

Henry Clune

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Dear Mr. Lovejoy:-

Ans  
by F.W.L. 44  
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The other day I talked again with my mother about the days when she was one of the small group of young women named on the first Eastman payroll. Her mind is slightly impaired, but she is able to recall events of the remote past better than she can remember more recent happenings. The story she told me this time of her Eastman experience substantiates her other reports, except that she was not so clear on minor details.

My mother was born in Rochester, I believe in Smith Street. Her father was Albert H. Bruman, who joined the Federal Army almost at the outbreak of the Civil War, and served through to the end. He must have re-enlisted in the Army immediately at the close of the war, for immediately he went West ( I think to Nebraska) as a member of a regiment detailed to quiet Indian disturbances. He took his wife and my mother, who was then a small girl, to the Western Army post with him.

When he returned to Rochester, discharged from the Army, he was given a position as a bank guard in the Rochester Savings Bank, and in time became a bank clerk. Presumably he was somewhat older than the other clerks in the bank, one of whom was Mr. Eastman. My mother has always told me that my grandfather and Mr. Eastman were good, if not close friends, and that when the latter was attempting to interest capital in his new business venture, he suggested that my grandfather purchase some stock. My grandfather was a man of modest means, with a family of a wife and two daughters, and he had no surplus funds for investment.

When Mr. Eastman presently left the bank, and opened his small shop in State Street, my mother was a young woman in her teens. She was finished with school, and wanted to go to work. My grandfather suggested that Mr. Eastman might employ her, as he needed help in his new adventure, and he called on Mr. Eastman to make arrangements for my mother's employment.

My mother said that her job was to coat dry photographic plates with the new emulsion Mr. Eastman had devised. She said she did this by pouring the fluid like emulsion on a plate and moving the plate around with her hands until the surface was completely covered. She may be somewhat in error about this, and there may have been a more convenient technic for this operation. But this is the way she described her work in our last conversation. I do know, though, from her other reports, that her job was to cover the plates with emulsion, and she has often told me that this was the main work of all of the girls.

My mother worked for Mr. Eastman in the State Street shop for

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six or eight months. I asked her if she often saw Mr. Eastman during that time. She said, "Of course. He was there every day. We saw him all the time. He was very nice to all of us. He was kind and courteous always."

My mother said that she very much enjoyed working in the Eastman shop. She said it was rather like a girls' club. The young women all carried their lunch to work, and ate it in the shop. Each lunch hour was not unlike a party, the girls exchanging delicacies from their lunch packages, singing, laughing and talking. Her only complaint was that the shop was three floors above the street, and the climb up the stairs was sometimes a little trying.

This is about all I am able to get out of my mother regarding this period of her life.

She did tell me, though, and my father supports this statement, that in later years when my mother occasionally met Mr. Eastman, he un-failingly reminded her of the days when she was one of his first employees, and he would chuckle as he recalled the crude shop in which he and his workers spent their days.

My mother's maiden name was Hattie Bruman.

I am not exactly sure of the date of my mother's employment, but the payroll record that you have shows that.

The picture of the clerks in the Rochester Savings Bank that I inclose shows, as you will readily recognize, Mr. Eastman in the lower left hand corner. My grandfather stands behind him, with one hand on the shoulder of the late Warham Whitney.

I had two of these photographs, one of which I gave to Mrs. Whitney Allen, daughter of Mr. Whitney. I would like this one saved.

Very sincerely yours,

Henry W. Clune

Clune, Henry