



# ArchivesSpace

a community served by †Lyrasis

## Edgar Simmons Buchanan papers4492437

---

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on January 14, 2025.

Description is written in: English.

appm

Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary

3041 Broadway

New York, NY 10027

Telephone: (212) 851-5606

[burke@library.columbia.edu](mailto:burke@library.columbia.edu)

URL: <https://library.columbia.edu/locations/burke.html>

---

## Table of Contents

---

Summary Information .....	3
Biographical / Historical .....	3
Scope and Contents .....	4
Arrangement .....	5
Administrative Information .....	5
Controlled Access Headings .....	6
Burke Library record group: .....	6
Collection Inventory .....	6
Series 1: Correspondence .....	6
Series 2: Writings .....	7
Series 3: Reviews and publicity .....	11
Series 4: Personal materials .....	11

---

## Summary Information

---

<b>Repository:</b>	Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary
<b>Creator:</b>	Buchanan, E. S (Edgar Simmons), 1872-1932
<b>Title:</b>	Edgar Simmons Buchanan papers
<b>ID:</b>	4492437
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1890 -- 1950
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6.75 linear feet 6.75 linear feet; 14 boxes
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .
<b>Abstract:</b>	E. S. (Edgar Simmons) Buchanan (1872-1932) was an Anglican minister, author, lecturer, and teacher. This collection contains correspondence largely relating to Buchanan's research into early Gospel manuscripts and his teaching career, as well as correspondence of a more social nature; material relating to Buchanan's writings and research on early Biblical manuscripts, ESB's writings about his research, papers associated with Bridport, England Reading Society, and other various writings including sermons, poetry, and autobiographical writings; clippings that relate to Buchanan's scholarly publications and publisher's notices announcing publication of Buchanan's books; as well as personal materials and legacy processing information.

### Preferred Citation

Item description, UTS1: Edgar Simmons Buchanan papers, series #, box #, folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Biographical / Historical

---

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.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Scope and Contents

---

This collection contains correspondence largely relating to Buchanan's research into early Gospel manuscripts and his teaching career, as well as correspondence of a more social nature; material relating to Buchanan's writings and research on early Biblical manuscripts, ESB's writings about his research, papers associated with Bridport, England Reading Society, and other various writings including sermons, poetry, and autobiographical writings; clippings that relate to Buchanan's scholarly publications and publisher's notices announcing publication of Buchanan's books; as well as personal materials and legacy processing information.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Arrangement

---

This collection is arranged in four series: Series 1: Correspondence; Series 2: Writings; Series 3: Reviews and publicity; and Series 4: Personal materials.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Publication Statement

Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary

3041 Broadway

New York, NY 10027

Telephone: (212) 851-5606

[burke@library.columbia.edu](mailto:burke@library.columbia.edu)

URL: <https://library.columbia.edu/locations/burke.html>

### Revision Description

PDF converted to EAD and description updated by Leah Edelman. 2024-06-28

### Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

### Conditions Governing Access

The following boxes are located offsite: entire collection except Series 2 Box 9 OS. Please note that requests for use of boxes held in offsite storage must be made three business days in advance.

### Immediate Source of Acquisition

The Edgar Simmons Buchanan papers were donated to the Union Theological Seminary in 1943.

## Processing Information

Correspondence, articles, newspaper clippings, photographs, reviews, and autobiographical materials were cataloged by Lynn A. Grove on 1988-07-07. 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. The finding aid was created by Maya Naunton in 2017 with the support of the Henry Luce Foundation and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, and edited by Leah Edelman in 2024.

## Conditions Governing Use

Some material in this collection may be protected by copyright and other rights. Information concerning copyright, fair use, and reproduction requests can be consulted at Columbia's Copyright Advisory Office.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Controlled Access Headings

---

- Photographic prints
- Clergy
- Authors
- Teachers
- Buchanan, E. S (Edgar Simmons), 1872-1932
- Church of England -- : Clergy

---

## Burke Library record group:

---

Union Theological Seminary Archives: UTS 1, papers of faculty and students

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Collection Inventory

---

### Series 1: Correspondence, 1890 -- 1936

Physical Description: 1.25 linear feet 1.25 linear feet; 3 boxes

Conditions Governing Access:**Conditions Governing Access**

This series is open for research.

**Arrangement**

This series is arranged in rough chronological order.

**Scope and Contents**

This series contains correspondence largely relating to Buchanan's research into early Gospel manuscripts and his teaching career. Some of the correspondence is of more social nature. A 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, including 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, and 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. Rutheford ("father of nuclear physics"), Stanley Baldwin (British Prime minister during WWI), and William Inge (Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral).

Title/Description	Instances
Correspondence, 1890 -- 1917	box 1.1
Correspondence, 1918 -- 1928	box 1.2
Correspondence, 1907 -- 1936	box 1.3

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

**Series 2: Writings, 1896 -- 1932**

Physical Description: 4.75 linear feet 4.75 linear feet; 9 boxes including 1 OS box

Conditions Governing Access:**Conditions Governing Access**

This series is open for research.

**Arrangement**

This series is arranged by piece of writing.

**Scope and Contents**

This series contains material relating to Buchanan's writings and research on early Biblical manuscripts, including Fleury Palimpsest (Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris), which resulted in a book "The Records Unrolled", published in 1911; Codex Corbeiensis = Codex H2 (Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris), published

as "The Four Gospels from the Codex Corbeieinsis... 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; Codex Veronensis (Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona), published as "The Four Gospels from the Codex Veronensis" in 1911; Beatus Apocalypse = Morgan Ms. (Morgan Library), published as "A New Text of the Apocalypse from Spain" in 1915; Huntington Palimpsest (The Hispanic Society of America, New York); Harkness Manuscript (New York Public Library); and various other manuscript transcriptions and translations. Also included in this series are ESB's writings about his research, papers associated with Bridport, England Reading Society, and other various writings including sermons, poetry, and autobiographical writings.

Title/Description	Instances	
Fleury Palimpsest (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), 1906 -- 1928	box 2.1	folder 1-4
<b>Scope and Contents</b>		
Proofs of the "Fragments of the Catholic Epistles", 1906; Latin text from "Prologus" in Epistulas Canonicas, c. 1906; Book "The Records Unrolled", 1911; Text "About Some Old MSS", 1928		
Codex Corbeiensis = Codex H2 (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), 1901 -- 1911	box 2.1	folder 5-8
<b>Scope and Contents</b>		
Text from Codex, 1901-1905, Text from Codex, c. 1907, "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; Collations from Codex Corbeiensis, 1907; collations from Codex Veronensis, 1911.		
Codex Veronensis (Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona), 1906 -- 1911	box 2.2	folder 1-3
<b>Scope and Contents</b>		
Notes on Codex, 1906, Text probably from Codex, c. 1910, Text, published as "The Four Gospels from the Codex Veronensis" in 1911		
Beatus Apocalypse = Morgan Manuscript (Morgan Library), 1914 -- 1915	box 2.2	folder 4-6
<b>Scope and Contents</b>		
Latin text and notes, c.1914, "The Catholic Epistles and Apocalypse", published in 1914, "A New Text of the Apocalypse from Spain", 1915		
Huntington Palimpsest (The Hispanic Society of America, New York), 1916 -- 1917	box 2.3	

**Scope and Contents**

Transcription of the Palimpsest, 1916, Transcription of the Palimpsest, The Acts of the Apostles, 1916, Wordlist, possibly relating to the Palimpsest, c. 1916, Notes and transcriptions from the Palimpsest, proofs of the same, 1916, List of 12 parables from the Palimpsest, followed by typed text and Buchanan's translation of the same, c.1917, Transcription of the Palimpsest. Some pages contain addresses of various people, 1917, Transcription of the Palimpsest, Gospel of St. Luke, c. 1917

---

Huntington Palimpsest (The Hispanic Society of America, New York), 1917 -- 1925 box 2.4

**Scope and Contents**

Proofs of the text from the Palimpsest, 1917, Proofs of unpublished Comparative Edition of the Palimpsest, 1917, Printed cards with passages from the Palimpsest, 1917, Two articles on the Palimpsest, Proofs of the top (latest) writing in the Palimpsest, 1918, Transcription of the Palimpsest, Gospel of St. John, 1918, Foreword for a publication of the Palimpsest, 1918, Notes on Palimpsest, 1919?, "The Oldest Text of the Gospels". Introduction is by ESB, 1924, Article printed in the Mercure de France on September 15th, 1925.

---

Harkness Manuscript (New York Public Library), 1928 -- 1932 box 2.5      folder 1-7

**Scope and Contents**

Transcriptions and notes, 1928, English version of the MS, 1929, Transcription of the MS, 1929, "Calendar of the New Gospel Texts with Poetic Commentaries by their Discoverer", 1932

---

Various manuscript transcriptions and translations, 1899 -- 1930 box 2.5      folder 8-13

**Scope and Contents**

Notes and wordlists, 1899-1905, Transcriptions from manuscripts, c. 1905, Text from St. Matthew's Gospel, from unidentified manuscript, c. 1910, "Early Spanish Marriage Rite" from a missal written c. 1300, copied and translated by ESB in 1916, "The Confession of St. Patrick" translated by ESB from Latin, 1930, "Cuthbert's Story of Bede's Death" translated by ESB, 1930

---

ESB's Writings about his research, circa 1920 -- 1930 box 2.6      folder 1-5



by ESB's wife in the Ashburton High School, New Zealand, 1930's

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

### Series 3: Reviews and publicity, 1896 -- 1932

Physical Description: 0.5 linear feet 0.5 linear feet; 1 box

Conditions Governing Access:

#### Conditions Governing Access

This series is open for research.

#### Arrangement

This series is arranged in rough chronological order.

#### Scope and Contents

This series contains 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.

Title/Description	Instances	
Clippings and reviews , 1896 -- 1931	box 3.1	folder 1-5
<b>Scope and Contents</b>		
Relating to Buchanan's high school, sermons, and publications		
Newspaper clippings regarding Huntington Palimpsest, 1914 -- 1932	box 3.1	folder 6
Brochure announcing a class ESB was teaching in Columbia University, 1916	box 3.1	folder 7
Publisher's announcements of ESB's book publications, 1916 -- 1924	box 3.1	folder 8
Reviews of ESB's publications and lectures, 1916 -- 1930	box 3.1	folder 9
Newspaper clippings relating to ESB's war activities, 1918	box 3.1	folder 10
"Commentary on the Primitive Text" by B.E. Scriven. Relates to Huntington Palimpsest, 1919	box 3.1	folder 11
Newspaper clippings relating to ESB's publications in French, 1923 -- 1924	box 3.1	folder 12

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

### Series 4: Personal materials, circa 1894 -- 1950

Physical Description: 0.5 linear feet 0.5 linear feet; 1 box

Conditions Governing Access:**Conditions Governing Access**

This series is open for research.

**Arrangement**

This series is unarranged.

**Scope and Contents**

This series contains personal materials, including teacher recommendations, church licenses, a resume that Buchanan wrote in 1914, his photograph, and his business card. This series also contains legacy processing information.

Title/Description	Instances	
Recommendations of ESB's teachers, 1894 -- 1895	box 4.1	folder 1
Church licenses, 1897 -- 1918	box 4.1	folder 2
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, circa 1910 -- 1919	box 4.1	folder 3
Resume and notes on ESB's biography written by his wife, circa 1900 -- 1939	box 4.1	folder 4
Letter appointing ESB as an instructor at Columbia University, 1916	box 4.1	folder 5
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)", circa 1920 -- 1929	box 4.1	folder 6
Legacy processing information, circa 1936 -- 1950	box 4.1	folder 7-9

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)