

✓ VAUGHN

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Interview with Mrs. Wm. S. Vaughn,
Was Mr. Eastman's Organist

Mr. Vaughn was organist for Mr. Eastman at his home during his last three years, coming there when Harold Gleason became so engaged with his work at the Eastman School that he felt he must relinquish playing for Mr. Eastman at breakfast from 9 to 10 or after each morning.

She met Mr. Eastman through Mrs. Folsom who took her to a small party at Mr. Eastman's house and who told him that Mrs. Vaughn had studied four years in Germany. She remembers they ate delicious corn on the cob at that time. Then, or at another time, she remarked upon the delightful lobster which he served. His friends, when they went fishing, would send him salmon.

She believes he enjoyed the light conversation of herself and of his other women friends because it was different from the harsh things of commerce. Four of those friends were Mrs. Bayne-Jones, Mrs. Whipple, Mrs. Folsom, and Mrs. Gleason. Mrs. Vaughn would tell him about her new house which was in Meadowbrook in an Eastman development. She would say that if it weren't for him they wouldn't have a chance to build such a nice house. (They were not large but were modern, convenient, and complete). And she would tell him about her husband and about little things that happened at home which he greatly enjoyed hearing. He would tease her about this house and would say "I saw Haight this morning and told him he had better sell that house you and your husband are in."

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One time when he visited her home the little Scottie dog playfully bit his hand and she said (in effect) "Scottie doesn't like great big capitalists." And Mr. Eastman laughed, as he had not been hurt anyway.

Mr. Eastman did not claim to be musical but he did like music very much. He preferred Wagner, although he was unpretentious in his musical as well as other tastes. Favorite Wagner selections seemed to be "Walther's Prize Song" and "Introduction to Act III;" from Lohengrin; and "Overture" and "Liebestod" from "Tristan".

Mrs. Vaughn believes he preferred instrumental to vocal music. She knows he never had any jazz played. His good taste was shown in directing her not to play the drums, cymbals and other effects with which the organ was equipped, because the organ really isn't supposed to sound like an orchestra. He wanted to hear the organ only in its own distinctive character.

She had one musical ability which may have pleased Mr. Eastman. That was her ability to play by ear so that she didn't have to play by note so strictly as some musicians do.

He was very pleasant and sometimes as she played while he sat at breakfast he would say "I think you might have some coffee." And he would call Young, the big, husky negro who would bring it and place it on the organ bench. She would play the organ with one hand and drink coffee with the other. It was a good and a strong coffee, Java and Mocha mixed, costing 45¢ a pound.

Mr. Eastman may have sometimes glanced at a morning paper as he listened but she does not believe it was a fixed habit. He seldom

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if ever lounged in a dressing-gown but was dressed as for business. He might ask her plans for the day and engage in other light conversation. He sat at a fairly large table which could seat six and sometimes there would be a few guests for breakfast.

Mr. Eastman liked to hear a Southern accent, it seemed, so a sister-in-law of Mrs. Vaughn who had a marked Southern accent came and he loved to listen to her talk. When she had guests she would bring this sister-in-law or her cousin. Other guests at breakfast might be Mr. Whipple, or Mrs. Gleason, or Dr. Hanson. Distinguished house-guests like Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Edison, and Roger Babson might be at breakfast. Dr. Burkhart would sometimes drop in on the way to his office.

Mr. Eastman possessed willingness to do good for an "enemy" and, thereby, to turn such a one into a friend. Mrs. Vaughn had a part-time maid who had a grievance at Mr. Eastman because a relative had been discharged from his employ. This girl was having great trouble with her teeth and, for financial reasons could not have them attended to. She was 19--too old to be accepted by the Clinic where the age limit is 16 years. Mrs. Vaughn told Mr. Eastman about this girl and also of how she hated him. "It doesn't matter what she thinks" he replied.

So he called Dr. Burkhart personally and the necessary work was soon done. Mr. Vaughn said to the girl "Would you like to thank Mr. Eastman for what he has done?" The girl replied she would and to this day she still remembers his kindness and the pleasant words he spoke at their visit. Incidentally, Mr. Eastman told Mr. Vaughn he could sympathize with persons having trouble with their teeth as he was then wearing false ones.

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Mr. Eastman's women friends called him "G.E." and he treated them as daughters. They were all clever women, not "butterflies" but of a cultured type that could appear anywhere or everywhere. They tried to take his mind off heavy affairs but at times they could discuss serious and thoughtful matters if he desired.

To her he was "a nice, sweet sort of old man." His one expression of crispness was shortly after she began playing for him. She said "Let me know if I don't play as you like." To which he replied shortly "Dont worry. I'll do it."

She recalls a pleasant incident at an outdoor supper at Folsom's. The little Folsom boy, then three years of age, liked to play with mother's brigh red pocketbook. At 11 o'clock that night he got out of bed and with both legs in one trouser leg hopped down stairs with the pocketbook taken from his mother's room. Mr. Eastman never guffawed but he did laugh good and heartily at this strange sight.

Mr. Eastman gave to Mrs. Vaughn some of his cooking recipes.

Among them was this for "El Tovar Corn Bread:

" 2 pounds white flour
1 pound yellow corn meal
1/2 pound better
1/4 dozen eggs
1 ounce salt
1 1/2 pints milk
1 ounce baking soda
1/2 pound sugar
Rub sugar, eggs and butter together, add milk--and last--
flour and corn meal."

He also gave her some recipes for salad dressing

Mr. Eastman was not one to get by on position or authority. Once he took Mrs. Vaughn and Mrs. Bayne-Jones to a movie at Eastman Theater, going to the mezzanine. Mr. Eastman had difficulty in finding

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the tickets. The usher said authoritively "You can't get in without a ticket." So Mr. Eastman, instead of saying who he was, fished around until he found the tickets.

He noticed details, for in the theater one of the side lights had a slight glare from a defect in its shade. "Oh, that light should be fixed" he noted aloud.

One morning Mrs. Vaughn was late for her recital. "I believe I'll fire you" he said jokingly. "Dont let my husband know I'm late or he'll fire me,too." said she in the same spirit.

On a certain occasion she wore a brilliant blue evening dress, short in front and long in the back. Mr. Eastman liked the blue and the bright red shawl she wore and though it would look nice in color film. So they went out in the garden and she stood across a pool and a way back. He suggested she come nearer to the camera, and again near. To which she replied "If I go any further I'll fall into the pool." At which he laughed heartily.

Mr. Eastman was amused by her quoting ,or misquoting, an old song once when invited the first time for dinner at his house and she did not have shoes to match her gown. He always sent orchids to the women he was entertaining and she received the orchid. Her husband said "he sends you posies when its shoesies that you need" Mr. Eastman thought that very funny and repeated it often to his other friends.

Mr. Eastman was fond of America and of Rochester. He said "America is the best country to live in and it has the best climate." As for Rochester he enjoyed the temperate summers and the crisp stimulating winters.

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Mrs. Vaughn believes Mr. Eastman seemed to lose his grip after Mr. Hubbell died. Also, when Thomas Edison died he was greatly affected. Mr. Lovejoy is the one man he spoke of gently, lovingly, and tenderly although she cannot recall the exact words, and when Mr. Lovejoy's son died Mr. Eastman was visibly affected.

The 12th of December before the end Young came down after she came in one morning and said Mr. Eastman wanted her to come upstairs and talk. He had come back from the South and seemed low in spirits, as he sat before the fireplace in his dressing gown. She talked and smoked, although she didn't usually smoke.

Mrs. Vaughn saw him three hours before his death. She told Mr. Eastman she was entertaining her brilliant and delightful music teacher whom he really should meet to which he indicated a desire to do so. She had been at the German Club with the teacher the night before and was too tired to play, suggesting that she wouldn't be worth her money. But she did play a little.

When she left, usually, Mr. Eastman would say "Good-bye, Mrs. Vaughn", or "I'll see you tomorrow." He did not say that this time although she did not note it then. But when she was leaving he rose from his chair (she told him not to get up but he was always polite) and kissed her hands and kissed her on both cheeks, which he had not done before.

After her death Mrs. Hutchinson saw that she was given the complete month's salary, saying that Mr. Eastman would undoubtedly have wished it done that way.

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