

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC **GEORGE EASTMAN HOUSE**

AND/OR COMMON

George Eastman House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER **900 East Avenue**

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN **Rochester**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
34

VICINITY OF

STATE **New York**

CODE
36

COUNTY
Monroe

CODE
55

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME **Trustees of the International
Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House**

STREET & NUMBER **900 East Avenue**

CITY, TOWN **Rochester**

VICINITY OF

STATE
New York

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC **Rochester County Courthouse**

STREET & NUMBER **Plymouth Avenue**

CITY, TOWN **Rochester**

STATE
New York

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE **None**

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Eastman residence probably reflects as much of the inventor's desires as it does the architect's design. A local architect, J. Foster Warner, supervised the construction of the house but Eastman chose the design and insisted upon the inclusion of many details which he had observed and photographed in other houses.

The two-and-a-half story Georgian style house is roughly T-shaped and is situated on twelve acres of landscaped ground. Faced with cream-colored brick the house is of fireproof reinforced concrete construction with 14" thick floors and walls. A full, pedimented portico with Corinthian columns dominates the front of the house. The gable roof is pierced by six dormers on a side, has a balustrade near its peak, and a rectangular skylight enclosed by a railing in the center of the peak. The front (southern) section of the house, which forms the head of the T is organized around a central hall and grand stairway. Of the three rooms in this section on the first floor, only the East Sitting Room and the Library remain basically unchanged. The bedrooms and other rooms on the upper floors now serve as gallery and office space.

The section of the house which forms the trunk of the T houses the noteworthy Marble Room (music room) which was enlarged by 9 feet in 1919 at Eastman's request. The house was cut in half and the north section, weighing 2,500 tons, was jacked up and moved 9'4" thereby lengthening the formerly square music room. The dining room pantry and kitchen were also contained in this section, and an enclosed garden walkway formerly extended north to the solarium. The solarium was connected on its west side to the large garage and stable building. Both the solarium and the garage have been converted into gallery space. Two post-historic structures are the Dryden Theater which was built onto the south wall of the garage in 1951, and a brick gallery, added to the north wall of the garage in more recent years. The basement of the house is now used as laboratory and storage space.

During his lifetime, Eastman prided himself on maintaining a high degree of self-sufficiency on his estate, and so maintained gardens, raised cattle, and built his own power plant. Many although not all of these features still survive. The power house, a red brick structure of plain design, is located across the driveway, just west of the former garage building. An underground tunnel still connects this service building with the main house. The greenhouse formerly attached to the power house has been destroyed, and the vegetable gardens to the south of it are now paved over as a parking lot. The dairy in the basement of the main house has been converted into a laboratory, but the two-story wooden frame cow barn, located in the northwest corner of the property is still standing, although it is only used for storage. Flanking the cowbarn are two small concrete structures, of post-historic construction, used for nitrate film storage.

Those portions of the grounds which are now open space are landscaped and maintained as lawn. There are two small formal gardens, one sunken garden and arbor located to the west of the house by the porte-cochere, and another on the

(continued)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1905-1932

BUILDER/ARCHITECT J. Foster Warner

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

George Eastman, inventor of the portable Kodak camera and flexible film, and founder of the Eastman Kodak Company, revolutionized the technology of photography and thereby introduced photography to the layman on a popular scale. Eastman's inventions developed from his belief as a young man that the bulky photographic equipment and difficult developing processes of the day could be simplified. By 1885 he had developed flexible film and in 1888 he first marketed the simple Kodak box camera which contained a 100-exposure roll of film, took round pictures and had to be returned to the factory for the development of the film. Capitalizing on the Kodak's success, Eastman dominated the photographic industry until his death on March 13, 1932.

The Eastman House, which was built for the inventor in 1905, is a stately two-and-a-half story Georgian style building located at 900 East Avenue in Rochester, New York. Since 1948 it has housed an international museum of photography.

BIOGRAPHY

George Eastman was born on July 12, 1854, in Waterville, New York, but moved with his parents to Rochester in 1860. The death of his father soon forced him to leave school and take a job. He initially worked in an insurance firm, at \$3 a week. When twenty, Eastman became a junior clerk in the Rochester Savings Bank. His salary was \$1,400 annually by 1876, and it appeared that he would remain in banking, but banking soon lost out to photography.

Eastman's interest in photography stemmed from his purchase of a camera in 1877. After acquiring it, he paid \$5 for lessons in its use. A trip to Santo Domingo not only convinced him of the attractions of photography, but impressed him that the bulky equipment and difficult developing processes of the day could be simplified. Once home, he set out to do that.

The young man first concentrated on film. He had learned of the invention of the gelatin dry plate in Great Britain and conceived of devising an inexpensive dry plate camera. While still a banker, he pursued his project. By 1879, he had produced a dry plate film and began to manufacture it. He left the bank in 1880 and moved his production to larger quarters, and then again in 1881. Eastman was making \$4,000 worth of dry plates a month by early 1882. Some two years later the dry plate business collapsed because of the rise of so many competitors.

(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- S. Sydney Bradford. "George Eastman House," National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, form 10-317, 11/1/66.
 Karl T. Compton. "George Eastman," Science, new series vol. LXXV (Jan.-June, 1932).
 B.C. Forbes. Men Who Are Making America (New York, 1918).
 George F. Redmond. Financial Giants of America (Boston, 1922).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 12 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	29,0	29,0	4,7	8,1	1,7	0	B	1,8	29,0	3,1	0	4,7	8,0	6,2	0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING					ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING				
C	1,8	28,9	8,7	0	4,7	8,0	6,0	D	1,8	28,9	8,7	0	4,7	8,1	1,3	0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Richard Greenwood, Historian, Landmark Review Task Force

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service 1/8/76

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1100 L Street

202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Washington

D.C. 20240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

9/28/83

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC
LANDMARKS)

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CONTINUATION SHEET Eastman House ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

eastern side of the house outside the Marble Room, which has a sunken pool. There is also a circular arbor situated on the north end of the property. Eastman's boyhood home, a simple frame house, is also located on the north end of the property, where it was moved to from Waterville, New York, but it is scheduled to be removed in the near future, to an historic house complex.

The Eastman House is located in a residential neighborhood, and is flanked by houses on all four sides. For sixteen years after Eastman's death, the house was used by the president of the University of Rochester. In 1948-89, it was adapted to its present use, a museum of photography.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Eastman House ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Despite the decline of business in 1884, Eastman's enthusiasm remained strong. Furthermore, he had already extracted four business principles from his experience. He believed that success would result from large production by machinery, low prices, sales abroad as well as in America, and the widespread promotion of his products.

Conscious of the mass market, Eastman in 1884 concentrated his efforts on the task of making photography easy. He first sought to make a simpler film. By March 1885 he had patented a flexible film that had a paper back. Shortly, he marketed the first roll film. Eastman then turned to the development of a simple camera. That effort resulted in the Kodak camera, which originally appeared on the market in June, 1888. It contained a roll of film with 100 exposures, took round pictures and had to be returned to the factory for the development of the exposed film. The camera sold for \$25.

In presenting his innovation to the public, Eastman also unleashed an extensive selling campaign. The inventor had fathered the name "Kodak." The label met his desire for a strong tradename and for one that would defy copying. He also devised the slogan, "You press the button, we do the rest."

Eastman continued to simplify photography in the 1890's. His firm produced a transparent film, turned out a small Kodak and in 1896 marketed a \$5 camera. Those innovations stimulated an amazing growth in Eastman's company.

The "Kodak King," as Eastman was called, dominated the industry. In 1890 he organized the Eastman Company, capitalizing it at \$1,000,000. Two years later he changed its name to the Eastman Kodak Company and capitalized it at \$5,000,000. Another reorganization occurred in 1898, this time at \$8,000,000. Alert to competition, Eastman bought patents, entered into marketing agreements and forced uncooperative people out of business. He thus acquired control of about eighty percent of production in the United States. A federal anti-trust suit in 1915 forced the sale of some units of his company, but left his organization really unharmed.

Many times a millionaire by 1900, Eastman gave away vast sums. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston, Massachusetts, and the University of Rochester greatly benefited from his generosity. All told, he distributed over \$100,000,000 while alive and left an additional \$12,000,000 in gifts upon his death. Eastman took his own life on March 14, 1932. Beset by old age, his last written words were, "My work is done; why wait?"¹

¹.Quoted by Karl T. Compton, "George Eastman," Science, New Series, LXXV, (January-June, 1932). p. 402.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Eastman House ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

The Eastman House landmark boundaries are coterminous with the present lot boundaries of the Eastman House proper (i.e., the landmark does not include the recently acquired Hutchinson House.) Beginning at a point on the northern right-of-way line of East Avenue, 149' east of the eastern right-of-way line of Westminster Road, proceed north along the eastern boundary of the Eastman House lot for 916.94' to the southern right-of-way line of University Avenue. Thence proceed west along said right-of-way line for 501.01', still following the lot boundary, thence south 261.9', thence east for 165', thence south for 205.36', thence west for 165', thence south for 294.64', thence east for 50', thence south for 195.99', always following the property line to the northern right-of-way line of East Avenue, thence east for 418.98' following the lot boundary to the point of origin.

VICK
PARK B

24:21

22

WESTMINSTER
ROAD

24:28

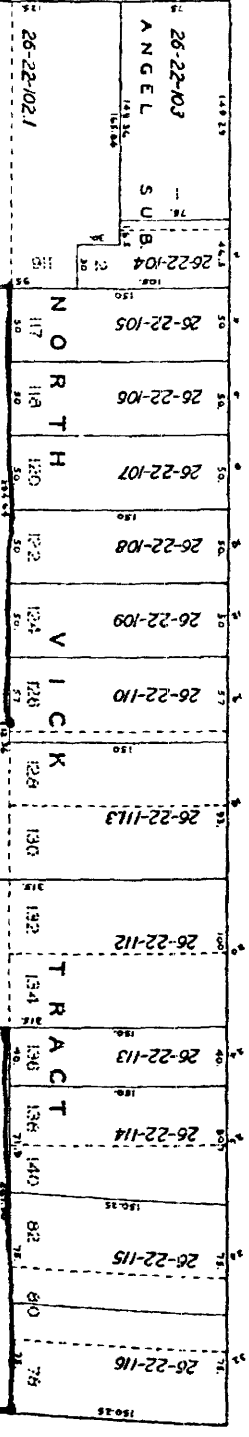
BANKINGTON
STREET

SCALE 1 INCH = 50 FEET

PORTSMOUTH

TERRACE

15



26-22-101/1
0.331 ACRES

51

4.3

23

AVENUE

UNIVERSITY

16

ELTON ST.

21

RUSSELL
STREET

584

Storage

storage

COW BARN

Circular arbor

Post-Historic Gallery

Former Garage now Gallery Space

Former Solarium

Post-Historic Dryden Theater

Former Kitchen

Pool and Garden

The George Eastman House landmark boundary shown in red not drawn to scale

Power House

Parking lot

Arbor & Garden

East Avenue, approximately 200' south

Entrance Road

Former Pantry

Dining Room

Music Room

West Room

Library

East Room



Enclosed Garden walk