

Edgar Creighton Higbie ◀

President (1920-31)

Dr. Higbie was a native of Wisconsin, having been born at Berlin, Wisconsin on July 31, 1875. In 1877, the family moved to a farm in southern Minnesota, and here he spent his childhood. He attended rural schools and for seven years he clerked in a store at Green Lake, Wisconsin. Later, he attended Ripon College Academy; taught school in Bluffton and Fairwater, Wisconsin; taught in a district in Mower County, Minnesota; was principal at Dexter and Clarkfield, Minnesota; and, superintendent of schools at Elmore, Minnesota. In the intervals of teaching, he carried on his studies at the University of Minnesota, Carlton College, and the University of Chicago. He received the A.B. in 1907 and A.M. degrees in 1909 from the University of Minnesota, and his PhD. from Columbia University in 1921.



While superintendent of schools at Canby, Minnesota, he established the first high school agricultural department in the State. From 1910-1917, he was Director of the West Central Minnesota School of Agriculture at Morris. He resigned to continue his graduate studies at the University of Chicago and Columbia University. During WW I, he was employed by private philanthropists at New York in organizing agricultural work for the rehabilitation of soldiers and worked for the Federal Board of Vocational and Agricultural Rehabilitation on among soldiers in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.

In 1920, he accepted the Presidency of State Normal Schools in Madison, South Dakota. He taught in the summer schools at Boston University and George Peabody College for Teachers. He began his duties in 1921.

Dr. Higbie was married to Nellie May Leslie of Brownsdale, Minnesota on June 15, 1904. They had two sons, Howard Ernest, born December 13, 1909 and Leslie Warren born on October 30, 1914.

While in Madison, Dr. Higbie served as the first President of the Madison Kiwanis Club. He was a member and active in the work of the Presbyterian Church. He was a member of the A.F. & A.M.

In March of 1931, President Higbie resigned President of Eastern State Normal School as it was then called. He accepted the Presidency of J. Ormand Wilson Teachers College, Washington, D.C.

He remained there as President until 1941, when due to ill health he gave up his administrative duties, but remained on the faculty as an assistant professor of education.

He was known throughout the nation for his profound study of the sociological elements and implications of Teacher Education.

He was noted for humanistic approach in the study of education and always emphasized the importance of setting up educational courses in scholarly sequence. He was President of District Education Association for many years. And he authored two books *A first Course in the Study of Education* and *An Objective Method for Determining Certain Fundamental Principles in Secondary Agricultural Education*. He died from a heart attack at his home in Bethesda, Maryland on November 24, 1944 at the age of 69.

Higbie Hall, built in 1965, was an addition to the growing school and named after President Edgar Higbie.

Source:

Dakota State University, RG 8, DSU 132, Box 855.

Lowry, V. A. *Forty Years at General Beadle (1922-1962)*. Madison, SD: Dakota State University, 1984. pg 24-43.

Olson, Bonnie. *Historical Calendar of Dakota State University (1881-2007)*. Madison, SD: Dakota State University.

Higbie Hall ◀

Higbie hall, built in 1965, was an addition to the growing school. Named after [Edgar C. Higbie](#), the hall located next to the [Trojan Center](#) was originally built to house 150 men. The dedication ceremony was held in September 1965 and was to be held, along with the dedication of the newly built Trojan Center, on the grounds outside of the building. Although that was the plan, due to weather the ceremony was moved inside the [Kennedy Hall](#) auditorium.⁸

Currently the four-story brick hall has changed to house both men and women within its walls. Divided by floors, both men and women have access to the hall's computer lab on the main floor, laundry rooms on two of the floors, and couches, chairs, and a large screen TV in the lobby of the main floor.



(taken from the archives of Dakota State University)