point. In the meantime, he sold his milling plant in Minneapolis and for the past sixteen years, has been engaged only in manufacturing at the new townsit of Akeley.

The episode given as the reason for Mr. Walker’s abandoning the Red Lake River mills at Crookston, and the sale to Shevlin & Company, is more a personal incident than an historical feature, but may be of interest as an explanation, and as an example of how an incidental or accidental circumstance may turn the current of events into different channels.

EARLY BUSINESS OPERATIONS IN POLK COUNTY,
BY E. D. CHILDS, PIONEER.

In the spring of 1877, in company with James Hill, of Warren, Wisconsin, Superintendent W. H. Fisher, of St. Paul, Minn., et al., I visited the Valley of the Red River of the North, making headquarters at Crookston. At this time the other railroads into the Valley were the Northern Pacific, which had been built from Duluth to a point just west of Fargo, and the old St. Paul & Pacific, which had built two lines, one of which, starting from St. Paul, had been completed as far north as Melrose, Minn.; the other starting at Minneapolis, had been completed and was being operated to Breckenridge, Minn. Also, while these were in process of construction, the company building the road brought material from Duluth over the Northern Pacific to Glyndon, and had laid rails as far south as old Barnesville toward Melrose, and also north from Glyndon to what is now Euclid. At this point of construction the financial backers of the St. Paul & Pacific were thrown into bankruptcy, all work stopped, and the property defaulting on its interest was thrown into court and J. P. Farley, of the Illinois Central, was named receiver, with W. H. Fisher as superintendent.

After Mr. Farley’s appointment as receiver, he had interested Norman Kittson, of St. Paul, who was running a line of steamboats from Crookston to Port Garry (now Winnipeg) on the Red River, induced him to furnish the funds to take up the track from Crookston to Euclid and relay it to Fisher, thereby enabling the boats to meet the end of the railway without navigating the dangerous stretch of river between Crookston and Fisher.

This was the condition of the railway service on my first visit to Crookston. Our party took the train at Minneapolis, and during the day made our way to Breckenridge where we stopped over night at the old Hyser House. The next morning we hired a team and drove to Fargo, stopping at Fort Abercrombie for dinner, reaching the old Headquarters Hotel at Fargo near nightfall. I distinctly remember that where Wahpeton now stands there was but one house and that was covered with tar paper. The third morning we took train from Fargo to Glyndon, ten miles, and then changed from the Northern Pacific to the St. Paul & Pacific and went aboard a mixed train, which ran tri-weekly during the summer (there were no trains in the winter), from old Barnesville to Fisher. We arrived at Crookston in the afternoon of the third day.

The town at that time consisted of two streets; the main one is now the alley between the Great Northern Depot and the property known for many years as the Fountain & Anglim store, at that time occupied by W. D. Bailey as a general store. The other was a short intersection of Robert Street from the railway to what is now known as the Routell Block, then occupied by Ross & Walsh as a general store and tin-shop.

During the previous spring Mr. Farley had been greatly hampered in operating the road by the flood waters collecting on the south half of Section 1, just south of the river, and on our return to St. Paul, he proposed to Mr. Hill and myself that if we would buy Section 1 at the agreed price of $2.50 per acre, and bind ourselves to drain it so the water would not be a menace to traffic, he would, “run flat cars under the Crookston depot and locate it and the town on Section 1, moving all their switches and the yards, with other railroad property, to the south side of