

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

"Early Carroll News Newspapers Discovered"

Carroll County Times article for 5 February 1995

by Jay A. Graybeal

People frequently contact the Historical Society to ask about an old manuscript, photograph or other item they have discovered. Sometimes the item turns out to be quite interesting. Such was case when I received a call from Mrs. Marian Dyer regarding two bound volumes of the Union Bridge Carroll News newspapers that she thought the Historical Society would like to have. Mrs. Dyer said that the papers had belonged to her late father Malcolm H. Rakestraw who once served as editor and publisher of the The Pilot, a Union Bridge paper published from 1899 to 1972. A nearly complete set of this paper was given to the Historical Society by Mr. William E. Kroh in 1983. The Historical Society appreciates the recent gift made by Mrs. Dyer and the other contributors who have built the Society's extensive collection of local newspapers.

The two bound volumes found by Mrs. Dyer begin in 1886 with Vol. 1, No. 1, and fill an important gap in surviving newspapers. A monumental Maryland Newspaper Project inventory published in 1991 noted that these earliest papers could not be found in any public repository in the state. Although printed on highly acidic wood pulp paper more than a century ago, the bound papers are in relatively good condition.

An informative description of Reisler and the Carroll News can be found in the Commercial and Industrial Review of Northern and Western Maryland, published in 1890.

There is perhaps no greater general educator to the masses than a well conducted newspaper, and in Union Bridge we disclose the "Carroll News," which owes its origin to the energies of Mr. Edward Reisler, and dates its foundation back to 1886. The Carroll News is a clean, spicy journal of twenty-eight columns, composed of chaste serial stories and reading matter, for the improvement of the mind of old and young. Its circulation is extensive, and as an advertising medium is unsurpassed. Independent in its proclivities it finds its way into the homes of all liberal minded persons throughout Carroll County and the vicinity. The Job Department is in charge of a practical man and skilled assistants, and equipped with a fine line of type, a Campbell cylinder press, and other trade facilities. Every description of job printing is executed in a unique and workmanlike manner at reasonable rates. Mr. Reisler was born in Baltimore city, but his interests have been identified with Frederick and Carroll Counties during most of his life. He came to Union Bridge to establish the high school here. In early life he was engaged in school teaching and was also connected with the Western Maryland College, from which institution he received the degree of M. A. He pursues the avocation of notary public and since taking the chair of the editorial room has sustained a well merited reputation in journalistic circles.

Edward Reisler sold the paper in September 1897 to J. Harry Dreschler who operated the paper for only a year. He sold it to the American Type Foundry of Baltimore in October 1898. Local readers were without a paper for a year until the Pilot, edited by J. Hamilton Repp, began publication in October 1899. Malcolm H. Rakestraw became editor and publisher of the paper in 1950 after the death of Oliver J. Stonesifer, editor from 1908 until his death. The paper was sold to the Carroll County Times on June 5, 1969 and continued as a special section of that paper until 1972.

The newly discovered bound volumes of the Carroll News were donated to the Society by Mrs. Dyer and are now at the Maryland State Archives for microfilming. This is being done to preserve the unique

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information they contain and to make it widely available for researchers. Once the paper has been filmed, the originals will be returned and carefully stored in the Society's manuscript room. Researchers will use the microfilm which greatly reduces the damage to the original copies. The Historical Society appreciates the generous gift of Mrs. Dyer.

Photo Caption: Edward Reisler, editor and proprietor of the Union Bridge Carroll News newspaper from 1886 to 1897. Photograph by J. W. Perkins, Westminster, Md., c.1875. Historical Society of Carroll County Collection, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Melichar, 1982.