



# Charles Tyson Yerkes: Railway Tycoon

*Tim Sherwood*

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## **Charles Tyson Yerkes: Railway Tycoon** Tim Sherwood

Charles Tyson Yerkes's impact upon London was seismic and his legacy controversial. He made his fortune in the Chicago Street railways but his shady deals and turbulent private life led him to London seeking a new playground after he married his latest mistress, who was 40 years his junior. He undertook the electrification of the District Railway and constructed the tubes which developed into the Northern, Piccadilly, and Bakerloo lines. He bought up London Tramways and built the biggest power station in the world at Lots Road, Chelsea. He overcame obstacles at a time when state involvement was minimal and revolutionized travel for Londoners. The events of his life formed the basis for the Theodore Dreiser novels *The Financier*, *The Titan*, and *The Stoic*, and the Yerkes crater on the moon is named in his honor. In the end, though, Yerkes's resources were drained by London's transport problems and when he died his affairs were in chaos.

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