

Samuel had started working in the DuPont mills in 1889. A tall, muscular man, he towered over most of the other powdermen. His workmates considered him taciturn, made so by the hard, physical labor performed in the yards. He was thoughtful and a reader and a player in Alfred I. du Pont's Tankopanicum Musical Club, known as "Al's Band" (Tankopanicum is a Native American word meaning "rushing waters of the Brandywine.") Buchanan played the bass violin, an instrument larger than a cello but smaller than a bass. Alfred called playing the bass violin "shaking hands with a bull fiddle."<sup>11</sup> He may have provided the instrument to Stewart, as he did with other members, and he may have paid for music lessons. The Delaware Symphony Orchestra grew out of Al's band.

Buchanan disliked dogs in the powder yards, saying that, if he went across the creek, he did not want dog bones mixed in with his. According to a great granddaughter, he was "wild and aggressive, as well as thoughtful, he was respected by everyone and earned that reputation as a hard-working employee." Buck was "fearless and incorruptible, but most of all he had guts." The descendant said that despite his avidity for reading and thirst for knowledge, he "thought himself not a very smart person."

The DuPont workmen had a sixth sense regarding explosions. In the event of an explosion, they "knew" whose mill building had gone up without being in the immediate vicinity. One example of this intuition comes from a Hagley oral interview with a daughter of a powder worker. Mary Braden Jackson reports that, on the morning Sam died, her father, who came home after working the overnight shift, said, "'Oh, God bless us, there goes Sam Buchanan.' And we all went out on the porch, and we run down the road, we were going to the gates, you know, everybody, all the older people to find out who it was, and sure enough it was Sam Buchanan."