



Mr E. Buchanan – 1904 (Edition 1)

When Mr George Humphries returned to India in January 1904 he was accompanied by Mr Edward Buchanan who had been commended by the assembly at Rongotea. He made his home with the Humphries in the orphanage at Kamakerai near to Kollegal and learned the Kanarese language. He accompanied Mr Humphries in his village visitation, helped him in the orphanage and shared with him in the distribution of literature at Hindu festivals. On March 3rd 1907, Mr George Humphries died of Blackwater fever and Mr Buchanan wrote intimately that “he had lost his boss”. He took over responsibility of the orphanage at Kamakerai and was more than ever conscious of the challenge of India – its religions, disease, filth and poverty. He himself suffered repeated attacks of fever.

On February 9th, 1909, he married Miss Dora E. Saunders, who had gone out from England and together they continued in the orphanage helping the boys in the home, in their school and in their work. There was not at first so much opportunity for visiting but Mr Buchanan did have fellowship with Mr Ebenezer Lynn in that ministry and for many years was himself the only one itinerating around that district. More schools were commended [sic] in that period up until 1920. Thousands of gospels were sold at the festivals and the consistent witness in the villages resulted in quite a number being saved and baptised, some of them notorious characters. There was always the fight against fevers and cholera both personally and on the behalf of other[s]. It was disconcerting to find dead rats in their sheds, and when a mad dog was shot “What a relief to see it drop over dead” was Mr Buchanan's comment. During those years they had blessing as a result of the special meetings with evangelist V.D. David and the first high caste young man confessed Christ openly. Then, too, help was given to poor people to rear silkworms, particularly during the war years.

In 1920 Mrs Buchanan had to have a serious operation and several years later, on June 19th 1923, she died. Mr Buchanan continued the new bungalow that he was building for them. His sister-in-law stayed on together with Miss Moseley for a short time. A young men's Bible Class was started at that time in an endeavour to prepare others for the responsibility of the work but mostly he carried on alone in village preaching.

On August 6th 1924, Mr Buchanan married Miss G. Murphy, from the Belguam district. Despite the fact that he had been in India for 20 years, he found himself still reaching out to new areas and Mrs Buchanan helped with a small dispensary. In 1927 he had a near escape when shooting a leopard. Before he saw it properly it sprang, clawing his chest and biting his arm. Only the quick action of one of his helpers saved him by snatching up his gun and putting a ball in the beast's head. Toward the end of the 1920's there was a greater response from the consistent sowing of the good seed over so many years and quite a number were saved and baptised.

Early in 1932 Mrs Buchanan, who had not been well for some time, went to Great Britain. Mr Buchanan felt he could not leave the work especially as that time he was responsible for the repairs at the Montauban Rest Home. In 1933 they enlarged the halls both at Kellegal and Kamakerai and Mr Buchanan welcomed his wife

back again. The medical work was blessed of the Lord in those years as the preaching was so often to those who had been personally helped.

During the 1940's, greater effort was made to reach people at the festivals. Hundreds of thousands of people met in their district and many thousands of those pilgrims passed their very gate having walked 50-100 miles. Footsore and weary they were drawn on by a power they said they could not resist. A survey produced at that time outlined the four-fold nature of the work:

1. Direct evangelism; scripture selling and preaching, visiting every village and hamlet.
2. Medical; carried on by Mrs Buchanan including midwifery and treatment for accidents and disease.
3. Educational; Schools up to the 5th standard to give many poor Indians the opportunity to learn the Scriptures in a Christian school.
4. Industrial; poor people were established on their own land rather than given charity so they could grow food and rear silkworms.

After 40 years in the Kamakerai district alone they welcomed Mrs and Mrs Murray McKay in 1945. They continued in a reduced tole for several more years during times of disturbances with destructive forces showing their hand against law and order. In 1951 they moved to Coonoor to be in charge of the rest home there but Mrs Buchanan had not been well and did not improve even in the hill country. They returned to New Zealand in September 1952 and retired to Levin in 1953 where Mrs Buchanan died on October 8th. A year later Mr Buchanan married Mrs Eva Rolston of Levin and continued his interest in the land of India, which they visited in 1962. Mrs Buchanan died on January 6th 1963.

After retiring in the Maranatha Home at Mosgiel, Mr Edward Buchanan died at Dunedin on 26th November 1970 at the age of 87. He had virtually given his life to India for Christ's sake, having gone out there when he was only 20 years of age. For his love for the people amongst whom he worked, and his administrative ability to help meet their physical needs he was awarded the highest Indian civil award, the Kaiser-I-Hind medal. For his years of faithful toil for his Master leading so many to know Him, and setting such a gracious example he has no doubt received the heavenly commendation - "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord."

[Source entry includes uncaptioned photo of Mr and Mrs Buchanan. Page 171 has photo captioned: 'Missionary group in 1924. Back: Mr Irvine, Miss Mai, Mr Brewerton. Centre: Miss Sundgren, Mrs Noel, Mrs Black, Mr Noel, Miss Mosley, Mr Revell, Miss Treweek, Miss Townley, Miss Starck, Mr Buchanan. Seated: Mr and Mrs Thomson, Mr Black, Mrs Irvine, Mrs Revell, Miss Dyason, Mrs A. Redwood. Note: Mr Brewerton was visiting India from Malaya.']