

Since this would be the last year to work behind "steam" I would ever have, I resolved to try and work what few trains regularly were assigned steam power. Being on the "extra list" I could fill vacancies of men on vacation or "off sick" on the "steam" passenger trains. One February morning I was marked up on train #25 out of Oyster Bay, the train with the club car on the rear. We had engine 32, and being the flagman I had the opportunity to open side vestibule doors and watch "32" go thru her paces eight cars up ahead. All those curves between the "Bay" and Sea Cliff were ideal for watching driving rods in motion!

It was also my one and only chance to "collect" in the Oyster Bay Br. club car. That membership list posted on the inside wall was impressive indeed! Many important "Captains Of Industry", men in "Banking Circles" and the "Stock Exchange" were regulars on this car.



Club car interior c.1945
Wicker chairs, backgammon
Photo: George Christopher
Archive: Dave Keller



Oyster Bay Club car #2002
Oyster Bay Yard 1/03/1959
Photo: George E. Votava
Archive: Dave Keller

The one thing that was irritating about all four club cars was that with the side-seating in the wicker chairs, the club members feet were always stretched out in the aisle. Trainman, in punching their commutation tickets had to step over them and balance ones self besides. Common courtesy would tell a person to momentarily move their feet inward while a person had to move close to them. Perhaps the club members figured they were above this, as they had to pay a fee for the car's operation as well as their commutation!

One March afternoon I was marked up as flagman on the "protect" engine that was stationed in Mineola for the p.m. rush hour in case of "diesel failure". That day it was G5 no.50 and I spent the time in Mineola up in "Nassau" tower awaiting the call to "bail a diesel out". Nothing happened that day so we returned to Jamaica after eight thirty p. m..

For much of March and April of 1955 I was lucky enough to work train 635 leaving "Port" at three forty eight p.m.. From Mon. to Fri. inclusive, this, the slowest in time of any train on the branch, always had a G5 on it. Usually engine 24, as it was Frank Albin's, the regular engineer's favorite, was the power on no.635. As far as "head end" cars go, this train was quite interesting. In addition to the express car out of "Port", we picked up another at Huntington, (on Tuesdays two), Behind them came RPO 737 and four "pings".



"Ping Pong" #46
Ronkonkoma c.1949
(Ziel - Boland)

Watching train 635 "highball" thru, say Mineola, one could easily mistake it for Greenport-New York train 211 of the 1930-1950 era. That is if you substituted "main liner" coaches for the "pings" and a round number plate on the engines smokebox instead of the present keystone plate!

On that same job, after a "swing", we left for Ronkonkoma on train 250 at seven thirty two, usually behind a "PM" 1600 h.p. diesel. Coming back to Jamaica we carried no passengers, being just an "equipment extra." One memorable spring evening we had G5 no.39 on the round trip to Ronk., and if that wasn't enough "class", our homeward trip back to Port on train

no.666 also featured engine 39! Neither the "round trip" to Ronkonkoma or train 666 had traveled behind a steam engine for quite some time, probably since the fall of 1951 when the 1600 "FM" diesels retired about a dozen G5s.

When the nicer days of May rolled around I decided one Monday morning to try and get some "steam action" on color slides. My first location was Sea Cliff to get train 525 coming into the station. Then it was over to



**Cold Spring Harbor - FM H16-44 #1505 - West Rogues Path c.1958
Photo: Robert Emery Collection: SUNY Stony Brook**

Rogues Path crossing on "Cold Spring Hill". Engine 113 was quite a sight storming up the grade with about fifty some cars. By the time the caboose went by me the speed was probably down to less than ten miles an hour, yet the train never stalled, something that would be fairly common in days to come with diesel operation of this train. One of the worse problems on this stretch was leaves on the track in the fall. After trains had run over them a few times, they formed a greasy-like film on the rails causing slowly moving trains to lose their "footing" sometimes. If the train ground to a stop and was unable to move ahead there were two things one could do to get moving again. One was back the whole train down grade to just west of Cold Spring Harbor sta. and make a "run for the hill", usually this worked. The other solution, at least for freight trains, was to "double the hill". This meant taking about ^{HALF} the consist to Huntington and putting it in the siding, and then going back "lite" to "the hill" for the rear half of the train and bringing that also to Huntington and consolidating it with the first part.

Sometimes the heavy evening commuter trains would get stalled on the hill as well, usually because the locomotive's sanders were not working properly. When that happened, the fireman, head end brakeman and conductor would walk ahead of the barely-moving train throwing sand and gravel on the rails so the engine could get "traction", usually this resulted in getting the train moving enough to "make the hill" and eliminate backing up for another try!

Once "113" was gone, I drove to Hicksville to get the Greenport freight leaving town. Since she took water there, she would be starting the long train around the sharp curve making the job harder for the "H10". Engineer Bob Crayton was running the "108" and those "cannonading exhausts" should have been "taped"! I got her with her towering smoke plume as she went by the old ice plant east of Nicholai Street. About a week later on another warm spring morning I photographed the same train passing Brentwood sta. with H10 111.



**LIRR G5s #39 Railfan Extra
Mattituck View W - 6/05/1955
Photo/Archive: Art Huneke**



**G5s #39 Railfan Extra
Greenport dock - 6/05/1955
(Collora - Boland)**

A "Farewell to Steam" round trip from Jamaica to Greenport occurred on Sunday June 5th behind G5 39. Going east a "photo stop" was made at Mattituck sta., I think the trip west did not include one. We were driving back to "Port" from Patchogue via Waverly Ave thru Holtsville and were about to cross the main line when the kids yelled, "train smoke, dad!". Sure enough, coming at us

up out of the "sag" between Medford and Holtsville came the "39". Probably doing at least "60", the excursion went by us in a cloud of "right of way" dust with her nine cars of "railfans". It had been a sunny day, no doubt



LIRR G5s #39 Railfan Extra at Greenport turntable 6/05/1955
Photo: Art Huneke Archive: Dave Keller

Greenport yard was awash with yellow "film boxes!" I would have liked to been on this trip but had no knowledge of it beforehand.

By the middle of June I was thinking seriously of bidding in the Port Jefferson freight as a brakeman, so as to see what it was "like" on a steam-hauled local freight. I had already experienced the Montauk freight in 1950, but that was hauled by an Alco "S-2" diesel engine. Near the end of the month my name appeared on the bid sheet for "L56-57, the Port Jefferson freight. The engineer was "Buddy" Embler and the conductor Wayne Riley.

The job reported in Holban Yard at nine a.m. Mon, Wed. and Fri. going east. westbound on Tues., Thurs. and Sat., it reported in "Port" at seven thirty a.m.. Being the oldest brakeman on the job, I chose the "flag" so I could sweep out



N52A #22 - Photo: Ernie Lanser
Collection: Kings Park Museum

the "hack", (no. 22), keep track of the "delay report", and keep the heavy marker lights filled with kerosene. Naturally whenever the train halted ~~anywhere~~ on the main tracks for any reason, I had to "protect" the rear end by going out with red flag by day and red oil lantern by night. Both day and night "flagging" was to be done at a reasonable distance to protect our train from a rear-end collision from any following train.

There were two ways to get to Holban Yard from Jamaica sta.. The "quick" way was a Taxi and a five minute ride via Surphin Blvd. and Liberty Ave to the yardmasters office. This ran about seventy five cents at that time. The "slow" way was to wait at "Hall" tower near the sta, for your engine to come by from Morris Park and ride it to your train at the yard.

Generally we had our brake test over and were ready to leave the yard by ten a.m.. If we had an unusual number of heavy loads, the yard drill engine, an



LIRR S-2 #449 Morris Park Shops
8/03/1958 - Archive: Dave Keller

Alco "S-2" diesel, would shove behind the hack as it was upgrade over the Liberty Ave bridge and around a long curve thru the "hump leads" to the Main Line. About the time the hack passed the switchtender's cabin I would close the angle cock on the caboose or "hack" and yank up on the chain to pull the "pin" on the hack. Then I would give the pusher engine a stop sign and her engineer would put his engine brake on to stop clear of the train. By that time the lead end of our train would be threading the interlocking of "Hollis" tower to enter the Main Line.

Some pages back we rode the Montauk freight west on a typical day, now lets take a ride east on the Port Jeff. job to see the operations on that branch. As soon as the conductor got the waybills for the cars in our train from the yardmasters office he would come to the hack and sit down at the desk to make out the "switch list" for the crew for the day.

As he walked from the first car on back, he would put each car's waybill in order with the cars position in the train. That way the "switch list" would match up with the consist. The waybills, all issued at the point of origin where the car was loaded stayed with the car for the entire journey even if the car was from, say, Tacoma, Wash. for example. All waybills showed where the

THE LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD COMPANY							AOL 5335-0/65	
Your Main Line to the Mainland							REPORTING DATE _____	
CAR NO.	DATE		WAYBILL NO.					
STATION TO	LENGTH OF CAR	FROM STATION	STATE					
	ORDERED	FURNISHED						
ROUTE	SHIPPER							
STOPPED OFF AT	CONSIGNEE					GROSS _____		
						TARE _____		
						ALLOWANCE _____		
						NET _____		
DESCRIPTION OF ARTICLES	COMM. NO.	WEIGHT	RATE	FREIGHT	ADVANCES	PREPAID		
WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE				PLEASE PAY THIS AMOUNT \$ _____				
RECEIVED PAYMENT _____	AGENT _____	DATE _____						

LIRR Waybill Blank 1965 "Dashing Dan" logo - Archive: Dave Keller

car was shipped from, the loading, routing to destination as to RR and junction points, who was getting the car, weight of car and contents, etc, etc. When we left a car at a siding we left that car's waybill with the station agent in charge of that siding. If we arrived after the agent was closed for the day we left the waybill in a "locked telephone box" nearby the sta. building.

By the time we reached Hicksville our engine needed a drink of water. Both Port Jefferson and Greenport freights always took on water here. As we passed "Divide" tower I would grab the Train order giving us the right to



H10s #117 Taking water Hicksville 7/25/1952 - Archive: Dave Keller



DIVIDE Tower, Hicksville View SE 1962 - Archive: Dave Keller

run as, "Engine No. 113 run extra "S", (end of double track), to Port Jefferson." We usually "highballed" Syosset unless there was a car of hard coal to set off at Syosset Coal and Lumber.

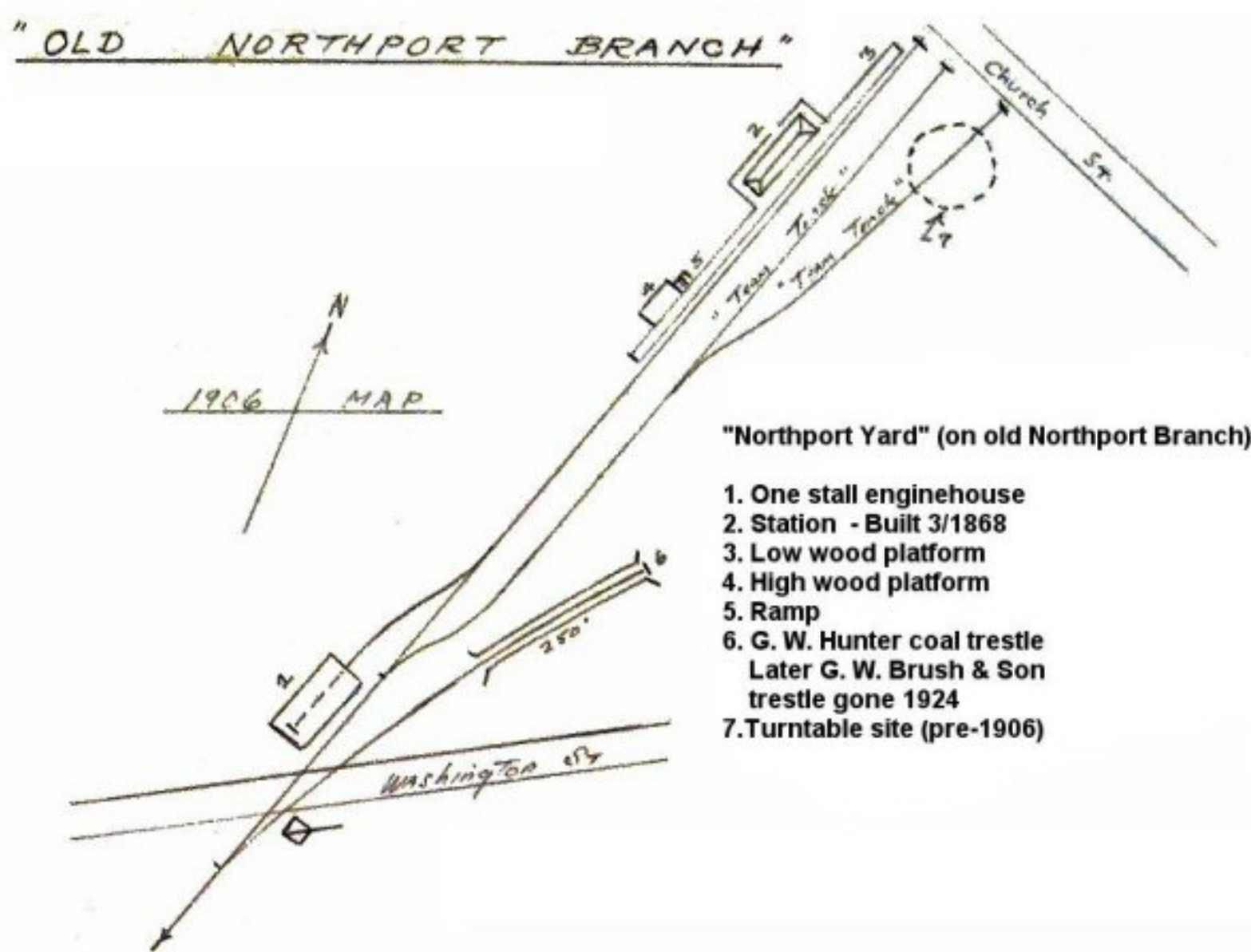
By the time we passed "S" cabin we were steadily descending into the valley that Cold Spring Harbor sta. sits at the head of. Wayne called me in from the caboose's back platform and said, "Sit down on the bunk or the "slack" will cause you to loose your grip out there where you are!" I didn't argue as I hurried inside and set down and braced myself for whatever was coming.

As the train descended the grade the slack between each car had gradually "bunched up". As soon as the engineer opened the 113's throttle, which would happen as he passed the depot, the bunched-up slack on thirty five cars or so would all stretch out nearly at one time causing the "hack" to bound forward four or five feet in a split-second. If one was unprepared for this, he would be knocked off balance and thrown to the rear of the hack! Oddly going west over the same stretch there was very little "slack action".

Most Mondays we were relieved from doing Huntington, as they ran an "extra" there from Holban that did all the work. If there was no "extra" we headed in the long passing siding at Huntington as there usually ^{was} an hours work, plus a couple of passenger trains due that needed the main track. The dozen or so cars for Huntington were always "blocked", (kept together when the train was made up the night before in Holban Yard), and were next to the locomotive.

The "blocked" cars were set over on the north siding by using the station crossover. Then the engine would come down the main track so as to be on the "west end" of the cars to sort them for various consignees or the freight house which was still getting cars of L.C.L. at this time. Except for Wood, Wood and Wood's coal and lumber track, every siding in Huntington was a "west-bound siding", meaning the engine to place cars on that siding had to be on the "west end" of the cars.

At Greenlawn we again "cleared up" in the siding for another passenger train. This also gave us time to set off any cars of lumber for there and place any cars for "Old Northport" or coal for Kissam's in Northport next to the engine. This done we went another mile and entered the "Old Northport Br." to "clear" still another passenger train and take the cars for Axinn Lum-



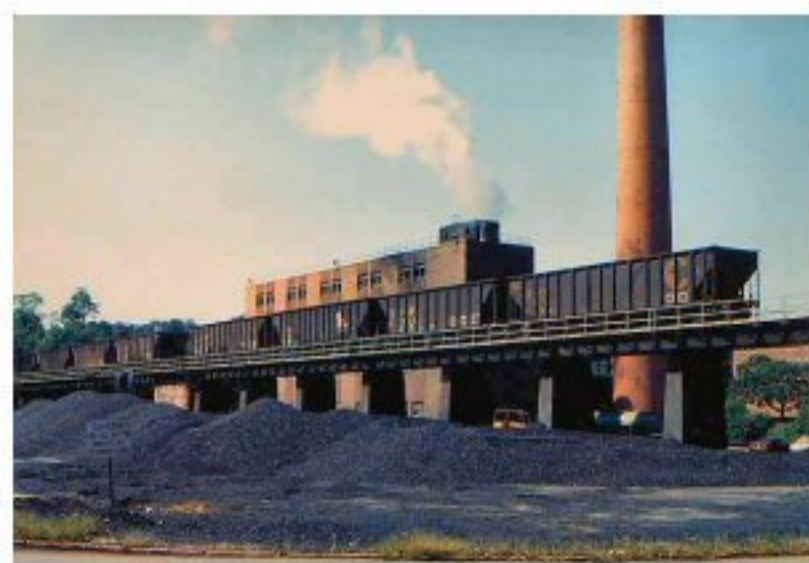
ber Co. and "Kissam's" down thru the woods about a mile to where they could be "dropped" so they would be on the front of the engine. This was necessary as both Axinn's and Kissam's were "westbound sidings". The "Old Northport Br." had been the original end of the line from Hicksville, until it was extended east from Old Northport Jct. to Smithtown and later Port Jefferson. While the rest of the crew was down at "Axinn's" switching or having lunch, I swept out the hack and dusted soft coal dust off the bunks and mattresses in the cupola. One afternoon in August the signal dept. men were changing the "distant signal" to switches in Northport that was near the hack from a semaphore type to a position light type. I asked if I could have the "rishtail" blade?



**Semaphore Distant Approach
Fish-tail blade - East-Moriches
Photo/Archive: John Scala**

No problem at all, I brought it home in the hack, probably weighed a good seventy pounds with the "roundels" attached.

Usually one more passenger train had to be "cleared" at Northport before we could go to Kings Park to set off the "hospital coal". We spent more time in the sidings "out of the way" or mid-day passenger trains than we did switching! I well remember when I used to visit my dad in "Port" before WWII the conductor on the eastbound freight coming into the sta. well before five p.m. and saying the engine was "on the pit" and they were finished for the day and had handled fifty cars or so. In those days there were only four mid day trains, (pass.), to watch out for. No doubt they "held the main" in most towns except for Huntington while they did the switching. Now there were just too many pass. trains even in non-commuting hours for a freight to do it's work and get over the road in a minimum amount of time.

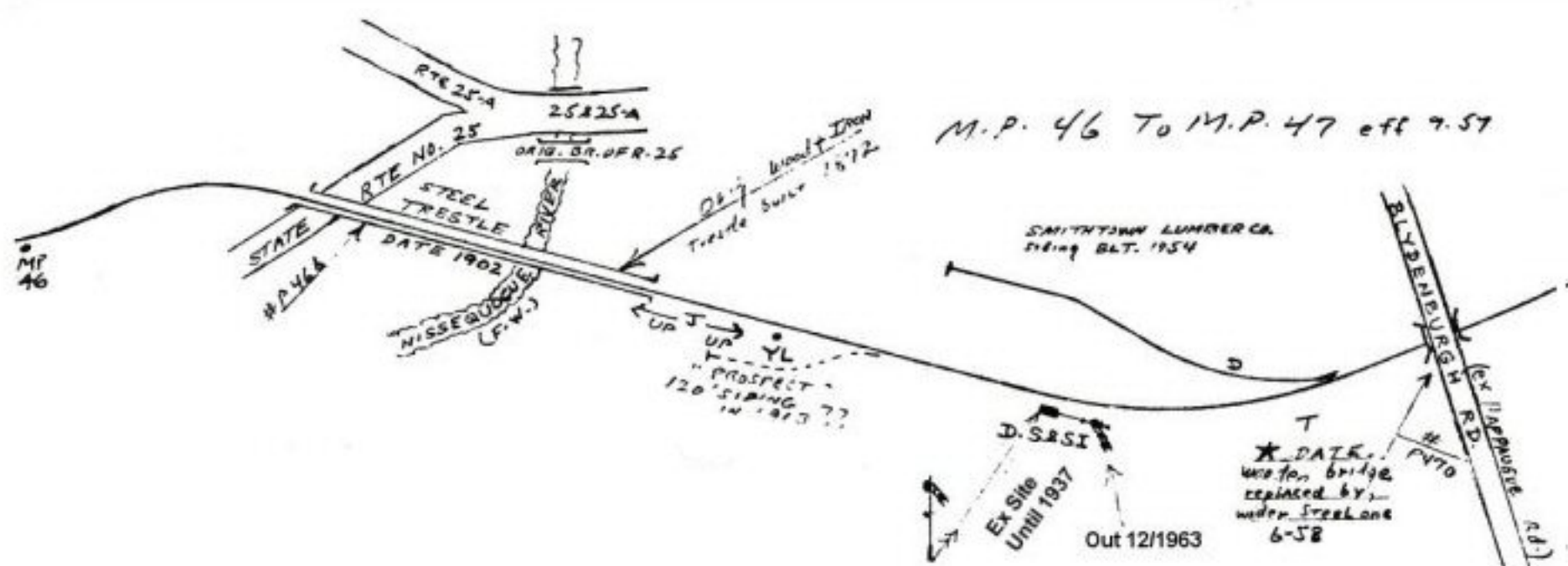


**Kings Park Hospital coal dock
Photo/Archive: John Volpi**

If we had cars of soft coal for Kings Park Hospital we would stop the train just east of Comac Road which is about a half mile west of the depot. There being a short but rather steep grade east of Comac Road, the six or seven hoppers of coal would be "dropped" to get them ahead of the engine. After cutting off the rest of the train the cars to be "dropped" had to have their air bled-off by pulling the rod on the side of the car. If this was not done the air brakes might go on just enough to stop the cars too soon, fouling the main at a switch.

Giving the hoppers a good start and then "slacking speed" so the brakeman could pull the pin behind the tender, the H10 would race ahead up the main track. As soon as the tender cleared the hospital siding switch, a brakeman lined it for the siding. The now free-rolling coal noppers would be manned by the conductor riding the coal pile on the lead car to wind on a hand brake if the cars

did'nt stop when the rear one cleared the section house. Most times hand brakes were not needed to stop movement as it was upgrade into the hospital siding from the main track switch. This whole "operation" only took about twenty minutes at most. We would take the cars down the long grade to the power house next day coming west. Then it was on to Smithtown as it was getting on late in the afternoon.



Smithtown Trestle - Smithtown Lumber - Robert Emery map 9/1957

Smithtown Lumber Co. in 1953 had cleared off the wooded hill on the north side of the RR east of the Nissequogue River steel viaduct. This area now contained a ten car siding and many storage piles of lumber serving the 'rapidly building-up' of new homes all around. We generally placed ten cars of various kinds of lumber here each trip east, pulling the ten "empties" out first. We left them on the south siding east of Landing Ave crossing to pick up coming west. Many times cast-off, usable "two by fours" were left in the box cars and I took many of them home via caboose 22!

Sometimes the cars for "Smithtown Lumber" were mixed in with cars for other towns and we had to switch them out at the lumber siding. Since the "grade" was down towards the viaduct each car that was "kicked" had to have a rider to put on a handbrake to "cut the speed." Sometimes while you riding a lone car another car would be "kicked" on the same track as the one you were on and it had no rider as they figured your car with it's



**Brakeman atop a boxcar
Fresh Pond - View W 1929**

handbrake on would stop the "second" car, which it would. You had to keep an eye on that "second" car as it would hit your car a good jolt when it coupled to it. Best thing to do if you couldn't get off in time was to run to the middle of the car's roof running board and jump up in the air with both feet at the moment of impact. When you came down the "jolt" was over usually!

After Smithtown the next stop was Port Jefferson as the Movement Bureau, (known as 204 to the men), wanted us off the railroad "ahead of the parade". They didn't want any delays to the heavy commuter trains starting with no. 648 due in "Port" at six thirty p.m.. That being the case all cars, if any, for St. James, Stony Brook and Setauket would be taken to "Port" and placed coming west next day.

Anthracite coal shipments accounted for three or four cars each trip. If one happened to be next to the "hack" sometimes a hard coupling would knock a bucketfull of coal over the hopper's end and onto the caboose platform. When that happened I had to pick it up and put it in the coal bin for the cold days sure to come.



**M. Remz Feed - 10/06/1947
Port Jefferson View SW
(Weber-Morrison)**



**Loper Bros. Lumber at left
Wilson Mill (center)
'JF' unattended block station signal
Wooden Express House/Office
Photo: 11/06/1947 (Weber-Morrison)**

"Port" at that time had Remz Bros. Feed, Loper Bros. Lumber and Coal, "7-V" cement block plant, two potato houses and the "Team" track for consignees who did not have private sidings of their own. We did most of our switching on arrival, so we could leave in the a.m. as soon as train 623 cleared "BK".

One day when we were going west, while → at Smithtown for a "meet", I noticed workmen removing the depot's station signs. I inquired, "what's going on here?", of the foreman. He said that orders from "higher up" were to remove all the "red-background" station signs. No doubt this was done to further remove any "Pennsy" colors from the now mostly "gray" LIRR. In the future none of the station buildings would display the name of the town it was located in. The replacements were small white signs sporting black letters and fastened to platform lamp posts. All the former "red" station signs were to be "junk", "What a waste", I thought to myself!



**Last cast iron Keystone sign
Archive: Brad Phillips**

Oddly enough, the very last tuscan red with gold letters and border station signs on the then N.Y. City owned Ozone Park station would remain in place until well into the 1960s! They were of cast iron in the "keystone" design.

There are a few more things to relate before we take leave of it, on the westbound trip of the "Port Jeff. freight". Since we did not have time the day before to place the coal down at Kings Park Hospital going east, it must be done today. When we arrive in Kings Park we leave the train in the passing siding and put the "H10" over on the cut of loaded coal hoppers on the State Hospital siding. Before backing them down the mile to the coal trestle we have to pump up the air on the cars and try the air brakes. The reason being because of the very steep grade beyond the passenger platform in the hospital grounds. Without an air brake on these fifty ton each coal hoppers they could get rolling too fast and despite the engine and tender air brakes being applied drag, the "H10" all the way down to end of track at the warehouse. This could very easily happen if there were dead weeds and oak leaves crushed on the rails, making them "greasy and slippery"!

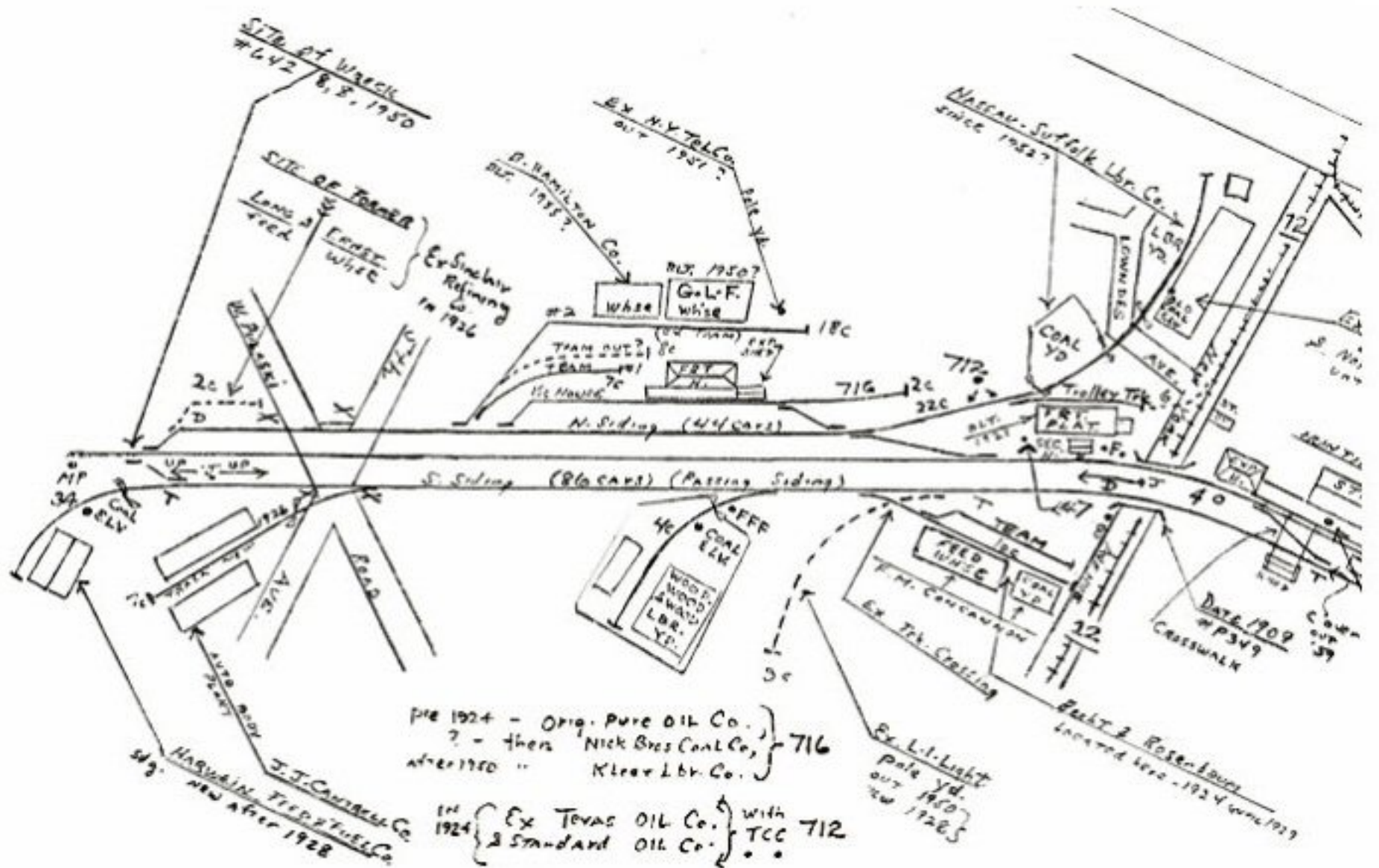


**H10s #113 - c.1950 crossing
Main St./25A, Kings Park
Photo: Ernie Lanzer
Archive: Kings Park Heritage Museum**

It is a slow ride down to the hospital so we sit on the coal on the rocking hoppers as it's safer than trying to stand up on the uneven track. Before placing our loads on the trestle we have to pull four empties off it, all B&O jobs, as most "hospital soft coal" seem to come in that RR's cars. We couple up and "shoot the air" into the four empties, so we now have eleven cars to drag up a nearly 3% grade. The smoke erupting from engine 113 as she "digs in" is like a "volcano". I'm riding the head hopper to pass signals to the engineer and often wished I had an umbrella to keep the cloudburst of cinders out of my eyes. Right along about "here" was the fragrant hospital pig farm, adding to the enjoyment of the pungent soft coal smoke!

Clear of the switch, we back the four empties in on the warehouse siding, and then another "blast" of smoke and cinders as we pull uphill again so we can back in and "spot" the coal loads on the trestle. Some "railfan", with his wife and kids, frequently photographed this "upgrade show" we put on, never did know who he was. Once the coal was spotted we retrieved the empties and returned to our train in the passing siding.

Going west, we always went in the clear in Huntington's long, eighty six car passing siding. Outside of picking up a few emptys from Concannon's



Huntington Yard - Emery map MP45 9/1957 - Archive: Dave Keller

siding and giving the team tracks another "switch" to sort out a few more emptys, there was'nt much to do here. Mainly it was to keep us "holed up" while the heavy commuter trains went east. After train 658 went east we would have block permission to run to "S" cabin, the end of double track from Hicksville.

One afternoon I was "catching cars" and chocking them on the team tracks while the cars were "kicked" in to me. If one can "chock" a car the very second a car stops rolling, it's amazing how little a piece of wood jammed under one wheel will keep the car from rolling back in the opposite direction! The "chock" will hold the car until a handbrake can be applied. There never seemed to be a shortage of material to use as "chocks" either, with all the scraps of wood laying around the RR.

One evening in late summer we had a train of over eighty cars leaving Huntington, of course they were all "emptys", but still it would be a big train for the "113" to drag up the grade beginning at Cold Spring Harbor and extending a good part of the way to Syosset. In order to signal the head end to stop after pulling out of the passing siding I had to use a fusee instead of the usual "electric" lamp. The engine was nearly a mile away so it called for a fusee in order for the engineer to see my "highball" after I closed the two switches.

Going up the "hill" to Syosset was slow going and you could have "dropped-off" the hack with no problem of footing most of the way. Anyway, we made it to "S" cabin without stalling and did not delay train 660! We always took water at Hicksville with any kind of a "train", (no. of cars). We left the train east of Manetto Hill road crossing near the village water tank, and the H10 ran "lite" to the water plug by the express house. One night while



"Flag" Red Lantern



**PRR G5s #5706 with LIRR tender
Morris Park Shops - 5/09/1945
Photo/Archive: Ron Zinn**

was out with the "flag", (red lantern), train 660 came by with a "real surprise!"--Something I had never expected to see on the LIRR again!----PRR engine no. 5741, a G5 on the point! That train had'nt had "steam" for some time and here it was, so close to complete "dieselization" of the entire LIRR, pulled by a Pennsy engine. A LIRR tender was coupled to it as the speed control "pickup" was on "tenders," not on locomotives.

Soon after Labor Day eng, 113 had a flue "let go" at Northport going east, FM 1503 was sent out to pull us to "Port". Next morning going west, the 113 was hauled "dead" in our train, never to pull another train, while diesel 1503 from that day on became regular power for the Port Jerf. freight.

Meanwhile, as to the other two remaining H10s, I had'nt seen no. 111 for quite some time on any freights, so I presume she was kept at Morris Park



**H10s #111 coal dock View W
Morris Park engine terminal
From left: G53, G5s and K2s
Photo/Archive: LIRR c.1942**



**H10s #111 "Three Aces" freight
Floral Park 1950
(Frank Zahn - Mike Boland)**

as a "stand by" in case nos 113 or 108 went in for a boiler wash or they broke down. The Greenport freight continued to be hauled by the "108", long after we lost the "113". Probably the diesels took over on the Greenport freight about the end of Sept..

Almost every time the Montauk freight went east during Sept. it would have a brand new Alco "RS-3" road switcher in the consist. The new engine would be set off at Patchogue. The LIRR took "title" to 1551-1560 there to save on the N.Y. City sales tax, which would be in effect if delivery was made at Morris Park.

Nightly, New Haven westbound freights going to Bay Ridge were setting off brand new LIRR coaches at the "upper interchange" in Fresh Pond. These were all in the "big order" from Pullman-Standard at Worcester, Mass. The new coaches for diesel service were taken to Oyster Bay for delivery to the LIRR, while MU coaches were hauled to West Hempstead. Both of these moves were to save on N.Y. City sales taxes.



**RDC1 #3101 "East Ender"
Deer Park Ave., Babylon
Winter of 1955**



**RDC1 #3101- Greenport
9/27/1959**

The new Budd "RDC" cars with their stainless steel finish sure gave a "touch of class" to an otherwise almost "gray" passenger fleet! On the Montauk Br., The RDC 1, no. 3101, ran between Babylon and Southampton from March thirtieth, 1955 to July fifteenth when it's run was extended to Easthampton. This car pulled a "ping" coach on certain trips during the summer, making it necessary to "run around it" both at Babylon and Easthampton. When the "ping" went along it meant a flagman was needed, otherwise only a conductor was aboard when "3101" ran by itself. There was only the engineer on "single" Budd cars. Later when the two ran in "MU" as a two car train, a "fireman" was required. The name "Eastender" adorned the storm "end doors" of the 3121. The Montauk Br. Budd car service was discontinued on May seventeenth of 1956.



**BUDD RDC2 #3121-Trailer
East Ender -Southampton
View NW - 1955
(Edwards-Keller)**



**Babylon-Patchogue "Scoot"
PD Tower, Patchogue View E
Photo: William Lichtenstern
Archive: Dave Keller**

The "RDC 2," no. 3121, started Main line service as far east as Riverhead on September seventh, 1955. Eastbound trips started ^{at} either Mineola, Hicksville or Ronkonkoma where connections were made with trains to or from the city. The car made it's "home" on the tail of the wye at Ronkonkoma nights., The service to Riverhead came to an end also on May seventeenth of 1956. Starting with the "summer" 1956 timetable, both "Budd Cars" were run as a pair on the Babylon-Patchogue "Scoot".

The "Montauk Budd service" was very well patronized, while the "Main Line Budd service" east of Ronkonkoma was very lightly patronized. Perhaps if the car went east to Greenport on at least some trips it would have paid it's way. After all, it was mostly woods from Ponkonkoma to Riverhead. The people live from Riverhead to Greenport in the "farm belt".

About the middle of August I decided to make one last trip to Camden, N.J. to see ^{IF} I could get a few more memories of "steam" to last me thru the coming "diesel years". I arrived in Philadelphia on the PRR around noon and decided to ride the Frankford El to 69th St., as I wanted to ride the famous "Bullet" cars to Norristown on the P&W, an electrified suburban line. Riding those cars with their rapid acceleration leaving stas. is the nearest thing to riding the abandoned LVT "lightweights" from Norristown to Allentown, Pa.. Riding that line was not for one with a queasy stomach! The way those 1000 series cars would speed down a long hill and seemingly not slow down for a sharp curve at the bottom was an "experience!" I'm glad I was around at the "right time" to ride the good old LVT in those days.

About four o'clock I was at the PR-SL Broadway Sta., and decided to take a ride behind the first "steamer" that left the sta., no matter where it went.



**E6s #1600 freight
Montauk View E 1939
Archive: Dave Keller**

About five p.m. E6 no. 1600 came in from the yard, pulling two PR-SL P70 open-window coaches. I climbed aboard as a Reading G-3 came in across the platform, also with two coaches. Engine 210 would bring that train to Hammondton via Clementon, the ex Rdg. main line to Atlantic City. Shortly, the train I was on left for Ashland, N.J., on the ex P&W, J.& S.S. line to A. City. Ashland was only a little way past Haddonfield.

All the familiar sounds and smells of an "E6" came in the open window as we made all the local stops, and the ride ended all too soon, naturally. As soon as the few passengers were all off at Ashland, "1600" hurriedly backed her train into a siding west of the sta., in order to be "clear" of the main line. The "reason" for this move soon appeared around the curve west of town. With whistle blowing and much smoke flying from her stack, Reading eng. no. 213 came on us like a vengeance! It was a Wildwood train that came out of PRR's 30th St. sta. in Philadelphia. This was a "summer timetable" only operation and in addition to the head three cars for Wildwood, she also had two car each sections for Ocean City and Cape May. The last two sections would be cut-off at Tuckahoe and Wildwood Jct. respectively and E6's would haul them to their destinations from there. If one needed a "good remembrance" of a G-3. in fast action, no. 213 surely did her part that evening!

The 1600, once 213 was out of sight, ran around her two cars, crossed over to the westbound main and soon returned to Camden, backing up. In about ten minutes a PR-SL "Budd" car for Hammondton stopped and I boarded it. I had planned to ride in from Millville next morning behind "steam", provided I could get a ride over there from Hammondton that evening. Luck was with me as I started to hitchhike when the first vehicle by stopped. I rode right into Millville in a pickup with a load of empty chicken crates in the back!

We passed near the Millville PR-SL yard on the way into town and even though it was dusk I caught sight of a PRR 0-6-0 and 2-8-0 sitting there. Next morning after a refreshing sleep in the small hotel I walked to the ancient Millville depot for my ride into Camden behind "steam". It was the last commuter train of the morning and the three P70s were headed by a Rdg. #3, no. 217 this time. Due to making all the local stops it was not a fast ride and the 217 had an easy time keeping the schedule. After I got off at Camden's Broadway sta., I got a color slide of 217 leaving the sta. for the yard near the river. A one "last visit" to the roundhouse area rewarded me with a good, clear shot of E6 no. 460 sitting there in perfect sunshine. She



E6s #460 passing KO Signals Ronkonkoma 3/1938 Archive: Dave Keller

had been leased to the LIRR in 1937 for a while. Compared to the visit of the previous year, this time diesels outnumbered the steam locomotives. Returning to New York in the afternoon, I had in mind another ride behind "steam", this time on the LIRR. Taking the I.R.T. Flushing Line subway to L.I. City I headed for the LIRR passenger sta.. Some evenings the two trains to Oyster Bay over the Montauk Br. to Jamaica, nos. 552 and 554, would be hauled by a G5, usually on a Friday when extra diesels were needed for the "Friday Montauk summer trains". Since this was Friday I had a chance to ride behind "steam"!

Again luck was with me, as the train with the club car, no. 552, had G5 no. 50 coupled on. I plumped my self down in the first "ping" coach behind the "club" for the "show" that was about to begin. No. 50 had a whistle that sounded almost identical to the one no. 40 had in my childhood days "down east". The whistle was described earlier in this story. Engineer "Pete" Hornosky really put "50" through her paces going up Mt. Olivet hill after the Haberman stop. I mused, as I listened to the "stack music", "What a spot for a hard-working steam engine to be photographed!" Why didn't someone snap an H10 with a long freight going up this grade in the cold winter air?

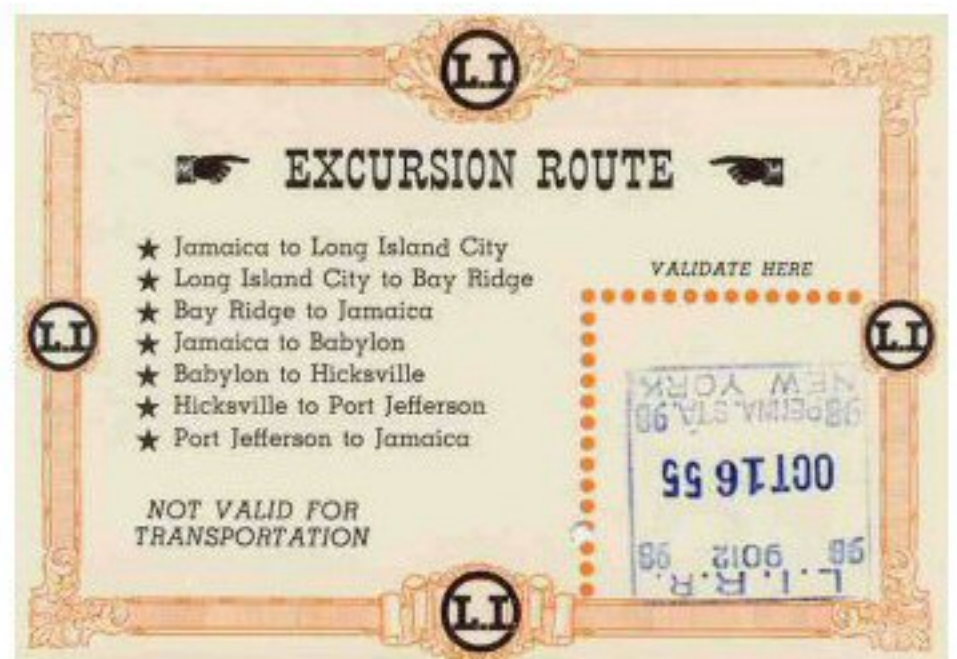
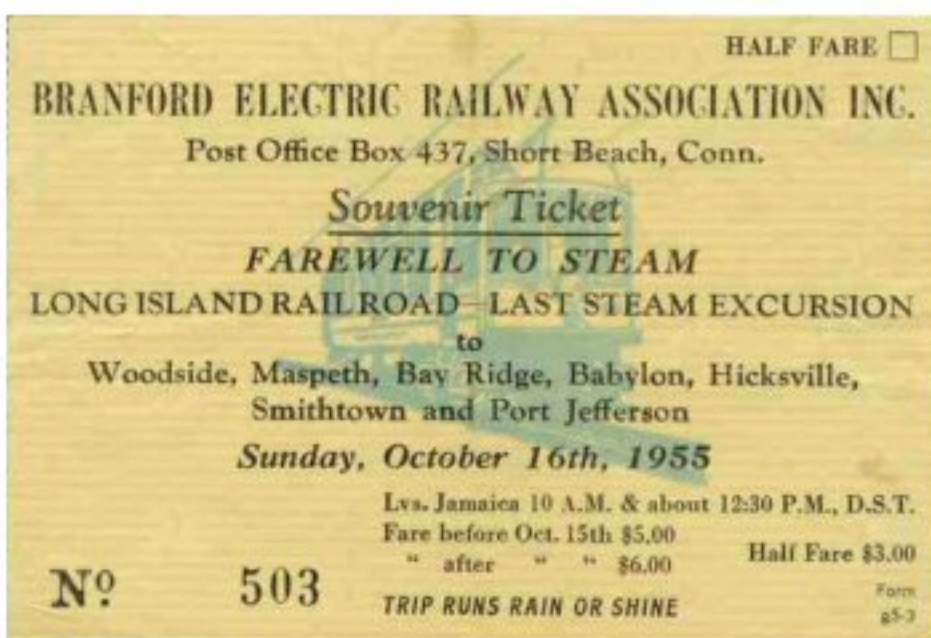
Regretfully no one did capture "steam" at this location, or on Yaphank hill either. I really "missed the boat" as they say, on these two locations! The ride to Oyster Bay was pleasant on that warm summer afternoon and it was my last ride on that branch behind a steam locomotive. One of her crew gave me a lift over to Syosset where I could board a train for "Port".



**Hicksville - Engine #39 facing east & Engine #35 facing west. 10/08/1955
Photo: John Krause Archive: Gary Everhart**

October the eighth was a rainy Saturday and also the day the "Boy Scout Specials" ran to meet each other at Hicksville. One came from Jamaica behind G5 39, while the other started at Riverhead with G5 35. According to a reliable source the one from Jamaica beat all previous speed records with its one 2900 series coach between "Queens" and "Nassau" towers! Engineer Frank, ("Hot Rod"), Mc Cann was at the throttle, but I never heard who the engineer was on the "35" from Riverhead. When we passed on the freight in the afternoon all traces of the "Specials" had disappeared.

Since the freight job I was on was off on Sunday, I was able to ride the "Farewell to Steam" excursion on October sixteenth. Leaving from Jamaica



Farewell to Steam excursion ticket and pass 10/16/1955 - Archive: Art Huneke

we headed west on the Main Line behind eng. 35 to "F" tower where we took the "Main Line Cut-Off" connection to the "Montauk Cut-Off", traveling over the latter to "Bliss" tower where there was a "photo stop". All day long the rain continued off and on but for a few minutes at "Bliss" the sun shone as everyone hurried around getting "35" on film.

Leaving there, we headed east on the Montauk Br. to "Pond" tower where we begin the ride over the "freight only" Bay Ridge Br. to Bay Ridge. At that point the engine was run around the train to haul us back to "Fremont"

The engine was backing up pulling the train to minimize smoke inhalation for the engine crew in the nearly mile long East New York tunnel. At "Fremont" tower we took the east leg of the wye to go east on the Montauk Br..

The train was left in Richmond Hill sta. while engine 35 was cut-off to go to Morris Park for water and to be turned. When she returned we went east thru Jamaica and then over the Montauk Br. thru Freeport to Babylon. At Babylon we switched to the Central Br. to make our long "back up move" to "B" tower and then the Main Line to Hicksville. Here we headed east on the Port Jefferson Br. At Smithtown we took siding for a "meet" and to take on a tank of water. Bill Rugen, the M. Park enginehouse clerk was seen up on the "tank" doing this chore.



**LIRR G5s #35 October 16, 1955
"Steam Special" Smithtown
Photo/Archive: Art Huneke**



**LIRR G5s #35 October 16, 1955
Steam Special" Port Jefferson
Photo/Archive: Art Huneke**

At Port Jeff; the train was left between the legs of the wye while "35" was turned on it. I did not return to Jamaica even though my excursion ticket called for it. Since it was raining heavily and soon would be getting dark and living in "Port" I watched them leave the sta., the "35" making short work of the grade west of the Coram Rd. crossing. From all reports, the G5 on it's last run for steam locomotives on the LIRR, gave everyone aboard a "record run" to Jamaica!



**BB-3 #337, 334 freight train
Bay Ridge 1936
Archive: Dave Keller**



**BB-3 electric #327, #329
Out of service Morris Park yard
View NE 11/11/1955 (Rugen-Huneke)**

Another class of locomotive on the LIRR, the BB-3 "AC" electric switchers used in Bay Ridge Yard, in a week or so would also no longer be needed. Also class "S-2" diesels were taking over Bay Ridge switching operations. New Haven freights would continue to use the overhead wire from "Fremont", but only the two main tracks, plus Bay Ridge yard would remain in service, strictly for NH use. The many private sidings along the Bay Ridge Br. had lost their overhead wire a few years ago. LIRR "MA jobs", (local freights), along the branch had been dieselized a few years back.

As the G5s went away for scrap, (except nos. 35 and 39), at least some of the keystone number plates on the smokeboxes were cut off and saved for "fans" and others. A few that I have been able to "verify" were nos. 21, 22, 28, 31, 38, 40, 48 and 49. H10 "round" number plates "saved" were 102, 103 and 111. If all those "survived" it's entirely possible others *did* also!

While on the "number plate" subject, it is a mystery why, when the G5's "round" plates were changed to keystones in the winter of 1942-43 that



**G5s #22 Pre-WW II
(Zahn-Boland)**



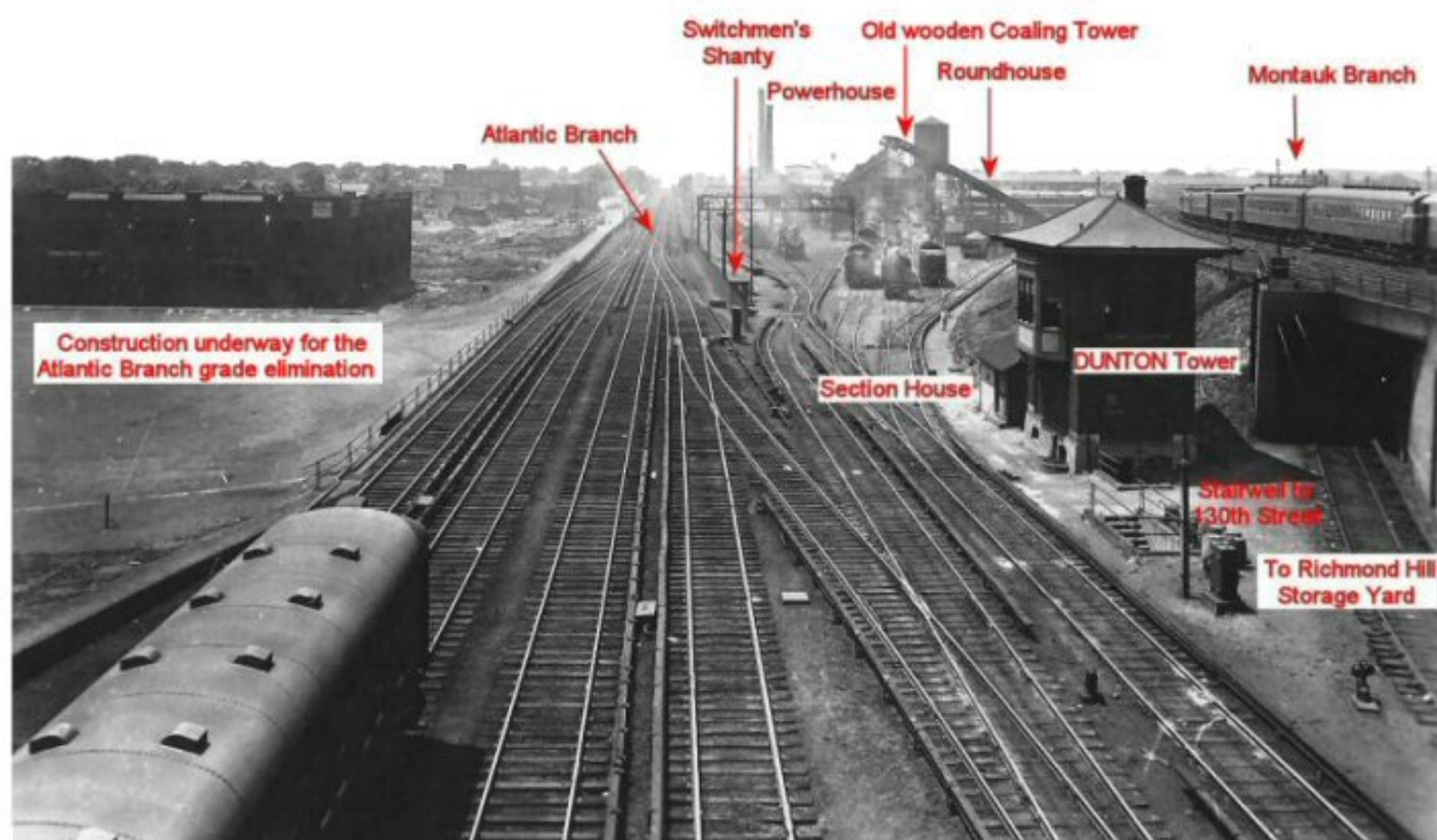
**G5s #40 - 7/13/1947
(Votava-Keller)**

certain engines featured "smaller" numbers in the keystone than all the others. They were 37, 38, 41 and 46. (Certain "H10s" that had standard "big" nos. on their round plates were not changed to smaller didgets about that time.) Their nos. were 112, 113, 114 and 117, 118. While the H10s probably were changed at the Altoona Shops when they went one by one after World War II for installment of automatic stokers and new tenders, the G5s apparently was changed for no "good reason," as only a few were done before the idea was dropped.

Now that the Port Jeff. frt. had "FM" diesel 1503 as it's regular power the job became much less interesting to me and the early December rains convinced me to look for a run in passenger service, preferably one that worked out of "Port". Luckily I was able to bid a brakeman's job on train 635 that left at three thirty in the afternoon. There was a middle round trip to Ronkonkoma in addition. We no longer picked up the express car at Huntington, but picked up one out of the Hicksville team yard instead. We would leave our train sitting in the station so mail and passengers could be loaded while we cut the diesel off and went in "lite" for the car.

The Hicksville express car was set over on the Nassau Seed Co. siding opposite the depot in the morning by train 226. There the REA trucks for the various local delivery routes could work out of the car. Early in the afternoon the Hicksville freight would bring the empty car over to the team yard so we could pick it up.

An unusual move indeed happened to us on train 635 one late afternoon in Jamaica! We always used sta. track one to unload our passengers and what baggage there was also. Instead of lining us up for the storage yard, our regular move, "Jay" tower set the route up for our train to go to Flatbush Ave. via Atlantic Br. no. three track! Picture an "RS-3" Alco diesel, two express cars, an R.P.O. and three 2900 series coaches passing "Dunton" tower and the Morris Park engine terminal, looking for



Dunton Tower - Morris Park Shops - c.1938 - Archive: Dave Keller

all the world like the whole collection was heading for the Atlantic Ave. tunnel! Everybody in Morris Park stared at the scene in dis-belief.

Most of the train was on the incline down into the tunnel before we stopped, as we had to clear "Dunton's" home signal so we could back our train to Jamaica sta. and make another attempt to get to the storage yard. The second time we succeeded.

Early in 1956, one afternoon at Huntington, we had a meet with a "G5." This time she was "dead" of course, being hauled by a diesel to the team track in Stony Brook for a "highway move" to "The Carriage Museum".