

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: THE INFLUENCE OF PULLMAN:
RAILROAD PASSENGER COACH COLORS,
1900-1940

Degree Candidate: Barbara J. Klobucar

Degree and Year: Master of Arts in Historic
Preservation, 2000

Thesis directed by: Patrick McKnight

This thesis shows the influence that the Pullman Company had on the colors of passenger coaches in the first forty years of the twentieth century. The Pullman Company was the foremost manufacturer of passenger coaches in North America. The Pullman name meant quality. The dark olive green color of Pullman-made coaches became known as "Pullman Green." Passenger coaches consist of any car that was used as a commuter or day coach, business car, dining car, post office car, baggage car, sleeper, or parlor car. Railroad companies not buying coaches from Pullman requested their coach manufacturers to paint their new coaches "Pullman Green." When railroads painted coaches

during normal maintenance, they were painted dark green or olive green like Pullman cars.

This thesis examines both archival records and physical evidence. Documents show that the railroads wanted the color of their coaches to resemble Pullman coaches. Coaches were investigated to date their age and document their histories. Paint samples were obtained and a paint color analysis performed on coaches representing different coach manufacturers and railroad companies.

Documentary and physical evidence shows that Pullman set the standard for passenger coach colors from 1900 to 1940. Evidence shows that the coach manufacturers tried to match the "Pullman Green" color but were not completely successful. Railroad companies had more difficulty matching "Pullman Green" but in turn, they each came up with their own unique green. Many of these colors were recorded in the course of this research. These colors are notated and an actual paint sample is included in this thesis.