

After a short wait in Albany, I rode a Boston & Albany train to Chatham, N.Y. where I spent the night, in order to have the next day for the ride to Boston. The sole remainder of "steam operation" in Chatham was a tender off a 2-8-4 "Berkshire" type locomotive. Autumn foliage was mostly gone this late in the fall up here, but it was a beautiful ride anyhow, even though it was behind NYC "E-7" EMDs. In Boston I took the subway over to B&M's North Sta.

My cousin Reginald had given me about a dozen envelopes to "post" on various RPO routes out of North Sta., so I spent most of the afternoon so doing. He had a tremendous stamp collection and also collected RPO cancellations. While walking around the sta. platforms looking for "outbound" RPO cars I saw a B&M Pacific type come in on a train from Lowell. About an hour later I rode a train to Lowell, also with a "Pacific". After an hour or so I boarded the B&M's "Cannonball" for Concord, N.H., where I spent the night.

The next days ride to Montreal would be on B&M-C.P.'s "Alouette" from Concord's old trainshed sta., via Woodsville and Wells River and then via St. Johnsbury to Newport, Vt. The Canadian Pacific only had three EMD "E-8" type diesels and we had one of these all the way to Montreal's Windsor terminal.

After spending the night in Montreal I boarded C.V.'s "Ambassador", the day train to White River Jct., Vt. We had a C.V. 4-8-2, the 600, for this fine days trip thru the Vermont countryside. I put my "Brownie" 616 size Kodak to use at Essex Jct, St. Albans and Montpelier Jct., where there were long sta. stops, taking "no. 600's" picture! After White River Jct. we were headed by an EMD "E-7" type diesel in place of the "600". The B&M locomotive would stay on the front to Springfield, Mass. sta.

The weather was very warm for this time in the fall, especially this far north, and the "AC" felt very comfortable in the thru Montreal-Grand Central Terminal B&M "American Flyer" type coach. Little did I think then, that in six



LIRR-P74B #7526 - Photo: Gene Collora Archive: Mike Boland

years time I would no doubt "collect tickets" in this very same car on the LIRR! In 1959 the LIRR bought the entire class of this type coach, thirty in all, when the B&M was giving up its long distance passenger trains. The NH ride from Springfield to New York went fairly "quick", even though darkness had overtaken us, even before Springfield.

One winter morning early in 1954, train 625 was delayed for about twenty minutes at Stony Brook. Seems the engineer and fireman had a big argument over keeping the G5 "hot" and other matters. The squabble ended with the fireman getting off the engine and refusing to fire it any further. Henry Hudson, the head brakeman, was "drafted" to fire no. 625 into Jamaica, uniform and all! Henry kept her "hot" it seems and was rewarded with an extra days pay as fireman. The guy who got off at Stony Brook got two or three weeks off to get his strength back, without pay of course. That previous summer job I had in Ponkonkoma also had the "lazy" fireman on it, luckily we had a diesel.

As Spring approached, one of the "old timers" who owned a "day" ticket collectors run in "Port" took a leave of absence for two months. This meant his job would be put on the bid sheet as a "pick" run, (temporary vacancy), for us extra men. Surprisingly I was awarded the run when the bids came out.



LIRR #2003 eastbound at NASSAU Tower 1/1955 Photo/Archive: Art Huneke

Leaving "Port" at five thirty nine a.m. on train 609, we had fourteen "mainliner" P54 coaches pulled by a 2400 h.p. Fairbanks Morse "C Liner". By this time all the former fields from Syosset west were filled with homes. At Hicksville we were "swamped" with commuters who gave us a "seated load" and then some. Anyone getting on from there west would have to stand up.

Parking around Hicksville sta. and nearby streets was non-existent after seven thirty or so and some commuters had a half-mile walk from their cars to the LIRR. That job had a six hour layover in the city and went back to "Port" on no. 642 in the afternoon, still hauled by a "G5" Mon. to Fri.!

The Spring of 1954 was the best for mild, beautiful weather since 1946, "just the ticket" to make you think of far away places to see on your soon to come two weeks vacation. The time to get the "official Guide" out and make out an application for "trip passes" was here again! About the middle of April I left Jersey City on the B&O's overnight train to Washington. That was a nice moderate-paced journey to lull one off to sleep in the "lower" of an "open-section" Pullman car. I woke up as we were coming into Union Sta., the best night's sleep I ever had on a train!

After breakfast in the sta. I boarded B&O's "Metropolitan Special", train no. 11, for the all daylight trip thru Maryland, West Virginia and part of eastern Ohio. Arrival in Cincinnati would be about ten p.m., where I had a short wait before catching the NYC overnight train to Indianapolis.

The Pennsy may have its Jack's Narrows and Horseshoe Curve, etc., but the B&O is even more scenic in many ways. Starting at Point Of Rocks and extending to Parkersburg, its mountains and more mountains! On this beautiful warm spring Sunday, the bursting buds of the new season were everywhere as we followed the Potomac River west to Cumberland. Due to a big freight wreck near Paw Paw, W.Va. we went via the Magnolia Cut-Off. Normally passenger trains use the original main line following the river. The only "steamers" I noted were two "big sixes", (2-10-2 types), slumbering away at Martinsburg by the ancient roundhouse.

Beyond Keyser we tackled "Seventeen Mile Grade", the two unit FMD "E-7s" going it alone with our seven cars. After Grafton and Clarksburg we went over the Mononagh Division with its seemingly endless tunnels. At that there were twenty two of them! Most pleasant was the Nathan "five chime" horns on eng. no. 72. I had never heard one before, definitely the closest to a "steamer" and sounding better than a few of them too, by the way!

Cincinnati Union Terminal was just as beautiful as they said it was, and

the short stay there was nowhere near long enough to really explore the place. Leaving Indianapolis the next morning on the Peoria and Eastern, it was a pleasant ride behind two EMD "Geeps" across Indiana's flat farmlands to Champaign, Ill.. Frequently along the way there were abandoned right of way embankments paralleling us, no doubt they once carried interurban lines. As soon as the P&E train I had just left "cleared" the IC Main, I was able to witness a IC 4-8-2 southbound with a long train of coal hoppers. The photo came out pretty clear for a "box camera" too!

I planned to ride the Illinois Terminal RR, (ITC), from Champaign to Springfield as there were rumors that passenger service on this line would soon be a thing of the past. Promptly at two p.m. I climbed aboard an arch-windowed Interurban car bound for Springfield. From there to St. Louis, the next day, I would ride the ITC's blue "streamliner" on the main line trackage.

"Country interurban" it surely was, going thru the small mid-western farm towns in the middle of "Main Street.", but always seeking the side of the highway once "out of town". Milk cans were loaded as well as "chick-pullman" cardboard boxes at a few places, since we had a "combine". Our one car "train" carried → only a few local passengers, I was the only "thru" passenger aboard. Coming into Springfield we went by an ITC yard with at least half a dozen electric locomotives of various types. I quickly "detrained" at the next stop and walked back to look over what looked like a "perfect set-up", no one about, no fence, and perfect "low-sun" as it was now nearly six p.m.. One problem, I soon discovered, I was down to the last "frame" in the camera and had neglected to bring a fresh roll of film. What's more, the place was far out of town with no stores in sight!

That evening, after getting accommodations for the night, I strolled over to the GM&O sta. to watch a southbound for St. Louis passenger train. The cars had diesel undercar power units for lights and "AC", boy were they noisy! In another year the LIRR would start to get new cars that also would have these "undercar power units". After the GM&O departed I walked a few blocks to the IC sta. and witnessed another Chicago-St. Louis passenger job. The IC sta. was on the end of a long "Wye" that came west off the main line. This meant the IC had to "back-in" in one direction to serve Springfield. each time it used the branch.

Next morning I was up early to visit the C&IM locomotive facilities that featured a few 2-10-2 types laying over that pulled long coal trains thru here. The C&IM yard had an immense many-siloed grain elevator as it's backdrop, what a "gem" for some model railroad with plenty of room!

At noon I left from the ITC sta, aboard the "streamliner" for the long ride into St. Louis which featured an underground terminal in that city.

The afternoon was still "young" so I decided to ride to Granite City, Ill., back over the route we had just traveled →, as the ride over the McKinley Bridge and the view of the Mississippi River from it were worth seeing again. This time I rode the ITC's "double-end" PCC streetcars, which were very comfortable, as all "PCCs" seem to be, no matter which city you ride them in. I got off in Granite City at the ITC yard to take photos of the "heavy cars" that ran to Alton, Ill. from St. Louis. Nicely maintained cars, I only wished I had the time to ride them to Alton. They had "fast running" written all over them!

That evening I rode the L&N night train to Louisville, Ky., arriving there at seven fifteen. I had little time to look around the huge train shed as my L&N train to Cincinnati via "The Short Line" thru northern Kentucky left at seven thirty a.m. That afternoon, although it was raining I had ample opportunity to explore the great Union Terminal, as well as see B&O "President" pacifics, plus several NYC "Hudsons", on at least a dozen trains!

Around ten p.m. the N&W Pullman "heavyweight" sleeper was opened for occupancy on the night train out of Cincinnati for Roanoke and Norfolk, so I retired early after the previous night of sitting up in a coach. I asked the porter to wake me coming into Williamson, W. Va. as "daylight" would be about then and I didn't want to miss any mountain scenery. He did, and I had time to run across the street for some rolls and juice to bring back while "The Pocahontas" did its station work in Williamson.

All morning long the train wound in and around hundreds of curves following the river valleys thru the steep-sided mountains. Some of the curves were so sharp that with the long train the "Pocahontas" had, you got the impression there was a train going in the opposite direction across the river headed by a class "J" streamlined N&W 4-8-4! In a few seconds your car would cant sharply as it rounded the curve and it was of course the head end of your train you "saw across the curve" you were now traveling over! There were many tunnels, some only a few hundred feet from each other thru the many mountain spurs. This was "soft coal mining" country and the weary little "company houses" where the miners lived were everywhere a few feet or half-way level ground could be found to erect them on. Arrival in Roanoke, Va. was in early afternoon and I got off here. The attractive Roanoke sta. overlooked the main line and even better than that, the sta. restaurant had its dining room on the track side. I spent a good hour enjoying the delicious chicken and dumplings sitting in a window seat and watching the continuous "show" on the sta. tracks below being staged by class "A" and "Y" mallet locomotives with the long trains. Once in a while a class "J" would pull in with a long passenger train with many "head end" cars that had to be swit-

ched by the station switcher, a brand new 0-8-0! I stayed in town that night as the next morning I had to leave Roanoke on the VGN Ry. passenger train.

Next morning a walk across the city brought me to the neat VGN station, located near the N&W Winston Salem Line -VGN Main Line grade crossing. The VGN passenger train consisted of 4-6-2 no. 210, an RPO and two "heavyweight" coaches. Any train running south of Washington, D.C. in those days always needed at least two coaches to observe "southern custom" at that time. Presently we were off for Norfolk with me as the only passenger! "Deacon" Joe Roberts, the conductor looked at my trip pass and said, "Long Island Railroad, never heard of it"! He was only kidding of course, it was probably the first time he had ever been handed a LIRR pass in all his years on the VGN!

I was enjoying the ride thru the hilly country side which even had a few tunnels not too far east of Roanoke. Listening to that big "steamboat" whistle on the "210" was'nt too hard to take either, riding in the black leather seats in the comfortable steel coach! We headed in to meet a westbound train of coal hoppers about half way to Victoria, Va. I got off and grabbed a shot of the big VGN 2-6-6-6 Mallet with it's huge smoke plume as she passed.

The ride ended all too soon for me as I had to get off at Alberta, Va. to connect with a SAL train that would take me to Richmond. At that city the same train became an RF&P train for Washington, D.C.. The Pennsy would forward me to N.Y. of course.



**Watchman's Crossing Shanty
Broadway St., Hicksville
1959 Archive: MTA/LIRR**

In June, George Basch, long time LIRR crossing watchman at Great East Neck Rd. west of Babylon, convinced us to buy a better camera. A pawn shop in Jamaica had an "Argus C-3" for sale at a good price so we bought it. Now we could take 16mm color slides and also take "action", something the old "Brownie" did'nt do too well. My very first "action" shot was the Port Jefferson frt.



**LIRR #32 G-5 westbound
Bellaire Station - c.1953
Archive: Jim Gillin**

passing Bellaire sta. with appropriate "smoke". It was H10 no. 113!

With the "summer timetable", I was fortunate to "hold" a flat day job as conductor in "Port" and it was off Sundays to boot! We made train 615 in to Hunterspoint Ave. and L.I. City in the a.m. arriving at eight o'clock. Almost every morning we passed the NH "Washingtonian" from Montreal. It was standing by "Harold" tower's home signal by the Knickerbocker Laundry building, no doubt waiting for a clear track in Penn. Sta. to open up. Usually by the time we were leaving Hunterspoint Ave. sta. the "Washingtonian" would be coming all "out straight" down the hill from "Harold" behind it's 0350 class electric motor and plunge into East River tunnel "Line Two".

Since we "swung" until train 616 to "Port" out of Jamaica at twelve fifteen, I often took morning walks around the L.I. City area. One of my favorites was to start at the nearby float bridges and follow the "North Shore Freight Branch" from there to Yard "A" and the PRR Sunnyside enginehouse east of the

Honeywell St. viaduct, (The long bridge over Sunnyside Yard with the big track numbers on it).



**Honeywell St. overpass
View E - c.1940**



**View NE from Honeywell St.
PRR Sunnyside Yard
1934 - Archive: NYS Collection**

There were always two PRR DDL engines laying outside, nos. 17 and 36. They were used to pull "wire trains" anywhere in "AC" electrified territory in → L.I. City or the East and Hudson River tunnels. At that time all this "AC" trackage also had third rail, which at one time extended to Mannattan Transfer sta. in N.J.. When maintenance was needed on the "AC" the current was turned off while the third rail remained energized, this enabled the DDLs to operate the "wire trains" anywhere as needed. Most of such work was done between ten p.m. and six a.m. when traffic thru the tunnels was at it's lowest ebb. Up until at least 1946 the NH had it's own "wire train" pulled by a well kept 2-6-0 "Mogul". I saw it at "Harold" a couple of times near the Gosman Ave. bridge. It also was used on the NH freight line to Fresh Pond Jct. → the connection to the LIRR Bay Ridge Br..

A rather unusual piece of equipment was kept near the turntable in Sunnyside. It was a PRR double-ended wrecker powered by third rail for use in the tunnels with their very restricted clearances. This would have to be moved with a DDL to the required location. The odd thing about the two DDLs at the enginehouse was the spelled out "PENNSYLVANIA" on their sides. Neither had ever had the 1939-40 "World's Fair" striping and sans-serif lettering and numbers applied!

Having Sundays off gave me the opportunity to go on the CNJ "Farewell to Steam" trip out of Jersey City on July → eleventh. Camelback no. 774 gave us a great trip to Freehold, Atlantic Highlands and Bay Head Junction. A sad sight in the yards at Jersey City was the lines of "Pacific" type engines with white lines through their numbers. That meant only one thing, they were headed for "scrap"! Someone had written with chalk on the tender of engine 814, "R.I.P."-814, very appropriate I thought. Many's the ride I had behind those "Pacifics" with their melodious whistles, as Round Brook was my favorite place off Long Island for "train watching". My dad first took me there in 1938, the first time I had ever ridden behind a "camelback".



**LIRR #50 G5s - 10/31/1954
Flatbush Ave - Vanderveer Park
Photo/Archive: Art Huneke**



**ERA Rail Fan Special 10/31/1954
LIRR H10s #111 Oyster Bay
Archive: Mike Boland**

On October thirty first the LIRR had a "steam trip" of it's own to L.I. City and then to Bay Ridge, behind G5 no. 50. Later the same day the "fans" made a round trip to Oyster Bay behind H10 no. 111. I could have gone on that trip, but I had no knowledge of it beforehand. I had a weeks vacation coming in mid-November and was looking forward to picture-taking with our new "Argus C-3" camera.

Early on the Monday of my week off I was standing along the Pennsy main line just east of the curve at the H&M Harrison sta..

At that time the PRR still had two North Jersey Coast trains into Exchange place Sta. in Jersey City pulled by K4s, at least in the a.m.. In the evening only "The Broker" left Jersey City behind "steam". Why those three trains did not "change power" at South Amboy as all other PRR trains did was a mystery to me! It was a cold morning and I got plenty of smoke and steam as I "captured" the two K4 hauled trains on film. That afternoon I went to Erie's Croxton yard and got a photo of one solitary light 4-6-2 waiting for the price of scrap metal" to go up! The Erie had it's last "steam" in March on the NJ&NY Branch.

Since I had a Pennsy "trip pass" in my pocket, I decided to go to Camden, N.J. the next day as I had heard there was quite a variety of "steam" operating out of there. Since there was still passenger service from Trenton to Camden via the line thru Bordentown and Burlington, I decided to get off my N.Y. to Philly train at Trenton. "Bubbling" away and sounding a lot like a Baldwin diesel, PRR gas-electric no. 4666 was already at the sta. platform. I was looking forward to riding on this car as it was a "sister" car to the 569 and 4670 that had been used on the LIRR's Babylon-Patchogue "Scoot" in the early thirties.

The car was warm and quite comfortable to ride in, and the engine was not that noisy back in the coach section. I regretted not riding the Pennsy to Phillipsburg from Trenton over the "Bel-Del" Br. in cars like this. That service had been discontinued not too long ago. The ride to Camden was over all too soon and I and about a dozen others alighted at Broadway Sta..

Walking toward the engine terminal I could see that Camden was "loaded with steam" alright, memories of Morris Park on the LIRR back when it had tracks swarming with steam locos were brought back to me by the sight! Several Reading class G-3 4-6-2's were sitting around in "steam", they were used on Hammondton locals mostly. An air horn on one of them was a surprise! The Reading G-3's were easily equal to a "K4" in getting a train over the road. In October 1952 I had ridden CNJ's "Harrisburg Special" from Jersey City to High Bridge, N.J. behind these fine engines, a memorable trip indeed. It was an upgrade out of High Bridge and the "210" really "talked it up" leaving, no tape recorder again, darn it!



**E6s #737 Patchogue - 1946
Locomotive service terminal
Archive: Dave Keller**

Over on the turntable was E6 1600, being lined up for a roundhouse stall for routine maintenance. Her numberplate was saved by a PR-SL fireman that once lived in Massapequa Park. I had't seen 1600 since 1941 when I took a photo of her in Patchogue. Only last month, (in Oct.), I had ridden from Newark to Atlantic City behind one of her sister E6's, no. 460. The rainy Sunday did not keep 460 from giving us a fast ride thru the New Jersey pine-lands on the well-maintained roadbed of those days. Only a couple of K4s were in evidence that morning, probably in from Pemberton or Atlantic City.

Mostly PRR 2-8-0's and 0-6-0's filled up the roundhouse and engine lay up tracks, used on the many local freights in and around Camden. There were also two new PR-SL Baldwin "road switcher" diesels, I did not waste film on them.

In October the LIRR "Modernization Program" of existing equipment began. The first "MU" car to be finished was 1742 and besides recessed lighting, new two and three seating, tile floors and new ceiling fans, boasted aluminum hand rails on the outside. The first ten cars "modernized" for steam or diesel service were former MU trailer cars nos. 392-401 inclusive. When I first saw them they were used on each end of trains that were composed otherwise of leased Reading Company coaches, such as nos. 205-214 and 42-31. The new seating arrangements of "2-3" seats meant many more seats for the long suffering and standing commuters!



P-72 2-3 seating 6/1955
Photo: LI Railroader



P-54 "Ping-pong" 2-3 seating
Archive: Richard Glueck

In late November one weekday I headed "out east" after work. Being the westbound freight from Greenport would be running later in the day due to cauliflower season, I had hopes of getting a few color "action" slides with "The Argus C-3". By not leaving Greenport until one p.m., the freight would be able to pick up iced reefers of cauliflower at Southold and Riverhead that had been loaded after the morning auctions at the "cauliflower blocks" in those two towns.

I had no sooner parked our '50 Ford at Southold sta. when I heard an H10 whistling for Boisseau Ave crossing, about a quarter mile to the east. I took her photo as she neared the depot. Ron Ziel's book "Victorian Stations" of the LIRR" features my slide of engine 108 on the dust jacket. Chasing her west by auto I also "got her" on film at Alvah's Lane west of Cutchogue and passing Mattituck sta.. Those last two shots were not as clear as the first was, due to clouds at times over the sun.

→ New Years eve of 1954 was marked the usual way in "Port". At midnight the "ashpit crew" blew all the steam engine whistles for a minute or two, joined by the "peanut whistle" on the nearby Thomas Wilson lace mill operated by a night watchman.

There would be many new passenger coaches on the LIRR in the coming year, as eighty steam/diesels cars in the 2900 series and many MU electric cars in the 2500, 2600 and 2800 series would arrive from the Pullman-Standard plant in Worcester, Mass.. All would be air-conditioned and the steam/diesel cars all would have under-car diesel engines for the lights and air conditioning.



RS-3 #1555 Mineola - 10/01/1955
Photo: G. Votava Archive: Dave Keller

President Goodfellow also ordered ten new Alco "RS-3" road switchers to completely eliminate the few G5s and H10s still in service. The "handwriting on the wall" for all P54 coaches in the 139-178 series, as well as all but a dozen in the 314-388 series of P54s was here at last. All the P70s and "pings" would survive intact. In MU service all the 1400 and 1500 series and many "trailer" cars would be candidates for the scrap merchant.