was but 54 when he died, having been born in North Carolina in November, 1795. His home was in Tennessee after he was eleven years old. He served in Congress fourteen years and was Speaker of the House from 1835 to 1839. He was Governor of his State from 1839 to 1841. The Democrats nominated him for President in 1848 and he was elected over the great Henry Clay by a majority of 40,000 of the popular vote and of 70 in the electoral college. He declined a second term. He advocated the war against Mexico and was an efficient President during that contest. But he was opposed to wars in general, and it was largely his great influence during his administration which prevented war with Great Britain in 1846 over the Oregon question—a war of which many unwise Americans were decidedly in favor—and when he was in Congress he and some other Congressmen prevented a war with Spain. He was a man of pure and high character and personally popular. This county need be well satisfied with its name.

Polk County was created by the first State Legislature of Minnesota in the summer of 1858; it was approved by Governor Sibley July 27. From the Legislative Journals it is learned that the bill was introduced in the House of Representatives and was known as House File No. 303. It established the counties of Pembina and Polk and was so entitled. It is difficult to learn who was the author of the bill, since the Legislative Journals are without indexes; probably it was Hon. John N. Chase, the Representative from the Pembina district, which was the 22d and was composed of Todd, Cass, and Pembina Counties. The act passed the House some time in the first weeks of July and the Senate July 13. In the latter body the votes were 23 for and 3 against. Those against were Senators Michael Cook (for whom Cook County was named), H. L. Thomas, and George Watson. What their objections were is not known.

The boundaries of the county as originally established commenced at the southwest corner of Pembina County, opposite the mouth of Turtle River and running up the Red River to the mouth of the Buffalo River, or Georgetown; thence eastwardly up the Buffalo along the northern boundary of Breckenridge County, and then along the northern boundary of Becker County to the southeastern extremity of Lake Itasca; then north and east up the Mississippi to its intersection with the county's eastern boundary line, at the northeastern extremity of Cass Lake; thence due north to the southern boundary of Pembina County, and then due west to the point opposite the mouth of the Buffalo River, the place of beginning.

The county seat of Polk County was temporarily located at Douglass, and that of Pembina County at St. Vincent. According to Sewall's map of Minnesota for 1860, Douglass was located on the Red Lake River, at the new crossing, or where the new Pembina trail crossed the river, and where the Ramsey treaty of 1863 was held. The present site is called Huot P. O., and consists of one house, which stands in the southwestern part of Red Lake County. Douglass was originally a trading post belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. A town was laid out here in 1858, but it does not seem to have made any progress. No attempt at formally organizing Polk County was made until in 1872, and the Legislature did not declare the county fully organized until March 3, 1873, fifteen years after it had been created.