

**NEW YORK & LONG ISLAND
TRACTION COMPANY**

Vincent F. Seyfried

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PREFACE

It seems especially appropriate, somehow, that this little study of the New York & Long Island Traction Co. should appear on this 50th anniversary of the company's founding. In the quarter century that has passed since the Traction's demise, the system has been almost forgotten, and its history fallen into an obscurity altogether undeserved. The names and places once so familiar in Traction days have greatly altered over the years, and the men once intimately associated with the company have largely passed on. This little book is written in the hope of restoring to the Traction the prestige and respect it enjoyed fifty years ago, and to immortalize for future generations the successes and failures, hopes and accomplishments of Long Island's first great adventure in interurban transit.

In writing the Traction story the scantiness of official records has, once again, made the task a difficult one; the story told here represents a distillation of over 800 articles from five different newspapers, plus much valuable data supplied by eye-witnesses. In the preparation of this book many persons provided invaluable assistance. I am especially indebted to Miss Marjorie V. Brooke of the Hempstead Library, who went to great pains to make available to me the complete file of the "Hempstead Sentinel", and without whose help this book could not have been written. I wish also to thank William Rugen, W. Nason Cooper, Grover White, W.P. Hamilton III, Edward Watson, and Harry de Beau. Felix E. Reifschneider of Orlando, Fla., has supplied a host of valuable details, and has once again attended to the proof-reading and publication of this manuscript.

February, 1952

Vincent F. Seyfried



TOP - No. 1 on North Main St. Freeport (prior to 1905)
BOTTOM - No. 5 crossing LIRR at Freeport, looking south (prior to 1905)

INTRODUCTION

Twenty-five years have now passed since the big cars of the New York & Long Island Traction rolled the rails over the far-flung routes of the company the length and breadth of Queens and Nassau. A whole generation has grown up scarcely aware of the great era of trolley railroading that in five short years produced the nearest thing to an interurban network that Long Island has ever seen. At a time when small Toonerville traction lines were springing up in various Main Streets over Long Island, the Traction plunged vigorously into a grandiose and spectacular construction project that culminated in a 24 mile main line through fourteen towns and villages, plus two seven mile branches that pierced into the heart of Queens. Nassau County, grown populous and wealthy, is today hardly conscious of the great debt she owes to the vanished trolley line that did so much to build up the rural hamlets of yesterday into the well-knit, thickly settled communities of today.

The good fortunes of the Traction spiraled ever upward all during the first decade of the century and some years beyond; then the heavy hand of economic pressure, ushered in by the first World War, very slowly bore down upon the company, until the management, pitted against overwhelming odds, succumbed to the unequal struggle and called home forever the faithful veterans of a quarter of a century of railroading.

But at the outset of our story, let us forget for a while this melancholy old age of a proud company, and turn our attention rather to a happier time when the century was young, and the Traction still a shiny dream.



TOP - No. 37 builder's photo (Courtesy Historical Society of Pennsylvania)
BOTTOM - No. 9 in Front St., Hempstead, opposite Liberty St. in 1908

CHAPTER I - THE RIVALS

Let us transport ourselves for a few moments back in time to the 90's ... to the area that is now Nassau County. A hundred years of slow growth had matured the tiny hamlets of the county into substantial villages, the white houses and broad open porches typical of a solid, suburban citizenry that prided itself on its American heritage of local industry and municipal progress. Hempstead, a village of 4,120, dominated central Nassau, with traditions going back to the 17th century. Predominantly a town of home owners, its Main Street was lined with small shops that thinned out northward as one approached suburban, aristocratic Garden City - a suburb still largely in the development stage. Mineola, just northward, though it could boast of only 1,125 souls, would soon have the distinction of becoming the county seat.

The really populous and thriving communities were strung along the South shore. The annual influx of Summer vacationists and the profitable fishing industry early combined to make Rockville Centre and especially Freeport, livelier, less countrified, and better developed than their somnolent inland counterparts.

One thing, and one thing alone was obstructing the further progress of the villages in growth, and that was the lack of intercommunication. It was true that the Long Island R.R. had served the South shore since 1869 and Hempstead since 1839, but there was no available transit north and south other than horse and carriage. Many youths, born and bred on the South side, had never been to Hempstead or Mineola; the need of a cheap and easy means of transit across the county and along the shore was more and more keenly felt as the new century approached.

The first impetus toward the building of a rapid transit line came from the richer and more influential professional men of Valley Stream, Rockville Centre and Freeport, and the wealthy owners of large estates near Long Beach and Oceanside. The earliest discussion of a trolley line came in the Fall of 1895, when a Hempstead-Rockville Centre-Long Beach route was suggested.(1) In the Spring of 1896 a circular signed by several lawyers and estate owners was distributed among the townsmen of East Rockaway, Oceanside, Freeport, and Rockville Centre, summoning them to a public meeting to organize a trolley company.(2) Public opinion was favorable, but nothing concrete came of the proposal, and 1896 slipped away without material progress.

As far back as 1894 the Long Island Electric Railway had been intending to build a branch line between Hempstead and Freeport; its franchise in 1894 called for a line on the Merrick Road, with a branch into Hempstead. In 1895 the company changed its plans, proposing to reach Hempstead through Rosedale, Woodmere, Hewlett, and Rockville Centre. All sorts of franchise difficulties were encountered besides opposition from property owners to tearing up the macadam roads. In 1896 the railway secured permission to build on Jamaica Avenue and the Hempstead Turnpike to Main and Front Streets in Hempstead, but because of high paving costs and the great expenses involved in its

(1) Long Island Democrat, Nov.12, 1895 2:3
(2) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, July 7, 1896 4:2

Queens construction, the company announced in March 1897 that it would terminate its trolley route at the Nassau County line.(1) The residents of Hempstead were bitterly disappointed over the failure of the company to live up to its promises and the express terms of its franchise, but could do nothing but hope for another opportunity. So strong was the popular sentiment for a trolley line that the next year - 1898 - brought fresh proposals, this time from a Nassau organization.

In the Spring of that year a company was informally organized under the name of the Nassau Belt Lines Traction Company to build a triangular trolley road from Hempstead to Freeport to Rockville Centre, and back to Hempstead again, with additional operation over the Long Island R.R. to Long Beach. The chief promoter behind this project was Paul K. Ames, President of the Long Beach Association, and chief developer of the summer hotels and beach cottages along the ocean front as far east as Point Lookout. A man of considerable means, progressive, and eager to increase the transportation facilities of the South shore in order to make his development the playground of Queens and Nassau, Mr. Ames commanded sufficient prestige to lease outright for many years the Long Island Railroad's Long Beach branch and to get the railroad to make remarkable concessions to further his trolley scheme.

Many surveys were conducted during the Summer months of 1898, and the town authorities were sounded out as to their attitude toward the project; in February 1899 agents were sent out along the Freeport-Mineola route to secure consents from the property owners.(2) Things were going so favorably that Mr. Ames decided to formally incorporate his company and enlist financial support. The Belt Lines Company would start with a capital stock of \$125,000, later to be increased to \$300,000, divided into shares of \$100 each; its promoters and directors were as follows:

Paul K. Ames, President of the Long Beach Assn. 2972 shares
 William G. Miller, President of the Village of Hempstead
 John W. DeMott of Rockville Centre, Secretary of the Queens
 County Title Company
 S.A. Smith & Carman Lush, Hempstead merchants
 Austin Cornwell, director of the Bank of Rockville Centre
 Charles L. Wallace, editor of the "South Side Observer"
 Henry P. Libby, President of the South Shore Telephone Co.
 Samuel F. Phillips, president of the Bank of Rockville Centre
 Samuel R. Smith, President of the Far Rockaway Bank

The route was to be as follows; From Mineola railroad station south down Franklin Ave. and Main Street to Front Street, Hempstead; east to Greenwich, and south down Greenwich Street, Nassau Road, and Main Street to Atlantic Avenue, Freeport; a branch was to run down to the Woodcleft Canal; the main line was to run west on Atlantic Avenue to Oceanside, north to Lynbrook, and then north on the tracks of the Long Island R.R. (West Hempstead branch) to Franklin Avenue, again in Garden City. The route formed a perfect triangle and tapped an area containing 60% of the population of Nassau. The Long Island R.R. also placed at the company's disposal the Long Beach branch for trolley operation. The total length of the "belt" was about 30 miles, 18 of which would be trolley route, and the remainder L.I.R.R.

- (1) Seyfried V.F., "The Story of the Long Island Electric Railway"
 (2) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Feb. 27, 1899 7:1
 Long Island Democrat, Mar. 7, 1899 2:1

trackage.(1)

Just as President Ames was preparing to incorporate his company, a new and rival organization called the Mineola, Hempstead & Freeport Traction Company appeared out of nowhere and incorporated itself on Feb. 27, 1899. The capital stock was \$125,000, divided into shares of \$50 each. The new organization was not promoted by local capitalists as was the Nassau Belt; the backers were predominantly New Yorkers:

William J. Newton, President of the Newtown Appliance Co., 2 shares
 Charles I. Hill, owner of the Eastern Electric Supply Co., 480 shares
 Peter C. Ackerman, manager of the Rhode Island Electrical Works, 10 shares
 Benjamin F. Hamilton, of the Sawyer-Mann Electric Co., 480 shares
 James H. MacElhinny, lawyer, 480 shares
 James H. Stiles, Hempstead, 973 shares
 James J. Apgar, Peekskill Stove Works
 John J. Deubert, Land Commissioner of New York State
 J. P. Hall, electrical contractor
 George R. Hamilton, of H.H. Hungerford & Co., exporters
 William L. Greeley, foreign contractor, 5 shares

President Newton prudently enlisted considerable local backing in an effort to overcome the certain prejudice of local Nassau residents to Manhattan industrialists.(2)

To the Nassau Belt Lines' horror, the Mineola, Hempstead & Freeport Co. announced that it proposed to build on a third of their right of way, namely, from Mineola R.R. Station on Franklin Ave., Main St., Nassau Road and Main St., Freeport, to the Woodcleft Canal, a distance of 11 miles. There was consternation in the Nassau Belt Lines camp. The company was not even incorporated as yet, and its rival already possessed a legal existence! To remedy the defect the Nassau company hastily incorporated itself on March 19, 1899, some three weeks after its rival. Immediately there was bitter rivalry between the two companies.

All during the Spring and Summer months the Nassau Belt Lines went ahead planning its routes carefully. The capital stock was set at 300,000, the full amount of which was already subscribed or pledged, and a traffic arrangement was effected with the Long Island R.R., whereby trolleys were to be run on the Long Beach branch between Lynbrook and Long Beach at a rate of 1¢ per mile, with a minimum of 5¢ for the first five miles or less. It was arranged that the steam coaches of the Long Island R.R. coming from Long Island City were to be hauled to the beach by Nassau Belt Lines trolleys! The West Hempstead branch of the Long Island R.R. was also offered to the trolley company on a rental basis if desired.(3) On May 16, 1899, an enthusiastic delegation of citizens from Rockville Centre attended a hearing on the company's routes before the State Board of R.R. Commissioners in Manhattan. Many residents and business men from

(1) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Feb. 11, 1900 35:5

(2) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Feb. 11, 1900 35:5; *ibid.* Feb. 27, 1899 7:1
 Long Island Democrat, March 7, 1899 2:1

(3) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, March 17, 1899 12:1; *ibid.* May 21, 1899 11:6



TOP - Looking south at Franklin Ave. Crossing, Garden City, on May 6, 1902 (near Porrier's Corner), LIRR locomotive blocking construction
BOTTOM - Opening day at Front and Main Sts., Hempstead, on May 15, 1902 (Photo from Harry de Beau)

Hempstead, Freeport, and Rockville Centre were unanimous in their plea for the proposed trolley.

The routes as presented to the commissioners were as follows:

- LEG 1: From Mineola station down Franklin Ave. and Main St. to Front St., east to Greenwich, and south down Greenwich St. and Nassau Road to Church St. Freeport; then south down Church, Raynor and Bedell Sts. to Atlantic Ave., and down Riverside to Woodcleft Inn, a popular tavern on Woodcleft Canal.
- LEG 2: West along Atlantic Ave. to Millburn Ave.; north up this street a block to Church St. Baldwin, and west on Church to Grand Ave.; south down Grand to Atlantic Ave. again, and west on Atlantic and Waukena Aves. to Long Beach Rd.; north on Long Beach to Anchor; west on Anchor to Lincoln; north on Lincoln to Atlantic, and west on Atlantic to the Atlantic Ave. station of the Long Island R.R.
- LEG 3: From the Atlantic Ave. station of the L.I.R.R. north up the Rockaway Rd. to Windsor Ave.; then on Windsor to Shellbank Place; east on Shellbank to South Centre Ave., north on South Centre to Village Ave.; then north on Village Ave. to Front St.; east on Front passing the Rockville Centre station to Park Ave.; north up Park to Grand Ave.; east on Grand to Morris Ave.; and north on Morris to Lakeview Ave.; then a mile east on Lakeview to the Long Beach Rd., and about 3 miles north on this track to Baldwin Rd., Hempstead, and north up Baldwin to the corner of Greenwich and Henry Sts., Hempstead.(1)

Merely to read of such a circuitous route is tiresome; what would it have been like to ride it? Most trolley companies in these days avoided frequent sharp turns; the inexperience of Mr. Ames and his associates in traction betrays itself startlingly here.

By September, engineers of the company were planning construction, and the Railroad Commission was getting ready to authorize all the routes. The Long Island R.R. agreed to depress its tracks at all points to avoid grade crossings.(2) On Sept. 27th the written approval of the railroad commission arrived from Albany.(3)

The Mineola, Hempstead & Freeport Traction was also making good use of its time these days. On March 18, 1899, the company had applied to Albany for permission to build its eleven mile line between Mineola and Freeport; a public hearing was held on June 21st to which the Long Island R.R. and the Nassau Belt Lines both sent representatives to oppose the granting of the franchise. The Railroad Commissioners understood the opposition for what it was; an attempt by a rival to undermine his opponent. The commissioners were impartial and granted the company's application on Sept. 12th, giving similar permission to the Nassau Belt on Sept. 27th. The result of this was that both companies possessed authorizations for the same eleven mile route. Whoever built first would be the winner!(4)

(1) *ibid.* May 21, 1899 11:6

(2) Long Island Democrat, Sept. 5, 1899 3:4

(3) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Sept. 28, 1899 11:7; Oct. 10, 1899 7:3; Oct. 18,

(4) *ibid.* Sept. 13, 1899 9:1 - & Long Island Democrat (1899 18:3 Sept. 19, 1899 3:3)

The approved route of the Mineola, Hempstead & Freeport through the villages of Hempstead and Freeport was so different from the one actually built two years later that it is worthwhile to quote; From the L.I.R.R. Station in Mineola down Franklin Ave. to 11th St.; then west along 11th St. to Cherry Valley Ave., and Rockaway Aves. to 4th St.; south down Cathedral, Atlantic and Columbia Sts. to Main St. to Front St., to Greenwich St., then six miles down Greenwich St., Nassau Rd., and Main St. Freeport to Raynor St.; north a block on Church to Smith and a block west to Ocean Ave.; then straight down Ocean to the Long Beach Ferry on Great South Bay. A glance at the map on the next page will show how closely each company duplicated the other's route.

The mere possession of a certificate from Albany was but the first step for both companies in the race. The certificate merely stated that public convenience and necessity demanded the construction of a trolley line, and authorized building. Yet before a single car could run, three other local bodies had to give their consent, and in the following order:

1. Permission from the Village Trustees of each of the towns traversed.
2. Permission from the County Board of Highway Commissioners for construction on the roads between the towns.
3. Permission from the County Superintendents.

In addition, 50% of the residents along the route had to give their consents in writing. Beginning in October, 1899, the two companies entered into hot competition with each other for the coveted franchises.

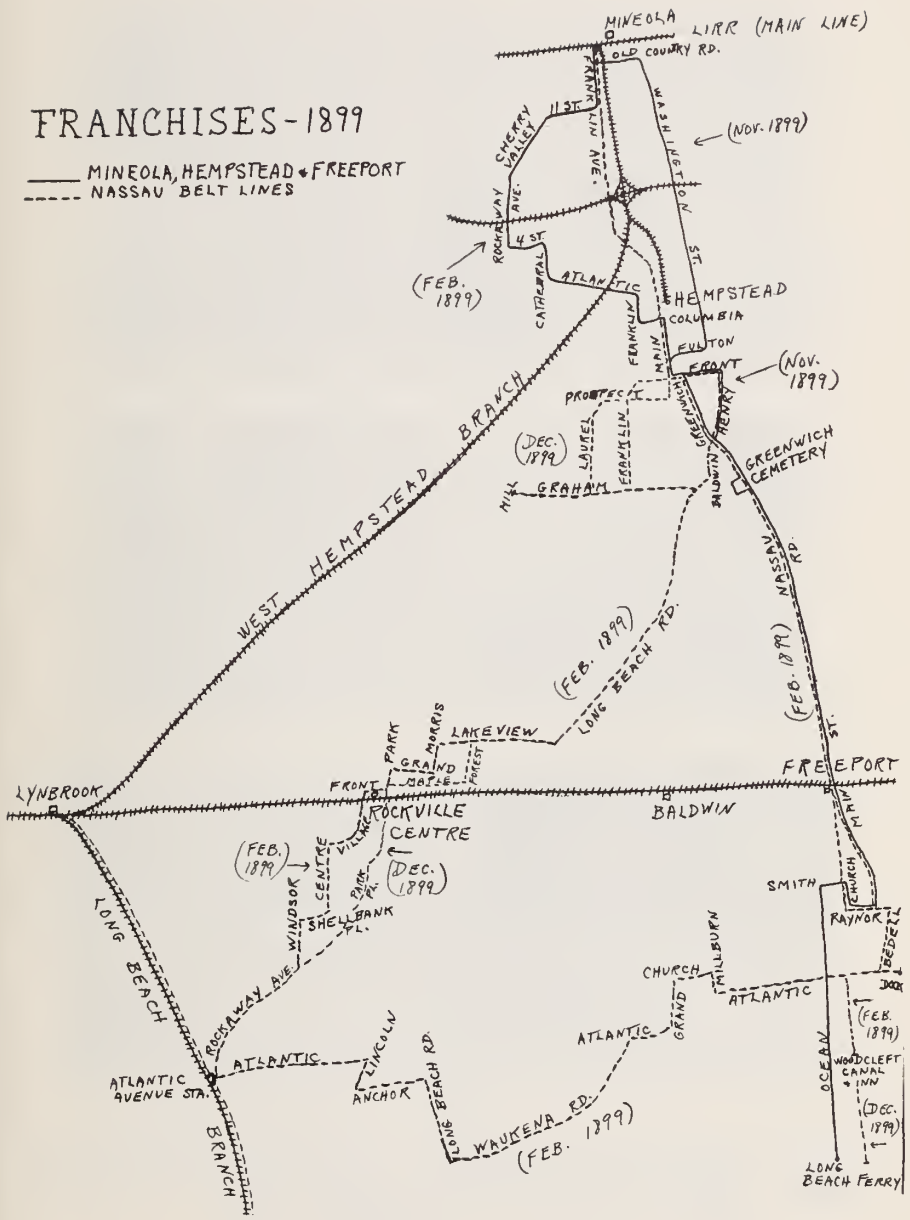
The Nassau Belt Lines bent its first efforts to taking Rockville Centre and Freeport by storm. On Oct. 27th the Board of Trustees of Rockville Centre held a public meeting on the Belt application and public opinion appeared unanimously in favor of the trolley. President Ames announced that well over 50% of the town residents had agreed to the trolley building on their streets.(1) A month later, on Nov. 26th, the Trustees met again and passed a resolution approving the granting of a franchise to the Nassau Belt Lines, and directed Lawyer Albert Seaman to draw up the forms.(2) On Dec. 5th the Trustees formally granted to the company the coveted franchise; the terms prescribed electric operation, the rate of fare to be not more than 5¢, and the road to be completed through to Long Beach by July 1, 1900, and in the village limits by Oct. 1, 1900. President Ames was of course delighted that his own village was the first to encourage his company.(3)

The company met with equal success in Freeport. On Nov. 13th it applied to the Village Board of Trustees for a Franchise, and on Nov. 24th a public meeting was held.(4) Although over 200 citizens attended, no action was taken despite President Ames' urging.(5) On Dec. 15th there was another lively debate in town on the issue, but this time the Mineola, Hempstead & Freeport attended and pleaded its cause.(6)

- (1) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Oct. 27th, 1899 11:4
- (2) *ibid.* Nov. 27, 1899 7:7
- (3) *ibid.* Dec. 6th, 1899 12:7
- (4) *ibid.* Nov. 14, 1899 6:3
- (5) *ibid.* Nov. 25, 1899 7:3
- (6) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Dec. 16, 1899 12:7

FRANCHISES - 1899

— MINEOLA, HEMPSTEAD & FREEPORT
 - - - NASSAU BELT LINES





WITH CAR IN POSITION FOR INSPECTION



TOP - No. 7 crossing LIRR at Franklin Ave. Garden City in 1902
(near Hempstead Crossing)

CENTER - Car interior shows red plush seats used at first; also shop
BOTTOM - Looking north up Main St. from trolley junction in Hempstead
during first month or two of operation (1902)

Finally, on Feb. 1st, 1900, Freeport voted the franchise to the Nassau Belt Co.(1) This left the company with only one nut to crack... Hempstead. This was the stronghold of the Mineola, Hempstead & Freeport Co., and the Nassau Belt Lines, despite a promise to pave all of Main St. with vitrified brick, made so little headway that it finally reluctantly ordered its engineers to survey an alternate route to Mineola directly from Rockville Centre to West Hempstead, so as to keep clear of the Hempstead Village line.(2) The company now had all the franchises it needed except Hempstead.

Let us turn now for a moment to the Mineola, Hempstead & Freeport Company's fortunes. On Nov. 7th, 1899, the Hempstead Board of Village Trustees voted a franchise to the M.H. & F., an action clamorously approved by the Hempstead voters. By this time the rather roundabout route proposed in the Spring had been abandoned in favor of a more direct line through the Village; from Mineola R.R. station via Franklin, Old Country Rd., and Washington St. south to Fulton St., then west to Main St. and south down Main to Front, east along Front to Clinton, and along Clinton, Cross, and Henry Sts. to Greenwich. In the summer of 1900 an act had been rushed through at Albany forbidding the use of Greenwich St. for a trolley road. This caused both companies to plan a detour via Clinton, Cross and Henry Sts.

The M.H. & F. cause was ably championed by James H. MacElhinney, a Hempstead lawyer who, by his persuasive manner and tact, would soon triumph over all opposition and bring the company to eventual success. He promised the Trustees that the road would be finished and in operation by May 1st, 1900, that the fare would be 5¢, that the company hoped to erect two power houses, one at Hempstead and one at Freeport, and that 8 cars would be run in summer with 8 additional trailers, and in winter 4 closed cars. He made one other significant promise: the construction of a branch to Queens.(3)

Just as the Nassau Belt found the going difficult to Hempstead so the M.H. & F. had great difficulties in Freeport. On Nov. 17th the Freeport Trustees met to discuss the M.H. & F. application. President Newton pointed out to the Board of Trustees the great advantages Freeport would gain from the M.H. & F. trolleys. Many inland people would come down to the bay front, and the proposed power house would provide employment for many local people; he also stressed the fact that it was easier for the M.H. & F. to build eleven miles of road than for the Nassau Belt to construct thirty.(4) The Trustees listened, and set Dec. 15th for a public hearing. At the appointed time, the company again pleaded its cause eloquently. Lawyer MacElhinney pointed out that the Nassau Belt had not yet paid its incorporation tax at the time that it applied for a franchise and that its present actions were therefore null and void; he also attacked his rivals as tools of the Long Island R.R. The townsmen listened to these spirited exchanges, but no decisive action was taken.(5)

(1)ibid. Feb. 6, 1900 7:5

(2) Long Island Democrat, Dec. 12,1899 2:4 and Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Feb. 11,1900 35:5

(3) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Nov. 14, 1899 6:3

(4) ibid. Nov. 18, 1899 7:4

(5) ibid. Dec. 16, 1899 12:7

The rival claims of the two companies were so clamorous by this time that the Trustees of the South Shore villages resolved to meet in joint session and thresh the matter out. On Dec. 20th they met in Freeport and by a narrow vote of 8-7 decided in favor of the M.H. & F. Co. (1) In the end this vote meant nothing, for on Feb. 6th, 1900, Hempstead granted a franchise, but Freeport on Feb. 1st, 1900, declared in favor of the Nassau Belt.

This divided result was very unfortunate, for it left both companies with only a part of their routes approved, and neither therefore could go ahead and build. The Nassau Belt was missing the apex of its triangular route, while the M.H. & F. lacked its lower half. Lawyer MacElhinney of the M.H. & F. announced that his company would build up to Seaman Ave., Freeport, the village line; at that point trolley passengers would be transferred to horse stages and conveyed to Woodcleft Inn on the bay. (2)

Oddly enough, neither company had any difficulty in securing the approval of the Highway Commissioners. These bearded gentlemen, pressured on every side by the conflicting claims of the rivals, threw up their hands in surrender and granted franchises to both companies. The west side of the Nassau Rd. between Hempstead and Freeport was assigned to the Nassau Belt Lines, and the east side to the M.H. & F. In case either company failed to begin construction of its road within four months, the other company might take whichever side it chose. (3)

The stalemate caused by the franchise deadlock persisted throughout 1900 and half of 1901, effectively paralyzing both companies. The newspapers were bitter about the situation; petty politics and red tape had triumphed over the wishes of the travelling public of all Nassau. Meanwhile, time was running out for both companies on their franchises, all of which contained a deadline for beginning trolley service. The Nassau Belt, in desperation, went so far as to make overtures to the M.H. & F., offering to split paving costs and track laying in Hempstead Village, but that company refused, and sat tight. The Spring and Summer passed, and the trolley began to seem less and less of a possibility. The first break came in December. The Rockville Centre Trustees, disgusted with the inaction of the Nassau Belt Lines, revoked its franchise on Dec. 6th, 1900. (4) A second obstruction was thrown in the way of the company by a State law which forbade the construction of trolley roads on macadam highways. The company initiated efforts to repeal this law, but it would take time, and President Ames petitioned Rockville Centre to reconsider its decision and extend the time limit. (5)

The long stalemate and the prospect of further litigation seem to have broken the back of the Nassau company. From this time forward the company disappears completely from the public eye, leaving the field to the Mineola, Hempstead & Freeport Traction Co.

- (1) *ibid.* Dec. 21, 1899 12:6
- (2) *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Dec. 31, 1899 11:1; Feb. 6, 1900 7:5
- (3) *ibid.* Dec. 2, 1899 4:7 and January 17, 1900 7:2
- (4) *ibid.* Dec. 7, 1900 11:5
- (5) *Hempstead Sentinel*, Jan. 17, 1901 4:3

Things had changed indeed in a year's time; twelve months earlier the over-whelming sentiment in popular and political circles throughout Nassau was for the thirty-mile project of the Belt line; with this company out of the running, all Nassau looked to the M.H. & F. to make the trolley line a reality.

In May, 1901, the Trustees of Hempstead formally issued their franchise to the M.H. & F. the route through the village was further simplified; straight down Franklin and Main to Front St. and east through Front, Clinton, Cross and Henry Sts. southward to Freeport. One important proviso was added; the company must agree to build the Hempstead Turnpike line to Queens immediately after the Freeport opening. The company was to give a bond of \$5000 and begin building before August 1, 1901. The route to Freeport had to be completed before June 1, 1902, and then the building to Queens must be begun at once.(1) The company accepted these terms and applied to Freeport for a franchise through that village. The Trustees, realizing that this was their last chance for a trolley line, decided to yield this time to insistent public demand. On July 26, 1901, they voted the franchise, attaching the following conditions; no construction beyond the railroad track until the section above was complete; a cash bond of \$5000 to be posted; work to be completed by Oct. 1, 1901; no more than 1000 feet of street to be broken up at any one time.(2) On June 14, 1901 the Supervisors of Nassau County gave their written approval for the whole project.(3)

The obligation of building a line on the Hempstead Turnpike imposed upon the M.H. & F. was the result of popular pressure, and not the company's original intention. During the long period of inaction-Feb., 1900 to June, 1901 -two companies sprang up, eager to get the franchise for this heavily travelled highway. On January 9, 1900, the New York & Nassau Railroad Co. was incorporated with a capital of \$150,000 to build from Main & Front Sts., Hempstead, to the Queens county line.(4) This company soon faded out of the picture and a successor, the Queens Borough & Nassau County R.R., was incorporated on May 9, 1900, to build the same route.(5) Its directors and backers were almost exclusively important politicians of Nassau and Queens.(6) Discussion went on during June, July, and August, but nothing further came of the project.(7) The residents and property owners along the line, however, who had signed consents for the trolley, were in no mood to let the idea die so easily. They brought pressure to bear on the Hempstead Trustees, and so it came about that the Mineola, Hempstead & Freeport, as the price of a franchise, had to agree to this unexpected extension of its route, an extension that would prove profitable and convenient as the years went by.

The long period of talking and planning was at last happily over; it was now time for the pick and the shovel.

- (1) Long Island Democrat, June 4, 1901 1:5; Brooklyn Daily Eagle, June 12, 1901 11:1; Hempstead Sentinel June 13, 1901 1:5 and 5:4
- (2) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, July 27, 1901 16:2
- (3) Hempstead Sentinel, June 24, 1901 4:6
- (4) Long Island Democrat, Jan. 16, 1900 3:7
- (5) ibid. June 19, 1900 2:4
- (6) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, May 18, 1900 13:5
- (7) Long Island Democrat, Aug. 14, 1900 3:2



TOP - Looking south on Main St. toward the Trolley Junction about 1909
CENTER- A photo by Alex, Hempstead's pioneer commercial photographer,
 looking north on Main St. toward Porrier's Corner with car no. 29
 (often titled "the first car" but this is impossible, as this type
 car was not in use until several years later)
BOTTOM - Looking west toward the trolley junction in Hempstead about
 1908. Note the sprinkler car between the Brill and Wason cars.

CHAPTER II - PICK & SHOVEL DAYS

Even the most sceptical were finally convinced that the much talked of trolley would be a reality with the arrival in Hempstead of ten carloads of ties during the week of July 21-28, 1901. (1) Just as the contractors were about to disturb the pavement of Main St. to lay rails, August Belmont, the financial genius of the IRT, a director of the L.I.R.R. and a resident of Hempstead, applied for and received a temporary injunction against the company, restraining it from building a railroad on Main St. on the ground that it was a macadamized highway and hence legally closed to trolley building. The company was given until August 30th to show why the injunction should not be made permanent. (2) The local newspaper, the Hempstead Sentinel, which had championed the trolley all along, looked into the case and discovered that the First National Bank had only a month earlier transferred a vacant 20-foot lot on Main St. to Mr. Belmont and on the basis of this ownership, Mr. Belmont was suing as an abutting property owner, claiming that the trolley would be a "public nuisance" and that spoiling the street with unsightly track and trolley poles was objectionable. In an angry and belligerent editorial, the paper declared:

"August Belmont has been recognized as one of the progressive citizens. He spends much time here and some money, improves the property where he resides and maintains a couple of parks that are attractive spots in our village. His residence is probably half a mile away from the trolley line and from his recently acquired property, a 20-foot unimproved vacant lot. For citizens to believe that he is personally identified with a plot to block the trolley seems almost incredible. If he is doing it for others, it ought soon to be developed.

For years and years our progressive citizens have endeavored to secure a trolley line into our village. They recognize its importance to the growth of the place. This time they are almost unanimous in their purpose and the claim that its operation would be a public nuisance is viewed as a blow to the progress of local business enterprise.

Men who have horses by the score and auto conveyances may not need the trolley, but the men of more moderate circumstances, those who must hire conveyances or "tramp it", are the ones who want the convenience a trolley affords. Why should these privileges be denied them, or even ignored by a few? To prevent the construction of the road seems so unjust, so contrary to the welfare of the villagers that citizens are naturally indignant that even one man is found who dares to combat the oft-expressed sentiment of villagers that the trolley is a necessity and ought to be built.

When the decision of the judge is made known, then will our city know what steps if any they will be called upon to take to insure the operation of the trolley. Don't falter in a good purpose if it costs thousands! Fight for it until success is obtained! Cooperate!" (3)

- (1) Long Island Democrat, July 30, 1901, 1:5
- (2) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, August 23, 1901, 16:3
- (3) Hempstead Sentinel, August 29, 1901

To everyone's delight the court, on Sept. 15th, vacated Belmont's injunction, remarking that "the complainant has no grounds whatsoever against the trolley company." (1) No doubt the real reason for his injunction was the L.I.R.R.'s fear of competition. The tracklayers, overjoyed, rushed to Main St. by noon of the same day and began tearing up the street. By evening, half a block had been laid! All Hempstead rejoiced to see its dream come true at last. (2) During the last days of September rapid progress was made. The rails stretched from just south of the Long Island R.R. at Main St. (at that time called Porrier's Corner from the bicycle shop located there), down Main, Front, Clinton, and Henry to Greenwich Street. North of the railroad the street had been scraped and graded for track-laying.

The company had barely moved its rails into lower Greenwich St. (Nassau Rd.) when a second difficulty arose. H. Van Rensselaer Kennedy, a friend of Belmont and owner of a lordly mansion fronting Greenwich St. for half a mile below Henry St., thundered forth his violent opposition to having a trolley pass his door. The company, fearing that he could translate his angry threats into action, did not dare lay its tracks past his house; Mr. Kennedy, for his part, took battle stations and angrily waited for the trolley rails to appear. For a week the silent tension continued. Then, on Oct. 1st, Mr. Kennedy left his castle to attend the yachting races on the Sound. The track-layers, peeping around the corner, watched the dragon leave his lair, and then flung themselves into a frenzy of action. Dirt and stones flew in showers; the sun gradually declined on the horizon, and at length sank into the west - and not long after, the lordly equipage of Mr. Kennedy was seen to approach the gates. Suddenly the carriage stopped and the portly figure of Mr. Kennedy was seen to descend, trembling and white with rage. There in the street - his street - lay two shiny new rails boldly stretching across his very threshold and passing down the street almost to Greenwich Cemetery. (3) It was too much; the old man stormed for his lawyers and his aspirin, and flung an injunction against the company like Zeus hurling a thunderbolt!

This time the company did not worry. After all, the rails were safely in the street, and it had the great force of public opinion on its side. The Hempstead Sentinel expressed itself in no uncertain terms on the matter:

"Rumor has it that Mr. Kennedy intends to oppose the construction of the trolley in front of his premises on the Turnpike. He certainly has that privilege. If he is anxious to spend his money in fighting a cause that is desired by progressive citizens, he alone, it seems to us, will be the loser. It is to be expected that the trolley will be blocked temporarily. It would be strange indeed if conditions were otherwise. But he who intends to block it for any length of time has our sympathy. The people who want the trolley will have something to say. A few individuals can only temporarily block the trolley." (4)

- (1) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Sept. 15, 1901, 2:2
- (2) Hempstead Sentinel, Sept. 19, 1901, 1:1
- (3) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Oct. 2, 1901
- (4) Hempstead Sentinel, Aug. 22, 1901, 1:1

In the last days of November, the courts threw out Kennedy's injunction, but the stubborn old man promptly filed an appeal with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court and hired a battery of Manhattan lawyers to handle the case.(1) Even with this formidable array of legal talent, Mr. Kennedy achieved so little that he hinted his willingness to compromise if the company would move its tracks and overhead to the west side of the street.(2)

Meanwhile, he gave active encouragement to his old friend, August Belmont, who had also appealed, and whose case was still pending. Almost three months later the Belmont case was thrown out in the Brooklyn courts (3) and it was expected that the Kennedy case would meet a like fate. On April 9th, 1902, the Supreme Court dismissed his injunction and rubbed salt into the wound by directing Kennedy to pay all costs incurred by the trolley company in litigation. The court ruled that Kennedy did not own the street in front of his house as he had claimed, or any portion of the highway, and that his action, being founded upon an alleged trespass of real property, must therefore be dismissed.(4)

Though defeated in the Appellate Division and the Supreme Court, Kennedy obstinately refused to accept defeat. In July, 1903, he appealed to the Court of Appeals.(5) With this final challenge the pathetic old man disappears from the pages of the company history. Evidently this final hopeless suit also failed, and the old man, broken and defeated, retreated to his mansion to spend his declining years shaking his fist half-hourly at the hated trolleys rolling insolently by. His mansion and its beautiful grounds, we might add, are now the Hempstead War Memorial.

Fortunately, the Kennedy litigation did not in any way delay construction. On Sept. 30th the Nassau Highway Commissioners gave their consent to laying track in Henry St. in the middle of the road rather than at the side.(6) Below Greenwich Cemetery in the little hamlet of Greenwich Point the track layers struck another snag. The road was so narrow that after the single track had been laid only five feet remained on either side, a violation of the Nassau ordinances. There was no room for the poles at all unless they were to be placed on people's lawns. The company appealed to the Highway Commissioners, and these gentlemen looked into the situation. It developed that the Nassau Rd. had been laid out in the 1840's as a wagon track, and that the general assumption was that the road should be 50 feet wide.(7) In the course of time, however, farmers had encroached on the road on either side, and fences had further confused the boundaries, producing the present awkward situation.

The trolley company was fortunate; all the property owners yielded the necessary footage voluntarily, and the town re-surveyed the whole length of the road to its proper width.(8) During the first

(1) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Dec. 10, 1901, 7:4

(2) Hempstead Sentinel, Dec. 12, 1901 1:1

(3) *ibid.* March 6, 1902, 1:1

(4) Hempstead Sentinel, Apr. 10, 1902, 4:4

(5) *ibid.* Aug. 27, 1903, 1:5

(6) *ibid.* Oct. 3, 1901, 1:6

(7) *ibid.* Sept. 19, 1901, 4:3

(8) Hempstead Sentinel, Sept. 24, 1901, 8:3 -also Oct. 17, 1901, 4:5 and Oct. 25, 1901, 4:5



TOP - No. 19 on the South Side about 1910
BOTTOM - No. 59 at the trolley junction in Hempstead about 1908

days of November the widening of the highway was begun so as not to delay the track-layers.(1) By mid-November the job was finished and permission was received for erecting the trolley poles.(2) By November 3rd the track-layers had reached the northern part of Freeport (3) and on November 20th finished the job right down to the dock in Freeport. Small gaps only remained between Hempstead and Freeport; a section from just south of the cemetery to Kennedy's property, the extreme northern end at Mineola, and the two railroad crossings at Garden City and Freeport, and the short stretch in Clinton and Henry Streets.(4)

On November 30th one of those comic experiences so often repeated in the early days of trolley pioneering took place on Main St., Hempstead. The company workmen were busy digging holes and erecting poles this particular Friday, and had no reason to expect anything out of the ordinary, when suddenly a young man who had been quietly observing the digging process leaped into the fresh hole and refused to get out. When questioned, he explained to the foremen that he had never given the company permission to desecrate his sidewalk or to erect a pole before his door, and he defied the men to dislodge him. The foreman listened quietly and then called off his men.

Mr. Duryea, the buried gentleman, feeling the November chill, rushed out of his hole as soon as the workmen left and returned in a matter of seconds, wrapped in a heavy overcoat and fur cap, determined to withstand a long siege. The foreman, well-grounded in local gossip, was suddenly inspired with an idea. Mr. Duryea's affections for a certain village belle were well-known, and the foreman, going home, arranged to have a messenger hurriedly approach the furry figure in the hole with an urgent message from his lady. Mr. Duryea was torn by conflicting emotions. Was it a trap, or was it the call of his beloved in distress? Gallantry triumphed, and as Mr. Duryea disappeared down the street, the track layers emerged from hiding and in minutes had the trolley pole upright. Some time later Mr. Duryea rushed back, only to be greeted by a freshly planted iron trolley pole.(5)

In the midst of all this busy building activity the residents of Nassau were startled by the announcement that the Mineola, Hempstead & Freeport Traction Co. had been bought up by a syndicate from Ohio. It developed that the Cleveland Construction Co., who had the contract to build the line, had in their employ a Mr. William Christy, who was at the same time a prominent member of the Pomeroy-Mandelbaum syndicate, an organization at that moment gridding Ohio with electric inter-urban lines. Mr. Christy had called the syndicate's attention to the M.H. & F., and these men had made an offer to President Newton which had been accepted.(6)

- (1) *ibid.* Nov. 7, 1901, 4:5
- (2) *ibid.* Nov. 14, 1901, 4:4
- (3) *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Nov. 3, 1901, 10:6
- (4) *Hempstead Sentinel*, Nov. 21, 1901, 1:2
- (5) *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Nov. 30, 1901, 3:7
- (6) *ibid.* Sept. 24, 1901, 17:1

The change of ownership brought about a change of officers in the M.H. & F. as well. Mr. J. R. Nutt, President of the Cleveland Construction Co., bought out almost all the stock of the former directors, 2332 shares; Mr. John E. Ensign, another official of the Cleveland Company, received an additional 160 shares and was made president of the M.H. & F., replacing William J. Newton. Only 8 shares of stock remained in other hands.(1)

The news of this transaction caused surprise but no resentment on Long Island. It was felt that fresh capital would insure the early completion of the line and possibly a whole network of trolley systems on Long Island.(2) The transfer seems to have infused fresh vigor into the trolley enterprise, and the work went on energetically.

It will probably come as a surprise to the reader to hear that the trolley company was threatened even at this very early period with bus competition! Just before the first rails had been laid, an enterprising Hempstead resident, William P. Miller, skeptical of ever seeing a trolley road, applied to the village for a franchise to run buses, or auto stages as they were then called, on Hempstead Turnpike, Merrick Road, Franklin Ave., Old Country Road and the Long Beach Road to Lynbrook, East Rockaway and Long Beach. The village trustees granted a 25 year franchise to his Long Island Motor Coach Traction Company.(3) Several months passed and nothing happened. President Miller announced in July that blueprint working plans of the proposed horseless carriages had been submitted to various builders for figures as to cost of construction, but that nothing had been heard from the companies contacted.(4) Of course, as the months went by the trolley company rapidly progressed and gained public favor, and President Miller, annoyed by the public indifference, accused the town trustees of trying to drive him out. The trustees, in a very moderate statement, pointed out that they had given him encouragement by granting a franchise, and had even allowed him to build stands for passengers, but that they frankly considered his bus line a visionary scheme, whereas the trolley was a demonstrated fact. Mr. Miller backed down, and thereafter disappears from the papers.(5) When we recall what passenger automobiles looked like in 1901, it makes us wonder what sort of quaint "bus" the manufacturers could have concocted at this early date!

During the course of the track laying, the fine pavement on Main St. Hempstead and Front St. was torn up and piles of ties and dirt obstructed traffic. The villagers silently endured the discomfort at first, realizing the necessity behind it. When this condition persisted, however, for several months, the village officials began to gently prod the company into doing something.(6) The rain and snow of winter and the slowness of the work in some places kept the excavations open unduly long.(7) The coming of Spring and the completion of all the track work at last restored Main St. to carriage traffic.

(1) *ibid.* July 2, 1902, 3:1

(2) *Hempstead Sentinel*, Jan. 10, 1901, 1:1 and Feb. 14, 1901, 4:2

(3) *Long Island Democrat*, July 23, 1901, 3:3

(4) *Hempstead Sentinel*, Aug. 15, 1901, 4:8

(5) *ibid.* Oct. 10, 1901 1:1 and Jan. 2, 1902, 1:1

(6) *Hempstead Sentinel*, Jan. 30, 1902 1:1 and Feb. 6, 1902 1:4

(7) *ibid.* Oct. 10, 1901 1:1 and 1:5

For its car barn the Mineola, Hempstead & Freeport early selected a site right in the heart of Hempstead, the swampy square block bounded by Franklin, Front, High and Orchard Streets. The northern part of this square block was occupied by the German Lutheran Church and a private house, and the Front St. side by private homes, so the trolley company contented itself with the middle portion. In later years (1909-1911) the company bought up all the adjoining land except the church property. In October, 1901, the company applied for permission to lay a spur track up Franklin St. into the barn area, but to its dismay this was immediately opposed. Residents of the street claimed that Franklin St. was too narrow and that the company had already taken the best north-south street for itself (Main).(1) A public hearing was set up for the 28th; at the meeting a considerable delegation turned out, and the opposition stiffened when it was revealed that the company proposed to erect a sub-station as well as trolley sheds.(2) The company, realizing that the good will it had enjoyed thus far might be alienated, offered to substitute High St. for Franklin. Fewer people lived there, the street was unpaved and carried little traffic, and access to the barn was just as convenient. The company offered to pay half the cost of grading the street in return for a franchise. This solution pleased everybody. A public hearing was again set for Dec. 6th, but the action was largely academic.(3) The trustees unanimously granted the desired permission and the company, by its tact and consideration, retained the good will of the townspeople, and gained its own ends at the same time.(4)

While the Mineola-Freeport main line was still in the construction stage the company turned its attention to preparing the legal and physical groundwork of the Hempstead Turnpike branch to Queens Village. On August 9, 1901, the Board of Supervisors of Nassau County held a hearing on the trolley application at which all the people present except one voiced eager approval of the line. This solitary objector was William D. Manice, owner of a beautiful country home on the site of what is now Belmont Park, and the proud possessor of greenhouses and gardens that won annual awards and made his estate a showplace for visitors far and near. Mr. Manice's attorney pointed out that the road in front of his client's property was only 56 feet wide and that a trolley track would further reduce the highway and cause the removal of a fine row of trees. The Supervisors, before coming to a decision, resolved to visit the contested spot and see for themselves.(5)

During the same week the company filed formal notice at Albany of its intention to build to the Queens line, and for the first time expressed its intention to enter New York City as far as Jamaica via the south side of Queens Village and Hollis. From the city line at Belmont Park the line was to continue along the Hempstead Turnpike to Springfield Boulevard, a block south on Springfield to Hollis Ave., and then on Hollis Ave. all through Bellaire and Hollis to a point about 100 feet south of 104th Ave., a street non-existent at that time. It was planned to run straight west through the fields parallel to the present 104th Ave. to the present junction of 104th Ave. and Farmers Ave. The

- (1) *ibid.* Oct. 10, 1901 1:1 and 1:5
- (2) *ibid.* Oct. 31, 1901, 1:4
- (3) *ibid.* Nov. 21, 1901 1:2
- (4) *ibid.* Dec. 12, 1901 1:3
- (5) Long Island Democrat, Aug. 20, 1901, 2:2
Hempstead Sentinel, Aug. 15, 1901, 4:8



TOP - No. 9 on Franklin Ave., Garden City about 1910
BOTTOM - No. 29 climbing the West Hempstead overhead, bound for Hempstead, about 1908

route would then continue west along 104th Ave. and Liberty Ave. to New York Ave. Jamaica; then up that street to just south of the Long Island R.R., where it was intended to cut across private property westward to 159th St., then cross the L.I.R.R. and continue west along Archer Ave. to 153rd St. and then one block north to Jamaica Ave. A loop was to be built in Dale Road between Union Hall St. and 160th St. and a second, much larger one, south down New York Ave., west on South St. and north up 159th St. (1)

This indirect approach into Jamaica was necessary because the Long Island Electric Railway was already operating along Jamaica Ave., the main highway, and the M.H. & F. was therefore obliged to be content with a back country route into Jamaica, unless an operating agreement could be effected with the Long Island Electric for the use of Jamaica Ave. Several overtures had already been made to the Electric, but without result. (2)

On Oct. 11, 1901, the Board of Highway Commissioners accepted the petition of Lawyer MacElhinney for a franchise for Hempstead Turnpike and directed its counsel to draw up terms. (3) Some days later the company received the very welcome news that Mr. Manice had withdrawn his opposition to the building of the trolley line, the company lawyers having proved to him that a strip a few feet wide along the front of his property was legally part of the roadway and not his own land. (4) The company breathed a fervent sigh of relief that this affair had not turned into another Kennedy case!

On Oct. 25th the Board of Supervisors granted the company the franchise for the Queens line; the contract was to run for 99 years, and the company, after the expiration of 15 years, was required to pay 1% of its net annual receipts into the Nassau County Treasury. (5)

The company set to work immediately with the construction of the Queens branch at the same time that the tracklayers in Freeport were putting the finishing touches to the main line. The company was making every effort to have all in readiness by the Spring of 1902. The Queens line was to be the connecting link with the trolley system in New York City and its completion would greatly enhance the value of the main cross-island route. The Hempstead Turnpike was the main artery of central Nassau, heavily used by farmers bringing produce to city markets. Travel was increasing yearly, and high revenues from trolley operation were a foregone conclusion. The turnpike had been macadamized in 1897 to its full width all the way to Hempstead at a cost of \$120,000 and ranked as one of the best-built highways in the state. (6)

In the first week of November 1901 the rails were distributed through Elmont and poles were being laid toward Queens. (7) During mid-December several carloads of ties were distributed along the road at West Hempstead. (8) The snow and rain of winter interrupted the work in January, but it was resumed in late March. The Brooklyn Eagle reports that the company laid 1500 feet of track on the Hempstead Turn-

- (1) Long Island Democrat, Aug. 20, 1901, 3:6
Hempstead Sentinel, Aug. 22, 1901 & Annual Report of PSC for 1913,
- (2) Hempstead Sentinel, March 20, 1902, 1:2 (Vol.V, pp.790-795)
- (3) *ibid.* Oct. 17, 1901, 8:3
- (4) Long Island Democrat, Oct. 22, 1901, 2:2
- (5) *ibid.* Nov. 5, 1901, 3:3 & Hempstead Sentinel, Oct. 31, 1901, 5:6
- (6) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Apr. 5, 1902, 7:1
- (7) Long Island Democrat, Nov. 5, 1901, 2:2
- (8) *ibid.* Dec. 24, 1901, 2:3

pike between Jericho Turnpike and Belmont Park.(1) But the report of the R.R. Commission expressly states that "no construction was commenced within Queens County until after the company changed its name." (Aug., 1902) The City of New York was very slow to grant a franchise to the traction company, and so construction therefore could not begin inside the city limits.

But this did not prevent the company from laying rail inside Nassau, a project actively begun in April. The company, to save money, asked permission of the Nassau supervisors to substitute a T rail in place of girder rail (2) and the permission was granted.(3) When the tracklayers reached the Manice property the company held its breath, but no injunction appeared, and all went well.(4) From this point eastward the work went more slowly, for the company, by the terms of its franchise, was required first of all to open the Mineola-Freeport line and then later on, the Queens division. With the coming of Spring, all efforts were turned to completing the main line to meet the June 1902 deadline.

On January 15, 1902, the first four trolleys for the new line arrived from the Wason Company, and what trolleys they were! At a time when the average city car in most places was a small, open-platform vehicle with curved sides and deck-roof strongly reminiscent of its horse-car ancestors, the M.H. & F. trolleys were large, streamlined railroad roof cars, completely enclosed and with large picture windows at either end. The interiors were furnished in light oak with red plush seats, later changed to rattan; four motors of 50 HP each permitted fast service. The reporter of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle was so impressed by the new trolleys that he reported them as "palace cars", for they were indeed a far cry from the rolling stock of his native Brooklyn at that time. The company insured each car for \$5000 and immediately set to work fitting on trucks and wiring.(5) In this early period, of course, it was customary to buy the car body first and then the trucks separately; all the wiring had to be done in the company's shops.

The arrival of the trolleys eliminated any doubts that the line would really run. For the eight positions of conductor and motor-man the company received over 100 applications! The first trial trips of the new cars were planned for February.(6) A contract was concluded with the Roslyn Light, Heat & Power Co. to deliver electricity to the company's sub-station.

With everything all prepared, tracks, overhead, cars, power, etc., the company fondly hoped to begin regular operation in April, but one last and formidable obstacle appeared that threatened for a while to make through service impossible. This was the grade crossing controversy with the Long Island R.R. Readers of the previous chapter will recall that the railroad had backed the Nassau Belt Lines in every way, extending them numerous unusual facilities. The M.H. & F. had never, in any way, cultivated the Long Island R.R.

- (1) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Apr. 5, 1902, 7:1
- (2) Long Island Democrat, Apr. 1, 1902, 1:4
Hempstead Sentinel, Apr. 3, 1902, 1:1
- (3) Hempstead Sentinel, Apr. 3, 1902, 4:4
- (4) *ibid.* Apr. 10, 1902, 8:3 and Long Island Democrat, Apr. 8, 1902, 3:2
- (5) Hempstead Sentinel, Jan. 16, 1902, 1:1- Bklyn. Daily Eagle, Mar. 2,
- (6) Long Island Democrat, Jan. 28, 1902, 1:4 (1902, IV, 8:6)

- rather, it had attacked its rival, the Belt Lines, for being a "tool" of the railroad. These charges hardly endeared the Traction to the railroad company, and friction inevitably developed when the M.H. & F. sought to cross the railroad at grade at Garden City, West Hempstead and Freeport.

The refusal of the Long Island R.R. to grant such permission was probably not entirely obstructionism directed against a rival carrier. There had been a great many crossing accidents throughout Queens and Nassau during the 90's, and great pressure was brought to bear on the road to bridge such crossings or depress the tracks. The Long Island had willingly undertaken these eliminations at great cost to itself, and naturally objected violently to the creation of additional hazards. Striking a carriage would kill one or two persons. Striking a loaded trolley could very possibly cause enough law suits to ruin the railroad.

The M. H. & F. first formally requested permission to cross at Garden City and Freeport in October, 1901, while the track laying was about half completed. On October 16th the Railroad Commission gave a hearing at which many engineers of the trolley company, the Brooklyn Water Works, and the Long Island R.R. presented evidence. The railroad officials declared that they would not oppose the trolley in any way but crossing their road at grade. The commissioners, after listening to the testimony, declared their reluctance to authorize grade crossings, and ordered all the engineers to confer on the possibility of erecting overhead crossings.(1) The Nassau Commissioners of Highways wrote to the Railroad Commission, urging them to grant permission to cross at grade, arguing that the road was sorely needed by Nassau, that bridges were unsightly and tunnels impracticable, and expressing the fear that if too many burdens were to be placed on the company it might well abandon all attempts to operate.(2)

Time passed, and no decision emanated from Albany. The Long Island R.R., meanwhile, was spending over two million dollars to eliminate crossings on Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn, and hundreds of thousands of dollars at the same work in other places, and was therefore in no mood to create additional hazards. In the Spring of 1901 a Long Island R.R. train had struck a fully loaded trolley on the Coney Island branch of the B.R.T. with numerous casualties, and the memory of this disaster weighed heavily against the chances of the M.H. & F.(3)

The new year 1902 arrived and there was still no word from Albany. At last, on March 1st, the company, to its great joy, received the coveted permission to cross at grade at Franklin Ave., Garden City; Main St., Freeport; and West Hempstead.(4) The Commission required, however, that the company install derailing switches 50 feet on each side of the crossing, to be operated by the conductor of the car, who must alight, and with a lever close the switch. The company was also required to place a V-shaped

- (1) Hempstead Sentinel, Oct. 17, 1901, 1:1
- (2) *ibid.* Oct. 17, 1901, 4:5
- (3) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Nov. 24, 1901, IV, 2:2
- (4) *ibid.* March 2, 1902, 8:6 IV
Long Island Democrat, March 18, 1902, 1:5



TOP - No. 1 at siding 48, Baldwin

CENTER - No. 47 eastbound on private right-of-way at Ocean Ave., Rockville Center (photo from George S. Mason)

BOTTOM - No. 5 (left, terminal of Pike line) and No. 45 (ready to start back for Brooklyn) at Mineola terminal, north of Old Country Rd.

copper trough above the trolley wires across the railroad tracks to prevent the trolley wheel from flying off and stalling the car on the tracks. The M. H. & F. immediately ordered the necessary switches. Since the installation of these items would cause further delay, President Ensign announced his plans to open the Hempstead-Freeport section of the road first early in April, this section being free of railroad crossings.(1)

Various minor difficulties cropped up at the last minute to prevent the scheduled opening of the road in April, but the company struggled on to get all in order. In the first days of May the derauling switches arrived, and were installed on either side of each crossing, but when the company attempted to lay its rails across the tracks of the Long Island R.R. as authorized, it met determined resistance. The crossing at Franklin Ave., Garden City, was the major battleground. Beginning the week of May 5th, the Long Island R.R. realized that an attempt to cross its tracks was imminent, and to frustrate such a move it set workmen ostensibly to lay new rail in the crossing vicinity, but in reality to keep an eye on the trolley employees. Hand cars and passenger cars were shuttled back and forth all day to further complicate matters. On Tuesday morning, May 6th, the foreman and Italian laborers of the M.H. & F. began to attempt cutting the rails to install frogs. Superintendent Jackson of the Long Island R.R. engaged the foreman in heated argument, and while everyone's attention was concentrated on the two men, a locomotive silently stole up and took its stand with the wheels covering the section of track which the trolley company wished to cut.

The news of the blockade spread, and a large crowd from Garden City and Hempstead gathered to watch the proceedings. After a few hours the trolley workmen left, but many thrill-seekers waited all night expecting some sudden, dramatic move by the M.H. & F., in vain. Fresh locomotives and crews came and went on 12-hour shifts to maintain the blockade. On Wednesday, the 7th, the railroad, fearing an attempt on the part of the three groups of workmen to rush the field, secretly gathered a little army of its own at a signal tower down the tracks, but again the M.H. & F. declined to give battle, and so the war continued.(2)

By this time the press and public had become very curious about the affair. When pressed for a statement, the belligerents issued the following explanation: When the Railroad Commission gave permission to the trolley company for the four grade crossings on March 1st the Long Island R.R. refused to accept the adverse decision on the ground that it was hasty and ill-advised, and promptly filed an appeal for a re-hearing scheduled for May 12th. The M.H. & F. hastily appealed to the Commission on May 6th to be allowed to put in frogs, and without waiting for a reply, was even now attempting to install them. The Long Island R.R., delighted to catch its rival in a frankly illegal act, was now retaliating by obstructing the M.H. & F. with every weapon at its command.(3)

(1) Hempstead Sentinel, March 6, 1902, 1:4

(2) Hempstead Sentinel, May 8, 1902, 1:1

Brooklyn Daily Eagle, May 6, 1902, 24:1 and May 7, 1902, 8:1

(3) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, May 7, 1902, 8:1

The blockade continued all during the first three weeks of May. Finally the M.H. & F., seeing its chances of operation north of Garden City indefinitely blocked, decided to get cars running on the clear section between Hempstead and Freeport so as to fulfill the terms of the franchise requiring operation by June 1, 1902.

On May 14, 1902, the company ran a trial trip over the line in preparation for the official opening the next day. All four cars on the line, filled to overflowing with school children, made a short run down Main Street with President Ensign in command. (1)

The next day, May 15th, the entire village of Hempstead turned out for the grand opening of the trolley line. This was the great moment that all Hempstead had been waiting for for 6 years; this was the climax of heroic struggles against great odds, a day of triumph for Lawyer MacElhinney and President Ensign, both of whom had worked hard to make this day possible. The four cars, #1, 3, 5, and 7, filled to overflowing with local dignitaries, the town fathers, and village trustees, gathered at the blockaded crossing at Franklin Ave., Garden City. Then, with car #3 in the lead, the procession moved majestically down Main St. to the ringing cheers of half of Hempstead. Just before 2 p.m. the cars halted before the company offices at Main and Front Sts., where they were officially welcomed by President Ensign. Then the guests piled out and gathered about the cars to be photographed. After three plates had been exposed, everyone again boarded the cars and made the five mile trip to Freeport. There was one unscheduled stop at Roosevelt caused by a pretty young girl who flagged down the car with an armful of roses which President Ensign gallantly accepted. At Freeport a large crowd of citizens awaited the car at the Long Island R.R. station, the crossing here being also blockaded by a locomotive. The whole run took just 22 minutes from Garden City. On the return trip an inspection tour was made of the car barn and sub-station at High Street, after which the cars returned the Freeport guests. Everything went off perfectly, and the company was riding the crest of popular enthusiasm. (2)

The following morning, May 16th, regular service began at 5:40 a.m., with a half-hourly headway until 11:50 p.m. at night. The Hempstead Sentinel celebrated the great event by publishing a large picture of the trolley on its front page, the very first photograph ever to appear in this newspaper, and beneath it this welcome:

"The trolley trip today from Hempstead to Freeport and return was a great success. No one doubts the benefit the trolley will be. May its success be even greater than anticipated.

That the trolley is a popular affair is evident enough by the great number who are patronizing it. At night it is crowded, afternoons it is oftentimes so, and mornings the people who find its service convenient are quite large. The trolley seems to be doing just what we expected of it, increasing trade and giving indication of activity. This village clearly shows it. The summer travel between this point and the beaches is likely to be something great. Success to the trolley!" (3)

(1) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, May 14, 1902, 8:1

(2) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, May 16, 1902, 8:1 and May 15, 1902, 7:2

(3) Hempstead Sentinel, May 15 and 22, 1902 1:1

CHAPTER III - Extensions and Operations, 1903

With the opening of regular trolley service between Hempstead and Freeport there developed a strong public demand for through service. On May 16th the Railroad Commission helped to realize this ideal by granting to the M.H. & F. Company the right to cross at Garden City and Freeport at grade, despite the appeal of the L.I.R.R. for an injunction. The long blockade at Garden City by L.I.R.R. locomotives was thus lifted at last, and the railroad was thus forced to let the cars run through over the whole line from Mineola station to the dock on Great South Bay.

Within half an hour of the receipt of the good news on the afternoon of May 17th, the company began making the track connections. (1) The work was finished the next Tuesday and Wednesday, May 20th and 21st. (2) Superintendent Potter of the L.I.R.R. offered to help with the track laying, and then a week later (May 28th) rather hypocritically applied for and received a writ of certiorari directing the Railroad Commissioners to review their grade crossing permission. (3) The trolley company ignored this L.I.R.R. maneuver and the following day, May 29th, ran its first through car from Mineola station to Scott's Dock on the bay. (4) The town of Freeport celebrated the long-awaited event with a big ceremony. At Scott's Dock a brass band greeted the approaching car, and a small cannon placed on the hotel lawn boomed out frequent salutes to the trolley party. Photographers recorded the event, and then all adjourned to the hotel where a lunch was served. President Ensign was in high spirits for the occasion. He took care to point out that yesterday's writ against the company was not an injunction but merely an effort on the part of the railroad to reopen the crossing controversy. (5)

The ride across Massau on one of these beautiful May mornings a quarter century ago must have been delightfully rural and refreshing. Why not take an imaginary trip right now from Mineola to the bay? After all this wrestling with franchises and litigation some fresh air will do us good! Our car, freshly swept and washed the night before, awaits us at the side of the road just a few feet from the broad porches of Jöhren's Hotel (still there in 1952) on the northeast corner of Mineola Blvd. and Old Country Rd. We roll down Franklin Ave. on the east side of the street, a cloud of dust swirling behind us from the dirt pavement. The shady trees on each side of the road spread overhead like cathedral arches, veiling the warm Spring sun. A few moments later we cross the L.I.R.R. spur to the Garden City water works, and continue southward until we reach the main railroad crossing. The conductor alights from the car, and with his switch iron pulls back the deraill, permitting our car to clear the grade crossing. Safely on the other side we roll on and cross the L.I.R.R. again for the third time; the Vallev Stream branch, scene of the big blockade until last week. Again there is the deraill job for the conductor. Two minutes later we are rolling down Main Street, Hempstead, with the little shops lining both sides of the street, and here and there thrusting

(1) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, May 17, 1902 9:1

(2) Hempstead Sentinel, May 22, 1902 1:2

(3) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, May 28, 1902 7:2

(4) *ibid.* May 29, 1902 1:6

(5) *ibid.* May 30, 1902 7:2



TOP - Looking north on Main St., Hempstead, from a point about midway between Front and Fulton Sts. No. 31 is southbound in front of the Louis Ceben Department Store (about 1908)

BOTTOM - No. 1 at Jamaica terminal (Washington St., now 160th St.) in 1914

porches and marquees right out to the curb. Carriages scurry out of the way, and horses, tethered to various hitching posts, stamp uneasily as we roll past. No pavement here. Just more dust in our wake. Careful! Mustn't go over 8 miles an hour or there'll be a complaint on President Ensign's desk tomorrow! At Front St. we pass the big brick building housing the company offices, swing the corner, and roll past the cemetery and Town Hall. At Clinton we make a sharp curve and another into Cross and Henry Streets, and then once again come out onto broad, quiet Greenwich St., or as some old-timers still call it, the Hempstead and Babylon Turnpike.

Open her up wide now... let's hear those four motors hum! In no time at all we're at Greenwich Cemetery, and there, sure enough, on the siding, is the northbound car waiting for us. We wave for a moment, exchange a quick word with a neighbor, and then really raise the dust. Nobody lives along here to speak of - just wide open spaces, warm and fragrant under the May sun. Fifteen minutes later we suddenly move out into the center of the street; Freeport village line. The houses are getting more numerous now, and before you know it, there's Freeport railroad station ahead. Out pops the conductor again, and as the derail swings back, we inch across and find ourselves in the heavy traffic of Main and Bedell Sts. Hardly five minutes later a vagrant whiff of salt air wafts by us; there's Atlantic Ave. paralleling the head of the bay. With a screech of wheels we turn into it, and hardly a moment later turn down a little dirt road to the bay. We step out, and what a change! The flat scenery of the center of the island has given way to a marine landscape; yachts and small craft ply the Woodcleft Canal; at the end of the street is Scott's Dock with its big sign proclaiming, "Long Beach Transportation Co." In a little while the afternoon boat will take us to Long Beach if we wish, or, if refreshments are in order, there is the Woodcleft Inn nearby. We've made good time. Only 40 minutes from Mineola.

The company was proud of its new line. So proud that it was anxious to build farther afield. There is a franchise all signed and sealed for Hempstead Turnpike. After the main line had been in operation only 25 days, the Traction officials turned all their energies into completing the Queens extension. Back in November, 1901, much of the grading and a very little bit of the track laying had been accomplished. The Cleveland Construction Co. of Akron, Ohio, in charge of the work, decided to put two gangs on the job - one working east from Belmont Park, and one working west from High St. On June 9th, 1902, a group of 50 men started the work, (1) at Front and High Sts., and by June 14th had reached the west village line at Fulton St. and the railroad. (2) By July 3rd they were grading at Nassau Blvd. (3) On July 15th three carloads of rails arrived at West Hempstead. (4) By July 24th the tracks were complete to Nassau Blvd., Munson.

At the Belmont Park end of the line, work progressed with equal rapidity. Some of the ties and rails were already in place up to

(1) Hempstead Sentinel, June 5, 1902 1:1 and Long Island Democrat (June 10, 1902, 3:1

(2) Hempstead Sentinel, June 12, 1902 1:1

(3) *ibid.* July 3, 1902 8:3

(4) *ibid.* July 17, 1902 1:2

1000 feet, east of the Queens line. Delivery of further rails was daily expected.(1) By July 10th ties and rails were all in place from the Queens line to Elmont.(2) Just east of Elmont and along the north side of the highway was located Ludlum's Woods, most of it today a farm. The traction company bought the entire tract of 12 acres and used the timber on it to provide 12,000 new ties for the construction work.(3)

The trolley company's old enemy, the L.I.R.R., chose this moment when the track laying all along the turnpike was nearly complete, to obstruct progress once more. The traction company had been careful to leave the L.I.R.R. track at West Hempstead untouched, preferring to leave a 25 foot gap in its trolley line rather than provoke a new controversy. Hostilities began this time over a detail that could hardly have been more trivial - one wire. The trolley company, anxious to power construction cars on the new extension for stringing overhead, hung a cable over the L.I.R.R. track to energize its new overhead. The railroad immediately took violent exception to this, and on July 25th cut the cable on the ground that it owned the air space over its private right-of-way, and that the wire was trespassing.(4)

On the evening of the next day, (July 26th) the trolley company replaced the wire, running it through a 1-1/2 inch galvanized pipe to prevent cutting, and stationed a watchman to guard the spot. Hardly had the break been repaired when a locomotive and crew came along. The railroad men threw a rope over the pipe and hitched it to the truck of a car; the engine then started up rapidly, and in a matter of seconds pipe and all came tumbling down. Two poles 14 inches thick were broken off, one on each side of the railroad track; the wires were ripped down for 2000 feet, and about half of the brackets torn off 33 poles. Superintendent Potter of the L.I. R.R. sent a telegram to President Ensign, accusing him of breaking his word by "attempting to cross the tracks", and again asserted overhead rights. Nothing, he insisted, could be strung across the tracks without the permission and supervision of the railroad.(5)

The trolley company lay low for a few days and pushed on with its track laying at Munson. In one week 3000 feet were laid, as much as 600 feet on some days.(6) Then very quietly during the week, the copper feeders were strung up a third time. At 1:30 a.m. on the morning of August 4th another engine and crew arrived at West Hempstead and cut down the feeder for the third time with a pair of heavy shears.(7)

The trolley company seems to have made no fourth attempt to restore the wires. Instead, the severed cable was gathered up, rolled into a huge coil, and left hanging on a pole. On the night of August 10th wire thieves, attracted by this tempting morsel, carried off the whole coil, 800 lbs. of copper wire, valued at \$250.

- (1) Hempstead Sentinel, July 3, 1902 8:3
- (2) *ibid.* July 10, 1902 8:4
- (3) *ibid.* July 24, 1902 1:4 and Long Island Democrat July 29, 1902,
- (4) Hempstead Sentinel, July 25, 1902 16:4 (2:2 and 2:3)
- (5) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, July 27, 1902 2:7 IV and Hempstead Sentinel, July 31, 1902 1:2
- (6) Hempstead Sentinel, July 31, 1902 8:3
- (7) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, August 4, 1902 1:4

Detectives were put on the trail, but the loot was never recovered.(1)

Meanwhile, track layers and wire crews on Hempstead Turnpike were making good progress. During the week of August 5-12 the track was completed to Franklin Square, and overhead was installed westward from the L.I.R.R. crossing.(2) By the week of the 17th a junction between the two gangs was expected daily.(3) On Sept.4th wire thieves hindered the prompt opening of the line by cutting down sections of overhead at Munson, but the company hastily repaired the break.(4)

Finally, on the morning of Thursday, Sept.11th, the hopes of the company and many residents of Nassau were realized; regular trolley service over the Hempstead Turnpike between Hempstead and the Queens county line. In a sense the opening was premature. No tracks crossed the L.I.R.R. at West Hempstead, so that people had to change cars at this point. For the same reason, the company was unable to get one of its own trolleys on the Hempstead Turnpike track, and so had to borrow two BRT cars to open the line and maintain half-hourly service. The sight of two single truck cars marked "Metropolitan Ave. and Grand St." must have caused amused comment among some spectators at the opening ceremonies. Even more strange was the method of powering the new line. The company did not dare to hang a cable over the L.I.R.R. tracks, so a feeder was extended from the trolley tracks on Franklin Ave., Garden City, all along the western edge of the railroad right of way down to West Hempstead, an ingenious solution to the problem. At Belmont Park a stage coach carried the passengers to Jamaica Ave. and 212th St., where they boarded Long Island Electric cars for Jamaica. The fare was fixed at 15¢ for the 212th St.-Hempstead run, Franklin Square and Belmont Park being the zone boundaries.(5)

The controversy over the power cables at West Hempstead had engendered so much bitterness between the M.H. & F. and the L.I.R.R. that a showdown in court was decided upon by both parties. On August 19th the L.I.R.R. and the M.H. & F. appeared in the Court of Special Term in Brooklyn and argued their views as to whether overhead wires constituted a trespass. The hearing was an unusually bitter one. The trolley company accused the railroad of wanton vandalism in tearing down the wires. The railroad insisted that it owned the right of way in fee, and that a wire was an unwarranted trespass and a menace to the lives of brakemen riding atop freight cars. As to the tracks, the railroad said it stood ready to help the trolley company if only the crossings were made above or below grade; crossings at grade level were death traps, and contrary to the policy of the railroad. The court, after listening to all arguments, reserved decision. It also refused a plea of the L.I.R.R. for a permanent injunction.(6)

Because the writ of certiorari obtained by the L.I.R.R., the Railroad Commissioners had to review once again their previously

- (1) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, August 11, 1902 9:4
- (2) Long Island Democrat, August 12, 1902 2:2
- (3) Hempstead Sentinel, August 14, 1902 1:3; also August 21, 1902 8:4
- (4) ibid. September 4, 1902 8:6
- (5) Long Island Democrat, Sept. 10, 1902 3:4; also Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Sept. 11, 1902 10:6; also Hempstead Sentinel, Sept. 11, 1902
- (6) Hempstead Sentinel, August 21, 1902 1:1 (1:1)



TOP - Atlantic and Stauderman Aves., Lynbrook (1922)
CENTER - Stop 22 on the Hempstead Turnpike, about 1917
BOTTOM - Looking west along Rockaway Blvd., Siding 22 (May 1918)

granted permission for the three crossings. A hearing was scheduled for Oct. 16th.(1) A week before the hearing, the Highway Commissioners of Nassau County wrote to the board that they opposed a bridge or tunnel at West Hempstead, and requested that the trolley be permitted to cross at grade.(2) At the hearing on the 16th the M.H. & F. accused the railroad of sabotaging the trolley to avoid competition, and showed statistics to prove that the West Hempstead branch of the L.I.R.R. was the least patronized on the system. The Commissioners reserved decision.

Out of a clear sky the L.I.R.R. wrote to President Ensign on Sept.23rd, offering to compromise the long dispute. The railroad offered to deed land outright on both sides of its tracks to the M.H.&F. for a trestle, and would pay half the cost of construction. The trolley company was favorably disposed toward the idea, but wanted to cross at grade temporarily until the trestle was completed, a favor the railroad refused to grant.(3) The inconvenience of changing cars and having to take a bus at Belmont Park was having a bad effect on traffic on the new branch. Patronage fell off so the company took off one of the two cars, resulting in hourly, instead of half-hourly service.(4) People soon complained, and the company restored the half-hourly service between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. 5) On Nov. 25th hourly service again displaced the half-hourly schedule.(6) While the Board of Railroad Commissioners was still debating the grade crossing issue, the L.I.R.R. succeeded in getting the previously denied permanent injunction against the overhead wires and a grade crossing at West Hempstead.(7)

Early in the Spring the Railroad Commissioners at last announced their decision; an overhead crossing would be required at West Hempstead. While the L.I.R.R. and the M.H. & F. dickered over the costs and details of construction months passed, and in the meantime a further improvement was taking place at Belmont Park end of the line; a bridging of the one mile gap between 212th St. and Belmont Park by the Long Island Electric Ry. Both companies, the Electric and the M.H. & F., had been besieging the Board of Aldermen of the City of New York for a franchise for this link, but the city procrastinated. The Electric pointed out that in 1896 it had held a franchise for this stretch from the now-extinct Queens Highway Commission, but had been too poor to build. The City authorities, after lengthy consultation, renewed the Electric franchise and rejected the M.H. & F. application. On Nov. 18, 1902 the Electric started laying rails, but was stopped in December by the injunction of an abutting property owner. Five months were lost in litigation. Then in May, 1903, work was resumed. The city then refused to grant permits for overhead wiring, so the company, rather than delay further, opened the line with two horse cars on June 10th, 1903.(8) This "improvement" added little to the efficiency of the line. Passengers could now ride to Jamaica from Hempstead by rail, but it took three changes of cars and lots of

(8) for details see "The Story of the L.I. Electric Ry" by

- V.F. Seyfried, vol. 2 of this series.
- (1) Hempstead Sentinel, Aug. 21, 1902 1:1
 (2) ibid. Sept. 11, 1902 2:3
 (3) ibid. Sept. 25, 1902 1:2 and Oct. 9, 1902 1:1; and Brooklyn Daily Eagle Nov. 6, 1902 18:5
 (4) Hempstead Sentinel Oct. 2, 1902 1:3 and Long Island Democrat
 (5) Hempstead Sentinel Oct. 16, 1902 1:1 (Oct. 7, 1902 2:4 and Long Island Democrat Oct. 21, 1902 2:3)
 (6) Long Island Democrat, Nov. 25, 1902 3:1
 (7) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Oct. 31, 1902 7:5

time to make the nine mile journey.

During the same Spring of 1903 the building of the great Belmont Park Race Track began. Laid out just inside the Nassau line, this great track, with its vast accommodations and beautiful grounds would soon attract patrons by the thousands annually, adding enormously to the value of the trolley lines. By March the surveys had all been completed and the contract for building was awarded to a firm of Philadelphia contractors.(1) August Belmont, after whom the park was named, had always been a connoisseur of horseflesh, and this park was to be a monument to his fame long after his financial and transit empire would pass away. 300 men set to work grading the land and felling the trees.(2) All of 1904 was spent in erecting grandstands and buildings; in 1905 the great work was done, and opened to the public.

In the last days of June 1903, after months of delay and negotiation, work began on the West Hempstead trestle.(3) The estimated cost of \$10,000 was to be borne equally by both companies. By the end of July the foundations for the girders were up. The bridge began at Front St. just south of Fulton St., crossed the L.I.R.R. via a triangular piece of property now housing a gas station, and came down on the other side in a field,(4) a block south of Hempstead Turnpike. By September the bridge structure was all built and track laying began.(5) On Sept. 27th regular trolley service began over the structure. For the first time in a year a passenger could ride through to Belmont Park without changing cars or losing time.(6) The "West End Line", as it was popularly called, was at last complete.

For many pages so far our story has been a tale of constant litigation or construction; it is time now to pause for a while and appraise the general operation of the road during 1903. When the trolley began running regularly beginning May 16, 1902, it was an immediate and huge success. In the first week every car between Hempstead and Freeport was crowded, and people had to stand, giving Hempstead quite a metropolitan air. As the cars passed through the streets people turned and stared, and groups of panting youngsters chased the cars on their bicycles. Farmers' wives and daughters hung over their fences and gaped with open-mouthed astonishment as the trolleys went whirling by. Horses shied or sat down squarely in the street as the strange monster passed them. There was no doubt of the trolley's popularity however; lots of people took rides just to be able to talk of the experience, and tradesmen were delighted at the number of customers coming downtown to shop.(7)

The company hoped soon to erect a power house of its own, and meanwhile relied on the Roslyn Light, Heat & Power Co. to furnish current. This was transmitted to High St. Hempstead, and converted

- (1) Long Island Democrat, March 10, 1903 2:3
- (2) *ibid.* March 31, 1903 2:5
- (3) Hempstead Sentinel, July 2, 1903 1:2
- (4) *ibid.* July 30, 1903 1:4 and 8:6
- (5) Long Island Democrat, Sept. 1, 1903 2:3
- (6) *ibid.* Oct. 20, 1903 1:4 and Hempstead Sentinel, Sept. 24, 1903 1:5
- (7) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, May 28, 1902 7:2 (and Oct. 1, 1903 1:4)

to 550 DC for operation. In the first months there were occasional power failures. On the morning of May 27th, a drizzly dismal day, the 12th of operation, the line suddenly went dead due to a short circuit in the feed wires at Roslyn. One car was stalled at Greenwich Point and another on Front St., and passengers had to trudge through rain and mud or else hire a horse and wagon. Service was restored by evening.(1) Seven days later, on July 3rd and 4th the whole line had to shut down due to the burning out of a transformer at Roslyn. The company owned three transformers; ordinarily two of these were in regular use, with a third kept in reserve. About this time the two operating transformers needed re-winding, and during the two weeks required for this job the company pressed the reserve machine into service. The reader can guess the sequel. The lone transformer broke down, leaving the whole line without power for two days. On the 5th, service was restored once more. Except for one other breakdown on Nov. 29th, 1903, the company had no further trouble with failing power supply.(2)

There was one feature of the new traction line that was certainly unique on Long Island- a double overhead trolley wire. While this was by no means unique in the United States it was somewhat unusual, being a Cleveland idea. The two wires were both positive, one for each direction, over a single track; on double track through sidings there was but one wire. The advantages of this system were three-fold; less wear on the trolley wire when wheels are always running in one direction; increased electrical conductivity so that less feeders are needed; no overhead special work at sidings.

The four cars, #1, 3, 5 and 7 gave excellent service. Painted an olive brown and decorated with fine gold striping and scroll work on the sides and dash, they presented a handsome appearance. Their four motors made them so fast that the village officials, in alarm, ordered the speed reduced to 8 m.p.h. inside the village limits.(3) It was soon obvious that four cars would be too few to keep the main line, the West End, and the planned southern division operating, so the company almost immediately ordered four new cars similar to the first four,(4) from the John Stephenson Co. In accordance with the old traction custom of using odd numbers only for closed cars, the trolleys were assigned numbers 9, 11, 13 and 15. The employees were superstitious about running a trolley #13, so this number was skipped and numbers 9, 11, 15 and 17 were assigned instead. About June 15th the new car bodies arrived and work began immediately on them. #17 was a combination baggage and passenger car, the only such vehicle the company ever bought.(5) These four new cars and all others thereafter were painted bottle green. By Sept. 25th all was in readiness. The motors, however, had not yet been delivered.(6) By October the cars were complete; a month too late to help out with the summer traffic.

During the week of July 6, 1903, six more car bodies arrived

- (1) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, May 28, 1902 7:2
- (2) Hempstead Sentinel, June 5, 1902 1:1 and Dec. 3, 1903 8:3
- (3) ibid. June 5, 1902 1:1
- (4) ibid. June 12, 1902 1:1 and 1:2
- (5) Hempstead Sentinel, Aug. 14, 1902 1:2
- (6) ibid. Sept. 25, 1902 1:1



TOP - Hempstead carbarn about 1920. Line car on left, High St. (upper) barn in center background and Franklin St. (lower) barn at right. When Foreman Charles Ziegler left in 1918, the overhauling program in the lower barn ceased; this, and use of third rail power were largely responsible for the equipment debacle that ensued

BOTTOM - Looking north on Main St. from Hempstead trolley junction about 1920, with no. 17 loading for Brooklyn, a Brill car behind.

from the Brill plant in Philadelphia - numbers 19, 21, 23, 25, 27 and 29.(1) During the week of July 20th the trucks and motors were received and the assembling of the cars was pushed rapidly.(2) No new cars were bought henceforth until 1905.

The track work on the new line held up well during the first two winters. The company was forced to patch up Front St.(3); at Maple Ave., West Hempstead, the tracks were so high above the street that wagons could scarcely cross, a second grading job for the company. A new switch was installed on Main St. at the curve at the north end of Main St., but was removed in later years.(4)

Schedules at this early date were very simple. Two cars only ran between Mineola and Freeport R.R. station, maintaining a half-hourly schedule; the run took 30 minutes. During the week of Aug. 25th the company agreed to run 3 cars during the afternoons and evenings because of the increased patronage.(5) The fare between Mineola and Freeport was 10¢; between Hempstead and Belmont Park 10¢, with the zone boundary at Franklin Square. On the Queens line the two cars easily maintained the half-hourly schedule in force between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. The travel on the Queens line became so heavy on weekends, especially on Sundays, that the company ran double-headers. The little horse car connecting at Belmont Park was swamped, and many people had to walk to 212th St. to get the Jamaica cars.(6)

On Sept. 22, 1902, an important change was made. The company, feeling that its name was no longer appropriate to a street railway that already ran to Queens, and planned soon to reach Brooklyn, asked for and received permission to have its title altered to "The New York & Long Island Traction Company". The letters N.Y. & L.I.T. were soon a familiar legend to thousands of Queens and Nassau riders.(7)

In Sept., 1902, the company reported the results of the first three months of operation: net earnings \$1325, passengers carried, 63,065, employees, 25, with a total wages of \$865. The earnings were rather good considering the brief time of operation and the shortness of the line.(8)

The one thing that failed to keep pace with the rapid growth of the traction was, oddly enough, its car barn. Designed in 1900 for a nine-mile car line, it was already too small in 1902 to service the system. A single track spur led from Front St. to the barn via High St., and from this single track there branched two spurs into the brick shop building ("upper barn"); later a large corrugated iron shed ("lower barn") was constructed, into which led 6 spurs. Maximum capacity was about 16 cars. Already the company had 14, and would in time add two dozen more, yet the barn was never enlarged. The problem was partly solved in 1904 by the building of outdoor storage tracks at Rockville Centre power house. The company at that time had no service cars as yet, and would never have much room for them. Besides the car sheds, the barn property contained a small brick sub-station adjoining the brick car shops. Here a transformer handled the electricity bought from the Roslyn plant. This was built in Oct. 1902 by Robertson Bros., contractors.(9)

(1) Hempstead Sentinel, July 9, 1903 1:2

(2) *ibid.* July 23, 1902 1:6

(3) *ibid.* June 5, 1902 1:1

(4) *ibid.* July 17, 1902 4:4 & 1:5

(5) *ibid.* Aug. 28, 1902 1:2

(6) *ibid.* Oct. 23, 1902 8:5

(7) Moody's Manual of Public Utilities for 1912

(8) Hempstead Sentinel, Sept. 11, 1902 1:2

(9) *ibid.* Oct. 2, 1902 1:2

A new 200 KW rotary converter was placed in position during the week of Sept. 8, 1902 to assure uninterrupted service.(1) Midway on the property was a small frame shop building for minor repairs and storage. It is one of the mysteries of the Traction Company why the owners spent so freely on extending the lines, and so little on the car house. Equally surprising is the location they chose for the barn; right on the second most important street in town, and on valuable property in the very heart of Hempstead. A far more spacious and less valuable piece of ground could have served equally well on the edge of town, the usual practice with almost all traction companies. Possibly the explanation lies in the fact that the car barn was, in the 80's and 90's the site of a pond fed from the north by a brook that was part of the Brooklyn City Water System. Low and swampy around the edges, the spot was considered of little value. Its nearness to Franklin St. caused the company to fill in the area about 1901. The trolley company, to avoid having a brook break its car barn area in two, bridged the stream over the width of the roadway (about 20 ft.) between the car barns with heavy planks. A visitor standing on the parking lot that occupies the site today would never suspect the former presence of any brook, or for that matter, a car house.

So much for operations in 1902-1903; our story next carries us on to the background and actual completion of the company's most ambitious project, the Southern Division.

(1) Hempstead Sentinel, Sept. 11, 1902 1:3



Macabre scene at Rockville Centre powerplant - dismantling the chimney

CHAPTER IV - THE SOUTHERN DIVISION

The first few years of the 20th Century were the Golden Age of interurban electric railways. After the city systems reached maximum development in the 90's, company presidents turned their attention to suburban branches, ever optimistic that extensions would increase riding and profits. Trolley schemes were in the air all over Long Island in the early 1900's and it was a foregone conclusion that the freshly completed Traction line would not long remain isolated inside Nassau. The Ohio syndicate behind it was ready and willing to advance the necessary capital for a 15 mile interurban extension westward. The residents of all the south side towns were actively interested in the trolley project, for after all, the original impetus for such a line had arisen in the south shore rather than in Hempstead. The townspeople had listened eagerly to the rosy promises of the Nassau Belt in 1899 and 1900, only to see the project collapse unfulfilled. When the Traction, therefore, requested franchises for the Southern Division, the local trustees fell over themselves with eagerness to grant everything asked. The company had conclusively demonstrated its ability to make good its promises and the prestige of this overcame many otherwise formidable obstacles.

The earliest application for the building of the long south side line seems to have been made on April 29, 1902, a month before the main line was opened. The Board of Aldermen of the City of New York was asked to approve a route across Queens to run just north of, and parallel to, the conduit of the Brooklyn Water Works from Rosedale all the way to Elderts Lane, and then north up Elderts Lane to Liberty Ave. In the same application the company requested the Hollis Ave.-Liberty Ave. route to reach Jamaica, and most surprisingly, a franchise for the Jericho Turnpike.(1)

On May 5, 1902 President Ensign appeared before the Highway Commissioners of Nassau County and asked for permission to lay tracks on Atlantic Ave. from Freeport west through Baldwin, Oceanside, Rockville Centre, Lynbrook, and Springfield. Permission was granted. On May 9th a similar petition for a Jericho Turnpike and south side line was addressed to the Nassau County Board of Supervisors, and a hearing was set for June 13th.(2) On May 27, 1902 a public meeting was held at Atheneum Hall, Rockville Centre, before the Town Highway Commissioners, again on the matter of a franchise for the south side; a branch line between Oceanside and Long Beach was also requested. Lawyer MacElhinney promised express trolley service superior to that of the L.I.R.R. President Ensign said it would take six months to get the rails, but thought the road could be put in operation by the following Spring. The audience was favorably inclined, and the commissioners granted the franchise in a month's time.(3) Beginning the week of June 1, 1902, the company employed a Mr. Henry Johnston of East Rockaway to go from house to house collecting signatures of property owners along the south side. At the same time Paul K. Ames, three years before president of the

(1) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, April 30, 1902 9:1
Hempstead Sentinel, May 1, 1902

(2) Long Island Democrat, May 13, 1902 3:2

(3) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, May 28, 1902 7:3



TOP - No. 11 waits on Front St. for the return trip to Jamaica, in front the trolley office as we look east toward the junction, where No. 33 waits on the wye for the car to arrive from Freeport so that it may proceed to Brooklyn (December 1918)

BOTTOM - No. 45 loading on Main St. at Fulton St., bound for Mineola (1920)

Nassau Belt Lines and now president of the Long Beach Transportation Co., operating ferries across the bay to Long Beach, filed a protest against the building of a trolley line on the Long Beach Road. (1)

On June 10, 1902 the company filed with the State Secretary a certificate of extension for the south side line and the Jericho Turnpike: "From Atlantic Ave. and Bedell St. Freeport, west along Atlantic Ave. to Millburn Rd.; north on Millburn one block to Church St.; west on Church to Grand Ave. Baldwin; south down Grand to Atlantic Ave. again; then west along Atlantic Ave., Brower Ave. and Christian Hook Rd. to Foxhurst Rd. (School Ave.); then west on Foxhurst Rd. to the Long Beach Rd.; then north on the Long Beach Rd. to Lincoln Ave. Rockville Centre; then northwest along Lincoln Ave. to the Merrick Rd.; then west on the south side of the Merrick Rd. to just north of the L.I.R.R.; then west along private property parallel to and just north of the L.I.R.R. all through Lynbrook, entering Hawthorne Ave., Valley Stream, at Horton Ave.; then west on Hawthorne Ave. to Hicks St.; then through the swamp and still along private property just north of the L.I.R.R. all through Rosedale, Laurelton, Springfield and Reisley Park to 150th St. (Three Mile Mill Rd.) then west along 135th Ave. (Old South Rd.) to 130th Place (also Old South Rd.); south down 130th Pl. one block to North Conduit Ave.; then west along North Conduit Ave. to 78th St.; here the track was to go on a long diagonal across private property to Glenmore Ave. and Elderts Lane, and finally one block north to Liberty Ave."

If the reader compares this proposed route with the track map of the line as actually built, he will notice several changes in the direction of simplification.

The high cost of building the long south side line caused the Traction to apply to the Board of R.R. Commissioners for permission to increase the capital stock of the company from \$125,000 to \$1,000,000, and to make a first mortgage loan of one million to the Cleveland Trust Co. as security for a bond issue, the proceeds of which were to be used in the construction of 46 miles of trolley road. The company announced that it proposed to use the money as follows:

\$350,000 cover cost of Mineola-Freeport & Hempstead-Queens lines
 \$150,000 cost of proposed Queens-Jamaica line
 \$160,000 cost of proposed Jericho Turnpike line
 \$500,000 cost of proposed south side line to Brooklyn
 \$100,000 for Rockville Centre power plant
 \$ 50,000 for two sub-stations

In the same application it was revealed that the contract with the Cleveland Construction Co. of Akron provided for the building and equipping of the Mineola-Freeport and Hempstead-Queens lines for \$350,000, to be paid by the proceeds of \$100,000 original stock and of a proposed issue of \$250,000 preferred stock when authorized by the stockholders and the R.R. Commission. The actual cost of

(1) Hempstead Sentinel, June 5, 1902 2:2

the Mineola-Freeport line had been \$209,783.94.(1)

On July 8, 1902 the village trustees of Rockville Centre agreed to grant the franchise for the south side route through the incorporated limits of the village.(2) During the last days of July, one small snag developed here; the required consents could not be obtained for Foxhurst Rd. (School Ave.) Rockville Centre, although all others presented no difficulty.(3)

At a meeting before the Commissioners of Highways in Hempstead on Aug. 11th, President Ensign asked for a change of route, avoiding School Ave., Rockville Centre, it being proposed at this point to divert the line to Davison Ave., crossing the Long Beach Rd., to Woods Ave., and up Woods Ave. to the Merrick Rd. He asked franchises for these streets, but the Board deferred action;(4) this revised route in Rockville Centre, however, became the one eventually built.

Other difficulties cropped up in the matter of the Jericho Turnpike application. On Oct. 17, 1902, the Board of Supervisors, in a hearing on the company's application, refused to grant a franchise because of a dispute on what percentage of the trolley revenues should go to the county. The company wanted a franchise for 99 years and a tax-free period of 15 years, but the Board proposed a much shorter time and readjustment of the premiums at certain intervals. Neither side yielded, and a deadlock ensued.(5) Again on Nov. 7th another meeting was held and with the same result. The Board was just about to agree to the Traction's terms when a resident of Cold Spring harangued the Board about being too liberal, and as a result the supervisors once again adjourned without action.(6)

While the company was still hard at work collecting signatures in Oceanside and Rockville Centre during the first week of November, the first ties were being distributed along Atlantic Ave.(7) On Friday, Nov. 21, 1902, the Traction put a large force of laborers to work on the first part of the job in Atlantic Ave., Freeport.(8) On Dec. 22, 1902, the Board of Highway Commissioners formally granted permission to the Traction to lay rails on Atlantic Ave. between the village limits of Freeport and Rockville Centre. President Ensign submitted to the Board the signatures of 70% of the property owners, more than the 2/3 required by law.(9) During the first week of February engineers were busy surveying along the line of the Brooklyn City Water Works conduit between Rockville Centre and the Brooklyn line for the new trolley.(10) During March nearly 5000 railroad ties for the new line were cut and carted from Elmont,(11) and the Traction was busy buying parcels of land just north of the conduit in Queens for the right-of-way.(12) Progress

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|---|-------------------------------------|
| (1) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, July 2, 1902 3:1 | (11) L.I. Democrat, Mar 24 1903 2:3 |
| (2) ibid. July 9, 1902 7:2 | (12) ibid. March 24, 1903 2:4 |
| (3) Hempstead Sentinel, July 31, 1902 4:3 | |
| (4) ibid. Aug. 14, 1902 4:3 | |
| (5) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Oct. 18, 1902 7:3 | |
| (6) ibid. Nov. 8, 1902 7:5 | |
| (7) ibid. Nov. 8, 1902 7:2 | |
| (8) L.I. Democrat, Nov. 25, 1902 2:4 | |
| (9) Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Dec. 23, 1902 8:6 | |
| (10) L.I. Democrat, Feb. 10, 1903 2:3 | |



TOP - Looking east at the trolley junction about 1919 with no. 67 rounding the curve on the wye toward Brooklyn. This splendid semi-steel car was then almost new, the finest, fastest cars ever to run on the Traction being cars 63 to 73. No. 67 burned in Hempstead barn in 1923.

BOTTOM - Flat no. 1 at High St. barn (Hempstead) in 1922. Larry Grella, long time Track Foreman is at extreme right

Park Place, Rockville Centre, a point a few blocks south of the village business center, and not far from the power house.(1)

With the company now so near the Queens County line, renewed efforts were made to secure a franchise for Queens from the Board of Aldermen. The company made a change of route this time, taking a simple, direct route from the conduit along Rockaway Rd. to the Brooklyn line, instead of the more costly, unsettled and hence unprofitable right-of-way beside the conduit through South Ozone Park.

When the news leaked out early in November that the company proposed to build along the Rockaway Rd., there was a rush among speculators to secure options on desirable parcels of property.(2) During the week of Nov. 16th the company was engaged in securing consents from the property owners in Rosedale and South Jamaica. Several withheld their signatures, but after a visit from President Ensign they were won over and appeared before the Railroad Committee of the Board of Aldermen of New York City urging the granting of a franchise. The next step was a hearing before the Board of Apportionment.(3)

This body and the Board of Estimate, re-worded and altered the proposed franchises and reported back to the Board of Aldermen.(4) On Dec. 22nd the Board of Aldermen granted the franchise for the conduit and Rockaway Rd. routes, and at the same time the Jericho Turnpike line between Bellaire and Bellerose, and the Hollis Ave.-Liberty Ave. routes to Jamaica. The franchise was for 25 years, and its terms were as follows: During the first 5 years, an annual sum of not less than \$1000, and equal to 3% of the gross annual receipts within the city limits; if such percentage should exceed the sum of \$1000 during the remaining 20 years, an annual sum of not less than \$2000, and which shall be equal to 5% of its gross annual receipts, if such percentage shall exceed the sum of \$2000.(5) Six miles of road had to be completed by Jan.1, 1905, and the whole road by July 1, 1906. The franchises were accepted by the company and filed in the county clerk's office on Feb. 1904.(6)

In January, 1904, the company asked for and received permission to change its route through Valley Stream, using Jamaica Ave. rather than Hawthorne Ave. as originally planned.(7) Toward the end of January the company contracted for the steel bridge to carry its rails over the L.I.R.R. just west of the Rockville Centre power house.(8) So rapidly did construction progress that by the first of February the bridge was completed.(9)

During the last days of March the company set to work building west from Rockville Centre, after considerable negotiation over acquiring property rights. During the third week of March the company put in operation the new Rockville Centre power plant, greatly

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| (1) Hempstead Sentinel, Sept. 24, 1903
1:3 and Oct. 1, 1903 6:2 | (6) L.I. Democrat Feb. 23, 1904 3:1,
Mar. 1, 1904 3:1 |
| (2) L.I. Democrat, Nov. 10, 1903 3:2 | (7) Hempstead Sentinel, Feb. 25,
1904 8:4 |
| (3) <i>ibid.</i> Nov. 17, 1903 2:1 | (7) Hempstead Sentinel, Jan. 7,
1904 8:4 |
| (4) <i>ibid.</i> Dec. 1, 1903 2:5 and Hemp-
stead Sentinel, Nov. 26, 1903 1:2 | (8) Hemp. Sentinel Jan. 28, 1904 8:3 |
| (5) Hempstead Sentinel, Dec. 24, 1903 2:2
L.I. Democrat Dec. 29, 1903 3:3 | (9) <i>ibid.</i> Feb. 4, 1904 8:6 |

improving the voltage on the south side and relieving the Hempstead sub-station of the load.(1) A high tension line for the transmission of AC current from the power station at Rockville Centre to the sub-station at Hempstead, a distance of 4-1/2 miles, was put into service at the same time.

The prospect of trolley service on the south side of Queens was eagerly awaited by Jamaica and Ozone Park residents. The Long Island Democrat, in an editorial, expressed the general feelings:(2)

"...this section of the borough is soon to have a fully equipped trolley service with a 5¢ fare. This will open up an entirely new territory for development, and bring Jamaica in touch with that section of the finest land for home seekers. Many do not realize that this section is much cooler in summer and warmer in winter than any other section in a corresponding latitude in the U.S. No doubt real estate speculators will take advantage of this opportunity and make handsome profits on their dealings. The N.Y. & L.I. Traction Co., a combination of Cleveland capitalists, are building with their own money, it is said, the best trolley line of the age."

The company's decision to use the Rockaway Road to get to the Brooklyn line instead of the conduit property involved one more grade crossing skirmish with the L.I.R.R. The tracks would have to cross at 100th St. and the Traction again strongly favored a grade crossing and with good reason; building a ramp for a trestle would block up residential cross streets, obstruct property frontage, and in general create an eyesore. The R.R. Commissioners considered the application of the company in mid-April 1904, and in December rendered a favorable verdict.(3) The railroad did not fight very hard this time. Their lawyers grumbled a bit, and the superintendent hastily laid two more tracks at the crossing, making four altogether, to increase the trolley company's construction difficulties, but opposed the project in no other way.

Construction in the private right-of-way just north of the L.I. R.R. through Lynbrook was held up very briefly pending condemnation proceedings, but then picked up speed.(4) Meanwhile the route in Valley Stream along Jamaica Ave., the swamp west of Hicks St. and the conduit was being surveyed.(5) Progress was so good that trolley service opened to Lynbrook L.I.R.R. station by the week of May 22, 1904.

The next immediate obstruction was the Clear Stream branch conduit of the Brooklyn City Water Works, a branch water conduit that still conducts water from the Hempstead Reservoir and Smith's Pond to the main conduit. This branch crosses the Traction right-of-way and the L.I.R.R. near Peninsula Blvd., Lynbrook. For several weeks it appeared that the company would be held up, but an amicable agreement was reached with the city. The company was to lay a cement foundation for the tracks to protect the conduit, and was to pay \$110 per year rental for the right to cross.(6) The company

(1) L.I. Democrat, Mar. 29, 1904 1:4
Hemp. Sentinel, Mar. 3, 1904 1:4
(2) L.I. Democrat, Mar. 29, 1904 2:1

(3) L.I. Democrat, Apr. 19, 1904 2:4
(4) Hemp. Sentinel, Apr. 21, 1904 2:2
(5) *ibid.* May 12, 1904 2:1
(6) *ibid.* June 2, 1904 1:1; June 16, 1904 1:4 & L.I. Dem. June 7, 1904 3:2

quickly laid rail and pushed westward until it reached the next obstruction; the L.I.R.R. branch one block west of Hawthorne and Satterlee Aves., Valley Stream. By June 23, 1904, trolley service was in operation to this corner.(1)

Construction on the bridge began early in June, and by the end of the month everything was in place except for the overhead. Rail crews quickly laid ties and rails in Jamaica Ave., Valley Stream up to the edge of the swamp at Hicks St.(2) On July 23, 1904 the trolleys began regular service over the trestle of the West Hempstead L.I.R.R. branch, running as far as Franklin Avenue.

The pile driver used to strengthen the roadbed over the swamp west of Hicks St. broke down temporarily, delaying progress.(3) From the swamp the track continued on private right-of-way, re-joining the L.I.R.R. at Camdyke St. From here the track was rapidly laid parallel to the railroad line. During the first week of August 1904 over 10,000 ties were delivered at the county line for the trolley roadbed. The grading between Jamaica and Rosedale was pushed rapidly, and rails were distributed along the line.(4) The company bought the Sappelt farm, extending from the Rosedale L.I. R.R. station on both sides of Cross Island Blvd. north to the Ker-ric's Road for \$5000 for a car barn, a plan that was never realized.(5)

By Sept. 6th the construction gangs had reached Springfield, and large timbers were being unloaded at the railroad station there to carry the trolley over the L.I.R.R. tracks at 230th St.(6)

It so happened that, at the very moment when the trolley tracks were about to be laid across the railroad right-of-way, the L.I.R.R. decided to relay the rails on the old Cedarhurst cut-off. The railroad began to re-grade and re-lay rail on the old New York & Rockaway R.R., abandoned right-of-way from Laurelton station to Cedarhurst, keeping strings of gondolas and flat cars on the line that entirely prevented the trolley construction gangs from laying their rails. It certainly seemed that this sudden urge for reviving a dead line was just one more act of harassment on the part of the L.I.R.R., and was so interpreted by contemporaries; the new L.I. R.R. track was never used (7) except for sporadic freight service, although talk of electrifying this short-cut to Rockaway persisted down to as late as 1912.

The semi-blockade at Springfield forced the company to put up a steel and concrete trestle with wooden approaches over the L.I. R.R.. Building this span halted the westward progress of the track gangs. To avoid losing time, the Traction began work at the Brooklyn line and pushed eastward to join the Springfield rail-head.

During the week of Oct. 16, 1904 the Traction unloaded ties and rails along 101st Ave. (Jerome Ave. or Broadway) from the City

- (1) Hempstead Sentinel, June 23, 1904 6:1 (5) *ibid.*, Aug. 23, 1904 2:4 &
 (2) L.I. Democrat, July 5, 1904 2:3 Dec. 5, 1905 2:3
 (3) *ibid.* July 26, 1904 3:2 and Hemp. Sent. (6) *ibid.* Sept. 6, 1904 2:2 &
 July 28, 1904 2:1 2:4
 (4) L.I. Democrat, Aug. 16, 1904 2:2 & Aug. (7) *ibid.* Sept. 6, 1904 2:4
 30, 1904 1:5



TOP - BRT 3722 on Front St., Hempstead, waiting to start for Jamaica (1922)
BOTTOM - No. 68 bound for Hempstead in 1923, about to cross the LIRR in Queens at the time the grade crossing was being eliminated. The car had just been rebuilt in Morris Park, repainted orange, but its speed and power ruined by removal of two of the four motors.

Line as far as Rockaway Rd. and along that street a short distance eastward.(1) On Nov. 1, 1904 the company made a contract with contractor John Doty to haul the 13 tons of iron needed for the Queens end of the Southern Division. Mr. Doty had already furnished all the teams needed by the company along the conduit road.(2) By Nov. 8th the single track of the Traction was all in place from City Line as far as the L.I.R.R. crossing at Ozone Park.(3) By Nov. 22nd the line was completed to 121st St.(4) Progress was so good that the company officials hoped to complete the road by Dec. 15th, a hope that proved four months premature.(5) By Nov. 29, 1904 rails were all laid as far as 150th St. South Jamaica.(6)

Construction meanwhile was hurried at Springfield on the bridge over the L.I.R.R. During the first week of November, a large force of men was at work.(7) The blockade of six freight cars was continued at the crossing by the L.I.R.R., making work difficult.(8) About Dec. 1, 1904 trolley service opened to Hook Creek Blvd., Rosedale.(9)

In December, the State R.R. Commissioners finally gave their decision about the Springfield and Ozone Park crossings; both were allowed to be at grade with derailing switches, but the decision came too late at Springfield to help the company. The bridge was almost all built, for the blockade maintained by the railroad had effectively prevented any crossing here at grade.(10)

During the first week of January 1905 construction gangs were setting up poles on 101st Avenue and the Rockaway Rd., while others were uniting the western track with the eastern rail-head at Springfield.(11) Feb.1st was set as the new opening date, again prematurely. On Feb. 15th through trolley service was opened as far west as New York Ave., "Jamaica Junction".(12) This was made possible by completion of the iron bridge at Springfield. The last break in the whole system was the gap over the L.I.R.R. tracks at Ozone Park. During the third week of March this link was completed.(13) The finishing touches were hastily put to the line, and on April 8th or 9th, 1905, Long Island's first interurban line that had been two years building, was at last opened for its full length, with half-hourly service between the Brooklyn line and Mineola, a run of 24 miles. The work had been a long and costly business, but it brought immediate and heavy returns to the company.

We have detailed at great length the building of the South Side Division; the physical and financial outlay for this great project had the effect of delaying for months and eventually years

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| (1) L.I. Democrat, Oct. 18, 1904 2:3 & 3:1 | (9) <i>ibid.</i> Dec. 6, 1904 2:4 |
| (2) Hempstead Sentinel, Nov. 3, 1904 1:2 | (10) Hemp. Sentinel, Dec. 15, 1904 1:6 |
| (3) L.I. Democrat, Nov. 8, 1904 2:2 | L.I. Democrat, Dec. 20, 1904 2:3 |
| (4) <i>ibid.</i> Nov. 22, 1904 2:3 | (11) L.I. Democrat, Jan. 10, 1905 2:3 |
| (5) Hempstead Sentinel, Nov. 24, 1904 4:6 | (12) <i>ibid.</i> Feb. 7, 1905 2:3 & Feb. 14, 1905 3:1 |
| (6) L.I. Democrat, Nov. 29, 1904 2:4 | (13) Hemp. Sentinel, Mar. 16, 1905 1:6 |
| (7) <i>ibid.</i> , Nov. 8, 1904 2:3 | L.I. Dem. Mar. 21, 1905 3:2 |
| (8) <i>ibid.</i> , Nov. 22, 1904 2:4 | |

the construction of the Jericho Turnpike route, application for which had been made at the same time as the south side. Counselor MacElhinney of the Traction was obliged to apply for an extension of the Pike franchise to July 1st, 1905, which was granted; the authorities agreed provided that the Traction would carry school children at half fare and post a \$2000 bond.(1) As events turned out, the Jericho Turnpike line would have to wait until 1906 for completion.

Surprising as it may seem, the Traction contemplated building eastward as far as Babylon during the summer of 1903, at the same time that track laying was being pushed vigorously on Hempstead Turnpike and the south side. A rival company, called the South Shore Traction Co., had just been organized to build from Elmont to Brookhaven, and the Traction feared that its business would be seriously threatened by the new organization, which was actively snapping up franchises right and left in each of the South Shore towns. To forestall this disaster, the Traction decided to apply for its own line to Babylon. On June 8, 1903, the Traction appeared before the Highway Commissioners of Nassau County to oppose the South Shore's application.(2) On June 15th at another meeting of the Commission, President Ensign presented consents of property owners for Kirkwood Ave., Merrick, Hogshead Rd., Bellmore, and Hickory St., Seaford.(3) At this early period the south side towns east of Freeport were hardly built up at all, and the route of the proposed traction line would therefore traverse private property almost all the way, emerging for very short intervals into village streets. In general, the route was planned to run about three blocks north of, and parallel to, the Merrick Rd. On June 29th, when the rival South Shore Co. appeared before the Commission to press their claims, the Traction opposed them by pointing out to the Board that the South Shore was not incorporated and therefore incapable of completing a contract.(4) At a later meeting on July 6th further wrangling developed over whether stone or shells could be used for paving.(5) Final hearings were held on the claims of the rival companies on July 13th, at which the Traction presented further consents.(6) On July 27th, 1903 President Ensign met with the Commissioners to discuss terms; the proposed franchise was to run 99 years from July 1903; the road was to be completed through to Babylon by July 1, 1905 with sidings at intervals; six trips at least were to be made daily; there were to be three zones: Freeport to Seaford, 10¢; Seaford to the Suffolk line, 5¢; and from there to Babylon, 10¢.(7) Further consideration of this application took place before subsequent board meetings on August 3rd and 10th, 1903.(8) On the latter date the commissioners granted the franchise to the N.Y. & L.I. Traction over the objections of the South Shore Co., for the Babylon line, and subject to the conditions of the franchise named above; construction was to be of T rail.(9)

- (1) Hemp. Sentinel, Apr. 13, 1905 1:5
L.I. Democrat, Apr. 4, 1905 2:3
- (2) Hemp. Sentinel, June 30, 1904 4:5
- (3) Hemp. Sentinel, June 11, 1903 4:4
- (4) *ibid.* June 18, 1903 4:3
- (5) *ibid.* July 2, 1903 4:2
- (6) *ibid.* July 9, 1903 4:4
- (7) *ibid.* July 16, 1903 4:2
- (8) Hempstead Sentinel, July 30, 1903 4:2
- (9) *ibid.* August 6, 1903 1:4

With its rival vanquished and the franchise safely in its hands, the Traction thereupon sat back and did absolutely nothing. Never again is the possibility of such an eastward extension mentioned! Evidently the company instituted the entire proceedings solely to shut out the South Shore, and not because it had the slightest intention of building. The mere existence of the Traction franchise disrupted for years the plans of the South Shore for a 60-mile line all along the shore.

This was not the only attempt of the Traction to forestall a rival. When the Long Beach Transportation Co. proposed to build its trolley line from Atlantic Ave., Freeport, to the end of the Woodcleft Canal, the Traction again petitioned to build a line, and ordered open cars, (1) but this time it was the other company that eventually won out, for the Freeport line opened on May 27, 1905. (2)

One last much-proposed link remains to be disposed of: the Traction's route into Jamaica from Belmont Park along Hollis Ave. and Liberty Ave. We have mentioned several times the difficulties the Traction experienced in trying to get the permission of the Long Island Electric to use their Jamaica Ave. tracks. This went on all during 1903 and 1904. People hated to change cars at Belmont Park and the newspapers on occasion inveighed against the inconvenience. (3) The property owners in Jamaica were opposed to another car line, yet as late as Nov. 7, 1904 the company was surveying in Jamaica preparatory to exercising the franchise granted by the city Dec. 22, 1903 for this Liberty Ave. route. (4) The situation would remain deadlocked until both the Traction and the Long Island Electric passed under one management in 1906.

The company also abandoned all thought of building to Long Beach. The old franchise to build from the corner of the Long Beach Rd. and Roxhurst Rd. south down Long Beach Ave. to Long Beach was never exercised; neither was the connection from Atlantic and Waukena Aves., Baldwin, south down Waukena Ave. to the Long Beach Rd. ever constructed. The South Side had cost so much money that any further construction was unthinkable.

This brings to a close at last the period of constant building or talk of it. Let us pause for a little while to examine operations on the whole system during 1904 and 1905.

The roadbed, despite considerable haste, served very well. The South Side was largely 80 lb. T rail except for the village sections, where tram rail was standard. The overhead was all double trolley wire, one for each direction. The entire route was single track with numerous sidings. The ties were all laid on natural gravel or sand, which provided a fairly uniform roadbed and drainage. At times the weight of the cars required raising sections of rail; at Henry St. and Jerusalem Ave., for instance,

(1) Hempstead Sentinel, May 26, 1904 7:3

(2) *ibid.* May 4, 1905 4:2

(3) *ibid.* August 25, 1904 1:1

(4) Long Island Democrat, Nov. 8, 1904 3:2



Three views of the sad results of the Hempstead car barn fire
TOP - (left) probably BRT (center) NY&QC no. 321 or 330 (right) B.Op. 5
CENTER- BRT no. 710 BOTTOM - NY&LIT no. 21

we hear that the track sank half a foot and had to be raised again.(1) Long stretches in East Rockaway and Oceanside developed the opposite trouble; the rails were so high above grade that carriages could get across only with the greatest difficulties. The company solved this by graveling heavily the offending areas.(2)

During October, 1904, all rails within the Hempstead village limits were ballasted with Peekskill gravel to quiet complaints.(3) During the same month the company tore out the old tracks on each side of the West Hempstead crossing which had been out of service since the trestle was opened,(4) although, oddly enough, the wire and brackets were suffered to remain for years.

In the administrative set-up of the company a few changes took place during 1903 and 1904. The new post of General Manager was created in July 1903, and given to Charles Thresher of Ohio, a man with experience on Western interurbans.(5) A more important change took place in February 1904 with the resignation of President Ensign, who had guided the company from its infancy to the peak of its mileage and prosperity; he was succeeded by George A. Stanley of Cleveland, Ohio, president of the construction company that owned and built the N.Y. & L.I. Traction. With him came Frank Polhamus, also of Cleveland, as superintendent.(6) These new men would guide the destinies of the Traction for just one year until the absorption of the company by the IRT-LIRR.

The service on the entire system provides a study in seasonal scheduling, a see-sawing every six months between the half-hourly and hourly schedule. The public wanted the 30 minute interval; the company claimed every Fall that the traffic justified only hourly service, and this would go on until the public again got its own way in Spring. Here are the known schedules in these early days and the effective dates:

30 mins.	9 a.m.- 7 p.m.	July 2, 1903
30 mins.	5:30 a.m.- 11 p.m.	Oct.10, 1903
	but hourly to Rockville Centre	
60 mins.	on whole system	November 1903
40 mins.	on whole system	March 12, 1903
30 mins.	9 a.m.- 9 p.m.	May 28, 1904
60 mins.	on whole system	December, 1904
30 mins.	morn & rush hrs. on Mineola-Hempstead	
60 mins.	on Southern Division	Jan. 23, 1905
60 mins.	on whole system	February 9, 1905
30 mins.	on whole system	April 16, 1905

At times traffic became very heavy, especially during Fair Week at Mineola in September, when everybody flocked to the outdoor displays to see the races and farm exhibits. On these occasions the company ran triple headers at 15 minute intervals, and the crews put in as much as 18 hours a day. During the Fair of

(1) Hempstead Sentinel, August 6, 1903 1:3

(2) *ibid.* May 19, 1904 5:6

(3) *ibid.* September 29, 1904 1:1

(4) *ibid.* October 27, 1904 8:4

(5) *ibid.* July 23, 1903 1:5

(6) *ibid.* February 11, 1904 1:4 and Long Island Democrat, February 23, 1904 2:4

September, 1903, for example, 50,000 passengers were carried, with receipts of over \$2,500.(1) The same thing happened in September, 1904, moving the local paper to comment:

"During the County Fair last week the trolleys carried thousands of passengers without a single accident that we have heard of, though at times the crowds that filled the cars was something awful. So many people desiring a particular car, at a particular time, when the rush was expected to be the heaviest, that even the double service was not able to provide all with seats. Employees rendered well their part, were courteous, obliging and careful of patrons' interests. Though they ran up against a big proposition, they were fully equal to it."(2)

On sunny summer Sundays and Memorial Day, double and triple headers were fairly common. The West End line to Jamaica was especially heavy in summer.(3) All this rushing and bustle of trolleys in Hempstead gave the place quite a metropolitan air; conductors, on reaching the main junction at Main and Fronts St., shouted out in professional railroad-conductor tones; "Change cars for City Hall and Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn, Jamaica, Queens, Elmont, Franklin Square, Munson Garden City, and Mineola!"(4) It certainly gave Hempsteaders a feeling of being the center of the universe these days! The Sentinel was moved to boast:

"A Manhattan man who made a tour of the local trolley line was overheard by a Sentinel representative to say that the cars closely resembled those of the Pullman in equipment and smoothness of running. It was a perfectly natural remark to make. He probably was 'thumped up and down' so many times a minute in using the city cars that when he found such quiet and comfort here it had to be expressed. The city service doesn't begin to compare with the pleasure provided by the local service. When the fare to and from Freeport is established and a little more Peekskill gravel is used on the local roadbed, conditions will be just about perfect."(5)

Occasionally the Traction, by its very zeal, brought extra expense upon itself. In June, 1903, it hired a wagon sprinkler to lay the dust during a hot spell.(6) The authorities thought it was such a good idea that they made it mandatory in July, 1904!(7) Occasional other improvements were made; a new siding, later #60, was built in Stauderman Ave., Lynbrook to handle the traffic.(8) An additional feed wire was also put up all along the southern division to power "express" cars to Brooklyn.(9)

Winter operation in lonely stretches of Nassau County was anything but easy in these early days. The company started with no snow equipment at all, but soon found out how necessary it was the first

(1) Hemp.Sentinel, Oct.1, 1903 1:5

(2) ibid. September 29, 1904 1:1

(3) ibid. May 26, 1904 1:1

(4) ibid. January 28, 1904 1:1

(5) ibid. April 14, 1904 1:1

(6) Hemp.Sentinel, June 11, 1903 1:1

(7) L.I.Democrat, July 26, 1904 1:4

(8) Hemp.Sentinel, Dec.22, 1904 2:3

(9) ibid. January 19, 1905 5:4

winter. In December of 1903 the company completed the construction of its first snow plow.(1) This same plow, during the heavy snows of December, 1904, did a fine service by opening a passage for horses and wagons on roads that were otherwise impassable, and received newspaper commendation for it.(2) Not long afterward it performed a more dramatic service. A heavy snow fell the week of Jan. 23, 1905; despite this, the usual hourly trolley left Wednesday morning, January 25th, for Belmont Park. When the car, piloted by Lew Smalling, the line's first motorman, reached East Elmont, the wind, whipping up ever-higher drifts, spread mountainous blankets of snow over the rails and in no time at all the trolley was cut off in front and behind, and buried up to the roof. The howling wind persisted all day Wednesday while the crew huddled near the heaters to keep warm. Thursday morning dawned gray and snowy and the men, cold and tired, were beginning to worry, so they got out shovels and cleared up about 500 feet. Within a short time the wind had drifted it all back and the men had to retreat once again inside the car. During a lull in the storm the men made their way on foot to the nearby Ludlum farmhouse and got their first meal in two days. Friday morning it was still snowing and the crew, after climbing back to the car roof to look over the country, once again withdrew to the farmhouse. By this time the Hempstead car barn was getting worried. Three days had passed since the trolley had left for Queens, and nothing had been heard of car or crew. Early Saturday morning the snow plow, with a large crew, chopped and swept their way westward, and after hours of struggling, sighted Lew Smalling frantically waving atop his car, far down the road. As dusk fell, the puffing plow finally reached the crew and dragged back car and men to Hempstead. The car had been marooned 80 hours altogether- certainly a record unsurpassed before or since.(3)

The accident rate during these early years was very low. The system operated a whole year before the first fatality on June 13, 1903.(4) On Feb. 1, 1904, one of the trolley cars on the Hempstead Turnpike jumped the tracks near Belmont Park and plunged into a telephone pole. The front of the car was broken in and both trucks damaged.(5) On June 22nd car #1 was damaged by lightning that struck the trolley wires, requiring a rewiring job.(6) A month later the company sustained its first big accident involving many people and unfavorable publicity. On the morning of July 20th car #7, filled with Sunday School students and adults, left St. George's Church, Hempstead, bound for Lynbrook, where the party would continue on to Long Beach. As the car rounded a slight curve at Roosevelt at a fair rate of speed, a northbound construction car #099 suddenly appeared and crashed head-on into #7. The entire front of the car was smashed in and the seats ripped from their moorings. Fortunately, no one was killed, but a score were injured and the company spent several months settling damage suits out of court.(7)

On Nov. 25, 1904 a car broke an axle at Jerusalem Ave., Hempstead, causing it to jump the track and crash into a pole, snapping

(1) Hemp. Sentinel, Dec. 17, 1903 1:3

(2) *ibid.* Dec. 29, 1904 8:4

(3) *ibid.* Feb. 2, 1905 8:3 & 8:4

(4) *ibid.* June 18, 1903 1:6

(5) L. I. Democrat, Feb. 2, 1904 2:4

(6) Hemp. Sentinel, June 23, 1904 1:6

(7) *ibid.* July 21, 1904 1:5 & 1:1

it in two.(1) On March 27, 1905 another car jumped the track on the West Hempstead trestle, but no damage was done.(2)

Business was so good during 1905 that the company ordered four new cars from Brill, numbers 31, 33, 35 and 37, all convertibles, and these arrived in Hempstead about April 1.(3) A careful description of these cars with respect to dimensions and construction appeared in the Street Railway Journal, the second time that the Traction was accorded such an honor.

Fares in these early days were simple. It cost 5¢ from Mineola to Hempstead, but 10¢ from Hempstead or Mineola to Freeport. At first there was no objection to this rate, but when the Traction opened its Southern Division it made the mistake of charging only 5¢ for the 8 route miles between Rockville Centre and Freeport. The Hempstead customers quickly noticed the disparity between their 10¢ rate to Freeport and the 5¢ Rockville Centre-Freeport ride, and began agitating for a reduction.(5) In April, a petition signed by over 100 business men was presented to the company urging a 5¢ fare;(6) no good came of this, so the Trustees of Freeport undertook to submit a similar petition a year later.(7) Nothing came of all these petitions. The traction apparently felt that a 20¢ fare all the way to Brooklyn was cheap enough, and that 10¢ was reasonable for a ride one-third this distance. Business was heavy on all the lines, especially in the Southern Division, and the company could afford to ignore a little criticism.

Other eyes besides those of the passengers were fixed upon the Traction and its evident prosperity in these early years; powerful financial organizations, and one great financier in particular, coveted the Traction system, not because of any special virtues in itself, but because it held a key place in any possible street railway empire on Long Island. August Belmont, the financial genius behind the Interborough Rapid Transit, a director of the L.I.R.R., and a resident of Hempstead, had, as early as 1903, conceived the idea of uniting the trolley companies of Queens and Nassau into one big system. In the summer of 1903 he undertook to interest his fellow directors on the L.I.R.R. and the IRT in such a project, the idea being that the trolley lines would act as valuable feeders to both the rapid transit lines and the steam roads. The idea was approved, and secret negotiations authorized. By December, 1903, Belmont had acquired majority stock control of the New York & Queens Co. Ry.; the Stanley management of the Traction was next approached, and on June 19, 1905, it was publicly announced that the sale had been made.(8) The negotiations were kept secret and nothing was really known until the public confirmation of the sale. As early as August, 1903, the newspapers speculated on Belmont's plans with respect to the Traction. After all, his great new race track would be a heavy drawing card, and the trolley passing the property could expect heavy traffic.(9) In February, 1903, Belmont and two friends reportedly took a tour of

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| (1) Hemp.Sentinel, Dec.1,1904 1:1 | (6) Hemp.Sentinel, Apr.21,1904 1:5 |
| (2) ibid. March 30, 1905 8:2 | (7) ibid. Feb.23,1905 1:1 |
| (3) ibid. March 16, 1905 1:6, also
Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Apr.12,1905 | (8) Report of the NY & LIT to the
RR Comm.for 1906 |
| (4) Street Railway Journal, June 24,
1905, p.1106 | (9) Hemp.Sentinel, Aug.6,1903 8:3 |
| (5) Hemp.Sentinel Aug.27,1903 1:5 and
March 10,1904 1:1; and L.I.Democrat
Feb.23,1904 1:3 | |

inspection over the line to appraise service and facilities.(1) Early in 1905 dummy purchasers, acting in the interests of Belmont, succeeded in buying up a majority of the stock, which they then transferred to Belmont. Once the sale was consummated, the future management of the two trolley systems was clarified. The IRT and the L.I.R.R. would jointly own the two lines, but because of geographical considerations the New York & Queens was to be run exclusively by the IRT, and the outlying New York & Long Island Traction by the L.I.R.R. Thus, by an irony of circumstance, the Traction fell into the hands of its old enemy, the L.I.R.R.

(1) Hempstead Sentinel, February 25, 1904 5:6



FARE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

NEW YORK and LONG ISLAND TRACTION CO.
 This receipt is valid between 6:30 A.M. and 6:30 P.M. on days when service is maintained.
 000905
 28

NY & LI T R
 30
 15 AM 45
 15 PM 45
 30
NY & LI T R

GOOD ONLY 1st Class 2nd Class 3rd Class 4th Class 5th Class 6th Class 7th Class 8th Class 9th Class 10th Class 11th Class 12th Class 13th Class 14th Class 15th Class 16th Class 17th Class 18th Class 19th Class 20th Class 21st Class 22nd Class 23rd Class 24th Class 25th Class 26th Class 27th Class 28th Class 29th Class 30th Class 31st Class 32nd Class 33rd Class 34th Class 35th Class 36th Class 37th Class 38th Class 39th Class 40th Class 41st Class 42nd Class 43rd Class 44th Class 45th Class 46th Class 47th Class 48th Class 49th Class 50th Class 51st Class 52nd Class 53rd Class 54th Class 55th Class 56th Class 57th Class 58th Class 59th Class 60th Class 61st Class 62nd Class 63rd Class 64th Class 65th Class 66th Class 67th Class 68th Class 69th Class 70th Class 71st Class 72nd Class 73rd Class 74th Class 75th Class 76th Class 77th Class 78th Class 79th Class 80th Class 81st Class 82nd Class 83rd Class 84th Class 85th Class 86th Class 87th Class 88th Class 89th Class 90th Class 91st Class 92nd Class 93rd Class 94th Class 95th Class 96th Class 97th Class 98th Class 99th Class 100th Class	GOOD ONLY 1st Class 2nd Class 3rd Class 4th Class 5th Class 6th Class 7th Class 8th Class 9th Class 10th Class 11th Class 12th Class 13th Class 14th Class 15th Class 16th Class 17th Class 18th Class 19th Class 20th Class 21st Class 22nd Class 23rd Class 24th Class 25th Class 26th Class 27th Class 28th Class 29th Class 30th Class 31st Class 32nd Class 33rd Class 34th Class 35th Class 36th Class 37th Class 38th Class 39th Class 40th Class 41st Class 42nd Class 43rd Class 44th Class 45th Class 46th Class 47th Class 48th Class 49th Class 50th Class 51st Class 52nd Class 53rd Class 54th Class 55th Class 56th Class 57th Class 58th Class 59th Class 60th Class 61st Class 62nd Class 63rd Class 64th Class 65th Class 66th Class 67th Class 68th Class 69th Class 70th Class 71st Class 72nd Class 73rd Class 74th Class 75th Class 76th Class 77th Class 78th Class 79th Class 80th Class 81st Class 82nd Class 83rd Class 84th Class 85th Class 86th Class 87th Class 88th Class 89th Class 90th Class 91st Class 92nd Class 93rd Class 94th Class 95th Class 96th Class 97th Class 98th Class 99th Class 100th Class	New York and Long Island Traction Company MINEOLA BROOKLYN DIVISION 1st Class 2nd Class 3rd Class 4th Class 5th Class 6th Class 7th Class 8th Class 9th Class 10th Class 11th Class 12th Class 13th Class 14th Class 15th Class 16th Class 17th Class 18th Class 19th Class 20th Class 21st Class 22nd Class 23rd Class 24th Class 25th Class 26th Class 27th Class 28th Class 29th Class 30th Class 31st Class 32nd Class 33rd Class 34th Class 35th Class 36th Class 37th Class 38th Class 39th Class 40th Class 41st Class 42nd Class 43rd Class 44th Class 45th Class 46th Class 47th Class 48th Class 49th Class 50th Class 51st Class 52nd Class 53rd Class 54th Class 55th Class 56th Class 57th Class 58th Class 59th Class 60th Class 61st Class 62nd Class 63rd Class 64th Class 65th Class 66th Class 67th Class 68th Class 69th Class 70th Class 71st Class 72nd Class 73rd Class 74th Class 75th Class 76th Class 77th Class 78th Class 79th Class 80th Class 81st Class 82nd Class 83rd Class 84th Class 85th Class 86th Class 87th Class 88th Class 89th Class 90th Class 91st Class 92nd Class 93rd Class 94th Class 95th Class 96th Class 97th Class 98th Class 99th Class 100th Class
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NEW YORK and LONG ISLAND TRACTION COMPANY
CITY DIVISION
 Good only on east bound cars of Long Island Electric Railway Company from Rockaway Branch to Nass (West Branch) on days mentioned below and good time mentioned in margin.
 296397

1920
 The New York & Long Island
 Traction Company
 SCHOOL TICKET
 075379

TOP - Last car in existence that ever operated on the NY&LIT which is now being restored at Branford
 BOTTOM - Transfers, pass, ticket (W. H. Rugen and W. Nason Cooper)

CHAPTER V - UNDER INTERBOROUGH - L.I.R.R. MANAGEMENT

The absorption of the NY&LIT by the IRT-LIRR combine was scarcely noticed by the man in the street; it seemed to be just one more of the many corporate maneuvers so common in street railway properties of the day. The cars kept the same appearance and ran as usual, and the only visible change was in the faces of the officials at headquarters. The old Cleveland Construction Company personnel who had built and operated the Traction, left all their posts and devoted their further energies to the organization and construction of a new trolley system which, since 1903, had been in the planning stage; namely, the New York & North Shore Traction. The new officers and directors at the helm of the Traction were now all IRT-appointed trolley men from the New York & Queens; Arthur Turnbull of Philadelphia, president; F.L. Fuller, vice-president and general manager; and Frank E. Haff, secretary.(1) Superintendent Polhamus, who had managed the road since 1902 resigned in October, 1905.(2) B.B. Winchester of Wilkes-Barre, Pa., was appointed in his place.(3)

With the purchase of the Traction the IRT-LIRR combine became quite a power in the street railway system of Long Island. The NY & QC had been acquired in December, 1903; the addition of the Traction in June, 1905, completed the eastern end of their proposed monopoly. There remained only the Long Island Electric Railway to be acquired in order to join the two systems, and this was engineered in January, 1906, creating a truly sizable system, spanning two counties.

The new IRT officials assumed the management of the Traction with a vigor that did them credit; the first task to which they addressed themselves was the completion of the Jericho Turnpike line. Finding that the negotiations with the Nassau County authorities were still unsettled, they promptly concluded a mutually satisfactory agreement, and ordered twelve trolleys from Brill for the new service. Announcement of immediate construction was made in March, 1906,(4) and during the first week of May the first ties and rails were distributed over the new line from Hempstead Turnpike and 212th Place to a point a mile to the eastward.(5) By the 15th of May the tracks had been laid to Doughty's Grove (6) (224th St.); by June 15th the track had reached to within a mile of Mineola Blvd., and the overhead wire was being strung along the completed portion. A construction car had been trucked to the new rails and carried materials between 212th Place and New Hyde Park.(7) By July 1st the tracks were completed to Mineola Blvd.(8) and the company opened the 212th Place-Floral Park (City Line) segment to the public, with one car.(9) 535 passengers patronized the line on this opening day.(10) When the workers reached the property of Mrs. Willis, a large landowner abutting the Jericho Turnpike in Mineola, they were met by her refusal to sign consents, and several smaller landowners took the same attitude. For some reason she changed her mind over July 4th, and work was resumed after the holiday.(11) On July 8th the Traction rails at 212th

(1) Eagle Almanac for 1907, p.448

(2) Hemp.Sentinel, Sept. 7, 1905 1:6

(3) ibid. September 14, 1905 1:5

(4) I.L.Democrat, Mar. 20, 1906 3:1

(5) ibid. May 8, 1906 2:1

(6) ibid. May 15, 1906 2:2

(7) ibid. June 19, 1906 2:3

(8) ibid. July 3, 1906 2:5

(9) Report of NY&LIT to RR Comm. for 1906.

(10) L.I.Democrat, July 10, 1906 2:4

(11) Hemp.Sentinel, July 5, 1906 8:1

Place were connected with the Long Island Electric Line. The L.I. R.R. bridge (Creedmore Branch) at Floral Park had to be raised before the cars could pass underneath. (1) By the second week of July two cars were on the line; on July 10th a violent electrical storm struck the wires at 212th Place and burned out the armatures on both cars standing there. (2)

The Jericho Turnpike franchise, under the terms of which the new extension was being built, provided for a single track line on the north side of the Pike to Mineola Blvd., Mineola, only. Nothing was said about a connection with the Mineola-Freeport line only a few blocks south. The company was naturally anxious to make such a connection, providing access to the High St. car barn, and easy transfer for passengers at Old Country Rd. terminal. To secure this privilege, the Traction negotiated a new franchise for the 13 block stretch and petitioned the Nassau Highway Commissioners for permission to build a new iron and concrete bridge over the L.I.R.R. to replace the existing wooden one, too weak to carry the weight of a trolley. Meanwhile, the track work along the Pike line was completed by July 23rd, (3) and a week later on Aug. 1st, the whole line was opened from Mineola Blvd., Mineola, to 212th Street. (4) A whole year was destined to pass before the connection with the Old Country Rd. terminal would be made.

The six miles of new track on the Traction system made an increase in rolling stock imperative. On April 1, 1906, the company ordered 12 double-truck semi-convertible trolleys from Brill, all four-motored, and seating 44 passengers. These were delivered at Hempstead on May 24, 1906, and received the numbers 39-61 (odd only). (5) The 12 trolleys, including trucks and complete electrical equipments, cost the company \$66,253. (6) At the same time the company added three snow plows to its winter equipment.

During 1906 the company finally settled the vexing question of the lift bridge over Parsonage Creek. Readers will recall the trouble over suspension of navigation on this stream by the trolley bridge in 1905. Secretary Taft (later President) of the War Department ordered the company to install a lift bridge. The Towns and the trolley company were disposed at first to contest the order, but at length came to an agreement complying with the government's wishes. The proposed bridge was to be 25 feet in width, 9 feet to be taken by the trolley company. The Traction offered to build the bridge if the Town would maintain it and pay a tender. The Town authorities agreed to this proposition, the War Department approved, and the bridge was constructed. During August the old lifting machinery broke down several times. A temporary structure carried the cars across pending the new bridge's erection. In December 1906 the new bridge, a plate girder structure on pile abutments, was opened, and the long wrangling was thus amicably settled. It had cost the trolley Company over \$6000 to build. (7)

(1) L.I. Democrat, July 10, 1906 2:4

(2) *ibid.* July 17, 1906 2:6

(3) L.I. Democrat, July 24, 1906 2:3

(4) Report of the NY&LIT to the RR Comm. for 1906; also L.I. Democrat, August 7, 1906 2:4

(5) Hemp. Sentinel, Jan. 10, 1907

(6) Report of the NY&LIT to the RR Comm. for 1906

(7) Hemp. Sentinel, June 7, 4:3; June 14, 8:4&5; June 21, 4:2; July 12, 4:2; July 19, 5:5; Aug. 9, 4:2; Aug. 16, 4:4; Oct. 4, 1:5; Oct. 18, 8:5; all 1906

The summer of 1906 brought another great convenience to the Nassau patrons of the Traction; through service without change of cars to Jamaica. Once the Long Island Electric and the Traction were united under one management, there was no longer anything to prevent the Traction cars from running over Long Island Electric rails in Queens County. The newspapers announced the welcome change in mid-July, adding that, as soon as necessary additional sidings had been made at Garden City and Belmont Park the cars would run through to 160th St., Jamaica.(1) The necessary application was submitted to the Nassau County Board of Supervisors to alter the tracks, and in addition, an agreement was concluded between the Electric and Traction on Sept. 1st covering joint use of the tracks.(2) The new Garden City turnout (#28) was constructed at 7th Street near the village offices and hotel,(3), but in 1911 it was changed to just south of the railroad tracks at 4th Street.(4) At Belmont Park a long siding was built, extending from the county line to a point half a mile beyond. This extensive siding was intended not only for normal trolley "meets" but also for special cars on Race Track days. Both new sidings were rushed to completion in August and the first through trip by a Traction car all the way to Jamaica was made on Saturday, Sept. 1, 1906.(5) With this link regular interurban service was at last a reality.

The new through service proved a tremendous convenience to Hempstead people, and became very popular because of its low cost and speed. In addition to regular service, special excursion trips could now be made. From 1906 annually the First Baptist Church and the Reformed Church, both of Hempstead, chartered excursion cars for their Sunday Schools all the way to North Beach via Jamaica, Flushing and Steinway; a long trip hitherto impossible without many changes. The rates were cheap- 16 miles for 65¢; generally three cars were used.(6) The BRT occasionally advertised "trips to the country" in its parlor cars over Traction routes. When Fair Week of 1906 came along the effect of through service was obvious to all for the first time. Not only were lines of Traction cars stretched bumper to bumper along Franklin Ave., but there were also to be seen for the first time L.I. Electric single-truck opens and NY&QC semi-convertibles. This triple service pleased everyone so much that the local paper thought it fitting to compliment the trolley management:

"The management of the trolley line is to be commended upon their handling of the thousands of people who attended the Fair and the races during the past two weeks without unnecessary delay, and to the satisfaction of the great majority who used the lines. To Messrs. Fuller, Winchester, and Cook, to the conductors, motormen and employees generally, who were engaged in handling the record-breaking crowds, much credit is given. They are worthy of it all."(7)

The great volume of business on the Traction during 1906 was the very reason for one of its legal headaches at this time. The Rosedale Board of Trade petitioned the R.R. Commission to force the Traction to double track its whole route. It was charged that the sidings were too far apart and that service suffered as a result.(8)

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| (1) Hemp.Sentinel, July 19, 1906 8:1 | (5) Hemp.Sentinel, Sept. 6, 1906 1:2 and L.I. Democrat, Sept. 4, 1906 2:4 |
| (2) Report of PSC for 1913, Vol. 5, pp. 790-95 | (6) Hemp.Sentinel, Aug. 16, 1906 8:4; July 4, 1907 1:4; Aug. 20, 1908 8:4 |
| (3) Hemp.Sentinel, July 26, 1906 8:2 | (7) Ibid. Oct. 11, 1906 1:1 |
| (4) Ibid. July 14, 1910 1:1 & 8:3 and July 28, 1910 8:1 | |
| (8) Ibid. Dec. 6, 1906 8:2 | |

The company countered that, as the Southern Division was but one year old, they were in no financial condition to double track the whole line immediately, but that this would come in the future. The Commission reserved decision pending its own inspection.(1) This agitation to double track the line was to continue for years.

About this same time the company entered into two other interesting trackage agreements: in December, 1906, the Traction secured the approval of the Nassau Electric R.R. of Brooklyn to construct a connection at Liberty and 101st Aves., between the Traction and the BRT rails; the construction to be at the joint expense of the companies, and the Traction was to pay \$25 a month for operating privileges. The gain was two-fold: access to the Grant Ave. "L" station for its passengers, and use of the L.I. Electric Waiting Room at Grant and Liberty Aves. On Jan. 23, 1907 the Traction secured from the Brooklyn, Queens County & Suburban R.R. the right to operate two cars in each direction per hour on Jamaica Ave. between 160th St. and 168th St., Jamaica. This was later modified on March 6, 1908 to 8 cars per hour.(2)

The new year 1907 saw the final completion of the Traction system, the construction of the link along Mineola Blvd. (Franklin Ave.) between Jericho Turnpike and the Old Country Rd. During the first week of February the company applied to the Highway Commissioners and the Mineola Village Trustees to construct a new steel and concrete bridge over the L.I.R.R. at Mineola Station.(3) The Commissioners agreed, and specified the engineering details they wanted incorporated into the structure.(4) The matter of a franchise for the tracs was taken up in April, 1907, and required the company to permit half fares for school children, a 5¢ fare to New Hyde Park, and a 10¢ fare to Freeport.(5) In mid-May work began on the new bridge (6) and progressed so rapidly that the company announced mid-July as the opening date.(7) This was a bit optimistic, for the work was not completed until August 15th.(8) During the week of the 18th the wires went up,(9) and about September 1st the link was opened.(10) The broad porches of John's Hotel (Nash's after 1909) were busier than ever, for the hotel now became a terminus for the Pike line as well as the Freeport-Brooklyn line. With this 13 block link completed, 0.61 miles, construction days on the Traction were over.

For a brief moment in 1907, however, it looked as if more building was contemplated. After the Cleveland Construction Co. had sold their interests in the Traction to the IRT-LIRR combine in 1905, they bought out the franchise of a paper corporation called the Mineola, Roslyn & Port Washington Traction Co., organized back in 1903, and changed the name to the New York & North Shore Traction Co. With ample capital at their disposal, the Cleveland people began immediately to build the route described in its title. The IRT, fearful, apparently, that it was losing out on a good thing, filed with the

- (1) Hemp.Sentinel, Dec.13,1906 8:3 (6) ibid. Aug.15, 1907 8:5
 (2) Report of the PSC for 1913, vol.5, (9) ibid. Aug. 22, 1907 8:2
 pp.790-95 (10) ibid.Sept. 5, 1907 1:1
 (3) Hemp.Sentinel, Feb.7,1907 7:4
 (4) ibid. Feb. 14, 1907 8:1; Apr.18,
 1907 8:1
 (5) ibid. April 11, 1907, 8:1
 (6) ibid. May 23, 1907 8:1
 (7) ibid. June 20, 1907 8:1

Secretary of State At Albany on March 16, 1907, an extension of route covering the very same streets that the New York & North Shore planned to use: On Willis Ave. from Jericho Turnpike north to Garden St., Roslyn; east on Garden to the station at Railroad Ave.; north on Railroad Ave. and Roslyn Road to North Hempstead Turnpike; west on the turnpike to Middle Neck Rd.; north on Middle Neck Rd. to Flower Hill Rd., Port Washington; and west on Flower Hill Rd. and Main St. to Third Ave.; also along the North Hempstead Turnpike to Plandome Rd. and north on Plandome Rd. to Manhasset railroad station. Whether this 12 mile extension was intended seriously by the IRT-LIRR or was filed merely to obstruct the N.Y. & N.S. is debatable; at any rate the N.Y. & N.S. began laying its own rails in July, 1907, and the Traction thereafter made no further attempts to build northward.(1)

With the Jericho Turnpike line completed, the Traction undertook little improvements here and there. A semaphore signal was set up at Freeport grade crossing at Brooklyn Ave. for safety's sake.(2) To make safety still more certain, the Hempstead village trustees passed a 10 mph trolley speed ordinance with a \$25 fine attached.(3) Despite the good service given these days, the Traction learned that it couldn't please everyone all the time. We read now and then of the usual complaint against flat wheels.(4) Other people complained of the company's habit of storing cars on Front St. during testing and inspection of cars at High St. barn. Superintendent Winchester pleaded that the hard winter and the difficulty of obtaining parts compelled the company to store and test cars on the streets.(5) Another source of complaint were the tracks in Fairlawn Park, Munson. The rails had sunk in spots and water gathered in the low places to a depth of 6-8 inches. Trolleys were held up, and in some places section hands had to be summoned to bail out the lakes by hand to let the trolleys pass.(6) This state of things caused so much unpleasantness that the rails were all relaid during August, 1907.(7) Just for good measure, all the tracks westward from the West Hempstead bridge were overhauled and placed in first class condition for the winter.(8)

Early in January, 1908, the IRT management made a simple but practical improvement on the cars: bonnet signs bearing the single word "Traction" or "Electric" were installed on the cars of the two companies. Passengers unfamiliar with the local lines who boarded cars in Jamaica had previously no means of knowing which company's cars they were entering; henceforth the rolling stock could be distinguished.(9) On Jan. 24th a heavy snowstorm blocked the line, but the faithful plows opened up Hempstead Turnpike Saturday night, Jan. 25th. Were the people pleased? Not at all! It seems that the plow was so efficient that it transferred the drifts from the rails to the highway, requiring 20 men to shovel it away at the town's expense!(10)

To simplify and speed up the schedule in the Summer of 1908, the Traction built a new siding at BayView Ave., Freeport (#46).(11)

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| (1) Report of the PSC for 1913, vol.5, pp. 790-95; Hemp. Sentinel, March 21, 1907 1:3 | (6) <i>ibid.</i> March 14, 1907 8:3 |
| (2) Hemp.Sentinel, Dec.27, 1906 3:6 | (7) <i>ibid.</i> Aug. 22, 1907 5:6 |
| (3) <i>ibid.</i> Feb. 7, 1907 1:1 | (8) <i>ibid.</i> Sept. 12, 1907 8:6 |
| (4) <i>ibid.</i> Feb.28, 1907 1:3 | (9) <i>ibid.</i> Jan. 16, 1908 1:2 |
| (5) <i>ibid.</i> Mar. 14, 1907 1:5 & July 4, 1907 1:6 | (10) <i>ibid.</i> Jan. 30, 1908 8:3 |
| | (11) <i>ibid.</i> Aug. 20, 1908 2:5 |

Another new siding, #78, on the Rockaway Rd., 343 feet or 0.06 miles was opened during 1909 at a cost of \$858.27; siding #50 in Oceanside, 654 feet or 0.12 miles, was also opened in 1909 at a cost of \$1124.53. In order to enlarge its rather cramped carbarn, the company, on Dec. 11, 1909, bought two lots with private homes thereon at Orchard and High Sts., Hempstead, adjoining its sub-station, for the small sum of \$6400. The same lots today would bring several hundred thousand dollars. (1) During 1910 the Traction built Siding #82 on the Rockaway Blvd., 370 feet, for \$1703.49; Siding #79, also on the Rockaway Rd., 373 feet, for \$1475.45; and Siding #76 on North Conduit Ave., 372 feet for \$1414.57. To enlarge the carbarn property still further, the company bought another lot at Front and High Sts., Hempstead, from the City of New York for \$3000. (2) On Sept. 15, 1911, the company placed in operation its new Siding #32 at the Court House, Mineola, to store cars during Fair Week, exhibitions, meets, etc.

There occurred two changes in administration during this period; Mr. B.B. Winchester resigned as superintendent of the line and Mr. James P. Kineon took his place as of July 1, 1907. (3) Mr. Charles L. Addison of the L.I.R.R. became President of the Traction Dec. 31, 1908. (4)

The Traction, for all its efficiency and prosperity these days, must in justice be criticized for one serious fault: a high rate of accidents, some of them serious:

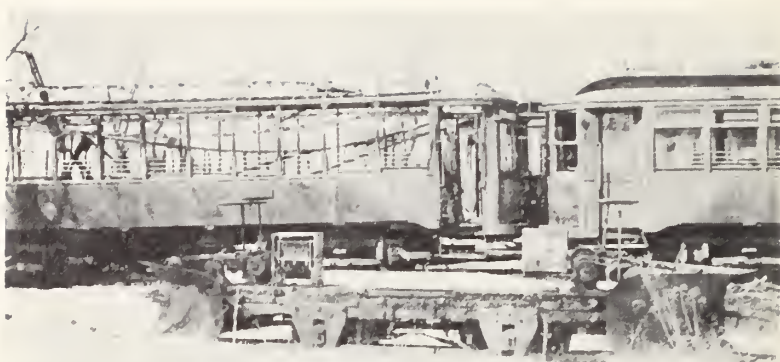
Aug. 17-18, 1906	Rear end collision at Washington Ave., Lynbrook; several passengers injured.
Aug. 27, 1906	Car runs into tower wagon near Grand Ave., Baldwin, killing horse and injuring the two linemen.
Sept. 12, 1906	Traction car rams rear of L.I. Electric open at Farmers Blvd., Hollis. Conductor injured.
Jan. 4, 1907	Deraillment in Hempstead; no one hurt.
March 10, 1907	Conductor of #31 fails to flag L.I.R.R. West Hempstead branch crossing in snow storm; rear end of car sheared off by locomotive; no one hurt.
March 24, 1907	Near accident; crowded car flagged across L.I.R.R. by conductor who fails to look in other direction. Car is just barely stopped as train roars by.
April 26, 1907	Car speeding north on Greenwich St., Hempstead, fails to make turn into Henry St. and snaps off several poles. No one hurt.
Aug. 9-10, 1907	Cars #57 and #25 crash head-on near Valley Stream bridge due to misunderstanding of orders; motor-man has both legs crushed and dies.
Nov. 30, 1907	Car #11 speeding northward on Greenwich St., Hempstead, fails to make Henry St. turn and is wrecked. Four injured.
April 16, 1908	#49 deraills on Lynbrook trestle; several passengers injured.
August 26, 1908	Two crashes with wagons same night in Hollis; four horses killed, two wagons damaged; one man killed, and several injured.

(1) Report of the NYLIT to the PSC for 1910

(2) Report of the NYLIT to the PSC for 1911

(3) Hempstead Sentinel, June 20, 1907 1:1

(4) *ibid.* February 18, 1909



Three views at Rockville Center storage yard, sometimes called the "Rockville Centre barn", altho the powerplant was principal building
TOP - No. 3, after fire; no. 1 is at right
CENTER - Car at right is BRT no. 1710
BOTTOM - No. 7, with no. 35 at right (platform torn off) (1923)

- March, 1909 Motorman starts car in barn, not noticing oiler working under car; oiler paralyzed from shoulders down for years.
- Sept. 24, 1909 Rear end collision of two cars in Hempstead; several injured.

This catalogue of a dozen accidents over a three year period reveals that the car crews were at fault in almost all instances; note that the identical accident happened twice at Greenwich and Henry Sts., a reflection on the company. Safety training and safety campaigns were alike unknown. No well-coordinated campaign seems to have been undertaken by the IRT-LIRR combine for the trolley subsidiaries as was done on their elevated, subway and steam operation.

Fares and fare collecting fluctuated considerably during these years. The fare between Hempstead and Freeport, the oldest part of the line, had been 10¢ since the beginning, but as early as August, 1905, the newspapers began agitating for a 5¢ fare.(1) The Hempstead village trustees petitioned the company for a 5¢ fare on Sept. 5th.(2) When the Freeport Board of Trustees heard of this, they passed a similar resolution on the 15th.(3) The matter was under "advisement" by both boards when the Traction countered with drastic suddenness. On July 1, 1906, Roosevelt Post Office was declared the boundary of a new fare zone inside the village of Roosevelt. Anyone living north or south of this point had to pay 10¢ to either Hempstead or Freeport, whereas before it had been 5¢ to either village.(4) The residents of the affected areas were outraged, and at a public meeting elected delegates to call on the Highway Commission to repeal this "violation of the charter and base robbery."(5) The company justified the new rate on the grounds that the 5¢ fare prevailed inside the villages only, not outside those limits. Alarmed perhaps by the storm it had raised, and fearful of a court test, the Traction suddenly reduced the fare to 5¢ again on July 21st.(6)

A real bombshell was dropped on the company in the form of the Miller Bill of May, 1907. This measure, introduced by Assemblyman William G. Miller of Freeport and signed by Gov. Flower, ordered "street surface railroads operating wholly in or part in, a city having at least one million inhabitants, to collect fare only once on one continuous ride on a single car or train, excepting that fare may be collected once within the city and once outside." This bill was expressly aimed against the Traction's habit of collecting fares several times.(7) This bill forced the Traction to make considerable changes. The Dayton fare registers were junked and Ohmer registers, a "classification" register, substituted. If a passenger was riding one zone, he paid 5¢; two zones, 10¢, etc. All the fare was paid at once and the conductor no longer came around after each fare zone in Nassau was passed; at the Queens line, however, another nickel was collected. The new system put a strain on the conductors because they had to remember the point to which each passenger paid. Although

- (1) Hemp.Sentinel, Aug.31,1905
 (2) ibid. Sept.7, 1905 4:3
 (3) ibid. Sept.21, 1905 1:6
 (4) ibid. July 12, 1906 1:2
 (5) ibid. July 19, 1906 4:2
 (6) Hempstead Sentinel, July 26, 1906 5:6
 (7) ibid. May 9, 1907 4:1

they became fairly skillful at spotting riders sneaking an extra zone, many must have escaped payment, particularly on crowded cars. Oddly enough, no identification check was ever issued to stop this enormous annual loss.

The agitation for a 5¢ fare received a new stimulus in July, 1907, with the announcement of a 5¢ fare on the N.Y. & Q.C. between Jamaica and L.I. City, a 15 mile ride.(1) Matters came to a head in December, 1907, when lawyer Elvin N. Edwards of Freeport formally petitioned the PSC to order a fare reduction to Hempstead.(2) A hearing was held in February, and in March 1908 the reduction was ordered. A 5¢ fare was ordered between any point in Hempstead and Freeport (stop #80 Millburn Bridge). In all other instances the old rate of 5¢ from one incorporated village to the next still held.(3) The Hempstead Sentinel was so pleased with the favorable result of its own agitation that it began to stir up another 5¢ fare issue on Aug. 16th, this time between Hempstead and Belmont Park.(4) This was heard and denied by the PSC in November 1911.(5) In summary, here are the fares for the period 1908-1911:

Mineola (any part) to Freeport	10¢
Hempstead to Freeport	5¢
Freeport to Rockville Centre	5¢
Rockville Centre to Valley Stream	5¢
Valley Stream to Rosedale	5¢
Rosedale to City Line	5¢
Mineola to New Hyde Park (Lakeville Rd.)	5¢
New Hyde Park (Hyde Park Ave.) to Floral Pk.	5¢
Floral Park to Jamaica	5¢

Beginning in 1910 and continuing through to 1912, there was considerable agitation in the South Side communities for a 5¢ fare. Little thought was paid to the practical economics of such a rate; such as whether service could be maintained and improved at such ruinous rates. The 5¢ fare had become a catch-phrase, and the goal sought by every local booster league. Rockville Centre took the matter before the PSC in March, 1910.(6) No hearing was granted at first, but agitation went on. In February 1911 an Elmont resident compelled the company to cease collecting 15¢ for a ride from Hempstead to Jamaica Ave. and 212th Place, Queens. The franchise specified 10¢ for this ride, but the company had all these years been collecting an additional nickel at the Queens line, making no allowance for the one-mile overlap from the county line to Jamaica Ave. This became effective March 1, 1911.(7)

Hardly had this complaint been disposed of than a second cropped up. Lawyer Edwards of Freeport and his partner Levy, who had caused the Hempstead-Freeport reduction to 5¢ in 1908, represented a resident of Roosevelt at the PSC in a petition to lower the fare to 5¢ from Garden City (siding #28) to Pleasant St., Roosevelt (stop 72). The filing of this additional complaint on fares caused the PSC to

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| (1) Hemp.Sentinel, July 11, 1907 1:1 | (6) Hemp.Sentinel, Feb.24,1910 2:4 |
| (2) ibid. Dec. 12, 1907 1:1 | |
| (3) Hemp.Sentinel, Mar. 12, 1908 1:1 | (7) ibid. Feb. 16, 1911, 4:1 |
| (4) ibid. August 6, 1908 1:1 | |
| (5) Electric Rwy.Journal, Nov.4,1911, p.1011 | |

undertake what the Traction had been dreading all along; a complete re-study and revision of the fares on the whole system. The commission was also petitioned to order the Traction to double-track the Hempstead-Freeport line, but the commissi on declined to rule on this issue and confined itself to a tariff change:(1)

Mineola (any part) to West Hempstead line	5¢
Mineola (any part) to Roosevelt St., Roosevelt	5¢
Hempstead (any part) to Freeport (stop #80)	5¢
Freeport (Seaman Ave.), to Rockville Centre (Ocean Ave.)	5¢
Rockville Centre (Driscoll Ave.) to Valley Stream (Central Ave.)	5¢
Valley Stream (trestle over LIRR) to Queens Co. line	5¢

The two zones on the Pike line and the two on the West End line remained the same.(2) A round trip ticket system was also introduced: 15¢ between Driscoll Ave., Rockville Centre, and Rosedale, and 15¢ on the Pike line between Mineola and Floral Park. The Traction lost money on these tickets and saw to it that almost no one bought them by restricting the sale to three agencies only, one at Rockville Centre, one at Lynbrook, and one at City Line.

A second reduction in fares soon followed by elongation of two former fare zones. On July 31, 1912 the PSC for the 2nd District ordered the creation of a new fare zone between Pleasant St., Roosevelt (stop #72) and the LIRR crossing between 6th and 7th Sts., Garden City, the new rate of 5¢ to be effective August 26, 1912.(3)

In September, 1914, further reductions were made by enlarging certain older zone boundaries:

Freeport (Seaman Ave.) to Rockville Centre (Ocean Ave.)	5¢
Baldwin (Grand Ave.) to Lynbrook (Atlantic Ave.)	5¢
Rockville Centre (Village Ave.) to Valley Stream (Rockaway Ave.)	5¢
Lynbrook (Atlantic Ave.) to QueensCounty line	5¢

The commission refused to lower the fares on the Pike line or West End line despite agitation, and ordered the Traction to sell round-trip tickets on its cars or open more agencies.(4) The cheaper rates and the institution of round-trip tickets alleviated some of the fare agitation, and for the next ten years tariffs remained stationary.

Coupled with the fare agitation on the part of civic groups was a demand for a double track on the whole Traction system. The PSC ordered one of its engineers, Mr. C. R. Barnes, to investigate the justice of this plea. We are fortunate in having this report in full, describing and evaluating the system as it was in 1909.(5) At that time there was 35.6 miles of single track and 4.42 miles of second track; track was 70 lb. T-rail and 7" girder rail in towns.

- (1) Hempstead Sentinel, March 16, 1911 8:5
- (2) Tariff of Feb. 9, 1911 of PSC for NY&LIT
- (3) Report of the PSC for 1913, pp. 660-665
- (4) Electric Rwy. Journal, Aug. 8, 1914, p. 278; and Apr. 11, 1914, p. 850
- (5) Second Annual Report of the PSC for the 2nd District, 1909, Vol. I, pp. 675-679



TOP - Rosedale local (Birney) crossing LIRR at Ozone Park (1923)
CENTER - No. 65 at the same spot about the same time (car has been rebuilt)
BOTTOM - Birney no. 102 on new siding in front of St. Georges Church,
Hempstead, about 1924

Most interesting are the remarks on operation and maintenance. We read that cars were swept every night, and washed inside and out during the summer. All general repairs and overhauling were done at Woodside by the New York & Queens. The dispatcher's office was located at Hempstead. All the lines had a telephone system with telephones at each siding; the crews reported to the dispatcher at each meet. Train sheets were kept in the dispatcher's office and all car movements recorded. Orders were issued by the dispatcher to the conductor, who relayed them to the motorman. Conductors made note on a special blank of what cars they were to meet and where. The telephone system was pronounced in excellent condition, as was also the track and roadbed. Some features were criticized; overloading of cars in rush hours between Brooklyn and Freeport; bushes on the right-of-way obscuring curves; train dispatching defective in that no orders were written out by the dispatcher nor record kept of them in his office; no printed book of rules, and no printed schedule.

At least one of these recommendations was adopted, for in September, 1912, the Traction issued its first printed timetable, an impressive yard-long document. Since this schedule shows the Traction in its prime, it is worth summarizing here:

West End: Every 15 and 45 mins. after the hour from 6:15 AM to 12:15 PM. No local service or rush hour service.

Pike Line: Every half hour beginning at 6:30 AM and on to 10:00 PM, then hourly to 12 PM. No extra local service or rush hour service.

Mineola-Brooklyn: Every 15 and 45 mins. after the hour from 6:15 AM to 10:15 PM; 10:45 and 11:15 PM cars to Hempstead only; 11:45 PM to siding 52, Rockville Centre only; 12:15 and 12:45 PM to Hempstead only.

Evening rush hour service: Rosedale local from 8:30 AM every half hour till 4 PM; also 7 and 7:30 PM, and 2,3,4 AM. 4:30 and 5 PM cars to Greenfield Cemetery only; from 5:30 to 7 PM every half hour to Millburn Ave. only. 8 to 9 PM half hourly to Rockville Centre.

Rockaway Rd. Beginning at 5:30 PM half hourly to 6:45 PM. locals:

At evening rush hour seven double-headers were operated:
5:30 PM every 15 mins. to 7 PM

At morning rush hours six double-headers were operated:
6:30 AM every 15 mins. to 8 AM

During the day on an average trip along the Mineola-Brooklyn division, eight cars would be passed on sidings. The usual passing sidings were as follows:

#84 Liberty Ave. and Broadway
#80 Glen Morris
#78 Rockaway Road at Conduit
#74 Springfield Blvd.
#72 Rosedale (Ocean Ave., now Hook Creek Blvd.)
#64 Irma Park, Valley Stream, now East Jamaica Ave.

- #60 Lynbrook (rush hour only)
- #50 Oceanside (rush hour only)
- #46 Bayview Ave., Freeport
- #40 Roosevelt
Wye at Hempstead Trolley Junction

A few changes in the office of superintendent of the Traction were made at this time. In February 1911 Superintendent Klineon was made General Superintendent of all the LIRR's trolley lines on the island; a Mr. I.B. Clark succeeded to the position of Superintendent of the NY&LIT, a new man formerly assistant superintendent of elevated lines on the BRT in Brooklyn (1908-11).(1) The new superintendent substituted incandescent headlights for the old arc lights on the Traction cars in June, 1911.(2) He also stepped up the schedule by 300 car miles by running a double-header service in rush hours.(3) The Traction was now giving just about maximum service possible for a single track line. Rather than construct numerous additional sidings, two and three cars were run together at the same time, thus doubling and tripling the load. The spacing of the sidings prevented a closer headway. To further step up speed and acceleration on the cars, ten obsolete trucks and sets of four Westinghouse #49 motors were removed and replaced with Westinghouse #307 motors bought new, plus one set of four GE #800 motors. This allowed modernization of eleven cars in February and March, 1910.(4) A hoisting apparatus to replace flat wheels was installed at the High St. car barn; the iron wheels that wore down quickly were replaced with steel wheels.

After only a year and a half's service on the Traction, Mr. I.B. Clark left his post of superintendent, and this time Charles L. Addison, nominal president of the Traction and vice-president of the LIRR, directly intervened to name a successor- his own son-in-law, Mr. John M. Stoddard. The new man had entered railroad work on the Grand Trunk in 1894 as ticket-agent and telegraph operator, and in 1902 was dispatcher on the Rapid Rwy. operating between Detroit and Port Huron. In 1904 Mr. Stoddard entered the services of Public Service Rwy., but left in 1905 to become dispatcher, assistant trainmaster, and supervisor of inspectors on the BRT. In 1910 he joined the NY&LIT as chief of the timekeeping and mileage department.(5)

Stoddard was the longest-serving superintendent of the Traction, and unfortunately, its most incompetent. He seems to have known little about trolley operation, and though he occupied a sensitive and highly responsible post, displayed no imagination or technical knowledge requisite for the post. In the last years of the Traction, when guidance, and above all, ingenuity, was desperately needed, Stoddard was content to busy himself with paper work. It is perhaps a harsh judgement but a true one to say that a large share of the blame for the Traction's downfall must be laid at his door.

In the Fall of 1912 the City of New York undertook to pave Rockaway Blvd. for the first time, and the Traction helped. On

- (1) Hempstead Sentinel, Feb. 16, 1911 1:5 & 6
- (2) *ibid.* June 15, 1911 8:2
- (3) *ibid.* Aug. 31, 1911 1:1
- (4) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1911: also Hempstead Sentinel, March 3, 1910 1:1
- (5) Electric Railway Journal, Aug. 10, 1912 p.233

Oct. 21, 1912, the company made an agreement with the Uvalde Asphalt Co. permitting the paving company to run its own dump cars on the Traction rails between the City Line and Springfield Rd., for the consideration of \$10 per car per trip.(1) The work was concluded in 1915.

The influence of the hobble skirt in women's fashions first began to be felt on the Traction in 1913. Large companies had long ago succumbed to the trend by purchasing very low-level cars. The Traction cars, however, had steps with the unfashionable height of 16-1/2" to 17-1/2" above the ground, quite an obstacle for a lady in hobble skirts! The PSC gallantly came to the rescue by requiring the Traction, along with other companies, to reconstruct the steps on 50% of their closed cars to 15" by Jan. 1, 1914.(2)

Late in December 1912 the Traction concluded an agreement with its half-owner, the LIRR, whereby it received power from the railroad's sub-stations at Mineola and Valley Stream between 5 AM and 1 AM daily.(3)

The long period 1913-1917 passed almost without incident on the Traction. The company was now at its zenith and had reached stability. On July 15, 1915 the management surprised everyone by ordering six trolleys from the Southern Car Co. of High Point, N.C. These were all double-truck, four motored, arch-roofed semi-steel suburban cars with Brill 27-MCB2 trucks and carrying Westinghouse #307SV motors.(4) These new cars cost the company \$33,873.23 complete, and were placed in service Jan. 1, 1916.(5) Of the three lines managed by the IRT-LIRR combine, the Traction was easily the favorite through the years, and this new car order was but one further indication. Certainly the Long Island Electric was in far more desperate need of cars than the Traction. Very possibly, Stoddard's personal relationship with the LIRR's Charles Addison is one answer; Addison also owned the square block in Hempstead just north of the NY&LIT car barn, his big yellow house being on the southwest corner of Franklin and Fulton Sts., where Arnold Constable's is now located. The same brook that ran through the car barn property ran through Addison's yard. Sheer propinquity and good will for a neighbor may therefore explain the LIRR's apparent favoritism.

The coming of the First World War, though it left the New York & Queens and the L.I. Electric almost unaffected, greatly stimulated the Traction. The Federal government had, during the Civil War and Spanish-American War, found the flat Hempstead Plains north-east of town ideal for a staging area and military encampment. The area enjoyed electric railroad service, nearness to a great port of embarkation, and unlimited space. In the Civil War Camp Scott occupied the area; in the Spanish-American War, Camp Black sprang up; and this time Camp Mills mushroomed out beyond the borders of the older camps. It sprawled over 2000 acres from Clinton Rd. east to the Meadowbrook Golf Club, and from Old Country Rd. on the north to Fulton Ave. on the south.(6) The war had been declared April 6th;

- (1) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1913
- (2) Electric Railway Journal, March 8, 1913 p.414
- (3) Report of the PSC for 1913, vol.5, pp.790-95
- (4) Electric Railway Journal, Aug. 21, 1915 p.339
- (5) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1916
- (6) Hempstead Sentinel, Aug. 16, 1917, 1:2

during the Spring the nation's selective service machinery went into high gear, and during July hundreds of carpenters, plumbers, etc., set up tents, shacks, etc. on the plains. On Aug. 14, 1917, the first contingents of the Rainbow Division moved into the new camp.(1) The influx of so large a body of men promptly swamped the transportation facilities of Hempstead. The town offered few amusements to the boys in Khaki, and thousands took the trolley into the city for an evening or weekend of fun. Single cars and even double and triple headers were no match for this swamping load; doughboys packed the cars like sardines... others hung on the platforms and even rode the fenders and car roofs. Often the conductor was lucky to get inside himself, much less collect fares. The lack of a pre-payment system cost the Traction thousands of dollars in uncollected fares. Other thousands of people as well as the soldiers were drawn to Hempstead; families and friends of soldiers, tradesmen, etc.; and all of these rode the trolleys as the cheapest and most convenient source of transportation. The receipts of the company sky-rocketed, so much so that the little Traction was astounded to discover itself in the position of a Class I carrier, the qualification being a revenue of \$500,000 a year or more.(2)

On Dec. 13, 1917, the whole Rainbow Division (41st) was suddenly evacuated at 10 PM, and by next morning Camp Mills had the appearance of a ghost town.(3) Before the day was out a violent storm struck Hempstead and laid low 4,200 tents. Camp Mills was a shambles, a sea of mud and puddles, and the rumor spread that the camp's days were over. The fly-by-night entrepreneurs were not the only ones hit hard; the Traction's revenues fell to their normal pre-war level. Meanwhile, seven of the Traction employees were drafted, and there soon appeared a service flag waving outside the company offices at Main and Front with seven stars attached.(4) A shortage of coal developed in January, and there were rumors that the cars would stop running for lack of fuel for the power plant.(5) On January 15, 1918 another great storm struck town and so flooded the low areas that the tracks were under three feet of water in Henry St., effectively stopping all service.(6)

On Feb. 20, 1918 it was announced that Camp Mills would become a part of Aviation Field #2 of the Signal Corps.(7) The LIRR, as part owner of the Traction, opened a new service. Henceforth the Camp Mills shuttle trolleys, running on the LIRR tracks between the camp and Garden City station, connected with the Traction cars on Franklin Ave., enabling soldiers to make better time to Hempstead and the city.(8) The LIRR trolleys, it may be explained in passing, were Huntington RR car #11 and Ocean Electric car #15, brought to the shuttle line in 1915 to give service as far as Clinton Rd. When Camp Mills opened, they ran to it, and still later gave service as far as Salisbury Plains station.

On April 4, 1918 boom times returned to Hempstead with the re-opening of Camp Mills; the 35th National Guard Division of Miss.,

- (1) Hemp.Sentinel, Aug.14,1918
- (2) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1918 & 1919
- (3) Hempstead Sentinel, Feb.28,1918 1:1 and Dec.30,1917 3:2
- (4) ibid. Jan. 3, 1918 1:2
- (5) ibid. Jan.3, 1918 5:1
- (6) ibid. Jan. 17, 1918 1:3
- (7) ibid. Feb. 21, 1918 1:6

Kans., and Okla. poured into Hempstead 10,000 strong.(1) By April 18th their numbers had swelled to 25,000.(2) Transportation facilities were strained worse than ever before. The Traction not only did a Class I business again, but over 750 jitney operators were licensed to ply between town and camp. Anything and everything on wheels was pressed into service, even a former Broadway omnibus body.(3) The Traction opened a 15 min. headway on the West End line all afternoon and evening to handle the crowds that swarmed over the cars.(4) For the next seven months this happy state of affairs continued; then the great influenza epidemic of 1918 halted the merry jingle of the fare registers. From Oct. 9th to Nov. 11th the entire personnel of Camp Mills was in quarantine.(5) No one dreamed that this date would coincide with the end of the war. Nov. 11th brought riotous celebration to Hempstead, and the big boom that the war had brought lasted a few months more. The government erected 800 new wooden barracks at Camp Mills with the intention of making the place a permanent encampment.(6) When the first shiploads of soldiers returned from Europe, Camp Mills was the demobilization center for the whole Rainbow Division as well as many others. The camp continued to process returnees until it was officially closed on Aug. 9, 1919.(7)

With the end of the First World War the golden days on the Traction were over. The last six years were a period of struggle. Before we chronicle this less pleasant era, let us take an imaginary ride once more over the whole system while it is still at the peak of its prosperity.

We board our car at Grant Ave. at the "City Line", and hand our nickel to the conductor. After a few blocks we turn into 101st Ave. and pass one or more cars waiting there. A few blocks eastward the double track ends and we cross over to the north side of Rockaway Blvd. and run on eastward. A short distance ahead we pass under the "L" once more and soon come to a halt at the Ozone Park LIRR crossing. Our conductor darts out and flags our car over the four-track crossing there. As soon as we pick him up again, we roll along at an average 12 MPH clip past occasional houses and empty lots of South Ozone Park. At 10 block intervals there are sidings and trolley signals on the poles. Five miles roll by uneventfully. Suddenly we make a sharp left turn off Rockaway Blvd. into an empty lot. Today this lot would be the middle of North Conduit Ave., the service roadway parallel to the Belt Parkway. In trolley days, however, there was no parkway at all, but rather a long grassy cut 100 feet wide, bare of trees and buildings. This was the 24 mile right-of-way of the Brooklyn Water Works main conduit, extending all the way to Massapequa in Nassau County, and the great pipe-lay at varying depths beneath the surface. The Traction company ran all the way into Nassau County alongside the conduit, and at some points directly over it.

Our car, once safely on its conduit right-of-way picks up speed and in no time at all we bump over the Long Island Electric crossing

(1) Hemp.Sentinel, Apr.11,1918 4:1

(2) Ibid. April 18, 1918 5:3

(3) Ibid. May 30, 1918 1:5 and
June 27, 1918 5:1

(4) Ibid. August 22, 1918 1:5

(5) Ibid. Nov. 14, 1918 1:2

(6) Ibid. Sept. 19, 1918 1:1

(7) Hemp.Sentinel, Aug.14,1919 1:6

in New York Ave. Onward we roll until we reach Springfield. The LIRR suddenly swings from the north across our path, and at 230th St. we mount a wooden trestle and pass over the railroad tracks on a single track steel girder bridge, and come down to ground level again on the north side of the tracks and directly beside them. At Hook Creek Siding, where Nassau County begins, the conductor comes around once more for the Nassau fare. From here we make good time through the private right-of-way, and after crossing Central Ave., Valley Stream, roll through the wood and swamp, emerging a few moments later in East Jamaica Ave., Valley Stream. Here we enter siding #68, pass a waiting car, and soon cross the LIRR again on a short girder bridge. We enter Hawthorne Ave. at Satterlee Ave. and again enter private right-of-way beyond Horton Ave. Near Lynbrook station we enter Stauderman Ave. and siding #60, and very soon thereafter re-enter private right-of-way, emerging onto Rockaway Ave., Lynbrook. We continue for perhaps 100 feet and then make a sharp right turn into the field on our right, and promptly mount a steep approach trestle carrying us over the south side LIRR tracks again. We come to ground level immediately in front of Niederstein's Restaurant on what is now Sunrise Highway, and pass the Traction's red brick power plant. Here spur tracks lead off north and south of the main line. The Lynbrook locals behind us stop here, but we move on, crossing Lister Park just south of the Sunrise Highway (formerly a swamp) on a wooden trestle work, striking solid ground again at a point just west of Windsor Ave., Rockville Centre. Passing through our right-of-way between the private houses, we turn sharply south at South Centre Ave. and pass through an alley striking Park Place at Park Ave. From here on our car sticks to conventional street operation, running along Park Place, Woods, Davison, Brower, and Atlantic Aves. all through Rockville Centre, Oceanside, Baldwin, and Freeport. At 7-1/2 minute intervals we run through sidings, meeting occasional westbound cars. Passing Grove St., Freeport, we clatter over the local trolley line and then turn abruptly north into Bedell St. From this point we run due north over Bedell and Main Sts., Freeport, Nassau Road, and Henry, Cross and Clinton Sts. to Front St., Hempstead. At the corner of Main and Front Sts. two other cars are waiting for us, one for Jamaica, and one for Freeport.

Upstairs in the dispatcher's office on the second floor of the company's office building, there are three electric gongs, each with a different tone or cadence. One will start the West End car to Jamaica, a second will start the southbound car for Freeport, and the third will sound the moment of departure for our car. As soon as the southbound car passes us on the wye, the dispatcher presses the button, the gong rings, and we move on for the 12 minute ride up Main and Franklin Sts. to Garden City and Mineola. At last, two hours after our departure from Brooklyn, we draw up alongside Nash's Hotel in Mineola at Old Country Road, the trolley terminus. From here, if we are so inclined, we can go over the Jericho Turnpike to Jamaica again. Our long trip from Brooklyn, more than 24 miles, has cost us only 30¢.

THE LAST YEARS 1920-1926

Although riding was at a peak during the war months, so was the cost of living. All the benefits that accrued to the Traction from heavy riding were wiped out by several pay increases made to the motormen and conductors at frequent intervals. For years the men had been getting from 25¢ to 29¢ per hour, depending on the length of service. In December, however, the employees made their first demand on the company for a wage raise, (1) and the company met the demand with an increase of four to five cents per hour for motormen and conductors beginning June 1st, 1918. (2) On August 25th the company voluntarily granted a second round of wage increases. (3) One year later, on Aug. 11, 1919, the Traction again raised wage scales: (4)

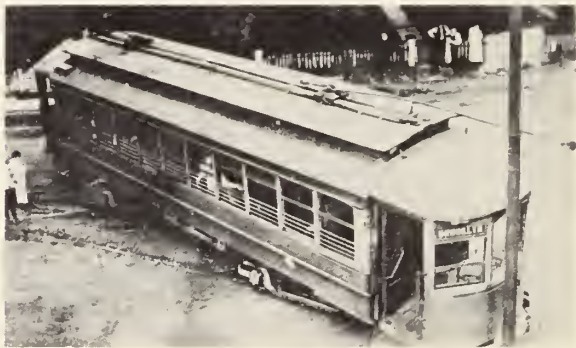
	<u>August, 1918</u>	<u>August, 1919</u>
One year	37-1/2¢	41¢
Second	40	43
Third	41	45
Fourth	42	46
Fifth	43	46
Tenth & after	43	49

Before the end of the month the company again granted a 10% increase, making wages run from 45¢-54¢ per hour. (5) The apparent reason for this extra increase was an attempt on the part of the Traction to forestall the organization of a union amongst the men, a tendency that had been gathering force since 1917. On Aug. 22, 1919, almost all the employees, both operating and shop, gathered at Kalb's hotel, Franklin Square, to discuss organization. (6) A week later, almost 100% of the Traction personnel had joined Division 920 of the International Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Rwy. Employees of America. (7) The company again voluntarily raised wage scales the next month to 52¢-62¢ per hour, effective Sept. 1st. (8) The union, during the same month, called on Superintendent Stoddard to present several demands: (1) a union committee to be present at hearings of men to be disciplined or discharged; (2) time and a half for runs over 10 hours; (3) arranging of runs so that a 9 hour run would become the standard. (9)

Stoddard and Wood heard the delegation, but pointed out that the company was in no financial condition to make any extravagant promises. (10) There had been no fare rises authorized; where was the money to come from?

In earlier years the company had made expenses fairly well, but the impact of all the wartime wage raises was the factor that tipped the scales. From 1917 onward the Traction went into a rapid decline from which it never recovered. The last year of profitable operation was 1914-15, when a profit of \$32,624 was recorded. Thereafter operating expenses, aggravated by higher wage scales, far outstripped the small increase in revenues, and the annual deficit grew:

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| (1) Hemp. Sentinel, Dec. 6, 1917 1:5 | (7) <i>ibid.</i> Aug. 28, 1919 1:7 |
| (2) <i>ibid.</i> June 13, 1918 1:2 | (8) <i>ibid.</i> Sept. 4, 1919 1:4 |
| (3) <i>ibid.</i> Aug. 29, 1918 5:4 | (9) <i>ibid.</i> Sept. 25, 1919 1:7 |
| (4) <i>ibid.</i> Aug. 14, 1919 1:4 | (10) <i>ibid.</i> Oct. 2, 1919 1:1 |
| (5) <i>ibid.</i> Aug. 21, 1919 1:6 | |
| (6) <i>ibid.</i> Aug. 21, 1919 1:6 | |



Keller's Cafe seems to have moved between the time no. 41's picture was snapped TOP in Lynbrook and 1923 CENTER when a similar car was taken at Atlantic and Stauderman Aves.
BOTTOM - No. 35 left the rails on Front St. in Hempstead

1915-1916	\$ 3,005
1916-1917	29,927
1917-1918	10,622
1918-1919	34,930
1919-1920	101,664

Of course the Traction was not alone in this plight; all the trolley lines in the city were badly off, and the IRT itself was heavily in debt. The poor financial condition of the company was gradually reflected in the service and maintenance of the property. No money was spent for new parts, and both trolleys and roadbed very gradually ran down, quite a contrast to the fine maintenance of the previous 20 years. In the Spring of 1919 one expensive improvement was made; the installation of a new siding #6, on the brow of the hill just east of the town of Elmont, at a cost of \$34,533.89.(1) This passing point had been certainly delayed too long already. It would have proved invaluable during the war years in providing an easy 15 minute headway on the Hempstead Turnpike. Perhaps the company realized that the empty spaces on both sides of the highway would one day be filled up. As a direct result of the war a shack colony had already developed at the new siding just east of Elmont that went by the name of "Fulton Street Place". The growth of home building continued all during the 20's and stimulated Traction revenues slightly. In the first week of June the company replaced the rails and switches at the corner of Main and Front Sts.(2)

In April, 1920, a strike paralyzed the LIRR on the south side, and as a result large crowds patronized the trolleys to get to the electric trains in Hempstead, unaffected by the strike.(3) During the same spring the little brook that flowed through the carbarn and residential areas of Hempstead went on a rampage twice, flooding the lowlands about Clinton and Henry Sts. with three to four feet of water, and interrupting all trolley service on March 5, 6, and 13th, 1920.(4)

To conserve power costs on the Traction the LIRR closed down the Rockville Centre power house on July 1, 1920;(5) this station had been faithfully supplying power since 1904, but had lost its importance in 1912 when the Traction began using LIRR current. As soon as the Rockville Centre plant ceased to be the main source of electrical energy, repairs to the pipes and boilers were more and more neglected. It is said that at the end, steam was escaping from almost every joint, and that rags were wrapped around them to try and stop the leaks. The boilers became so unsafe that condemnation was only a matter of time. Rather than spend the money to overhaul the plant, the LIRR men decided to shut it down altogether. The plant and equipment was later sold in 1924 for \$111,763 scrap value.(6) This was one of the biggest mistakes that the NY&LIT ever made.

Henceforth the Traction was wholly dependent on LIRR power, the voltage supplied being normally 650-700. This was at least 100 volts

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| (1) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1919 | (4) <i>ibid.</i> Mar.11,1920 1:1 and Mar.18, 1920 1:2 |
| (2) Hemp.Sentinel, June 5,1919 5:3 | (5) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1921 |
| (3) <i>ibid.</i> April 15, 1920 1:7 | (6) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1924 |

too high for the light trolley motors, and as a result the car barns were kept busy rewinding armatures far in excess of normal requirements. This fact, and the high accident rate, forced more cars off the streets and into the shops, so that the Traction began to have great trouble finding enough trolleys to meet the schedule. On Oct. 19, 1920, for instance, the 8 and 8:30 AM trips could not be made at all for lack of cars. Fourteen were in High St. for repairs. Meanwhile, people waited along 24 miles of route in vain, damning the management. (1) By Spring of 1921 things had reached such a pass that the PSC arranged to have the Traction lease Brooklyn Rapid Transit cars, and three semi-convertibles were run out to Hempstead. Oldsters claim that these cars were unequal to the faster schedules and longer runs on the Traction and wore out rapidly. At the end of the year they were returned to Brooklyn, and five smaller double-truck 8-window cars, obsolete and ready for retirement, were sent instead. (500's and 700's) (2) These trolleys saved the day and permitted the Traction at least to live up to its schedules. Meanwhile the Commission ordered the Traction to overhaul its own worn equipment at the rate of four cars per month until the whole fleet was in proper condition. The New York & Queens County Rwy. also loaned four of its "300" series cars for temporary service. (3)

Under the prodding of the commission the Traction also took concrete steps to improve the service and eliminate traffic congestion by building two new sidings so as to facilitate a 15 minute service. The first was to be built in front of St. George's church on Front St. Hempstead, to replace the old wye which delayed auto traffic, and the second was to be installed just below Park Ave. on the Nassau Rd. (4)

On June 14, 1921, actual work was begun at Park Avenue, utilizing material delivered the previous week. Each of the new sidings was to be 300 feet long and was to be finished in a week. (5) On June 21, 1921, construction was started at Front St. and finished by the end of the week. (6) On June 27, 1921 a 15 minute rush hour schedule was instituted, and it was expected to extend this throughout the day on July 1st. (7) This promise was not kept despite the new sidings, for on October 18th the Roosevelt Civic Ass'n lodged a complaint with the town board about the poor and infrequent service, causing commuters to miss trains at Freeport and Hempstead. (8) The town board passed the complaint along to the Traction, which pleaded unpaid power bills, aged cars, etc. Excuses which satisfied nobody. Neither of the two sidings had thus far been pressed into use, and the sight of them lying there unused undoubtedly goaded people into righteous anger. (9) How inept the trolley management had become!

The resentment against the Traction company found expression not only in words... but for the first time in deeds. The experience at Camp Mills taught Nassau riders that the auto and bus had possibilities for mass transportation as well as the trolley, and the

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| (1) Hempstead Sentinel, Oct. 21, 1920 1:4 | (5) <i>ibid.</i> June 16, 1921 1:2 |
| (2) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1922 | (6) <i>ibid.</i> June 23, 1921 |
| (3) Hempstead Sentinel, Mar. 23, 1922 1:4 | (7) <i>ibid.</i> June 30, 1921 1:1 |
| (4) <i>ibid.</i> May 19, 1921 1:7 | (8) <i>ibid.</i> Oct. 20, 1921 1:6 |
| | (9) <i>ibid.</i> Oct. 27, 1921 1:6 |

laxity of the Traction gave the infant bus industry the chance and encouragement that it had been waiting for. As early as 1920 the hardy survivors of the Camp Mills business had continued to operate on an informal basis in Hempstead and Garden City, but without any licensing or supervision. The Traction alone saw in them a menace to its continued existence, and began to press the local town boards to regulate and license these fly-by-night carriers. General Manager Wood of the IRT trolley division and IRT counsel Arthur Peacock appeared before the Hempstead Board of Trustees and told how the jitneys were cutting severely into the trolley revenues, and that unless this was stopped the Traction might have to suspend. Michael Kelsky, a jitney operator since 1918, attracted the special wrath of the company. He had been operating between Hempstead and Mineola for two years and proposed to extend his service to Freeport. Mr. Peacock complained that Kelsky paid no license, owned no franchise, had never posted a bond, and paid no real estate tax. The trolley paid all these imposts and a share of its earnings besides, thus helping to support the Nassau townships, while Kelsky robbed the company of \$25,000 to \$45,000 a year in revenue. Mr. Peacock also pointed out that the buses were uninsured, and in case of an accident the jitney operator had no liability whatever. The same pleas were made before the Garden City board, and as a result, Kelsky was arrested for operating without a license.(1) Mr. Peacock followed up his victory with a demand that bus operators should be subject to Section 26 of the Transportation Corporation Law of New York State, requiring transit companies to get property owners' consents, and a certificate of convenience and necessity from the PSC. The town boards of Mineola, Garden City and Hempstead sympathized with Mr. Peacock's reasoning, the argument for equal treatment of buses and trolleys being a powerful one.(2)

On Aug. 24th Garden City refused licenses to bus lines and ordered operators arrested who attempted to pick up passengers.(3) For the next 8 or 9 months the trolleys operated comparatively free of bus competition, the hostile attitude of the authorities being sufficient to make their rivals' operation uneconomical.

In April 1921 the village of Hempstead directed its counsel, Felix Reifschneider Jr., to draw up a code on bus operation, but made no decision as to whether buses should be made to live up to Section 26 of the law.(4) On April 19th the same trolley officials, Messrs. Wood and Peacock, made a second appearance before the Hempstead Village Board, complaining that new bus lines were robbing the company of \$100 a day in revenue; not only did they continue their operations, but they had become so bold as to run directly behind the trolleys, and then as the car slowed to a stop to pick up waiting passengers, the jitney would edge in to the curb and scoop up the waiting customers.(5) The Traction men again pleaded that the buses be regulated and made to pay the same fees as the trolleys, so that the unfair competition might be eliminated. Mr. Peacock then went about Hempstead gathering signatures from businessmen to a petition demanding that Section 26 be applied to bus operation, and on the strength of this the village trustees voted to require all jitney operators to secure licenses and franchises by June 1, 1921.(6)

(1) Hemp.Sentinel, July 8, 1920 1:7

(2) ibid. July 15, 1920 5:6

(3) ibid. August 26, 1920

(4) ibid. April 7, 1921 1:3

(5) ibid. April 21, 1921 1:5

(6) Hemp.Sentinel, May 5, 1921
1:7 and May 26, 1921 1:1

The effect of the new legislation was to drive all but the most financially stable jitney operators off the streets. The posting of a \$5000 bond was an especial stumbling block. In Oct. 1921 three bus franchises were finally approved: Lynbrook to Far Rockaway (Nassau Bus Lines); Lynbrook to Hempstead; and Rockville Centre to Hempstead (Peoples' Bus Lines). Several others for Mineola, Freeport, and Uniondale were disapproved. These new lines did not parallel the Traction lines, but they did shorten the distance to Brooklyn by cutting off Freeport and Baldwin. On November 3rd the bus rates were set at 25¢ to Lynbrook and 25¢ to Rockville Centre.(1) These fares were considerably higher than the trolley rates, a small factor in the trolley's favor anyway.

On Nov. 10, 1921 franchises were granted to the Peoples' Bus Lines Co. for Hempstead-Uniondale, Hempstead-Lynbrook, and Hempstead-Rockville Centre, all to begin operation November 29th.(2) These were the first legally approved buses on the south side, and the first legitimate competition for the Traction. Apparently business was poor and operation none too easy for the new buses, for no new operators applied for routes for another two years.

The effect of bus competition on the Traction is interesting; the company fought back vigorously in the courts, and succeeded in ridding itself of most of its rivals, but it could hardly hope to stem the spread of legitimate bus operation. At the time everything was on the side of the trolleys; buses were costly, maintenance was high, loads small, and the very high fares discouraged regular patronage. If the Traction had given the buses real competition by a dependable 15 minute service, it might have driven its rivals off the streets entirely, but it seems to have been unable to do this despite apparently sincere efforts. Superintendent Stoddard lacked energy and ingenuity, and made no effort at all to cultivate public relations by advertising and propaganda. It must also be admitted that his superiors at Woodside, Mr. Wood and others, gave him little cooperation. The building of the two new sidings already mentioned was an attempt to compete with the jitneys; two other attempts were made to improve the company's health; cutting wages and reshuffling the routes.

It was apparent to everyone that the high wages granted to the men by the company during the war could not long continue. The motormen and conductors realized that the company was not gaining any new revenue and that a cut was imminent. On Jan. 15, 1921, Mr. Wood met the employees and told them that the company was "staring ruin in the face" and suggested that a wage cut of 12-1/2% was the only immediate remedy. A spokesman for the employees countered with an offer of 5¢ per hour, or 8%.(3) Less than a month later the management announced that the proposed 12-1/2% cut would go into effect immediately; this brought down wages from 57-67¢ per hour to 50-59¢.(4) On Aug. 7, 1921 a second wage cut followed, this time 10%, lowering wages to 41-53¢ per hour.(5)

(1) Hempstead Sentinel, Nov. 3, 1921 1:6

(2) *ibid.* November 17, 1921 1:1

(3) *ibid.* January 20, 1921 1:7

(4) *ibid.* February 10, 1921 1:6

(5) *ibid.* Aug. 11, 1921 1:4 -also Report of NY&LIT to PSC for 1922

	AUG. 7, 1921	JAN. 1921
First 6 mos.	41 ⁶	50 ⁶
Second 6 mos.	45	50
Two years	47	52
Three years	49	54
Four years	50	55
Five years	51	56
Six years	51	56
Seven years	51	56
Eight years	51	56
Nine years	51	56
Ten and after	53	59

An attempt at schedule revision was made on Dec. 12, 1920 by the elimination of the Pike and West End lines as separate divisions. Henceforth the cars made a continuous trip between Hempstead, Jamaica, and Mineola. (1) The growth of traffic in Jamaica had made it increasingly difficult for the cars to maintain their former schedules, so the running time in Queens County was lengthened and one car was added to the service. Running time was increased from 45 minutes to 52 minutes, and instead of 3 cars on each line as heretofore, 7 cars maintained the schedule, taking 3-1/2 hours to make the "grand round trip", or combined round trip on the two formerly separate routes.

To further improve service without unduly increasing expenses, the Traction rented 14 trolleys for 1922 and 1923, ten from the Brooklyn Rapid Transit to replace the others sent back in 1921, and four from the New York & Queens. The new rolling stock seems to have made quite an improvement on the Traction generally, for the year 1922 passed without any serious complaints about service. The terms were moderate: \$5 per car per day, and only \$3 for the New York & Queens cars. (2) The Brooklyn cars were changed frequently but they were all "1700" series, eight-window double-truck Laclede 1899 models, plus a few "2100's" of similar style. On occasion the Long Island Electric supplied a few Bridge Operating cars for the Rockaway Rd. service in Queens. During the years 1921-1923, therefore, quite a variety of equipment was observable on Nassau streets:

The old bugbear of accidents continued to dog the Traction, especially in 1921:

June 23, 1920	Head-on collision of two cars at Stop 16, Elmont; no one seriously hurt.
Sept. 16, 1920	Head-on collision of two cars at Stop 94, Oceanside; two people injured.
Sept. 25, 1920	Head-on collision in heavy fog at Rockaway Rd. and 150th St.; 25 injured, 14 very badly.
March 15, 1921	#43 derails in Front St., Hempstead, and crashes into earth bank; nine hurt.
March 22, 1921	Feed wire falls at Main and Front Sts., Hempstead, onto automobile; plenty of pyrotechnics and 40 min. delay.

(1) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1921

(2) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1922

- May 29, 1921 Rear-end collision of two eastbound cars at Stop 16, Elmont; one woman killed.
- July 31, 1921 Rear-end collision of two cars, one of them #27, at Belmont Park; no one hurt.
- Sept. 17, 1921 Car derails on West Hempstead bridge; no one hurt.
- Oct. 21, 1921 Car derails at Rockaway Blvd. & Centerville Ave., front truck breaks away, body of car plunges into woods; six slightly injured.
- Nov. 10, 1921 Speeding car fails to make curve from Greenwich St. into Henry St. Hempstead, and snaps off two poles, ending up on lawn. No one injured.

While the Traction struggled on during 1922, one member of the combine financing the company was tottering on the brink of bankruptcy. The IRT, owner and operator of most of the elevated and subway lines of Manhattan, the Bronx, and Queens had accumulated a serious operating deficit since the war because of the inadequate 5¢ fare. All efforts to raise the fare to 7¢ or 8¢ met with stubborn resistance from City Hall, and in the Fall of 1922 the company was driven to petition for a receivership. The reorganization of such a large and complex company was an intricate, slow-moving affair, only one aspect of which concerns us here. It was agreed that the Long Island trolley lines should be gradually detached from IRT control, reorganized on a sound financial footing if possible, and then sold to private interests. In pursuance of this plan, the Executive Committee of the IRT removed W.O. Wood from his post as General Manager of the New York & Queens, the Long Island Electric and the New York & Long Island Traction, and appointed a much more able and vigorous executive to take his place, Gen. Lincoln C. Andrews, formerly executive chairman of the PSC and a man sympathetic to, and intimately acquainted with, Queens trolley operation. Announcement of the change was made on Feb. 1, 1923, (1) to take effect Feb. 15th.

The task that confronted Gen. Andrews and his assistant Edward A. Roberts was a colossal one. The outlook for the three trolley lines was unpromising, to say the least; the rolling stock was old, and increasingly subject to breakdowns; the trackage throughout Queens and Nassau was worn and in need of immediate repairs if safe operation was to continue, and all three lines were saddled with all sorts of fixed expenses and charges that ate up the few cents the cars earned. The New York & Queens and the L.I. Electric had piled up deficits since 1906, and the Traction since 1915. Despite these discouraging conditions, Messrs. Andrews and Roberts worked tirelessly to effect economies and improvements. The New York & Queens was on its feet by 1924; the Electric and the Traction posed greater problems because of the very poor trackwork and lighter traffic, yielding less revenue per car mile. Under the new receivership the Miller Law was ignored, the Dayton fare registers reappeared on the cars, and the conductor henceforth went through at each zone point collecting the next nickel.

General Andrews had scarcely entered upon his new duties when disaster struck. Very early in the morning of Sunday, Feb. 18, 1923,

(1) Hempstead Sentinel, Feb. 8, 1923 1:4 -also Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1923.

a young girl, passing the corner of Main and Fulton Sts., Hempstead, at 3:40 AM, noticed flames issuing from the High St. car barn, and turned in an alarm. When the firemen arrived, the fire had already attained great headway, and masses of flames were bursting through the roof, shooting high into the air. The building usually referred to as the "lower" barn beside Franklin St., was used only to store cars; no one could explain then or later just how the fire could have started. Unfortunately the heavy wooden timbers supporting the corrugated sides and roof, plus the dried wood of the trolleys, added fuel to the fire, while the intense near-zero cold hampered the firemen and quickly froze the water at the pumps. An effort was made to run the cars out of the barn as quickly as possible, but the firemen refused to fight the fire unless the power was shut off, for fear of being electrocuted. It was necessary to do this, because the fire would have spread to the Lutheran Church next door if the firemen had not fought the fire. Had it not been for the church, most of the cars would have been saved. The barn burned more fiercely because the floor was saturated with oil.

The first pale rays of dawn three hours later revealed a scene of devastation. Fourteen cars lay in a blackened, smoking heap.(1) The poor Traction, already desperately short of cars, lost 4 of its own cars, 9, 21, 27 and 67- five of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit, 518, 710, 1759, 1760, 2110, one of the Bridge Operating cars #5- and two of the New York & Queens, 321, 330. In addition, two service cars were ruined, the line car and the flat car, #1. Fortunately the cars were all insured. Depreciation, however, reduced the insurance recovered to \$28,520.91.

Two of the burnt cars, #21 and #27, had recently been overhauled at Woodside, and looked almost like new again. #27 was completely burned up, but #21 was only slightly scorched in a few places. Nevertheless the company scrapped the car, probably because they saw a good chance to collect the insurance in cash.

Scarcely a month later, on March 29, 1923, another fire broke out at the Rockville Centre storage tracks beside the old power house, and burned cars #3 and 37, snow plow #2, a rail grinder, and rail welding machine.(2)

The crippling loss of equipment forced the Traction to depend more than ever now on borrowed Brooklyn cars. No less than 24 trolleys of the "1700" and "2100" series of the BRT were operating in Nassau. The additional loss of the storage facilities at the Hempstead car barns caused Gen. Andrews to consider for a while the possibility of selling the land and moving the car shops to Rockville Centre, but for some reason this was not done.(3)

The first indication of how greatly pinched the company was for rolling stock came on May 21, 1923, when the Rockaway Rd. service

(1) Hempstead Sentinel, Feb. 23, 1923 1:1

(2) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1923

(3) Hempstead Sentinel, May 3, 1923, 1:7



TOP - Looking north from Hempstead Ave. as one of the Stephensons (9, 11, or 15) crosses the West Hempstead overhead in 1918

CENTER - Looking east on Jericho Turnpike from siding 7 at New Hyde Park

BOTTOM - Rig used to ferry passengers across Stansbury's Lake (Hollis) Old LIE sweeper tows NY&LIT no. 15 as trailer, after motors were removed from no. 15 (1925)

was so reduced during the rush hours that hundreds of persons had to take the LIRR, buses, or elevated lines to get to work. There had been no warning. When Mr. Stoddard was called for an explanation, he issued this lame and cheerless press release: "An effort is being made to get cars into service and resume operation on the normal schedule, but I cannot give any definite information when this result will be achieved."(1) Bitter complaints to the PSC produced a meeting attended by officials from the IRT and LIRR, and it was agreed that the Brooklyn cars should be retained, and that at least 10 should be purchased, while 19 other old Traction cars should be immediately overhauled.(2)

One unusual car purchase was made as a result of these talks; 10 big 12-bench opens from the Third Avenue RR Co., at a cost of \$2000 each. These cars had seen service since 1909 on the Westchester Electric RR. The strangest thing about this purchase is the fact that the cars were never placed in service on the line! Immediately after their delivery they were handed over to the L.I. Electric and used for the Far Rockaway service, yet the roll signs contained Nassau destinations!

In August, 1923, General Andrews made a much more practical purchase of 10 Birneys from the Eastern Massachusetts St. Rwy. for \$47,665. The impoverished Traction had no such large sum on hand, so a down payment of \$11,250 was arranged, the remainder to be paid in twelve monthly installments of \$2812,50 each.(3)

General Andrews then proceeded to carry out the recommendations of the PSC as to the Traction cars. During the second week of July, 1923, eight cars were sent to the Morris Park shops of the LIRR for rebuilding.(4) One month later, on August 5th, the first of these "rebuilt" cars reappeared on the streets of Hempstead.(5) Little had been done on the car bodies or even the trucks; the most unfortunate "improvement" was the removal of two of the original four motors, making the cars slower and weaker than they had been before. To create the impression of extensive overhauling in the minds of the riding public, the old bottle green paint scheme was changed to traction orange with silver lettering, a dull, durable color, attractive only when new. No doubt this was the best that Andrews could do, for the LIRR was increasingly unwilling to sink any money into the Traction.

On July 1st, Messrs. Andrews and Roberts made two other important changes, the removal of John Stoddard from the post of superintendent, and an increase in pay rates. With all the management in the hands of Andrews at Long Island City, it was hardly economical to support a figurehead at Hempstead. Out of deference, perhaps, to his father-in-law, Charles Addison of the LIRR, Stoddard was "promoted upstairs" to assistant to the general manager, but no one was fooled.(6)

Two years later, in September, 1925, Mr. Stoddard and family

- (1) New York Times, May 22, 1923 20:2
- (2) ibid. May 23, 1923 13:1
- (3) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1924
- (4) Hempstead Sentinel, July 5, 1923 1:6
- (5) ibid. August 9, 1923 1:7
- (6) ibid. July 5, 1923 1:6

moved from Hempstead to take charge of the Hutchinson Interurban Rwy. Co. of Kansas. (1) Mr. Chester Davis succeeded Stoddard as local superintendent. The motormen and conductors were greatly pleased by the new increase, effective July 1st, ranging from 4¢ to 8¢ per hour: First year, 49¢; second, 51¢; third, 53¢; fourth, 55¢; fifth and after, 57¢. (2) Andrews probably hoped that the more liberal pay scale would curb the tendency of the conductors especially to "knock down" as much money as they dared to compensate for their low wages.

General Andrews' next move to improve the Traction was a far-reaching one; the break-up of the 24-mile main line from Mineola to Brooklyn into two sections. In the 90's and up to the First World War the main flow of traffic was from the island to the Brooklyn elevated terminals at City Line, or Ridgewood, and then over the Brooklyn Bridge to downtown Manhattan. The building of the Jamaica "L" in 1916-1918 changed all this by bringing the 5¢ fare out to Jamaica, and surface traffic thereafter converged largely onto that town. The Traction's old south side line declined in importance so that by the 1920's there was very little through riding all the way into Brooklyn. Harry Carter's Bee Line Buses competed for the through traffic, and their route on Merrick Road was more direct. People on the south side either rode the Bee Line or changed at Jamaica Junction for a car to the elevated.

Along Rockaway Blvd. there was a considerable local traffic to the "L" at Grant Ave., largely because South Ozone Park was wholly dependent on the Traction for transportation. General Andrews was aware of this traffic change and the new riding trends of the day, and saw the opportunity of effecting an economy in cost of operation.

On Sept. 23, 1923, the main line was broken at Rosedale at the Queens line. Henceforth, cars from Mineola turned back at the Hook Creek Blvd. (siding #72) and cars from Brooklyn also turned back at that point. By operating the two ends separately, a local service was possible, unaffected by delays on the other end. Formerly, a delay anywhere on the 24 miles of single track was sooner or later reflected all the way to Mineola, because cars were held up at each of the sidings all along the route. The running time was lengthened, making it easier to run on time.

At the same time, the transfer point in Mineola was moved from Old Country Road to Jericho Turnpike and Mineola Blvd., and a lay-over was provided here. A real estate company donated a wooden waiting station for the use of passengers. A 15 minute rush hour service was inaugurated on all divisions with half-hourly service at other times; on the Brooklyn-Rosedale division one-man cars were to operate all day on a 10 minute headway. (3)

Toward the end of 1923 a second bus promoter, the first to appear in two full years, appeared before the trustees of Hempstead for franchises. He was Richard W. Semke of East Hempstead. His request was for a bus line between Rockville Centre and Hempstead, via

- (1) Hempstead Sentinel, September 24, 1925 7:3
- (2) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1923; also Hempstead Sentinel, July 5, 1923 1:6
- (3) Hempstead Sentinel, Sept. 20, 1923 1:3; also Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1923.

Franklin St. and Long Beach Rd., and a branch to Baldwin.(1) The trustees approved the franchise, Semke secured his certificate after posting the required bonds, and on the morning of Jan. 4, 1924, the new line opened with a 20¢ fare. It was successful from the start, and has continued to this day. There were now two bus rivals of the Traction competing with it for the south side business.

In the last days of December, 1923, the Traction, after a long and unsuccessful struggle, went into receivership. This was not in any way the fault of Messrs. Andrews and Roberts, who had been guiding and revitalizing the line so successfully for the last year. The story goes back to a dark night in the year 1921, as a Traction car was making its way slowly westward along the Jericho Turnpike. An auto with no headlights, and with a drunken driver at the wheel, moved over to the wrong side of the road onto the car tracks and smashed into the car.

It happened that one of the passengers in the car, a son of Sheriff Philip Krug of Nassau County, an influential man in Democratic circles in Nassau, was injured in the groin; and because of the grave and permanent nature of the injury, Sheriff Krug brought suit against the Traction for \$50,000. Although the accident was wholly the fault of the auto driver and in no way that of the Traction, yet under the law an innocent party can sue anybody he wishes.

The Traction refused to pay the \$50,000 and fought the judgement through the courts all during 1922, but in the end Krug was awarded a verdict for full damages. Needless to say, the Traction had no such sum in its meagre treasury, and the LIRR refused to advance the cash, so an unusual settlement was worked out. The Traction was thrown into receivership and Krug's attorney, Elmer J. Ashmead, was named as co-receiver with Charles L. Addison.

The action to place the company in receivership was well maneuvered. Gen. Andrews obtained an order directing the First National Bank of Hempstead, depository of the Traction funds, to pay the New York & Queens County Rwy. \$29,107, which it owed for several years. The non-payment of this sum resulted in an examination of the books, revealing the financial instability of the company, and the action for the naming of a receiver was begun.(2) Mr. Addison's appointment was made on Dec. 21, 1923, and on Jan. 2, 1924, Mr. Ashmead was appointed co-receiver. Then on Feb. 3, 1924 Gen. Andrews and Mr. Ashmead were appointed co-receivers in another foreclosure proceeding brought this time by the Union Trust Co. of Cleveland for non-payment of interest on the million dollar mortgage taken out by the Traction in 1902 to build the main line to Brooklyn.(3)

The sudden receivership, and the devious issues involved, attracted the suspicions of State Senator Frank Giorgio, who introduced a resolution into the State Legislature for an investigation of the affairs of the Traction, plus a recommendation to discontinue the company as an outmoded institution.(4)

- (1) Hempstead Sentinel, Nov. 22, 1923 1:4 and Dec. 6, 1923 1:2
- (2) *ibid.* Dec. 27, 1923 1:4
- (3) Report of the NY&LIT to the PSC for 1924; Electric Rwy. Journal Jan., 1924, p.45
- (4) Hempstead Sentinel, Feb.7,1924 1:2, N.Y. Times, Jan.31, 1924 5:3

The receivership forced Gen. Andrews into more drastic economies than any hitherto considered. He applied for and received permission from the courts to abandon all service on the south shore from Brooklyn City Line to Valley Stream (siding #68) on Feb. 5, 1924. This was the first time that any part of the Traction had ever been abandoned. It showed just how bad conditions had become. Borough President Connolly of Queens asked Grover A. Whalen, Commissioner of Plant Structures, to institute bus service in Queens to relieve the situation. Representatives of the South Ozone Park Civic Ass'n. went before the PSC to beg for relief, for there was no other transit facility at all in that area. General Andrews justified the abandonment as the only way to save the rest of the system, which was at least earning expenses.

The abandonment had not been handled in a way to gain friends for the Traction company. On Sunday the 3rd, service had been curtailed to three cars on a 30 minute headway. On Tuesday no notices were issued; the cars simply failed to appear, and commuters were left stranded all along the road. General Andrews said that the south side lines had been losing \$4000 a month, and that there were not enough cars to operate the division after the Brooklyn trolleys had been returned. (1)

Certainly the real reason for abandoning the line was the highly uneconomical 6-mile haul for only 5¢. No matter how crowded the cars were, they could not be made to pay when passengers were hauled so far for only a 5¢ fare. Perhaps the use of trailers and trippers might have tipped the scales - or the abandonment of the one-mile haul parallel to the "L" on Liberty Ave. No attempt was made, however, to secure a second fare zone or anything else to alleviate the situation.

The removal of 9.02 miles of route permitted the transfer of the one-man Birney cars to Nassau County, and on Feb. 3rd they were placed in service on the Mineola-Freeport run. (2) Between Freeport and Valley Stream the old cars were used with one-man operation, fare boxes, and identification checks.

In May, the receivers petitioned all the Nassau communities to temporarily suspend the fare zones and put into effect a new schedule for eight months. The proposition in substance was that from the centre of one village to the centre of the next the fare rate should be 5¢. (3) None of the towns in Nassau wanted to lose the trolley service, which, despite the few bus lines, was still regarded as the backbone of local transportation, and all the villages without exception agreed to the increased fares. (4)

On Nov. 25, 1924 the Traction was re-zoned for the last time, and all transfers were cancelled at the same time. The short stretch of abandoned track between Valley Stream and Rosedale, 1.75 miles, was re-opened. The new tariff was as follows:

- (1) Electric Rwy. Journal, Feb. 1924, p. 45; and N.Y. Times, Feb. 7, 1924 36:4
- (2) Hempstead Sentinel, February 7, 1924 5:3
- (3) ibid. May 8, 1924 1:5
- (4) ibid. May 15, 1924 1:3

Hook Creek Blvd. Rosedale to Rockaway Ave. Valley Stream	5¢
Rockaway Ave. Valley Stream to Atlantic Ave. Lynbrook	5¢
Broadway, Lynbrook to Rockaway Ave. Rockville Centre	5¢
Windsor Ave. Rockville Centre to Milburn Ave. Baldwin	5¢
Grand Ave. Baldwin, to Olive Blvd. (Sunrise Hwy.) Freeport	5¢
Merrick Rd. Freeport, to Roosevelt (Stop 63)	5¢
Roosevelt (Stop 65) to Fulton St., Hempstead	5¢
Town Hall, Hempstead, to Jericho Turnpike, Mineola	5¢

Fares on Hempstead Turnpike and Jericho Turnpike remained the same. (1)

The new zoning system maintained the 5¢ fare, but the distance that a passenger could ride for a nickel was about halved, resulting in a 5¢ charge for most riders, but 10¢ for certain others. The extra money brought in by this change enabled Messrs. Andrews and Roberts to restore the through Jamaica service in two steps.

On Aug. 17, 1924 the abandoned stretch from Rosedale to Jamaica Junction was reopened, and on Nov. 15, 1924 the cars began operating from Jamaica Junction via New York Ave. to Jamaica Ave., Jamaica. (2)

The through service proved very popular and began to make money. This new service was made possible by a virtual merger of the Traction with the L.I. Electric Rwy. General Andrews had been appointed receiver of the Electric on Nov. 1st, and the Traction operation into Jamaica was the first result of his announced intention to run the two lines as one. (3)

Late in 1924, or very early in 1925, the last new track installation was made on the system- a new siding in Mineola Blvd. at Jackson St., to serve as a terminus for the Mineola-Freeport service.

The Traction performed in 1924-5 its last piece of street paving anywhere on the system- Front St. in Hempstead. On this narrow street the cars entered Hempstead from the West and clouds of dust rose high in the air in the wake of each passing car. The company was supposed to sprinkle the road frequently, but the aged Taunton sprinkler of 1898 vintage had long since rusted to pieces. In June, 1920, the village ordered the company to pave the track area; (4) two years later in August, 1922, things were just the same, and the village adopted a resolution ordering the company to assume its share of a complete paving job, concrete on the sides and asphalt between the tracks. (5) The county went ahead and laid the concrete on either side in 1923, but the Traction did nothing to pave between its tracks (6), being satisfied with laying a Belgian block strip on the outside. In the summer of 1924 the trustees noted that no inside paving had been installed and brought new pressure on the company. (7) At last, in August and September of 1925 the company filled in a few holes and spread a little oil over the pavement. (8)

(1) Local Tariff #1 of NY&LIT for May 25, 1924.

(2) N.Y. Times, Aug. 17, 1924 III 6; L.I. Daily Press Nov. 14, 1924 1:1

(3) Hempstead Sentinel, Nov. 6, 1924 1:2

(4) *ibid.* June 3, 1920 1:6

(5) *ibid.* August 17, 1922 1:3

(6) *ibid.* April 19, 1923 1:3

(7) *ibid.* July 3, 1924 1:7

(8) *ibid.* July 9, 1925 1:2- and Sept. 3, 1925 3:4

The visitor in Hempstead today can still see the evidence of the Traction's poverty. Front St. has concrete on both sides, but the tarred strip in the center over the rails remains just as it did 25 years ago.

The extensive abandonments and re-routings of 1924 were the last important events on the Traction system; in the last year and a half of operation the strength of the line was steadily tested in court battles with ever-stronger bus competition on one hand, and efforts to stave off final bankruptcy on the other. In the Spring of 1924 a third bus rival appeared on the scene; on June 3, 1924 Russell C. Baukney, a Hempstead banker, got the consent of the town board of Hempstead for the operation of a bus line from Baldwin to Hempstead over the Baldwin road.(1) On Feb. 3, 1925 Mr. Baukney secured permission to operate between Mineola and Hempstead via Washington St.(2) During the first week of June, 1925, Mr. Baukney, in partnership with Harry C. Bickmeyer, organized the Hempstead Bus Co. and began operating two large White buses between Hempstead, Lynbrook and Baldwin on a 20¢ fare.(3) The new line, like its predecessors, shortened the distance to the south side villages and stole from the Traction a large share of the north-south traffic. The Hempstead Bus. Co. gave a fairly good service and remains in operation to this day.

When the time came for the Hempstead town board to renew the Traction's temporary fare rise, Gen. Andrews appeared before the members and attempted to minimize the new bus operations as expensive, temporary, and undependable. The board agreed to extend the fare rise on this occasion and on several later occasions until the end, but more than one member must have wondered whether the buses were not well on the way to becoming a permanent institution.(4)

General Andrews' final step to improve service seems to have been taken on April 23, 1925 when the courts consented to his plan of operating the Traction and the Electric as one, the cars of one system to be allowed to operate over the other freely and without payment.(5)

The first hint of the end for the NY&LIT as a whole came in July, 1925, when Jeremiah Wood, referee in bankruptcy in the action brought against the company by the Union Trust Co. of Cleveland, recommended that the line be sold to satisfy the judgements totaling \$1,390,000. This sum represented the million dollar mortgage of 1902 plus accrued interest charges since November, 1916.(6) Months passed in further litigation before anything definite was done to liquidate the road, but meantime, the Traction became involved in a battle to the death with a bold and persistent bus operator on the Hempstead Turnpike.

The small local service provided by the buses in Nassau had been helpful on the whole to the outlying sections and provided services to areas untapped by the trolley. The town board of Lynbrook, for

(1) Hempstead Sentinel, June 5, 1924 1:2

(2) *ibid.* February 5, 1925 5:6

(3) *ibid.* June 11, 1925 1:2

(4) *ibid.* February 5, 1925 1;4 -and May 28, 1925 1:2; and July 2, 1925 1:5

(5) Long Island Daily Press, April 24, 1925 1:1

(6) *ibid.* July 13, 1925 1:2

example, warmly encouraged the new bus operations, and gave similar encouragement to the trolley as well.(1) It was inevitable that somewhere someone would soon challenge the Traction in its home territory and provoke a showdown. The challenge was flung down by one Edward Markoff of Elmont, who began operating a fleet of Mack buses on Hempstead Turnpike between Franklin Square and 168th St., Jamaica, in November, 1924. Markoff had no franchise for this run and probably could not have secured one, so he resorted to a stratagem. He canvassed the residents of East Elmont and Elmont and secured their signatures to a "transportation club" named, The Sunrise Trail Communities League. The fares for the ride to Jamaica were collected all at once for a month at a time, and in this way he maintained the fiction of operating a sort of charter service.(2) The "club bus" trick was an attempt to get out of the "common carrier" classification and into the "private carrier" class, thus escaping Commission regulation and the need for a franchise.

The Traction could hardly afford to ignore this invasion of its franchise route, and applied for an injunction, effective September 8th. Markoff summoned the members of his league to a protest meeting (3), and the following week defiantly announced that he would soon operate ten routes with 42 buses.(4)

At two mass meetings held on August 29th and Sept. 4th, 1925, several hundred trolley patrons turned out to air their grievances against the company. Some condemned the poor service, declaring they had to wait anywhere from 15 minutes to two hours for a car; others condemned the conductors and motormen for their discourtesy; one man claimed that Traction got him into serious domestic difficulties by delaying him frequently at night, so that his wife was becoming increasingly suspicious. Several hundred people affixed their signatures to a petition listing their grievances, which was to be presented at the injunction hearing on Sept. 8th.(5)

The Supreme Court at Mineola heard the case as scheduled, and issued an injunction against Markoff forbidding him to operate on streets already served by the Traction. The next morning, however, the Sunrise Trail buses were operating as if nothing had happened. Four days later, on Sept.13th, Markoff was hauled into court for defying the injunction.(6) Markoff failed to heed the summons, and the sheriff called at midnight at his home in Elmont, but found the quarry missing. The following morning, Sept.15th, three of his drivers were arrested for driving a vehicle without a permit.(7) Markoff continued to evade the law, and five more of his drivers were arrested -so that his bus service was crippled for lack of operators.(8) On September 16th Markoff voluntarily surrendered to the law and was jailed for 30 days for contempt of court and failure to obey an injunction. With Markoff in jail Sunrise Trail bus service collapsed, though public opinion along Hempstead Turnpike was strongly sympathetic to both the buses and their champion.(9) Calmer heads pointed

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| (1) | (6) <i>ibid.</i> Sept.14, 1925 1:8 |
| (2) L.I.Daily Press, Aug.15,1925 1:6 | (7) <i>ibid.</i> Sept.15, 1925 1:8 |
| (3) <i>ibid.</i> August 26, 1925, 1:7 | (8) <i>ibid.</i> Sept.16, 1925 3:8 |
| (4) <i>ibid.</i> Sept. 4, 1925 1:5 | (9) <i>ibid.</i> Sept. 17, 1925 1:8 |
| (5) <i>ibid.</i> Sept. 5, 1925 1:8 | |



TOP - No. 41 (left) and no. 5 in storage alongside Rockville Centre power-plant in 1923. Both cars were out of service
 CENTER - Stop 186 1/2. House is 126-42 144th St., Ozone Park
 BOTTOM - Springfield overhead (now 230th St.) over LIRR in 1918

out that the Traction had done little to deserve public approval. The rails and cars were old, and the single track operation obsolete, both allegations being only too true.(1)

On Tuesday, Sept. 22nd, a mass meeting at Franklin Square brought renewed and determined pledges to support Markoff and the Sunrise Trail League against the trolley company. It was even proposed to organize a mass rally to whip up public spirit; others urged car drivers to pick up passengers so as to hasten the bankruptcy of the Traction.(2) The promised parade failed to materialize, and the battle remained deadlocked until Markoff got out of jail on Oct. 16th. Wiser, but unrepentant, he announced that the Sunrise Trail Communities League was dead, thanks to the Traction, but that the Sunrise Trail Transportation Co. would begin service Dec. 15th with 7 buses between Jamaica and Franklin Square. To avoid future legal entanglements, Markoff secured a permit from the Hempstead town officials, and applied for another franchise from the Dept. of Plant & Structures in New York City.(3) This time the Traction could do nothing to stop him.

Meanwhile, the Hempstead Bus Co. had expanded its operations to cover Baldwin, Oceanside, and Lynbrook;(4) the poor Traction was now completely paralleled on every route, fighting hard for its life. It was bad enough to have enemies outside, but to have enemies inside as well, in the shape of the Union Trust Co., demanding its pound of flesh, weakened the morale of the receivers to the point where they lost the will to fight what seemed a losing battle.

Under the very careful management of Andrews and Roberts the Traction for the first time in many years had begun to make a very tiny profit. On the strength of this, Roberts approached a Wall St. banker and tried to refinance the line. This was necessary to take care of the Cleveland bondholders and the large debt owed the LIRR for back power bills. Unfortunately, Roberts approached the wrong banker and was refused. Other bankers, hearing of this, refused Roberts any further hearing. Without the necessary refinancing Roberts had no choice but to give up. Also, there was considerable political pressure against the Traction company; after all, the trolley operated on very lucrative routes, and the new bus operators had powerful political backing.

By December Andrews and Roberts had reached the point where they no longer talked about restoring the trolley service; instead they outlined the early formation of a bus company to be called the "Queens-Nassau Transit Lines", which would liquidate the Traction's few assets and then take over the routes.(5)

General Andrews, in March of 1925, had received an appointment as Secretary of the Treasury in charge of the enforcement of the Prohibition Laws, leaving Edward A. Roberts, his general manager in charge of the organization of the new bus line. Roberts authorized

- (1) Long Island Daily Press, Sept. 17, 1925 6:1
- (2) *ibid.* Sept. 21, 1925 1:1 and Sept. 22, 1925 1:1
- (3) *ibid.* November 25, 1925 1:3
- (4) Hempstead Sentinel, Sept. 24, 1925 1:2
- (5) *ibid.* December 17, 1925 1:1

his counsel, Harold Cloutman, to release details of the new bus route. The Queens-Nassau Transit Lines would bid in the Traction at the foreclosure sale, and sell it for scrap. With the money secured, new buses would be bought. It remained only for the new company's bankers to advance the capital required.(1)

With the Traction's demise certain, the Queens-Nassau Transit Lines was not the only one avidly seeking the trolley routes. Two other bus companies hovered like vultures over the dying body of the Traction, ready to swoop down and gorge themselves on the defenseless railroad. The Bee Line Bus Co. in 1924 had begun a bus route on the Merrick Rd. between Freeport and Rosedale, and during 1925 had begun to make its competition felt on the south side. At first the Bee Line had been prohibited from running through buses, but the manager evaded this by transferring passengers from one bus to another at the Rosedale line. When the PSC granted the Bee Line a certificate of convenience and necessity, the Traction petitioned for an injunction, but this was denied and the buses continued operating.(2) Worse still, the Bee Line appeared before the Hempstead Village Board and confidently announced its readiness to take over all Hempstead service as soon as the trolleys should quit;(3) it also offered to operate the whole south side route of the Traction to Rosedale, should the trustees approve.(4)

The Sunrise Trail Trans. Co. also appeared before the Hempstead board and asked permission to operate a deluxe bus service between Hempstead and New York at 75¢ per trip or \$1.25 a round trip.(5) On January 8th Markoff pleaded his cause before the Board of Estimate of New York City, offering to operate from 168th St. via Jamaica Ave. and Hempstead Aves. to Hollis, Queens, Elmont and Franklin Square to Hempstead; also to Mineola via the Jericho Turnpike. Fired by his own eloquence, he painted a glowing picture of shiny fleets of new white buses rolling over a vast network stretching from Jamaica to such distant points as Port Jefferson, Lake Ronkonkoma, and Patchogue. The Board listened calmly, but granted no franchises.(6)

Not to be outdone in the race, the Hempstead Bus Co. appeared before the Hempstead board on Jan. 12th and requested permission to take over the Mineola-Freeport run of the trolleys at a 20% fare. The Board thought 15¢ was enough, and held the matter over for study.(7)

On Jan. 19th the Board issued a two-year franchise and ordered the company to secure the permission of the PSC.(8) On Feb. 2nd the company received the permission of the township for operation on the day that the trolleys ceased. Russell Baukney, the president, objected to this restriction, but finally accepted.(9) The stage was all set for the last act of the drama; the dying limbs of the Traction were already being parceled out even before its death.

While its competitors plotted its destruction, the Traction continued operating as before. At 6:50 AM on Jan. 9, 1926, a fuse blew out in the LIRR power house in L.I. City, and all cars on the Traction

(1) L.I. Daily Press, Jan. 9, 1926 1:1

(2) *ibid.* Jan. 9, 1926 1:1

(3) *Hemp. Sentinel*, Jan. 7, 1926 1:5

(4) *ibid.* Jan. 14, 1926 1:2

(5) *ibid.* Jan. 7, 1926 1:5

(6) L.I. Daily Press, Jan. 8, 1926 1:1

(7) *Hemp. Sentinel*, Jan. 14, 1926 1:4

(8) *ibid.* Jan. 21, 1926 1:5

(9) *ibid.* Feb. 4, 1926 1:5

were stalled for 10 minutes until repairs were made.(1) On Feb.1st, 1926, a gray rainy day, a Traction car jumped the tracks at Belmont Park at the height of the rush hour, causing the tie-up that delayed hundreds of commuters on the L.I. Electric as well as the Traction.(2) Three days later on Thursday, Feb. 4th, a heavy snow began falling, and by afternoon the swirling drifts cut off all service on the Traction east of Elmont. All the plows and sweepers were pressed into service and the company put 60 men to work shoveling snow off the rails. On Sunday, the 7th, the company set three rotary sweepers to work on the blocked Jericho Turnpike line. On Thursday, Feb.11th, service was opened through to Hempstead at last, and two days later the Pike line was finally cleared. The trolley company had been almost entirely out of service for eight days, a further serious loss of revenue. The Hempstead Bus Co. profited from the Traction's misfortune by running between Hempstead and Freeport over the trolley route as an "emergency" service.(3)

In the midst of the snowstorm there came the news that the Traction employees had been dreading; on Feb. 9th the court announced the sale of the N.Y.& L.I. Traction, cars, rails, franchises and property, to be held at Mineola Court House on Thursday, Feb. 25, 1926. The vice-president of the LIRR, in a newspaper interview, said it would mean the end of the trolley service on the line. This was the first definite statement that the line would be abandoned.(4)

On the fateful Thursday morning the receivers of the Traction, the receivers of the IRT, the counsel for the Union Trust Co., and Jeremiah Wood, referee in bankruptcy, gathered for the final sale.(5) The property was first offered in bulk, and a committee of the bondholders bid \$300,000. The property was then offered in separate parcels. In the end the bondholders bought in all the real property for \$307,815, but the five franchises were allowed to go to Hyman Salzberg, the junk dealer who specialized in wrecking railway lines, for the nominal sum of \$285. Had the bondholders bought the franchises as well they would have been legally obligated to operate the line; without the franchise, they could now abandon.(6)

Nothing was said at the sale about the future, and speculation ran rife. When approached for a statement the Traction officials said that all service would end in 30 days, the moment the courts dismissed the foreclosure proceedings. Whether buses would take over the routes was an open question. The bondholders could hardly run buses without a franchise, and Salzberg could not run a bus line on his street car franchises.(7) Meanwhile, the civic associations wondered and worried. After all these years of carping at the trolleys, the prospect of actually seeing them go was disquieting, to say the least.

On March 2nd the discharged receivers wrote the Hempstead board, thanking them for their cooperation on service and fares in the past

- (1) L.I. Daily Press, Jan. 9, 1926 1:5
- (2) *ibid.* Feb. 1, 1926 1:3
- (3) *ibid.* Feb. 6, 1926 1:4 and Feb. 9, 1926 2:6; and Feb. 11, 1926 1:1
- (4) N.Y. Times, Feb. 10, 1926 14:6

- (5) N.Y. Times, Feb. 24, 1926 29:3 and L.I. Daily Press, Feb. 24, 1926 1:2
- (6) Hemp. Sentinel, Feb. 25, 1926 1:2- also L.I. Daily Press, Feb. 25, 1926 1:5 and Feb. 26, 1926 1:3
- (7) L.I. Daily Press, Jan. 8, 1926 1:1

and expressing regret that the plans of reorganization had failed after all.(1)

The Long Island Daily Press, during the period of uncertainty in the first weeks of March as to what was going to happen, decided to send a reporter to the Traction territory to sound out public opinion on the bus-trolley question. The reporter interviewed various town officials in Floral Park, Franklin Square and Elmont, and discovered that sentiment was strongly in favor of the buses. The reasons were interesting; some denounced the decrepit, worn condition of the cars; others censured the dirty interiors; the overwhelming grievance against the trolleys, however, was the poor service and long waits. People saw no hope of better service with a single track and siding arrangement, and placed high hopes on the buses.(2)

On March 15th general manager Edward Roberts issued a press release on the situation; the trolleys were to stop April 15th, and the Queens-Nassau Transit Lines, organized and incorporated by the bondholders, was to take over the routes. He intimated that the bus operation would be the largest ever requested of the Hempstead Village Board, and town board, and that as soon as the buses could be delivered, the trolleys would stop.(3)

On March 24th the Supreme Court in Brooklyn heard a motion by the receivers to discontinue the operation of the Traction and affirm the sale, but no decision was given.(4) On March 20th the employees of the Traction, worried over the prospect of unemployment that might strike them at any moment, petitioned the company for definite information concerning the future of the line, so that they might look for other positions in the meantime. Some men had worked for the Traction for twenty years and felt entitled to that much consideration from the company.(5)

On March 24th the Press published a rumor that the Traction system was to be taken over by two men who would refinance and reorganize the system; the paper pointed out as proof that as late as March 20th a track gang was at work repairing the Garden City crossing.(6) The next day the truth came out. Two bankers, Park A. Crowley and H. Pushae Williams, both officials of the Bank of Manhattan Co., had decided to take over the Queens trolley system, but Nassau was to be abandoned. The bank had heavily subsidized home building in Hollis and Queens and feared heavy losses if transit facilities were withdrawn.(7)

The Hempstead Village Board was immediately deluged with bus applications now that trolley abandonment was certain. The village officials wisely required all applicants to submit photos of their equipment and evidence of financial competence, and studied the petitions for two weeks. Meanwhile, it was announced that the trolleys would definitely stop on midnight of Easter Sunday, April 4, 1926.(8)

On April 1st placards were posted in all the Traction cars an-

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Hemp.Sentinel, Mar.4,1926 6:1 | (5) L.I.Daily Press, Mar.20,1926 1:1 |
| (2) L.I.Daily Press, Mar.6,1926 1:2 | (6) Ibid. Mar.24,1926 1:3 |
| (3) Ibid. Mar.15,1926 1:1 and Mar. 17,1926 1:5, and Mar.18,1926 1:3 | (7) Ibid. Mar.25,1926 1:6 |
| (4) Hemp.Sentinel, Mar.25,1926 1:3 | (8) Ibid. Mar.31,1926 1:8 and Hemp.Sentinel, Apr.1,1926 1:3 |

nouncing the end of operation. Nothing was said of bus substitution. No final ceremony of any kind was arranged to mark the end of a quarter century of service. Early Sunday morning the Brooklyn Eagle photographer took a picture of one of the cars in Freeport; on the dash hung two crudely lettered signs, "Rest in pieces" and "1892-1926".

The riding public, warmed by the sunny Easter skies and gaily decked out in their new Spring apparel, scarcely noticed the impending disappearance of an old friend on which they and their parents before them had relied for a quarter century. As the shades of evening fell over the Traction routes, more than one old employee sensed the double significance of the gathering twilight; it was the end not only of this Easter day, but of a day of trolley railroading that would never come again. As the midnight car pulled into Hempstead and then backed slowly into the carbarn, the last act of the drama was ended.(1) To Nassau commuters, waiting in the cold dawn of Monday morning, it came as a hard fact that the trolleys were really gone.

All the newspapers chronicled the following day the news of the Traction's passing and its significance to the riding public. The N.Y. Daily News sent a photographer to the Hempstead carbarn on Sunday night, and a photo of the last car pulling into the carbarn appeared in Tuesday's paper.

The buses that had waited impatiently for months quickly stepped into the breach and took over the routes. The Hempstead Bus Co. secured a temporary and later permanent franchise from the town board for the Mineola-Freeport route, which it operates today.(2) The Bee Line took over the Jamaica-Hempstead route, and the Schenck Bus Line, a newcomer to the field, won the Pike franchise.(3) All the buses were new and anxious to make a good impression; they inaugurated a 15 minute service and have continued it with a few variations to the present day.

Perhaps the saddest aspect of the abandonment was the plight of the Traction employees. Men who had spent a lifetime on the job were thrown out of work, with no provision made to rehire them on other lines or give them pensions. Old Lewis Smalling, who had piloted #1 down Main St. 24 years before, typified this tragedy; too old to learn a new trade, he was obliged to enter the Town poor farm and died a few years later.

In May the first steps were taken towards dismantling the Traction's physical plant. The West End overhead over the LIRR was the first structure to go, followed by the trestles at Rockville Centre, Valley Stream, and Springfield. The Birneys had been sent to the Jamaica Central car barn at Cedar Manor, and after a few weeks of storage were put into service on Jamaica and Liberty Aves. The other cars remained in the High St. barn at Hempstead all during April and May 1926, along with one or two of the Traction's opens that had

(1) Long Island Daily Press, April 5, 1926 1:1

(2) Hempstead Sentinel, April 8, 1926 1:5

(3) *ibid.* May 6, 1926 3:3

never seen Nassau service. The oldest cars 1, 3(burnt) 5, 7, 11, 17(burnt), 35(wrecked)- were already at the Rockville Centre scrap tracks. The Brill semi-convertibles that had not been renovated (31, 33) were run to the Rockville Centre yard for junking. In June or July all were burnt there. In June or July the Southern cars (63-73), the rebuilt Brills (39-61), and the four opens were moved, apparently under their own power, over the Jericho Turnpike to the Woodside shops of the New York & Queens Co. Rwy. Very shortly afterwards the Brills and Southern cars were sent to the Jamaica Central and placed in service on the Far Rockaway and Jamaica Ave. lines. At the time the Jamaica Central Rwy. was renovating the old yellow Second Avenue fleet it had inherited, and badly needed the Traction cars for temporary duty. As soon as the Jamaica Central Birney cars had been repainted, the Traction Birneys were withdrawn from service (mid-July, 1926). By the end of the summer of 1926 the Jamaica Central had finished rebuilding its own cars, and the Traction Birneys, Brills, and Southern cars were returned to Woodside for storage. Meanwhile, the 12-bench opens had been burnt (1550, 1551, 1544 and 1553). In the late Fall of 1926 the old Traction Brills were burnt, but the six Southern cars and the Birneys were moved again to Cedar Manor for loading onto railroad flat cars. The Southern cars were painted a dark color, fenders removed, life guards put on, and lettered on the sides, "Hydro Electric". The trail of these cars ends here. Just which Hydro-electric company these cars went to remains a mystery. One thing is certain; they did not go to the Hydro-electric Commission of Ontario.

The Traction Birneys, it is said, were advertised for sale in the fall of 1926, and supposedly went to Three Rivers, Ontario. It has not been possible to verify this tradition.(1)

Although all the Traction's rolling stock has long since perished, one of the cars that formerly operated on the Traction has been saved thanks to a few lucky accidents and much hard work: BRT car #1792. This trolley was one of twenty-six "1700" series cars from Brooklyn that operated on the Grant Ave.-Rosedale division, and occasionally through Hempstead. After leaving the Traction in 1923, it escaped the "modernization" that overtook the others, and became sand car #9730. On Nov. 8th, 1950, after months of negotiation, the car arrived safely at the Branford Trolley Museum, Branford, Conn., where it is currently undergoing restoration.

Once the Traction's rolling stock had all been removed from Hempstead, Hyman Salzberg, the junkman, set to work dismantling the line. All the rails and overhead were taken up, and by 1927 little remained to show where the Traction had operated. Fortunately, the two old trackmen who worked so hard to keep the roadbed intact, John D. Murphy (died 1915) and Larry Grella (died 1925) did not live to see their handiwork desecrated. In 101st Ave. Ozone Park (siding #88) the rails remained until 1940; in Front St., Hempstead, opposite St. George's, some rail remained till 1942. Today only siding #60 in Stauderman Ave., Lynbrook, between Broadway and Atlantic Ave. remains to remind the hurrying traveller of the vanished Traction. In 1927-

(1) Eye-witness reports of Messrs. W.P. Hamilton III of St. Louis, Mo. and William Rugen of Richmond Hill, L.I.

-28 Hempstead Turnpike and Jericho Turnpike were both widened to their present four-lane dimensions, and in the process all traces of the Traction were obliterated.

On the south side the old right of way is still very clear from 230th St., Springfield, parallel to and just north of the LIRR, as far as Hicks St., Valley Stream. Across Horton Ave., Lynbrook, the rails are still embedded in the concrete. North of the LIRR tracks in Lynbrook the private right-of-way is again clearly discernible. In Rockville Centre the private right-of-way between South Centre Ave. and Lincoln Ave. remains unused to this day. These tiny remnants are all that remain of the south side trackage, the building of the Sunrise Highway having destroyed other remnants. Authorized by the Board of Estimate in March 1924, the highway was completed by December 1928.(1) The construction work over the conduit removed the old trolley roadbed from Rockaway Ave. to Springfield, and the storage yards at Rockville Centre just east of Ocean Ave.

Today the Traction lives only in the memory of an older generation. The Nassau youth of today, riding through Freeport, Oceanside, or Hempstead, would stare in astonishment at the news that a trolley once rolled through his neighborhood. The hand of time has wrought vast changes in Nassau and its transit, but the New York & Long Island Traction will live on in history and in the memory of its old friends.

(1) Queensborough Magazine December 1928

Hold "Funeral" Over Trolley



Inspector Sylvester Wright and Motorman George Murphy pose in front of their car in Freeport on Easter Sunday morning, 1928. Can you imagine how these men felt as their lifetime career came to an abrupt end in a strange contrast to the vast pride and enthusiasm with which they were greeted 24 years before!

ERRORS AND CORRECTIONS TO PREVIOUS
BOOKS- LONG ISLAND ELECTRIC AND NEW YORK & QUEENS

- Long Island Electric: 1. Picture facing p. 21 of car #6. The caption says that #6 was formerly one of #50-54 series; Caption should read: #6 was a rebuilt open of #55-75 series.
2. L.I. Electric map: crossover on Jamaica Ave. should have been labeled 195th St., not 197th St.
3. L.I. Electric map: NY&LIT bridge went over the LIRR at 230th St., Springfield, not under as shown.
4. L.I. Electric map: trackwork at 212th Pl. and Jamaica Ave. is correct; delete question mark.
5. "1500" series open cars were, of course, 12 bench opens, not 14 as indicated.
6. L.I. Electric book. p. 44. The ferry motor car was a former sweeper, not an old single truck open.

New York & Queens Co. Ry.: The roster of the Steinway RR Co. as of July 8, 1895, just five months before incorporation of the NY&Q, has recently come to light:

- 45 open trailers, as follows:
- 11 Stephenson 1894, 25 ft. overall
 - 18 Stephenson 1895, 25 ft. overall
 - 4 second hand cars from Boston, bought in 1893; 25 ft. overall
 - 5 built by the Steinway RR in 1887. 22 ft. overall
 - 7 purchased second hand in 1895 from the Long Island City & Newtown RR. 22 ft. overall. One of these was #123.

- 21 open motor cars, formerly horse cars:
- 6 Stephenson 1886
 - 1 Lewis & Fowler 1889
 - 2 Steinway RR 1884
 - 11 Steinway RR 1891
 - 1 Piegel Co. 1887

- 6 closed trailers
all six made by Steinway 1887

- 48 closed motor cars:
20 American Car Co. 1894
28 horse cars, built 1890-1893, motorized 1894

GOOD ONLY FROM Main and Front Sts., Hempstead, TO Westerly Limits of Village of Hempstead NOT GOOD IF DETACHED 007970	1	15	1	New York and Long Island Traction Company MINEOLA-ROSEDALE DIVISION Good ONLY on date stamped below, and until time punched in next coupon, and to fare limit of last coupon attached.
	2		2	
	3		3	
	4	4		
	5	5		
	6	6		
	7	7		
	8	8		
	9	9		
	10	45		
	11	11		
	12	12		

N. Y. & L. I. T. Co.

West Bound

**IDENTIFICATION
CHECK**

To be held
by passengers and
returned to car
operator or collector
when leaving car.

This check is issued
in the zone between

**ATLANTIC AVE,
LYNBROOK**
and
**ROCKAWAY AVE,
VALLEY STREAM**

Pay fare according to
as many zones that
you have ridden.

ELLIOTT TICKET CO., N. Y. C.

N. Y. & L. I. T. Co.

East Bound

**IDENTIFICATION
CHECK**

To be held
by passengers and
returned to car
operator
when leaving car.

This check is issued
in the zone between

**GRAND AVE,
BALDWIN**
and end of line
FREEMONT

You will deposit 5c
fare in box when
boarding car and
return check
on leaving car.

ELLIOTT TICKET CO., N. Y. C.

THE LUSH PHARMACY
TROLLEY JUNCTION, HEMPSTEAD

DRUGS, TOILET ARTICLES, PHOTOGRAPHIC SUPPLIES, KODAKS,
CIGARS, SODA WATER AND ICE CREAM

Branch, Main St., Opposite Post Office
ROOSEVELT, L. I.

CAR ROSTER OF THE NEW YORK & LONG ISLAND TRACTION

1,3,5,7
Wason 1901, double truck closed cars; bodies delivered at Hempstead Jan. 15, 1902; four Westinghouse 56C motors; Peckham trucks; later Brill 27M trucks; K-11 controllers; Brill hand and air brakes; crosswise seating; body weight 20,260 lbs.; 11 windows; railroad roof. 44'2" X 9'4" X 12'5"
Olive brown color with scroll work decoration in gold; this was later painted out. All retired about 1922 and stored.
#1,5,7 scrapped in 1926
#3 developed dry rot in the main sills and was put on the scrap track at Rockville Centre; burned to the belt line on March 29, 1923 while there.

9,11,15,17
Stephenson 1902, double truck closed cars; bodies delivered June 1902; Brill 27M trucks; four Westinghouse 56C motors of 55 HP each; #17 had four OE 80 motors of 40 HP each; Brill hand and air brakes; crosswise seating; 4 1/2 capacity; body weight 20,700 lbs.; K-11 controllers; 11 windows; railroad roof; 43' X 9' X 12' Olive green color
#9 burned in car house fire of Feb. 18, 1923
#11 converted into a snow sweeper in Jan. 1925 as #011; after the traction quit, it was stored at the NY&LJ barn at Woodside, and later scrapped.
#15 body sold by Saltsberg, the junkman, to the Jamaica Central Railways in 1926 for \$25 as a motorless trailer to ferry passengers over Stansbury's Lake. Scrapped about 1930.
#17 originally an express car with side doors for baggage; car part seated 38. Baggage part later fitted with longitudinal seating; destroyed by fire in Oceanside while in service Dec. 23, 1925; burned shell towed to Rockville Centre yard and left there. For years it leaned on one side due to weak spring on the truck bolster.

19-29
Brill 1903, six double truck semi-convertible cars; bodies delivered July 1903. Four OE 80 motors of 40 HP each; Brill 27 MCB2 trucks; K-350 controllers; National hand brakes; Brill air brakes crosswise seating of 40 capacity; body weight 19,360 lbs.; 10 windows; deck roof; 39'10" X 8'9" X 12'10"
Total cost for each car completely equipped \$3978.23
#19,23,25,29 scrapped in 1926
#21,27 destroyed in car barn fire Feb. 18, 1923

31
Brill 1905; delivered April 1905; double truck semi-convertible car; four Westinghouse 307 motors of 50 HP each, two motors removed in 1923; in 1926 the car had one Brill 27 MCB and one Brill 27 PE truck; K-35 controllers; Brill air brakes; crosswise seating, 4 1/2 capacity; body weight 19,360 lbs.; 11 windows; deck roof. 42'7" X 8'8 1/2" X 12'7 1/2" Scrapped 1926

33,35
Brill 1905, double truck semi-convertibles; delivered April 1905; four Westinghouse 307 motors of 50 HP each, two motors removed in 1923; in 1926 the cars had one Brill 27 MCB and one Brill 27 PE truck; K-35 controllers; National hand brakes and Brill air brakes; crosswise seating, 4 1/2 capacity; body weight 20,560 lbs.; 11 windows; deck roof; 42'6" X 9' X 12'9"
Both scrapped in 1926.
#35 was involved in an accident around 1921 or 1922; one platform was knocked off and the car was put on the scrap track at Rockville Centre and never repaired; scrapped 1926

37
Brill 1905, double truck semi-convertible; delivered April 1905; four Westinghouse 307 motors of 50 HP each; Brill 27A-1 trucks; K-35 controllers; Brill air brakes; crosswise seating of 40, later 4 1/2 after 1911; body weight 20,580 lbs. 11 windows; deck roof; 43' X 9' X 12' Fate of this car is uncertain.
Cars #31-37 are fully described and illustrated in the Electric Railway Journal of June 1905, p. 1106

39-61
Brill 1906, twelve double-truck semi-convertibles purchased April 1. These cars seem to have had four OE 80 motors at first but Westinghouse 307 motors of 50 HP each were later substituted; #53 and 57 retained the OE 80 motor to the end. Brill 27 MCB or PE trucks; K-28 controllers; National hand and Brill air brakes; crosswise seating, 4 1/2 capacity; body weight 19,660 lbs.; body seat \$266 each; 11 windows; deck roof; 42'6" X 9' X 12'9"
#39 two motors removed 1923; scrapped 1926
#41 withdrawn from service after platform was crushed in in Elmont rear-end collision May 29, 1921; stored Rock. Centre
#43 two motors removed 1923; scrapped 1926
#45 two motors removed 1923; "written off" for salvage of \$50 in 1924 along with car #41
#47 converted into a waiting room at Rosedale in 1923; destroyed by fire on October 7, 1924.
#49 two motors removed 1923; scrapped 1926
#51 & 53 two motors removed 1923; scrapped 1926
#55 platform dry-rotted, removed from service about 1922, and #57 scrapped 1926 / stored at Rock. Centre
#59 two motors removed 1923; scrapped 1926
#61 two motors removed 1923; scrapped 1926

63-73
Southern Car Co. 1915, six closed cars; bought July 16, 1915 and began service Jan. 1, 1916. Cost \$2089 each; four Westinghouse 307 SV motors of 55 HP each; Brill MCB1 trucks; K-3502 controllers; Westinghouse air brakes; crosswise seating, 4 1/2 capacity; 12 windows; arch roof; 42' X 8'9 1/2" X 12'2 1/2"
#63 sold 1926
#65 two motors removed 1923; sold 1926
#67 destroyed in Hempstead car barn fire of Feb. 18, 1923
#69, 71, 73 two motors removed 1923; sold 1926

100-109
Brill 1920, ten Birney cars, bought second-hand from the Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway in August 1923. Two Westinghouse 508A motors of 25 HP each; K-10 & K-2 controllers; Brill 79E1 trucks; Westinghouse traction brakes; crosswise seating, 30 capacity; body weight 11,420 lbs.; 28'5" X 7'10 1/2" X 10'0 1/2" Used for local service on the Rockaway Blvd. to Rosedale; later Mineola-Freeport locals; also Jamaica-Bellerose locals. May have been sold to Three Rivers, Quebec, but this cannot be verified.

Eastern Mass. numbers: 5100, 5101, 5104, 5121, 5139, 5154, 5179, 5184, 5191, 5192.

151,2,1514,1515,1516,1517,1518,1519,1550,1551,1553
Brill 1909, ten double truck 12-bench opens bought in May 1923 from the Third Avenue Ry. system for \$20,000. Westinghouse 56 motors of 50 HP each; K-11 controllers; Brill 22B trucks; National hand brakes and Brill air brakes; crosswise seating, 65 capacity; body weight 11,420 lbs.; 37'9 1/2" X 7'6" X 11'6" These opens were never used on the Traction lines; they were leased immediately to the Long Island Electric; most burned in the Cedar Manor car barn fire of July 6, 1921.
#151-1519, 1552 totally destroyed in Cedar Manor fire
#150, 1551, 1552 scrapped in 1926
#1553 damaged in the Cedar Manor fire but repaired; scrapped at Woodside in 1926
These opens were bought new in 1909 by Third Avenue for suburban service on the Westchester Electric RR, and numbered series #21-70; renumbered 1917 to 1500 series.

SERVICE CARS

1 or 031, 2
Two Brill plows, two OE-202 motors of 50 HP each, k-11 controllers; Brill 8564 trucks; Brill staff brakes. 26'6" X 9' X 11'10" Generally kept at Rockville Centre car yard. Bought 1906 for \$2227.30 each, completely equipped.
#1 changed to #031 on March 9, 1925. Scrapped 1926
#2 destroyed in car barn fire of March 29, 1923 at Rockville Centre

99 or 066
One double truck plow purchased by the NY&LJ in 1910. After July 1915 it was listed as a wrecker, four Westinghouse 93 motors; K-14 controllers; Brill 27M1 trucks; 200 HP; National hand brake and air brakes. 43' X 9' X 12'9" Scrapped 1926

1 or 038
One rotary Peckham plow; two GE58 motors and two Westinghouse 56 motors of 55 HP each; K-10 controller; two RP2 Peckham trucks. 24 1/2" X 6'8 1/2" X 11'10 1/2" First listed by company 1909 Changed to #038 on March 9, 1925. Scrapped 1926

SWEEEPERS:

1, 2 or 010
Two sweepers, McQuire 1907. Three OE202 motors of 50 HP each; K-11 controllers; two 1 1/2 MCB trucks; 28'5" X 9'10" X 12'5"
#1 destroyed in car barn fire of March 29, 1923
#2 changed to #010 in November 1924

011

Former passenger car 11 rebuilt into a snow sweeper in Nov. 1924. Two OE 202 motors and two OE 80 motors of 50 HP each; K-35 controllers; Brill 27 MCB trucks. 48' X 8'5" X 13'5" Sent to Woodside in 1926 where it remained for some years.

012
Second hand snow sweeper bought in Jan. 1924 for \$1064.00 Three OE 80 motors of 40 HP each; K-10 controllers; two 1 1/2 MCB trucks; hand brakes; 26'6" X 7'1" X 10'10" Scrapped 1926

LINE:

1 or 042
One line car, bought by the NY&LJ in 1909; two Westinghouse 49 motors of 40 HP each; K-12 controllers; Brill 21A trucks; body weight 12,000 lbs. 30'10" X 7'9" X 12'10" Changed to 042 on March 9, 1925. Apparently slightly damaged in the Hempstead car barn fire of 1923, for it was reported "rebuilt" in May 1923.

FLAT:

.....
Three trailer flat cars, non-motor, 30', bought 1903 for \$1208.85. Two were retired in 1916. Dimensions also given as 20' X 8' X 4'

1

One flat car listed in July 1912 for the first time. Four motors totaling 100 HP. 37' X 9' X 12' Destroyed in car barn fire of Feb. 18, 1923 at Hempstead. This was trackman Larry Orell's special all-purpose work car.

SPRINKLER:

1
One sprinkler, first listed July 1912 and never again. Taunton; 22'1" X 11'10" X 12'3" Two motors, totaling 50 HP. Probably rented from the New York & Queens County Railway.

WORK CARS:

2,3
Two work cars, built by the NY&LJ, and first listed by company in January 1913. 37' X 9' X 12' Disappeared before 1926.

AUTOS:

1
White automobile tower wagon, bought in the early 1920's.

LEASED CARS (ALL FROM THE BROOKLYN RAPID TRANSIT)

3722, 3734, 3735
Brill 1905, double truck convertibles, four motors, cross seating; assigned to the Brooklyn, Queens Co. & Suburban by the BRT. In service on the Traction June 1920 to June 1921; #3722 scrapped April 9, 1937
#3734 scrapped Feb. 2, 1938
#3735 scrapped April 9, 1937

508, 518, 579

Double truck, eight window cars. Flooded; longitudinal seating #508 Lealedo Car Co. 1897; converted to wrecker #9640 in 1926 scrapped 1938
#518 St. Louis Car Co. 1897; burned at Hempstead Feb. 18, 1923
#579 American Car Co. 1898; scrapped Nov. 30, 1929
All these cars were assigned to the Brooklyn City RR by the BRT. #508 and 518 in service on the Traction June 1922 to June 1923; #579 to end of 1923

710, 723

Double truck closed cars; leased June 1922 to June 1923. #710 Brooklyn & New York Supply Co. 1896; burned at Hempstead Feb. 18, 1923
#723 Barney & Smith 1896; scrapped Feb. 28, 1930

- 1702 St. Louis 1899; leased for 1923 and 1924; scrapped Mar. 31, 1930
- 1706 St. Louis 1899; leased for 1923 and 1924; scrapped Mar. 31, 1930
- 1710 St. Louis 1899; leased for 1923 and 1924; scrapped Jan. 31, 1930
- 1720 St. Louis 1899; leased for 1923 and 1924; scrapped Jan. 31, 1930
- 1723 St. Louis 1899; leased for 1923 and 1924; scrapped Jan. 31, 1930
- 1725 St. Louis 1899; leased for 1922 and 1923; scrapped Mar. 31, 1930
- 1726 St. Louis 1899; leased for 1923 and 1924; scrapped Jan. 31, 1930
- 1733 St. Louis 1899; leased for 1922 and 1923; scrapped Mar. 31, 1930
- 1737 St. Louis 1899; leased for 1923 only; scrapped Mar. 31, 1930
- 1744 St. Louis 1899; leased for 1922 only; converted to sand car #9750 in 1927 and scrapped 1938
- 1756 Lealedo Car Co. 1899; leased for 1922 only; scrapped Nov. 30, 1925
- 1759 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1922 only; burned at Hempstead on Feb. 18, 1923
- 1760 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1922 only; burned on Hem stood on Feb. 18, 1923
- 1761 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1922 and 1923; scrapped Nov. 30, 1925
- 1762 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1922 only; scrapped Nov. 30, 1925
- 1763 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1922 only; scrapped Sept. 30, 1925
- 1765 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1922 only; scrapped Sept. 30, 1925
- 1781 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1923 only; scrapped Aug. 31, 1925
- 1788 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1923 only; scrapped Sept. 30, 1925
- 1789 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1923 only; scrapped Sept. 30, 1925
- 1790 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1923 only; sold to Third Ave. Ry. Feb. 28, 1927.
- 1792 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1923 only; converted to sand car #9730; bought by the Branford Trolley Museum and shipped to Branford Nov. 8, 1950. Last surviving 1700 type car and last surviving car that ran on Traction rails.
- 1793 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1923 only; scrapped Aug. 31, 1925
- 1794 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1923 only; scrapped Aug. 31, 1925
- 1795 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1923 only; scrapped Sept. 30, 1925
- 1790 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1922 and 1923; sold to Third Ave. Ry. Feb. 28, 1927.
- 2100 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1922 only; sold to Third Ave. Ry. Feb. 28, 1927.
- 2110 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1923 only; burned at Hempstead on Feb. 18, 1923
- 2154 Lealedo 1899; leased for 1922 and 1923; scrapped June 30, 1928
- 2190 Brigo 1899; leased for 1922 only; burned at Hempstead on Feb. 18, 1923
- 2191 Brigo 1899; leased for 1922 and 1923; scrapped Sept. 30, 1925
- 2198 Brigo 1899; leased for 1922 and 1923; converted to bond testing car #9907 in 1927; still at 9th Ave. depot in Bklyn.

1-20
Jowett 1904; Bridge Operating Co. cars; 10 window, double truck semi-convertible, longitudinal seating. Leased to the Long Island Electric, but they were occasionally pressed into service on the NY&LJ.
#5 burned at Hempstead on Feb. 18, 1923
For others, see Long Island Electric Ry. roster

THE NEW YORK & LONG ISLAND TRACTION SIDINGS

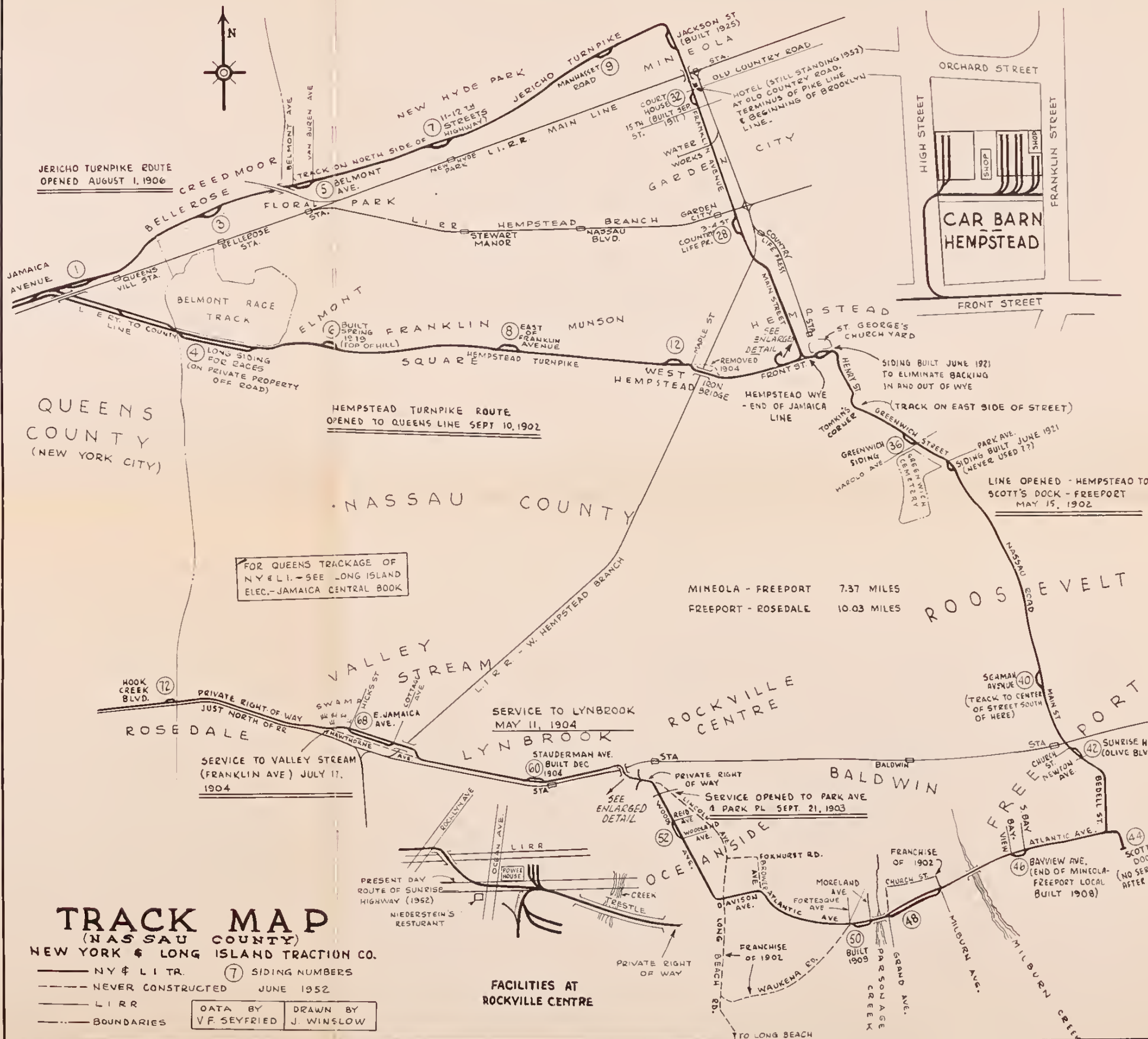
Below are the 33 sidings on the Traction with their locations. Most of the siding numbers are well-known, but a few are uncertain and difficult to verify; these have been marked with an asterisk.

- 1. Queens Village, 213th St. Queens Village
- 3. Bellerose
- 5. Floral Park, Belmont - Van Sicken Ave.
- 7. How Hyde Park, 11th St.
- 9. Garden City Park
- 4. Belmont Park, Queens-Roseton line
- 8. Franklin Square, just east of Franklin Ave.
- 12. Minson, just west of West Hempstead overhead
- 24. Hempstead Wye, Main & Front Sts.
- 28. Garden City, called Doubleday's, 3rd-4th Sts.
- 32. Mineola, between 15th and Old Country Rd.
- 36. Greenfield Cemetery, just north of cemetery entrance
- 40. Roosevelt, Pleasant St. Prospect Town line
- 42. Prospect grade crossing, Olive Blvd, now Sunrise Highway
- 44. Scott's Dock, Atlantic Ave, at Bell St.
- 46. Bayview Ave. Prospect, turnpoint for Mineola-Prospect locals
- 48. Hillburn Ave. Baldwin; siding between Hillburn & Grand Ave.
- 50. Oceanside, between Moroland & Porteusque Ave.
- 52. Rockville Centre, between Reid & Woodland Ave.
- 56. Rockville Centre, probably car yard tracks
- 60. Lynbrook, in Stauderman Ave. between Broadway and Atlantic Ave.
- 64. Irme Park, Vello Stream
- 68. Vello Stream, in East Jamaica Ave. between Cottage Ave. & Hicks
- 72. Rosedale, just east of Hook Creek Blvd.
- 74. Leffington
- 76. New York Blvd, probably the Long Island Electric crossing
- 78. Rockaway Rd. (134th-137th Ave.)
- 79. Baitoly Park, called May's from the Hotel there, 147th-149th Sts.
- 80. Olon Morris, 131st-133rd Sts.
- 82. Ozone Park, 119th-123rd Sts.
- 84. Liberty Ave. & Broadway in Flat Top.
- 88. City Line, Brooklyn, at Front Ave.

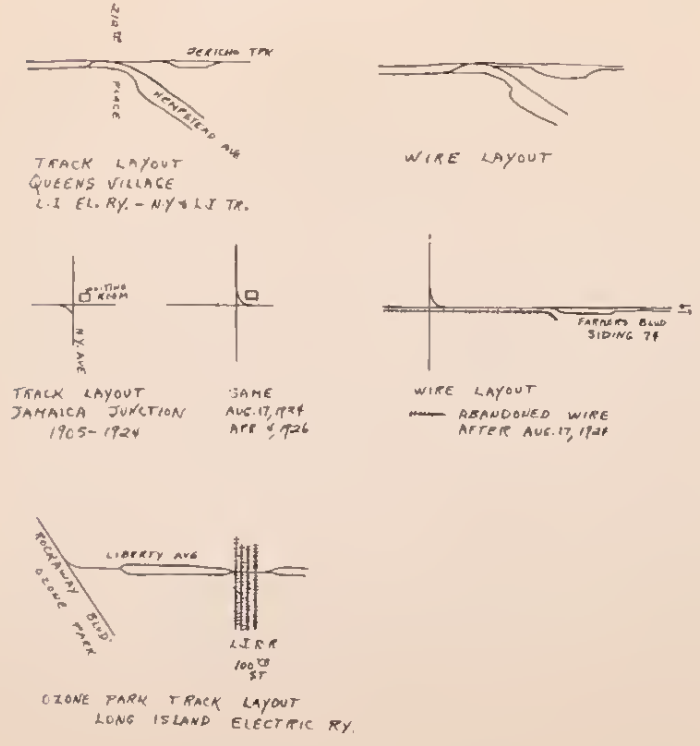
NEW YORK & LONG ISLAND TRACTION STOPS

The list given here does not profess to be complete; it comprises only the known stop numbers, chiefly in Nassau County along with a very few in Queens:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. County line, Belmont Park | 160. Central Ave., Valley Stream |
| 6. Piltmore Ave., Elmont | 168. Ocean Ave., Rosedale |
| 11. Elmont Rd. Elmont | (Hook Creek Blvd.) |
| 12. Old School Rd. Elmont | 166. 145th St. Ozone Park |
| 17. Benson Ave., Elmont | 167. 144th St. Ozone Park |
| 20. Meacham Ave., East Elmont | 202. Old Country Rd., Mineola |
| 26. Franklin Ave., Franklin Square | 216. Hyde Park Ave. New Hyde Pk. |
| 30. Mirschel's Lumber Yard | 224. Lakeville Rd., New Hyde Pk. |
| 32. Nassau Blvd. | 226. 7th St., New Hyde Park |
| 33. Munson Ave., Munson | 240. 257th St. City line, Floral Park |
| 34. Cherry Valley Rd. | |
| 35. Brooklyn Ave., West Hempstead | |
| 36. Spruce Fl., Fairlawn Park | |
| 40. Broadway, West Hempstead | |
| 41. Just west of Hempstead Overhead | |
| 54. Jerusalem & Clinton Aves. Hempstead | |
| 56. Nassau Rd. & Park Ave. | |
| 57. Ave. B | |
| 58. Nassau Rd. & Uniondale Ave. | |
| 60. East Greenwich Ave. Roosevelt | |
| 61. Raymond Ave., Roosevelt | |
| 62. Roosevelt St., Roosevelt | |
| 65. Whitehouse Ave. Roosevelt | |
| 66. Tolliniaux Place, Roosevelt | |
| 68. Centennial Ave., Roosevelt | |
| 72. Pleasant St., Roosevelt | |
| 76. Colonial Ave., Freeport | |
| 77. Seaman Ave., Freeport | |
| 79. Milburn Creek, Freeport | |
| 80. 450 feet west of Milburn bridge, Baldwin | |
| 81. Milburn Ave., Baldwin | |
| 82. Central Ave., Baldwin | |
| 83. Grand Blvd., Baldwin | |
| 84. Verity Lane, Baldwin | |
| 85. Grand Ave., Baldwin | |
| 86. Yale Place, Baldwin | |
| 87. Munk's Hotel, just east of Parsonage Creek | |
| 88. Moreland Ave., Oceanside | |
| 90. Portesque Ave., Oceanside | |
| 92. Skillman Ave., Oceanside | |
| 94. Sunnyside Rd., Oceanside | |
| 96. Oakview Ave., Oceanside | |
| 98. Oceanside Rd., Oceanside | |
| 100. half way between Oceanside Rd. & Long Beach Rd. | |
| 102. Long Beach Rd., Oceanside | |
| 106. Weeks Ave., Oceanside | |
| 108. Driscoll Ave., Rookville Centre | |
| 118. Village Ave., Rookville Centre | |
| 119. South Centre Ave., Rookville Centre | |
| 124. Ocean Ave., Lynbrook | |
| 138. Atlantic Ave., Lynbrook | |
| 148. 500 ft. east from bridge over LIRR, Valley Stream | |
| 154. Rookaway Ave., Valley Stream | |



INTERESTING TRACK & WIRE LAYOUTS ON THE L.I. ELECTRIC AND THE N.Y. & L.I. TR.



TRACK MAP

(NASSAU COUNTY)

NEW YORK & LONG ISLAND TRACTION CO.

— NY & L.I. TR.	⑦ SIDING NUMBERS
- - - NEVER CONSTRUCTED	JUNE 1952
— L.I.R.R.	
— BOUNDARIES	

DATA BY V.F. SEYFRIED DRAWN BY J. WINSLOW

Courtesy of William P. Hamilton, III
St. Louis, Mo.

