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A Letter

Theodore N. Vail

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A Letter

[The following letter is printed from the original which was loaned to the Society by Mr. W. T. Whitney of Waterloo, to whom it was written. It is of interest not only because of the writer, Mr. Theodore N. Vail, late president of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, but also because of its reference to the late "Pop" Anson who did his early ball playing on an Iowa team.—The Editor]

Jany 1, 1917
Jekyll Island Club,
Brunswick, Georgia.

Dear Mr Whitney

How glad I am to hear from you. I often think of you and the old talks we used to have, for you were a philosopher and had an uncommon sensible grip on the realities of life, some of which I hope I assimilated.

From what you say you are just 10 years older than I am—I am 71 will be 72 this year in July. Waterloo was a curious dividing point in my life—just 21 when I went there—think of it 51 years coming March next. Sometimes as I look back I wish I had stayed in Waterloo and taken my chances there. Not that I have any reason to complain for my life has been busy and I have done my share of work, but when you get to a point where responsibility is loaded on you, and you are really conscientious about it, it makes you feel tired sometimes, and you wish you could shut down your office desk.
lock your official door & just take a real rest once in
a while.

I knew Dorsey very well; he was Senator from
Arkansas when I was in the P. O. D. but never had
any relations except official ones with him. I think
probably you have heard of my relation with Gen­
eral Brady who was 2nd asst P. M. G. when I was
in Washington & was brought into the P. O. scandal
“Star Route” along with Dorsey. One of the most
dastardly political acts ever perpetrated — but that
is neither here nor there. Brady was in the Dept &
after I went into the telephone loaned me 50000 to
buy & carry some telephone stock — on shares, and
both of us made money. Years after when they
commenced to prosecute him he was broken in pock­
et, and because I loaned him money to defend him­
sel their attorneys used to say that I must have
been one of them but they never went so far as
making any public accusation.

Dorsey was on trial at the same time with Brady
& Ingersoll was their attorney. Some one told me
the other day that Dorsey was still alive.

I am somewhat broken up this winter myself.
Have had a very strenuous year. I hope some day
it will be my good fortune to see you again, for there
are few, if any, of those I knew when young that I
think of oftener or more pleasantly than of you. Do
you remember that on that Marshalltown trip Anson
afterwards the famous baseball player was Captain
of the team (Marshalltown). I have often wondered
if I would have become famous as he if I had stuck to baseball. I saw Miller at Los Angeles last year. You remember he was in the team and so was Mullan, after whose father, I suppose the street you live on was named. Good luck to you

Theo N. Vail