.								
	Nathan Ogden	1	1	\$80	2	\$10	\$480	\$1.39	\$1.20
		80 acres land valued @ \$240							
		1 slave aged over 5 and under 60 years valued @ \$150							
1857	None of Ezekiel Blanks, Nathan Ogden, or Seborn Robins were assessed 1857 taxes.								
1858	Neither Ezekiel Blanks nor Seborn Robins were assessed 1858 taxes.								
	Nathan Ogden	1	1	\$80	4	\$36	\$116	65¢	19¢
1859	EzK <sup>l</sup> Black	1	1	\$50	7	\$70	\$120		20¢
	Nathan Ogden	1	1	\$50	13	\$100	\$150	--	25¢
	C. Robbins	1	--	--	--	--	--	50¢	--
1860	E. Blank	1	--	--	--	--	\$120	--	20¢
		40 acres land valued @ \$120							
	Mrs. Temp Blank	--	--	--	5	\$50	\$850	--	\$1.42
		2 slaves over 5 and under 60 years valued @ \$800							
	Nathan Ogden	1	--	--	10	\$100	\$1670		\$2.78
		90 acres land valued @ \$270							
		2 slaves over 5 and under 60 years valued @ \$1200							
		1 mule over two years old valued @ \$100							
Seborn Robins was not assessed 1860 taxes.									

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

## Notes

### Ezekiel Blanks: Early Years Along the Oconee River in Eastern Georgia

1. Olive Branch Methodist Cemetery (Caledonia, Union County AR), tombstone of [W. Ezekiel Blanks](#). His original tombstone, now broken into pieces, was inscribed with: "W. E. Blanks, Died Feb. 25 1864, Age 58 Ys. 5 Mo. 26 Days." This yields a birthdate of 31 August 1805. A modern tombstone was erected in 2008.
2. [Greene County GA Ordinary Court Records \(1820–1836\), p. 95](#) (*Georgia Greene County Greensboro Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 1825*"); [p. 99](#) ("Ezekiel Blanks orphan of William Blanks over 14 years of age came in person in Open Court and made choice of Thomas Riley as his Guardian"). [Greene County GA Estate Papers, LDS Film #5764283, Image #512](#) (William Blanks Estate, 1824, account of John G. Gaston, Administrator, filed 28 January 1854).
3. [Greene County GA Will Book 4 \(1817–1842\), pp. 34–36](#); [Greene County GA Probate Court Wills \(1798–1914\), LDS Film #5764273, Images #196–199](#) (Will of John Hill of Greene County, Georgia, written 11 August 1817, filed in court 15 January 1818). John Hill made a bequest to his three granddaughters, Matilda, Martha, and Seleta Blanks, "daughters of William Blanks and Jean Blanks his wife who has lately deceased." It is unclear why he did not mention his grandson, Ezekiel Blanks, but William Blanks and other relatives sued after Hill's death, claiming he was not in his right mind when the will was made, and other relatives had pushed him to make certain bequests.
4. [Pittsylvania County VA Deeds & Wills Book 10 \(1794–1797\), pp. 73–74](#) (Will of Henry Blanks, written 15 September 1794, filed in court 20 October 1794). Henry made this bequest: "I give to my Son William of Georgia Mare Cow & Calf and a Sow now in his possession to him I give the same to his heirs forever." For more details on the Blanks family, see:  
Blanks, William L. *Filling in the Blanks: A Study of the Blanks Family*. Meridian, MS: Dement Printing Company, 1984.
5. The following veterans of the Revolutionary War described their service under Capt. William Blanks in their applications for pensions:
  - #W1122:** Application of Richard Arthur – States that he was drafted about the time that the British were besieging Charleston and marched to Kinston, North Carolina and placed under the command of Captain William Blanks.
  - #S6557:** Application of Peter Banks – States he was drafted in Craven County by "William Blanks Captain," the year in which Charleston was taken by the British. He went to Kinston, North Carolina, under the command of General Caswell, Col. Richard Caswell, and Captain William Blanks, then marched to South Carolina and was present at Charleston when it was taken by the British.
  - #S1760:** Application of John Freman – States he was drafted on 1 March 1780, when to Kinston on March 10<sup>th</sup>, stating "my Capt. Was William Blanks." Marched towards Charleston but learned it had surrendered. Stated, "My discharge was but for three months signed by Capt. Blanks."
  - #S25689:** Application of William Miller – States drafted in the company of Capt. Blanks, North Carolina Militia, for a four-month tour in Craven County to defend Charleston. Marched through Fayetteville to Camden, South Carolina, then to the Santee River before learning Charleston had surrendered. Retreated to Cross Creek
6. State Archives of North Carolina, Treasurer and Comptroller's Papers, Military Papers: Revolutionary War Army Accounts. S.115.59, Record ID: 13.30.4693, Vol. VIII, p. 21, Folio 1, p. 39, Folio 4, Wm. Blanks (company of).
7. Halifax County VA Marriage Bonds, p. 206 (William Blanks to Marian Robertson, 10 January 1782).
8. Revolutionary War Pension Applications #R7635 (Joseph Newton, Georgia and North Carolina); #R2421 (William Crabtree, North Carolina); #S6030 (Sarah Knight, widow of Capt. John Knight, North Carolina).
9. [Georgia Headright and Bounty Documents, 1783–1909, LDS Film #5139170, Images #284–285](#) (John Hill, 862½ acres, Washington County, 6 June 1785; signed S. Elbert & Col. E. Clark).
10. Hudson, Frank Parker. *Wilkes County, Georgia Tax Records, 1785–1805*. 1996, pp. 23–142:
  - 1785:** Capt. Karr's District, #014: William Blanks, 52 acres 3rd quality land.
  - 1786:** Capt. Heard's District, #22: Wm. Blank, 80 acres 2nd quality land.
  - 1787:** [Capt. Heard's District, #35: Wm. Blanks, 80 acres 2nd quality land.](#)
11. Franklin, Jimmie Tucker. *Church Histories: Phillip's Mill Baptist Church, Wilkes County, Georgia, 1785–1850*. Meridian, MS: Lauderdale County Department of Archives and History, 1995, pp. 6–7.
12. Wilkes County GA Deed Book FF, pp. 46–47 (Thomas Heard to James Turner, 18 February 1788).
13. Franklin, pp. 13–14, 36.
14. Greene County GA Deed Book 3 (1799–1804), pp. 78–79 (William Blanks to Bennett Posey, 2 February 1791). The consideration for which Blanks made the transaction was not stated.
15. 1788–1789 Greene County GA Tax Digests, LDS Film #7903320, Images #364–403.
16. Greene County GA Tax Digests, LDS Film #7903320:
  - [1793, Image #436:](#) Capt. Fielder's District, Defaulters, #89: William Blanks.
  - [1796, Image #498:](#) Capt. Robert Melton's District, #22: William Blanks, poll tax without property.

- [1797, Image #554](#): Capt. Robert Melton's District, #17: William Blanks, "*Pole without Property.*"
- LDS Film #8134236:
- [1798, Image #45](#): Capt. Melton's District, column 1, #28: William Blanks, "*Pole without Property.*"
- [1799, Image #114](#): Capt. Moses Speer's District, column 2, #1: William Blanks, "*poll Without property.*"
- [1802, Image #294](#): Capt. George W. Forster's District, column 1, #2: "*W<sup>m</sup> Blanks,*" 1 white poll.
- [1804, Image #379](#): Capt. James Armor's District, column 2, #5: William Blanks, 1 white poll.
- [1805, Image #456](#): Capt. Armor's District, column 2, #13: William Blanks, "*Polls without property.*"
- [1806, Images #474–551](#): No William Blanks listed.
17. [Greene County GA Marriage Book \(1786–1810\), p. 6](#) (William Blanks to Jane Hill, 25 September 1799).
  18. Graham, Paul K. *1805 Georgia Land Lottery: Fortunate Drawers and Grantees*. Decatur, GA: The Genealogy Company, 2004, p. 6. Georgia Secretary of State, Surveyor General Land Grants, 1805 Land Lottery, Baldwin County, District 1, p. 41 (State of Georgia to William Blanks of Greene County, Lot #154, 26 September 1805).
  19. Baldwin County GA Tax Digests, LDS #7895985.
    - 1807**: Capt. Thomas' District, p. 3, #4: William Blanks, 202½ acres on Fishing Creek; p. 6, #18: Robert Hill; Capt. Stephen's District, p. 2: Joseph L. Hill, 202½ acres on Fishing Creek adjoining Blanks.
    - 1808**: Capt. Watson's District, p. 3: Joseph L. Hill, 202½ acres on Fishing Creek adj. Blanks; Capt. Thomas' District, p. 1, #9: Robert Hill; p. 4, #6: William Blanks, 202½ acres on Fishing Creek, adj. J. Hill.
    - 1809**: Capt. Watson's District, p. 1, #3: Joseph L. Hill, 202½ acres on Fishing Creek adj. Blanks; Capt. Hill's District, p. 1, #20: William Blanks, 202½ acres on Fishing Creek adj. J. L. Hill; p. 2, #13: Robert Hill.
    - 1810**: Capt. Watson's District, p. 3, #14: Joseph L. Hill, 202½ acres on Fishing Creek adjoining Blanks; Capt. Hill's District, p. 1, #22: William Blanks; 202½ acres on Fishing Creek adj. Baker; p. 2, #1: Robert Hill.
    - 1811**: Capt. Ellis' District, p. 1, #24: Robert Hill; p. 3, #16: William Blanks, 202½ acres on Fishing Creek adjoining Baker; Capt. Smith's District, p. 1: Joseph Hill, 202½ acres on Fishing Creek adjoining Blanks.
  20. Greene County GA Tax Digests, LDS #8191031:
    - [1812, Image #333](#): Capt. Lemuel Gresham's District (Militia District #161), #8: "*W<sup>m</sup> Blanks,*" 1 white poll, 2 slaves, tax: 93¾¢.
    - [1813, Image #415](#): Capt. William Garner's District (Militia District #161), #5: "*W<sup>m</sup> Blanks,*" 110 acres Quality 2, 110 acres Quality 3 land drained by Oconee River, adjoining Armor, 1 white poll, 3 slaves, tax: \$1.66.
    - [1814, Image #494](#): Capt. William Garner's District (Militia District #161), #5: "*W<sup>m</sup> Blanks,*" 220 acres Quality 2 land drained by the Oconee River, adjoining Armor, 1 white poll, 3 slaves, tax: \$1.80.
    - [1815, Image #581](#): Capt. William Garner's District (Militia District #161), #3: William Blanks, 110 acres Quality 2, 110 acres Quality 3 land drained by W. Oconee River, adjoining Park, 1 white poll, 4 slaves, tax: \$1.97½.
  21. [Georgia Headright and Bounty Land Records, 1783–1909, LDS Film #5061137, Images #248–250](#) (Greene County Justices, warrant for survey of 25 acres for William Blanks, 6 May 1816; "*Thomas Riley, J.P.*").
  22. [Greene County GA Deed Book FF \(1816–1818\), pp. 394–395](#) (William and Sally Armor to William Blanks, 28 October 1816).
  23. [Georgia Grant Book K5, p. 852, LDS Film #5007536, Image #807](#) (State of Georgia to William Blanks, 20 November 1816). Georgia granted Blanks a tract of six acres adjoining his own land and that of Gaston.
  24. [Greene County GA Deed Book GG \(1818–1821\), p. 57](#) (William Blanks to Thomas B. Scott, 18 April 1818).
  25. [Greene County GA Deed Book GG \(1818–1821\), pp. 239–240](#) (Jacob and Sarah Peeler to "*William Blanks Senr,*" 26 October 1818).
  26. [Greene County GA Deed Book HH \(1821–1826\), pp. 205–206](#) (Matthew Houghton to William Blanks; John Mann to William Blanks; Thomas Bell to William Blanks, 28 December 1820). The tract Blanks purchased from Houghton gave no discernable identification of the 200 acres, with the description only in terms of various trees, numbers of chains in various directions, with the line described as "*up the Creek,*" without identifying which creek. The 110-acre tract he bought from Mann lay "*on the waters of Beaverdam Creek*" and adjoined the lines of Veazey, Hasten (Houston?), and Houghton. The 4.7-acre tract also lay "*on the waters of Beaverdam Creek.*" Thomas J. Moore and Francis West J.P. witnessed the transactions with Houghton and Mann, while the purchase from Bell was witnessed by Matthew Houghton, John Mann, and Francis West J.P.
  27. [1822 Greene County GA Tax Digest, LDS #8191031, Image #655](#): Capt. William L. Astin's District (Militia District #142), #11: "*William Blanks Senr,*" 294 acres Quality 3 land drained by Beaverdam [Creek], adjoining White, 1 white poll, 4 slaves, tax: \$1.93.
  28. [Greene County GA Will Book 4 \(1817–1842\), pp. 34–36; Greene County GA Probate Court Wills \(1798–1914\), LDS Film #5764273, Images #196–199](#) (Will of John Hill of Greene County, Georgia, written 11 August 1817, filed in court 15 January 1818).
  29. [Greene County GA Administrations & Guardians Bonds, Book A \(1812–1858\), p. 132](#) (William H. Blanks, bond as administrator of the estate of William Blanks, 12 January 1824).



30. [Greene County GA Ordinary Court Records \(1820–1836\), p. 95](#) (Greene County Court session, 10 January 1825); [p. 99](#) (Ezekiel Blanks, orphan of William Blanks, chooses Thomas Riley as guardian). [Greene County GA Administrators & Guardians Bonds \(1821–1835\), p. 92](#); [Greene County GA Original Guardians Bonds, LDS Film #7731074, Image #830](#) (Bond of Thomas Riley as guardian of Ezekiel Blanks, “*orphan of William Blanks decd*,” 10 January 1825; security: Jacob Riley).
31. [Greene County GA Marriage Book \(1786–1810\), p. 74](#) (Thomas Riley to Sally Hill, 10 January 1808).
32. [Greene County GA Estate Papers, LDS Film #5764283, Image #478](#): Estate Sale of Joseph Blanks, 3 March 1825 (“*Horse*” bought by “*Ezekiel Blanks*” for \$70).
33. Houston, Martha Lou, comp. *Reprint of Official Register of Land Lottery of Georgia 1827*. Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1986, p. 208. Ezekiel Blanks, who registered in Robins District, Greene County, drew Lot #19, District #32, Section #1.
34. [1827 Greene County GA Tax Digest \(marked as 1828\), LDS Film #8191032, Image #206](#): Capt. Daniel W. Howel’s District (Militia District #161), #6: Ezekiel Blanks, 1 white poll, 202½ Quality 2 land in Lee County, Lot #19, District 32, tax: 82¢. Although identified as the tax digest for 1828, comparing this with the 1828 digest on Film #8188760 shows a conflict, as on that listing, Capt. Thomas J. Parks was the captain of Militia District #161. A careful examination of the recapitulations of the 1827 (partial) and 1828 (complete) tax digests on Film #8188760 shows that Daniel W. Howell was the captain of Militia District #161 in **1827**; see [1827 Greene County Tax Digest, LDS Film #8188760, Image #204](#), compared with the recapitulation of the [1828 Greene County Tax Digest, LDS Film #8188760, Image #302](#), which shows Capt. Thomas J. Parks as captain of MD #161.
35. [1828 Greene County GA Tax Digest, LDS Film #8188760, Image #258](#): Capt. Thomas J. Park’s District (Militia District #161), #11: Ezekiel Blanks, 1 white poll, 202½ Quality 2 land in Lee County, Lot #19, District 32, tax: 82¢. Although both tax digests are labeled as 1828,
36. Georgia Secretary of State, Surveyor General, Land Grants; 1827 Land Lottery, Lee County, District 32, 1st Section, p. 126 (“*Ezekiel Blanks of Robins District Greene County*,” Lot #19, 32<sup>nd</sup> District, 1<sup>st</sup> Section, Lee County, 7 August 1834). Lee County lay on the opposite side of the state from where Ezekiel lived, so he probably never lived on the land. Early records of Lee County do not exist, so we have no way of knowing when he sold the land.
37. 1830 Greene County GA Federal Census, p. 289, line #1: Thomas Riley. In his household is one male aged 20–30, the age bracket into which Ezekiel Blanks have fallen in 1830. Riley had one known son alive at that time, William M. Riley, born sometime between about 1805 and 1810.
38. [Greene County GA Estate Papers, LDS #5778161, Image #486](#) (“*List of Sale, Personal Property of Thomas Riley decd, February 21<sup>st</sup> 1831*”); [Image #495](#) (“*E Blank Paid 6¼*” cents for a “*Bagin Needle*”). [Greene County GA Appraisements, Sales, & Divisions Book K \(1831–1841\), p. 23](#) (“*Sale of the personal property of Thomas Riley decd*,” purchaser: “*E. Blanks*,” filed 5 April 1831). The original papers show that “*E Blank*” paid 6¼¢ for a “*Bagin Needle*.” In the recorded version, he was identified as “*E. Blanks*,” with the item he bought described as “*1 Baging Needle*.”

### **Temperance Riley: Growing Up in North Carolina & Georgia**

1. Olive Branch Methodist Cemetery (Caledonia, Union County AR), tombstone of “[Temperance wife of W. E. Blanks](#)” (15 Apr 1802–6 Mar 1894). Both the original tombstone erected soon after her 1894 death and a modern replacement erected in 2010 mark her gravesite. Federal census records for 1850, 1870, and 1880 show her birth in North Carolina.
2. [Greene County GA Will Book 5, \(1840–1877\) p. 28](#); [Greene County GA Original Wills, LDS Film #5764274, Images #499–503](#) (Will of Peter Riley, dated 31 January 1844, filed in court 13 January 1845). Peter Riley wrote:  
*...what may be remaining from the foregoing sale, after my debts & the above cash legacies are paid, I wish to be equally divided between my children William M. Riley, James Riley, Susan Griffen, Temperance Blanks & my Grand Son Early Fawcett.*
3. “*Raleigh Register and North-Carolina State Gazette*” (Raleigh, NC), July 9 (p. 3, column 3) and 23 (p. 1, column 4), 1804. The Hillsborough post office advertised that Peter Riley had a letter there awaiting pickup. Hillsborough was the county seat of Orange County, North Carolina.
4. [1805 Greene County GA Tax Digest, LDS Film #8134236, Image #399](#), p. 4, #5: John Riley; #6: Peter Riley. John Riley paid taxes of \$1.71¼ on 100 acres of Quality 3 land on the waters of the Ogeechee River adjoining Flippen and granted to Barnett, one white poll, and four slaves. Peter Riley paid taxes of 93¾¢ on one white poll and two slaves.
5. [Orange County NC Deed Book 11 \(1803–1805\), pp. 290–291](#) (Jacob Riley “*Senr*” to Peter Riley, 28 November 1804).
6. [Greene County GA Deed Book 4 \(1803–1808\), pp. 371–372](#) (Peter Riley to Jesse Grimes, 25 October 1805).
7. 1810 Orange County NC Federal Census, p. 126a/816, line #23: Peter Riley; #24: Jacob Riley. [Orange County NC Will Book D, p. 365](#); [LDS Film #4088834, Orange County NC Original Wills, Image #1569](#) (Will of Jacob Riley, dated 31 August 1812).
8. [Orange County NC Deed Book 16 \(1817–1818\), pp. 274–275](#) (Peter Riley to William Brown, 27 July 1816).

9. [Greene County GA Deed Book GG \(1818–1821\), p. 82](#) (Thomas Ware to Peter Riley, 22 May 1817; witness: Joseph Riley).
10. [Greene County GA Marriage Licenses Book A \(1817–1829\), p. 161](#) (Thomas Deviney to “*Tempy Riley*,” 4 December 1821).
11. Bussey-Herin Cemetery (Pleasant Grove, Union County, AR), tombstone of “*Seaborn Robins*” (8 Jan 1827–18 Mar 1894). Seborn Robins’ tombstone was standing and included in cemetery surveys made in the 1960s or early 1970s. However, it appears that the cemetery has since fallen into disrepair, with his stone broken into pieces. Several sources prove that Seborn Robins was the son of Temperance Riley Blanks, namely the 1880 federal census and a 1900 deed in which his heirs sell his farm. His heirs who signed the deed are Mary A. Breazeal, wife of Reuben S. Breazeal (the former Mary Ann Blanks), and the heirs of Elizabeth J. Blanks Ogden, who died in 1891. Mary Ann and Elizabeth are the only daughters of Temperance and Ezekiel Blanks who survived childhood. The 1850 and 1870 federal censuses show Seborn Robins living in Temperance’s household. These precise references:  
**1850:** Harrison Township, p. 268a, Dwelling #798, line #31: E. Blanks (age: 46; Farmer; born: “*Geo*”); #32: Temperance Blanks (age: 46; born: “*N.C.*”); #37: Seborn Robins (age: 22; Farmer; born: “*Geo*”).  
**1870:** Johnson Township, P.O. Hillsboro, p. 568b, Dwelling #228, line #25: “*Temperance Blanks*” (age: 65; Farmer; born: “*North Ca*”); #26: “*Seaborne Roberts*” [sic] (age: 44; Farm Laborer; born: Georgia).  
**1880:** Johnson Township, ED #273, p. 271b/15, Dwelling #110, line #1: “*Seaborn Robins*” (age: 52; widowed; Farmer; born: “*Ga*”); #2: “*Temperance Blanks*” (age: 74; mother; widowed, Keeping House; born: “*N.C.*”).  
 Union County AR Deed Book 14, p. 303 (“*The Heirs of Seborn Robins, Mary Brazeal, J. E. Ogden, I. N. Ogden, Eliza Ogden, and Mary L. Ogden*” to Tony Martindale, 26 January 1900; also signed by William R. Ogden, Sarah E. Ogden, and Susan M. Robertson). Two other daughters of Elizabeth J. Ogden did not sign the transaction.
12. [Greene County GA Will Book 5 \(1840–1877\), p. 96](#) (Will of Sarah Robins, written 12 June 1849, filed in court 1 July 1850). The records in the next section describe the debt owed to Temperance by William Robins.
13. See the references below to the 1838–1839 Greene County Superior Court suit between Ezekiel Blanks and Peter Riley.
14. 1830 Greene County GA Federal Census, p. 274, line #15: Peter Riley. His household included one white male aged 50–60 (Peter himself), two white males aged 10–15 (William M. and James Gray Riley), plus a white female aged 30–40, who is undoubtedly his second wife, Nancy Finley, who he obtained a marriage license to marry on 18 January 1830. Also in Peter Riley’s household was a white female aged 20–30 and a white male under 5, precisely the ages of Temperance Riley and Seborn Robins.

### **1830s: Marriage & Conflicts**

1. [Greene County GA Marriage Licenses Book \(1829–1849\), p. 79](#) (“*Zekiel Blanks*” to “*Temperance Leviney*,” 1 March 1832).
2. [1834 Greene County GA Tax Digest, LDS Film #8191032, Image #340](#), Capt. Park’s District (Militia District #161), #4: Ezekiel Blanks, 1 white poll, 40 acres Quality 3 land in “*Characee*” County, tax: 36¢.
3. Georgia Secretary of State, Surveyor General, Land Grants; 1832 Cherokee County Gold Lottery, Section 4, District 2, Vol. 1, p. 409 (“*Ezekiel Blanks of Harris District Greene County*,” 2<sup>nd</sup> District, 4<sup>th</sup> Section, Lot #634, 40 acres, 19 May 1837).
4. [1837 Greene County GA Tax Digest, LDS Film #8191032, Image #406](#), Capt. Hutcherson’s District, #18: E. Blanks, 1 poll tax, total tax: 31¼¢.
5. [Greene County GA Deed Book NN \(1839–1842\), p. 22](#) (Peter Riley to William Askew, 24 December 1836).
6. [Greene County GA Superior Court Proceedings Book LL \(1834–1838\), March Term 1837, pp. 470–471](#) (“*The State vs. Ezekiel Blanks: Larceny from the House*”); [p. 477](#) (“*The State vs. Ezekiel Blanks: Misdemeanor*” [sic]); [pp. 477–478](#) (“*The State vs. Ezekiel Blanks: Simple Larceny*”).
7. Leslie-Winfield Family Cemetery (Liberty, Greene County GA), tombstone of “*Nathan Winfield; Died Septr. 20th 1849; Aged 79 years.*” Graham, Paul K. *1805 Georgia Land Lottery: Persons Entitled to Draws*. Decatur, GA: The Genealogy Company, 200, p. 614. Nathan Winfield registered for Georgia’s 1805 land lottery in 1803 as a resident of Greene County. In the lottery, he drew two blank entries.
8. 1834 Greene County GA Tax Digest, LDS Film #8191032, Image #336, Capt. Hutcherson’s District (Militia District #163), #2: Nathan Winfield, 100 acres Quality 2, 342 acres Quality 3 land in Greene County, Beaverdam Creek, adjoining Merritt, 13 slaves.
9. [Greene County GA Superior Court Minutes, Vol. 8 \(1831–1839\), p. 363](#) (“*The Honorable the Superior Court met pursuant to adjournment present his Honor*,” 13 March 1837).
10. [Greene County GA Superior Court Minutes, Vol. 8 \(1831–1839\), 16 March 1837, p. 371](#) (“#3: *The State vs. Ezekiel Blanks, Larceny from the House True Bill, George Heard foreman*”); [p. 373](#) (“*The State vs. Ezekiel Blanks, Misdemeanor, True Bill, Geo. Heard, Foreman*”); [p. 377](#) (Case #134: “*The State vs. Ezekiel Blanks, Misdemeanor*”;

- verdict: *"We the Jury find the Defendant not Guilty, Wiley M. White;"* Case #135: *"The State vs. Ezekiel Blanks, Simple Larceny;"* verdict: *"We the Jury find the defendant not Guilty, W. M. White,"* 17 March 1837). [Greene County GA Superior Court Proceedings Book LL \(1834-1838\), March Term 1837, pp. 470-471](#) (*"The State vs. Ezekiel Blanks: Larceny from the House...True Bill;"* verdict: *"We the Jury find the defendant not guilty;"*; [p. 477](#) (*"The State vs. Ezekiel Blanks: Misdemeaner [sic]...True Bill;"* verdict: *"We the Jury find the defendant not guilty;"*; [pp. 477-478](#) (*"The State vs. Ezekiel Blanks: Simple Larceny...True Bill;"* verdict: *"We the Jury find the defendant not Guilty"*).
11. Greene County GA Marriage Licenses Book A (1817-1829), p. 344 (William S. Robins to Sarah Williams, 23 October 1827). Greene County GA Will Book 4 (or F) (1817-1842), pp. 216-217 (Will of Irbane Leonard, written 18 July 18--, filed in court 18 May 1837). Irbane Leonard was a well-to-do bachelor. His first bequest was to *"the lawful children of William and Sally Robins born and to be born,"* leaving them four slaves. Temperance's statement that William Robins owed her money suggests that he may have been a relative of the father of her son, Seborn Robins. William was the son of Sarah Robins, who in her will of 12 June 1849 dictated that her estate was to be divided among her children, including *"Thomas Robins orphan Children"* and *"William Robins orphan Children."* This may be an indication that Thomas Robins was Seborn's father. See [Greene County GA Will Book 5 \(1840-1877\), p. 96](#) (Will of Sarah Robins, written 12 June 1849, filed in court 1 July 1850).
  12. [Greene County GA Superior Court Proceedings Book Z \(1838-1841\), pp. 97-99; LDS Film #8458690, Images #91-92](#), September Term 1839: *"Ezekiel Blanks & Wife vs. Peter Riley, Assumpsit."* [Greene County GA Superior Court Case Files, LDS Film #8201397, Images #181-188](#): *"Ezekiel Blanks & wife vs. Peter Riley, Sept Term 1838."* [Greene County GA Superior Court Minutes, Vol. 8 \(1831-1839\), p. 463; LDS Film #8627953, Image #488](#), 14 March 1839: *"Ezekiel Blanks & Wife vs. Peter Riley, Assumpsit Settled."*
  13. [Greene County GA Estate Papers, LDS Film #5764283, Image #516](#) (William Blanks Estate, 1824, Ezekiel Blanks to John G. Gaston, selling *"his proportionable [sic] part of Nancy Blanks Dower,"* 27 September 1839).
  14. 1840 Perry County AL Federal Census, p. 276, line #29: Ezekiel Blanks; p. 285, line #8: *"W<sup>m</sup> Seawall."* William Seawall's household consisted of an adult male/female couple, presumably him and his wife, together with thirty-two slaves, twenty-four males and eight females. All eight of the enslaved females were aged between ten and twenty-five years of age.
  15. [Dallas County AL Deed & Mortgage Book J, p. 278; Union County AR Deed Book A, pp. 284-285](#) (William Seawall to Temperance Blanks, 3 October 1842).
  16. [Greene County GA Deed Book NN, p. 414](#) (Peter Riley to William M. Riley, 23 December 1841; witness: Robert F. Griffin, J.P.). [Greene County GA Deed Book OO, p. 10](#) (Peter Riley to James G. Riley, 9 May 1842; witness: Robert F. Griffin, J.P.).
  17. [Greene County GA Will Book 5, p. 28 \(1840-1877\); Greene County GA Original Wills, LDS Film #5764274, Images #499-503](#) (Will of Peter Riley, signed 31 January 1844, filed in court 13 January 1845). [Greene County GA Inferior Court Records \(1837-1851\), p. 143](#) (Will of Peter Riley proved; appraisement ordered; William M. and James Riley qualified as executors, 13 January 1845). In his will, Peter Riley wrote, *"what may be remaining from the foregoing sale, after my debts & the above cash legacies are paid, I wish to be equally divided between my children William M. Riley, James Riley, Susan Griffin, Temperance Blanks & my Grand Son Early Fawcett."*

### **Immigration to South Arkansas**

1. Olive Branch Methodist Cemetery (Caledonia, Union County AR), tombstone of *"Mary Ann Blanks, Wife of R. S. Breazeal"* (29 Oct 1843-7 Jun 1915). Federal census records from 1850 and 1870-1910 verify her birth in Arkansas in October 1843.
2. [1843 Union County AR Tax Assessments, LDS Film #833821, Images #843-844](#): Ezekiel Blanks was not assessed 1843 taxes in Union County.
3. [1844 Union County AR Tax Assessments, LDS Film #833821, Images #867](#), #5: Ezekiel Blanks, 1 white poll, 1 slave over 8 and under 60 years valued @ \$400, 1 horse or mare aged three years or older valued @ \$25, 1 mule aged three years or older valued @ \$25, and 1 cow aged two years or older valued at \$10; total tax: \$1.65.
4. Arkansas Internal Improvements #959, Ezekiel Blanks, 23 January 1846, NE¼ of Section 20, Township 18 South, Range 14 West, 160 acres at \$1.25 per acre for a total price of \$200.
5. [Union County AR County Court Record Book A \(1830-1846\), p. 271](#) (14 January 1846); [p. 277](#) (*"Luter Road from High's land; Ordered...that the following persons be appointed on the luter road Joel Kelly from Highs land to Johson Township line, Ezekiel Blanks from thence to Jas. Andrews,"* January 1846).
6. [Union County AR County Court Record Book A \(1830-1846\), p. 284](#) (*"At a regular County Court begun and held at the Court House in the town of Eldorado in said County on Monday,"* 13 April 1846); [p. 287](#) (Commissioners appointed by the Court *"to view and mark out a road leading from the Louisiana line to intersect the Champagnolle road at James Andrews...it is ordered that Henry Tatum be and he is hereby appointed overseer from the Louisiana line to the Township line near James Andrews and Ezekiel Blanks from there to where said rode [sic] intersects the Champagnolle road,"* April Term 1846).



7. [Union County Arkansas County Court Record Book B \(1845–1849\), p. 128](#) (“Ezekial [sic] Blanks vs. The County, On the account of Ezekial [sic] Blanks here filed it is ordered that he be allowed the sum of four dollars for warning hands to work on the road 1846 and that the Clerk issue a warrant for the same; Issued,” 8 November 1847).
8. [Union County Arkansas County Court Record Book B \(1845–1849\), p. 269](#) (“Ezekiel Blanks vs. The County, Upon the Account of Ezekiel Blanks here filed, It is ordered by the Court that he be allowed the sum of thirty dollars for his Services in viewing & marking out a new road and that the Clerk issue Warrant for the same. Issued to Cornish,” 7 May 1849).
9. [Union County AR Circuit Court Record Book B \(1846–1849\), p. 254](#) (“And the sheriff is ordered to forthwith summons from the bystanders nine persons Qualified to serve as Pettit Jurors, Whereupon...Ezekiel Blanks,... [have] been summoned and reported as such. There now being Eighteen persons in attendance Qualified to serve as Petit Jurors all of Whom answered to their names when called to Wit...#10. Ezekiel Blanks,..., were duly empaneled to Serve as Pettit Jurors during the present week of this term of the Court,” 10 April 1848).
10. [Union County AR Circuit Court Record Book B \(1846–1849\), p. 267](#) (“State of Arkansas vs. Ezekiel Blanks, fine for contempt of court. Came the said Ezekiel Blanks in his own proper person and the Court being satisfied [sic] that the act committed by him on a previous day of this term of this Court, for which he was fin[e]d the sum of one dollar & cost was not intended to cast contempt. It is therefore Ordered and considered by the Court that said judgement for the sum of one dollar fine & cost as aforesaid be and the same is set aside and said Ezekiel Blanks go hence without day [delay] free therefrom,” 12 April 1848).
11. [1850 Union County AR Federal Census, Slave Schedule, Harrison Township, p. 567, column 1, #27: E. Blanks](#), slave owner.
12. [1850 Union County AR Federal Census, Agricultural Schedule, Harrison Township, pp. 475–476, line #10: E. Blanks](#).
13. [Union County AR Deed Record Book G \(1851–1854\), p. 631](#) (Ezekiel Blanks mortgage to Albert Rust, 6 June 1853). 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, Wilmington Township, p. 277a, Household #709/948: Albert Rust. Rust was born in Virginia about 1818 and described as a planter whose real estate was valued at \$16,000.
14. “*The Daily Picayune*” (New Orleans, LA), September 17 (p. 2, column 4), November 29 (p. 4, column 1), December 10 (p. 3, column 1), 29 (p. 4, column 3; p. 8, column 6), 1853; January 8 (p. 8, columns 3, 7), 10 (p. 3, column 2), 11 (p. 4, column 1), 18 (p. 4, column 4), 22 (p. 8, column 5), and 25 (p. 2, column 1), 1854. “*The Daily Delta*” (New Orleans, LA), 30 September 1853, p. 1, column 1. “*The Standard*” (Clarksville, TX), 4 February 1854, p. 2, column 5. Capt. Kouns left New Orleans at 5:00 p.m. on December 10<sup>th</sup> with the “*Frank Keeling*,” headed for the Ouachita River. He must have gone north into the Ouachita River, possibly stopping at Harrisonburg, Louisiana until the water levels rose enough for him to make it over the Catahoula Shoals and to Monroe, Louisiana by December 21<sup>st</sup>. The Ouachita Packet “*New World*” advertised to leave on December 31<sup>st</sup> for all landings on the Ouachita River as far as Camden, Arkansas, including Alabama Landing and Ouachita City, the two northernmost river landings in Union Parish, Louisiana, while the Ouachita Packet “*R. W. McRae*” departed on the 29<sup>th</sup>, going as far as Alabama Landing. The advertisement stated that, “as soon as the navigation opens,” the “*McRae*” would “go up Bayou Bartholomew to Point Pleasant.” This shows that, although the water in the bayous clearly remained too low, they anticipated a rise in the Ouachita River that would allow trips up to Camden.
15. “*Picayune*,” November 4 (p. 5, column 1), 21 (evening edition: p. 1, column 3), December 16 (p. 4, column 6), 19 (evening edition: p. 1, column 3), 20 (p. 5, column 2), 1854; 3 January 1855 (p. 1, column 6). “*The Daily Delta*,” 6 January 1855, p. 4, column 3.
16. “*Picayune*,” May 3 (p. 5, column 3), 20 (p. 3, column 1), 24 (p. 1, column 7), June 26 (p. 1, column 6), July 27 (p. 2, columns 1, 3), 1855.
17. “*Picayune*,” May 1 (morning edition supplement, p. 5, column 3), August 28 (p. 1, column 4), September 22 (p. 2, column 2), 1855. “*Democratic Advocate*” (Baton Rouge, LA), 7 June 1855, p. 5, column 2. “*New Orleans Daily Crescent*,” 7 August 1855, p. 2, column 3. “*Semi-Weekly Standard*” (Raleigh, NC), 19 September 1855, p. 3, column 5. The reports from Union Parish, located just a few miles south of Ezekiel Blanks’ farm, all come from the “*Farmerville Enquirer*.”
18. [Union County AR Circuit Court Record F, p. 178](#) (Union County Circuit Court, 27 August 1855); [pp. 181–182](#) (A. C. L. Hill vs. Ezekiel Blanks, Cases #1362, 1388).
19. [Union County AR Deed Record Book I \(1856–1860\), pp. 125–126](#) (Ezekiel and Temperance Blanks to Augustus C. L. Hill, 26 September 1855).
20. [Union County AR Marriage Book B \(1850–1866\), p. 73](#) (Nathan Ogden to Elizabeth J. Blanks, 18 September 1851).
21. [Union County AR Circuit Court Record F, pp. 223.5](#) (A. C. L. Hill vs. Ezekiel Blanks, Seaborn Robins, & Nathan Ogden, Case #1453, 17 April 1856).
22. [Union County AR Tax Assessments, LDS Film #8339822](#), 1848–1860.
23. In 1988, Mrs. Mary Frances (Sissy) Mace (27 Jan 1923–5 Feb 2015) of Caledonia, Union County, Arkansas provided family information with specific names and dates of birth and death of the children of Ezekiel and Temperance

Blanks. Mrs. Mace was a great-granddaughter of Ezekiel and Temperance, and she obtained this data from her mother, Mrs. Gussie Cates, the daughter of Mary Ann Blanks Brazeal, daughter of Ezekiel and Temperance. See below for specific names and dates of the Blanks daughters.

24. Olive Branch Methodist Cemetery (Caledonia, Union County AR), tombstone of "[W. E. Blanks](#), *Died Feb. 25 1864 Age 58 Ys. 5 Mo. 26 Days.*" The age inscribed on his original monument places his birth on 31 August 1805.

### **Thirty Years a Widow**

1. [Union County AR Marriage Book B \(1850–1866\), p. 117](#) (Seborn Robins to Elizabeth Jackson, 21 December 1854).
2. [Union County AR Marriage Book B \(1850–1866\), p. 358](#) ("[R. S. Brazeal](#)" to "[Miss M. A. Blanks](#)," 19 July 1866). Rev. S. T. Cobb reported that on that day, "*I duly joined in Marriage R. S. Brazeal and Miss M. A. Blanks both being of the Lawful age then and there declared them to be husband and Wife according to Law.*"
3. 1867 Union County AR Tax Assessment, Johnson Township, LDS Film #8339822, Image #700, p. 53, #8: S. Robins.
4. 1870 Union County AR Federal Census, Agricultural Schedule, P.O. Hillsboro, Johnson Township, p. 4, #14: Temperance Blanks.
5. [Union County AR Deed Book O \(1871–1872\), pp. 391–392](#) ("[Sebbeon Robbins](#)" mortgage to William A. Coit, 8 March 1872).
6. [Union County AR Deed Book X \(1876–1877\), pp. 225–226](#) (State of Arkansas to W. B. Coit, 14 June 1873; W. B. Coit to W. A. Coit, 30 September 1873; W. A. Coit to "[Sebran Robbins](#)," 24 January 1874; State Commissioner of Lands to "[Sebran Robbins](#)," 24 May 1877). Robins purchased the E½ of the SW¼ of Section 4, Township 19 South, Range 14 West, 80 acres of land for \$100.
7. [Union County AR Deed Book V \(1876–1877\), pp. 151–153](#) ("[Seaborn](#)" Robins mortgage to William & Smith, 19 April 1876).
8. [1880 Union County AR Tax Assessment, LDS Film #8743836, Image #97](#), Township 19, Range 14, Section 4, Seborn Robins, E½ of SW¼, 80 acres valued at \$120, taxes paid 4 March 1880.
9. 1880 Union County AR Federal Census, Agricultural Schedule, Johnson Township, p. 9, #9: "[Seaborn Robins](#)."
10. [Union County AR Deed Book II \(1886–1890\), pp. 382–383](#) (J. W. Callaway, Commissioner appointed by the Pulaski Chancery Court to dispose of "[Certain Lands in Union County Arks](#)" to "[Seaborn Robbins](#)," 16 May 1888). Robins received the N ½ of NW ¼ of Section 9, Township 19 South, Range 14 West, 80 acres of Internal Improvement Land for \$127.75.
11. [1890 Union County AR Tax Assessment, LDS Film #8743836, Image #427](#), Township 19, Range 14, Section 4, #2: "[Sebon Robbins](#)," E½ of SW¼, 80 acres @ \$120; #3: Mrs. E. Ogden, SW¼, 159.30 acres @ \$206; [Image #428, Section 5, #21](#): "[Sebon Robbins](#)," N½ of NW¼, 80 acres @ \$100. Both Seborn and his sister paid their taxes on 10 February 1891.
12. Olive Branch Methodist Cemetery (Caledonia, Union County AR), tombstone of "[Elizabeth J. Wife of Nathanel Ogden](#)" (1 Dec 1832–8 Apr 1891).
13. Olive Branch Methodist Cemetery (Caledonia, Union County AR), tombstone of "[Temperance Wife of W. E. Blanks](#)" (15 Apr 1802–6 Mar 1894).
14. Bussey-Herin Cemetery (Pleasant Grove, Union County, AR), tombstone of "[Seaborn Robins](#)" (8 Jan 1827–18 Mar 1894).
15. Union County AR Deed Book 14, p. 303 ("[The Heirs of Seborn Robins, Mary Brazeal, J. E. Ogden, I. N. Ogden, Eliza Ogden, and Mary L. Ogden](#)" to Tony Martindale, 26 January 1900). Robins' heirs sold the E½ of SW¼ of Section 4 and the NE¼ of NW¼ of Section 9, both in Township 19 South, Range 14 West. The clerk erred with the names of Robins' heirs, including only Mary Ann Brazeal, Isaac N. Ogden, and James E. Ogden, and the wives of the latter two in the initial list of grantors. However, the transaction was also signed by William R. Ogden and his wife, Sarah E. Ogden, and Susan M. Ogden Robertson. Two other daughters of Elizabeth J. Ogden did not sign the transaction, Temperance Ann Ogden Griffin, who then lived in Texas, and Mary Elizabeth Ogden Jeter, who lived in Union County.

### **Seborn Robins, Son of Temperance Riley**

1. The 1850, 1870, and 1880 Union County AR Federal Census enumerations all show Seborn living in Temperance's household, while the 1880 census identified her as Seborn's mother:
  - 1850:** Harrison Township, p. 268a, Dwelling #798, line #31: E. Blanks (age: 46; Farmer; born: "[Geo](#)"); #32: Temperance Blanks (age: 46; born: "[N.C.](#)"); #37: Seborn Robins (age: 22; Farmer; born: "[Geo](#)").
  - 1870:** Johnson Township, P.O. Hillsboro, p. 568b, Dwelling #228, line #25: "[Temperence Blanks](#)" (age: 65; Farmer; born: "[North Ca](#)"); #26: "[Seaborne Roberts](#)" [sic] (age: 44; Farm Laborer; born: Georgia).
  - 1880:** Johnson Township, ED #273, p. 271b/15, Dwelling #110, line #1: "[Seaborn Robins](#)" (age: 52; widowed; Farmer; born: "[Ga](#)"); #2: "[Temperance Blanks](#)" (age: 74; mother; widowed, Keeping House; born: "[N.C.](#)").

- Union County AR Deed Book 14, p. 303 (*"The Heirs of Seborn Robins, Mary Brazeal, J. E. Ogden, I. N. Ogden, Eliza Ogden, and Mary L. Ogden"* to Tony Martindale, 26 January 1900). The transaction was also signed by two other children of Elizabeth J. Blanks Ogden: William R. Ogden, and his wife, Sarah E. Ogden, and Susan M. Ogden Robertson. Two other daughters of Elizabeth J. Ogden failed to sign the transaction.
2. [Greene County GA Will Book 5. \(1840–1877\) p. 96](#) (Will of Sarah Robins, written 12 June 1849, filed in court 1 July 1850).
  3. [Greene County GA Superior Court Proceedings Book Z \(1838–1841\), pp. 97–99; LDS Film #8458690, Images #91–92](#), September Term 1839: *"Ezekiel Blanks & Wife vs. Peter Riley, Assumpsit."* [Greene County GA Superior Court Case Files, LDS Film #8201397, Images #181–188](#): *"Ezekiel Blanks & wife vs. Peter Riley, Sept Term 1838."* [Greene County GA Superior Court Minutes, Vol. 8 \(1831–1839\), p. 463; LDS Film #8627953, Image #488](#), 14 March 1839: *"Ezekiel Blanks & Wife vs. Peter Riley, Assumpsit Settled."* This court record shows that Temperance lived with her father, Peter Riley, for the three-year period prior to her marriage to Blanks on 1 March 1832.
  4. [Union County AR Marriage Book B \(1850–1866\), p. 117](#) (Seborn Robins to Elizabeth Jackson, 21 December 1854). Justice of the Peace Ezeriah Pepper stated that *"Seborn Robins aged 26 years and Elizabeth Jackson aged 15 years all of Union County Arks and were then and there by me at their mutual request and desire Joined in the bonds of matrimony."*
  5. Compiled Military Service Record, *"S. Robbins,"* private, Co. D, 37<sup>th</sup> Arkansas Infantry Regiment, Civil War (Confederate).
  6. Bussey-Herin Cemetery (Pleasant Grove, Union County, AR), tombstone of ["Seaborn Robins"](#) (8 Jan 1827–18 Mar 1894).

### **Children of Ezekiel Blanks and Tempey Riley**

1. In 1988, Mrs. Mary Frances (Sissy) Mace (27 Jan 1923–5 Feb 2015) of Caledonia, Union County, Arkansas provided family information with specific names and dates of birth and death of the children of Ezekiel and Temperance Blanks. Mrs. Mace was a great-granddaughter of Ezekiel and Temperance, and she obtained this data from her mother, Mrs. Gussie Cates, the daughter of Mary Ann Blanks Breazeal, daughter of Ezekiel and Temperance. The data appears to have come from a family Bible, but Mrs. Mace did not report ever seeing a Family Bible or recalling her mother mentioning a Bible. Mrs. Mace was unsure of the origins of the family information, but she thought it was given to her mother in 1971 by Mr. Irol E. Blanks, a man with no close relation to their family. This family information from Mrs. Mace is the only source for specific details on the daughters of Ezekiel and Tempey Blanks who died young: Susan, Martha, Louisa, and Sarah Blanks.

### **Union County, Arkansas Tax Records**

1. Union County AR Tax Records for the given years are found on LDS Film #8339821 (1843–1846) and #8339822 (1848–1867).

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