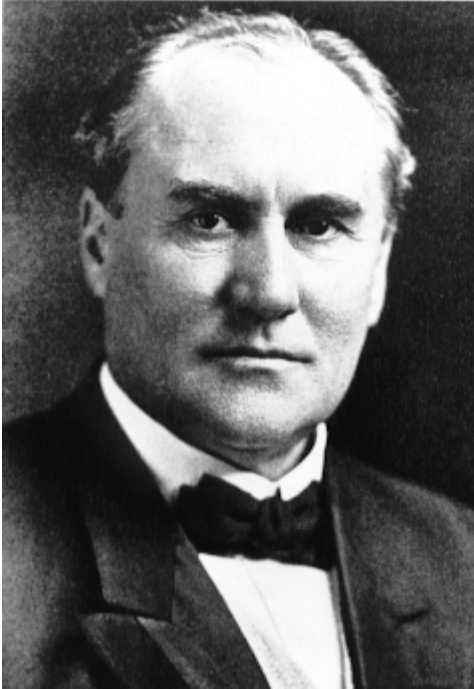


COLORADO GOVERNORS

Dr. Henry A. Buchtel



Scope and Content Note

The Dr. Henry A. Buchtel collection comprises approximately 10 cubic feet of material and 2 microfilm rolls spanning his term from 1907-1909. Record series in the collection include the Executive Record; correspondence; extraditions and requisitions; reports; and speeches and messages to the General Assembly.

The official acts of Buchtel's administration can be documented through the Executive Record. His associations with various state agencies are documented in the correspondence and reports. Buchtel's political vision can be researched through his Inaugural Speech of 1907 and his Biennial Message of 1909. Strengths of the collection include documentation concerning State institutions, the State Board of Charities and Corrections, the railroads, and highways/good roads.

Biography

Dr. Henry Augustus Buchtel, Republican Governor of Colorado from 1907-1909, was born on September 3, 1847, in Akron, Ohio. Soon after his birth, the Buchtels moved to South Bend, Indiana where Henry Buchtel received a private school education and later attended Indiana-Asbury University (now DePauw University). After working as a foreman in the grocery and pharmaceutical business, Buchtel found his calling in the Methodist Ministry. Buchtel reentered his alma mater to study theology and graduated with a Master's Degree and Phi Beta Kappa Honors. After graduation Buchtel and his new bride, Mary Nelson Stevenson, traveled on a mission to Rustchuck, Bulgaria in 1873. His wife soon developed both typhus and tuberculosis, however, which forced them to return to the United States early.

After establishing himself as a notable Methodist pastor in other states, Buchtel took his place behind the altar of Denver's Evans Chapel in 1886. Shortly thereafter, the community recognized Buchtel's talent and offered him the ministry at the Trinity Methodist Church. Under his five years of leadership the church's membership grew from 766 to 1,023 and Sunday school blossomed to 1,200 students. This sudden growth not only made the Trinity Church the largest congregation in Colorado, but also necessitated building a new church. Utilizing the architectural skills of Robert Roeschlaub, designer of the Central City Opera House, the Trinity Church became an architectural landmark as well as a popular place to worship in downtown Denver. After his popular ministry in Denver, Buchtel was called to serve at the Central Avenue Church in Indianapolis for five years, and later at two churches in New Jersey.

Buchtel soon left the pulpit in 1899 and accepted the position of Chancellor of Denver University, a school that was on the verge of bankruptcy with a \$175,000 debt. Buchtel toured the state, made various guest sermons, and became an active and contributing member of the Denver Chamber of Commerce in order

to raise the money necessary to save the school from bankruptcy. In a matter of three years Buchtel raised \$243,000, protecting the school from its creditors, and more than doubled the student body to 1,116 students. Buchtel's close relationship with the philanthropic Andrew Carnegie resulted in funding for a library and a new science building in 1916. In fact, under the stewardship of Buchtel, Denver University grew from one building to seven within two decades.

In 1906 the Republican Party asked Buchtel to run for the governorship. This election was not fraught with the same accusations of fraud that the 1904 race was, but Colorado citizens still mistrusted the Democratic Party. A major schism developed within the Democratic Party leadership between Alva Adams on the one side, and Denver Mayor Robert Speer and Rocky Mountain News owner Senator Thomas Patterson on the other. This political infighting insured victory for the Republicans and Henry Buchtel.

Buchtel did not have to cope with the economic woes of the 1890's or the numerous labor strikes that occurred during the administrations of his predecessors. He focused instead on regulating various industries in order to protect the consumer. Buchtel accomplished the development of a stringent pure food law, the creation of a functional Railroad Commission, and the passing of a well-written Colorado insurance code. As in his previous occupations, Buchtel focused on providing funding for public institutions. His unprecedented support of the State Board of Charities and Corrections allowed for the development of the State Home for the Mentally Defective and he also was responsible for the funding of other state-operated schools. Buchtel left office authorizing a peerless public building program which was responsible for the creation of 48 building projects and twenty-eight bridges throughout the State. Furthermore, Buchtel's outspoken support of prison labor resulted in the building of good roads that reached as far south as Trinidad. Finally, Buchtel sponsored the local option law so that communities could determine whether or not they wanted saloons and other questionably moral businesses within their city limits. Despite these popular acts, Buchtel chose not to run for a second term so that he could return as Chancellor of Denver University.

Dr. Henry Augustus Buchtel died on October 22, 1924, and is buried at Fairmount Cemetery in Denver. Denver University and the Trinity Church still stand as a living testimonial to a man who gave much to the Denver community and people of Colorado.

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Series Descriptions

Executive Record

The Executive Record contains executive orders; appointments; legislative messages; pardons; extraditions and requisitions; honorary citations; and proclamations which were issued by Governor Buchtel during his term of office from 1907-1909.

Correspondence

Included in this series is correspondence between Governor Buchtel and his constituents, state agencies, and other public officials. The series is alphabetically arranged either by subject or by correspondent. Significant subject matter includes the operations of various state agencies, the state highway system and good roads campaign, and Senate Bill 252 (1907) having to do with the State Geological Survey.

Reports

This series consists primarily of reports from state agencies including the 1st Biennial Report of the Industrial Workshop for the Blind (1908), the State Industrial School for Girls: Outline of Work (1907), and various reports from the State Board of Charities and Corrections. There are also reports from the El Paso Good Roads Association (1908) and the National Prison Congress (1907), as well as State Board of Equalization Annual Reports (1907-1908).

Speeches and Messages

Buchtel's 1907 Inaugural Address and his 1909 Biennial Message to the General Assembly comprise this series.

Extraditions and Requisitions

This series includes documentation concerning the surrendering of alleged criminals to a different jurisdiction for trial. Documentation may include the application for extradition, the warrant for arrest, and correspondence from the Attorney General's office concerning the extradition.

Proclamations

This series consists of Executive Proclamations issued by the governor and deposited as filings in the Office of the Secretary of State.