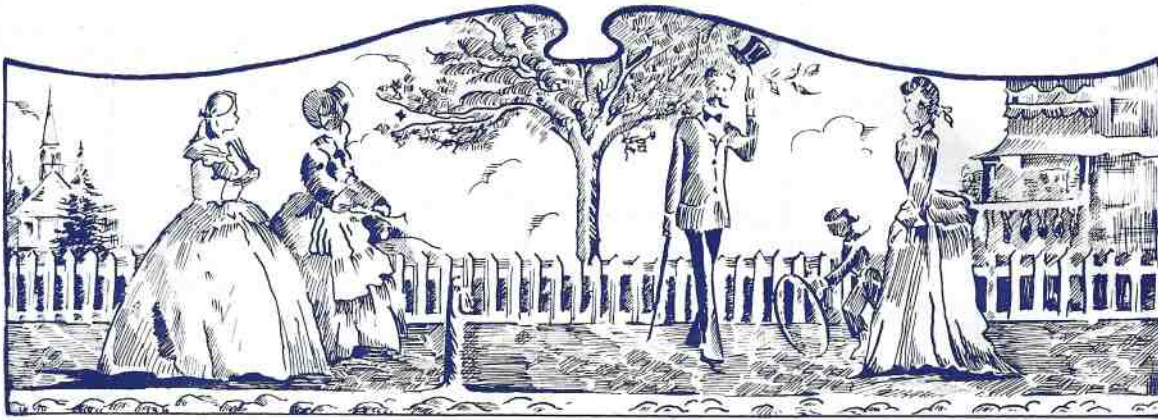




'Way Back When

If you had been a pupil in Classical (then Worcester High School) back in the 1850's, on your schedule would have been ancient geography, political economy, astronomy, geology, Greek, natural theology, and natural, intellectual, and moral philosophy. Whew! But that's not all; once a week there would have been exercises in music, composition and declamation, drawing, penmanship, and spelling for the entire school. You would have had to pass a written examination in every subject at the end of each term, often with supplementary oral exams. Instead of going to school approximately twenty-eight hours a week, as you do now, you would have gone to two daily sessions, six days a week. Of course, if you had been especially prompt and well-behaved during the week, you might be excused from attending on Saturday. The records show, however, some industrious scholars who chose to remain for another day of study! And there would be no long summer vacation, either. There were four terms in those days, including one in the summer, and new pupils were admitted in April provided that they could pass the entrance examinations. The city fathers did not want to waste education on those who would gain nothing from it!

School, however, was not work alone. It played a much greater part in the social life of the students than it does today. The first extra-curricular organization was the Eucleia Debating Society, formed by the boys in 1858. This was the forerunner of the present Debating Assembly, which was started in 1885 because of dissension among the members of Eucleia. Not until 1881 did the girls organize the Aletheia Society for debate and literary discussion, which thereby gains the title of the oldest active group in the school. Each year a contest was held in which the boys declaimed and the girls gave readings, with a prize awarded to the best speaker in each group.

