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DAIRYMEN'S
League
NEWS

11 WEST 42nd STREET
New York City



Waterville, N. Y.
May 10th, 1940.

Mr. F. W. Lovejoy,
Eastman Kodak Company,
Rochester, N. Y.

Dear Sir:-

It was my privilege to write several items regarding George Eastman and also to entertain him when he visited the Village of Waterville.

When I was editor of the Waterville Times, I thought it very worth while to run an article regarding Mr. Eastman, whom I considered probably the most prominent man born in this community. He furnished material and a photograph and also sent me a copy of the book on his African travels, which I prize very highly.

We were building a new school in Waterville and I wrote Mr. Eastman, asking if he would care to give anything towards an auditorium. He said he was interested because his father and mother had lived in this section on adjacent farms and we exchanged half a dozen letters on the subject.

One Saturday I received a telegram stating that Mr. Eastman would be in Waterville the next day. At that time the foundation had been laid for the new school. Mr. Eastman, Mrs. Almon Eastman, a cousin, I believe; and Mr. and Mrs. Carl Ackerman met me on Sunday morning and we examined the school site, which is about one hundred yards from Mr. Eastman's birthplace. We then drove around the country, visiting the farm where Mr. Eastman's father lived and the Kilbourn farm where his mother resided.

He told some interesting stories regarding his father's relationships with a rather notorious group, the Loomis gang, which resided in this section.

At noontime we went to Hotel Brunswick for dinner. Mr. Eastman asked me one question: "If I don't give anything towards your school how will you get along?"

sent to Townsend

Townsend, Ted H.

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Mr. Lovejoy:

My reply was, "Mr. Eastman, our school won't be as nice and we won't have as much for the boys and girls of Waterville, but we will get by."

Nothing more was said on the subject at the moment.

For Mr. Eastman's convenience, the dining room was opened at 12 o'clock and he told stories of experiences in Africa and seemed to be having a right royal time. Mr. Ackerman accompanied him as he was collecting material for his book at the time. At one o'clock the dining room was opened to the public and the change in Mr. Eastman was remarkable. Word had spread around that Mr. Eastman was in the village and there were a great many diners for this particular meal. I don't think Mr. Eastman said a complete sentence during the rest of the dinner. He would answer yes and no when necessary, but seemed to have acquired a mask and I often wondered if this were the Mr. Eastman that the public knew.

When Mr. Eastman had written me regarding costs of a school auditorium I had thought to ask him for a donation of \$15,000, which was the cost of the school site. While writing the letter, I had some sort of an inspiration and changed the \$15,000 to \$50,000.

As Mr. Eastman said goodbye at Hotel Brunswick, stating that he had a dinner engagement in Rochester for the evening, he shook hands and said, "It's all right about the auditorium."

I heard nothing more until a letter arrived, addressed to the president of the school board with a check for \$50,000 enclosed.

Mr. Eastman wrote a number of times regarding the auditorium, which was given as a memorial to his father and mother. He planned to visit Waterville and see the auditorium, however

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Mr. Lovejoy:

these plans never materialized.

Out of the millions of dollars Mr. Eastman gave to various organizations and institutions, I imagine the gift of an auditorium at the Waterville Central School is probably returning as great dividends as any. The boys and girls of Waterville use Mr. Eastman's gift continuously.

Sincerely yours,

Ted H. Townsend

T. H. Townsend.

THT:MW