

# North British Railway Chairman and Chief Officers 1842 - 1922

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## Acknowledgement

The information set out below has been compiled by Study Group member Donald Cattanach and was gathered from a number of original sources: North British Minutes, Circulars and Notices, and Press reports. From the turn of the century, the Railway Yearbook also provides a convenient source.

## Chairman

John Learmonth	1842-1852	Resigned (forced out by English lobby).
James M. Balfour of Whittinghame	1852-1855	Resigned (ill-health).
Richard Hodgson <sup>1</sup>	1855-1866	Resigned (1866 financial scandal).
John Beaumont	1866 <sup>2</sup>	Caretaker Chairman.
John Stirling of Kippenross and Kippendavie	1866-1882	Died in office.
Sir James Falshaw	1882-1887	Stepped down to Deputy Chairman.
The Marquis of Tweeddale	1887-1899	Overthrown by Wieland cabal.
Sir William Laird	1899-1901	Died in office.
George Bradley Wieland	1901-1905	Died in office. See also under Secretary.
The Earl of Dalkeith	1905-1912	Stepped down to Deputy Chairman.
William Whitelaw	1912-1922	To LNER as Chairman, to 1938.

## General Manager<sup>3</sup>

Charles Forbes Davidson	1842-52	Dismissed (at instance of English lobby). See also under Secretary.
Henry Chaytor	1852 <sup>4</sup>	Resigned (see note).
Thomas Kenworthy Rowbotham	1852-1866	Resigned, probably as alternative to dismissal (1866 financial scandal).
Samuel Lack Mason	1867-1874	Resigned. Possibly forced out to make way for John Walker.
John Walker	1874-1891	Died in office. See also under Secretary.
John Conacher	1891-1899	Resigned (forced out by Wieland cabal).
William Fulton Jackson	1899-1918	Retired early (ill-health).
James Calder	1918-1922	to LNER as General Manager (Scotland), to 1934.

### **Secretary**

Charles Forbes Davidson	1842-1852	See under General Manager.
James Nairne	1852-1866	Died in office.
John Walker	1866-1873	Resigned, appointed a Director, subsequently General Manager.
George Bradley Wieland	1873-1892	Retired, appointed a Director, subsequently Chairman.
John Cathles	1892-1918	Retired.
James McLaren	1918-1922	To LNER as Joint Secretary, then sole Secretary, to 1938.

### **Locomotive Superintendent 1846 – 1919<sup>5</sup>**

Robert Thornton	1846 - 1851	Resigned.
William Smith	1851 - 1854	Dismissed.
Hon Edmund George Petre	1854 <sup>6</sup>	Resigned (as alternative to dismissal).
William Hurst	1854 - 1867	Dismissed.
Thomas Wheatley	1867 - 1875	Resigned (probably as alternative to dismissal).
Dugald Drummond	1875 - 1882	Resigned (the full facts are not known).
Matthew Holmes	1882 - 1903	Resigned (ill health). <sup>7</sup>
William Paton Reid	1903 <sup>8</sup> - 1919	Retired.

### **Chief Mechanical Engineer 1920 - 1922**

Walter Chalmers	1920 - 1922	to Mechanical Engineer, Southern Scottish Area, LNER.
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### **Locomotive Running Superintendent 1920 - 1922**

John P Grassick	1920 - 1922	to Loco Running Supt, Southern Scottish Area, LNER.
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### **Engineer-in-Chief<sup>9</sup> 1853 - 1922**

James Bell (senior)	1853 - 1879	Retired.
James Carswell	1879 - 1897	Died in office.
James Bell (junior)	1897 - 1909	Retired.
Charles J Brown	1909 - 1911	Resigned.
William A Fraser	1911 - 1922	To Engineer-in-Chief, Southern Scottish Area, LNER.

**General/Chief Goods Manager <sup>10</sup>**

Archibald Scott <sup>11</sup>	1846 - 1851	To GM, Edinburgh, Perth & Dundee.
William Hardie <sup>12</sup>	1851 - 1867	Remained as Goods Manager, Edinburgh.
Peter MacPherson	1867 - 1874	Died in office.
Donald McDougall	1874 - 1897	Died in office.
Alexander Rutherford	1897 – 1905 <sup>13</sup>	Retired.
William Andrew	1905 - 1917	Retired.
John Wilkinson	1918 - 1919	Died in office.
John C Christie	1919 - 1922	To Goods Manager Southern Scottish Area.

**General Superintendent/Superintendent of the Line 1857 – 1916 <sup>14</sup>**

James McLaren <sup>15</sup>	1857 - 1893	Died in office.
David Deuchars <sup>16</sup>	1893 - 1911	Retired.
John Black	1911 - 1916	Retired.

**Operating Superintendent 1917 - 1922**

Major Charles H Stemp CBE	1917 - 1922	To Superintendent, Southern Scottish Area, LNER.
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**Commercial Superintendent 1917 - 1922**

Matthew S Strang	1917 - 1922	to Passenger Manager, Southern Scottish Area, LNER.
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**General Accountant <sup>17</sup>**

James P Lythgoe	1865 - 1866	Resigned, probably as alternative to dismissal (1866 financial scandal).
George Simpson	1867 - 1905	Retired.
John Martin	1905 - 1922	Retired.

**Solicitor <sup>18</sup>**

Adam Johnstone	1865 - 1881	Retired.
William White Millar	1881 - 1891	Retired.
James Watson	1892 - 1922	Retired.

## Notes

1. Later adopted the name 'Richard Hodgson Huntley'.
2. 15 November to 21 December as interim Chairman.
3. The first General Manager, C F Davidson, also held the office of Secretary.
4. 4 June - 2 July. Chaytor of Croft, near Darlington, was elected a Director by the lobby of English shareholders in March 1852 and became Deputy Chairman almost immediately. On 4 June, he was appointed interim Manager in place of Davidson, it being understood 'that many English Shareholders considered Mr Chaytor well qualified for the office of Managing Director'. He didn't last long. At the Board meeting on 2 July, the Opinion of Counsel was read that, by accepting such paid office, Chaytor had effectively resigned as a Director. The Board duly resolved that Chaytor had 'ceased to be a Director upon and from his acceptance of the office of Manager on 4th June last'. He thereupon resigned as Manager, and was reappointed a Director, and Deputy Chairman.
5. On W P Reid's retirement in 1919, the post was split into Chief Mechanical Engineer and Locomotive Running Superintendent.
6. March to December
7. Resigned in May 1903 and died two months later
8. Appointed on a temporary basis until 2 June 1904.
9. Until January 1853, the line was under the supervision of the Consulting Engineer, John Miller, with Resident Engineers (one of whom was James Bell) reporting to him. In January 1853, Bell was given responsibility for the whole line, becoming 'Engineer-in-Chief' five years later.
10. On the amalgamation with the Edinburgh, Perth & Dundee on 29 July 1862, Peter MacPherson, ex-EP&D, was appointed Goods Manager of the Northern Section (Fife); later, he also assumed the Western (E&G) area. In March 1867 he was appointed the first General Goods Manager. The General Goods Manager was based in Glasgow.
11. Goods Manager
12. Goods Manager. After amalgamation with the Edinburgh, Perth & Dundee, continued as Goods Manager for the Southern (Edinburgh-based) Section until his death in October 1871.
13. Appointed as General Goods Manager, but title later changed to Chief Goods Manager
14. On Black's retiral, the post was split into Operating Superintendent and Commercial Superintendent.
15. Appointed to the new post of Passenger Superintendent in 1857. Became General Superintendent in March 1873.
16. Appointed as 'Superintendent of the Line' on McLaren's death.
17. Initially, the accounts were the responsibility of C F Davidson, the General Manager & Secretary. In July 1852, responsibility passed to the Cashier. In 1854, the Cashier appears to have become Cashier and Accountant, but the two functions were split following amalgamation with the EP&D in 1862. The post of General Accountant appears to have been created on amalgamation with the E&G in 1865, resulting in the appointment of J P Lythgoe, who had held the post of Audit Accountant.
18. Prior to 1865, the NBR retained firms of solicitors to undertake their legal work, principally Mr John G Wood WS of Messrs Dalmahoy & Wood of Edinburgh. Wood died on 14/9/1865. The NBR's first two Secretaries, C F Davidson and James Nairne, were both qualified solicitors.