Braille typist lets fingers do reading

Story: SUSAN TAUBER Photos: MINDY SAUNDERS

Norine Kernick writes a book every three months. When she's through with it, she sends it to a place in Iowa and never knows what happens to it after that never knows what happens to it after that.

Although she would like to see what

rappens to ner manscript after she drops it in the mail, the Rochester woman doesn't mind not knowing whether it's bound in hard or soft covers or who reads her work. Mrs. Kernick doesn't write the books for fame. She writes them to help

seven keys, she transcribes adult Bible lessons supplied by Board of Missions of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. "The fact that we have Leader Dogs

for the Blind in Rochester got me interested in blind people," Mrs. Ker-nick said. "In my church bulletin from St. John Lutheran Church, I saw an announcement for people to learm Braille either by correspondence or by class."

Braille entner by constant class."
"I was working then as an elementary school secretary in Rochester and wondering what I was going to do when I retired. I'm not one of these people who can sit around and do noth-

people who can such as the correspondence class while I was still produce the correspondence to the corresponde

"50 I decided to take the correspondence class while I was still working." Mrs. Kernick studied under Betty Reithal, who had been teaching Braille in Birmingham for 10 years. The former secretary at Woodward Elementary School said Mrs. Reithal talked her into taking the class after learning that she types.

"SHE SAID DOING Braille is just like typing. But it's not," Mrs. Kernick

For two years, Mrs. Kernick worked daily. Since she was still working, she studied from 6-7 every morning and again at night. It took her two years of studying before she got her accredidation.

accredidation.

On the wall behind her desk in the sumry, wood-paneled room in which she works. Mrs. Kernick has two certificates. One is from Library of Congress and states that she's a wolunteer Braille transcriber. It's dated July 16, 1975.

Braille transcriber. It's dated July 16, 1975.
The other certificate certifies her to do Braille work for her church.
The art of Braille was foreign to Mrs. Kernick before she began her lessons. She said she never realized it was so hard to learn.
"If it hand't been for my teacher, I think I would have quit a few times.

"When she would hand back a paper with mistakes marked all over it, she would write a note saying, 'Don't be discouraged. You're coming along fine."

fine."

The first thing Mrs. Kernick learned in Braille was the alphabet. Since there are only six dots in a square space used to write everything, the task wasn't easy.

SHE LEARNED on a slate covered with heavy manilla paper. Placing a metal slate across the rows, marking the spaces for each six-de-cell, Mrs. Kemick learned to punch out each letter or number, working right to left instead of left to right.

"We worked right to left because the blind person reading this turns to page over to feel the docs," she explained. After mastering the alphabet, Mrs. Kernick got into the more complicated areas. She had to learn contractions for certain letter combinations and words.

words.
For instance, instead of punching the word "about" she learned to use the contraction "ab." Symbols for

"ch," "ar," "the," "that," "in" and many others are used because they use less space. Now Mrs, Kernick uses her Braille writer instead of the slate and is able to work much faster. "I can type a page of 25 lines in 15 minutes. But my teacher can do a page in six minutes," she added. Mrs. Kernick's work isn't completed once she twose a nage She has to

Mrs. Kernick's work isn't completed once she types a page. She has to check for mistakes. Only three are allowed per page. Mistakes are erased by taking a wooden dowel and flat-tening the paper where the Braille writer has typed a raised dot. Then Mrs. Kernick proofreads every line again. Before she mails off her two-inch-thick stack of pages, she reads every page once more for errors.

reads every page once more for crrors. "MY HUSBAND William helps me proofread now, and I make fewer mis-takes with his help. He watches the printed page, and I read the Braille copy out loud, including all punc-tuation. "I really have to be careful about mistakes. If there is one dot out of place, it changes the way the Braille reads,"



Norine Kernick can't use any eraser laying around the house to erase mistakes she may make in typing Braille. She has to use a special wood eraser that

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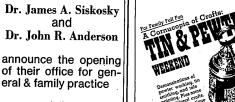
A Bit of England

smooths out the raised dot. She erases from the front side of the paper.

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