



JOURNALISM of long ago is represented in these newspapers which have been in Kermit Sheets' family since they were printed. The paper Sheets is holding is the Ulster County Gazette published in 1800. The papers were given to him by Mrs. J. C. Hunt who gave others to the Fremont School where they are now on display.

Sex Change Tales Not New, Newspaper Of 1864 Relates

By TOM STIMMEL

From Wheeling, West Virginia, came the news story of a wedding with this unusual angle: The groom, said the dispatch, "has been known for ten years... as a lady of correct habits, modest demeanor and marked intelligence and refinement, and has been Portmistress, and kept a little store in the village known as Rest..."

The story continued that Jane Katherine Payne, who married Mrs. Annie Hinton, was a person whom neighbors "gradually came to look upon... as an old maid."

Naturally the neighbors were surprised when Miss Payne came to town, bought a suit of men's clothing and announced her intention to wed Mrs. Hinton. She was examined by doctors. Their findings, as reported in the news dispatch:

"They announced to their patient there could be no doubt of perfect masculinity, and the ignoramus who superintended her advent into the world deserved to be prosecuted for their stupidity, which brought about the subsequent wearing of petticoats instead of trousers."

Obviously quite late, the good people of Rest discovered that Miss Payne "has no mustache or whiskers," and the dispatch added: "Much confusion results in the change of sex."

Perhaps more remarkable is the timing of this news item. It preceded so-called change of sex operations by a good many years. The story quoted is from the February 6, 1864, edition of The Madison County Democrat.

That paper, and others of great vintage, recently were acquired by Kermit Sheets, 1842 Esplanade. They were given him by his aunt, Mrs. J. C. Hunt of 70 Pine Street, widow of Dr. J. C. Hunt, and have been in his family since they were printed.

That, in some cases, was quite a while ago. One paper is the Ulster County Gazette, printed at Kingston, New York, on January 4, 1800. Others include an 1874 edition of the Democrat, printed at London, Ohio, and a London daily called the Daily Nickel Plate, edition of March 27, 1890.

Remarkably, the 1800 Ulster County Gazette is the best preserved of the lot. Its first four pages are devoted entirely to doings of Congress and letters signed by President John Adams.

Page five devotes much space to a poem and funeral descriptions on the death of General Washington, who had died several weeks before. Unhappily, most of the advertisements are announcements of possessed property sales

soon to be conducted by Sheriff Peter Ten Broeck.

The front pages of both copies of The Madison County Democrat devoted three of their eight columns to advertising. The more interesting ads, though, were in the rear of the papers on pages three and four.

Marketed on these pages were Double-Breasted Champion Flows ("Each Flow Being Polished All Most to a Mirror Surface"), Hill's Patent Husking Gloves ("No More Sore Hands or Cold Fingers"), The New Wilson Sewing Machine selling for only \$50, "Gold for the Working Class" (a blind ad for spare-time sales), and many pitches for patent medicines.

The person obligated to fill the family medicine chest could choose between Dr. Hart's Iron Tonic, Tutt's Pills, Pe-Ru-Na Man-A-Lin, Dr. Walker's California Vinegar Bitters, Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy and Parsons' Purgative Pills.

Most of these remedies, by the way, were available at No. 13, 15 and 17 W. Second Street in London at an establishment recently opened by E. T. Riley and called the "New Cheap Cash Grocery."