

FIRST HAND MEMORIES -----,or  
" All Of My Life-----Watching Trains Go By " \*

My first memories of trains started in 1930 when my parents and I were enroute to Somerville, N.J. from our home in Cutchogue on the north shore of Long Island. We were coming west on train 281, known by east end local folk as the "first morning train", while the following train, no. 205, carrying the mail was always referred to as the "second morning train". Until 1933, no. 281 was the Greenport section of the morning "Cannonball ". At Manorville it would become the rear two cars of train 3, the Montauk part of the "Cannonball".



**Manor Station, Manorville - View E close-up  
c.1900 Archive: Dave Keller**

We were sitting on the south side of our coach and while waiting at Manorville for no. 3 to come over the Manorville Branch, I remember my dad pointing out the arriving Montauk section coming around the curve with it's "high-wheeled" Atlantic type locomotive. Shortly it backed it's three cars on to our two on the main line and away we went to New York.



**PRR E3sd #4176 Richmond Hill Storage Yard  
4/23/1939 Archive: Dave Keller**

Other "Railroad Memories" from that trip included my dad pointing out the Riverhead turntable, wooden coaches on the CNJ at Somerville and a ride on the South Branch of the CNJ to Three Bridges to visit people my dad grew up with there. I was already a "Railfan", but of course that term for the "affliction" would come years later!

\* From the words of a popular song of a few years back.

Sometime in 1931 my mother took me to Greenport from Cutchogue on the "Scoot" which had originated in Speonk and went over the Manorville Branch. It was a two car train with a combine and coach, most probably hauled by a Pennsy "E7".

"Freddie" Baldwin was the genial Conductor while Jack Peckham was the Brakeman. Jack treated me to Butterscotch wafers as we rode along. He knew my parents from years back. One of the sights I noticed particularly was the long sign near Peconic station proclaiming "88 Miles To Abraham & Strauss". At this time many stations "out East" had those signs for the big department store in downtown Brooklyn.



Peconic Station "NC" signal  
Valuation photo c.1922  
view SE Archive: Art Huneke

That same year good work in school all week would be rewarded by me spending Saturdays with Dad at Peconic sta. where he was agent. My duties included "checking the yard" and jotting down all the wooden LIRR box car numbers on a pad. Both the passing siding and team track were filled with these cars during the winter and spring, as their use was not needed until "potato season" opened up in July. I climbed around on them a lot, (when Dad was not looking), and one thing I always remembered about them was the wooden end-ladders and the wide end-sills.



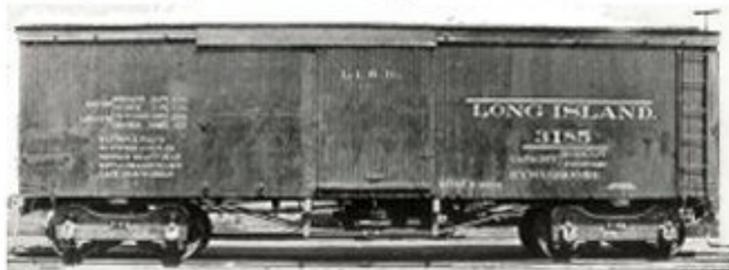
LIRRer "Less-Than-Carload"  
January 1954 Archive: Dave Morrison

I was also in charge of the two-wheel hand truck that every sta. was supplied with in those days. Part of a station agent's duties were to "truck" the U.S. Mails between train and Post Office if the distance did not exceed about 400 feet or so. In Peconic the "P.O." was only across the street. My dad would "truck" mail for trains 205, 204 and 211. No mail was handled on Sundays.

Many times there would only be the first class pouch and a single bag of parcel post and that's when I got to "deliver the mail". Peconic's long wooden platform had a nice sort of "Rhythm" to it as the iron wheels of the hand truck went over each crack between the boards, regulated of course by the speed you pushed.

Only Company Mail and local baggage traveled on the "Scoot" mostly, as passengers were few and far between. Connections with Montauk Branch trains were possible at Eastport both morning and afternoon by the "Scoot". The locomotive on the "Scoot" must have been a Pennsy E7 or E3, as I was distinctly impressed with the high trailing wheel under the spacious cab. I guess we will never know just what class it was!

During the early and middle "30's" large numbers of wooden LIRR 36 foot box cars were stored at various locations. Motor trucking of potatoes and other L.I. produce to the N.Y. City area had largely robbed the R.R. of this trade by this time. About 1932 we were riding thru Oakdale and I recall seeing a string of the cars stored on the long siding west of the depot. Another long-used location for storing these cars was the long "Wampmissic" siding west of Manorville between Mile Posts 62 and 63. This roughly half a mile of track was the sole remains of the large World War 1 layout that had served Camp Upton so well.



LIRR #3185 wood side sheathed boxcar  
1904 Archive: Art Humeke

After about 1933 FGEX ice refrigerator cars were stored here in harvest season, largely replacing the LIRR box cars used to ship produce in. In 1941 the siding was torn up and the rail was used to relay the Camp Upton Branch for WW 2.

Other places these old box cars were stored were Amagansett, Mattituck and Holban Yard. No doubt most were burned at the last named place and the scrap metal salvaged by 1939.

The very last LIRR wooden box car I saw in service was in Port Jefferson in 1938. It had a load of L.C.L. and was on the "team track". Since most of these cars had arch-bar trucks which were forbidden in "interchange service" after c1939, the RR had no further use for them. A few were converted into various "M. or W." service cars.

Believe it or not the LIRR once had a sizeable number of both all steel high gondolas plus wooden-side with steel underframe low gondolas. The 5500 series of high gons. had angle braced sides and many were used to carry rail and ties as well as ashes from Morris Park and other engine terminals. Both gondola types had wooden floors and the "low gons" also sported "drop ends". All of the "high" gons went to the PRR by 1942. I recall seeing them on the Pennsy for some years afterward.



Gondola Class GM #2900  
drop end gondola built in 1906  
5/05/1954 (Rugen-Humeke)

The "low" gons. were mainly in the 2700 and 2900 series. For years they transported loads of straw-covered manure from the Bushwick Branch to the farmers "Out East". Manure was spread over the fields in early spring before plowing began. Even as late as 1952 four of the "wooden-sided" jobs were listed under LIRR freight cars in the "Official Freight Equipment" book. Does anyone ever recall seeing LIRR freight cars off of Long Island anywhere ?

My interest in the LIRR must have been inherited from my Dad, who was one of the old time "Boomer Telegraph Operators", Learning the Morse Code at the Lehigh Valley's Three Bridges, N.J. Sta., his first railroad job in 1902, he soon moved on. The Pennsylvania Railroad's Bel-Del Branch was nearby and he worked various tower and station positions there.

From there he headed west to the Northern Pacific, where he was agent or block operator at Mandan, N. Dakota on the prairie. Working for the Southern Pacific in the San Francisco Bay area at the time of the terrible 1906 Earthquake there, he went on to the desert country in Arizona, holding down the "third Trick" on the S.P. at lonely depots because it was much cooler at night.

Then it was east to the Atlantic City Railroad in Southern New Jersey, where he worked the Williamstown Jct. tower job. Many years later when he was in a reflective mood, (usually after a few good "puffs" on a good cigar), he would tell about the high-wheeled Atlantic Type Locomotives whizzing thru the junction, trying to beat the West Jersey and Sea Shore RR's between Camden and Atlantic City running time!

Following that location he next worked for the CNJ at the Elizabeth River tower on the Perth Amboy Branch. Finally in 1915, his "boomer" days behind him he went to the LIRR. At the time they needed an agent-operator at Peconic so he was assigned to that job, being the youngest in "seniority".

He boarded with my mother's folks on Peconic Lane. Later that year they were married and moved to a house on Depot Lane in Cutchogue. At that time Jim Hand was sta. agent there and John Kaelin the clerk, while the block operators position was bid in by dad. Three men in Cutchogue seems impossible to believe now, but then they were all kept busy as all local produce was shipped out by rail as well as items not made locally such as canned groceries, fresh meat, butter, bread, hardware, etc. came into town by express or freight. Cauliflower was shipped out in wooden barrels then.

FORM-5-11-28-41/8 x 14 D

<b>FORM K</b>	<p>The Long Island Railroad Company</p> <p><b>CLEARANCE CARD</b></p> <p>Block Station <u>BP</u> M. <u>11/14/1927</u></p> <p>To Conductor and Engineer: Train <u>L-107 - EXTRA 102 WEST</u></p> <p>Proceed at <u>BP</u> as though <u>CLEAR</u></p> <p>Signal was displayed. Report clear at _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Hubbs</i> Towersman or Block Operator</p> <p><small>The towersman, or block operator may issue this card only when authorized by the Superintendent. Before issuing it the towersman, or block operator must have proper understanding with other towersmen or block operators, if any, having authority over blocks mentioned, and must know that blocks mentioned above have been duly reported clear of opposing trains, and clear of trains that may not be followed in the same block by the train addressed.</small></p> <p><small>The conductor and engineer receiving this card properly filled out and signed, or authorized by the towersman or block operator to fill it out, may proceed as directed above.</small></p>	<b>FORM K</b>
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Form K - Clearance Card 11/14/1929

In 1927-28 the PRR installed the "K Card System" on most LIRR Manual Block "single-iron routes". This resulted in many block stations losing their operators and semaphores in favor

or "unattended block" letter signs and lights. Cutchogue was included and Dad went back to Peconic as agent.

He almost lost his life there in 1928 when the west-bound freight hit a farm truck at Peconic Lane just east of the depot and killed four brothers riding on the flat-bed of the truck. Dad was standing in front of the depot giving the oncoming train a "Highball" so they wouldn't have to stop, as there was no work for them to do. A piece of the truck flew thru the air, striking him in the right leg, breaking it and knocking him off the platform!

November 15, 1928 Greenport Freight hits farm truck - Peconic Station  
Westbound Greenport Freight hits farm truck killing four Volinski Brothers.

One Saturday at Peconic I saw a "Billboard Reefer" on the freight. This car had reporting marks PRKX, owned by the F & P Car Line of Buffalo, N.Y. There was a large figure of a boy feeding chickens on the reefer sides. I assumed the cars were used to transport various poultry feeds, why they used an ice-reefer to do this remains a mystery. Shortly the ICC banned all "Billboard Cars", I believe it was in 1933.

All the monthly "Official Guides" which would serve three or four stations in order of their importance would end up at Peconic and we had stacks of them in our cellar which we used to start the coal furnace early or late in the season just to "take the chill off". They were all dried up and really got the fire going in a hurry!

The Depression was on in earnest in 1932 and the LIRR was laying off left and right in all departments, plus asking the employees to take a "temporary" pay cut until things got better. Peconic sta. was closed as an open agency that year and Dad had to go to Wyandanch as a clerk. During the Summer Timetable Wyandanch was an "open" block sta. The Winter Timetable listed WK as only an unattended block sta.



Wyandanch Station View SE 11/09/1934  
Archive: Dave Keller

MR & PT Cabins were also "Summer Only" open block stas. All three of the above had their semaphore blades removed during the Winter Timetable.

In 1933 Dad bid in the block operators job at Central Islip, working with George Ayling who was the Agent. Many of the Suffolk County depots handled Western Union Telegrams so you had to know "Morse" to hold those jobs at that time.



It's train time at Central Islip. Block operator George G. Ayling has just photographed the depot scene, using his his Kodak 122, and is in the process of walking back across Suffolk Avenue to resume his duties at the station when he turns and captures westbound G54sb camelback #13 as it pulls a train of old wooden passenger cars across the Carlton Avenue crossing in this view looking south from Suffolk Avenue c. 1922. Notice the old wooden pole gates with crossing watchman's shanty as well as the fireman taking a momentary break, standing on the open platform behind the boiler. The G54sb camelbacks were dual-service 10-wheelers (4-6-0) and as such, were used in both freight and passenger service. The arrival of the G5s passenger locomotives and the ex-PRR H10s (2-8-0) freight locomotives around that time sounded the death toll for the camelback locomotives in LIRR service and this locomotive and its sister engines would be sent to the scrap yard by the end of the decade.

Photo: George G. Ayling Research/Archive: Dave Keller

Ayling was a "camera bug" and often took action shots of non-stop trains going thru CI, especially no. 20, "The Cannonball". Dad occasionally had to hand up a train order to "20" and did so by standing on the express house platform, by placing one foot against the stud that was used for holding the car to platform "skid" in place. It made just the right distance and height to hold up an train order "stick" or hoop to a fast moving train.

If Dad had worked CI only a year earlier he would have seen locomotive no. 03, the 0-4-0 switcher owned by the State Hospital. This engine handled all freight cars destined for the two mile "Hospital" Spur. Two other cars were also pulled up and down the

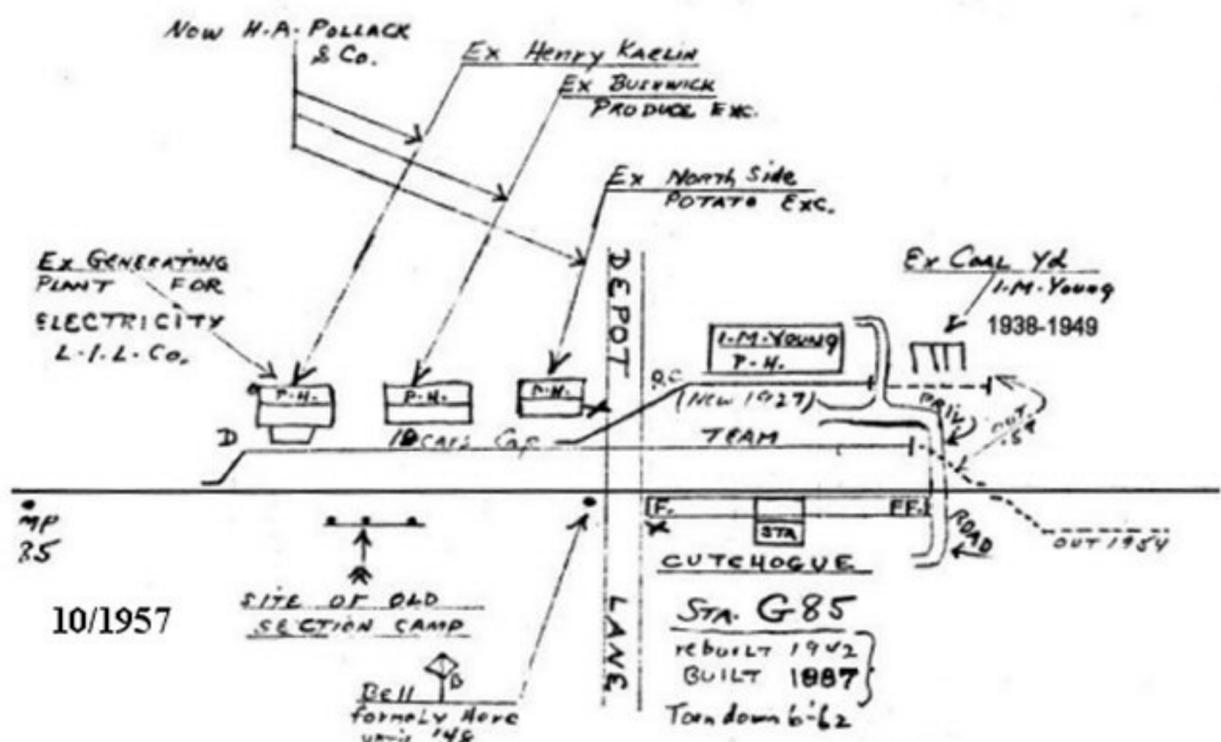


Central Islip State Hospital  
Class A3 (0-4-0) drill engine no. 3

Spur by engine 03. One was an LIRR class B40 baggage car for Railway Express and L.C.L. shipments to and from the Hospital, while the other car was a "ping" coach with bars on the windows used to bring patients out from the City. This car came out on train 234 on the rear. It was cut off in the sta. and taken to the Hospital by the 03. The Hospital also owned another car, an ex PRR class PB54 combine which could be used if the other two cars were laid up for repairs. When the 03 went to Morris Park Shop for any reason, the LIRR supplied a class D16b 4-4-0 for power.

By now you're probably wondering why so much about my Dad. All of the various Railroad Books that have been published so far have had little to say about station and tower forces and I think its about time something was written about them. Dad often talked about his railroading over the years and certainly stimulated my interest in it to a high degree! Maybe station work was not as exciting as engine or train service, but it had its "moments"!

In February 1934, an all day blizzard with fifty mile an hour gusts out of the Northwest buried the LIRR from L.I. City to Montauk and all points in between! There were great drifts, particularly in the many "cuts" in farming country out east.



A day or so after the storm had passed I was sleigh riding in the field north of our house on Depot Lane in Cutchogue, when I noticed a huge plume of what looked like steam coming from a long black object on the railroad about a mile away across the frozen fields to the north. As I continued to watch, I noticed the "steam" was curving in a high arc and falling back to the ground, something steam would never do !



LIRR MOW steam rotary snowplow no. 193 clearing the track in front of the rail yard near the Bridgehampton station after a heavy snowfall on November 28, 1898. Photo: Hal Fullerton Collection: Queens Public Library

I decided I had to see "what this was all about", and ran the mile or so up to the Main Line east of our depot. It was then I had my first and only glimpse of LIRR Rotary 193 at work. The main track had already been opened and the Rotary, pushed by a class H6sb 2-8-0, was clearing the 19 car passing siding. I was standing too close to the cut watching the great plume of snow being thrown high in the air, so the Rotary crew motioned me to move back, otherwise I would be buried over my head !



LIRR P70 #824 Morris Park Yard 1962 Photo: William Rigen

The Summer of 1934 saw the first air-conditioned PRR equipment on the LIRR. At least on the Main Line only the Greenport section of the "Cannonball", train 286, coming east had them. They went west on train 281 except Mondays, when they were on no. 203, "The Banker". There were two P70 coaches and a PB 70, all using ice bunkers and a blower and fans to circulate the cooled air in the car. How nice it was after being in the City on a sweltering summer day, to descend the stairs in Pennsylvania Station to track 16 and find a nicely cooled coach with comfortable high-back plush seats for the long ride home on the "Cannonball" !



OYSTER BAY #2002 club car - Oyster Bay 1/03/1959 Photo: George E. Votava Archive: Dave Keller

About this time the Club car "Oyster Bay" was equipped with "ice" air-conditioning. For many years until the 1947-48 arrival of the "Double Deckers", that car, later carrying the no. 811, was the only LIRR car with "AC" !

Around 1938-39 Pullman Parlor cars with ice air-conditioning began to make their Summer appearance on the LIRR, only a few at first, but by 1941 they all had "AC".

Dad got trimmed out of CI, (by a man with more seniority), and went on the extra list early in 1935. By this time the station forces got a weeks vacation each year so he would stand to get quite a bit of work nearer our home in Cutchogue. Men from the "West End", in order to cover those jobs out east would have to find a place to stay and eat, plus pay board for the week.

Among the places he worked were Yaphank, MR Cabin, Riverhead, Jamesport, Mattituck, Cutchogue and Southold. He posted at the original "B" tower, but never worked it. I went with him that day and recall walking the tracks to "B" from Central Park sta.



B Tower: 1 View E - c.1930's Archive: Art Huneke - K4s #5406 passing "B" Tower Bethpage Jct. 5/11/1947 Photo: George Votava - Archive: Dave Keller

The Bethpage Branch was still connected to the Main Line at this time and a few covered cement hoppers were spotted on the girder bridge a few hundred feet of Merrit Road crossing. The cement was being used to build the new Bethpage Parkway, which meant a new "fancy" B tower of brick. Construction of this road would also sever the Central Extension in the woods back of "B" tower. A friend of mine from Brentwood remembered going into the city one day in the early 1920's when there was a derailment around Westbury. The train he was on backed up when it got to Bethpage Jct. a short way on the Central Branch and then used the Central Extension thru Island Trees and Garden City to bypass the Westbury delays.

When they rebuilt the Central Branch as a "high speed line" in 1924-25, the switch to the Extension was removed, although the severed rail-ends were visible for years as you entered the Central Branch. When Bethpage State Park was opened in 1936 the station at Central Park was renamed Bethpage.

**"Fisherman's Special"**  
FROM NEW YORK—BROOKLYN  
WOODSIDE—JAMAICA

**\$150** ROUND TRIP

**To MONTAUK  
PECONIC BAY  
(Covey Place)**

From NEW YORK (Penn. Sta.)	\$45.00
WOODSIDE	5.00
BROOKLYN (Atlantic Ave.)	5.00
JAMAICA	5.00
At CANOE PLACE (Covey Place)	7.50
FORT FOND BEACH	2.50
MONTAUK	2.50

**RETURN**

From MONTAUK	4.25 (W. Weekdays)
4.00 (W. Sundays)	
At CANOE PLACE	3.10 (W. Weekdays)
3.00 (W. Sundays)	

**A New Service for Peconic Bay Fishermen!**

Beginning Sunday, April 19, and on weekdays through to May 21, "The Fisherman's Special" for Montauk will make a special stop at Covey Place, the entrance to the Great Peconic Bay, to allow fisherman to return to their boats, before the train leaves for Peconic Bay, before the train leaves for Peconic Bay.

**Extra! Open Party Seats at Covey Place for Pleasure and Workfishing!**

Only **\$2** per person

**PRIZES FOR BIGGEST FISH!**

The Long Island Railroad will give beautiful prizes to the anglers catching the biggest fish, such as, salmon, trout, bluefish, sea bass, etc. on the train. Prizes will be awarded at Peconic Bay.

**YOUR CATCH ICED ON RETURN TRIP!**

Fish can't suffer and lose their freshness and flavor when you return by train. The Long Island Railroad provides an iced car for the use of its angling patrons.

Inspire about the new overnight baggage. Built specially for fishermen. Fine Restaurant operated by Union News Company.

**GO BY TRAIN TO THE FISHING GROUNDS**  
—Cheaper, Safer, Quicker!

—FISHING INFORMATION BUREAU—  
Telephone PE 6-0000, Ext. 2715-2718

**LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD**

Fisherman's timetable - 4/16/1936  
Archive: Art Huneke

**Long Island Rail Road  
Train Schedules**

**SEA GULLS  
WILL TELL YOU...  
Fishing  
IS BEST  
AT MONTAUK  
AND PECONIC BAY**

**SPECIAL PARTY EXCURSION TRAINS**

FISHERMEN'S SPECIAL		DAYS OPERATED	
From New York	1:00 P.M.	April 19 to May 21, inclusive	7:00 A.M.
From Woodside	1:15 P.M.	May 22 to May 23, inclusive	7:15 A.M.
From Brooklyn	1:30 P.M.	May 24 to May 25, inclusive	7:30 A.M.
From Jamaica	1:45 P.M.	May 26 to May 27, inclusive	7:45 A.M.
From Canoe Place	2:00 P.M.	May 28 to May 29, inclusive	8:00 A.M.
From Fort Pond Beach	2:15 P.M.	May 30 to May 31, inclusive	8:15 A.M.
From Montauk	2:30 P.M.		

**RAILROAD FARES**

From	To	Rate
New York	Montauk	\$45.00
Woodside	Montauk	5.00
Brooklyn	Montauk	5.00
Jamaica	Montauk	5.00
Canoe Place	Montauk	7.50
Fort Pond Beach	Montauk	2.50
Montauk	Canoe Place	2.50
Montauk	Fort Pond Beach	2.50
Montauk	Jamaica	5.00
Montauk	Brooklyn	5.00
Montauk	Woodside	5.00
Montauk	New York	45.00

Fisherman's Special timetable  
April 4th-Sept 26th 1937 fishing season

As soon as the Peconic Bay fishing opened up in May, the Montauk "Fisherman's Special" would start running. Known as the "Fish Train" to all railroaders, it ran east usually via Main Line and Manorville Br. in order to pass around train 4 which left Penn. Sta. 40 minutes before the "Fish", but would reach Montauk a full hour after it. No. 4 used the Montauk Br. east of Jamaica all the way out at this time.

This operation called for MR & PT Cabins to be open block stations until the end of the fishing season, usually in Oct. The operators at the two Cabins would throw the switches on both ends of the Branch so the "Fish" would not have to stop.

According to Dad, some of those "throttle Artists" really sailed into or out of the Manorville Branch curve at MR Cabin! If YA or MD block stations were closed for the westbound "Fish" he had to give the engineer and conductor a "K Card". This was done either with a hoop or train order stick. Most of the time he stayed in the cabin and put the stick or hoop thru the side window just to be on the safe side! He always hated that "MR job", mainly because of the pesky mosquitoes from the nearby pond. He had to sit in the dark many an evening, this helped a little.



Cutchogue Station view SE c. 1905  
Archive: Dave Keller

During July he was relieving Jim Hand at Cutchogue and after school I sometimes went up to the station. One afternoon I had my one time glimpse of the short-lived Greenport "Fishermans Special," or "Fish Train". It went west thru town at about four forty five. On that day it had a Pennsy E3sd, a combine and two coaches. This train commenced operation in May of 1935 to serve the Peconic Bay Weakfishing Season which was fairly exploding in fish caught that Spring and Summer!

In the morning coming east it's first stop was Cutchogue, where it took siding and met train 281 at seven ten. Almost all the hopeful anglers got off at Cutchogue as it was the stop nearest New Suffolk where all the party and rowboats left from. Going west in the afternoon the only stop was Mattituck. On Fridays it took siding to meet train 210 "The Shelter Island Express."

The good people of New Suffolk would meet the morning "Fish Train" at Cutchogue with their autos and take the anglers the three miles to New Suffolk, taking them to Mattituck for the train in the afternoon. If you lived in the Metropolitan area the Montauk and Greenport "Fisherman's Excursions" were a real bargain! As I recall the round trip to either Montauk or Greenport was less than two dollars. The Greenport "Fish" only ran during 1935, but the Montauk ran from 1934 to 1941, plus 1946 to 1951.



LIRR valuation photo 1921 Yaphank depot  
View E Archive: Dave Keller

On Labor Day Dad had to work 2nd trick at YA, Yaphank from three to eleven p.m. "YA" was not normally open on Sundays and Holidays, but in order to keep things "moving on time" this was done. Mom and I went along to keep him company at the lonely station far from the village.

Yaphank from our home seemed like a long journey in our 1929 Ford Model A. Some of the roads were without street signs and you could get lost even trying to find Manorville in the day-time, let alone after dark! Seems as there were about seven trains that passed that clear and warm afternoon and evening. Main Line to and from Greenport included 216, 211, 4211 and 4215, while trains from Montauk via the Manorville Br. included the Passenger Extra "Montauk Fish", All Pullman 15 and lastly 23.

Mom and I stood up on the four-wheeled baggage cart as 15 passed, the better to see what the parlor cars looked like inside. Unfortunately I was not yet into copying engine numbers, so I can only guess that all the Main Line trains had G5s, while 15 no doubt was pulled by a K4, and the "Fish" and 23 sported E6s locomotives.

All westbounds had to slow down to grab Dad's K card by MD, (Medford). The next open block sta. was KO, (Ronkonkoma).

On many a nice Sunday afternoon my Uncle Dave would take us somewhere on the Island for a ride in his big Packard. One Sunday we were going along Division St. in Patchogue and I spied a PRR Gas Electric car on the asphalt siding next to the turntable. It really looked "long" to me for some reason. It had to be either 4669 or 4670, as they were both on the Babylon-Patchogue "Scoot" at this time.



PRR leased Gas Car #4669 at Morris Park Shops 5/20/1934 Archive: Dave Keller

In 1936 both "gas cars" were replaced on the "Scoot" by two Pennsy class E3sd 4-4-2 locomotives, so the Pennsy got its equipment rental anyway!



PRR E3sd #4176 Richmond Hill Storage Yard 4/23/1939 Archive: Dave Keller

In late Spring of 1936 Dad "bid" in the block operators job at Port Jefferson on the Wading River Branch and to his great surprise he was awarded it. We moved from Patchogue to Port Jeff. station in September. The move there would effect the rest of my life as far as career was concerned. We lived almost opposite the Thomas Wilson & Co. lace mill, only a block from the R.R. We had a full view of all the trains from our back yard, I was in "7th Heaven"!

We had lived in a town with only seven trains a day which were hours apart and suddenly there were 23 a day, running at all hours during day and well into the night. \_\_\_ "Fabulous"!

My mom never did get used to the "Theatre Train", ( 600) coming in at two minutes after two ! The first evening we were there I was out on the front porch when train 650, the "mail" train went east to Wading River. With the east wind you could hear "On Time Willie" Pendleton, the hogger, whistling for all the crossings thru Mt. Sinai and Miller Place.

First chance I got I walked to Setauket on the track because I was curious as to what it was like around the next curve. In this case it took me the two and a half miles to Setauket as there were seven curves, one after another!

Unfortunately all this "heady stuff" came to a sudden end when my mom died in late October. We gave up our rented house and I moved back to Cutchogue to live with my sister, while Dad got a room in the Linden House, close by his job.

During my 1937 summer vacation I got to visit with Dad for a week or two. One weekday when train 610 arrived at eleven twenty three, Jimmy Harchick, the rear brakeman on it asked me if I wanted to take a ride to Wading River?

In 1937 from mid May to mid October several trains started and ended their runs out of Wading River. They were eastward weekdays nos. 610, 634 Sat. only and 650 ex Sat. Westward nos. 617 Sat only, 621 ex Sat. Sundays and Holidays, east no. 4606, and west 4631.

The ride was about forty minutes for the eleven miles or so, as the trains went no faster than thirty miles per hour as the track by this time needed many new ties. As all the trains above layed up at Port Jefferson it was necessary to back up in one direction going to or from Wading River.

Miller Place, first sta. east of "port" was just a short cinder platform, plus the unattended block "MI" and a blind end team track. Rocky Point, where most of the passengers got off or on,



Rocky Point Station-View W  
1930 - (Osborne-Keller)

sported a wooden sta. building, plus covered sheds on either end. There was a team track where Thurber Lumber Co got cars often.



Shoreham depot looking N -6/26/1918  
Photo: LIRR valuation Archive: Dave Morrison

Shoreham had the nicest depot east of "Port" with a neat blue-stone platform as well. The team track west of the sta. was used to unload tank cars of "road oil" for the highway dept.

Sadie Robinson had been the last agent here, until 1932 when it was closed down. On days when there were no passengers east of Shoreham the trains going east would go no further, and then back the equipment to Port Jeff. yard.



Wading River depot - View NE 9/06/1937  
Photo: George Votava Archive: Dave Keller

Wading River was the last stop on the branch, about two or three people usually got off there. In 1937 when I rode the train the two story depot was boarded up and badly in need of repair. The agent once lived up over the station, back in the Twenties. After 1938, the building was torn down and most of the lumber went into building "Wivczar's Store" nearby.

The wye and water tank had been removed in 1929 as well as all trackage except the Main and team track. Cars of seed potatoes came in here in early spring for the nearby farms.

Backing up to Port Jeff, "Jimmy" let me blow the warning whistle on the back up nose for all the grade crossings. We also threw a lot of rolled up newspapers off along the way to summer residents who lived near the tracks and waved to us.

When we got to Port Jeff, my "job" was to close all the windows as well as put down the "traps" and close the side doors. In those years all the "mainliners", (coaches and combines), plus the "P70s" had cinder screens on the windows during the summer months. The "pings" never had them. What is a "main liner" you ask? \_\_\_ Cars that had a clerstory roof such as nos. 333, 619 or 832, etc. etc.

Many a Friday evening when I lived in Cutchogue we drove to Riverhead to shop as the stores would stay open late. As soon as we got parked, I would run up Griffin Avenue to the Railroad Station, hoping to be in time to see the "Riverhead" train come in at eight ten. Most times no. 266 was on time with G5 no. 35 and her combine and 5 "P70 coaches. In those days



Riverhead Station - RH Block Signals  
View E 6/1933 Archive: Dave Keller

Riverhead had a working turntable, two water plugs, water tank and a nostler to clean the fire and watch the engine overnight and all day Sunday when nos. 263 and 266 did not run.



Riverhead water tank and crossing shanty  
Turntable lead at the left - View NE 1940  
Photo: Fred Weber Archive: Dave Morrison

The train always layed up opposite the station on the east end of the passing siding. After the locomotive was turned, had her tank filled and fire cleaned, she was coupled to the east end of the train to heat it. In the morning the crew would put the engine on the west end of the consist.

I have heard several times how the train was "swept"! Seems after Manorville on no.266 the crew would open all the end doors and the resultant blast of wind right thru the entire train would clean out all the dirt and papers by the time they arrived in Calverton! This seemed rather far-fetched as in winter it would be a very chilling way to travel for the remaining four or five passengers.

The summer of 1938 I spent several weeks in Port Jefferson helping Dad in the depot and again had a ride to Wading River on train 610. Since late 1937 the Wading River end of track had been moved west three quarters of a mile to the former site of



Wading River Station  
Experimental Greenery c.1898

the old LIRR Experimental Farm. Seems the owners of the properties from the "Farm" to Wading River terminal had given the right of way to the LIRR under the condition that trains run all year long. Since for the last five years trains ran east of "Port" only from mid May to mid October the courts finally ruled that the land the RR occupied east of the "Farm" would revert back to the original owners, so the RR had no choice but to remove their tracks from the "Farm" east.

The Pennsy gas electric Brill car had made its last run between "Port" and Wading River on June twenty fourth, 1933. It was usually no.4742 or 4744, both were similar cars. The U.S. Mail contract east of "Port" was given up by the RR also in June 1933. When we first moved to "Port" in 1936, the short spur that held the gas car just east of the sta., as well as the gasoline pump that fed it were still to be seen.

On Sunday October ninth, 1938, a rainy evening, my niece Eleanor and I rode the very last passenger train ever to leave Wading River to Port Jeff.. The train, no.4629 became 4631 after a one minute pause at "JF", (Port Jeff.), continuing on to Jamaica.

During the late winter and early spring of 1939, engine no. 108, a locomotive crane with its coal tender and a string of low LIRR gondolas based in "port", removed the rails and a few re-usable ties east of Port Jefferson. The telegraph poles became firewood while the heavy concrete mileposts remained in place.

No one in eastern Suffolk County will ever forget the great Hurricane of September twenty first, 1938. Probably the LIRR would have been just as well off "without", read on!

There were problems galore just on three long routes into Suffolk County alone, not to mention the rest of the RR. The equipment of train no. 9 was laying in Montauk yard when



Fort Pond, Montauk - View NW 1897  
Photo: Harold B. Fullerton  
Archive: Queensborough Library

the waters of Fort Pond Bay started to rise alarmingly in the small fishing village north of the Railroad. Conductor Frank Olsen waded into the rising water near the train and helped a number of half-drowned villagers up into the dry coaches. Soon after, Olsen had the train pulled west far enough on the "fill" past the upper yard so the Hurricane whipped waves were no longer a threat. The crew and their "guests" waited out the storm on the higher ground. No. 5 had left earlier, just in time to get past Napague near Milepost 109, where the tracks were washed out for a good seven hundred feet or so. The Ocean broke thru the dunes at that point.

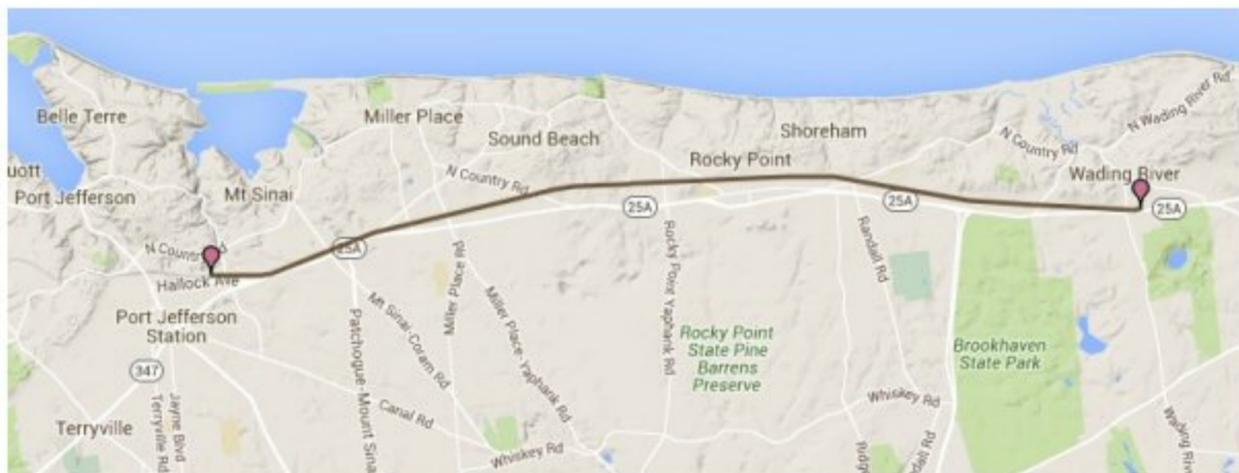
Further west near the game preserve which is about a mile west of Quogue, train 26 was derailed when a creek normally hardly noticeable became swollen by the rush of water up from the South during the height of the storm, and washed out about a hundred feet of roadbed under the track. The RPO car and three Pennsy P70 coaches were strewn about at various angles, although none went over on their sides. To this day, I have never found out if the locomotive made it over the washout without derailing. No doubt it was an E6 or K2.

No. 20, "The Cannonball", apparently was held up somewhere to the west by either fallen trees or poles across the track, otherwise she would have been first over the "washout"! No. 211 on the Main Line had just made Southold depot when the great storm hit the area at three ten p.m. Evidently the crew were told to remain there, because when I made my way to the Southold station after the storm was over the train was still there at five thirty p.m. I was attending Southold High School at that time and I will always have very vivid memories of that memorable afternoon! The only person on the train was the fireman watching his engine, G5 no. 31.



G5s #31 Morris Park 1948  
Archive: Dave Keller

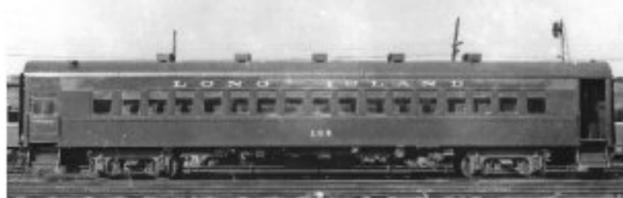
Two empty thirty three ton FGEX ice reefers had been blown by the over one hundred mile an hour wind from the east end of the team track nearly a thousand feet. They ended up fetched up against no. 211's second express car, not much damage though.



**Wading River branch - Port Jefferson to Wading River Terrain map**

The Wading River Branch had quite a few fallen trees here and there but no wasnouts. Dad was pulling the four-wheeled baggage wagon down the station platform, loaded with outgoing express for train no. 635, due out of Port Jeff. at three thirty six p.m.. Before he reached the express car the sky overhead became suddenly very dark, notwithstanding the already low cloud ceiling due to the storm. Looking up he saw the entire large roof off of one of Loper Bros. Lumber Co's nearby sheds fly over the train and land in a field about five hundred feet to the northeast. On the way back to the sta. a large hunk of corrugated roof being propelled by the mighty wind gusts, just missed him. It was going end over end along the platform. Probably it would have cut him in two if it had hit him!

Next morning I biked to Cutchogue depot and was rewarded in seeing the first eastbound train since no. 204 the previous day. Pennsy loco. no. 4176, a class E3sd, was pulling a lone "ping" combine full of "gandy dancers". They were clearing the right of way of fallen trees and downed telegraph poles.



**LIRR "ping" #105 Jamaica c.1945  
Photo: Ron Ziel Archive: Mike Boland**

1938 was the year I discovered "Railroad Magazine" and found out there were others like me who were fond of "watching trains go by". The Railfan movement was in its very beginnings. My only Christmas wish was that I get a camera to take engine pictures like the ones in the magazine. Santa must have agreed with me, as I found a brand new "Brownie" 127 size camera under the tree!



**Patchogue ash pit Class E3sd #2985 4-4-2  
Class E7s #9820 4-4-2  
Mid-late 1930's - View NE  
Photo: H. Reschke Archive: Mike Boland**

The very first locomotives I photographed were in Patchogue on a January 1939 Sunday afternoon. They were two Pennsy class E3sd's nos. 3149 and 4170 on the ash pit track. I also shot PRR E6s 1600 leaving the sta. on a westbound "Scout", but took it too soon to get a good clear photo. The 127 size was much too small for RR pictures, but the clarity of what you got was unbeatable! My dad noticed that the camera size was too small and presented me on my fourteenth birthday in March of 1939 with a Kodak 616 size Brownie box camera. I was in the "big league" now!

1939 meant the grand opening of the great New York World's Fair in April. Dad and I usually went via Woodside instead of Penn. Sta. as his annual LIRR pass was void on the famous "10 minutes-10 cents" MU shuttles between N.Y. and the Fair.

While awaiting a North Side Branch train at Woodside there was lots to look at. About every ten minutes a twelve car MU "snuttle" would zip thru non-stop. About seven sets of equipment were used in this service, all round roof cars and kept very clean and freshly painted. The end windows of each car had a "Trylon and Perisphere", (The fair's theme), painted on.

If you were lucky, once in a while a Special train off the PRR would pass thru, hauled by double-headed PRR DDL electric. These trains came from all over the PRR, some from as far away as Pittsburgh or beyond.

In addition to all this there was the normal LIRR traffic, and overhead on the El, the frequent I.R.T. and B.M.T. trains. The wooden "gate" cars of the I.R.T. via the Queensboro Bridge. This line came off the Second Ave, El in Manhattan. The B.M.T. ran its long-lived "Q" wooden cars from Queens Plaza. The I.R.T. of course also ran its steel equipment.



NYC & HRRR 4-4-0 #999  
NY World's Fair 1939  
Archive: Dave Keller

Dad and I probably made at least six visits to the "Fair" in both 1939 and 1940. We usually visited the wonderful Railroad exhibit each time. The "Railroads On Parade" show we saw three times. The scene that we both enjoyed the most was the one where engine 999 of the New York Central came roaring across stage whistle blowing for the crowd hanging around the country <sup>DEPOT</sup> representing a scene up along the Hudson River.

We had never been to Montauk, so one fine summer Sunday in July we embarked from Jamacia on train no. 14, non-stop as far Bay Shore. I can still recall that K4 leading our train thru Mineola and Westbury at a very high rate of speed, probably close to 90! Dad had his watch out and always maintained we went from Minerva tower to Hicksville in five minutes, which included slowing down for the sharp Hicksville curve!

At Hampton Bays no. 14 set out a PRR "R50" express reefer containing milk cans for Sherfield Farms bottling plant there. Even though there was no time allowed for this ten minute delay in the schedule, we went into Montauk on the "advertised".

We had about two hours to see the "sights" of Montauk before returning west on train no. 7 at three forty p.m.

Once 14 had backed its train out of the station we had a good view of four K4s and the two or three E6s on the ashpit tracks.



K4s #5409 Montauk ash pit 1940  
T. J. Sommer photo, Dave Keller archive

With my new 616 size box camera I very much wanted to get those engines on film. This was not to easily done as the grassy area between the engines and sta. platform was swampy. Nevertheless I started "clicking away". For the record they were nos. 1737, 3771, 3873 and 5238. The E6s were hidden behind the K4s so I had to skip them.

Regretfully I did not walk up to the "Upper Yard" where all the Pullman and Pennsy equipment could be seen in the distance. We did see the rare PRR "Parlor-coach" used on trains 27 and 26 nearer the bunkhouse though. We had a snack at the Union News Co. restaurant at the fishing pier. Boy, would I like to live that day again if they ever invent a time machine!

Later that fall Dad and I rode the MP41 cars on a local train from Jamaica to Brooklyn that made the ten local stops.



LIRR MP41 #1111 Rockaway Park Yard  
1948 (Rugen-Huncke)



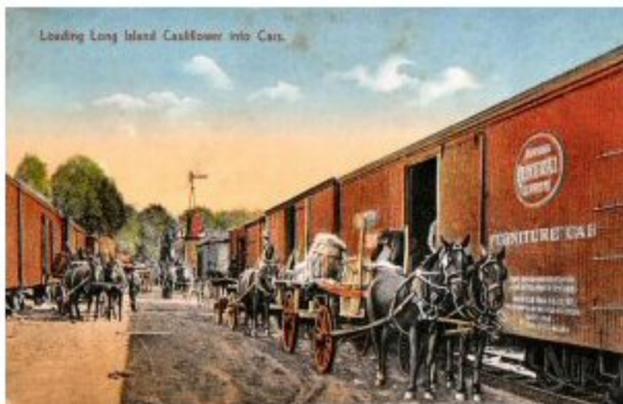
Morris Park 5/24/1946  
Aerial view Archive: Dave Morrison

It was my first view of fabled Morris Park engine terminal with it's great variety of steam power. Just about the time you really got absorbed in it, a long row of class DD1s on the track next to the Atlantic Branch blocked your view! The entire local service to Brooklyn would be discontinued in November of 1939. The Atlantic Avenue Improvement of 1941-42 would need space for the temporary running tracks so the elevated structure from East New York to Atkins Avenue had to be torn down. From there east to Morris Park, Atlantic Ave. was closed to thru traffic for autos also because of the temporary tracks on the edges of the street.

When in Brooklyn we always ate in "Bickfords" as their hot turkey sandwich with giblet gravy, mashed potatoes and cranberry sauce for twenty five cents was not only a bargain but very good too! Grabbing a window seat along Flatbush Avenue in "Bickfords" in those days was a must, what with all the street cars of various types running near and past the station. The "PCC" cars on the "Seventh Avenue" were a pleasure to watch and ride, almost noiseless!

Overhead, at least until 1940, ran the Culver Line on the El, with it's wooden "gate" cars to Coney Island. We managed to ride it before it was discontinued, along with the Third Ave. Branch with it's one car train. The 65th St. Terminal was right over the LIRR Bay Ridge Yard.

Living in Cutchogue in 1940 was indeed "rural", as most people were farmers or worked on them. Potatoes, Sprouts, Cauliflower and beans were the chief produce shipped out.



Riverhead team track cauliflower loading colorized postcard c.1905

Unfortunately by this time motor trucks had most of the other than Cauliflower shipments to the Metropolitan area. Once in a while a reefer of "spuds", (potatoes), would leave town for cities further away. For this purpose several FGEX reefers were kept at every station from Calverton to Southold during harvest season.

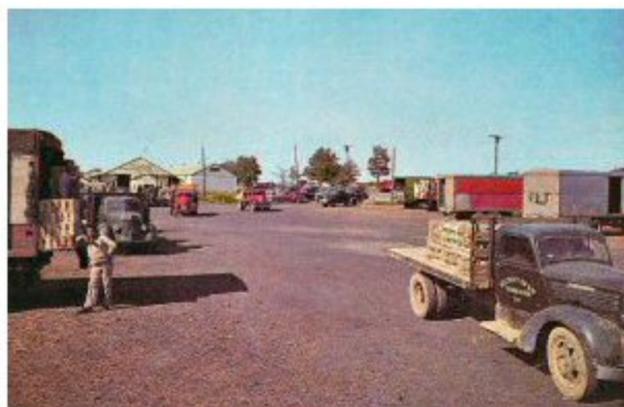


Riverhead Produce reefer ice loading 1951 Photo: John Krause

Southold and Riverhead both boasted Farmers Auction Blocks and during Cauliflower season they loaded many reefers of crated "flowers". L.I. Ice blew chipped ice on top of the crates to keep them fresh for their long journeys to many parts of the U.S.A. When "flowers" were running heavy in the fall the westbound freight from Greenport left there after train 204 arrived around noon. In some years there was a "double-end" freight. In other words, instead of an E. Bound frt. on Mon., Wed and Fri. and a Westbound Tues, Thurs and Sat., there was a freight both ways every day except Sundays. Some times "reefer extras" were run to help the regular freights get over the railroad so they would'nt "outlaw", (work over sixteen hours, the legal limit).

Our local station agent, genial Jim Hand, had a fairly nice job with only inbound PRR hoppers of Antnarcite coal or "road oil" in UTLX tank cars for the highway dept. During late winter and early spring reefers arrived from Maine with bags of Aroostook County seed potatoes for the farmers.

He sold very few tickets and there were no commuters. Telegrams he handled plenty of as he also was in charge of Western Union for Peconic as well as Southold and Cutchogue. The large number of summer residents on Peconic Bay seemed to send and receive a lot of telegrams.



Riverhead Cauliflower Cooperative Archive: Bill Faller

Railway Express and L.C.L. were handled by truck from Riverhead inbound and outbound with few exceptions. One being "Bay man" Charlie Rice's weekly iced box of hard clams. During months with "R" in them barrells of Oysters also <sup>WERE</sup> loaded on train 211 in the afternoon.

From time to time I would go to Port Jefferson to visit with dad, mostly when there were three or four day weekends such as Thanksgiving, etc. etc. I always rode train 281 from Cutchogue to Hicksville as this gave me a about an hour and a half for "train watching" there, before train 610 left for "Port"



Port Jefferson station View NW  
1938 Photo: George Christopher  
Archive: Dave Keller

On cold mornings arriving at our depot, it was so gratifying to open the door to the waiting room and feel the warmth of that big pot belly stove that most country depots had at the time. A big metal plate near the stovetop proclaimed it as model "Station Agent No. 24". The LIRR also used them in freight houses and section houses. They gulped "soft coal" with a vengeance and usually showed their "thanks" by spewing out fragrant coal gas, making the Agent or Clerk open both waiting room doors for a few minutes until fresh air could clear the smell out!



Port Jefferson Station Waiting Room  
Photo/Archive; Dave Morrison

Cutchogue was indeed "typical" of a country station. See if you can recall these familiar furnishings! The tall timetable rack with tables from every road you ever heard of in the country, plus Mexico and Canada. The two "fire pails" of water on their wall shelf near the stove. The wooden floor, always the color of old "shoe soles". The curved-back heavy oak waiting room benches that really were fairly comfortable! The chattering telegraph key at intervals, or the train dispatchers phone with its odd "sta. rings" signifying an "19" order for a station down the line somewhere to copy. The heavy wire cage over the ticket counter, etc.



St. James Freight-Express House  
"water closet" - 8/25/1955  
LIRR H10s #113 Freight westbound

Last, but not least the air-conditioned "water closet" located a respectful distance from the depot usually. Even Higbie Avenue sta. had one right up to 1958 and that in the city limits!

Just as I was warming my self around the stove, the crossing bell would begin ringing at Depot Lane announcing the imminent arrival of my train to Hicksville. Engine 40 would be hauling it most every time I used train 281, C.E. Seaman was the hogger, and Clifford Prince was the "relief engineer". Charlie Noe, (pronounced "no"), was regular Conductor while Leo Hantz always replaced him when the "East End Relief Crew" were on 281.

In those days only the Greenport and Montauk train and engine crews had about nine days off each month as they were "Speed Based" jobs, while the rest of the passenger crews were all "short turnaround" jobs. That meant they could work three hundred sixty five days, year in and year out. Only from 1944 on were the "short turnaround" men granted a weeks yearly vacation.

"Riding 281" was always something "special" to me. Probably a lot of the enjoyment was hearing the best described as "organ type whistle" of engine 40. C.E. (Yeller), Seaman really layed the whistle on for all the crossings. "two longs, the short and the final long", with that final blast ending with a curtness only when the engine pilot was on the crossing !

Seaman had a lot of crossing mishaps over the years. Among them a school bus at Holbrook and a flatbed truck of live ducks at River road in Calverton. None of these were his fault by the way, so he had a very good reason for all his "correct" and long crossing whistling!

Fast time on 281's schedule called for rapid getaways from the numerous stops with appropriate "stack music". The timetable allowed only four minutes running time from Cutchogue to Mattituck for the nearly three miles, start to stop. Yet, year in and out, the G5s made the time, time that the diesels havent been able to match yet!

The "sense of urgency" about that train really got to you if you were a frequent rider. You could "set your clock" by the trains out east those days. "On Time" meant just what it said. With all the stops train 214 had from Penn. Station to Greenport, (and there were many), it was once reported the fastest local train in the U.S. !



Mattituck Station valuation photo  
"K" Block Signal c.1921  
Archive: Art Humeke

Two "sights" I could always count on seeing going into Hicksville were Agents "Chubby" Gildersleeve at Mattituck, and Bob Walker at Deer Park. Both had Station Agents caps with brass button uniform coats, the same color as train crews. The PRR had issued the cap and jacket to all the agents around 1935 or so, but they were the only ones I ever noticed wearing them.

Hicksville, where I detrained from no.281 was a "railfans paradise" those days. Watching the semaphore blade positions soon told you what train was going where, Normally the blades were kept at stop, (horizontal), unless a train was due.



Water plug, Express House, Station  
7/31/1937 Archive: Dave Keller

One day I went up the two flights of wooden stairs to visit towerman Charlie Brown who owned the "first trick" at "Divide" tower. There were about forty levers all told and Charlie related now the ones that controlled the crossover down by the express house could be "murder" to pull after a snow storm.

Hicksville got quite a few cars of seed potatoes up to the early fifties as the village was surrounded <sup>by</sup> rich black soil. Most arrived in white and later orange MDT refrigerator cars with charcoal heaters in the ice bunkers. Potatoes coming from Maine in late winter or early spring would freeze otherwise.

Hicksville had a wye, east and west water plugs, water tank, a big team yard, freight house, express house, mail cranes, crossing gates, a neat brick station and even hosted snowplow 191 for use on the line to Port Jefferson. Other plows were kept at Ronkonkoma, Greenport, and Speonk.



Russell Snow Plow #191  
Hillside Yard 1934

If you wanted to see a mail carrier "earn his pay", any weekday at Hicksville was the place! At four-fifty six p.m. train 635 would unload mail from it's RPO. As soon as that train cleared the platform, he would run across to the eastbound mail crane and hang a pouch for non-stop no. 26 to Montauk. That was at five ten, at five thirteen train 5 also from Montauk threw off a pouch as she went by non stop.



Hicksville mail crane pickup 8/1954  
Archive: Emery SUNY-Stony Brook

Picking that up, he had to run back across to no, two track to hang another pouch for train 650 to Port Jeff., also non stop, and due at five twenty. At five thirty four no.211 from Greenport stopped to pick up and discharge mail. That done he had to jump in his "pick up truck" and dash over to no, two track to meet train 214 to Greenport with more mail to load and unload.

Ater taking that to the post office he could take it "easy" until he had to meet no.645 at seven twenty two.

That summer I spent about a month in "Port" and almost wound up "grounded" as they say nowadays !

I had made friends with the new "day hostler" and once in a while would throw a switch for the ash pit or water plug for him, so he could stay up in the cab. One day he was spotting G5s no. 22 at the plug and asked me if I would like to climb up the tender ladder, open the manhole covers, and pull the plug spout over for him. He would open the "T" water valve on the ground and <sup>MYSELF</sup> putting the water in no. 22's tank, which then was a "low tank" of class 70p82A.



LIRR tender Class: 70.P.82a -Oyster Bay  
1940 with Penn Roman style lettering  
(T. Sommer-Keller)

Well, all went off fine so far. As I was on my way back to the depot I spotted Dad coming "lickety-split" up thru the yard! He had been informed by a retired railroadman living nearby, who had seen the whole performance. Dad was not pleased at all, and my "assistant hostler's" job was abolished right then and there!



LCL crate with an REA label 4/16/1943  
Archive: John Sandrowicz

That summer I learned to "write up" Railway Express prepaid and collect shipments. Usually collects were not weighed at the shipping point and we would guess at the weights, usually by lifting them up after a little practise, you would come within a pound or two of their scale weight.

The LIRR had an agreement with REA that a certain amount of LCL freight shipments would be included with the express. These were kept in the freight house and "I was in charge" of that, keeping all related shipments together and seeing the customers didn't take someone else's goods by error.

Also in 1940, I gave my Kodak 616 Brpwnie a good workout, photographing almost all the different G5s and H10s that came into "Port". At the same time I was copying the builders plate data off the locomotives, plus getting the tenders class and number. This brings us to the "mystery of tender 18". During that year visiting the different locomotive terminals I was able to account for all tenders nos. 20 to 50 except there was no tender 25. Since there was never a G5 no. 18, why a class 70p82A tender with that no?

The "best guess" is that tender 18 was sent here by the PRR to be Camelback engine no. 18's tender as an experiment. After that engine was scrapped in the late twenties, tender 18 was a spare. About that time more G5s were arriving, so tender 18 was matched with one of them, perhaps one that came without a tender, makes sense.

As a matter of record, here is the "match-up" of the G5's and their tenders in 1940-41.

Engine No.	Tender No.	
20	26	*
21	27	*
22	32	
23	18	*
24	22	*
25	20	*
<hr/>		
26	41	
27	50	
28	38	
29	24	
30	33	
31	29	
32	23	
<hr/>		
33	28	
34	34	
35	32	
36	47	
37	37	
38	35	
39	30	
<hr/>		
40	48	
41	39	
42	42	
43	43	
44	44	
45	45	
<hr/>		
46	46	
47	36	
48	21	
49	49	
50	40	

\* "low" tender of type 70p82A.

All others type 110 p82A or "high".



LIRR tender class 110P82a  
Archive: Ron Zinn

Later on during the summer of 1950 on p.m. L.I. City "swing time" between trains I personally observed G5's no.'s 36 and 44 on carfloats bound for a scrap yard and both went with "low tanks", I did not get the no.s.

In February 1952 over at Morris Park one Sunday I noticed G5 no. 27 ready for shipment to a "scraper". She also had a low tank, again I did not get the no.

Every time I saw engine 25 she always had a low tank and went to "scrap" with it after November 1951. This left one "low tank", the 22, which was mated with wrecker 197 at Holban Yard to become its coal and water supply about that time. The remaining G5s now all had "high tanks" for the remainder of their service lives.

Apparently engines with "low tanks" never were used to Montauk, Greenport, Speonk or seldom to Port Jefferson. Oyster Bay saw them more than any other terminal.

Near the end of summer I caught a ride as a "guest" or the crew on the westbound local freight to Kings Park from "Port". Caboose 45 rode smoothly enough even though it still had arch bar trucks at that time. The crew were as follows: Engineer "Hen" Tozier; Fireman "Willy" Scanlon; "Russ" Mann, head brake; "Jimmy" Harchick, Pin puller; "Cowboy" Wiltgen, Flagman and Henry Krantz, Conductor.



Caboose 45 - Holban Yard c.1948  
Archive: Dave Keller

Dad was off Sundays and we always managed to take a train trip off Long Island without going to the same place twice. Dad would send for "trip Passes" on other Lines for him and I and we traveled to Port Jervis on the Erie, Scranton on the D.L. & W, Allentown on the Lehigh Valley, New London on the New Haven, etc, etc. He had an "entire System" pass on the PRR, so we went to Trenton or Philadelphia some times too. Two lines we missed were the N.Y.O. & W. and the PRR "Bel- Del" Branch.

Usually after one of these all day Sunday trips I was "shipped" back to Cutchogue on train 4214. During most months it would be dark after Pinelawn and the ride sometimes seemed "endless". Those P70 coaches rode better than the "Pings" and "mainliners", but they didn't have six wheel trucks either!

Those kerosene platform lights that dimly lit such "big stas." as Pine Aire, Holbrook, Aquebogue and Laurel, I never did find who lit them as none of those stations had clerks. Yet snow or pouring rain they would always be aglow!

Engineman "Mike" Brown was the regular man on 4214 with his "38". He had his own style of crossing whistling and even at some distance from the railroad when he "blew" you knew it was "Mike"! Walter Hudson, the Conductor was the essence of neatness. Walter should have been "Captain" on the "Broadway"!

About this time Herbert Du Russel of Islip founded a fan club with the name "Long Island Railroaders Club". Apparently there were about a dozen members and they did run at least one "fantrip" to Morris Park Shops in 1941. My guess is the club broke up because of World War Two, between the photography restrictions around railroads and the members going in the services. The next fan club based on Long Island would be the



Long Island Sunrise Trail -NRHS  
50 years logo

"Sunrise Trails Chapter" of the N.R.H.S., founded by Ron Ziel and friends in the mid 1960s.

By now my "Watching Trains Go By" had become the incurable infection known as "Railfanitis" and to this date no cure has been found !

1941 would turn out to be the most interesting year ever in Port Jefferson for "different wheel arrangements ".As soon as the powers that be in Jamaica assured themselves that a K4 would make it around the west leg of the wye in "Port" without derailing,( for the west leg is much sharper than the east leg),they dispatched the 1st K4 ever to run on the Branch.

She was no. 3643,non-stoker of course,and her summer chores would be morning no.621 and evening 654. Every afternoon the section men would grease the rails on the west leg in advance of no. 654,but she never derailed or did any other K4, long after they ceased to grease that wye!

Pennsy H9 no.3468 turned up many times on the freight.By this time "Futura " or "Sans serif" lettering and numbers had replaced standard "block type" of same on engines and tenders on most PRR power and some LIRR cars and locomotives as well.

K2s such as no.1458 also made their "debut" into "port" that summer.Train 610 and returning on train 631,turned up the biggest variety of E6's ever seen on the line such as nos. 169,530,1287 and 5209.Never again were that class seen in "Port" in such perfusion!

There were more surprises.One morning train 604 came in minus her express car.Evidently the move from PXT had arrived too late in Jamaica to add on to 604 at the station.About ten a.m. along came class G53sd no.142 with the tardy express car.of course she had also set off the Huntington car as well. I got a good shot of her at the sta.,rods down too.I recall she had a passenger whistle like a G5.



G53sd #144 at Morris Park Shops c.1938  
Archive: Dave Keller

The last week in August another G53sd,no. 146, stayed for a couple of days. Her train consisted of a locomotive crane ~~and~~ and several LIRR "4-Bay" gray hoppers in the 400000 series MW nos. They were cleaning up the ashes that accumulated over the year at the ash pit.At that time cinder ballast was standard on most of the RR. No. 146 had a "banshee" whistle common to the H10s, H6s and C51 engines.

When the operator's desk in the sta. bay window was'nt being used I'd listen in on the Dispatcher's wire.The block sta. and towers would "OS" the trains by their place and "form 19" train orders

would be given out, two or three per hour usually. Once in awhile when Dad was busy elsewhere, I would sell a ticket. Those 1941 fares I will always remember: Port Jeff to Penn Sta. was \$1.47 and the "Monthly to NY" was \$17.33 ! Many times I answered the Bell telephone to tell folks train information too.

Around Labor Day Dad and I rode the Rockaway Park and Far Rockaway Branches. My only memories of those lines were the remaining wooden water tank on the north side of the track at Rockaway Park, while both branches along the peninsula part



Rockaway Park - Water tank  
1901 Photo: Harold B. Fullerton  
Archive: Queens Library

were undergoing much heavy construction work due to the 1941-42 Grade Crossing Elimination Program. Coming back into Flatbush Avenue sta. we were routed into the "EX" yard, probably on track 9 or 10. Regular operation dictated that passenger-carrying trains use only tracks one to seven inclusive!

On Saturdays and Sundays the "Syosset" and "Smitntown" Club cars did not operate and you could find them coupled together on the east end of the freight track in "Port". "Syosset" was of course the former P70 chair car 516, while "Smitntown" had a bit more history. Built in 1906 as a class P58 coach, the very first LIRR steel "steam service" car. Numbered 1401 at first, then 1451, to vacate the 1400 no.s for new MP54 cars arriving, it was converted to a club car about 1925. The "Smitntown" club members merged with the "Syosset" group in 1942 and "Smitntown" had it's wicker chairs facing the aisle replaced by walk-over seating coach seats, being renumbered 179 at that time.



"SMITHTOWN" Private Club Car  
Morris Park Yard - 5/1940  
Archive: Dave Keller

The "Smitntown" car operated west on train 621's east end, operated east on <sup>the</sup> east end of train 650, being operated from May to October only. "Syosset" operated west on train 621's west end and coming east in the evening on train 652's west end. This car ran all year. Both cars had porters. The cars were leased to the two groups by the year for a specified amount. Club members had to pay their fares to ride in the cars also.

After "Pearl Harbor Day", the LIRR began to gird for the war effort. The Camp Upton Branch was rebuilt on it's former 1917-18 alinement from the main track up into the Camp. At the Camp itself there were only two long warehouse tracks, nothing like the huge freight yards and passenger platforms of World War 1.

In the first world war, thousands of freight cars of building materials, coal and foodstuffs were handled there and the RR kept a class D16sb engine as a yard switcher with it's own crew there to switch the many sidings. It was known as the "Camp Job".

Camp Upton - Center island station platform  
with small square ticket office  
1917 (Bayles-Keller)



Almost daily in the Second World War the LIRR ran a "draftee" train out to the Camp with New York City area men. The consist usually was ten or twelve PRR 6900 series cars with wooden-slat seats. These were ex Pullman "heavyweight" open platform sleeper-observation cars converted by the PRR to coaches during 1941-42. A couple of vertical bars and safety chains were added on the observation end for passage between two cars whenever the "platforms" were adjacent. I saw this consist going west at Hicksville a couple of times in 1942-43.

When the basic training was over, Troop Trains or "Mains" as they were called often, were sent east empty composed of Pullman sleepers or Tourist sleepers along with one or two "kitchen cars" interspersed among them. Kitchen Cars were either Baggage-Express cars of various RRs or the Pullman-built "box-like" cars built at this time by the hundreds.

"CU" cabin, a block sta., was established on the main track between the new east and west legs of the Camp Upton Br., along with a water tank and plug. Train 205 usually stopped at Hay Road bridge about a mile west of "CU" to board small detachments of outbound troops. The rear P70 was reserved for this daily except Sunday stop. In addition small groups of men were bussed to Patchogue which had almost hourly service westbound in those years. Lido Beach Hotel on the Ocean east of Long Beach was used by the Navy to house a large number of Sailors. Once in a while a "Main" train would take 10 Pullmans or so to Long Beach, pulled by a class H6sb 2-8-0 for "steam heat", to pick up large contingents of men.

The Merchant Marine Academy in Great Neck, (Kings Point), had hundreds of cadets that used train 381 on Friday evenings. This train made Penn Sta the next stop after leaving Great Neck. That westbound platform would be "solid" with cadets when we pulled up out of the pocket track!

Just as I was nearing the east portal of the East New Tunnel a LIRR uniformed cop appeared from behind a coal hopper on a nearby siding and informed me that my presence on the LIRR was definitely was not needed at this point and time! I showed him my trip pass and told him that I wanted to learn more about the RR in hopes it would help me later on in getting a RR job. Still he said "no", so I found my way into the public street and walked to the west portal of the tunnel at East New York Avenue. Yes, there was another RR policeman, guard house and all, right on the unused "high" passenger platform !



REX train of all REA and/or baggage cars.  
RS3 #1556, #1552 Montauk 5/05/1963  
Archive: Dave Keller

Note: Illustrates the service 20 years later

Railway Express Agency was expanding by leaps and bounds to all Long Island points by the fall of 1942. Long delays were becoming common on passenger trains that carried express cars in their consist. Very early in 1943 the RR established "REX" trains to Port Jeff., Greenport and Montauk that carried all the express cars and a "rider" car for the crew.

Along with these and the additional trains added to the airplane factories, more motive power was badly needed to keep the RR "humming". The following class K3 PRR engines were leased: Nos. 7149, 7793, 8091, 8232 and 8659. K2 no. 3570 was also added. Two class K4s we saw a lot on the RR at this time were nos. 3805 and 5409.

The Montauk "REX" had solid cars for Bay Shore and Patchogue and a working "messenger", (manned), car Sayville on out. The Greenport "REX" had a solid car for Riverhead and a working car with messenger Farmingdale to Greenport. The Port Jeff. "REX" was more complicated with solid cars for Farmingdale, Grumman's warehouse siding, Huntington and a working messenger car Westbury to Port Jefferson. This job went out the Main Line to "PW" and turned on the wye at that place. Headed west it set off the Farmingdale and Grumman cars on the way to Hicksville. Headed east around the wye there, it proceeded to "Port", setting off the Huntington car enroute. Coming west this job picked up the Huntington car, while the Greenport "REX" grabbed the Farmingdale and Grumman cars. Mostly "ping" combines were used for rider cars, but once in awhile PRR PB 70 combines showed up.

The Montauk REX always had a K2 or K3, while the Greenport one usually had E6 1179. The Port Jeff., was pulled by that little "racehorse", the class E3sd no. 2999.

Security was beefed up at the L.I. City tunnel portals of Lines No. 1 and 3, but for some reason there were no guard shacks at the portals of Lines 2 and 4. These were manned by Army soldiers with rifles. The Shinnecock Canal bridge and Manhasset Viaduct were also patrolled by soldiers. LIRR men from it's police dept. guarded both ends of the East New York tunnel on the Bay Ridge Br.



K4 Trestle Shinnecock Canal  
6/21/1931 LIRR valuation photo  
Archive: Dave Keller



Atlantic Ave., East New York 1924  
Photo: James V. Osborne  
Archive: Dave Keller

At Pennsylvania Station huge flood gates were installed at the west end of the East River tunnels near the station, as well as at the Tenth Avenue portal of the Hudson River tunnels. In case sabotage would somehow blast out the casing and concrete of any of the tunnels under either river, the water would gush into the tunnel hole and flood the tracks and platforms of Penn. Sta. The track in the sta. is nine feet below river, or sea level. If that happened, the whole complex would be useless in this time of great need !

During 1942 a great new aluminum plant was built on the Montauk Br, at Maspeth by the "Defense Plant Corp", a U.S. government wartime agency. Maspeth yard was greatly enlarged and a water tank and plug built at it's east end. All this preparation was for naught for some reason, as the big plant never went into operation !

Blissville engine terminal was established to save dead-heading steam locomotives back to Morris Park from the L.I. City and Bushwick area to get coal and sand, plus their fires cleaned. The former L.I. City Blissville engine house, not too far from this site, had been abolished in 1929.

Grumman and Republic stops were opened for the giant new aircraft assembly plants at those locations. Shortly a new public timetable form showing the greatly increased service to these two stations came out. Long trains of war workers including many "Rosie The Riveters" came east in the morning to both Republic and Grumman, returning after six in the early evening. Additionally, regular Greenport, Ronkonkoma and Speonk trains had stops added to serve people from Suffolk County points working the aircraft plants.

I found out about "Security" on the Bay Ridge Br. one August Sunday in 1942 ! I had walked the Bushwick and both ends of the Evergreen Branches and encouraged by not meeting any "resistance" started to walk towards Bay Ridge at Cooper Ave. Jct. on unused and out of service track no. four.

Montauk was the site of a hastily constructed Navy Torpedo Base for supplying Submarines prowling the nearby Atlantic Coastal waters. Fort Pond Bay's deep water was made to order as they were protected from storms on three sides. About a mile west at the very beginnings of the Hither Hills they also built a Navy Seaplane Base with a big hanger along the RR.

The Navy took over the LIRR station for an office, along with the two long sta. platform tracks, (but not the two sta. platforms which were torn up), being lined with Navy warehouses. What was left of the little fishing village north of the RR was torn down, also becoming part of the base. The whole complex was surrounded by a high wire fence complete with manned guard towers.

For it's part the LIRR had to build a new yard south of the one it had been using since 1927. A brand new depot was built, very much like the one vacated. The wye remained in place, but the freight and express house and water tank were moved to the new location. Using sand and gravel from a nearby hill, the LIRR filled in the swampy ground where the present yard is now. All this was accomplished during



Montauk Station (3rd) and Freight House  
View NE 1942 - Archive: Art Humeke

the winter of 1942-43. Never again would the picturesque little fishing village and railroad yard be the same. The "upper", or Pullman" yard would no longer be needed, there was ample room in the new "set up"!



Fishermen timetable -Montauk 1933 Archive: Art Humeke



Montauk fishing pier c.1940  
Montauk Library -Dave Edwardes Collection

The Montauk "Fishermans Special" did not run after the end of fishing season in 1941 due to the Nazi sub menace not to far off shore after "Pearl Harbor". Likewise, the popular Sunday and Holiday "Greenport and Montauk Excursion" Trains that were inaugurated in the summer of 1939 were also cancelled. The Montauk one made Penn, Sta., Jamaica and express to Montauk. There the "one day trippers" could take the steamer from the RR fishing dock to New London, Conn. and return, all for the price or less than three dollars, quite a bargain!

The "Greenport Excursion" also came out of Penn. Sta., stopping at Jamaica and then express to Mattituck, Greenport the next stop. There was about a seven hour stay in Greenport, and many went to Shelter Island for the day to explore that beautiful place. The fare was cheaper than the Montauk trip and TICKETS were only good returning on the "excursions", never on trains in the timetable.

Soon after the Labor Day weekend all Pullman Parlor Car service to both Montauk and Greenport ended for the Wars' duration. The "Sunrise Special", trains 18 and 19, never were resumed after that Sept. The PRR Dining Car on Sat, no. 12 and Mon. no. 21 had already made it's last trip in Sept. 1941, as well as the PRR "Parlor Coach" on trains 26 and 27.

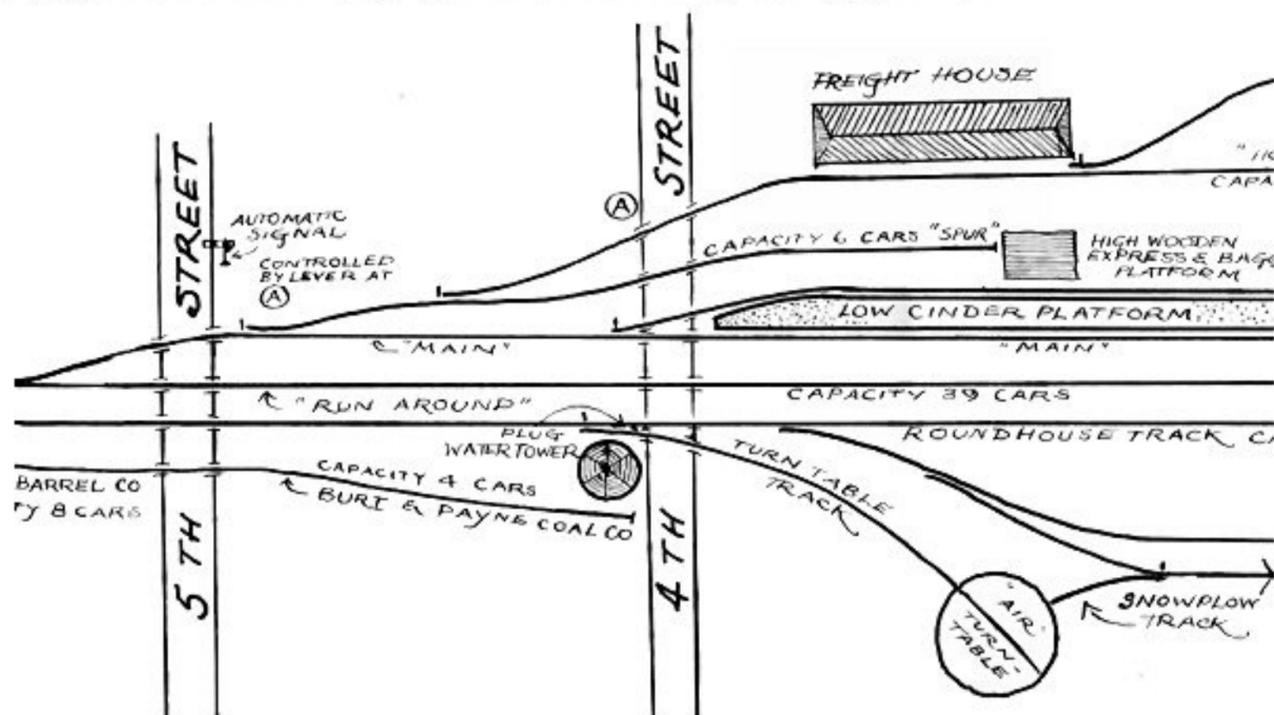
The Far Rockaway and Rockaway Park Branch grade crossing eliminations were both opened late in 1942, followed by the Atlantic Avenue tunnel opening from Morris Park to East New York.



Hempstead Station - View N 1940  
Archive: Gary Weinstein

In Hempstead the brick sta. was moved west three blocks and a new layup yard built west of it. During "commuter train hours" the streets of Jackson and Columbia were being blocked for long minutes and tying up traffic badly. It was a big improvement all-around. Over at West Hempstead a new express and freight house and greatly enlarged "team yard" were built to replace what Hempstead had lost due to the station relocation.

By now photography around Railroads was frowned on to say the least, due to "the War", and my "616 size" box camera was gathering dust on top of our piano. I had a few more "frames" on the roll in the camera, so the Saturday before Easter I rode the Sunrise Coach Lines bus to Greenport. Even if it was 1943, there was one picture I had to get!



1940 Greenport map by Vincent Quatroche  
Research: Robert Emery Archive: Brad Phillips

What I had in mind was to take a photo or two of the lower quadrant semaphore at fifth st. crossing. The signal was for street traffic crossing the RR, not the RR over the street as is normally the case. It was hand-operated from fourth street crossing by means of a big lever there. Wires on foot high poles connected the lever with the signal. When the semaphore was in "stop", or raised position, it displayed the red blade with big letters "STOP" for cars and pedestrians. There was also a crossing bell, the hostler was in charge of the lever for scheduled trains, but switching moves became the train crews turn to man the lever.

What I planned to do was to get the "Greenport Baggage", or REX train coming over the street with the signal at stop, so there I was waiting and about ten fifteen I heard whistling for Silver Brook road up around the curve to the west.

I recognized the whistle of PRR E6 1179 that was on the "REX" most of the time. As the train was almost to the crossing I noticed that it was going to stop right on it! "What luck, I thought", as I raised the camera to "snap it". The Conductor, who happened to be riding the engine, slid down the handrails and ran over to me!

In no uncertain terms he yelled at me "not to take any pictures around the RR and to get out of there"! With that, he got back on the engine and they proceeded into the station. As a parting gesture, he shook his fist at me from the cab!

The signal arm dropped out of sight in its shield and I never did get the picture. I also forgot all about taking any more RR photos in Greenport that day, or other places for many days to come! In later days I worked with that man in Patchogue and he didn't recall the incident when I brought it up.

Well, if I couldn't take any photos, there were no restrictions on "just plain looking". About two days later I got up at three thirty a.m. and walked the two and a half miles from the house to Cutchogue depot to "catch" train 263 due at four forty or so. (263 was the former "Riverhead train"), extended to Greenport so defense plant workers from "out east" could commute to Republic and Grumman. Gasoline and tires were mighty hard to come by at this time!

I purchased a cash fare from Conductor Pete Picozzi to L.I. City, as I always wanted to ride the Montauk Branch from Jamaica west. No. 263 and a solitary Oyster Bay Br. train were the only westbounds over this line in the a.m..

After making almost every stop as far as New Hyde Park we arrived in Jamaica behind our G5. Being used to the fast but monotonous ride from Jamaica to New York via Forest Hills, etc, and seeing mostly apartment houses, the Montauk Br. to L.I. City was anything but boring to me. In order as I saw them that morning, here are the sights:



Morris Park turntable - View NE 11/1946  
Photo: NY Daily News Archive: Ron Zinn

" The "overview" of Morris Park shops and various yards that could not be seen from the main line. Forest Park, looking like something that belonged in eastern Nassau County instead of in the heart of Queens, surrounded in all directions by housing! "

" Many -factored Glendale along with its Atlas Terminal, that had its own small variety of diesel locos. over the years. Around the long curve to Fresh Pond with the New York Connecting



Bridge #35 built in 1916  
Photo/Archive: Steve Lynch 6/2000



Pond Tower - View W 1968

RR's big girder bridge over the LIRR. Wooden B.M.T. "gate" cars crossing over us on their own bridge, bound for Park Row Terminal in Manhattan via the Myrtle Ave. Fl. "



H10s #107 freight at Mt. Olivet  
c.1937 (Reschke-Keller)

" Down Mt.Olivet grade passing Welbuilt Stove Co's Flushing Ave. factory with it's ever present odor of "kerosene burning stoves," even noticeable inside passing trains. "Olivet" signal tower controlling the trolley semaphores and derails on Flushing Ave's trolley line. "

" Haberman, with it's turn of the century old brick factory buildings, then Phelps Dodge copper refining complex, truly a "heavy industry" with all kinds of fascinating shaped buildings pouring out steam and smoke everywhere. They even had their own narrow gauge railroad equipped with small four wheel flat cars to move the copper slabs on around the plant."

" Penny Bridge and the large Standard Oil Co. refinery on both shores of Newtown Creek. Tank cars being filled with various petroleum products, why Standard Oil even had it's own private grade crossing, gates and all, manned by the oil co's watchmen! "



"BS" Bliss Tower on 8/12/1959  
Archive: Jeff Erlitz

" Just before "Bliss" wooden tower, with it's winding stairs, was Van Iderstine's rendering plant noted for it's "fragrancy" in the area! Here fats, gristle and bones were "cooked" to make "inedible" tallows and greases. They even had their own tank car fleet of about ten cars. (VICX). For steam whistle fans the plant had one that sounded like the CNJ's heavy Pacifics! "



Montauk Cutoff tracks center view E  
Yard A at upper left - 1956

" The Montauk Cut-OFF going upgrade to the right on it's way to Yard A, and normally "freight service only", and boasting of "left handed running". Bloch and Guggenheim's pickle and sauerkraut canning plant that also boasted of it's own, but small fleet of Pickle Tank cars. (BAGX). "



Dutch Kills Swingbridge 1986  
Photo/Archive: Frank Fiore

" Dutch Kills swing-type drawbridge over that narrow waterway travelled mainly by sand and gravel barges that barely fit thru the opening. "M" cabin on the Cut Off with it's bascule type lift bridge over the same waterway. only a couple hundred feet north of the Montauk Br. bridge. "

" Then on the right "Wheelspur Yard" created in 1938-39 to handle "overflow" traffic from Sunnyside Yard, expected because of the forthcoming New York Worlds Fair. This site was originally the LIRR's main passenger car yard when L.I. City was the road's main terminal. Opposite, along here were the

large roundhouses, and locomotive servicing facilities when L.I. City was "King". In 1939 the modern "New York City Live Poultry Terminal" was built on the site. Usually there would be Palace Poultry Cars in their siding. (PPKX)."



LI City Passenger Yard - View W c.1940

" Finally, after passing Eppinger and Russell's large creosote works on the left we entered the Long Island City passenger yard, used mainly after 1933 to store LIRR equipment during the day. Equipment that was handled to and from Penn Sta. by the DDI electric locomotives. Class C51 0-8-0 switchers worked this yard and the "Wneelspur Yard" at this time. L.I. City passenger sta., or what remained of it was <sup>used</sup> by car maintenance forces, under capable Freddie Loeb who ran a very Efficient terminal."

Passenger amenities consisted of two cinder platforms with -out a roof at this time. I walked over to the Vernon Ave, Bridge which was open to water traffic rather often. Finally getting across to Greenpoint on the other side of Newtown Creek, I boarded a "Greenpoint " line ancient trolley that would take me to the Boro Hall section in downtown Brooklyn. This line crossed the Brooklyn Eastern District Terminal RR at several places in Williamsburgh. All were on Kent Ave. and had crossing gates with watchmen.

My graduation from Mattituck High School would be coming up in late June and I wanted to work for the LIRR in the sta. dept. as they were putting on an extra clerk in Port Jeff. for the summer and probably the job would go to a new man as no one from the "west end" could get there early enough by train in the a.m.. Dad would not hear of it and talked me into going into train service as I could make more money.



Jamaica Station c.1945

Time soon went by and I found myself, diploma included, on the third floor of Jamaica station one morning in mid-July. It was the chief clerk to the Trainmasters' office, presided over by Charlie Roth. After the usual questions he added, "Can you work seven days a week?".

"I guess so", I replied, he laughed and sent me to the doctor's office for a "physical", which I got thru fine. Charlie then gave me a "temporary Pass" between Port Jeff. and Jamaica and told me to report next morning at nine a.m. to the big room on the fifth floor to "Instructor" W.T. Rodgers. I and about fifteen others would be "going to trainman's school" for a week learning to be railroaders and getting paid for it too!