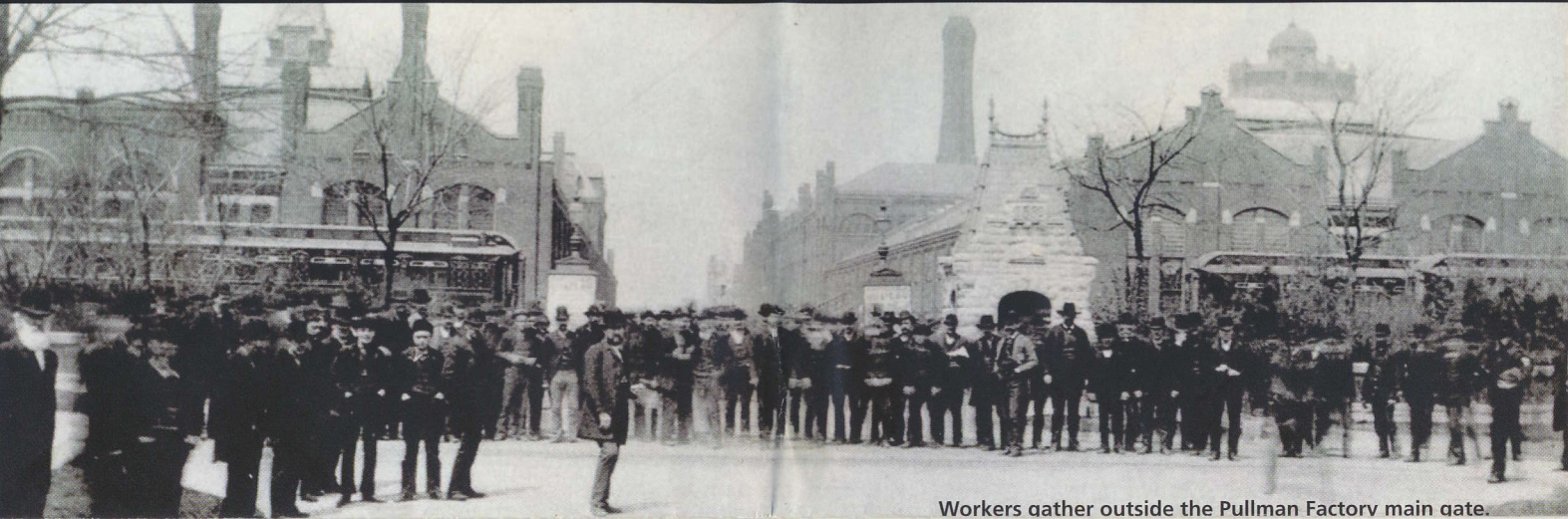


Pullman

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Pullman National Monument
Illinois



Workers gather outside the Pullman Factory main gate.

Pullman National Monument is a story of American opportunity. Some Pullman workers found success while others found opportunity limited by race, gender, economic status, or position. Their stories intertwine in the town of Pullman, a planned manufacturing and residential community famed for its urban design and architecture.



George M. Pullman

A renowned industrialist, he received early training as a merchant and a carpenter growing up in New York.

COURTESY/ILLINOIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION AGENCY

“We decided to build...homes for working men of such character and surroundings as would prove so attractive as to cause the best class of mechanics to seek that place for employment... We also desired to...exclude all baneful influences.”

George M. Pullman, Report on the Chicago Strike of June–July, 1894

From Engineer to Industrialist

The man whose vision and ingenuity helped create those opportunities was George M. Pullman (1831-1897), a Chicago entrepreneur and industrialist. Upon his arrival in Chicago in 1859, he gained fame with an elaborate

system of jacks to help raise the level of the city's buildings and make way for a new sewer system. At about the same time, Pullman saw an opportunity to improve overnight rail travel.

The Pullman Palace Car Company

From personal experience, and with an innovator's eye, Pullman believed train travel should be more comfortable and started experimenting with sleeping cars. In 1867 he founded the Pullman Palace Car Company to build and lease cars to the railroads as well as provide the staff necessary to serve the passengers. Pullman sleeping cars evolved into luxurious accommodations with an unparalleled level of customer service.

In 1880, Pullman began to design his new manufacturing facilities 14 miles south of Chicago adjacent to Lake Calumet and the Illinois Central Railroad. Pullman attracted skilled workers to his new town to build his palace cars. The cabinetmakers, upholsterers, and

other skilled laborers were mostly white, often immigrants from Europe. Many of the company's first passenger service workers, such as porters and waiters, were former house slaves who relocated to train hubs around the country. Job opportunities for African Americans were created by the company where few had existed.

The Pullman Company absorbed or built shops in other states, continually expanding and diversifying for over a century. While known for passenger cars, they also built many other specialty train cars. The height of production occurred in the mid 1920s, when the company fleet grew to 9,800 cars. The last Pullman car was made for Amtrak in 1981.



Pullman Palace Car passengers experienced luxurious interiors and exceptional customer service. African Americans found prestigious jobs as waiters and porters serving affluent travelers.

COURTESY/ARTHUR DUBIN COLLECTION, LAKE FOREST COLLEGE ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS



Pullman built houses to attract and retain skilled and loyal workers.



Arcade Park and the Greenstone Church integrated with employee housing demonstrated an architectural sophistication unprecedented at the time.

COURTESY/ILLINOIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION AGENCY, THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY

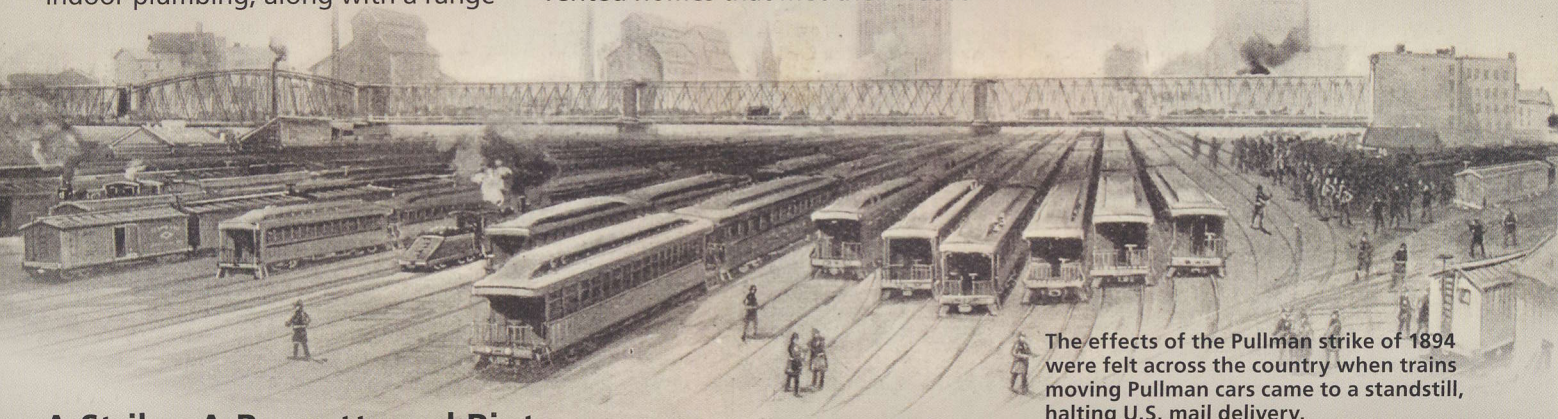
A "Model" Town

Architect Solon Spencer Beman brought Pullman's 1880 town to realization. Pullman observed that many workers lived in slums with unsanitary conditions and adjacent "social ills" during this rapidly expanding industrial era. He believed it would be a smart business move to provide an improved standard of living to retain skilled workers, and integrated his factory with a town that included many amenities. Housing included utilities and indoor plumbing, along with a range

of options depending on one's income and family size. A variety of shops and services, schools, a church, and hotel, along with beautifully landscaped streets, parks, and a lake put the model town's accommodations well above the standards of the day. Visitors marveled at this showplace during the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.

Housing was designed to accommodate mixed economic classes. Workers rented homes that met their needs

but could never own them. The opportunities and amenities that Pullman provided went beyond social uplift and came to be viewed by many as social control. A Chicago Tribune editorial stated, "none of the... advantages of the model city will compensate for the restrictions on the freedom of the workmen." Limitations on residents' freedom, along with an economic downturn, sowed the seeds of social unrest.



The effects of the Pullman strike of 1894 were felt across the country when trains moving Pullman cars came to a standstill, halting U.S. mail delivery.

COURTESY/THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY

A Strike, A Boycott, and Riots

The town of Pullman became the focal point of a classic labor struggle as financial panic hit the country in 1893 and company profits were threatened. The company laid off or reduced workers' salaries but not their rents. A delegation of workers approached the company with a list of unmet grievances, sparking the May 1894 Pullman Strike. Frustrated employees walked off the job, appealing to American Railways Union (ARU) president Eugene Debs for support. The ARU enlarged the Chicago strike into a nationwide boycott affecting any train that moved a Pullman car.

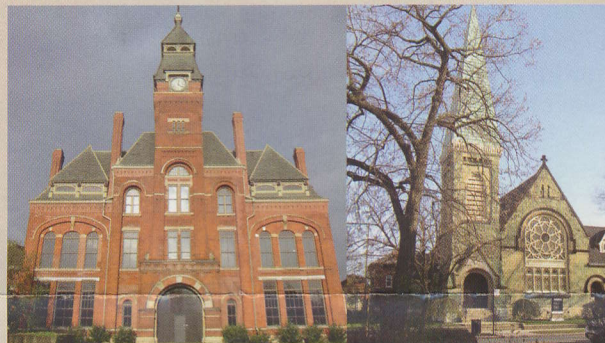
The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters

Throughout the twentieth century, the company's workers persisted in their quest for increased opportunities. In the 1920s, the Pullman Company was a substantial employer of African-Americans. Under the leadership of A. Philip Randolph, Pullman porters formed the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and became the first African-American labor union chartered under the American Federation of Labor in 1937. The influential members of this first Black labor union significantly impacted the Civil Rights movement, including the 1963 March on Washington.

Visiting Pullman

Today the multiple and complex stories of Pullman are shared by private museums, organizations and public agencies that partner with the National Park Service in preserving these resources for future generations. The vibrant stories of Pullman still resonate as workers and business people throughout the world continue to strive for opportunities for a better life.

Trains across the country came to a standstill, disrupting rail travel and interfering with U.S. mail delivery. President Cleveland vowed, "if it takes the entire army and navy to deliver a postal card in Chicago, that card will be delivered." Federal troops were directed to disrupt the strike and get trains moving. Violence and rioting escalated nationally. Trains were torched. People lost their lives. In a conciliatory move, just as the strike was escalating, Congress designated Labor Day as a federal holiday.



The Pullman Factory Administration Building and Greenstone Church remain icons of this innovative planned community of the 1890s.



The National A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum resides in what was workers' housing.

Pullman National Monument is an outdoor historic landscape with several destinations within its boundary. You can explore the community on your own or participate in the many programs and events offered by the park and partners. Visit the websites for additional information, programs, events and seasonal hours of operation.

Pullman National Monument
(temporary Visitor Information Center)
www.nps.gov/pull (773) 264-7431
11141 S. Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago IL

Historic Pullman Foundation
www.pullmanil.org (773) 785-8901
11141 S. Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago IL

National A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum
www.aprpullmanportermuseum.org (773) 850-8580
10406 S. Maryland Ave, Chicago IL

Pullman State Historic Site
www.pullman-museum.org (773) 660-2341
11111 S. Forrestville Ave, Chicago IL

By August, the strike had subsided and many Pullman workers returned to their jobs on condition that they would never again join a union. While the strike was unsuccessful in meeting the workers' demands, it did draw attention to their plight. Just after Pullman's death in 1897, the Illinois Supreme Court declared the company ownership of non-manufacturing structures in the town of Pullman as illegal. Within 10 years all the residential buildings were made available for private ownership.

Thank you for respecting the many private homes and buildings in this historic community.

Pullman National Monument is one of more than 400 units in the National Park System. The National Park Service cares for these special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our nation's heritage. To learn more about national parks and National Park Service programs, please visit www.nps.gov.

More Information:
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