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Interview with George H. Clark,  
A Director

The father of Mr. George H. Clark (Brackett H. Clark), with Henry Strong, helped Mr. Eastman to organize the company. Mr. Clark's father was a director and the secretary of the company from its organization until his death in 1900. Mr. Clark is <sup>now</sup> in feeble health and suffers from a speech difficulty, but an endeavor was made to gather as many recollections from him as possible. He has been a director since 1921.

He was understood to say that Ackerman names Walker as Secretary of the company but that while Walker held office a month or two at the beginning his father held it from then on.

Mr. Strong was a neighbor of the Clark's in the mid-eighties on Lake Avenue, the Strong home being where the Knights of Malta building is now located. His father met Mr. Eastman through Mr. Strong whom he knew. Mr. Eastman convinced Mr. Strong that the company had a future so he went in with him. There were originally sixteen stockholders but Mr. Clark is the only one alive today. None of these original stockholders, except Mr. Strong and Mr. Clark, Sr. took a position in the company.

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Mr. Clark said that Mr. Stuber came with the company through the discharge of Reichenbach in 1892 after the latter with two others had deliberately made bad film. Mr. Eastman had to hunt for a new chemist and he had heard of Mr. Stuber. Mr. Clark thinks Mr. Eastman

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went to Louisville, <sup>Kentucky</sup> to see him. For about six years Mr. Stuber worked night and day and got good film eventually.

Being pressed for details of Mr. Eastman himself Mr. Clark claimed he was a "regular Indian"--because he never forgot. He never forgot if anyone helped him and he never forgot if anyone deliberately crossed him. As an example of his remembering a friend, he cited the case of Mr. Brownell, who like some inventors, was not a good business man although he was a good fellow. Brownell went broke and Mr. Eastman upon learning of the predicament of a man who has been a loyal employee gave him a pension. Mr. Clark recalls hearing about this at a director's meeting. Mr. Eastman never forgot those who had done the best they could for him.

Asked to tell something about the director's meetings at which Mr. Eastman presided, Mr. Clark said their distinguishing point was that there was no nonsense or wasting of words. Like Mr. Eastman's personal conversation, they were characterized by being strictly to the point.

One reason Mr. Eastman named him as a director, Mr. Clark believes, was a feeling of friendly loyalty to his father. Others had sold their stock and discouraged him during hard times. Clark, Sr. had stuck and had bought more so George Eastman made him a director.

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The photo of a house made in winter by Mr. Eastman and appearing in Ackerman, says Mr. Clark, was taken on Jones Avenue. His father had a stove factory at the end of that street when Mr. Eastman took the picture.

Explaining his dearth of personal reminiscence of Mr. Eastman Mr. Clark said he was not intimate with him as his father was who was in the office every day.

Some of the directors of Eastman Kodak Company felt discouraged during the depression of the '90's but Strong and Clark, Sr. remained backing Mr. Eastman. There were only five directors then and two of them--Ed Sage and Mr. Kent--wanted to wind up the concern. Today both of their families are wealthy because this was not done.

Mr. Clark first saw Mr. Eastman when he lived near the Clark's on Ambrce Street. He saw him frequently but not in any intimate fashion. Asked if Mr. Eastman ever called at the Clark house, Mr. Clark said he may have run over to the house occasionally to visit but this was not often.

As to idiosyncrasies, Mr. Clark, like others who have been asked about this point, said there was nothing "peculiar" about Mr. Eastman. He was just altogether serious.

The greatest Eastman trait, Mr. Clark believes, was courage and faith. Not one in ten thousand, he thinks, would have had courage to carry on during some of the difficulties Mr. Eastman encountered. Asked to name the worst of these periods he named the

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occasion in 1892 when Reichenbach spoiled the film. The time when patent suits were being waged was another difficult period. As to how Mr. Eastman took these experiences, Mr. Clark claimed "one wouldn't know from him. He was always the same, at least externally."

No special traits that Mr. Clark discovered could be gathered from Mr. Eastman's general and casual conversation. However, he believes that in talking with Mr. Eastman it was apparent that he had read widely, carefully and thoughtfully.

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