

# GREATER ASTORIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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## HISTORY TOPICS: TRANSPORTATION: LIRR

### INDUSTRIES SERVED BY THE LONG ISLAND RAILROAD

A Research Series on the History of Long Island City



### VOLUME 9: LONG ISLAND RAILROAD SERVICE TO LONG ISLAND CITY'S STERNBERGER

By Nicholas Kalis

Ninth in a series of glimpses into industries or warehouses that made for interesting freight operations on the Long Island. Information presented has included, where available, a brief history of the firm, how it was served by the LIRR, and what commodities were received or shipped from this facility.

Sternberger Esbitco Warehouse, located at 45-55 Pearson Street, Long Island City, was known as Spot 9 according to page 1 of *Maps of Freight Stations and Private Sidings* published in June 1966. Your author surmizes switching crews did not actually use these spot numbers to identify these industries as the map book previously referred to has not assigned unique spot numbers to each industry - the Spot numbers are "recycled", so to speak, on different maps. This 1966 publication puts Sternberger facing Yard A. According to this track plan, Sternberger is immediately east of C.J. Slicken but I suspect Slicken (Spot 8) was simply a co-tenant in 45-55 Pearson Street. According to the *Hyde Atlas*, Queens Vol. 1, updated through 1955, this building, then known as "Ludwig Bauman Warehouse" was situated west of the Queens County Court House and was bounded by Court Square and Pearson Street. Prior to that it was *Ludwig-Bauman Co.* It would be interesting to learn when this warehouse was built - can any of our readers assist in this regard? According to a Robert Emery map, Sternberger was served by a siding that ran alongside this building. Fabrizio believes two sidings ran into the building.



Sternberger Warehouse showing sign advertising available space

Forty-five fifty-five Pearson Street appears to be a ten-story tan brick building with 20,000 square foot floors. Sternberger may have been roughly 160 feet wide and 120 feet deep. In the 1960s, a script "LB" graced its fascia. A 1939 photograph from the Carl Fabrizio Collection shows the name *Ludwig Bauman* spelled around three sides of this structure from about the second story and up. Fabrizio notes that there was another logo painted on its façade during the post-war forties. A lighter color broad horizontal band above its ninth floor distinguishes this building. A wooden water tank graces its roof. Can anyone tell us what name to apply to the three roof structures almost apparent from trackside? Also noteworthy is Sternberger's external fire escape.



Sternberger seen in the context of neighboring Peter Mallon building

Retired railroad employee Howie Waelder recalls furniture was shipped in boxcars in the 1940s and 50s into this facility; I assume this continued into the early 1960s. Howie cautions that this facility may have had more than one tenant. Indeed, C.J. Slicken (Spot 8) may have been just such a co-tenant. These boxcars may have originated from southern cities we have yet to ascertain and from furniture factories we have yet to name. This is where the memories of retired LIRR clerks would prove useful. As a warehouse, Sternberger Esbitco was a furniture delivery service according to the telephone directory. It served as a distribution and service center for the Metropolitan New York market. Hence, only empties likely left this facility by rail.



Sternberger seen with the LB logo apparent

### GAHS STORE



### Books



### Images



### Merchandise

### MODELING

I have built a foam core mock-up of this building. I am still open to advice about parts to use to build this structure in HO scale.

### CREDITS

Thanks to Carl Fabrizio, Bob Miller (Volunteer at the Long Island Division of the Queens Borough Public Library), and Bill Myers

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

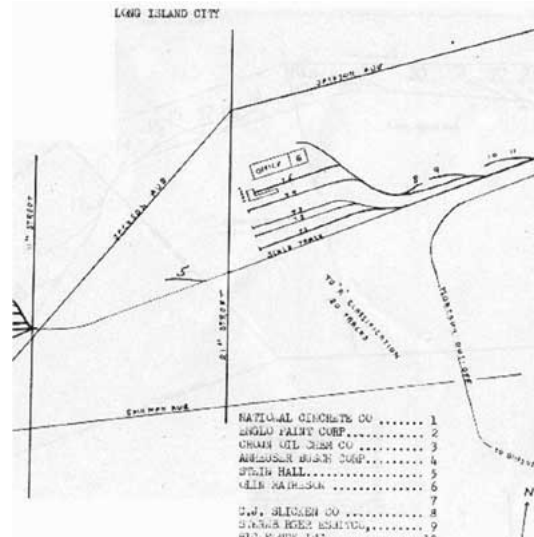
Author Unknown *Maps of Freight Stations and Private Sidings* (Reprint) June 1966

**Please send photographs that show how Extrin appeared in the 1960s and direct any comments on or corrections to this manuscript to:**

Nicholas Kalis  
 Suite 600, 1420 Spring Hill Road  
 McLean, Virginia 22102  
 Any illustrations or maps contributed will be gratefully acknowledged.



Logo, Long Island Railroad



Maps of Freight Stations and Private Sidings (Reprint) June 1966

http://www.astorialic.org/topics/industry/lirr/volume9/volume9\_p.php


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