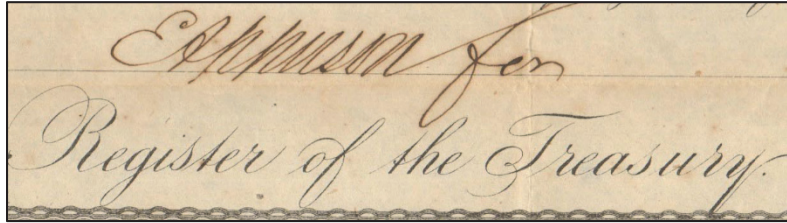


*Edmund Bacon Williamson Apperson,  
Assistant Register and Bond Signer for the Confederate Treasury  
by Charles Derby*



By law, the Register of the Treasury was responsible for recording the Confederate debt, which included signing treasury bonds and bond coupons, treasury notes and warrants, transfer drafts, and other debt-associated documents. In the initial months of the Confederacy, the Register himself signed most of these documents, but after mid-1861, other staff in the Register's office primarily assumed these jobs. Indeed, an impressive cadre of men and women signed Treasury notes<sup>1,2,3</sup> and bond coupons<sup>4</sup>, but the signers of the bonds themselves were a select few<sup>4</sup>. Who were these men – and indeed, it was only men – who signed bonds? Christopher G. Memminger, as Secretary of the Confederate Treasury, appointed two Registers: Alexander Clitherall and Robert Tyler. Clitherall was the first Register, but he held that position only from February to the end of June 1861, so he signed only those bonds authorized by the Act of February 28, 1861. Clitherall's successor, Tyler, who was the son of U.S. President John Tyler, served as the second Register, from August 1861 until the end of the war, so he signed many documents. Charles T. Jones, who was the Treasury's second chief clerk of the Register<sup>5</sup>, was also appointed Acting Register so that he could sign documents when the Register was unavailable. Jones did so frequently in 1861 and sporadically in 1862 and early 1863, but by then, the Treasury formed a new position, Assistant Register, whose responsibilities including

signing bonds. Three men served in that position: Charles Alexander Rose, E. Apperson, and William Fraser White.<sup>6</sup> Rose was appointed in 1863, and he signed many bonds from 1863 until the end of the war. Apperson's appointment apparently began around mid-1864 since his signature appears on bonds issued from then until the end of the war. White's appointment was the last, probably by Memminger's successor, George Trenholm<sup>6</sup>. E. Apperson stands out among these Confederate Treasury officials as the only person who has not been identified<sup>3</sup>. Until now. This article is about Edmund Bacon Williamson Apperson, the elusive "E. Apperson," second Assistant Register of the Confederate Treasury and signer of Confederate bonds.

**The Bonds of E. Apperson, Assistant Register of the Confederacy**

Confederate bonds signed by E. Apperson in 1864 and 1865 are listed in Table 1, according to Ball and Simmons<sup>3</sup>. Examples of bonds with Apperson's signature are shown in Figure 1. Apperson also initialed bonds as the recorder, with examples shown in Figure 2.

**Edmund Bacon Williamson Apperson**

Edmund Bacon Williamson Apperson, shown in Figure 3, was born to James Patterson Apperson and Ann Williamson Apperson in 1813 in Charles City County, in eastern Virginia. He descended from several

**Table 1. Confederate Bonds Signed by E. Apperson**

**Act of February 11, 1864**

Fifteen Million Loan: Type 155 (B-285), issued Jan.-March 1865

**Act of February 17, 1864**

6% coupon bonds, Confederate seal vignette, printed date 1<sup>st</sup> March 1864

Type 158 \$500 (B-304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 308a, 309, 311, 312)

Type 159 \$1000 (B-317, 318, 319, 320, 322, 323, 323a, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 330a)

4% Call Certificate, handwritten date 1864

Type 170 \$20,000 (B-350)

Type 172 \$100,000 (B-352/353 [short printed denomination & even serial number])

6% coupon bonds, Confederate sergeant in front of tent vignette, printed date 1<sup>st</sup> April 1864

Type 177 \$1000 (B-360)

6% nontaxable call certificates, Man at a turnstile vignette, handwritten date 1864 or 1865

Type 178 \$100 (B-362, 363)

Type 179 \$500 (B-364, 365)

Type 180 \$1000 (B-366, 367)

Type 181 \$5000 (B-368, 369)

6% bonds, Old Customs House of Richmond vignette, from Act of March 23, 1863, but converted by Act of February 17, 1864, and handwritten date and issuance in 1864 or 1865

Type 185 \$1000 (B-374)

Type 186 \$100 (B-375)

**Act of June 13, 1864**

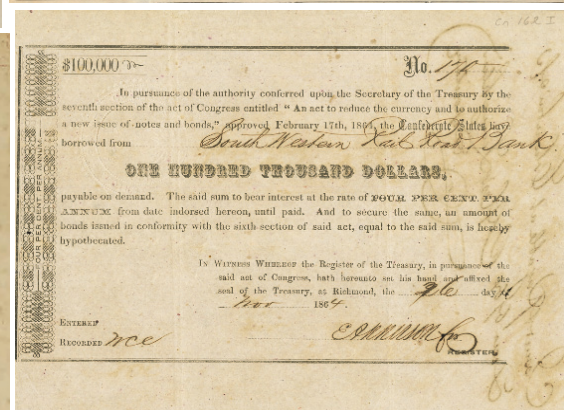
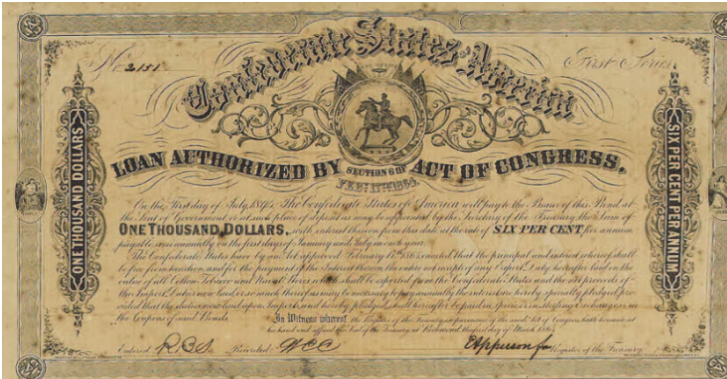
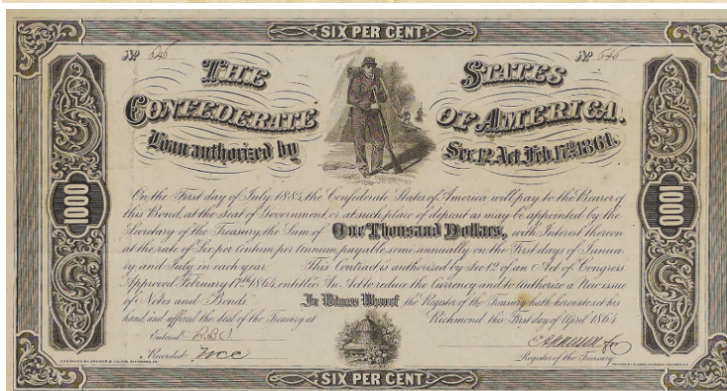
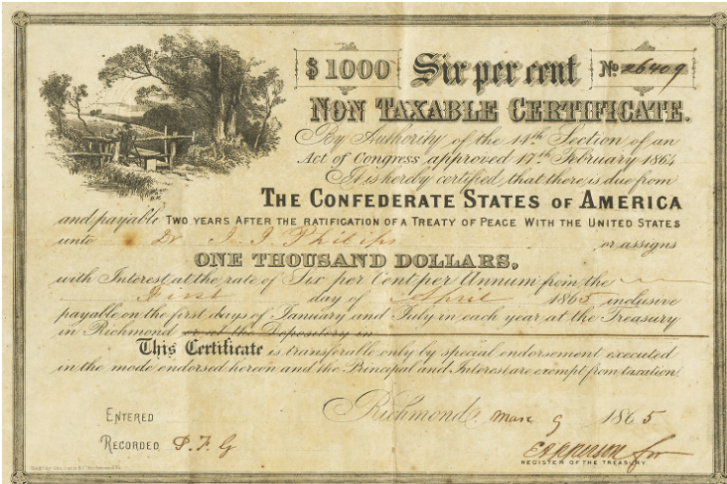
8% bonds, Sailor by shore with Confederate flag vignette, printed date 1<sup>st</sup> July 1864

Type 190 \$500 (B-382)

Type 192 \$1000 (B-384)

lines of founding Virginian families – Bacon, Williamson, and Apperson. For example, from the Bacon lineage, Captain Edmund Bacon (1654-1705), brother of Nathaniel Bacon (leader of Bacon’s Rebellion), is one of E. B. W. Apperson’s ancestors, as is King Henry I of England some 32 generations removed<sup>7</sup>. Edmund’s only brother was James Lawrence Apperson (1819-1880), who became quite wealthy and famous in Richmond as a businessman, banker, and auctioneer primarily of real estate but also of slaves with the firm Goddin & Apperson. E. B. W. Apperson most often signed documents “E. B. W.” and that is also how he was most often referred to in records, but he

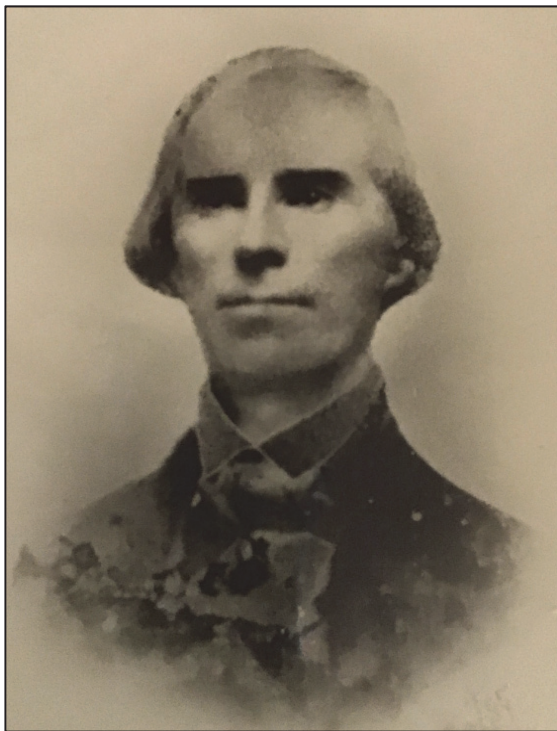
was apparently called ‘Edmund’ by his peers since that is the second most common name used, including in his obituary<sup>8</sup>. Edmund might have used “E. B. W.” to distinguish himself from other Edmund Appersons, since that name was used by others in eastern Virginia, including the father-in-law of Martha Savage Morecock Apperson (herself a signer of Confederate Treasury notes), but that Edmund Apperson (1775–1857) died before the war so he could not be the E. Apperson who signed Confederate bonds. By 1840, Edmund B. W. Apperson built his home in Charles City County, near the James and Chickahominy Rivers, but he also owned land in neighboring James City County. One



**Figure 1.** Confederate Treasury bonds signed by E. Apperson as Assistant Register. Clockwise from bottom left: Type 155 (B-285), Type 159 (B-317), Type 177 (B-360), Type 178 (B-367), Type 186 (B-375), and Type 190 (B-382), Type 172 (B-352/353).



**Figure 2.** Treasury bonds Type 159 (B-329) initialed “E A” by E. Apperson as recorder. The bond on the left was signed for the Register by Charles A. Rose, but the bond on the right was signed by Apperson himself. Apperson also initialed and signed in this way other Type 159 bonds (B-325 and 327).



**Figure 3.** Edmund Bacon Williamson Apperson

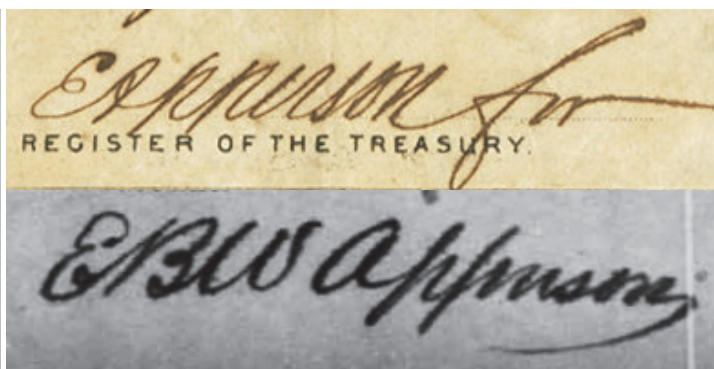
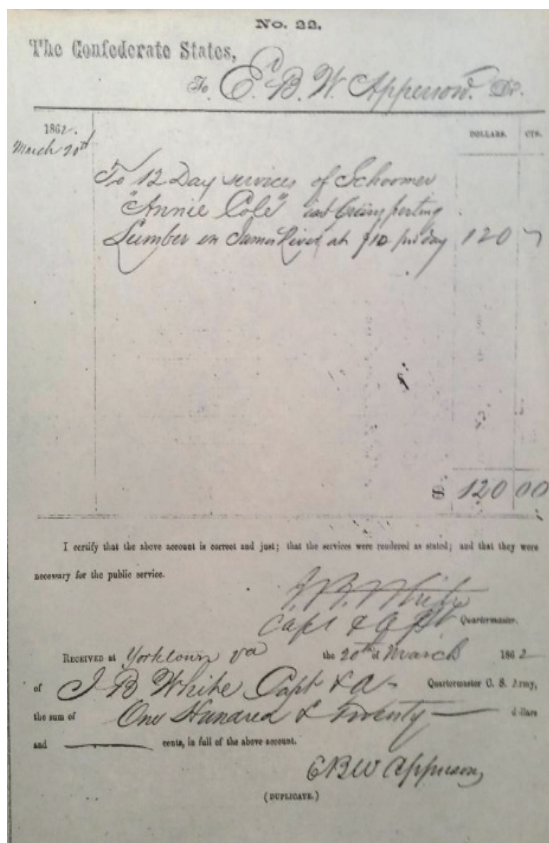


**Figure 4.** Edmund Apperson’s daughter Marie Louise “Rilu” Apperson (Trigg).

of his Charles City farms was called Yarmouth. He began as a planter and merchant. Around 1840, Edmund married Martha Elizabeth Rebecca (Marable?) Morecock, a widow and also from Charles City. She was born in 1811 and had at least three children by her first husband: Ann

Virginia, Louisa S. (born ca. 1833), and John William Morecock (born 1839).

The lives of Edmund and Martha during the next 17 years in Charles City were grand. By 1850, Edmund was a successful merchant with \$10,000 real estate. Besides his farms, he owned and ran a general store –



**Figure 5.** Receipt signed by “EBW Apperson” for sale of one horse, two mules, and a wagon to a Confederate quarter master in Richmond in May 1862. Enlargements of the “EBW Apperson” signature on a Confederate receipt and an “E Apperson” signature on an 1864 Confederate bond are very similar, supporting the identification of Edmund Bacon Williamson Apperson as the Assistant Register to the Confederate Treasury.

Apperson’s Store – in the Mount Zion and Rustic communities near Morris Creek, from 1850 to 1871. The store became a community gathering spot that also served as the post office (with him as postmaster), courthouse, and voting precinct<sup>9,10,11</sup>. As his business grew in the decade before the Civil War, so did his standing and civic engagement in the community. During this time, he served as Sheriff of Charles City County (1852), Justice of the Peace (1856, 1857), Commissioner (1857), and delegate to the secession convention (1860)<sup>12,13,14</sup>. Edmund and Martha had at least eight children between 1841 and 1856<sup>15</sup>. One of their daughters, Marie Louis “Rilu” Apperson (Trigg), is shown in Figure 4.

But personal tragedy struck in 1859, when Martha died. Whether it was for that reason, or the growth of his business, or both, Edmund decided to move to Richmond and expand his business there. In 1860, he

offered for his Yarmouth farm and house, with 1000 acres located in James City County on the Chickahominy and Yarmouth Rivers, for sale or exchange for real estate in Richmond<sup>16</sup>. He moved to Richmond, where in the 1860 census he was listed as a grocery and commissions merchant owning \$9,000 in real estate and \$26,000 in personal estate. Then the war began, and it brought hardship to Edmund as it did so many other Virginians. He supported the war, and even did business with the Confederacy. Documents<sup>17</sup> show that he received \$120 on March 20, 1862, for providing the services of his schooner *Annie Cole*<sup>18</sup> for transportation of lumber on the James River. Two months later, he sold two mules, one horse, and a wagon for \$500, and in February 1864, he sold 220 springs for \$120. In 1863 and 1864, Edmund hired out three of his male slaves, each at \$25-30 per month, to the Chimborazo Hospital in Richmond<sup>19</sup>. Undoubtedly, he did more business with the Confederate government.

These documents provide the crucial evidence that Edmund Bacon Williamson Apperson is our E. Apperson, Assistant Register of the Confederate Treasury. Figure 5 shows one of these receipts from 1862, and a comparison of the signature on it by “EBW Apperson” against the signature on one of the 1864 Confederate bonds by “E. Apperson.” The signatures are highly similar, particularly the “E” and “Apperson.” Only the “A” differs, and this could be because in the “E Apperson” signature the “E” flows into the “A” with no break, whereas in the “EBW Apperson” signature, there is a break between the “EBW” and “A.” In any case, this signature evidence, plus the cumulative historical and biographical evidence putting our E. B.W. in Richmond at this time, overwhelmingly supports the case that Edmund Bacon Williamson Apperson signed these Confederate bonds.

In December 8, 1863, Edmund married again, to Letitia Ann Newman Brown. Like Martha, Letitia had been married before, in 1836, to Samuel T. Brown, and she had at least one child by that marriage<sup>20</sup>. Edmund and Letitia had one child together, born in 1865: Mary Adelaide Apperson. In 1864, Edmund had another personal loss – his stepson, John Morecock, died. John was a planter in Charles City County who joined the Confederate army at the beginning of the war and served in Co. H, 5<sup>th</sup> regiment of the Virginia cavalry. John was wounded at Brandy Station in 1863, and though he survived that injury, he was killed in action at Front Royal, Virginia, on August 30, 1864, at 26 years old.

By the end of the war, Edmund was struggling financially. He was supporting a large family, and his income was devastated. In 1866, he was working as an auctioneer, possibly with his brother<sup>21</sup>. By 1870, he had returned to Charles City County with Letitia and his many children and was a farmer with only \$1000 real estate and \$100 personal

estate. He could not make ends meet, and so he was forced to file for bankruptcy in Charles City in January 1869<sup>22</sup> and again in Richmond in April 1871<sup>23</sup>. As part of his bankruptcy agreement, three of his parcels of land – two in Charles City County and one in James City County – were auctioned<sup>24</sup>. Things continued to spiral downward. Sometime during this time, Letitia died. In 1877, he listed his job as a bookkeeper<sup>25</sup>, in 1880 grocery clerk<sup>26</sup>, and 1889 clerk<sup>27</sup>.

Edmund died on May 15, 1891, at 78 years old. The next day, after funeral services at St. John’s Church led by Reverends Preston G. Nash and Lewis William Burton, Edmund was buried in Hollywood Cemetery<sup>28</sup>. His obituary on the front page of the *Richmond Dispatch* that day remembered him as he surely led his life: “*Mr. Apperson was of that class known as the Old Virginia gentleman and was greatly esteemed and respected by all who knew him*”<sup>7</sup>.

**Acknowledgments.** Many thanks to Amy Trigg Adkison – descendent of Edmund and Martha’s daughter, Marie Louise Apperson – for providing documents about the Apperson family, and to Hank Simmons and Mike McNeil for sharing images of bonds and commenting on the manuscript.

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- 3 Derby, Charles (2018) Seaton Grantland Tinsley, clerk for the Confederate Treasury Department and signer of Confederate notes. *Paper Money* March/April 2018, Whole No. 314: 116–123

4 Ball, Douglas B., and Simmons, Henry F. Jr. (2015) *Comprehensive Catalog and History of Confederate Bonds*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. BNR Press, Port Clinton, Ohio.

5 The chief clerk was responsible for verifying that bonds were recorded in the treasury registers, which he did by signing or initialing bonds in the bottom left. Thus, the signatures or initials of the two chief clerks, Henry Dickson Capers (who was in the position for the first year of the Confederacy) and Charles T. Jones (who served after Capers for the remainder), are found on some bonds.

6 Derby, Charles. (manuscript) William Fraser White, a newly identified Assistant Register and bond signer for the Confederate Treasury.

7 Amy Trigg Adkison, personal communication.

8 “Death of Edmund Apperson” in *Richmond Dispatch*, May 16, 1891, page 1.

9 *Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia, 1850–1851*. Richmond, Virginia: William F. Ritchie, Public Printer, 1851.

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11 Charles City County Historical Markers, <https://charlescity.org/learn/historical-markers/county-historical-markers/>. Accessed December 21, 2020.

12 *Elliott and Nye’s Virginia Directory and Business Register, 1852*.

13 *Richmond Times Dispatch*, May 18, 1856, page 5.

14 *Governor’s Message and Annual Reports of Virginia, 1857, Volume 1*, page 27.

15 Children of Edmund and Martha Apperson were Sarah Ellen (1841-1848), Marie Louise (1842-1922), Ann Elizabeth (1843-1928), Lucy Williamson (1845-1931), Theodosia Rebecca (1847-1927), Robert

Burley (1852-?), Martha Christian (1854-1838), and Ella Bacon (ca. 1856-1931).

16 *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, August 1, 1860, page 3.

17 Documents in the National Archives, accessed through fold3.com in December 2020.

18 The *Annie Cole* was a central player in an interesting legal case in 1874 at the U.S. Circuit Court of the Eastern District of Virginia. The case involved an 1872 accident wherein the *Annie Case* was damaged and sank, and the owners sued for the cost of lost cargo and for raising and repairing the schooner. The case was published in: U.S. Circuit Court, District of Virginia. The Steamer Oler. *The American Law Register (1852-1891)*. Vol. 23, No. 5, New Series Volume 14 (May, 1875), pp. 300-305.

19 *List of Employees of Chimborazo Hospital, 1861-1865*. CivilWarRichmond.com, accessed December 21, 2020.

20 The child of Letitia and Samuel Brown was Elizabeth P. Brown, born in 1850.

21 *U.S. City Directories, Richmond, Virginia, 1866*.

22 *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, January 1869.

23 *Alexandria Daily State Journal*, April 17, 1871.

24 *Alexandria Daily State Journal*, July 8, 1871, page 4.

25 *U.S. City Directories, Richmond, Virginia, 1877*.

26 1880 U.S. Federal Census.

27 *U.S. City Directories, Richmond, Virginia, 1889*.

28 *Annals of Henrico Parish*, by Rev. L. W. Burton, St. John’s Protestant Episcopal Church, Richmond, Virginia, 1904.