



George M. Pullman, at left, explaining a stock-holding of the Chicago, Pacific Railroad Co., new features of the Pullman Palace Car, in August, 1877.

At the end of October Pullman summoned the church clerk, Frank Kittredge, and the architect, S. S. Beman, to New York City to discuss the project. As a result, on October 31 the stone and foundation work was let to DeGraff & Roberts. The DeGraff & Roberts quarry, in the bank of Sandy Creek just south of East State Street, had a reputation for producing beautiful Medina sandstone that carved well and held up in buildings. By the end of November DeGraff & Roberts had torn down the brick Burrows house. They were well along on the excavation for the basement in December when they were stopped by winter weather. However, twelve stone cutters worked under sheds at the quarry through the winter, preparing the stone for the spring.

It seemed a long winter. The hole in the ground that would become the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church sat there through the rain, snow, and mud. But there was hope. Some of the confusion and want of enterprise in the fall of 1893 had been caused by the lack of a superintendent and a general contractor. Evidently Pullman had recognized that mistake — he hired J.H. Porter of Chicago as superintendent and Mr. Murphy of Tonawanda as



The Pullman Monument which marks the graves of James Lewis and Emily Caroline Pullman is located west of the Tower in Mt. Albion Cemetery.

general contractor. Now things began to move. Pushing his luck, contractor Murphy began work in March 1894. DeGraff & Roberts delivered the stone. The walls began to go up.

George knew the church had to have a corner stone laying ceremony. The new church was to be a memorial to his father, who sixty-eight years earlier had renounced his Baptist faith. About 1826, soon after his marriage in Auburn, New York, Lewis had attended a revival meeting in his Baptist church. Here, for the first time, he understood the implications of Calvinistic theology and was horrified by the awful descriptions of the wrath of God. Every night men, women and children shrieked in terror and cried out in wild and piteous pleadings to be saved from the burning fires of hell. Lewis turned away in disgust, with visions "of a better God, a fairer justice, a sweeter mercy, a stronger love and a brighter hope." Forsaking the Baptist church and its Calvinistic theology, he began groping toward Universalism.

The church was also dedicated to the memory of Emily Caroline Pullman, who had left her Presbyterian faith to support her husband in Universalism. This new church, born out of Lewis Pullman's revision to Calvinism in Auburn, his finding of Universalism in Brocton, and his missionary work in Albion, had to be physically founded on his parents' faith. So George made up memorial booklets on the faith and life of each parent to place in the corner stone to symbolically strengthen the building.

Obviously, the Masons had to hold the corner stone laying ceremony. Lewis Pullman had been a Mason and forty-one years before had been buried in Albion with Masonic ceremonies. The corner stone laying of this magnificent church, dedicated to the memory of a fellow Mason, would be a great opportunity to show the importance of Masonry. So Renovation Lodge pulled out all the stops — they invited the officials of the Grand Masonic Lodge of New York State to preside — the first time that such officials had presided at a corner stone laying in Albion.

When Saturday, May 19, 1894, arrived it was raining the second day of a five-day rainstorm that flooded the county. Many people were kept away by the rain — most of the Niagara County Masons never showed up. Only four of the Grand Lodge officials — Grand Master Frederick K. Burnham, Grand Treasurer John J. Gorman, Grand Marshal Elmer A. Miller, all of New York City, and Grand Senior Warden William A. Sutherland, of Syracuse — showed up. The other Grand positions were filled by Masons from Lockport, Medina, and Albion.

The planned grand procession through the streets was canceled — the two hundred Masons from Albion, Medina, Holley, and Lockport processed along Main Street, marching directly from their hall on East Bank to the church. The village businesses closed from 2:00 to 3:00 — a liberal crowd stood in the rain to greet the Masons. A platform had been built at the level of the corner stone, high up on the northeast corner of the church — now it was covered with a canvas awning to protect the Masonic officials during the ceremony.

Also in attendance were the Pullman party — George Pullman, his son George, his sisters Helen West and Emma Fluhrer, his brother Rev. Dr. Royal H. Pullman (Rev. Dr. James Pullman could not attend because of the death of a parishioner and Charles Pullman was never asked, or at least never came, to these ceremonies), his private secretary Charles S. Sweet, his traveling secretary, his architect S. S. Beman, and his friend and advisor Rev. Dr. Charles Eaton.

With the rain drumming on the awning, Acting Grand Chaplain Rev. F.S. Dunham of Christ Episcopal Church offered a prayer. Acting Grand Secretary George A. Newell read the list of articles included in the copper box. Grand Master Burnham then instructed Acting Grand Treasurer Newell: "You will now deposit these articles beneath the corner stone, and may the Great Architect of the Universe, in His wisdom grant that ages upon ages shall pass away

ere they shall again be seen by men."

The corner stone was then dropped in place and mortared by Grand Master Burnham while he uttered the following prayer: "Almighty and eternal God, by whom all things were made, grant that whatsoever shall be builded on this stone may be to the honor and glory of Thy name, to which be praise forever."

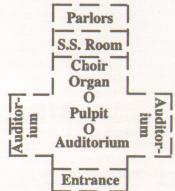
The master architect presented the working tools to Grand Master Burnham, who delivered them to Grand Marshall Miller, who gave the square to Acting Deputy Grand Master John Hodge, the level to Grand Senior Warden Sutherland, and the plumb to Acting Junior Warden Charles Ross. After an invocation the square, the level, and plumb were applied, then Grand Master Burnham came forward and struck the stone three times with a gavel and declared it "well formed, true and trusty and laid in ample form." The stone was then consecrated with corn, oil, and wine.

By the end of the ceremony the rain had become so heavy that everyone adjourned to the courthouse, where the court room was soon packed to capacity. Rev. Dr. Royal H. Pullman delivered the address of the day, choosing as his theme *Character Building*. He alluded to his father and mother, in whose memory the church was erected, and to the consecrated life lived by them in the old home in Albion. The Pullman Universalist Memorial Church was not erected by his brother George as a work of ostentation, but simply and purely as a memorial of the father and mother who believed in the doctrines of the Universalist church and who lived their religion among the people of this community many years ago.

The exercises were concluded by the benediction by Acting Grand Chaplain Rev. Dunham. A collation for the visiting Masons was served in the dining room of Masonic Hall, followed by dancing. The Masonic officials were entertained next door at the Orleans House (now Henri's).

By the summer of 1894 construction was progressing rapidly, and it seemed likely the church would be completed by the end of the year. The memorial window had been a problem — George could not make up his mind about the theme. It was not until sometime after the corner stone laying that the theme of Christ with open arms had been chosen. Everyone hoped that Tiffany could get the huge window done quickly.

The society would soon have a church, now they needed a minister. The church had been without a permanent minister since Rev. John A. Copeland had left in October, 1893. Now they turned the situation to good advantage — by inviting a wide variety of ministers to preach on summer Sundays they would get regular sermons and could look over possible permanent ministers for their new church. Reverend Thomas Borden began the



This was Beman's first floor plan of the church before the actual site was selected and conformed to by altering his original idea.

summer by preaching at the courthouse on June 17. He was followed by Rev. Dr. James M. Pullman; Rev. Miss Henrietta Moore, of Ohio ("an eloquent speaker"); Rev. Dr. Charles Fluhrer, of Grand Rapids, Michigan; Rev. J.H. Holder, of Amherst, Massachusetts; Rev. Alice K. Wright (wife of Rev. Alfred Ellsworth Wright) of Brooklyn; and, finally, on September 14, by Rev. Francis A. Gray of Nashua, New Hampshire.

The search was successful, for on October 14 the society called Rev. Dr. Charles Fluhrer to the pastorate. Rev. Fluhrer had been a classmate of Rev. James Pullman at St. Lawrence University and Canton Theological School and was well-known in the denomination as a fine scholar and able preacher as well as a sympathetic minister. He was also the brother-in-law of George's younger sister, Emma Pullman Fluhrer. Rev. Fluhrer would begin his pastorate when the church was dedicated.

With the pastoral problem solved, all the society had to worry about was getting the church completed. In August the lathing and plastering was being pushed ahead rapidly, using the newly invented steel lath wire net that held plaster thoroughly, producing a firm and durable surface. By the middle of October, when George and other members of the family stopped by on their way east to look over the new church, the masons, carpenters and painters were almost finished. George set early January as the tentative date for the dedication. A general dedication date had to be set relatively early because it would take some time to mold and cast the bronze dedication tablet — George ordered it read "January 1895."

With the interior carpentry and plastering finished, the church was ready for the pipe organ. The organ, from the Johnson Pipe Organ Company, Westfield, Mass., arrived in early November; company workmen spent the rest of the month installing it. As soon as the organ was installed workmen from Tiffany's workshop in New York City arrived to paint the walls and ceilings with the special "Tiffany blend," which modulated from terra cotta on the walls to gold on the ceiling, and install the fifty-six colored glass windows.

By the end of December the church was almost complete, so the dedication was set for Wednesday, January 16, 1895. However, that date was too optimistic — the decorators were done by January 10, but the memorial window had not yet arrived. George visited Albion on the



The Pullmans at Castle Rest in the Thousand Islands around 1890. L-R Royal Henry, Charles Lewis, Albert Beason, George Mortimer, Emily Caroline their mother, Helen Pullman (Mrs. George West), Emma Pullman (Mrs. William Fluhrer) and James Minton. Both Royal Henry and James Minton were Universalist ministers. Royal Henry gave the dedication sermon for the Pullman Church.

10th, refused to dedicate the church until it was complete, and postponed the dedication until further notice.

Luckily, the half-ton memorial window came on Tuesday, January 15. The new dedication was set for Thursday, January 31, the last possible date on which the memorial tablet date would be correct. George ordered the souvenir programs, which contained the text of all the speeches and the order of the ceremonies, and the exact date. Now the dedication had to take place on the 31st. The workmen rushed the memorial window into place.

The doors of the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church were first opened to the public on the morning of Thursday, January 31, 1895. It was an unpleasant winter day — the half-frozen through rushed in, pushing the users into the far corners, and within five minutes completely filled the church.

The Pullman family, who had arrived in three private railway cars, and their friends occupied the west wing of the transept, nearest the memorial window and the memorial tablet. The seating plan left out a pew so that the tablet on the north wall could be easily read: "Erected by a Son as a Memorial to his Father JAMES LEWIS PULLMAN in recognition of his love and work for the Universalist Church and its Faith and in Memory of his Mother EMILY CAROLINE PULLMAN one with her husband in the joys and hopes of religion. Dedicated January 1895."

The dedication ceremony began at 10:30. The choir



A view of the Church from Main St. prior to 1905 (actually a quartet) from the Third Presbyterian Church of Rochester provided appropriate sacred music. George Pullman delivered the deed, ending his short speech by saying, "I hope and firmly believe that the spirit of the prayers offered to the throne of Grace from the old red school-house, whose influence, through a period of more than fifty years, has resulted in the building of this church, will continue, and will echo and re-echo within its walls to the lasting benefit of many people."

The society clerk, Frank Kittredge, accepted the deed and the keys. Rev. Dr. R.H. Pullman preached the dedication sermon, from the text, "What mean these stones," which embraced a history of the Pullman family with a panegyric of the father and mother, in whose memory the church was erected.

In the afternoon the church doors were again opened, for the installation of Rev. Dr. Fluhrer as pastor of the new church. This time Rev. Dr. James Pullman presented the sermon, speaking the sentences of installation for his friend.

In the evening the doors were opened for the third time, for the reception for Mr. Pullman and Rev. Fluhrer and the visiting clergymen. Receiving the guests were Mr. and Mrs. Pullman, Rev. and Mrs. Fluhrer, and Mr. and Mrs. Donalds. An elaborate repast was served by the ladies of the church. The new church was truly dedicated — in one day the society had received the keys to their new church, installed their new pastor, and held their first church supper.

George Pullman's investment in Universalism paid off — the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church, the only Universalist church established in an Orleans County village, is the only one of the five Orleans County Universalist churches still functioning. It now serves a growing and vital Unitarian Universalist congregation.

Acknowledgments
I would like to thank C.W. Lattin for his contributions to this study; it was Bill who suggested I write about George Pullman and his church for this publication. In his roles as Orleans County Historian and historian of the Pullman Memorial Unitarian Universalist Church, Bill made available many useful historical materials. As my work was underway several illuminating discussions about



This interior photo was taken around the time the church was dedicated in 1895, looking from the east transept through the crossing into the west transept.

Universalism in Albion in the 1850s and the construction of the church in the 1890s helped me form the interpretation presented here.

As always, I thank my wife, Joanne, and my daughter, Sarah, for their support of my research and writing in spite of the time and attention it takes away from them; it was they who encouraged a more informal writing style. I thank my son, Thomas, a Ph.D. candidate in historical archaeology at the University of Pennsylvania, whose clear literary vision and ability to see the thread of an argument has helped me to organize my writing. I also thank Stephanie Sanger, also a Ph.D. candidate in American Civilization at the University of Pennsylvania, whose interest in my columns on Albion history has convinced me to continue writing them.

Bibliographic Note
I have here presented a short tale of the founding of the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church. Those who wish a long, comprehensive chronological history of George M. Pullman and his church, as seen from Albion, should see my columns, *Albion, Oh, Albion*, Nos. 539-547, published in the *Albion Advertiser*, January 12 - March 9, 1994. Copies of the *Albion Advertiser* are preserved at the Swan Library, 4 North Main Street, Albion, New York 14411. Typescripts of all my columns, with citations, are deposited at the Swan Library.

My research began with the biography by Liston Leyendecker, *Palace car prince: a biography of George Mortimer Pullman* (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1992). This work, the only full-length biography of Pullman, utilizes Pullman family letters, diaries, newspapers, and various company papers. It is the basic starting point for anyone studying George Pullman; it would have been impossible to be as precise about his life without its chronological framework.

My contribution to our knowledge of George Pullman and his church is new material on the Pullmans in Chautauque County, the Pullmans in Albion, and the construction of the church obtained from newspapers, local histories, pamphlets, deeds, censuses, obituaries, and cemetery records. For citations see the typescripts held at the Swan Library, cited above.

The PMUC wishes to extend its sincere thanks to Neil Johnson for all his research and preparation of this historical account.



CHRIST THE CONSOLER

"Standing here, the minister shall have in view the latest and best thought of Jesus the Christ, as art, taking up this thought, has given to the sacred figure in this memorial window a pose that is worth a thousand volumes of commentary on his character. The grandeur of strength, of knowledge, of spiritual force and moral power is there. It is the Universalist conception.

Art for ages has been under the domination of theological absurdities, and has given in its work inefficiency and weakness to the sacred figure; but now it rises at the touch of liberal ideas and gives the conception of Jesus as a Master on all questions of human life, as competent to lead men in the 19th century as when he led the multitudes in the first." — Royal H. Pullman, D.D.

These words are taken from the "Dedication Sermon" for the Church by Rev. Dr. Royal H. Pullman, on January 31, 1895. This portion of his remarks dealt specifically with the window pictured herein. It is the only signed Tiffany glass church window in Orleans County. Etched in small letters on a little piece of glass in the lower right corner it states: "Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company - New York."

ENDOWMENTS FOR THE FUTURE MAINTENANCE OF THE PULLMAN MEMORIAL CHURCH GIVEN BY

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| George M. Pullman | William J. Luttonton |
| Jerome D. Gibson | Corra V. Luttonton |
| Caroline E. Gibson | Harriet A. Hart |
| Frank M. Gibson | William W. Phipps |
| Rosetta Church | Edward W. Nicholson |
| A. Jaquith Egelston | John E. Brady |
| Lewis R. Rogers | Stephen Hallcock |
| Roderick O. Smith | Mary Billings |
| Flora B. Northrop given in memory of | Helen A. Tanner |
| William & Emily Hallcock | Oliver A. Paine |
| Sara E. Hallcock | Clara T. Luttonton |
| Alma E. Caswell | Rance Wright |
| Thomas J. Sweet | Jay R. Brown |
| Ora & Sarah Lee | Iva Kimball |
| | Gladys & Harold Parsons |
| | J. Howard Pratt |