The treaty was signed by Selkirk and by Chiefs the Sounder, Black Blanket, Big Ears, and Black Man, the first two of the Crees.

As stated, the land ceded extended two miles on either side of the Red River from its mouth practically to Lake Traverse. It particularly included the country comprising the west two miles of Polk County. The Selkirk colonists came to the Red River first in 1812, locating near its mouth. Soon after, when the French Canadians had joined the Colony, many of them, Scotch and French, came up the river and settled at various points. A good many were on the Red Lake River, “some leagues from the Great Forks.” (Ross) John McIntyre is recorded as dying at la Grande Fourche in 1817. The list of these settlers has been lost so far as the present writer knows. But former writers have established the facts of the settlement. In his official report of his expedition, Capt. John Pope states:

The settlements along the Red River of the North were made first about the year 1812 by a colony of Scotch, English, and Canadian French, who were located upon a grant of land made by the Hudson’s Bay Company to Lord Selkirk, extending along both sides of the Red River to about the parallel of 47 degrees north latitude. It was supposed at the time that the grant was contained in the possessions of the English, and the settlements were therefore made near the mouth of Red Lake River, or what is now called “La Grande Fourche,” or the “Great Fork of Red River.”

* Lord Selkirk died, broken in heart and fortune, in 1820, and in 1836 his heirs sold back to the Hudson’s Bay Company the territory of his Colony for 84,111 English pounds sterling, or about $408,000. (See Justin Winsors Crit. Hist. of Amer., Vol. 8, p. 61.) His was a noble character. He was a real philanthropist and the most generous and disinterested man in the history of American colonization, but died a victim to the predatory selfishness of other men, that were his business rivals. It is not well known that in 1818 he went by land from Pembina to the mouth of the St. Peters (now the site of Mendota and Fort Snelling), and thence by river to St. Louis, Cairo, Louisville, Pittsburg, and thence overland to New York, where he took ship for Europe. He never saw America afterward.

† The italicizing is by the compiler.

Large numbers of Indians were soon attracted to the settlements by the presence of so many strange people and the display of so many tempting articles of traffic; moreover many of the colony were at once induced to take to themselves Indian wives, and in a few years the half bloods that resulted from these connections amounted to several thousands. It was not until about 1820 when it was ascertained that these settlements had been made within the territories of the United States. It then became necessary for the traders that had settled among the people, and who belonged to the English trading companies, to remove their stores to points within the British possessions, and they forced all the peoples who had by this time become dependent upon them for goods and supplies, to break up their settlements and remove to points lower down or north on the Red River. They now [1850] extend along both banks of the river from the northern frontier of the United States northward to the entrance of the river into Lake Winnipeg, in latitude 51 north. (See Pope’s Report to Secy. of War; Senate Ex. Doc., p. 30, No. 42, in 31st Cong. 1st Session.)

A FEW OF THE FIRST WHITE RESIDENTS.

Not many names can now be given of the Selkirk Colonists that settled on the Red River in or near what is now Polk County. Bryce’s “History of Lord Selkirk’s Colonists” (p. 167) mentions a French family that afterwards was in the Colony as having been at “the Forks of Red River” as early as in 1811. The name of this family was Lajimoniere. In 1815 the family had joined the main colony and Mr. Lajimoniere distinguished himself by carrying a packet of letters for Lord Selkirk from Red River to Montreal.

Another former member of the Selkirk Colony was Charles Bottineau (father of the noted mixed blood Pierre Bottineau, who was prominently identified with Minnesota history), who became a fur trader and lived for a considerable time near the present site of East Grand Forks. He had been a hunter for Alexander Henry, at Pembina, in 1803, later a partner with Charles Grant, at St. Joseph, and joined the Colony several years later. In 182—, he had “a hundred acres in crop.” (N. D. Hist. Coll., Vol. 1, p. 304; Ross’s Red River Valley, 176.) Some time after this he became a trader in the Grand Forks region. It is commonly stated that his noted son, Pierre, was