

As a fitting tribute to the 50th anniversary celebration of the old High School, Frank B. Rickard, Class of 1908, wrote the words and music to a song still sung today in Middleburgh Central School:

Alma Mater

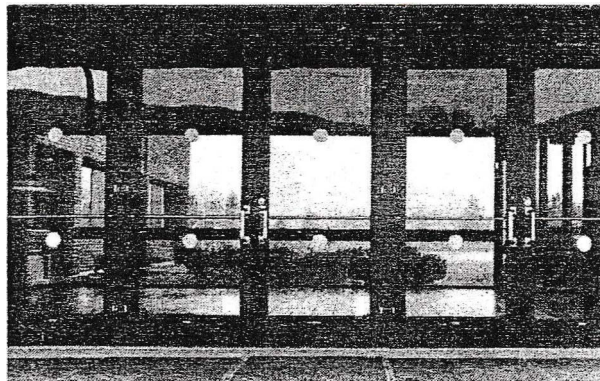
On the banks of a lovely river,
By the side of a quiet stream
Stands our dear old Alma Mater,
Our School of White and Green.

In the Fairest valley fashioned
By the hand of God unseen
Stands our dear old Alma Mater,
Our School of White and Green.

In the days that lie before us
In the silent years between,
May we love her as we do to-night,
Our School of White and Green.

Chorus:

Then join we all in singing
And may this be our theme,
Keep bright her shield of Snowy White,
Keep fair her field of Green.



Frank B. Rickard, A.A.G.O., 1892 - 1968.

When one talks with older members of the community about Frank Rickard, the phrase, "quite a character," seems to be a re-occurring theme.

Mr. Rickard was born and raised in Middleburgh. He attended the local school, and in 1908 wrote the Alma Mater for the Middleburgh school. Over the years through centralization and annexation the Middleburgh school became Middleburgh Central School; however, the school Alma Mater remained the same.

Mr. Rickard left Middleburgh for a short time and studied organ at the Guilman Organ School in New York City, which later became a part of the Julliard School of Music. His studies led to his becoming an Associate in the American Guild of Organists, an honor bestowed on individuals only after passing a series of playing exams at the organ.

When he returned to Middleburgh, he entered the Postal Service, eventually becoming Postmaster of the Middleburgh Post Office. As important, he continued using his musical talent serving as organist in most of the churches in Middleburgh at various times.

The last church that Mr. Rickard served was the Middleburgh Reformed Church where you are tonight. He was instrumental in the organ renovation of 1946. Most of that work was renovated and changed in 1983. However, some of the '46 work is still in place. Whenever something goes wrong with the organ or it makes a strange sound (unrelated to the organist), I say Frank is back among us.

Ask an older member of the community to tell you about Frank Rickard. Tonight, however, as his words say, "Then join we all in singing."