



## Short History of the Veterans' Association of the Chicago & North Western Railway

*The links below will take you to a page with news of Association activities in the 1940's and 1950's, some information on the Association's first Vice-President, E. T. Erickson, and to a page with annual membership figures.*



On the afternoon of December 9, 1924, a group of North Western Railway employees met at Mason City, Iowa and formed the Veterans' Association of the Chicago & North Western Railway. The group was smaller than first anticipated due to a winter storm, but large enough and with the right people to get the job done.

As with many ventures, there was one man of whom it can be said was the driving force behind this undertaking – **Frank L. Corey**, a conductor on the Iowa & Minnesota Division. The idea came to **Mr. Corey** while attending the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Company held on October 24, 1923. Many of the guests were 50-year veterans and these men expressed their desire to **Mr. Corey** for an organization of this nature. In particular, at the anniversary dinner, **Mr. John D. Condit** of the Omaha Road suggested that the North Western men might well emulate the example of the Omaha Railway Veterans' Association which had been formed some years previous. Those discussions inspired **Mr. Corey** to take action.

Following the adoption of a Constitution and By-Laws, the initial slate of Officers and the Executive Committee were elected as follows:

**Frank L. Corey** – President (Conductor)

**E.T. Erickson** – Vice President (Agent)

**N.A. Howland** – Treasurer (Freight Service Inspector)

### Executive Committee

**M.J. Hanson** (Train Rules Examiner)

**Charles Flowers** (Engineer)

**D.J. Daniels** (Conductor)

**George W. Deertz** (Conductor)

The selection of a secretary was delegated to the Executive Committee and wanting to obtain the greatest possible publicity for the new organization, this place of duty was assigned to **Bruce V. Crandall**, the editor of "*The North Western Railway System Magazine*," the then-current employee news magazine. Initial membership qualifications required 25 years of service with the North Western, its controlled or subsidiary companies. The first annual dues were set at \$2.00 with a \$1.00 initiation fee. Charter membership was offered to all who were eligible for membership and who signed up prior to the first Annual Meeting, which was held in the summer of 1925.

The first application for organizing a Division Section, or Chapter as they are called today, came from a group of 20 members on the Northern Iowa Division at Eagle Grove, Iowa. Subsequently, the association grew to many more chapters including Adams, Antigo, Boone, Chadron, Chicago, Clinton, Council Bluffs & Omaha, Eagle Grove, Escanaba, Florida, Fond du Lac, Green Bay, Huron, Iron Mountain, Kenosha-Waukegan, Los Angeles, Madison, Mason City, Milwaukee, Norfolk, South Pekin and Waseca. Today, there are active chapters in Adams, Chicago, Florida, Green Bay, Kenosha-Waukegan, Madison, and Milwaukee.

The Chicago & North Western Railway encouraged the Veterans' Association both financially and by furnishing office space. Membership reached its peak with 5,896 members in 1952 and today (January 1, 2012) stands at around 643. Membership in the early years is not known, though annual memberships to the extent known are posted on another [page](#).

A similar organization for the Omaha Road was formed about 1920 and called the *Veteran Employees Association of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha Railway*. As late as 1951, this group had 882 members, all of whom had 30 or more years of service with the Omaha Road.

Anyone having additional information about either association is invited to send it to the [webmaster](#) and this page will be revised accordingly.

