THE CLOCK TOWER AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING OF THE PULLMAN COMPANY is situated on the east side of the Illinois Central Railroad at 110th Street and Cottage Grove Avenue in Chicago. Hundreds of people commuting and through trains pass it each day, with never a thought that they are passing one of the historical buildings in the State of Illinois, the worthy monument to one of the great socioeconomic phenomena of the Nineteenth Century, and the highly interesting center of an architectural and construction activity which had not been equaled in America when it was brought into being in 1880-84.

THE MAGIC NAME—PULLMAN
The name “Pullman” means many things to different people. It is synonymous with the Railroad Sleeping Car, and with first class rail travel by day or night. To the student of Labor Relations, it is tied with the tragic “Pullman Strike of 1894.” To the lawyer, bankers, and the believers in big government, it was an early example of too much centralization of financial power which resulted in court action to force the Pullman Company to dispose of all of its property not used for industrial purposes.

WHO WAS PULLMAN?
George Mortimer Pullman, 1831-1897 was born in Brockton, New York. He was trained as a cabinet maker. In 1838, he moved to Chicago, and in 1858 and 1859 he converted two Chicago and Alton Railroad coaches into sleeping cars. Their success was immediate. He then built the grand oversized “Pioneer” parlor and sleeping car for the Alton; Mrs. Abraham Lincoln rode in this car in 1865 and demanded it in the Lincoln Funeral Train. In 1867, he built a “Hotel Car” for the Chicago and Great Western and in 1868, the first true “dining cars” for the C. & A. In 1870, he promoted a solid train of “Pullman” cars on a trip by a group of prominent Easterners from Boston to San Francisco, and the work was done. That remained was the ability to meet the demand from the public and the railroads for his improved railroad cars. He had competitors, but Stuart Holbrook in “American Railroads” says: “George Pullman believed in fine things, was always ahead of his competitors ... and always bought them out or broke them.

THE TOWN OF PULLMAN
Stuart Holbrook in “American Railroads” states that “in 1880-81, Pullman built a feudal and what many contemporaries held to be the finest company town in the country.” Carlton J. Corliss in “Main Line of Mid-America” is more explicit: “George M. Pullman, founder and President of the Pullman Palace Car Company purchased a large tract of land on the Illinois Central near Lake Calumet and there in 1880, began the construction of his great car manufacturing and the town of Pullman, including streets, sidewalks, parks, water, gas and sewage systems, workmen’s homes, business buildings, schools, churches, hotel, bank, library, theater and hospital. ... Starting with his family, the population of Pullman company increased to 8,800 in 1885, to 12,000 in 1893, having in the meantime become world famous as a model manufacturing town.

The Clock Tower and Administration Building was the center of this tremendous complex.

Earl Miers, in the “American Story” quotes a Pullman worker as stating during the 1894 strike: “We are born in a Pullman House, fed from the Pullman Shop, taught in the Pullman School, catedized in the Pullman Church, and when we die, shall be buried in a Pullman Cemetery and probably wind up in a private Pullman hell.”

TOWN DEVELOPMENT IN THE AGE OF ECLECTICISM
Mr. Robert M. Lillibridge, in the October, 1953 Journal of the American Society of Architectural Historians, tells the story of Pullman as a town. Mr. Barrett, a landscape engineer, was commissioned by Mr. Pullman to assume the town planning phases, and Solon Spencer Beman, a twenty-six year old architect, for seven years a pupil of Richard Upjohn, was given perhaps the largest single architectural commission up to that time. “In the development of Pullman, America witnessed the rise of the first sizeable new town constructed as an integral whole.”

“The primary aim was to construct new industrial structures for the expanding operations of the Pullman Palace Car Company, along with residential accommodations for shop workers and executives ... Out of a total of 3,500 acres ... on a level stretch of prairie twelve miles south of Chicago ... on the Western Shore of Lake Calumet ... 300 acres were selected for town development.

“The town plan ... reflects the common denominator of American cities, the gridiron pattern ... relieved by ... park features, winding roadways ... the lagoon with waterfalls ... and symmetrically arranged flower beds.

“Land use arrangement ... involved use of the central portion by industry, the northern portion by residences, and the southern portions by residences and community facilities. Community facility structures were located along ... a large public park for active recreation ... on the adjacent shore of Lake Calumet.

“The industrial structures ... form a large complex. Steel roof trusses formed the dominant element ... Red brick and limestone trim enclosed the structures. Romanesque window arches ... used with a minimum of architectural detailing ... to harmonize with adjacent residential and community facilities.

“Towering over this central industrial section of the town was the huge bulk of the water and sewerage pumping tower and the Administration Building clock tower, with its opulent eclectic design.

“The architectural result involved some 1,800 dwelling units built in various structural types. Row houses built in long blocks predominated ... some apartment and duplex structures ... and a few single family dwellings were included ... They represented the severe approach to applied decor ... stylizing it as Queen Anne, Romanesque, or Gothic ... with setbacks, breaks in structural rooflines, and minor structural detailing, in an attempt to give plastic quality and variety.

“The public and semi-public structures afforded the architect his major opportunity to express the eclecticism of his time. The Hotel Florence, the Arcade, with its commercial and community facilities, and the Market Building, represent the major structures although ... a church, a school, a casino with shops and meeting rooms, and a large central stable were constructed. The public park upon which these structures fronted was conceived in the manner of nineteenth century romanticism.

“Pullman had great social significance. The town, for the nineteenth century, contained superior living conditions for the workingman ... and represented an unusual recognition by industry of the mutual advantage to be gained by such conditions.

“The town planning aspects ... reflect the viewpoints prevalent in that era ... however in provision of open spaces and in the interrelation between these public open spaces and public buildings, the designers succeeded in creating a coordinated whole of unusual quality. In recognition of the relationships of various types of land uses, Pullman was well in advance of that period.

“Fortunately ... the evidence of this experimentation. on the Illinois Prairie is still largely visible.

WHAT IS LEFT
You can see the Clock Tower from Illinois Central Trains, also the Hotel Florence, several of the original industrial buildings, and many of the interesting Row Houses. The Pullman Arcade was razed in 1926. The Greenstone Church now serves the Pullman Methodist congregation. The top floors of the unique Market Hall Circle were removed in 1937 and the first floor converted to apartments. The Water Tower adjacent to the Clock Tower came down in 1978, but there is much of Old Pullman to be found. The area was annexed to the neighboring town of Hyde Park and became part of Chicago in 1889.

MATERIAL HELP
We would be remiss if we failed to acknowledge the help we had from several people in finding the background material for our 1962 print. Mr. John B. Siewers, Jr., of the Pullman Trust and Savings Bank made available a copy of the now scarce booklet, “Our Community” published by the Pullman Bank in 1938 on the 75th Anniversary of the Bank. Mr. Dan W. Stevens, of the Chicago Agency of M. Glenn Miller, Advertising, secured for us the photographs from which our sketches were made. Special thanks are due Dean Allen Weller of the College of Fine and Applied Arts of the University of Illinois for his advice and help from the Architectural Library.

The print was done as usual from wood blocks cut from tulip wood, and printed by hand.

FRED AND BETTY TURNEZ
Christmas, 1962
Urbana, Illinois