

## Becksted, Walter Frederick #220 \*

Honoured by Robert Becksted.

Walter Frederick Becksted

Herewith is his story commemorating his affiliation with the heritage of North Bay's CPR Station.

Walter was transferred to North Bay from Montreal in the early 1940's as official Signals Supervisor of the CPR, covering a principal territory of the east/west rail line between the Ontario provincial borders of Quebec and Manitoba.

This was the evolution of the Becksted family history which began in St. John's (now St. Jean) Quebec. At that time, all four brothers administered the signals territory of the CPR in the eastern half of this first coast to coast railway in Canada.

They formed a significant component of our national heritage that centered in the City of North Bay. The youngest brother, Russell, became the signals foreman in St. John's, Quebec, responsible to the signals engineer Ted who administered the Quebec territory through Montreal. In Ontario another brother, Bob, served as the signals engineer head quartered in Toronto, to whom Walter responded as signals supervisor from North Bay.

As it occurred across the nation, diesel replaced steam engines, which enlarged the space between divisional points of equipment service. This resulted in the transfer of all staff from North Bay to Sudbury, including Walter in his position.

This occurred in 1960 when he was 62 years of age, which consequently resulted in his return to North Bay when he reached the company specification of retirement at 65.

During the lives of Walter and his wife Violet they had two children, me and my sister Norma, two grandchildren Karen and Scott and five great grandchildren subsequently.

Until he deceased in 1987, Walter was a constant personage of this City's heritage era. In all of the years of his employment here he occupied a second floor office of our historic CPR Station; it was actually the birthplace of the City of North Bay.