later near Trondheim. His desire to learn was strong and this early training was later to become the foundation of the knowledge he needed in the new world to explore and develop the new untracted lands.

Mr. Sampson's main ambition in life was to become a farmer, one who owned his own property, and the reports coming back home from America from earlier immigrants at this time were glowing with news of unlimited, undeveloped lands. In 1867 at age 28 and alone, Bernhard crossed the Atlantic to the shores of the United States in search of a new home.

For two years after his arrival he was employed in Ohio and Michigan working there for the railroads, but in 1869 he came west to Minnesota and found employment on the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad. At this time Mr. Sampson settled in Becker County and here he met Petra Bjornstad, his future wife.

Bernhard worked west from Brainerd to the Cheyenne River, Dakota Territory, and in 1870 he took a claim for a farm on that river's banks. Here he built a log cabin and planted 80 acres of land into wheat. For the next 18 months he divided his time between farming this land and working for the railroad.

In 1870 and again in 1871, he journeyed north along the Red River on exploring trips, branching out along the Snake River and other tributaries of the Red River. He proceeded as far north as Pembina. He returned along the Red Lake River traveling some distance farther east than where Crookston is presently located.

Because in the spring of 1872 the grasshoppers had devoured every part of his wheat crop in Dakota, Mr. Sampson again returned to Minnesota, traveling north with a Mr. Christ Sather to the Red Lake River. Each furnished an ox which he hitched to a wagon carrying some small tools and equipment, axes, and a plow. They would break soil for the new claimholders along the way as they journeyed north. Mr. Sampson stayed, but Mr. Sather continued south to the Buffalo River where there were fewer Indians.

At this time the Manitoba Railroad headed by James J. Hill was in the process of constructing a road bed from Glyndon, Minnesota, north to Pembina with plans for crossing the Red Lake River about three miles east of the present site of Crookston. Mr. Sampson, with surveying knowledge, was very much aware of this and with his early agricultural background he knew that farther west along the river was much finer soil for farming. My father would relate this, quoting his father, "This is the best land!"

Bernhard Sampson made three important decisions which had an impact on the founding of Crookston and continue to affect Crookston today. First, he took several grading contracts on the Manitoba Railroad along Wild Rice Crossing (Ada), the area along the Red Lake River that is now Crookston, and Fisher's Landing. Second, he filed a homestead claim on June 12, 1872, for 275 acres of land along the Red Lake River, and third, he met with James J. Hill a few days later and donated some of his land to the railroad for a road bed. By performing the third step he altered the road bed originally planned east of Crookston to where it is located today. With a keen foresight, Mr. Sampson could visualize that the area farther west was better suited for development of a community that would have an adequate supply of water, good soil, and shelter from the prairie winds.

On this land he erected a fine log cabin topped off with a sod roof. This cabin was considered to be the first in this part of the valley, and after the grading contracts were finished Mr. Sampson located on his claim, which became his home for over 50 years. This was where he and his family lived devoting their energies to its improvement and development.

Crookston's earliest name was "The Crossing." Here was a future settlement on good soil for the farmers, with potential railroads and waterways connecting it from south to north and east to west. "The Crossing" was truly a fitting name for the settlement, but the same name also could be applied to the Sampson homestead, for it too was "The Crossing."

The Sampson home was known far and wide for its hospitality. The home was located on a high hill majestically overlooking present Crookston and was the first place seen as any weary traveler approached from the south. It became a mecca for many travelers, some of whom spent the evenings there, or others who were always welcomed with a piping hot meal and hospitality built around a warm fire and spiced with good conversation. No one was ever turned away and many did odd