



COLORADO

State Archives

1313 Sherman Street, Suite 120
Denver, CO 80203

Colorado State Archives
State and Territorial Governors Records
Papers of Henry Augustus Buchtel

Collection Summary

Title	Papers of Henry Augustus Buchtel
Dates (inclusive)	1907-1909
Creator	Buchtel, Henry Augustus, 1847-1924
Abstract	This collection holds the papers relating to the administration of Henry Augustus Buchtel, seventeenth governor of the State of Colorado from 1907-1909.
Identification	Collection Number 1000.19 (Collection may have been previously referred to as Collection Number 1028. See additional information in other collections; see Detailed Description below).
Quantity	10 record boxes, 3 bound volumes, 3 reels of microfilm
Repository	Colorado State Archives
Location	Documents and Bound Volumes: 8847A (Vol. 18), 9364C (Vol. 7), 13894, 9872, 8775, 13898, 26720, 26721, 26722, 26952, 9737, 9738 Microfilm: S193, S194, S230
Language	English
Processing Information	Processed by Siobhan Sims, April, 2022



Biography

Written by Jason Brockman and Erin McDanal

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.

Bibliography

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Buchtel Collection. Denver, Co.: Colorado Historical Society.
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Garth, Thomas Russel. The Life of Augustus Buchtel. Denver, Co.: Peerless Printing Company, 1937.
Schreiber, Theodore. "Henry A Buchtel, 1847-1924." The American-German Review, August 1942, 7/6, pgs. 13-15.
Leonard, Stephen J. "The Irish, English, and Germans in Denver, 1860 - 1890." Colorado Magazine, 54/2, pgs. 126-155.
McGiffert. "Higher Learning in Colorado: A Historical Study, 1860-1940." The American Historical Review, vol. 70, pgs. 907.
Templin, John Alton. A History of Methodism in Denver, 1876-1912. Denver, Co.: The Iliff School of Theology, Unpublished Th.D. Dissertation, 1956.
Templin, J. Alton, Allen Breck, and Martin Rist. The Methodist, Evangelical, & United Brethren Churches in the Rockies, 1850-1976. Denver, Co.: Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Methodist Church, 1977.
"The University of Denver." Pacific Christian Advocate, 7 March 1906, pgs. 6-7.

Arrangement of the Papers/Scope of Content

The papers are organized into the following series:

Executive Record - This series consists of three bound volumes (one letterpress), eight file folders, and two rolls of microfilm containing executive orders made by Governor Buchtel during his term of office. Included are extraditions, proclamations, pardons, and vetoes. File folders are organized chronologically and alphabetically by subject or correspondent.

Correspondence - This series is composed of correspondence between Governor Buchtel, his constituents, and other leaders of local and international governmental agencies. Appointments, applications, and petitions are included within this series. Information is organized alphabetically by sender and also by agency or topic.



Reports - This series contains annual, biennial, semi-annual and other reports compiled during Buchtel's term in office.

Speeches and Messages - Buchtel's Biennial Message to the 17th General Assembly comprises this series.

Extraditions and Requisitions - This series contains a record of criminal requisitions requested by Buchtel.

Proclamations - This series encompasses one file folder containing executive proclamations deposited as filings of the Secretary of State.

Manuscripts and Research Items - This series consists of one file folder holding a pamphlet supporting Buchtel as the Republican Candidate in the 1907 gubernatorial race.

Note on Scope of Papers

Boxes 9737 and 9738 missing.

Restrictions on Access

None

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item]. *Papers of Henry Augustus Buchtel*. Colorado State Archives.

Index Terms

Colorado

Governors—Colorado

Buchtel, Henry, 1847-1924

Detailed Description of the Collection

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