

We hope you enjoy this tour of car floating which is an interesting aspect of railroading, both in 12"=1' scale and model railroading. Since I was busy running the engine, John Grosner took all of the photos in Greenville.

So, lets Take a Cruise Around
New York Harbor. . .

Ooopps. . . wrong ship!



First, we arrive at the dock.



We check in at the First Class lounge at the dock.



*After much anticipation. . .
Our ship comes in!*

And here she is. . .Float 26! Ex-NY,NH&H.

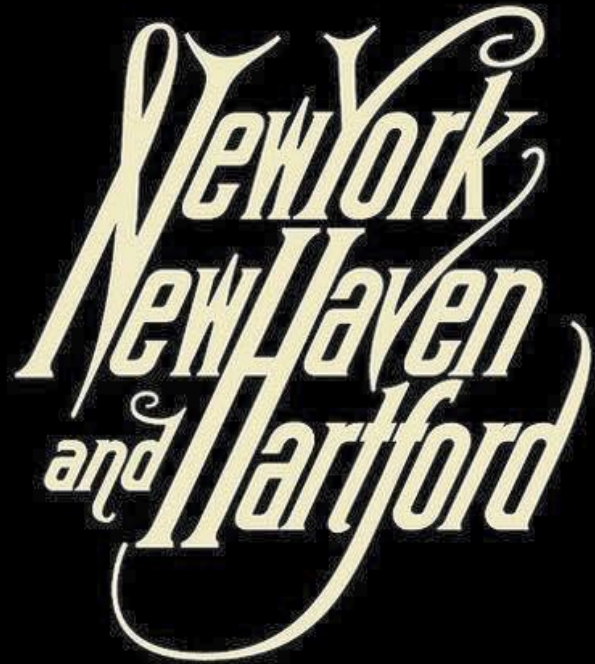


After much anticipation, our tug arrives!

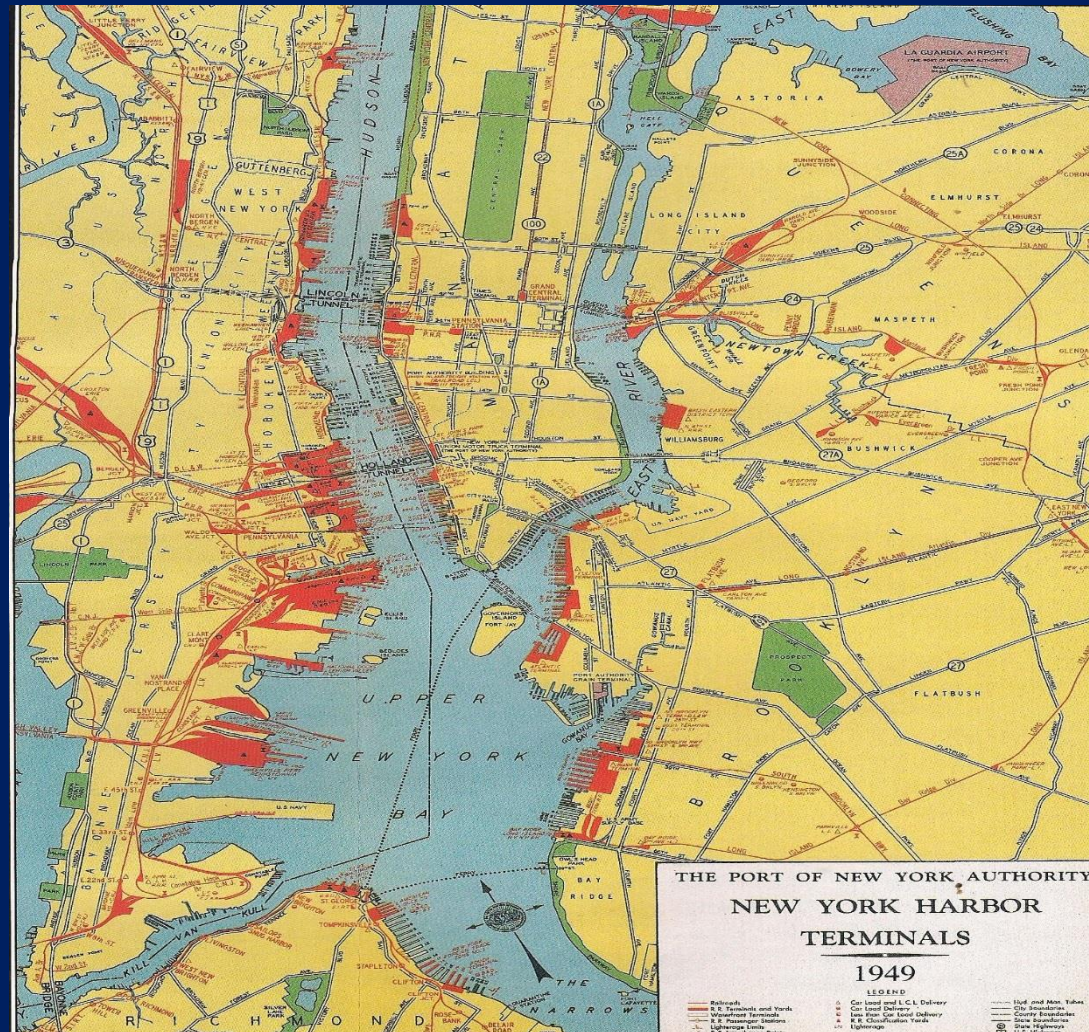


*Before we go any further, a bit of
history on the car floating.*

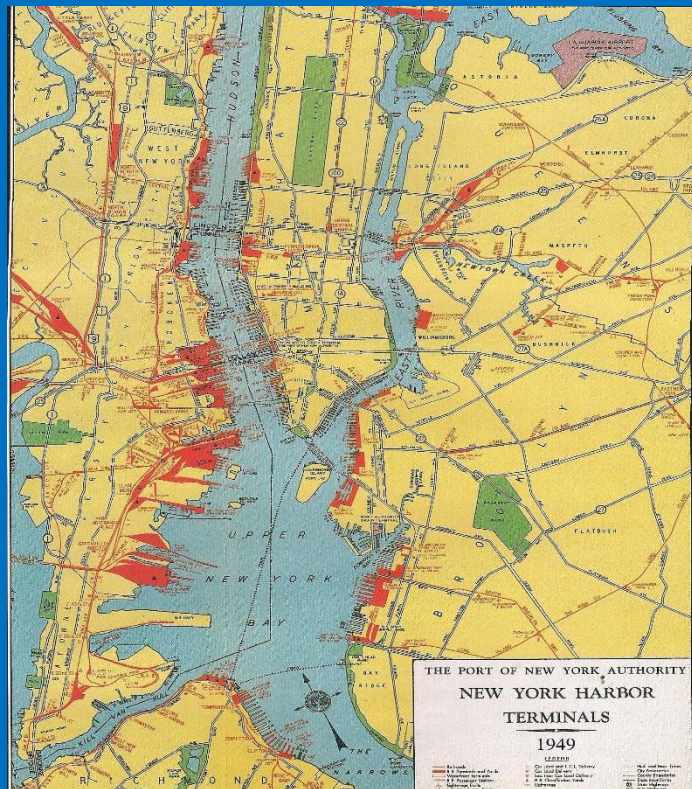
The floating between Bay Ridge and Greenville began with the New Haven and Pennsylvania RR's. Unfortunately, after PC absorbed the NH the floating was discontinued, the catenary and poles came down on the Bay Ridge Branch and all freight re-routed to Selkirk; totally by-passing NYC and adding truck traffic to the already congested roads in the city.



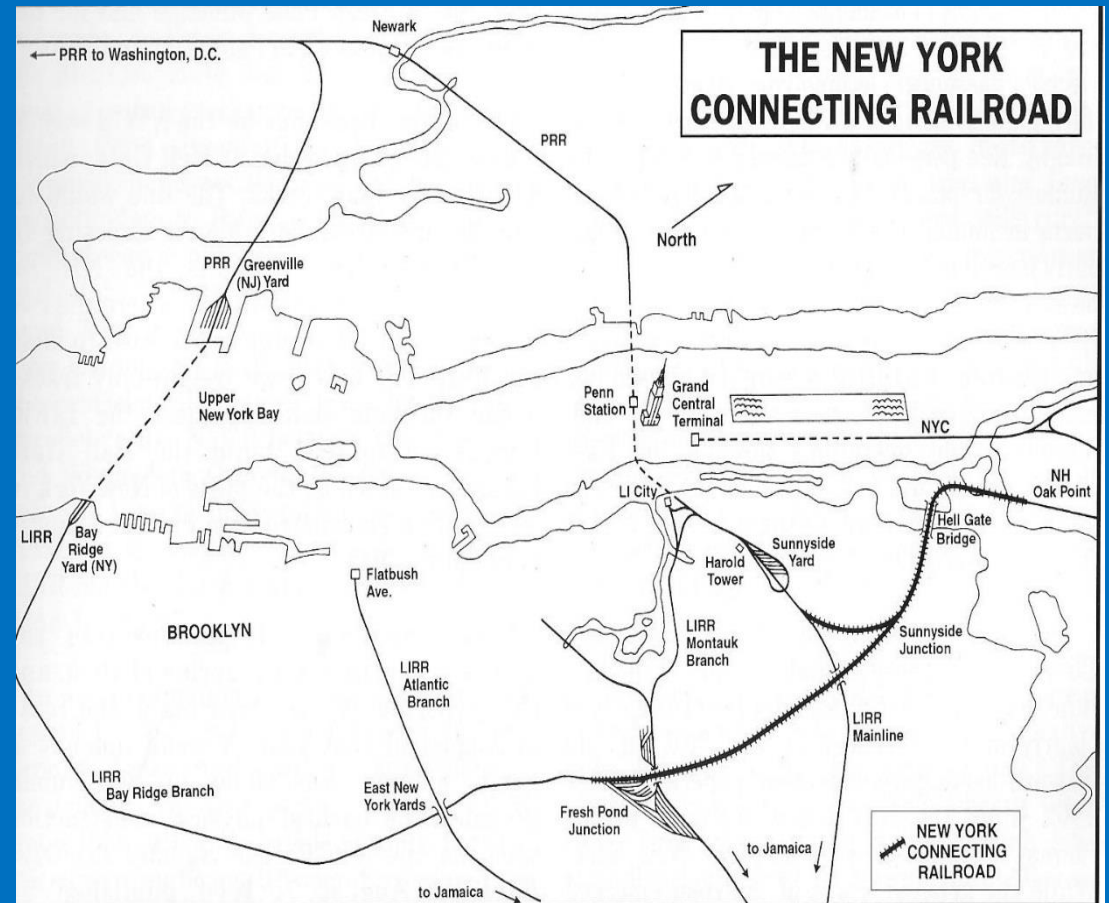
This map of NY Harbor in 1949 shows a portion of how busy the car floating was. All the areas in red along the harbor had float bridges.



Then. . .

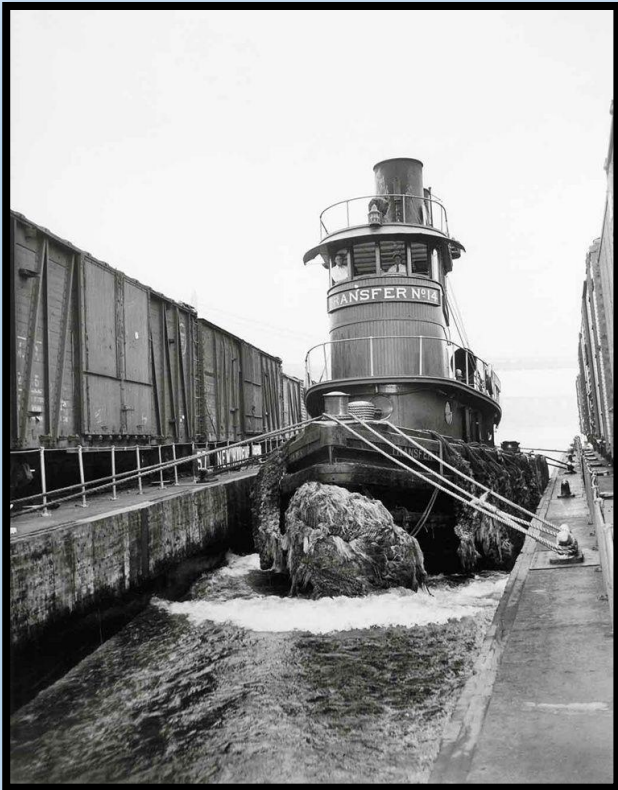


And now!



Examples of NH and PRR steam tugs.

New Haven



PRR



Hell Gate Bridge connecting the Bronx with Long Island gave the New Haven access to Penn Station and Bay Ridge.



New Haven freight with 4 EF-1 motors crossing the Hell Gate Bridge in the late 1940s.



NHRR eastbound freight for New Haven crossing the Hell Gate Bridge in 1964. Cars were floated from Greenville to Bay Ridge.



*Well...enough history, so let's fast
forward a bit.*

Our engine was sometimes stored overnight at the Port Jersey RR. He we are enroute to the float bridge. Note the unusual switch.



Our engine is Ex-CN SW1200RS No. 1337.



Since I was a former NY,NH&H employee, I tried to convince management to repaint the 1337...



Photo courtesy of Rick Abramson

CONRAIL brings our cars from Oak Island Yard.



Up in the “command module” I await instructions from the conductor.



Running around the drop to shove down to the float.



In the meantime, CSX makes a guest appearance with the OJT-1 for Tropicana.



Former George H.W. Bush campaign engine on the OJT-1.



A tour of the float bridge in Greenville, formerly PRR. In its day there were 12 bridges! Note the double crossover to access all tracks on the float.



The bridge “apron” that goes up and down to match the tides.



The operator's location to raise or lower the bridge.



AN OVERVIEW OF THE FLOAT BRIDGE STRUCTURE.



Remnants of the bridges that are out of service!



Overhead view of crossovers at bridge.



Switching out our cars brought over by CONRAIL in preparation to heading for the float bridge.



We have now run around the drop in order to shove down to the float for loading.



Having arrived at the float, the careful process of loading begins. It needs to be carefully orchestrated in order to prevent the float from capsizing.



“Pinning” the float to secure it to the bridge.
That heavy steel bar slides into a receptacle on the float
and then is secured with what are called rack lines.



First float of the day arriving from Bay Ridge.



Unloading a float from Bay Ridge.



Loading cars for the return trip to Bay Ridge.



Overhead view of the float.



Last of the cars shoved onto the float.



1337 all set for her trip to Brooklyn.



Our ship sets sail for Bay Ridge. . .



On its way. . .



Pontoon float bridge in Brooklyn.



Loading the float in Brooklyn at Bush Terminal.



Street running in Brooklyn.



The NY Cross Harbor RR today is
NY-NJ RAIL.



New power!

Knoxville Locomotive Works SE10B; 1050HP.

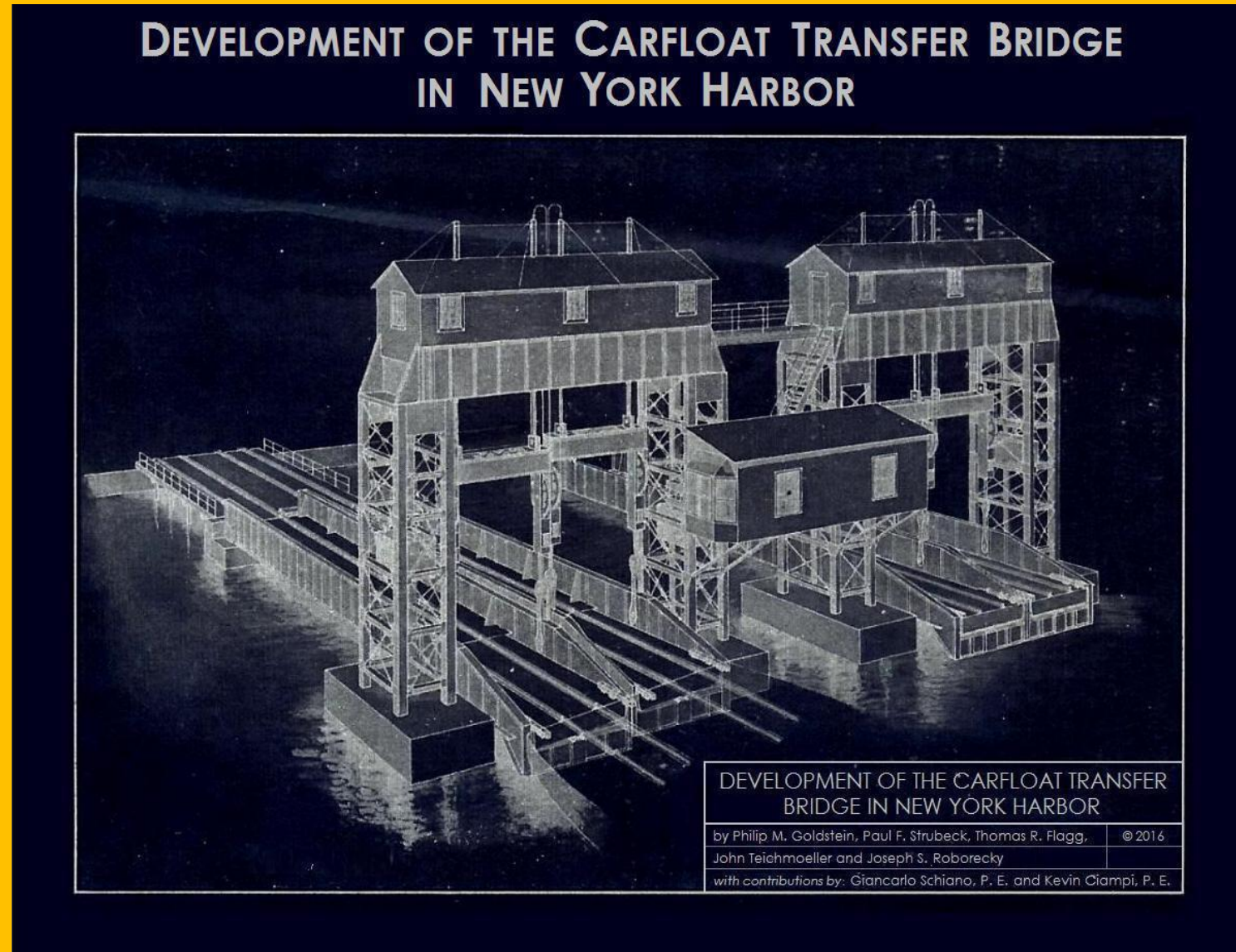


Where the PRR bridges once stood.



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Diagram of new Greenville float bridge.



PRR float bridges demolished, new ones being built.



New Greenville bridge under construction.



New bridge taking shape.



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New 65th Street Yard and float bridge in Brooklyn.



*The present and the future certainly
looks bright for the car floating in
NY Harbor. Will it ever return to
what it was in years gone by? Only
the future will tell!*