

Not long after the N.Y.O.&W.Ry. was abandoned in March 1957, we noted five of their wooden cabooses one morning in the storage yard. They were on



Ex-NYO&W caboose #8304 (became LIRR #70) in storage yard - Richmond Hill 11/04/1957 Photo: Bill Rugen Archive: Dave Keller - LIRR #70 11/15/1959

the track usually reserved for the "chloride cars" that lay opposite the yard turntable and north of the Montauk Br. embankment. This purchase of second hand equipment from other railroads would go on for some years to come and would include everything from locomotives to business cars if "the price was right"!

From reading various "fan" magazines I got the impression that "steam" and Interurban elec. lines were about to bow out of the "American Scene", and if one wanted to ride them there would never be a better time. There were several places and lines that I had always wanted to cover so I spent a few days with "The Official Guide" mapping out a trip to Chicago from New York. It was anything but a direct route as you will note as we travel in the next few pages! My 1957 two weeks vacation started on March twenty third, a Monday, but by using the two days previous to it, I could stretch it to sixteen days which would be ample time.

Sat., March twenty first.

LIRR Port Jefferson, N.Y. to Penn. Sta., N.Y.

PRR Penn. Sta. to 30th St. Sta., Phila., Pa.

Frankford "El" to 69th St., Upper Darby.

Red Arrow Lines: Media and Sharon Hill Lines.

" " " 69th St. to Norristown, Pa. (via "Bullet cars").

Sun. March twenty second.

Reading Company Norristown to Shamokin, Pa.

Surely one of the more pleasant memories of the entire journey!----- Listening to the soothing drone of the twin EMD "FP-7s" as they led our train steadily west along the ever so calm Schuylkill River". The brilliant blue skies of the early spring day, along with the newly budding trees, all made it an idyllic scene. Once thru the long Mahanoy tunnel we were in the heart of the Anthracite Coal country with its coal breakers, mountains of waste rock and unwanted other soils from mining operations and dreary looking towns of look-alike "company houses" for the miners.

Passing thru Gordon, Pa. with its now empty engine terminal brought memories of a 1953 "fan trip" that stopped here on a hot summer afternoon. That day there were three or four 2-10-2 types, plus a couple of the huge 2-8-0s of the I class. (There were no "T-1s" though!) Coming into Shamokin one is fully aware of the mining nearby what with the veritable "mountains" of culm towering over town. Nearby the PRR had a small engine terminal with two H10s laying over for the weekend when the mines didn't operate. What was truly a "find" at this late date was that neither had gotten the "infamous face lift"!

→ Since Reading passenger service to Sunbury had ceased awhile back, I had to take a bus thru Sunbury and on to Northumberland, Pa., where the PRR roundhouse was known to house the locomotives the Pennsy had "saved" for "historical purposes." Getting off the bus opposite Northumberland's large freight yard I encountered a long walkway in a tunnel under the yard that came out near the roundhouse. Seeing no one to ask permission of to take photos, I started to explore the place. Since it was Sunday and there was no activity, all the steam engines were sitting around the turntable or in the roundhouse with their tenders sticking out.

Engines under steam included an H10, several 2-10-0s of class I-1 and a half dozen M-1s of the 4-8-2 type. Most of the "historical collection" of various class steam engines was stored out in the open north of the roundhouse. K-4 no. 1737 and E6 no. 460 looked very badly rusted, but G-5 5741 and the "A" class 0-4-0 no. 94 looked great as they had recently been painted.

Inside the roundhouse there were a few very old wooden passenger cars that looked well taken care of. I walked back the few miles to Sunbury to await the day train from Buffalo, N.Y., due about five thirty. It took me south along the scenic Susquehanna River to Harrisburg. Later in the evening another PRR train carried me to Altoona.

Mon. March twenty third.

An early morning train to Pittsburgh on the Pennsy and by the looks of the fog and haze hanging on the mountains were in for a rainy day! I take a PCC streetcar across town from the PRR sta. to the P&LE station across the Monongahela River. I board the B&O's "Shenandoah" for the ride to Cumberland, Md.. The P&LE route is lined with steel mills and other heavy industry all the way to McKeesport where we cross over to B&O trackage for the ride up to Sand Patch tunnel and down the long grade to "The Narrows" from there. The rain begins soon after Connellsville and the coach's double-glass windows fog up badly so I miss most of the scenery I had wanted to see on this route.

In Cumberland the rain lets up enough for me to walk across town to the WM station. A neat Alco "RS-3" is waitin there with an RPO and one coach. This will take me to Elkins, W. Va. an all afternoon ride. As soon as we leave town the rain comes down again spoiling the very scenic ride up the valley of the N. Br. of the Potomac and after Thomas, W. Va., the famous Black Water Canyon. That was where in steam days WM used eight or more engines on coal trains going east! After a short wait in Elkins I board the WM's mixed train for Durbin, W. Va. the train has three "RS-3s" pulling about forty empty coal hoppers with a combine tacked on the rear.

The comfortable combine was heated by a stove and I would be the only passenger on the entire ride. When we got to Cheat Jct. the flagman put out the car lights and invited me to see the view from the opened combine baggage door of the three engines directly across the valley and on a higher level than the rear of the train. The layout and sharp curves at this point produce this odd scene of the train seemingly going in opposite directions. While the rain was over, it was plenty dark^{^T} this time of the evening, I sure would have liked to see this RR line by daylight!

We arrived in Durbin, W. Va. before midnite and this mountain town looked like a good place to get a good night's sleep. The small, but adequate hotel across the street from the depot had a nice room for \$ 1.50, not too high an inflation["] area apparently!

Tuesday March twenty fourth.

Another "misty", but fairly warm day as I leave Durbin on the C&O's gas-electric motor car at one thirty p.m. This is my third ride on this type of car, the first being on one of the Erie's in 1942 from Jersey City to Wanauque-Midvale on the Greenwood Lake Br. The C&O car which is part RPO and baggage, is → much better looking in appearance than the "Erie job." No doubt the U.S. Mail contract is what keeps this car running as I am about the only passenger most of the way to Ronceverte on the C&O Main Line. The car rides well as this RR is known for it's well-maintained roadbed.

There is time for supper in Ronceverte as my train, "The F.F.V.", for Waynesboro, Va. isn't due^{UNTIL} eight thirty in the evening. Not a single train of any kind goes thru during my stay. I'd been hoping to see one of the long coal trains go thru. After only a few minutes aboard my train to Waynesboro I fall asleep in those wonderful reclining, leg rest, seats in one of those ultra-smooth riding post war C&O coaches. It's midnite when I get off at Waynesboro.

Wed. March twenty fifth.

Staying the remains of the night in a hotel near the depot, it seemed like no time at all had passed when the night hotel clerk knocked on the door. J&W train no. 1 left at six twenty a.m. for the run down the Shenandoah Valley to Roanoke. She was pulled by a diesel now, but a short time back a streamlined 1-8-2 always was regular power on here. No. 1 carried a sleeper from Penn. Sta., N.Y. to Roanoke and N&W coaches that came from Harrisburg on the PRR. After a very enjoyable late morning and early afternoon here watching N&W class "A & Y" pallets drift thru the station on frequent freights I boarded train 45, "The Tennesseean" for Abingdon, Va. on the line to Bristol, Va.

Splendid mountain scenery abounds on much of this route and "Mr. Sun" was on duty all afternoon to make it even more enjoyable. We had a class "J" 4-8-4

and she "ate up the miles" much too quickly to suit me! Abingdon, Va. was a quiet country town and I struck up a conversation with the N&W station agent about my trip. He suggested I ride "The Virginia Creeper" from there to West Jefferson, N.C. and return the next day as it was mountain scenery in "spades".

Thurs., March twenty sixth.

Early next morning the N&W mixed train clanked in from nearby Bristol, where it spends the night, behind a 4-8-0 with a "flared high smoke stack", (to prevent sparks igniting fires in the National Forests on this line). The train's consist was four empty pulpwood rack cars, two boxcars of LCL, an RPO/Exp. car and a stove-heated heavyweight N&W coach on the rear. The rains came down again as we climbed higher and higher in the mountains. The conductor, seeing my frustration trying to photograph the locomotive from an opened window, "fixed it up" with the RPO clerk to let me ride in the RPO part of the car. That way, I could lean against the safety bar across the open door on either side to take photos without fear of falling off. Fortunately for the younger generation of railfans O. Winston Link recorded the stack music and whistles of "steam" climbing the grades on this branch as well as action photos of the 4-8-0's daily struggle against gravity!

Very few sta. stops were made either way and all the freight cars went to West Jefferson. After about an hour for lunch the train began its easy descent of the branch and I relaxed in the coach even though the rains spoiled the scenic vistas that a clear day would have revealed. No passengers were carried according to the timetable, but the conductor allowed me to stay on for the fifteen miles ^{ABINGDON} to Bristol. There I took a slide of the 4-8-0, no. 429. There was a nice hotel near the depot to stay in on this rainy evening.

Friday, Mar. twenty seventh

Morning dawned clear and warm and I was soon off for "Natural Tunnel" on an intercity bus. The driver promised to let me off right by the entrance on the highway. Enroute at one point we passed the valley between two mountains where the Clinchfield RR bridges the chasm with an extremely high steel-beam viaduct. The LIRR Manhasset viaduct is the same type but only half as high as this one. Below the Clinchfield trestle, the Southern Railway enroute to the coalfields in southwest Virginia, has its own viaduct over the valley, but it's a much lower one.

The entrance to "Natural Tunnel" is thru a souvenir shop that gets a small fee for the attraction. Once inside the fence you go down hundreds of steps to the level of the Holston River far below. Down there one walks a path next to the Southern Railway and alongside the river.

After about three hundred feet to the north as you go around a curve, the "great hole under the mountain", (or cave), suddenly comes into view. It contains the rushing Holston River; the Southern Ry and the "open-wire" telephone line, ~~→~~ on the east bank of it. There is a reverse curve in the tunnel too. One has to be careful to watch for infrequent coal drags as the noisy river makes quite a roar in the confines of the tunnel walls. A diesel hauled outbound train coasting downgrade thru here could easily come up on one. After walking thru the tunnel and back I again went up the many steps to the level of the highway and began my "hitchhike" to Norton, Va. The day was very warm for this early in the season at this latitude and the guy at the souvenir shop called it "tornado weather".

After walking a few miles on the "unbusy" highway a model "A" Ford passed me slowly and then stopped. I ran the hundred feet or so, as I was beginning to worry if I would make Norton that day. It was an elderly mountain couple that could have passed for "Ma and Pa Kettle" of former movies. It turned out they were also going to Norton! After riding away they asked me if I knew Elvis Presley? When I replied I never missed his shows on "TV", they seemed quite pleased and my Norton destination was "in the bag". Wonder how far I would have rode with them if I in truth had told them the minute "Elvis" appeared on the "tube" I changed the station!

This part of southwest Virginia is quite pretty with many wooded hills and small mountains. That back seat in that 1929 Model "A" sure brought back memories! My dad had one exactly like it from 1930 to 1936. The "tassles" on the rear and side-rear window^{SHADES}, the adjustable arm rest in the middle of the back seat, it was all there. We rode through Big Stone Gap and Appalachia on the winding route to Norton. The L&N and N&W connect here with just a stone marker denoting where one RR ends and the other begins on the continuous main track. The Interstate RR, a coal road, also has trackage rights thru here,

I had a couple of hours to kill in Norton so I watched an N&W class "Z"allet of the 2-6-6-2 type classifying empty hopper cars west of the depot.

A sign of the future was a set of brand new "RS-11" Alco road switcher diesels in the yard. About three p.m. the N&W train from Bluefield pulled in with a four car consist of express car, storage mail car, RPO and one coach. The locomotive, No. 578, was a 4-6-2 type with a very large smoke stack. After the engine was turned and serviced and the train consist rearranged we were off for the east to Bluefield.

This Line has many high steel trestles and some tunnels, Curves abound also, and it's no problem at all to get shots of the engine and first car at least from an open window on curves. At Findlay we took siding for a westbound freight headed by a "Y" class mallet.

By the time we came into Bluefield it was dark and a dramatic change in the weather was soon evident as I got off there. Much colder air with a hint of snow had replaced the warm humid air of only a few hours ago! I had three hours to wait for the westbound "Pocahontas" to take me on west to Welsh, W. Va. where I was to spend the night. This formerly electrified N&W stretch featured many tunnels, bridges and sharp curves, but the pitch darkness hid it all.

Just before dropping off to sleep in the close to the RR hotel in Welch, I heard an eastbound coal drag coming up the grade behind a "whoosing-exhausting" Y-6 Mallet working hard. Suddenly the sound stopped as if someone "cut it off with a sharp knife", and a near quiet reigned for a good minute or two. Then again the "whoosing" sound of a Y-6 pusher came nearer and louder, only to cease abruptly as the road engine sound had done! This was a mystery I had to look into in the morning.

Saturday, March twenty eighth

After a good breakfast of "Buckwheat Cakes" and sausage patties I set out to see what the previous night's "disappearing exhausts" was all about. A little ways west of the station was the junction of the Tug Fork Br. at "Tug" tower. Shortly a long coal train came off the Br. with a Y-6 Mallet heading it and I got a good chance to see one of these "giants" close at hand as it ponderously clanked by crossing over to go west on the main line. That low-pitched "hooter" whistle on that huge hulk of locomotive seemed out of place!

The reason for last night's "mystery" soon became evident as I walked a few blocks west along the main tracks. About a half mile west of town a freight "by pass" branches off the main line to the north and almost immediately plunged into a tunnel under a mountain behind the town. The tunnel is at least a half mile long and ends just short of the "bypass" connection to the main line east of town. The mountain had muffled the exhaust of last night's coal train and perhaps wind direction had prevented me from hearing it when it came out of the tunnel east of town.

Promptly at one fifteen p.m. N&W train 15, "The Cavalier" came into Welsh with its long consist of "head-end" cars and a couple of coaches. No. 15 is strictly a local, doing mail and express work at most stations, although many are only "flag" stops. The pleasant all afternoon ride behind a "J" class to Ironton, Ohio was over all too soon.

As my C&O train for Fostoria, Ohio didn't leave Ashland, Ky. across the Ohio River from Ironton until nearly midnite I had plenty of time to walk across the bridge on that cool, but sunny late afternoon. When no. 47, "The Sportsman", came in to Ashland I sought out one of C&O's great reclining-seat coaches to stretch out and hopefully doze off in for the all night ride ahead.

Sunday, March twenty ninth.

The "Sportsman" was going to Detroit but I was only going as far as Fostoria, Ohio, there to change to the B&O for Chicago. Some years back "Railroad Magazine" had a feature story with photos of the four "big" railroads that all cross each other at grade in Fostoria and all that takes place in a less than a square mile area. It's snowing hard when I get off in Fostoria at the C&O depot, so I look for a place to eat and kill some time until daylight comes as it's only four forty five a.m.!

The two railroads running north to south, the NYC and C&O, cross the two running east to west, the NKP and B&O. In addition the NKP and B&O also cross each other at grade just west of the B&O depot. All lines had passenger service at the time except the NYC. After a "long" breakfast I walk the half mile to the B&O station. The snow has stopped and as dawn breaks the sun is trying to break thru heavy gray clouds. After pacing up and down the platform for an hour to keep warm a headlight appears in the east on the B&O. "Camera ready, I await the "suprise", whatever it may be!

I'm in luck as the "suprise" turns out to be double-headed B&O mountain types with about a mile of mixed freight behind them. They go thru about sixty miles an hour and the sound of the many sets of wheels "clumping-clumping" over the NKP crossing frogs at the 45° angle or it nearby have a rather nice sound to it on this quiet sabbath morn. In about twenty minutes another westbound B&O freight follows the first, also with two 4-8-2s. I note that all four steamers had been renumbered to three "didgits" to make their original nos. available for new diesels.

About nine a.m. the B&O station agent drives up in his car to put some coal on the waiting room's pot belly stove. Even though the depot is "closed" on Sundays, he very kindly leaves the waiting room open for me to wait for my train which is 'nt due until eleven thirty. The waiting room has a rocking chair and of course wall benches, and it's real cozy after being out in the cold. He tells me to be sure and lock the door with the padlock when I leave.

About eleven oclock I hear a steam whistle blowing for a crossing west of town and I hurriedly grab the camera and run to the nearby B&O-NKP "diamond", barely getting there before a NKP "Berkshire" 2-8-4 bound for Buffalo bursts out between the grain elevator and the NKP wooden depot. He was doing at least "60" with a long consist of reefers and merchandise box cars, trailed by one of the "radio-equipped" wooden hacks.

B&O no. 7, "The Shenandoah", came in on time and I was off for Grand Central Sta. in Chicago. Not long after crossing into Indiana it began to snow again, this time, big wet flakes.

With an on time arrival in Chicago at two p.m., I was soon on my way via the Garfield Park line of the CTA to Des Planes Ave sta. in the west suburbs. Here I changed to the C.A. & E. interurban. That afternoon I rode to Elgin, Batavia and Aurora, the three terminals of the line. Going to Aurora the conductor was telling of the lines expected demise in the near future. That evening I stayed in Aurora in a hotel right near the CB&Q main line.

Monday, March thirtieth.

"Another grey and cold day", I mused as I boarded the "Roarin Elgin" for Wheaton, Ill. Passing the shops there was quite a display of equipment both old and new. I could have got some photos but the early hour and dull skies discouraged me from doing it. Getting off in Wheaton, I joined a bunch of Chicago bound commuters at the nearby C&NW station. The train consisted of six "Osgood Bradley" arch roof steel coaches, similiar to what the Boston & Albany used out of Boston.

One item I noticed right away was the "double-sliding" interior doors. I had always thought that only the LIRR and IRT had them. They say "travel" is the best education, how right they are! Once in the C&NW Chicago sta., I lost no time in looking for the Lake St, El "outbound". I wanted to ride those cars that boasted third rail for the El portion and trolley poles for the outlying surface section. The highway grade crossings with the El running on the surface below and along side the C&NW embankment all had crossing watchman operating manual gates just like any railroad would have. The sta. platforms, of course, were all high platforms.

About mid-morning I took the C.N.S.&M. RR interurban from the Loop to Waukegan, Ill.. The stories I'd heard about the speed on that line are true; We must have been doing at least "75" on the long straightaways under those criss-crossed girders once out of Chicago. Since I had already ridden all the way to Milwaukee in 1949, in order to have more time in Chicago I got off in Waukegan.

Coming up on the 700 class cars, on the return trip I boarded the modern "Flecto-Liner" to see how they rode compared to the older cars. Personally, there was little difference to me at least, both were about the same. Regretfully I was too late to ride the original "Shore Line Route" with all it's grade crossings and street running nearer Lake Michigan's shore line.

The entire afternoon in Chicago was spent riding the entire CTA El and subway system. Fortunately there still some of the wooden El cars running in rush hour service on the Ravenswood and Evanston Lines. I even managed to ride a wooden car on the soon to be abandoned "Stock Yards Br." on the south side of the city. That was a one car "train". Speeds on the CTA lines

compared to New York's system were much faster, as most Chicago routes have a "skip-stop" operation, plus many of the "close in" and little-used stops have been done away with. As darkness closed in on this dismal grey, but windless day, over in the northwest the sun shone for a few minutes, promising a better tomorrow!

Tuesday, Mar. thirty first.

Another "interurban" ride, this time the C.S.S. & S.B. out of Randolph St. sta., shared with the IC electric suburban service. It's more like a "railroad" than an Interurban as its heavy rail and rock ballast would do credit to many a RR, the LIPR included! Even the cars seem to be heavier types than the other two Chicago interurbans, with only a half hour in South Bend, Ind. I quickly walked to the GTW station only a few blocks away. Today I will ride the GTW "Maple Leaf", an intercity train to London, Ontario.

The all afternoon trip across rather "boring" Michigan was relieved at Durand by the sight of a GTW "steamer", the neat 4-6-2 was on the Detroit connection to the "Maple Leaf". That Durand sta. is of a unique design and should definitely be preserved! After going thru the St. Clair tunnel under the Detroit River we are in Canada. A few years ago electric motors pulled "steam" trains thru this bore, but since dieselization the diesels run thru from Chicago to Toronto, tunnel and all. We arrive in London, Ontario just before dusk and I detrain ~~→~~ so I can have the next day to take slides of all the "steam" activity here.

Wed., April first.

Early in the morning, probably around "seven", I was walking from the hotel to the CN London sta. carrying my "Argus C-3" when a car pulled along by the curb just ahead of me and stopped. Two well-dressed men got out and came over to me and asked for "I.D.". That over with, they questioned me as to "where I'm going at this hour with an expensive camera?" Seems that recently someone burglarized a local camera store and I looked "suspect", especially hurrying along, (to keep warm), at that hour! After explaining my reason for being out so early, (account of I wanted to make the most of this sunny day in "steam-land"), they seemed satisfied and drove off.

The CN depot was "the place to be" that morning what with 4-6-2, 4-6-4 and 4-8-2s in abundance. A half mile walk east to the engine terminal was equally rewarding. While walking to that place I noticed "trolley wire" on a connecting track to the CN freight yard on the south side. Following that "wired" track led to the London & Port Stanley RR shop and yard a few blocks away. This former electric line had ceased operating a short time ago and all its locomotives and cars were ~~→~~ in an unfenced area near the shop building.

No one was around that windy and cool noon hour so I "snapped away", their odd-looking passenger cars had curved ends with arch windows in them! This line ran south to St. Thomas, Ont. where it connected with NYC's "Michigan Central line".

Over on the other side of London was the CP line from Windsor to Toronto. The only "action" was an eastbound with an EMD FP-7 diesel on it. Later in the afternoon walking west of town along the CP I "caught" a double-headed freight going west with great smoke effects! A vintage 4-6-0 of the 1000 series was leading a semi-streamlined 4-6-2 type with about eighty or more cars.

I left London early in the evening for Toronto on a steam-hauled train, at least it was as far as Toronto. There I changed to the "Maple Leaf" for the overnight run to Central Sta. in Montreal. So tired was I from walking all over London that day that I slept soundly all night in the comfortable CN coach!

Thurs. April second.

"Another very clear but chilly day", as I step off the train at Central Sta. During the morning I ride the long Montreal Tramways trolley line on private right of way out to Lachine, Que., a suburb. The line even had block signals! Those Montreal trolley cars are about the most well kept I've ever seen, even the color scheme is pleasing. In the early afternoon I walked up to the overlook on Mount Royal for a splendid view of the city.

Around four o'clock p.m. I found my way to the C.P.'s Westmount sta. where I was able to get several "shots" of the 1200 class 4-6-2s leaving on commuter trains. Those shiny, wine-red tenders and "spic and span" white tired locomotives, how different than the LIRR!

Friday, April third.

A rainy day for the return to the USA aboard GT train 16, leaving from Central sta., finds me enjoying the mostly farming countryside from a comfortable coach with "wide" windows. It's a short train pulled by a EMD "GP-7". Only a short time ago "steam" ruled this Montreal to Portland, Me. line. The only place that we stop at with any potential passenger business is Island Pond, Vt. One thing that made a distinct impression on me was the "snow piles"! There was no sign of any snow anywhere but on the north side of buildings, where there was always three or four feet of it in piles. Even "outhouses" had a small, but just as high amount of it.

We arrived in Berlin, N.H. in a pouring rain and I had to get a Taxi to take me to a hotel nearer the B&M station. Berlin is a great "papermill town", and the smells associated with the making of paper are everywhere and overwhelming to a person not used to it!

Saturday, April fourth.

I have most of the morning to walk around town and finally the clouds break up revealing Mount Washington some miles to the south with it's snow mantle. The B&M train to White River Jct. that I take has two "RDCs", the front car a mail-coach "RDC-3" and the last car a coach only, an "RDC-1". At White River Jct. I transfer to another B&M train, this one locomotive-hauled, to continue my trip down the Connecticut River Valley to Greenfield, Mass., where I spend the night.

Sunday, April fifth.

Right on time B&M train 57 comes into Greenfield behind an EMD "E-7". I pick out a seat midway in an "American Flyer" B&M reclining-seat coach for the beautiful ride along the winding Deerfield River. I finally get the chance to ride thru over four-mile long Hoosac Tunnel which had electrified track thru it until 1946, when the new diesels made it obsolete. The train terminates in Troy, N.Y. and a short ride on a bus gets me to Albany.

I have a few hours to wait for an eastbound NYC train to take me to New York so I walk across the bridge to Rensselaer. The Hudson River is like a "mill pond" this sunny and mild early spring day. My last "great railfan trip" on passes was nearing it's end not too long in the future the trip would be impossible to repeat as railroads continued to cut back on passenger trains, or as in some instances, were abandoned altogether!

The ride down the "Hudson" was pleasant as always and I "celebrated" by having a good late lunch in the dining car, probably taking too long to eat as I always did when watching the scenery flow by and eating are combined!

In May 1957 the LIRR obtained three PRR "12 section" sleeping cars, the "Belfast"; "McEwen", and "J. Findlay Wilson". This was done to replace the three club cars in diesel service which were not getting any "younger", besides lacking air conditioning. The first diesel service club car to be replaced by the "sleepers" was no. 816, the "Syosset" car. Morris Park shops selected the "J. Findlay Wilson" for this purpose and removed the diaphragms and replacing them with safety chains to operate with LIRR cars. Personally I think a car of the pre 1950's vintage looks "odd" without diaphragms, something like a cat with no tail! Tuscan red with "stripes" above and below the windows was retained along with the car's name, but the "Pennsylvania" on the letterboard and word "Pullman" in small letters near the end doors was painted over.

The car operated this way on trains 621 and 652 until October when the "new" Syosset club car was ready for service, the ex "McEwen". All three ex PRR, nee Pullman, "sleepers" had their mechanical AC replaced by undercar diesel power sets to provide lighting and AC.

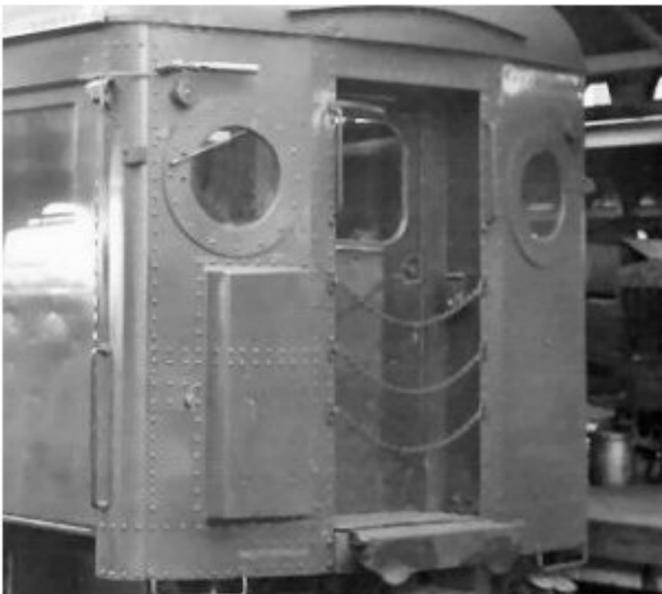
Rumor had it that the Pennsy K4s on the N.Y.&L.B. were about to be replaced with diesels in June.,so on May twenty seventh my friend Dave Halloran, a LIRR signal maintainer),and I went to the PRR Exchange Place sta. in Jersey City to ride behind a K4 for the very last time. That day the only westbound that still ran "thru" from there to Bay Head Jct. was lead by K4 no.612. The train still carried the name "The Broker" at this time. Riding in the first car we "absorbed" all the familiar sounds of a steam locomotive pulling a heavy,fast train as we went down the North Jersey Coast.The rapid starts out of the closely-spaced stas. were "perfect"! The whistling was'nt hard to take either,although I always thought the LIRR G5s as a whole had nicer whistles than most "hoarse" K4 quills.

Getting off at Point Pleasant we had about ten minutes to wait for our EMD "E-7" headed train back to Penn. Sta..This ten minutes was just enough to give us a great memory to treasure in years to come.The engineer of the "Bröker" leaving town really made the 612 "work" for the short mile or so to Bay Head Jct!----"What a tape recording that would have made!"---I can hear that K4 even now,over thirty years later!

The next day I rode the NYC Putnam Div. to Brewster,N.Y.,why I never rode it in steam days I don't recall.

All that summer timetable and continuing on to the Winter table I was able to hold the "best job on the RR",(trains 605-606),if not the best paying moneywise,certainly not to be topped in hours put in six days a week with Sunday off to boot!

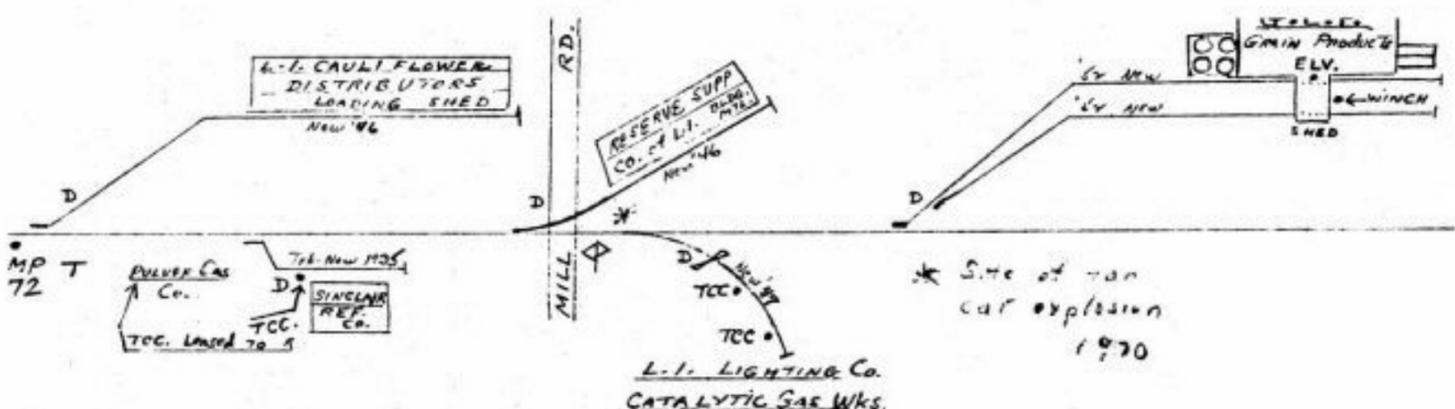
That fall train 605 had three P70 coaches on the head end except Saturdays. Cars of that class on the Port Jeff. Br. were scarcer than "three dollar bills." What was "unique" was that the head car,no.814,was the last remaining car on the RR with diaphragms in revenue service.Business car "Jamaica" was not in "revenue service" at this time.This made it impossible to hang the"safety chains" between 814 and 832,the second car,creating a "gap" between the two.



MP70A #1341 Safety Chains
c.1947 Archive: Mike Boland

Safety chains had one good feature as far as us trainman were concerned. Now we no longer had to lug around the portable folding-gates used on front and rear platforms of diesel-hauled trains. The P70's all had PRR style permanent folding end gates in each vestibule,but the P54 coaches did not.

In late September I drove to Riverhead one fine afternoon and parked near the RR at Mill Road crossing west of there,→. Walking east from here



Emery partial map Riverhead MP72 east 10/1957 - Archive: Dave Keller

I recorded every siding,industry,crossing protection,telephones,etc.all the way to the East Main St. crossing.This was a distance of about two miles, or from mile post 72 to 74. Although I did not plan it at the time,this walk would be the very beginning of my later fifty album set of LIRR track maps now in the "Special Collections Division" at the State University of N.Y. at Stony Brook.