



"The oldest high school west of the Alleghenies" — this is Woodward High School.

Old Woodward has seemingly changed a great deal since William Woodward, its founder, provided for the building of this first Cincinnati high school in 1831. Actually it has not changed. True, there has been more than one Woodward High School, but there has been only one Woodward Spirit — though time may change the appearance of the building, it will never change the spirit on which the institution was founded. This spirit has been handed down from class to class, not as any written document, but as something intangible, not seen, and yet ever present.

The Spirit had its birth in a small two-story brick building which was the first Woodward. With the addition of another floor in 1841, more of the Cincinnati youth were given opportunity to share with others the spirit and traditions of the school.

For fourteen years, this building echoed and re-echoed the tread of young Woodward feet — then in 1855 gave way to a greater structure. This building was purely Gothic, pronounced in its architectural design and beauty. For more than half a century, the building of 1855 continued its sublime mission of service and usefulness. It stood as the representative of high ideals of life, of loyalty to home and to nation, of strong minds and great names, of consecrated teaching and high standards of scholarship. It seemed almost sacrilege that it, too, should have to bow down before the onward progress of the times. Yet it had to be.

In 1910, there came another Woodward, the building of today — much greater, much grander, rising its majestic dignity towards the skies, even at its creation glorified by the sacred spirit and tradition of the Woodwards of the past and earnestly resolved to uphold and preserve them untarnished and undimmed in the years that were about to come.

For forty years, the present Woodward has continued its work of immeasurable benefit and blessing to the youth of our city — for forty years, it has through consecrated teaching exalted high and noble ideals — for forty years, it has annually sent forth hundreds of young men and women to fill positions of honor and trust throughout the length and breadth of our great land — for forty years, it has raised its head in conscious pride at the contemplation of its long years of service and usefulness.

And let us say in the beautiful language of a poetess of our own dear Woodward —

Bide in these walls, O spirit of the place,  
Else have they built in vain, who built anew —  
Breathe honor here and loyalty and truth  
And high desire and laying down of life.  
And when the day has come, in time's stern round,  
When these walls shall crumble and decay,  
Still hover near, O spirit of the Place,  
Until a newer habitation stands  
In dedication to those deathless things  
Beyond decay and irony of time.