

Finally wanting "a change of scenery" after getting up at four a.m. for three and a half years, right after New Years I bid a "collectors job" out of "Port" that started on the "noon train". After two and a half hours "swing" in Jamaica I worked Patchogue-bound train 66 to Babylon via Main Line and Central Br.. By this time there wasn't much left of the undeveloped land and pine trees along the Central Br.. "Suburbia" had just about paved it over. There were a lot more industrial sidings west of Wellwood Ave. than the last time I had been over the line.

Coming back to Jamaica from Babylon, train 173 did not pick up any passengers until Freeport. I usually rode in the head MU car up to that point so I could hear the nice-sounding "big" MU air whistles before "modernization" replaced them with the dull-sounding "feep" DDL type. Even PRR MP54s all had these low-pitched "feep" whistles, as well as all our double-deckers and "new" cars since 1955 on.

Frank Hack, our motorman, really laved on the "blasts" as all those towns except Massapequa were still at "grade level" then and that time in late afternoon was a busy one with much traffic of people coming home from work. On the change to the "summer timetable" I went to Long Beach instead of Babylon on the "middle trip" of the job. It was train 860, the five three p.m. out of Penn. Sta, skipping Jamaica, with Rosedale the first stop.

The crew that brought the deadhead equipment for 860 in from Jamaica always had to make sure all windows were closed on the north side because if they were in any way opened the hordes of commuters waiting on track sixteen would climb thru the windows in their haste to get a seat as soon as the train stopped!

There was a little "swing time" in Long Beach and I used it to get several good shots of the MP54s coming east over the long Wreck Lead,



**Wreck "LEAD" swing bridge
Reynold's Channel - View N
(Rolf H. Schneider - Dave Keller)**

(local name for a boat channel), trestle. Those color light signals added a nice touch on that Branch to any photography as well. Leaving Long Beach on no. 871 at six twenty five I only collected as far as Jamaica. On Friday evenings this gave me about twenty minutes before I left for "Port" on train 660 at seven fourteen. I would be up on platform "E" "early" to observe the four or five Pennsy parlor cars on Montauk bound train 28. Those freshly-washed tuscan red cars sure gave that otherwise "gray consist" a nice appearance!

Railway Express Agency's contract with the LIRR expired on June 22nd. Suddenly out of work were most "full" baggage/express cars including the recently acquired ex B&M ones. From this day on, only one "full" baggage car would be on the morning train to Greenport for newspapers and one on

the morning train for Montauk for newspapers and "overflow" parcel post that the RPO car had no room for. As far as MU class MB54 baggage cars "went" after June twenty second, was into storage in Johnson Ave. yard awaiting scrapping. Only no.4215 would survive as a "supply car" at Brooklyn's Carlton Ave. yard for the ME Dept. that maintained MU cars when they needed light repairs at the Carlton Ave. Inspection Shed.

L.C.L. shipments to Long Island points from Arch St. Transfer in L.I. City



**Arch St. Yard - Freight House
Freight Accounting Office
Olin Dry Ice
5/21/1965 (Makse-Keller)**

had ceased a year or so previously to 1960 and that facility was now the home of a firm that received "dry ice" in insulated cars from Saltville, Va. Those cars were probably ex "ice reefers" belonging to Fruit Growers Express at one time, before Mathieson leased them. They were real "old timers" with outside-bracing both on sides and ends!

Why don't we follow the journey of a car of anthracite coal that came from, say Ashley, Pa., from it's arrival in L.I. City on a CNJ car float to when it arrives at the consignee in Riverhead which is Bishop & O'Keefe's coal yard. The car is a typical CNJ fifty ton, "two bay" hopper one.



**LIRR Tugboat "Meitowax" pulling two loaded LIRR car floats in NY Harbor
4/23/1939 - (Percy Loomis Sperr photo, Dave Keller archive)**

Before the car is even "pulled" off the float, a yard clerk tacks a tag on the car's tackboard on the side that reads, "Return to CNJ when empty." This was done on most cars coming by car float so when the car was returned to Yard "A" as an empty the job working the westbound "hump" in the L.I. City 6th St. yard, (opposite Hunterspoint Ave. Sta.), would put it in a track with other cars returning to the CNJ. This "carding" applied to all the Railroads floating cars into L.I. City. If freight cars came off the NH at Fresh Pond, the clerk tacked a "return to NH when empty".

Cars with excessive roof height such as "automobile box cars" also received an additional diamond-shaped card on their tack boards, that read "Car will not clear on Atlantic Br., (west of Jamaica), or in L.I. City passenger yard". The last restriction was referring to the low viaduct over the yard carrying Vernon Blvd.

Our car of coal, along with other cars coming from the CNJ, (usually there were at least eighteen to a float,) was pulled off by the "float job," and set on one of the "float lead tracks" under the Vernon Blvd. girder bridge. From there the "feeder job" would push the contents of about two of the tracks, (usually about twenty five cars or so), upgrade past the 6th St. yard, under the I.R.T. El structure and along the south side of Yard "A" until the east car was about even with the adjacent PRR Sunnyside enginehouse. The "hump job"



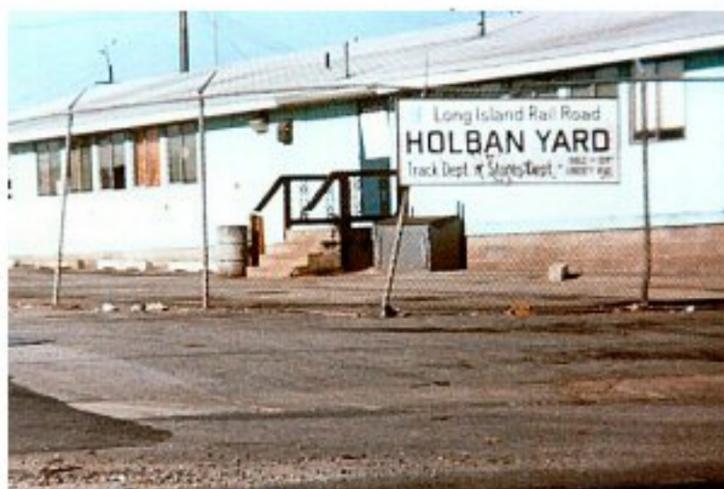
**Yard A - Tri-color signal on hump
PRR enginehouse GG1s at left
3/10/77 - Photo/Archive: Jeff Erlitz**

would couple to the east car and pull the whole string clear of a switch that lead to a track going over the eastbound "hump". Then began the steady pushing of the cars one or two at a time over the "hump".

Engines pushing cars over the "hump" were governed by a signal east of the "hump" itself that told the engine crew to "shove" or "stop". This was operated by the conductor on the crest of the "hump". His crew pulled the "pins" allowing the cars to coast from the crest to whatever track they were supposed to go into. There were also "hump riders", (brakemen), that rode most of the cars coming off the "hump" so they wouldn't roll too fast and smash into cars that were already occupying the track. The men that rode the cars down carried stout brake clubs to give them more leverage winding on the hand brakes, especially the "staff type". Yard "A" had many tracks to classify cars in that were fed from the eastbound "hump". Freight for points west of Jamaica such as the North Side Br.; The Ozone Park and "Brooklyn Beef" jobs; Bushwick Br.; various yards along the Montauk Br. to Jamaica, etc, all left directly from Yard "A". All cars going east of Jamaica were brought to Holban Yard in long trains from Yard "A" in what were known as "The Haulers".



Holban South Yard View NW
Photo/Archive: Tim Darnell



Holban Yard Track & Stores Dep't
Photo/Archive: Steven Lynch

Our car of coal has went thru all the paces just described and is now in Holban Yard. "Haulers" backed their trains in from the Hollis end of Holban, but not before going thru the length of the yard on "the running track", kept clear for this purpose. There were about seven tracks curving around to the Holban "hump" and eastbound trains to be classified for points east on the Island were shoved in on these tracks by the "Haulers". During the night the "Holban Hump" was busy as all the cars had to be "humped" into various tracks for the freights to Oyster Bay, Port Jefferson, Farmingdale, Ronkonkoma, Greenport, Garden City, Babylon, Patchogue, Speonk, Montauk and "the Rockaway" job. Our car of anthracite would be "blocked" with any other cars for Riverhead and go east on the Greenport freight, who would deliver it to "Bishop and O'Keefe".

The three week Trainman and Conductors Strike in July 1960 gave us all a "summer vacation", something us younger men in seniority would not "rate" for almost another decade. I still recall the pleasant weather that favored Long Island during those three weeks! Good thing too, as we all had to take turns doing "picket duty" at various key spots day and night. Three nights in a row I carried a "sign" from midnight to six a.m. in front of the gate to the Morris Park Shops at 120th St. and Atlantic Ave. The only passersby to see our sign "On Strike" were occasional N.Y. City police cars on their nightly rounds. One reason the strike lasted so long was that the other railroads "pressured" the LIRR not to give in to the "five day week" for Trainman and Conductors. They did not want a precedent set which could well mean that they too would have to grant their crews a "five day week".