

Half-sisters who used to be half-brothers

From BRIAN HITCHEN in New York

WITH demure smiles, these two girls present their new faces to the world.

They are half sisters—now. But until they had sex-change operations, they were half brothers.

Lauraine, 28, used to be Gary until she had her operation two years ago.

Lenette, 23, used to be named Burt. She was operated on six months later—she had to wait until she was twenty-one.

She and her husband were recently divorced after a 14-month marriage.

"The marriage failure had nothing to do with the sex-change operation," said Lenette.

"My husband knew all about that."

The American girls, whose story has been revealed in St. Paul, Minnesota, believe they are the first blood

brothers to have had sex-change operations.

Discussing their lives as boys, Lenette said: "School days were hell for me. I was called a queer and a fairy. How could you make people understand."

Blonde Lauraine said: "We had played a masquerade for so many years that the pressure of trying to act as men when we felt as women began to cause all types of frustrations.

"I knew that unless I could change my sex I might as well commit suicide."

Both Lauraine and Lenette say they are now like any other woman—except that they cannot bear children.

Lenette works as a beautician. Lauraine is a cashier-secretary. And she also works in a night-spot as an exotic dancer.



Once half-brothers, now half-sisters . . . Lauraine (in front) and Lenette.