

Pusey, Edwin Davis ^[1]



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by [C. Sylvester Green](#) ^[2], 1994

6 Jan. 1870–4 Jan. 1953

Edwin Davis Pusey, educator, was born at Princess Anne, Md., the son of Edwin and Katherine Ellen Davis Pusey. Tutored privately as a child, he entered Washington Academy, Princess Anne, in 1880 and after six years enrolled at St. John's College, Annapolis, from which he was graduated at age nineteen. He taught Latin and geography in Lancaster, Pa., for a year before returning to St. John's College, where he taught Latin and German (1890–1902). While there he earned a master's degree in classical languages (1892) and from Columbia University in New York he received a master's degree in education (1894). Between 1902 and 1924 he was principal of a high school and then superintendent of city schools in Laurinburg, Goldsboro, and Durham, in turn. He also taught education at [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[3] during some summer terms. In 1919 St. John's College awarded him an honorary doctor of laws degree.

Leaving North Carolina, he taught briefly at [Winthrop College](#) ^[4] in South Carolina and at the [University of Georgia](#) ^[5] (1925–45), where he also became a dean. During his professional career Pusey was active in numerous educational organizations and was often elected to positions of leadership, particularly with the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. He was editor of the *High School Quarterly* for a period and afterwards of *School and College*. While superintendent of city school systems in North Carolina, he worked to improve teaching standards, stressed the need for uniform school laws, and rendered special assistance to the [Textbook Commission](#) ^[6]. While he was head of the Durham city schools he developed and published a model course of study that attracted considerable attention. In Georgia he drafted several school laws for the state.

During the [Spanish-American War](#) ^[7] Pusey was a captain of infantry. An active [Episcopalian](#) ^[8], he served at both the parish and national levels. Over six feet tall and weighing around 230 pounds, he was a commanding figure and a popular public speaker, particularly on education and religion. He married Anita Mary Southgate and they had one daughter, Frances Southgate. After his wife's death he married Mrs. Bessie Payne Turner on 24 Aug. 1926.

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