

Early in January of 1953 the LIRR acquired the expertise of Mr. J.F. Doolan, who it seems, had done "wonders" with morale and getting trains on time on the New Haven. This soon became apparent to us on the LIRR, at least the morale was becoming "better"!

I was collecting on N.Y. to Babylon train 98 that left Penn. Sta. at eight forty a.m.. Mr. Doolan always rode the train to Jamaica and as he came down the broad, brass-railed staircase that serves tracks 18 and 19, he always gave us a big wave and smile. Usually he stopped and passed "the time of day" with each of our crew as he walked forward to ride with the motorman. Each week the RR's publicity dept. put out a small pamphlet with a column "Doolan Sez" with his personal ideas on making the LIRR the best on Long Island, if not in N.Y. State.-----Governor Rockefeller would do that at a later time!

As far as getting the LIRR to run "on time", Mr. Doolan soon accomplished that easily enough, by merely adding additional minutes to each train's schedule. Also, a new policy allowed a train to be at least five minutes off it's arrival time at it's final terminal before it was recorded "late"!

Later in January I bid in a collectors run in the p.m. out of Penn. Sta. It was a round trip to Rockaway Park and a round trip to Port Washington. The trip to and from Rockaway Park boasted an MBM, (RPO), usually no. 1210. Only Valley Stream to Far Rockaway inclusive still had mail by rail at this time, and in the not too distant future would go by truck, as would the Oyster Bay Br. mails.

Coming west from Port Wash., many times I would be working an 1100 class MU car, and one could not help noticing the "lateral motion" in those cars, particularly at speeds of forty miles an hour or over. I always wondered if it was due to the dissimilar trucks at each end of the car. The heavy roller-bearing motor truck was paired with a PRR "suburban" coach truck on the opposite end, which was much lighter. The "1100s" I always liked to "work in" as they were the nearest thing to a PRR MP54 we had, besides they also boasted glass lamp shades, while all the remaining motor and trailer cars, (except the double-deckers), had "bare" ceiling bulbs!



**H10s #107 Railfan Extra
Meadowbrook Station
10/26/1952 (Votava-Keller)**



**Meadowbrook/Roosevelt Raceway
The low-level platform - View west 1953
Photo: W. J. Edwards Archive: Dave Keller**

Soon after "The Trotters" opened in the evening at Roosevelt Raceway I "fell" for the Brooklyn train that took racing fans directly to the "island platform" just east of the Mitchell Field "shuttle" platform. From there the fans only had a quarter mile walk to the Grandstand. The RR provided crossing watchman at both Washington Ave and Clinton Road grade crossings in Garden City so trains would not have to stop and "flag"

the two crossings. There was also a New York train directly to the "island platform", many more rode this train than the Brooklyn train. Usually "L20", the late afternoon "perishable and newsprint" freight direct from yard "A" in L.I. City to the Central Extension, was switching A&P Food Stores four sidings when the "Trotters" two specials went by. "L20" always had a very interesting assortment of "reefers" with meat, vegetables and fruit in it's consist. The engine was an Alco S2 mostly. "Newsday" publishing always received numerous CP or CN "clean" boxcars with huge rolls of paper for the busy presses.

On arrival at the "island platform", which was the former Meadowbrook Polo Club platform, we had about three hours to kill before we had to report back to man the two trains when the "harness races" were over. We were required to pull all the "pump" switches in the MU cars so the nearby Air Force



**New Mitchel Field base housing
View NE - c.1930
Archive: Dave Keller**

personell in the Mitchell Field neat brick "barrack" buildings nearby could get a good night's sleep. Otherwise, the intermittent air pump noise whenever air pressure in the brake system of the two MU trains fell below what it was supposed to be, would wake them, possibly.

Since it was still "light enough" to walk when the trains were empty, I explored the track curving and rusty that led on eastward towards Salisbury Plains sta. The third rail east of where our train layed up was removed. At one time third rail extended east across Merrick Ave. as far as the Meadowbrook Hospital switch and even that siding was equipped with it as late as 1950. The hospital at one time received cars of soft coal as it had it's own power house. When I started on the RR in 1943, DD1 electric engines no longer were used on the Central Extension, being replaced by class H10 "steamers".



**Salisbury Plains
View NW - 7/27/1953
(Slade-Huneke)**

Suprisingly, long unused Salisbury Plains sta. was in fairly good shape when I reached it that evening, although almost overgrown and hidden by small trees and dead weeds from the previous summer! Right after WW II Levitt & Sons, (builders), established a bulk cement unloader and lumber storage area near Newbridge Road on the end of the Central Extension. Almost daily box cars with building supplies of every type, plus covered hoppers of cement arrived via class H10 steam locomotives. It was necessary at that time to transverse the Salisbury Golf Links between Merrick and Carman Aves. About 1952 "Levitt " had no further use for the track east of Merrick Ave. and it together with the long unused Meadowbrook Hospital spur were removed by the LIRR.

Also, around that time Nassau County purchased the former golf links east of Merrick Ave., together with other properties and renamed the whole "spread" Salisbury County Park. If one cares to walk the former Central Extension east of Merrick Ave., it's easy to trace as LILCO's steel "high

tension" towers trace the former LIRR Central Extension all the way from Merrick Ave to the Newbridge Road substation. Beyond that point the "high voltage line" continues along the ex right of way almost to "B" tower on the Main Line. From there to where it once connected to the Central Br., the former alignment is plainly visible in the woods, except for the part that crossed the Bethpage State Parkway right of way.



Mitchel Field (Field 2.)

Mitchel Field 1919 view before the housing construction. Archive: Art Huneke

In WW I the Central Extension had seen many troop trains in and out daily. At that time Camp Mills and Camp Black of the U.S. Army occupied areas near the RR from Clinton Road to where Mitchell Field was later on. The two long cement platforms at Clinton Road sta. were used by those WW I troop trains.



**A&P (since c.1928) Station
East of Clinton Road, Garden City
View E 12/20/1938
Archive: Dave Keller**

The "stations" on this line besides the ones already mentioned included, (at one time), Washington St. in Garden City, "A&P" for the nearby A&P grocery warehouse just east of the former Curtis Aviation building, and a small cinder platform at the Mitchell Field crossing. Both Washington St. and "A&P" were short cinder platforms also. Washington St. vanished when MP 41 cars replaced the trolley cars.

"A&P" was moved further east when the new A&P warehouse and General Bronze opened in 1946-47. It consisted of a short cinder platform and covered shelter that extended over a sidewalk to Stewart Ave. This stop was renamed "A&P-Bronze" at that time. About the same time a short cinder platform and corrugated iron shelter shed were established at the "Newsday" printing plant. It bore the sign reading "Newsday"!

Sometime in 1950, the two class MP41 cars on the "Mitchell Field Shuttle" were replaced by two class MP54 cars. These lasted until the service was discontinued in May, 1953. The final crew was F.P. Miller, conductor; J.E. Keegan, brakeman and William Murphy, motorman. The nickel fare was still in effect!

In early June I managed to be marked up in Oyster Bay on a "round trip" to L.I. City. The morning train, no. 523, was a very heavy commuter job in to Hunters Point Ave., while eastbound in the late afternoon, train 562, was an "equipment extra" as far as Jamaica, where we took on the passengers. The reason for the run over the Montauk Br., "empty" being that L.I. City had more room for coach storage during the day than the Jamaica storage yard. "Hen" Tozer was our hogger, while Claus Meyer was conductor and the head end brakeman "Bill" Dargan. The job "swung" a little over eight hours in L.I. City, giving me ample time for a trip to Trenton, N.J. on the PRR and then some!

Catching the nine thirty Phila. "clocker" out of Penn. Sta., the miles on the Pennsy "flew by" all too soon as they usually did behind a "GG-1", and I noticed an E6 sitting outside Pennsy's East Trenton enginehouse as we went by. The "odd" tender I remember seeing before on the LIRR, was it the one that E6's nos. 1333, 1347 and 230 were mated with while on the LIRR ??

Since I had in mind taking an action photo of Pennsy's train 1073 to Atlantic City due out of Trenton at eleven twenty three, I had an hour to "kill." Finding a "company phone", the operator connected me with the East Trenton enginehouse. I asked the clerk if no. 1073 would have "steam" that morning? I was pleased when he replied, "Yeah, a K4", and hung up on me. New York to Atlantic City trains, (or vice versa), changed power at Trenton. Leaving Trenton, the short Bordentown Br. curves sharply left and rises on a fairly steep, but short grade towards the east to parallel the Delaware River to Bordentown.

I quickly made my way the three blocks or so necessary to put me in a good spot "sunwise" to "bag" no. 1073. In about half an hour, the sounds that only a hard-working steam engine could make, together with a towering plume of black smoke, soon appeared coming up the grade toward me. "A sight for sore eyes", of course was the chance to witness a K4 in "action" again! It



**PRR K4s #5072 eastbound west of Great River station
12/1947 Archive: East Islip Historical Society**

was pulling two Pennsy Parlors and five "AC" P70 coaches of the "arch-roof" type. This being a Friday in warm weather the train was carrying a good load. I was so absorbed in "taking" and watching the "show" that I neglected to get the K4's engine number. The box-camera photo was pretty good of the train, but blurred just enough so the no. was not clear.

With no more trains due for hours on this branch, it was time for me to find my way out to the E. Trenton enginehouse to have a better look at the E6 and the "mysterious" tender coupled to it. A couple of city bus rides and a half hour later, plus another half mile of walking in cinders, and I was standing in front of E6 no. 645. She was all, "shined up", (at least for a PRR engine), and very much alive!

The tender looked like the one that had been coupled to various E6's on the LIPRR, but since I never copied it's number down I can't prove it. It's best described as a pre-stoker-equipped K4 or L1 tender with a "slanted" coal cowl. The hostler informed me she was going out in the afternoon on train 812 to Red Bank, the same one Theresa and I had rode on behind an E6 the previous summer. The only other evidence of "steam" around there that afternoon was three "dead" G5s, headed by no. 5720.

Walking back to the bus stop I thought back to the 1941 Sunday Dad and I were chased out of this very yard by the roundhouse foreman. At that time there were perhaps three dozen steam engines here of various types such as 0-6-0s, 2-8-0s, 4-4-2s and 2-8-2s. (The only number I can recall is L-1 860.) I was snapping photos continuously as we walked along the "line-up", even getting up in the cab of a 0-6-0 on a hostler's invitation. I remember dad offering the guy a couple of cigars as we climbed down. About then the foreman told us to get off PRR property, pass or no pass!

Dad and I complied, at least as far as the distant pile of old ties near the Main Line. We sat there for a few minutes, while I changed the roll of film in the camera, as I had taken sixteen photos before we were "discovered." On the way back to New York I reached in to my thick jacket for the two rolls of exposed film. Nowhere, either on me or dad could we find the films. Apparently I had left them on the tie pile and walked away! They should have been good shots, as it was a very clear and cold day, "Oh Well!"

Going back to Oyster Bay we had a G5 that evening as it was Friday. When the "Friday Montauk" trains were running, it was the practice to use "steam" on nos. 552, 554 or 562 during the 1952-55 summers. Sometimes all three "Bay" bound trains got "steam", especially if one or two of the "Montauks" was powered by double or triple-headed FM 1500 class diesels! One summer evening in 1955 I was taking slides at Floral Park and got the three "Bay" trains, plus Ronkonkoma bound train 248 also in "steam". That of course, was a "Friday".

Due to numerous "diesel failures" during those steam to diesel "transition" years, it was the practice to have a "protect engine" stationed on the Hicksville wye during morning commuter hours, while in the evening commuter rush a "protect engine" was laying in Mineola on a spur back of the sub station. Both a.m. and p.m. "protects" were G5s.

If a person wanted to see all the nine remaining G5s and three last H10s normally kept under "steam" in action, Floral Park on the "summer timetable" was the place to be! The hours one would have to be there were from about nine a.m. to nine p.m., making sure it was on a "Friday" of course. Below is about the order the steam trains went by in and the selection of engine numbers powering each is a "good guess" based on my observations:



**G5s #39 with PRR Tender
Morris Park Shops
10/18/1945 Archive: Ron Zinn**



**LIRR H10s #113
King Park-Spur 1940's
Photo/Archive: Ernie Lanzer**

No. 623 at 9:20 am eng. 39

"Protection" eng. lite W.B. 9:40 (21)

No. 610 at 9:45 eng. 24

"L56" " 10:00 " 113

No. 625 at 10:35 " 32

"L44" " 10:45 " 111

"L62" " 11:30 " 108

(21) "Protection" eng. lite E.B. 3:05 p.m.

No. 642 at 3:25 eng. 39

No. 544 " 4:00 " 32

No. 635 " 5:15 " 24

Continued from left:

No. 552 at 5:35 pm eng. 50

" 543 " 5:55 " " 32

" 554 " 6:05 " " 28

" 246 " 6:25 " " 35 *

" 248 " 6:40 " " 38

" 562 " 6:45 " " 22

" 247 " 7:50 " " 35

" Protection" eng. lite W.B. 8:15 (21)

No. 664 at 8:25 pm eng. 32

" L45" " 8:50 " 111

* This train normally hauled by two "RS-1s", but even those were known to be "ill" sometimes on a Friday!

With the June "timetable" and selection of runs I chose to remain on the "extra list" again. On the last Friday in June I was marked up on "Extra Crew I" which was train 16, "The Advance Cannonball", due out of Jamaica at



**C-Liner #2403 Cannonball at Montauk - Parlors SETAUKET and JAMAICA
Photo: John Krause - Archive: Dave Morrison**

three forty three p.m.. This schedule roughly corresponded with the one the long discontinued "Sunrise Special" ran on.

No. 16, headed by a FM "C Liner", consisted of three tuscan red Pennsy parlor cars and four P54 "mainliner" coaches. Conductor Henry Alberts informed me he would "collect" the parlor cars, while I and Frank Kozlowski, the flagman, were responsible for the coach fares. Since Speonk was the first stop we had ample time to "collect in". After that was done I went up into the parlor car next to the first coach to give my "count" of coach passengers to the conductor. He was finished collecting also, so we sat in the very comfortable high back leather seats in the men's lounge. I had never ridden in a parlor car before, and was amazed how smooth and quiet the ride was compared with the average LIRR coach!

No beverages, liquor included, were sold on parlor cars at this time, that would come later in the "fifties". The porters were on the cars to make the journey for the "well to do" enjoyable by adjusting the "AC" or heat and to assist with luggage at stations. They also made sure they were on the station platforms at stops to help folks up and down the car steps, even providing a "step-box" if there was too great a step for the ladies from sta. platform to car steps.

At Montauk we put the three Pennsy parlor cars on track three as they would lay over here until Sunday evening for westbound trains. More and more "parlors" were needed as the years went by as the "weekenders" discovered the comfort and coolness compared to "no frills" LIRR coaches. As soon as "The Cannonball" arrived we were ready to leave with the four coaches. We would run as an "extra" with no passengers all the way back to Jamaica.

"Friday" must have been my lucky day as far as good jobs went, as next Friday evening I was marked up on a trip to Greenport on train 218 which was merely an extension of a Monday to Thursday inclusive train that on Fridays continued to Greenport to accommodate the weekend summer people. That was about my third trip to Greenport in ten years! Leaving Greenport about ten p.m. we ran as an "extra" back to Jamaica. I remember "flagging" our train over all the Riverhead grade crossings that had "watchmen" in the "day" hours, but not at that late hour.

We sold our home in Westbury in June and moved back to Port Jefferson, as Nassau County, at least near us, was getting harder and harder to get around in with the "population explosion" that was going on. I figured I would be able to get a few days work in "out east" every week with almost ten years seniority!

"Luck" was with me in July as an afternoon run out of Ronkonkoma came up for bid and suprisingly I was awarded it. The new "Nesconset Highway " opened that summer of 1953, almost all of it through undeveloped woodland. This meant I could drive from our house in "Port" to Ronkonkoma in less than twenty minutes. Our first trip left at five twenty five p.m. Mon. to Fri. inc., but Saturday we left earlier at three fifty, and made two round trips from



**RS-1 #462 at Oyster Bay c. 1956 in Tichy Scheme
Photo: Ron Ziel Archive: Mike Boland**

Ronk. to Jamaica. Weekdays our "power" was an Alco "RS-1" on the entire run which included a trip to PXT from the storage yard. A G5 pulled us west on the initial train, no. 4229, and then it was "RS-1s" for the other three trains, on Saturdays. The "steamer" had come east on no. 248 Friday evenings.

On June fifth I had finished my days run early in New York and was able to ride the last two steam powered passenger trains on the D.L. & W.. The engines were 1100 series pacifics, and the trains ran over the Boonton Br. both ways. It was a beautiful early summer day and the scenery was all new to me. Coming east from Dover, N.J. the eccentric rod on the locomotive broke near Clifton and we were delayed until a mechanic arrived to make repairs!

One interesting Monday to Friday sight on our return from our "PXT trip" was the sight of "The Montrealer", a New Haven train, as it glided by "Harold" tower with it's O350 class "flat bottom" electric locomotive. CN equipment in the form of a combine and two usually streamlined coaches was guaranteed nightly, along with three or four heavyweight "sleepers". At times the RPO was a GTW car, but mostly NH.

When we pulled into the Richmond Hill receiving yard Mon. to Fri. on our trip in from Ronkonkoma, my job was to hang the markers on the "PXT move" a few tracks over. Then I would ride back to Jamaica sta. on the "mail extra". This train was about eight MP 54 cars with two "steam" RPO cars on the rear. After the DDIs were gone, "steam" RPO cars were carried on various MU passenger trains or "mail extras" between Penn. Sta. and Jamaica storage yard, or as it's sometimes called "Richmond Hill yard". (same thing).

My conductor, "Jake" Reichert and the head end man Homer Dean, had to have their "coffee" to take on the "PXT move", and that's the reason I had to ride up to Jamaica sta. on the "mail extra". In about fifteen minutes the "PXT move" would back up into the sta. and I would be waiting with the "eats". On my "ten years seniority date" on the LIRR, (about July twentieth,) "Jake" bought me a "big coke" to mark the occasion! Of all the conductors that I worked with, "Jake" was the one I was on with the "longest".

The job in Ronkonkoma lasted until right after Labor Day and then I had to go back on the "extra list" again. Mostly I caught work out of "Port" on jobs that no one else wanted, either because they had "lousy" hours, or only paid a flat days pay.

1953 was a good year for train service employees on the LIRR. New Union agreements with the company provided two weeks vacation for everyone with ten years or more seniority, instead of the "one week for everybody" regardless of time on the RR then in effect. Additionally all jobs, both in passenger and freight were made "six days a week" jobs. Extra men had no regular day off, but had a choice of either working seven days a week or taking any day off they chose, as long as the crew dispatcher felt they could be "spared." Another big change was the "merger" effective May first of Switchmen and yard crews with the "road" passenger and freight men's seniority roster. A condition of this was that no matter how much "seniority" the yard or road crews had previous to the "merged roster", neither could have any seniority before May first in each others rosters.

An example: Say, after May first I wanted to bid a "switchman's job" in. My road crews seniority from July 1943 to May first 1953 would not apply. Even a switchman hired in April 1953, 10 years after I was on the RR, would get the job before I would. My seniority as a "switchman" only began as of May 1. Likewise, even if a switchman had thirty years time in and wanted to bid a passenger run in, his seniority as a "road" man only dated from May first also. I would get the passenger run before he would, even if he did have twenty more years on the RR than I did!

One fine Indian Summer afternoon I had a long "swing" and decided to take a tour of the PMT Division of the New York City Transit System. I rode the heavy articulated "Triplex" units on the Sea Beach and Brighton Lines and the "standard (or steels)", cars on the Culver and West End routes. I was saving the "best" for last, the "Multi's" on the 14th St.-Canarsie Line. If I ever had a subway car that I enjoyed riding, those 7000 series "Multi's" were definitely "my nomination". That rapid acceleration out of a station and the smooth ride besides, boy!, do I miss them. They also had a front window seat facing forward that gave you a "motorman's view" of the right of way.

Coming back from Canarsie the "F1" portion of the route parallels the LIRR Bay Ridge Br. north of the New Lots Ave BMT sta.. Near Livonia Ave I spotted a LIRR H10, no. 117, with a string of wooden M. of W. gondolas unloading new ties.



H10s #117 Babylon 1940

Next year she and a few others would go for "scrap", leaving only the final "three", nos. 108, 111 and 113.

On my November vacation I took a trip to New England and on to Montreal. I wanted to ride some lines that I had never had "time-off" enough to enjoy, and possibly, ride behind "steam" once more! Leaving on a Sunday a.m. I rode from Weehawken, N.J. to Albany, N.Y. on the NYC "West Shore Div.". This line is as scenic as the Hudson Div. on the east bank, if not more so. I had missed riding behind "steam" only by a little over a year.