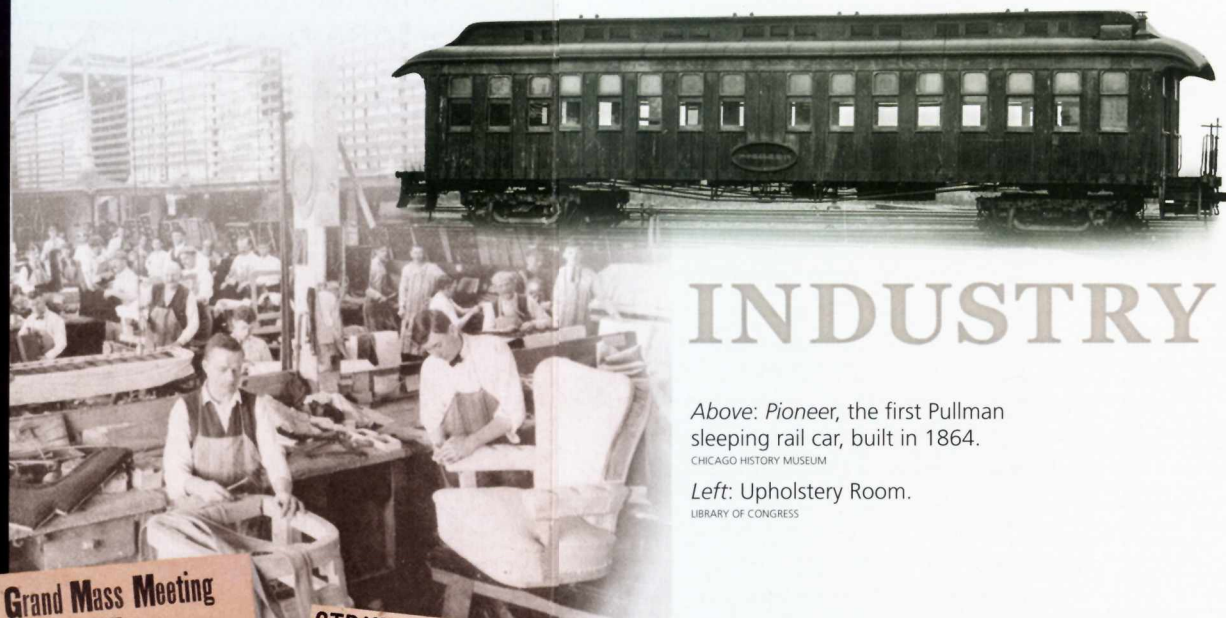




INDUSTRY

Above: Pioneer, the first Pullman sleeping rail car, built in 1864.
CHICAGO HISTORY MUSEUM

Left: Upholstery Room.
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

PULLMAN

From the prairie south of Chicago, a perfect town began to rise in 1880. Through “scientific planning,” it integrated offices and industrial shops with housing, all in a parklike setting.

Both town and company bore the surname of the owner, George Pullman (1831–97). He built luxury sleeping rail cars and leased them to railroads, along with staff who provided on-board services. Pullman’s business model gave the company a nationally competitive edge.

A worker’s status and class influenced which Pullman home he could rent. High earners lived closest to their workplace. The company hoped the hygienic homes and elegant landscape would lead employees to strive toward a higher social class and behavior. Some praised Pullman’s genius; others called his experiment un-American. By the 1890s, the company and its workers began to clash. Events at Pullman and rulings in the state and federal courts set precedents that echoed throughout the nation.

ABOVE: PULLMAN LETTERING—NEWBERRY LIBRARY

Pullman Strike and Boycott

A depression in 1893 caused a nationwide decline in orders for rail cars. The Pullman company cut workers’ wages by 25 percent but did not lower rents. George Pullman refused to negotiate with employees over either issue. Workers walked off the job in May 1894, and across the country, American Railway Union (ARU) workers responded in solidarity. They boycotted any train that pulled a Pullman car, halting commerce.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Jane Addams (1860–1935) A social reformer, Addams saw the strike as a class conflict and tried to mediate it. She brought the workers to the bargaining table, but George Pullman refused to meet with her.

Eugene Debs (1855–1956) The founder of the American Railway Union, Debs tried to build labor’s power by reaching out to railroad workers across the skill lines that separated them. The federal government prosecuted and jailed him.

Federal and State Laws Change

After the strike ended, the tide began to turn in favor of labor. The US Congress passed the Erdman Act in 1898. It required railroad companies and unions to arbitrate labor disputes.

Also in 1898, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled the original charter was for manufacturing only, and Pullman began to sell its non-industrial holdings. The ruling paved the way to home ownership for Pullman residents.

The Great Migration

A Pullman porter job was a way into the middle class for African Americans—despite continuing racial discrimination. Based near major train hubs, porters earned a good income and had opportunities to travel. They absorbed news and information from across the country and carried it home. Their eyewitness reports helped fuel the Great Migration of African Americans to northern and midwestern industrial cities. Pullman porters helped inspire others to seek change in order to support their families and build new lives. Hundreds of thousands of people made the transition.

A family arrives in Chicago, 1922.
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



Black Workers Unite and Win

The American Railway Union opened its membership to Chicago railroad workers in 1893 but barred African Americans. In 1915 an all-African American railroad brotherhood, the international Railway Mens Benevolent Industrial Association, organized Pullman porters under federal World War I railroad labor regulations.

The loss of wartime emergency protections doomed the association’s survival but convinced African American railroaders that federal recognition was crucial. In 1925 Pullman porters organized the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), aided by labor and civil rights activists A. Philip Randolph (1889–1979) (left) and former Pullman porter Milton P. Webster.



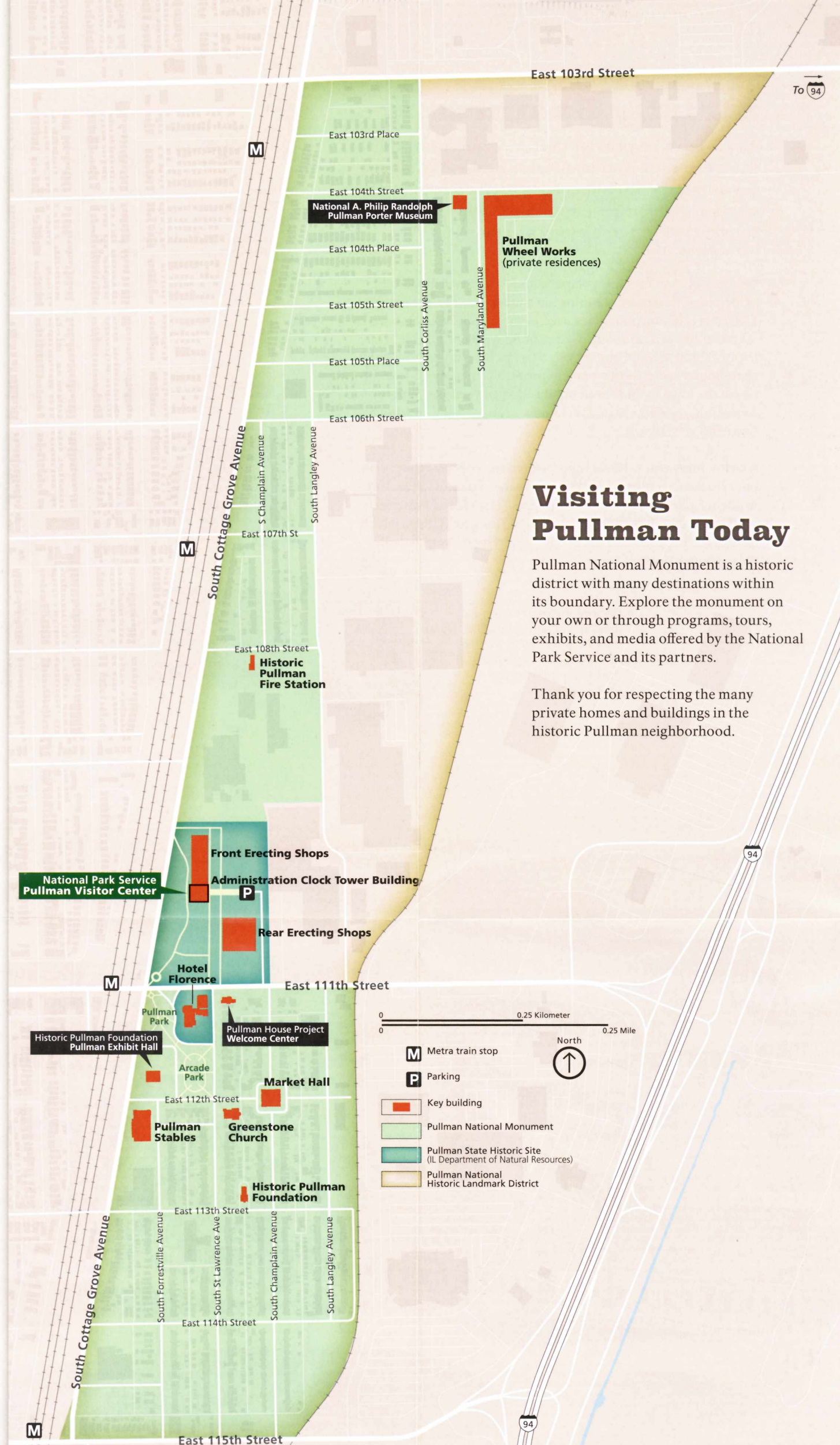
Above: During the 1940s, A. Philip Randolph linked the struggles for labor and civil rights. He rallied African Americans to demand jobs and an end to segregation in the war industries (poster, left).

POSTER—NEWBERRY LIBRARY

An End to the Monopolies

In 1943, a federal district court dealt a sharp blow to the Pullman Company’s business plan, ruling that it could not insist on an “exclusive right” clause when leasing cars or service staff to railroads. The court directed Pullman to choose between operating or manufacturing train cars. The company chose the latter.

Left: Pullman Administration Clock Tower Building, before 1957.
CHICAGO HISTORY MUSEUM



The National Park Service partners with private organizations and public agencies to share Pullman’s history. As people throughout the world continue to seek equality and opportunity, Pullman’s stories resonate.

We strive to make our facilities, services, and programs accessible to all; call or check the websites.

Emergencies call 911

For firearms regulations check the park website.

Pullman National Monument
11001 S. Cottage Grove Ave.
Chicago, IL 60628
773-468-9310
PULL_visitorinfo@nps.gov
www.nps.gov/pull

Pullman National Monument is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks, visit www.nps.gov.

National Park Foundation.
Join the park community.
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Bielenberg Foundation
www.PullmanAtHome.org

Historic Pullman Foundation
www.pullmanIL.org

National A. Philip Randolph
Pullman Porter Museum
AprPullmanPorterMuseum.org

Pullman State Historic Site
<https://www2.illinois.gov/dnrhistoric/Experience/Sites/Northeast/Pages/Pullman-Site.aspx>

Strictly Business

“Let it once be proved that enterprises of this kind are sage and profitable and we shall see great manufacturing corporations developing similar enterprises, and thus a new era will be introduced in the history of labor.”

George Pullman, 1867

George Pullman built his company and town according to the principle of “scientific planning” in a rational, orderly manner. The same tools and machines used in the first industrial shops to manufacture rail cars were used to build workers’ houses. The use of capital to build houses was a “strict investment” on which shareholders received a 6 percent profit. The beauty and amenities of the town would result in “elevated and refined” employees. As a result, residents would refrain from consuming alcohol, swearing, or striking.

A writer for *Harpers Weekly* appreciated the cohesive town plan, but criticized its overly restrictive management and the lack of residents’ participation in town affairs: “The idea of Pullman is un-American... It is benevolent, well-wishing feudalism, which desires the happiness of the people, but in such a way as shall please the authorities.”

George Pullman excelled at moving and raising buildings along the Chicago lakeshore in the 1850s. He saw opportunity in the rapidly growing city.

CHICAGO HISTORY MUSEUM

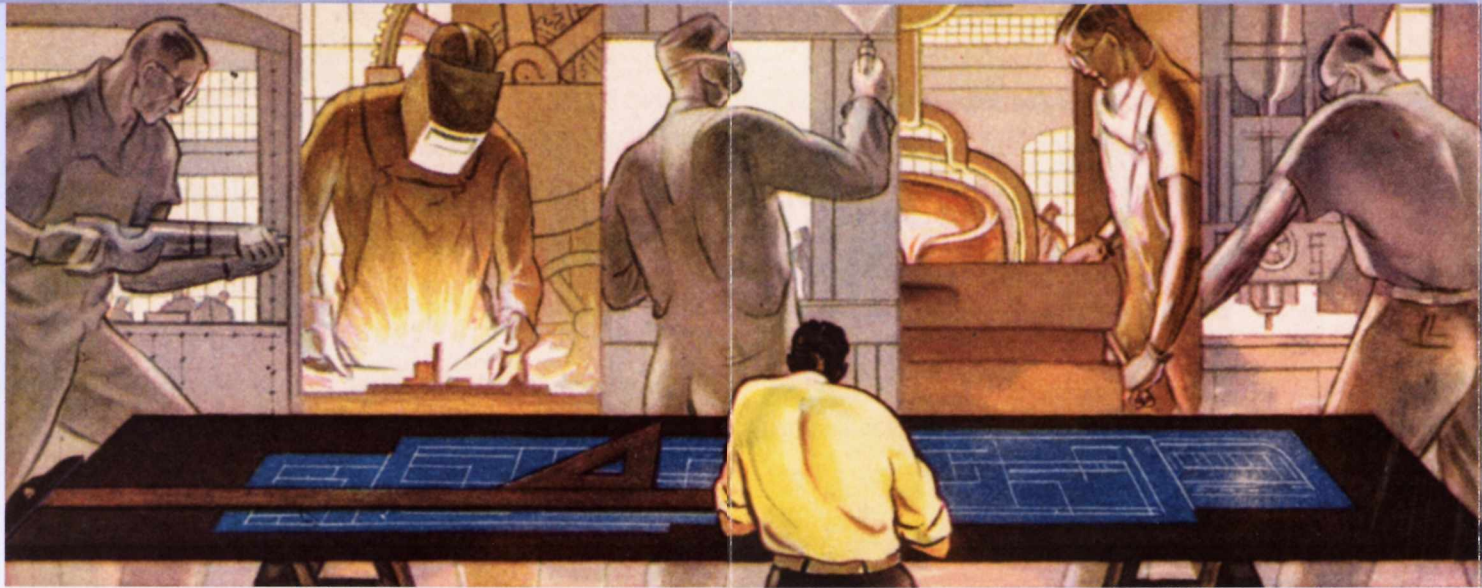


It was only a short walk from the factory gate to the workers’ housing, which had varied amenities and rental rates. Rent did not include use of the Pullman Public Library. Patrons paid a fee to use it.

Below: The South Gate at noon, undated.
Right: Building a Pullman car, ca. 1930.



PULLMAN STATE HISTORIC SITE



CHICAGO HISTORY MUSEUM

Order, Precision, and Power

In the Administration Clock Tower Building, natural light from tall windows filled the central area where designers, engineers, and administrative staff worked. In two flanking wings, skilled artisans finished train cars.

The layout was intended to save time and unnecessary movement. A visiting economist enthused, “the planning of these workshops is remarkable... Tiny little locomotives are running along the lines which are built in the spaces between the various workshops ... Everything is done in order and with precision; one feels that

each effort is calculated to yield its maximum effect, that no blow of a hammer, or turn of a wheel, is made without cause.”

The Corliss Engine, which powered the car shops’ machinery, could be seen by people traveling on the Illinois Central Railroad as it passed Pullman. It was displayed in a building with plate-glass windows. The exhaust water discharged to an artificial lake in front of the shops, where it cooled. Lake Vista also functioned as a landscaping feature.

Promoting Pullman

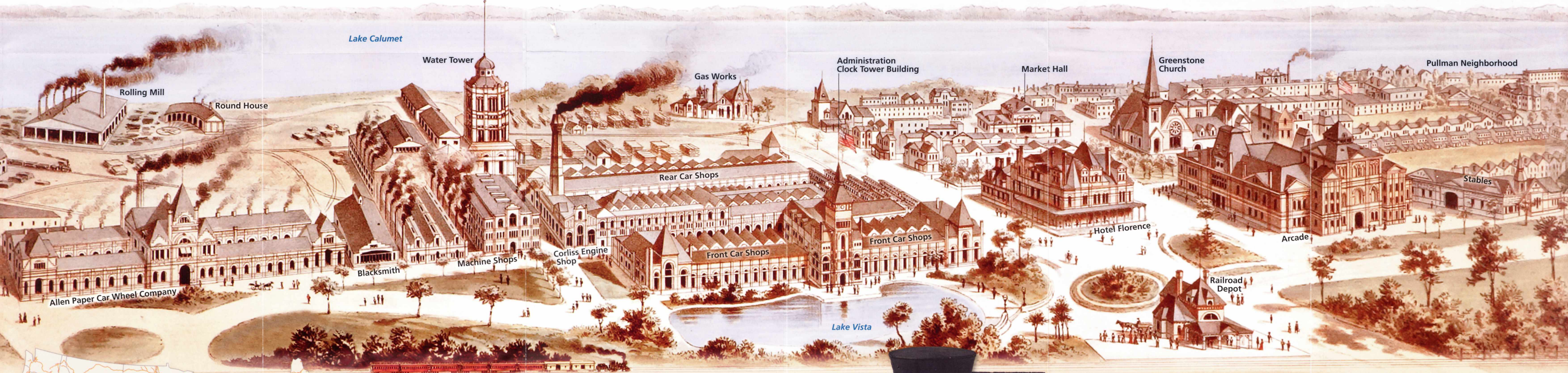
Idealizing illustrations about Pullman (above and below) appeared in ads and national and international newspapers and magazines. Reports from the 1890s often mentioned the Chicago World’s

Columbian Exposition. George Pullman donated funds and served as a board member. The exposition celebrated all that was modern, new, and innovative—like Pullman.



Left: Commemorative coin for the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition. AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

Below: Visitors marveled at the Arcade, with 30 stores under one roof. HISTORIC PULLMAN FOUNDATION



A Railroad Nation

Pullman staff who provided on-board service lived around the country. African Americans made up nearly 40 percent of the Pullman workforce in the early 1900s. All followed detailed car-service rules published by the company.

Railroad network
ca.1916.

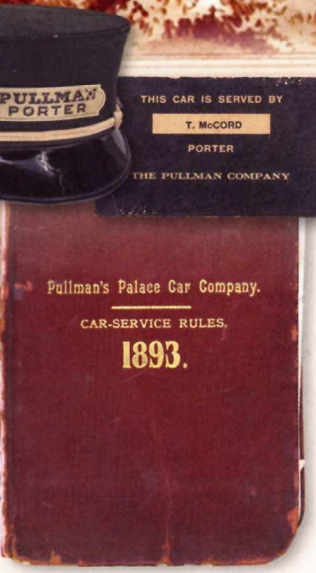
“While the Pullman porters helped push forward our rights to vote and to work, and to live as equals, their legacy goes beyond even that. These men and women gave their children and grandchildren opportunities they never had.” President Barack Obama, 2015



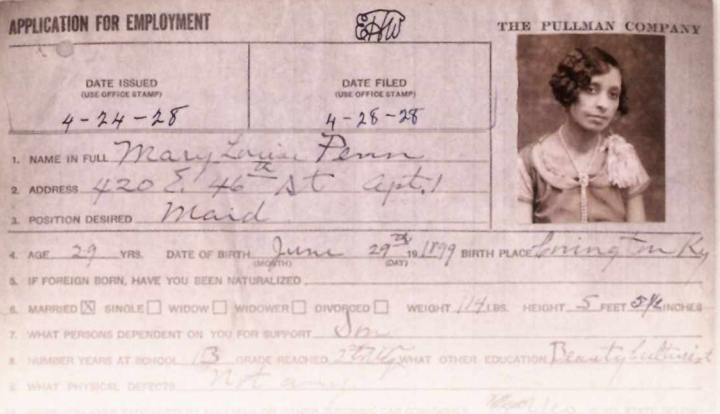
Pullman conductor, attendants, and porters.
SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY



Porter William Warren and family,
Fort Worth, Texas, ca. 1930.
LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY



Porter's hat and namecard.
Car-service rule book.
HAT AND NAMECARD—SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE.
RULE BOOK—NEWBERRY LIBRARY



Mary Louise Penn's employment
application, 1928.
NEWBERRY LIBRARY



Pullman mechanics at
repair shops, Richmond,
California, 1939.
PULLMAN STATE HISTORIC SITE