

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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George M. Pullman 1831-1897

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George M. Pullman, a native of Brockton, Chautauqua County, N.Y. was born March 3, 1831 to James Lewis Pullman and Emily Caroline Minton Pullman. When George was fourteen years old the family moved from Brockton to Albion, N.Y. Like his son to be, James Lewis Pullman had an inventive mind and constructed and patented a machine in 1835 for moving buildings upon wheels. There were ten children in the Pullman family, George being third. Two of his brothers became Universalist clergymen and one became Assistant U.S. District Attorney. As a young man, George secured a contract for widening a part of the Erie Canal for which he received \$6,000. Following this he removed to Chicago contracting for raising streets and moving buildings without interrupting business. At the end of this interval of time he had accumulated \$20,000. In 1858 he purchased two Railroad coaches and remodeled them into sleepers. The seats were without springs, the cars were lighted with candles and heated with a wood-burning stove at each end. The cost of each was \$4,500. In 1864 he produced the renowned Pioneer which was the first sleeping car that approached the modern sleeper to today, costing \$20,000.

However, problems arose when it was discovered that the car was too wide to be satisfactorily used because of protruding station platforms. When President Lincoln was shot in 1865, the State wished to display the greatest respect possible. The Pullman Pioneer was called for and bridges were immediately widened and platforms cut away for the Pioneer to carry the martyred President's remains. In 1867 Mr. Pullman married Harriet Sanger and they made their home in Chicago where they had four children: Florence, Harriet, and two sons, George and Sawyer who both died quite young.

In 1880 the Pullman Company built an industrial center outside Chicago, a place of over 12,000 inhabitants covering 3,600 acres called Pullman, Ill. Fifty years from the establishment of the Pullman Co. they had built 41,000 passenger sleeping cars and 312,000 freight cars. For many years one of the Pullman daughters had the responsibility of naming the Pullman cars.

In 1894 the George Pullman commissioned S.S. Beman his personal architect who had planned Pullman, Ill. to design the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church in Albion, N.Y. which he had erected at a cost of \$64,000 in memory of his parents.