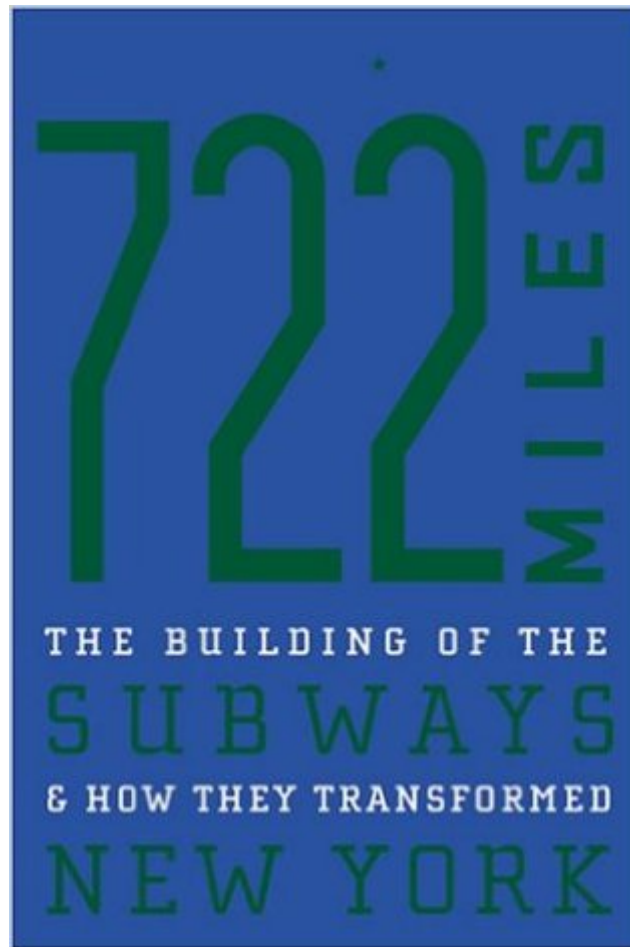


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# 722 Miles: The Building Of The Subways And How They Transformed New York



## Synopsis

When it first opened on October 27, 1904, the New York City subway ran twenty-two miles from City Hall to 145th Street and Lenox Avenue—the longest stretch ever built at one time. From that initial route through the completion of the IND or Independent Subway line in the 1940s, the subway grew to cover 722 miles—long enough to reach from New York to Chicago. In this definitive history, Clifton Hood traces the complex and fascinating story of the New York City subway system, one of the urban engineering marvels of the twentieth century. For the subway's centennial the author supplies a new foreword explaining that now, after a century, "we can see more clearly than ever that this rapid transit system is among the twentieth century's greatest urban achievements."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you are looking for a tour guide of New York's vast subway system, or a concise timeline of its construction and equipment, look elsewhere. What Clifton Hood has produced is a political history of the subway which should be read by every student of New York history and every person who wants to understand better the workings of New York City politics today. The reader will find such familiar personages as Boss Tweed and Fiorello LaGuardia, but will also read about John F. Hylan, mayor from 1918-1925. Hylan's is hardly a household name in popular New York history—he is known instead to the relative handful of people who delve into the recesses of Big Apple politics of the early 20th century. In *722 Miles*, Hood places Hylan in his proper place as the man who politicized the NYC transit system and, in so doing, set the stage for the long deterioration of the

system which is only now being reversed. I could quibble with various aspects of Hood's book--perhaps he focuses too much attention on one or another story relatively peripheral to the system's development while treating too lightly other threads. For example, he doesn't visit the influence of the BRT (later BMT) system until it became involved in the subway building contracts of 1913. Additionally, to address the concerns of an earlier reviewer, there are lapses in editing which are odd in so heavily researched and footnoted a work. For example, at one point (using my hardbound copy as reference), Hood described a laborer's pay on the first subway as being \$2.00 or \$2.25 PER HOUR, a princely sum at the time, when he clearly meant PER DAY.

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