Red Lake River at Huot, and goes south through Polk County on the ridges east of Crookston, and it was they who really estab­lished the Red River cart traffic.

In 1857, the great Canadian scientist, Hind, made a trip from Pembina to St. Paul, and gives an interesting and accurate ac­count of his journey. He followed the Red River Trail crossing the river at Huot, and thence down through Polk County. He is very accurate in his measurement of the distances between the different streams he crossed, and he tells of meeting the mail-car­rier, who was then 15 days out from Crow Wing (near the present Brainerd). He met two trains of Red River carts, one 21 and the other 19 days out from St. Paul. He states that the trail used in the winter time turned to the east in Marshall County, going to the present Thief River Falls, and then down the river and lakes to St. Paul.

In 1857, Joe Rolette and Norman Kittson platted a town­site at the point the trail crossed the Red Lake River, at the pres­ent Huot, and named it Douglas. When the legislature passed the act establishing Polk County, Douglas was named the county seat. It is doubtful whether there ever was anything there except a trading post, for when Joseph Wheelock accompanied Governor Ramsey, when the "Old Crossing" Treaty was made, he wrote: "On the opposite or northern side once flourished a magnificent city, founded by Joe Rolette and others in 1857 and known as Douglas. The ruins are still visible — a single monumental chim­ney of mud and sticks."

The first settler in what is now Polk County undoubtedly was W. C. Nash, who settled at what is now East Grand Forks in 1869. He came here as a mail carrier, contractor and Indian trader—not with the intention of making it is home, though it turned out that he spent the rest of a fairly long life there.

Early in 1871, Levi Steenerson went north from Lac Que Parle County and took a job with the Hudson's Bay Company, driving teams with supplies between Georgetown and Frog Point (opposite Climax on the Dakota side of the river). That spring and sum­mer being dry, Frog Point was the southern terminus of river transportation on the Red River. On one of his trips in the latter part of May, he swam across the river at Frog Point and selected a homestead along the Sand Hill River, and went back to work. He wrote to his brother Knute urging that he come there and select land also. So in June, 1871, there arrived Ole Estenson and family, Peter O. and Esten Estenson, Peter Satermoe, Ole Jvening, Tollef Ose, Knute Steenerson, Henry and Paul Simon, Gullek and Salva Spokely, Tollef Tollefson, Jorgen Knutson, John Bremseth, Peter Jacobson and John Sundet, all of whom settled on the east side of the Red River from a point just north of where Climax now is to a point south of the present Neilsville, the settlement extending for about twelve miles north and south. The land was not surveyed except by townships, and they agreed among themselves as to the boundaries of their claims.