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HUFFLINERS OUT OF SERVICE 60 YEARS AGO

Until buses replaced them on December 15, 1946, the Huffliners were always operated on Broadway, Third Avenue's second busiest line. (Third and Amsterdam Avenues was the busiest.) Cars 551-625, the only center-exit cars ever operated by the company, were nicknamed "Huffliners" in honor of Slaughter W. Huff, who had been Third Avenue's President since 1918 and who was in favor of trolley cars.

Broadway was the first line to receive the rebuilt cars. On November 26, 1934, car 131 was placed in service, and on December 20, 1935, 83 rebuilt 100-series cars were operating on Broadway.

Cars 316-320, 360-390, and several other 300s appeared on Broadway when they were new. They were soon transferred to the Bronx and Yonkers.

Unfortunately, we have no record of the date the Huffliners were placed in service. However, we observed the Broadway Line at least once a week and we recorded the dates we first saw each car, as follows:

Steel car 601	November 13, 1936
Steel cars 602-625	September 23, 1937- January 31, 1938
Aluminum cars 552-600	December 3, 1937-June 30, 1938

Company records reveal that 24 center-exit cars were running on November 29, 1937.

Built in 1936, aluminum car 551 was the odd car. The center doors were opposite each other like the Peter Witt cars operated by other companies. Center doors were staggered on the other Huffliners. It was the only Huffliner that was equipped with a trolley pole

for testing in Mount Vernon's Garden Avenue Yard. The pole was removed when the car was placed in service on the Broadway Line, probably in 1939.

The Huffliners were always operated on the busy Broadway Line until buses replaced them on December 15, 1946. Because there were not enough Huffliners to provide full rush hour service, a few 100-series cars always appeared on the Broadway Line. We have no record of the maximum number of cars required. However, we counted 68 cars operating on a 1½-minute headway between 3 and 4 PM in August, 1939, and 44 cars running on a 2½-minute headway on a Sunday afternoon in May, 1946.

Most of the Huffliners were placed in storage when buses replaced them. We observed a few of these cars operating on the Broadway-Amsterdam Avenue-125th Street Line until buses replaced them on June 29, 1947. Aluminum cars 551-600 were apparently scrapped and steel cars 601-625 were sold to Brazil, where they continued operating for several years. When they were finally taken out of service, they were not scrapped, but were displayed in public parks. Fortunately, the Brazilian government decided to preserve these unusual center-exit cars that transported thousands of passengers through New York's Great White Way for only a decade.

On December 14 before midnight and December 15, 1946 shortly after midnight, four cars with 200 passengers, including Third Avenue's President McQuiston, city officials, and stage and movie stars, rode from 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue to Times Square.

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