George Eastman House - International Museum of Photography
The George Eastman House of Photography, 900 East Avenue, Rochester, New York. Open free daily except Monday 10:00 to 3:00, Sunday 1:00 to 6:00, free parking. In the Conservatory are shown early processes of photography. Here is located the console of the organ on which concerts are given every Sunday.

From an Ektachrome Transparency

POST CARD

George Eastman House - International Museum of Photography
Program for Eastman Homestead Dedication

George Eastman House of Photography

Rochester, N.Y.

July 12, 1956

Chairman

DR. C. E. KENNETH NES. President, George Eastman House

Speakers

JAMES E. GLEASON. Chairman, Board of Trustees, George Eastman House

MISS ELIZABETH G. HOLAHAN. President, Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in Western New York

THURSTON BROWNE. Mayor of Waterville, N.Y.

CHARLES HUTCHISON. Vice-President of George Eastman House

MRS. ROBERT RAMLET. Long-time Friend of Mr. Eastman

(Mrs. Ramlet will officiate at the dedication)
June 10, 1954

Mr. Thomas J. Hargrave  
Eastman Kodak Company  
Rochester 4, New York

Dear Mr. Hargrave:

Andrew Wolfe has requested permission to print the enclosed letters written by George Eastman in the May "Scrapbook" of the Rochester Historical Society of which he is an editor.

Oscar and I think this a good idea and would like to know if this meets with your approval.

Faithfully,

[Signature]

Beaumont Newhall  
Curator

BN/msw  
Enc.

An Educational Memorial to George Eastman to Show  
the Progress in the Art and Science of Photography
COPY OF LETTER FROM MISS ELIZABETH LEA
July 27, 1954

2031 Locust Street
Philadelphia

Beaumont Newhall, Curator
George Eastman House
Rochester, New York

Dear Mr. Newhall,

I was very much interested to read "The Prodigious Life of George Eastman" in the April 26th issue of Life magazine and have been intending for quite some time to convey my congratulations to you and Mr. Butterfield for an excellent article.

I was amazed to read that more than 200,000 letters from Mr. Eastman's correspondence have been preserved; I am fortunate enough to have in my possession the letter he wrote to my great-grandfather, Matthew Carey Lea, dated February 5, 1879. As you know, Mr. Eastman was experimenting with dry plates at that time; he received much valuable information from M. Carey Lea's Manual of Photography as well as the British Journal of Photography. In fact, Mr. Eastman stated that my great-grandfather's book was the first textbook he read when he commenced to study photography--it was the only one of its kind that had been published as early as 1879.

In 1922, at Mr. Eastman's request, my father sent him the letter he wrote to M. Carey Lea, so that he could have a photostat copy made of it, which perhaps you have seen.

I hope some day to be able to go to Rochester and see the museum. Meanwhile, I shall treasure the small portion that I have of that voluminous correspondence, and my copy of Life Magazine for April 26th!

Sincerely yours,

Signed-(Miss) Elizabeth G. Lea

July 26th.
The George Eastman Birthplace

Only Example in the East of a Story-and-a-Half Greek Revival House Museum Open to the Public.

George Eastman, age three.

George Eastman, philanthropist and Father of Modern Photography, was born July 12, 1854, in this house, in the village of Waterville, N. Y., to Maria Kilbourn and George Washington Eastman.

The family was in comfortable circumstances in Waterville with a 30 acre nursery fruit farm there; the father owned and administered the Eastman Commercial College in distant Rochester.

When George was not quite six years old his father sold his nursery business in Waterville and moved the family to Rochester so as to devote his entire time to his commercial college there. Two years after this move the elder Eastman died and the family of Mrs. Eastman, George and his two elder sisters, came upon hard times. Mrs. Eastman in her struggle to keep the home together and the children in school had to take in boarders. George was forced to leave school at thirteen and go to work at $3 per week.

For his one hundredth birthday a few of George Eastman’s old friends together made a gift of his birthplace to the George Eastman House. It was moved 140 miles from Waterville to Rochester, and re-erected and restored in this garden for his Centennial, July 12, 1954. This brought the first and the last homes of George Eastman together. The front of each house is similar: four columns support a portico.
The earlier Eastman colonial homestead, where George’s father was born, was built by his great grandfather about 1770 and is located across the line from Waterville in the township of Marshall. The early forbear, Roger Eastman, came from England in the ship “Confidence” in 1638 to Salisbury in Massachusetts Bay.

RESTORING THE HOUSE

Built in the 1830’s during an era of expansion and confidence, the George Eastman Birthplace was designed in the Greek Revival Style of architecture. This was a style which lasted for over 40 years and was a reflection of the intense sympathy of the people of our young republic for the Greeks in their struggle for freedom in the 1820’s. The main block of this seven-room house is a story-and-a-half tetrastyle temple type. Fluted Greek Doric columns of solid white pine support the portico. The handsome entrance with its 8-panel door flanked by painted glass sidelights and rich surrounding treatment is an interesting regional variation which occurs in a number of houses in Oneida County.

Both within and without, the Eastman Birthplace has been painstakingly restored to the period of the occupancy of the Eastman family. During the course of the years, a number of minor changes and one major change had been made to conform to changing fashions and needs. A late 19th century porch ran along the west side of the house and a balustrade had been added to the front porch. The original small window panes had been removed and plain sash substituted. Doors and windows had been let into walls and original openings sealed up. The shutters had been discarded.

Careful research conducted in Waterville, before the house was moved,
revealed the nature of these changes and permitted restoration of the
missing features and removal of later additions. The missing window
shutters were discovered in a sealed part of the old barn. Many layers
of paint were removed in order to determine the colors used both with-
out and within during the time of the Eastman family's occupancy.
Under as many as 12 layers of wall paper, in some instances, the original
wall papers were located. These will be duplicated.

ASSEMBLING THE FURNISHINGS

In the absence of original furnishings and because of the limited time,
the Eastman Birthplace is presently furnished with a loan exhibition made
possible by the cooperation of generous individuals and Rochester Museum
of Arts & Sciences, Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester Historical Society

In order to furnish the house in a manner consistent with the eco-
nomic and cultural level of the Eastman family, a study was made of all
existing family correspondence and of the Waterville area and its resources
during the 1840's and 1850's. The furnishings selected belong to the period
of the 1840's with some earlier pieces combined, it being assumed that
both husband and wife might have been supplied with a few old family
pieces.

The 1840's marked a transitional period in house furnishings which saw
late Empire gradually merge with the rising Victorian period which was
to supplant it. The center table in the parlor, with its scroll feet, and the
curly maple settle in the sitting room are examples of this late Empire.
The chintz hangings in the sitting room are old and were made in the
1840's. The Metropolitan Museum of New York owns a length of the
same chintz. The blue moreen valances in the front parlor are also old
and of the period as are the printed cotton hangings in the bedroom.
Tambour embroidered muslin curtains have been used in other rooms.

The parlor, which in the
1850's was seldom used
except for an important
even such as a marriage
or funeral.
The downstairs master-bedroom with its early maple canopied bed. A campfire lamp can be seen on the maple bureau.

The floors have been covered with straw matting. This material was widely used from the second quarter of the nineteenth century and is still in use today, both as a summer covering, for bedrooms and for lining of carpets. Early home-making books such as Miss Catherine Beecher’s “A Treatise on Domestic Economy for the Use of Young Ladies at Home & at School,” published by Harper Bros. in 1842, and “An Encyclopaedia of Domestic Economy” by Thos. Webster, assisted by the late Mrs. Parkes, and published in New York in 1845 by Harper Bros., provide an inexhaustible supply of information on the furnishing and maintenance of houses of the period.

An old fashioned flower and kitchen-herb garden west of the house resembles such gardens of Waterville in the 1850’s.

To date the Eastman Birthplace is the only example in the East of a story-and-a-half Greek Revival house museum that may be visited by the public.

At the time of his death in 1932 the New York Times editorialized: “Eastman was a stupendous factor in the education of the modern world. Of what he got in return for his great gifts to the human race he gave generously for their good: fostering music, endowing learning, supporting science in its researches and teaching, seeking to promote health and lessen human ills, helping the lowly to rise to their struggle toward the light, making his own city a center of the arts and glorifying his own country in the eyes of the world.”

Issued by the George Eastman House of Photography—an educational memorial to George Eastman to show the progress in the art and science of photography.