

**The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary,
Columbia University in the City of New York**

Union Theological Seminary Archives 1

Finding Aid for

Edgar Simmons Buchanan Papers, 1890-1936



Credit to: UTS1: Edgar Simmons Buchanan Papers, series 4, box 1, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Finding Aid prepared by: Maya Naunton, 2017
with the support of the Henry Luce Foundation and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation

Summary Information

Creator: Edgar Simmons Buchanan, 1872-1932
Title: Edgar Simmons Buchanan, 1890-1936
Inclusive dates: 1890-1936
Bulk dates: 1900-1932
Abstract: Anglican Church minister and theologian. Papers pertaining to early manuscript research, correspondence, newspaper clippings, and autobiographical writings.

Size: 14 boxes [1 oversize], 6.75 linear feet
Storage: **Offsite storage**, except Series 2 Box OS9
Repository: The Burke Library
Union Theological Seminary
3041 Broadway
New York, NY 10027
Email: burkespecial@library.columbia.edu

Administrative Information

- Provenance:** Edgar Simmons Buchanan Papers were donated to the Union Theological Seminary in 1943. These materials were partially processed in shortly after the donation. This collection was among a large group of unprocessed materials that were organized in 2016/2017 as part of an archival processing grant funded by the Henry Luce Foundation and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation. Further accruals expected.
- Access:** Archival papers are available to registered readers for consultation by appointment only. Please contact archives staff by email to burkespecial@library.columbia.edu, or by postal mail to The Burke Library address on page 1, as far in advance as possible. Burke Library staff is available for inquires or to request a consultation on archival or special collections research.
- Access Restrictions:** This collection is open to readers. Access to some of the materials might be restricted. Please note that boxes held in Offsite storage will require 48 hours' notice in response to a weekday request for retrieval.
- Preferred Citation:** Item description, UST1: Edgar Simmons Buchanan Papers, 1894-1932, series #, box #, and folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Biography

Edgar Simmons Buchanan was a scholar of early Biblical manuscripts and an Anglican Church minister. He was born in Southampton, England on May 6th, 1872 to John Edgar Buchanan and Elizabeth May Saunders. When Buchanan was four, the family moved to New Zealand where he grew up. Buchanan graduated from University of New Zealand with an M.A. and B.Sc. In 1896 he returned to England where he attended Theological College in Salisbury. The College was headed by Bishop Wordsworth for whom Buchanan worked as his pupil and assistant. Their close relationship lasted until Bishop Wordsworth's death in 1911. After being ordained in 1897 Buchanan served as a curate in a number of churches in England and on the continent. During this period he also studied early Biblical manuscripts in libraries in London, Paris, Rome, Vienna, Milan, and Verona. He published numerous articles and books based on his research.

In 1914, Buchanan came to New York and stayed in the United States for the rest of his life. In the United States Buchanan continued working on early Biblical manuscripts, as well as teaching and lecturing, including teaching at Columbia University. In 1915 Buchanan became a Curator of Manuscripts in the Hispanic Society of America. While working there, he began studying a manuscript belonging to Archer Milton Huntington, the founder of the Hispanic Society (referred to as the Huntington Palimpsest). Buchanan announced that the manuscript was a palimpsest and declared that the erased text constituted the earliest, previously unknown version of the Gospels. He dated the erased text to the 2nd century AD and claimed that the text was very distinct from the traditional Bible as it was known and that the newly discovered text revolutionized our understanding of Christ and Christianity.

Buchanan prepared the text for publication and was working on correcting the proofs when the owner of the manuscript started having doubts about the validity of Buchanan's findings. Other scholars disagreed with Buchanan's assertions and the type of the book was broken up and it was never published in the United States. Buchanan published it later in England.

Subsequent to the controversy with the Huntington Palimpsest, Buchanan continued to fight for recognition of his discoveries, writing letters to other scholars, to the media, and even to Pope Pius XI, who Buchanan met prior to his election while they were doing Biblical research in Italian Libraries.

Buchanan supported England during WWI and the archive holds correspondence with the English government and benevolent societies reflecting that association.

Later Buchanan taught at a number of private schools. He continued to do research and publish. He also lectured around the country.

In 1930 Buchanan fell sick and sailed to Australia at his doctor's advice, where he died on August 19th, 1932.

Collection Scope and Content Notes

The collection consists of papers relating to Mr. Buchanan's scholarly work, his autobiographical writings, and his correspondence. The scholarly papers are mostly concerned with Buchanan's work on early Biblical manuscripts.

The collection is divided into four series.

• Series 1: Correspondence, 1890-1936 (3 boxes, 1.25 linear ft)

Most of the correspondence in this series relates to Buchanan's research into early Gospel manuscripts and his teaching career. Some of the correspondence is of more social nature. Most of the correspondence is arranged chronologically, with the exception of Box 3, Folder 6. The last was arranged during previous processing to include letters from famous people that Buchanan corresponded with.

Note: Correspondence contains both handwritten and typed documents. Series 1, box 1, Folder 6 includes a photograph of unidentified individual.

Large number of the letters concern Buchanan's interactions with libraries where he worked on his research. These include Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris, Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona, the British Museum, Morgan Museum and Library, the Bodleian Library, Harvard College Library, The Hispanic Society of America, Oberlin College Library, National Library of Wales, Library of Congress, Bibliotheque Universitaire Bordeaux, and New York Public Library.

Buchanan also corresponded with clergy and religious organizations. These include Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Bishops of Salisbury, Carlisle and Birmingham, Society for Promoting of Christian Knowledge, Drew Theological Seminary, Theological Seminary at Princeton, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, American Sunday-School Union, Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, Episcopal Theological School, the office of Pope Pius XI, American Tract Society, Evangelical Theological College, Pentecostal Holiness Church, Biblical Seminary, Union Theological Seminary.

Individual scholars that Buchanan corresponded with include Alexander Souter, Francis Crawford Burkitt, Dr. Erwin Nestle, Eduard Naville, James Rendel Harris, and Homero Seris.

Further notable correspondents include Theodore Roosevelt, Arthur Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling, Dr. Achille Ratti (later Pope Pius XI), E. Ruthford ("father of nuclear physics"), Stanley Baldwin (British Prime minister during WWI), William Inge (Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral).

• Series 2: Writings, 1896-1932 (9 boxes, 4.75 linear ft)

The bulk of Buchanan's writings in the collection are related to his research on early Biblical manuscripts. The writings were arranged according to the subject into the following subheadings:

Subheading: Fleury Palimpsest (Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris)

This research resulted in a book "The Records Unrolled", published in 1911. Contains notes, proofs, and the published book. The material is handwritten, typed and printed.

Subheading: Codex Corbeiensis = Codex H₂ (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)

Buchanan's work on this manuscript was published as "The Four Gospels from the Codex Corbeiensis... Together with Fragments of the Catholic Epistles of the Acts and of the Apocalypse from the Fleury Palimpsest" in the Old-Latin Biblical Texts series in 1907. Contains copies of the text from the M.S. and the published book. The material is handwritten and printed.

Subheading: Codex Veronensis (Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona)

Buchanan published his research on this manuscript as "The Four Gospels from the Codex Veronensis" in 1911. Contains notes and text from the M.S. The material is handwritten.

Subheading: Beatus Apocalypse = Morgan Ms. (Morgan Library)

This work was published as "A New Text of the Apocalypse from Spain" in 1915. Contains notes, text from the M.S., and the published book.

Subheading: Huntington Palimpsest (The Hispanic Society of America, New York)

Contains text from the M.S., notes, articles, proofs of the book. The material is handwritten, typed, and printed.

Subheading: Harkness Manuscript (New York Public Library)

It is unclear if the results of this work were published. Contains text from the M.S. and translations. The material is handwritten and printed.

Subheading: Various manuscript transcriptions and translations

Contains transcriptions and translations from manuscripts other than those listed above. Some of the documents contain information on the source of the text, others are unidentified. The material is handwritten and typed.

Subheading: ESB's Writings about his research

Contains drafts of a book based on ESB's research and a list of libraries he sent his books to. The material is handwritten and typed.

Subheading: Papers associated with Bridport, England Reading Society

Contains the papers that Buchanan wrote for presentation at the Society as well as a critique on a paper presented by another member. The material is handwritten.

Subheading: Various writings 1897-1930

Contains texts of sermons given by Buchanan, miscellaneous papers of that are outside of his main research focus, and his poetry. The material is handwritten and typed.

Subheading: Autobiographical writings, 1897-1930

Contains Buchanan's diaries, his travel notes and other autobiographical writings. The material is handwritten and typed.

• **Series 3: Reviews and Publicity, 1896-1932 (1 box, 0.5 linear ft)**

This series consists of newspaper clippings that relate to Buchanan. Most of the clippings concern his scholarly publications. This series also contains publisher's notices announcing publication of Buchanan's books.

• **Series 4: Personal, 1894-1932 (1 box, 0.5 linear ft)**

This series contain personal material, such as teacher recommendations, church licenses, resume that Buchanan wrote in 1914, his photograph and his business card.

Note: one folder from this series is housed in Box OS9.

Processing

Metal clips were removed from the material if they were rusted. Material was flattened where necessary. The collection was placed in archival folders and boxes. Acidic items were interleaved with acid-free paper. Photographs and fragile materials were placed inside Mylar envelopes.

Contents list

Series 1: Correspondence, 1890-1936

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	1	1890
1	1	2	1904-1905
1	1	3	1906
1	1	4	1907
1	1	5	1908-1911
1	1	6	1912-1914
1	1	7	1915
1	1	8	1916
1	1	9	1917
1	2	1	1918
1	2	2	1919
1	2	3	1920-1921
1	2	4	1922
1	2	5	1923
1	2	6	1924
1	2	7	1925
1	2	8	1926
1	2	9	1927
1	2	10	1928
1	3	1	1929
1	3	2	1930
1	3	3	1931
1	3	4	1932 -1036
1	3	5	1907-1930 – famous correspondents

Series 2: Writings, 1896-1932

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
			Fleury Palimpsest (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)
2	1	1	Proofs of the “Fragments of the Catholic Epistles”, 1906
2	1	2	Latin text from “Prologus” in Epistulas Canonicas, c. 1906
2	1	3	Book “The Records Unrolled”, 1911
2	1	4	Text “About Some Old MSS”, 1928
			Codex Corbeiensis = Codex H₂ (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)
2	1	5	Text from Codex, 1901-1905.
2	1	6	Text from Codex, c. 1907
2	1	7	“The Four Gospels from the Codex Corbeiensis... Together with Fragments of the Catholic Epistles of the Acts and of the Apocalypse from the Fleury Palimpsest”, Old-Latin Biblical Texts: No. V, 1907. Note: Fragile.
2	1	8	Collations from Codex Corbeiensis, 1907; collations from Codex Veronensis, 1911.
			Codex Veronensis (Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona)
2	2	1	Notes on Codex, 1906
2	2	2	Text probably from Codex, c. 1910

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
2	2	3	Text, published as "The Four Gospels from the Codex Veronensis" in 1911
			Beatus Apocalypse = Morgan Manuscript (Morgan Library)
2	2	4	Latin text and notes, c.1914
2	2	5	"The Catholic Epistles and Apocalypse", published in 1914
2	2	6	"A New Text of the Apocalypse from Spain", 1915
			Huntington Palimpsest (The Hispanic Society of America, New York)
2	3	1	Transcription of the Palimpsest, 1916
2	3	2	Transcription of the Palimpsest, The Acts of the Apostles, 1916
2	3	3	Wordlist, possibly relating to the Palimpsest, c. 1916
2	3	4	Notes and transcriptions from the Palimpsest, proofs of the same, 1916
2	3	5	List of 12 parables from the Palimpsest, followed by typed text and Buchanan's translation of the same, c.1917
2	3	6	Transcription of the Palimpsest. Some pages contain addresses of various people, 1917.
2	3	7	Transcription of the Palimpsest, Gospel of St. Luke, c. 1917
2	4	1	Proofs of the text from the Palimpsest, 1917
2	4	2	Proofs of unpublished Comparative Edition of the Palimpsest, 1917
2	4	3	Printed cards with passages from the Palimpsest, 1917
2	4	4	Two articles on the Palimpsest.
2	4	5	Proofs of the top (latest) writing in the Palimpsest, 1918
2	4	6	Transcription of the Palimpsest, Gospel of St. John, 1918
2	4	7	Foreword for a publication of the Palimpsest, 1918
2	4	8	Notes on Palimpsest, 1919?
2	4	9	"The Oldest Text of the Gospels". Introduction is by ESB, 1924
2	4	10	Article printed in the Mercure de France on September 15 th , 1925.
			Harkness Manuscript (New York Public Library)
2	5	1	Transcriptions and notes, 1928
2	5	2	English version of the MS, 1929
2	5	3	Transcription of the MS, 1929
2	5	4	Transcription of the MS, 1929
2	5	5	Transcription of the MS, 1929
2	5	6	Transcription of the MS, 1929
2	5	7	"Calendar of the New Gospel Texts with Poetic Commentaries by their Discoverer", 1932
			Various manuscript transcriptions and translations
2	5	8	Notes and wordlists, 1899-1905
2	5	9	Transcriptions from manuscripts, c. 1905
2	5	10	Text from St. Matthew's Gospel, from unidentified manuscript, c. 1910.
2	5	11	"Early Spanish Marriage Rite" from a missal written c. 1300, copied and translated by ESB in 1916
2	5	12	"The Confession of St. Patrick" translated by ESB from Latin, 1930
2	5	13	"Cuthbert's Story of Bede's Death" translated by ESB, 1930
			ESB's Writings about his research
2	6	1	"The Story of Changing Manuscripts", 1929
2	6	2	Drafts of "The Search for the Earliest Gospels", 1930
2	6	3	Draft of "The Search for the Earliest Gospels", 1930
2	6	4	Unpublished articles, 1930
2	6	5	List of libraries ESB sent his books to, 1920's?

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
			Papers associated with Bridport, England Reading Society
2	6	6	Notes on Browning, 1899
2	6	7	"Wordsworth's "Prelude", 1899
2	6	8	"Dante's "Inferno", c. 1900
2	6	9	"Spenser's "Faery Queen", 1900
2	6	10	Critique of a paper by Mrs. Solly, contributed to the Bridport Reading Society, 1900
2	6	11	Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound", 1901
			Various writings 1897-1930
2	7	1	Notes on a sermon preached in 1897
2	7	2	"Church and Empire in Australia", c. 1909
2	7	3	"George Herbert – Melodist", published in 1910
2	7	4	"Victor Hugo on the Rape of Alsace-Lorraine", c. 1914
2	7	5	"Booker T. Washington [an appreciation]", written on his death, 1915
2	7	6	"Religion Re-revealed", 1924
2	7	7	"Prophet or Quack" – a review by ESB of "H.G. Wells: Educationalist" by F.H. Doughty, c. 1926
2	7	8	"Luther's Reply to King Henry VIII", 1928
2	7	9	"Martin Luther Against King Henry of England" translated by ESB, 1928
2	7	10	Religious poems, 1918-1930
2	7	11	"Thoughts Concerning God", n.d.
			Autobiographical writings, 1897-1930
2	8	1	Diary, 1896
2	8	2	Diary, 1897
2	8	3	Travel notes, 1897
2	8	4	Autobiographical, 1898
2	8	5	Travel writings, 1901
2	8	6	Travel diary, 1909
2	8	7	Diary, 1915
2	8	8	"Growth", autobiographical, 1917
2	8	9	"A Spiritual Progress", autobiographical, 1917
2	8	10	"The Story of a Seeker", autobiographical, 1922
2	8	11	Autobiographical notes, 1922
2	8	12	"Canterbury College as I Knew it", 1923
2	8	13	Thoughts dictated by ESB during his final illness in Australia, 1931-1932
2	OS9	1	Facsimiles of manuscript related research materials, 1911-1916
2	OS9	2	Facsimiles of manuscript related research materials, 1916
2	OS9	3	Facsimiles of manuscript related research materials, 1916
2	OS9	4	Galley proofs of Huntington Palimpsest, 1916
2	OS9	5	Proofs of the Huntington Palimpsest, 1917
2	OS9	6	Galley proofs of Huntington Palimpsest, 1919
2	OS9	7	Facsimiles of manuscript related research materials, 1930
4	OS9	8	A rubbing of the memorial plate installed by ESB's wife in the Ashburton High School, New Zealand, 1930's

Series 3: Reviews and Publicity, 1896-1932

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
3	1	1	Newspaper clippings relating to ESB's high school, 1896-1931
3	1	2	Newspaper clippings relating to ESB's sermons, 1907-1912
3	1	3	Newspaper reviews of ESB's publications, 1907-1925
3	1	4	Announcements of publications, reviews of publications, 1914-1917

3	1	5	Announcements of ESB's lectures and sermons, 1914-1918
3	1	6	Newspaper clippings regarding Huntington Palimpsest, 1914-1932
3	1	7	Brochure announcing a class ESB was teaching in Columbia University, 1916
3	1	8	Publisher's announcements of ESB's book publications, 1916-1924
3	1	9	Reviews of ESB's publications and lectures, 1916-1930
3	1	10	Newspaper clippings relating to ESB's war activities, 1918
3	1	11	"Commentary on the Primitive Text" by B.E. Scriven. Relates to Huntington Palimpsest, 1919
3	1	12	Newspaper clippings relating to ESB's publications. French, 1923-1924

Series 4: Personal Material, 1890-1936

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
4	1	1	Recommendations of ESB's teachers, 1894-1895
4	1	2	Church licenses, 1897-1918
4	1	3	Two pages from the front of the book "A Remarkable Bible Discovery or "the Name" of God" by William Phillips Hall. Has a handwritten inscription to ESB by the author, 1910's
4	1	4	Resume and notes on ESB's biography written by his wife, c.1900-1930's
4	1	5	Letter appointing ESB as an instructor at Columbia University, 1916
4	1	6	ESB's photo, business card and a card with a plaid pattern and a note "Buchanan plaid (tartan) and coat of arms (Buchanan's clan)", 1920's
4	1	7	Legacy processing information
4	1	8	Legacy processing information
4	1	9	Legacy processing information