CHAPTER VI.

CHIEF HISTORIC FEATURES OF EARLY TIMES.


THE RED RIVER CARTS AND THEIR OVERLAND COMMERCE.

Reference has been made to the passage, in former times, through what is now Polk County, of trains of two-wheeled vehicles called the Red River carts. These carts were originally built wholly of wood and rawhide, not a particle of metal being used in their construction. The wheels were large and clumsy, being sometimes five feet in diameter and three inches thick. The felloes were fastened together by tongues of wood, and pressure in the revolutions of the wheel assisted in keeping them from falling apart. The hubs were thick and strong, the axles were all wood, and even the linch-pins were wooden. A light box frame, tightened by wooden pegs, was fastened, also by pegs, to and poised upon the axle. The common price of such a cart was, in Manitoba, two pounds; in Minnesota, ten dollars.

Each cart was generally drawn by a single ox, and sometimes by a tough, strong Indian pony, or “ca-yuse.” The animal was hitched between shafts, and its harness was made of roughly tanned ox hide or buffalo hide. This leather was called by the Red River Metis, or mixed bloods, “shagganappi,” and the horse that drew the cart was called a “shagga-nappi pony.” A loaded cart generally contained about 500 pounds weight. A good pony could often draw such a load 50 miles a day, but a slow, plodding ox could not compass more than 20 miles in that time. The axles of the cart were not greased or lubricated in any way, and the wheels turned with a dreadful squeaking and screeching which could be heard on the open prairie for more than a mile.

The carts generally moved in trains. Ten carts constituted a “brigade,” in charge of three men. Five or six or more brigades made up a train, which was in charge of a guide or leader, who assumed much authority. He was on horseback, rode backward and forward along the line, yelling at the drivers and those in charge of the extra oxen or ponies, and marshaling his forces in pomp, flourish, and style. He had to be an intelligent man, for the stopping places for the night, where there were plenty of grass and water; the time of halting and starting; the disciplining of the crews, and all the other details of the successful management of a considerable caravan were all under his charge and responsibility. The history of these Red River cart trains which often might be likened to ancient Midianitish caravans, may be briefly sketched.
Prior to 1844 the import of goods to and the export of furs from the Red River Colony and the trading posts in that quarter were made through the circuitous, difficult, and uncertain Hudson's Bay route. This route was open and navigable practically only two months in the year and was beset with difficulties at all times. In 1843 Norman W. Kittson (for whom both Norman and Kittson Counties were named) established a trading post of the American Fur Company at Pembina. The first season he secured about $2,000 worth of furs and buffalo robes, but there was the greatest difficulties in the way of sending them to market. He had to deliver them at Mendota (Fort Snelling), the headquarters of the Minnesota division of the Company, and formerly the way of transporting furs from the upper Red River posts to the "factory" at Mendota was up the Red to and through Lake Traverse, then by portage to Big Stone Lake, and thence down the Minnesota. But this method of transportation involved much hard work and its success depended largely upon the proper stage of water in the rivers.

After due deliberation Kittson procured six of the rude carts which have been referred to, loaded his furs, and in the spring of 1844, set out for Mendota, which he reached after a toilsome and expensive journey. Presumably he had six or eight men with him. The route he followed was that which had been taken by the Red River refugees when they had left the Selkirk Settlement for Fort Snelling; it ran along the west side of the Red River to Lake Traverse, then crossed into what is now Minnesota, thence down the Minnesota. But this method of transportation involved much hard work and its success depended largely upon the proper stage of water in the rivers.

The Old Red River Cart Trail.

Mr. Kittson's first ventures in cart transportation were failures. On the first trip he lost $600; and on his journeys the two following years he lacked over $1,000 in coming out even. But he was of stubborn Scotch courage and believed in his scheme and followed it up and in time a great success crowned his efforts. He soon realized that he had made mistakes and he corrected them. First, he changed his route. He crossed the Red River near Pembina and went down the east side of the river to near the mouth of the Otter Tail; then he struck across by way of Otter Tail Lake to Sauk Rapids, on the Mississippi, near St. Cloud, and then it was an easy march down to Fort Snelling and Mendota. His carts, too, brought back goods and supplies for the use of his patrons and for the people of Pembina generally. The trail from Pembina down to the Otter Tail was always a few miles east of the river.

The new route crossed the Red Lake River near and west of Fisher. This passage way was long known as "the Old Crossing of the Red Lake River." It crossed Sand Hill River near Beltrami. It passed through the western part of Polk County from north to south a distance of about 50 miles. This was called the "western route," to distinguish it from others. It was also called the Kittson Trail, the Half Breed Trail, and the Crow Wing Trail. One reason for its selection by Mr. Kittson, in addition to the fact that it was most direct, was that it avoided the route by Big Stone Lake and Traverse des Sioux, the country of the Sioux Indians, who were in a chronic state of deadly hostility against the Chippewas, including Kittson's mixed-blood cart drivers. The latter were wholesome in fear of their old enemies and struck against being employed among them. In time the upper Red River traders, who did business with the Sioux sent their trains down the Minnesota Valley and brought back goods and supplies.

This route was selected by Wm. Hallett, a noted scout and trader of the region acting for Mr. Kittson. For a long time it served its purpose well. Maj. Woods and Lieut. Castor, with the dragoons of Capt. Pope's party, came over it in August and September, 1850. Capt. Pope shows it on his map accompanying his official report, and the map shows where Maj. Woods and the dragoons encamped every night. It crossed the Red Lake River apparently seven miles
from the mouth. The map also shows the trail on the Dakota side which the party followed in going up, but lays down no other trails in the lower Red River than it and the one mentioned as on the east side. The latter is labeled by Capt. Pope as "the Half Breed Trail." In his report Major Woods says as to the route he and the dragoons followed on the return from Pembina:

The route we followed is well known and traveled every summer by large "trains" of carts from the Red River settlements. We left Pembina on the afternoon of the 26th of August on our return, and had for about 15 miles the same difficulties to contend with that we encountered going out; but at this point the prairie began to improve. There had evidently not been so much rain as at Pembina, and 25 or 30 miles farther on the roads became good and we traveled without any serious interruptions, averaging more than twenty miles a day until we reached Fort Snelling the 18th of September, 1849. We made the distance from Pembina to Fort Snelling, coming down, 471 measured miles, in 231/2 days. We were 57 days going up. (Wood's Report, p. 21; Exec. Doc. No. 51, 31st Cong., 1st Sess.)

We have other evidence that the old Kittson Trail was identical with the "western trail," the "old Crow Wing Trail," and the "Half Breed Trail" mapped by Capt. Pope. In 1859 the late Capt. Russell Blakeley and others, who were engaged in opening the Red River to commerce, went from Georgetown by way of this trail to Pembina. In Vol. 8 of the Minn. Hist. Soey. Collections, p. 55, Capt. Blakeley says:

* * * We resumed our journey by way of the old Kittson trail, the location of which can be found on the map of Capt. John Pope, in his report of the topographical survey of the Territory, in 1849.

Other early and reliable authorities confirm the statement of Capt. Blakeley, that the line marked by Capt. Pope as the "Half Breed Trail," and which ran only a few miles east of Red River, was identical with the old "Kittson Trail," opened by Wm. Hallett in 1844. But this trail was at least partially abandoned in about 1858 (or perhaps in 1860) and wholly disused after the Civil war.

When it was first followed, it was used only in the early spring, in August, and in the late fall. At such times the ground was frozen in the spring and fall and dry in the late summer, and could be easily traversed; at other times the muddy and swampy conditions of the Red River bottoms rendered this route impassable. In April, before the ground had thawed, the carts came down with the furs of the winter's hunt, and soon returned with supplies. In the late fall they came down en route to St. Paul for the trader's winter supplies. Maj. Woods and his dragoons came down late in August and the first part of September, when the rains were over, and the major says that 15 miles from Pembina the road was good. He had several wagons, in which his provisions and baggage were transported, and they were easily hauled along.

Manton Marble, a noted American journalist, for a long time editor of the New York World, made with a party, a tour of Minnesota and the northern part of North Dakota in the summer and early fall of 1858. He went down the river from Georgetown to Pembina on the west or Dakota side, but returned via the old Kittson (or Pope) trail, on the Minnesota. Apparently he crossed the Red Lake River near where Fisher now is. In the February, 1861, number of Harper's Magazine he presents a descriptive illustrated sketch of the crossing of the little river by his party; he both wrote and illustrated the article, for he was a good artist and an accomplished penman. He made a fine sketch of where his party crossed the Red Lake, and this sketch clearly shows a scene resembling the topography near Fisher, with no boulders or other features such as are seen near Huot, but with heavy timber, high banks, etc. In describing the situation, Mr. Marble wrote:

Red Lake River is the largest of the tributaries of the Red River, excepting only the Assiniboine. * * * It is itself the main stream. We came to its banks one afternoon at the spot figured in the sketch here given, dined, and then attempted the passage. The water was high and the river wide. By wading it on horseback, we soon found the easiest spot to cross. It was necessary to enter the stream from a projecting spot of land, make head against its cur-
run for a few rods, then turn where the deep channel was narrowest, wade through it, and keep on a long shallow bar to the opposite shore. The force of the current in the deepest part was more than any but a strong man could stand against; and, to wade, even over the shallow bar, was like forcing one’s legs through dry sand.

The party had great trouble in getting their cart, with the provisions and baggage on it, across the stream. The water was too deep to haul the stuff in the cart, and so the latter was floated across and the provisions and baggage carried over on the men’s shoulders. This was on September 23 (1858), when the trail was dry but the Red Lake River was at a good stage where the crossing was made. Apparently, under the conditions stated, this crossing was near Fisher.*

In the early years of the decade of 1850—say, in about 1855—the Red River cart trade had increased to such proportions that trips had to be made at all seasons of the year, except in very cold weather. The old Kittson trail, on the east side of and only a few miles from the Red River, was practically impassable during many months, by reason of watery, muddy, and swampy condition. At the breaking up of the river in the spring it overflowed its banks and sometimes its swollen current was more than a mile wide. On such occasions several weeks of clear and warm weather were required for the waters to subside and the mud to dry so that the carts could pass down the valley.

Supplies were demanded by the traders at all seasons, and in almost every month, and Kittson and his chief lieutenant, Joe Rolette, were forced to procure them from Fort Snelling and St. Paul, the headquar-

ters of the Chouteau Company with which they were allied. A new route for the cart trains which should be traversable at almost any time of the year was demanded—and secured. Just who established it, or first passed over it, cannot now be stated. Nor can it be said with certainty when it was established. But upon its definite location it ran eastward for some distance until it crossed the valley and then went up on the permanent dry land and then went southward until after it had crossed the Red Lake, the Sand Hill, and other rivers to Detroit Lake, etc. Lieutenant Governor John Schultz, of Manitoba, went over this trail in 1860, and (in his pamphlet on “the Crow Wing Trail,” in the Collections of the Manitoba Historical Society for 1904) he says that it “went from Pembina across to the country eastward.” He describes this country as “of fine gravel ridges, running north and south, with willow and balsam poplar trees.” It was said to extend from Snake to Sand Hill River, when another sort of country was entered upon. It then went successively to Detroit, Rush, and Otter Tail Lakes, thence eastward, along the Leaf River, to the Crow Wing River, and thence down the latter to Crow Wing.

This new route could not have been the “old” Crow Wing Trail, except in part. There seems to have been no map made of it until in 1865. It was called the “Crow Wing Trail,” but not the “Old” trail of that name for many years afterward. It was called, at least in later years, by Polk County people the “Pembina Trail.” It crossed the Red Lake River near where is now situated the village of Huot, in the southwest corner of Red Lake County, whereas the “old” trail crossed near the site of Fisher. From the upper or Huot crossing, the new trail passed through the central part of Polk County southward about 26 miles, and is now part of a judicial highway. It crossed the Sand Hill River near Fertile, while the old trail crossed near the site of Beltrami.

In addition to the two trails here mentioned, Governor Schultz, in the pamphlet heretofore mentioned, says that in 1860, when he explored the country, there

* Too late for inserting in the proper place, Hon. Wm. Watts writes to the compiler: “There was an old trail that crossed Red Lake River about a mile west of Fisher; but in the seventies, when settlers first came this way, the survivors said that this trail did not seem to have been much traveled. In this respect, they said, it was in very marked contrast to what was known as the Pembina Trail, which crossed Red Lake River near Huot.” Of course, as the trail had been abandoned for at least ten years and had never been graded or otherwise improved, it soon fell into decay and obliteration, and to the settlers from 1878 to 1880 did present the appearance of infrequent use.—Compiler.
were three others in this region, viz.: (1) The military, stage, and early Red River steamboat route, from St. Paul to Breckenridge and Georgetown, and then down the Red River to Fort Garry. (2) The Breckenridge Flats route, which skirted the west bank of the Red River from Pembina to the junction of the Sioux Wood and the Red, crossing the latter either at Georgetown or Fort Abercrombie (McCaulleyville), and then across the Breckenridge Flats to Otter Tail Ford, and entered the rolling, lake-dotted country intervening between that ford and St. Cloud. (3) The mail-carriers, dog-train route, used only during the winter months. It crossed the Red River at Pembina, passed on to Red Lake, which it crossed on the ice; then from this big lake it went south, over the ice of many other lakes, to and across Leech Lake; then, by way of sundry other lakes, all of which were crossed on the ice, to Crow Wing; thence down the Mississippi to Fort Ripley, Sault Rapids, and St. Anthony to St. Paul. Of the "old" Crow Wing trail, Gov. Schultz says:

> It was opened in 1844 by Wm. Hallett for the trader, Norman Kittson, whose trains having been attacked by the Sioux when on their way to St. Paul via Lake Traverse and Traverse des Sioux, sought safety by thereafter taking the new route. Many miles of this trail had to be cut through the Big Woods country.

As stated, in 1844, when the first cart train was composed of six carts, it carried $2,000 worth of furs. In 1850 the carts brought down to St. Paul $15,000 worth and carried back $10,000 worth of goods. In 1851 there came to St. Paul 102 carts, but in 1857 there came about 500. In 1858 there were 612 and nearly all were from the Red River Valley. When St. Paul was laid out, in 1849, the destination of the carts and their loads was changed from Mendota to St. Paul, which had been made the capital of the new Minnesota Territory, and then had stores and shops and a big warehouse built by the Fur Company, which then belonged to Pierre Chouteau, Jr., & Company, of St. Louis. In 1859 the steamer Anson Northup was running on the Red River between Georgetown and Fort Garry and it carried tons of furs for the Red River traders as far as to its southern terminus. Not all of the Polk County traders patronized the cart lines, for some of them were in the Hudson's Bay Company's service and were forced to ship their furs to the markets of the world by the way of Hudson's Bay.

In 1858 the value of furs received at St. Paul from all sources was $161,022, but in 1863, when the Sioux in Dakota were hostile, the value increased to $250,000 and half of the amount received came from the Red River Valley. (See Williams' Hist. of St. Paul, pp. 304 et seq.) The trade was of great advantage to St. Paul. Nearly all of the money paid for the furs on their arrival in St. Paul would be spent in the town, and the supply of circulating medium would be, at least for a time, abundant and of great value. And there was a valuable feature about this medium. The Red River men sold and bought for coin only, gold and silver, nearly all of American coinage, with occasionally English sovereigns which were in demand on Red River.

It is much to be regretted that we cannot now present the names of the traders then living in what is now Polk County that were interested in the Red River cart trains. One fact may be derived from this circumstance—they did not grow rich from the trade or famous in any way. There is a great deal of misinformation extant concerning the profits made by the Minnesota fur traders from their transactions. It has often been asserted that they swindled the "poor Indians" shamefully out of their skins and pelts and made enormous profits. And yet only three or four of the old Minnesota traders grew wealthy.

We well know who these men were. Norman W. Kittson was one, Henry M. Rice, Gov. H. H. Sibley, and Louis Robert were the others that made respectable accumulations. Yet these men made but very little comparatively out of the fur business. By far the greater part of their holdings came from their profits in real estate transactions. They bought Minnesota
lands when they were cheap and afterwards sold them at handsome profits.

MAJOR WOOD’S AND CAPTAIN JOHN POPE’S EXPEDITION TO PEMBINA IN 1849.

In the summer of 1849 an expedition, half military and half investigatory, went from Fort Snelling to Pembina, made a thorough examination and a report thereon upon the intervening country, and gave to the world much information. The expedition was composed of about 50 men, nearly all in the military service. The commander was Major Samuel Woods, of the Sixth U. S. Infantry (from Fort Snelling), and under him were Second Lieut. A. D. Nelson, who was the expedition’s quartermaster and commissary; Brevet-Capt. John Pope, of the U. S. Topographical Engineers, who had been directed to make a thorough survey of the country, and Lieutenants J. W. T. Gardiner and T. F. Castor, who were in direct command of 40 men of Company D of the First Regiment of the U. S. Dragoons, acting as escort. There were also Dr. Craig, a surgeon, and Basil Beaulieu, the guide, with some other civilians connected with the expedition.

The chief object of the expedition was to select the site for two or more forts, to be built so as best to protect the country from the Hudson’s Bay Company’s traders (who were coming upon Minnesota Territory and appropriating the fur trade, mainly by selling and giving whiskey to the Indians), and to put a stop to the bad practices of Hudson’s Bay employees, who were wont to raid upon northern Minnesota and North Dakota soil and kill off the buffaloes by thousands.

The expedition took what was called “the middle route to Red River,” and which left the Mississippi at Sauk Rapids, 76 miles above the mouth of the Minnesota, and intersected the Red River near its most southern point, at the mouth of the Bois des Sioux, or Sioux Wood River. It crossed the Red about ten miles north of the Sioux Wood and then pursued a route down and parallel with the river, on the Dakota or west side, to Pembina. Returning Capt. Pope and a small party came in canoes up the Red River from Pembina to the Otter Tail River, thence up that river to Otter Tail Lake, then through that and other lakes and streams and by a portage to the Crow Wing River, down it to the Mississippi, and thence to St. Anthony’s Falls and Fort Snelling.

Going up, the party left Sauk Rapids June 16 and arrived at Pembina August 1. The trip was without special incident save that the mosquitoes were extraordinarily voracious and annoying, that numerous severe electrical storms were encountered, especially at Lightning Lake, and that travel was toilsome. At the Rabbit River the party met 25 Red River carts from Pembina, in charge of a member of the Selkirk Colony, laden with furs and pemmican, and on the way to the market at “St. Paul’s,” as the place was then called. Ten miles further north they met 65 more carts, similarly laden and with the same destination and in charge of Norman W. Kittson, the trader at Pembina, and to whom all the furs mentioned belonged.

On the return trip Maj. Woods and Lieut. Castor, with the dragoons, passed through what is now Polk County from north to south. In his report Maj. Woods describes the country north and south of the Red Lake River as “naturally fine and fertile” and adapted to agricultural purposes, although perhaps “too far north for corn of the present varieties.” Capt. Pope stopped at the mouth of the Red Lake River and computed the latitude to be 47 degrees, 48 minutes, and 8 seconds north. He too was of opinion, “that the climate of the Valley of the Red River would be too severe and the seasons too short for the successful cultivation of corn, but all other grains would be produced most abundantly.” The Captain further said that the only valid objection to the Valley as a wheat country was its distance from market; but, to remove this obstacle, he recommended that Congress make grants of land in aid of the construction of railroads from the head of navigation on the Red River eastward to Lake Superior and
from the same head "to the Mississippi below the Falls of St. Anthony." He referred to the extensive wild rice fields in the Red Lake River region, and thought that large quantities of rice and maple sugar produced here might profitably be sent to market over these roads when they should be constructed.

At the time of Maj. Wood's and Capt. Pope's expedition the Territory of Minnesota had been recently organized. It embraced all the country lying to the north and west of Iowa and Wisconsin, containing about 160,000 square miles. Capt. Pope noted that of this great expanse, the country lying west of the valleys of the St. Peter's (Minnesota) and the Red River, "is still unexplored." The two officers reported that the head of navigation of the Red River was in the vicinity of the mouth of the Sioux Wood River. At the latter point they recommended the establishment of a military post; but when Fort Abercrombie was built, some nine years later, it was established several miles to the northward, on the Dakota side, nearly opposite McCauleyville. They also recommended that a post be established at Pembina and this was afterward done.

During the Civil War, Capt. John Pope became a major general in the Union Army; but after his disastrous defeat at Second Bull Run he was sent to the Northwest to conduct the military operations against the Sioux Indians during the great outbreak of 1862.

How Polk County was obtained from the Indians.

The region in which Polk County is situated was, upon the advent of civilization in this quarter, and for a long time thereafter, conceded to belong to the Chippewa (or Ojibway) tribe of Indians. The Polk County country was obtained by treaties made with them at different times by the United States authorities.

The first treaty for the cession of the country was made by the old Pillager Band of Chippewas with Territorial Governor Alexander Ramsey, who was accompanied by ten other civilians, at Pembina, in the early autumn of 1851. Gov. Ramsey and party, with a military escort of 25 dragoons from Fort Snelling, left St. Paul August 18 and returned October 28. By this Pembina treaty the Chippewas ceded to the United States a tract on the lower Red River 150 miles in length by 65 miles in width, and which was fairly divided from north to south by that river. The northern boundary of the cession was the 49th parallel of latitude and the southern boundary was Goose River on the west side and Buffalo River on the east side of the Red River. The Government was to pay the Indians $30,000 cash in hand, and $10,000 a year for twenty years as the purchase price. But the U. S. Senate refused to confirm this treaty and therefore it never went into effect, to the great disappointment of both the Pembina settlers and the Pillager Chippewas. (Minn. in Three Cents. Vol. 2, p. 325.)

The treaty of "The Old Crossing of the Red Lake River."

Not until in 1863 did Congress order another treaty with the northwestern Minnesota Chippewas. This treaty was ordered held "at the old crossing of the Red Lake River." The probabilities all are that Congress meant the site of the treaty to be the crossing of the old Kittson Trail, the trail mapped by Capt. Pope, since that was the first Red River cart trail, the old trail of 1844. This crossing was near the present site of Fisher, perhaps a little to the westward. There being in 1863 two crossings of the Red Lake River, Congress particularly designated the "old" crossing as the council ground.

Yet the treaty was not held at the "old" crossing, but at the crossing of the new trail, up near the site of Huot, in Red Lake County. At the time that was the crossing best known, and probably this was the reason for its use. June 8, 1914, the people of the country celebrated the event by a large meeting at which appropriate exercises were held and an enduring monument placed in position. There is no question that this is the place where the treaty was held,
since it must be presumed that the participants in the celebration knew the facts and what they were doing. A soldier, Benjamin Dolbec, of the Mounted Rangers, who was present at the treaty was also present at the celebration. The preamble to the treaty says it was made at the "old crossing," but it certainly seems that this is a mistake.

At all events, on October 2, 1863, while war with the Sioux to the westward was yet being waged, the treaty was concluded. The Government commissioners were the then Senator Alexander Ramsey and Ashley C. Morrill, representing the Government, and the Chiefs and head men of the Pembina and Red Lake bands of Chippewas for the cession of a large tract of country containing Polk County. The boundaries of the country so acquired were these:

Commencing at the intersection of the international boundary with the Lake of the Woods; thence, in a southwesterly direction, to the head of Thief River; thence down Thief River to its mouth; thence southeasterly, in a direct line, toward the head of Wild Rice River to the boundary of a former cession (1855) by certain bands of Chippewas; thence along the boundary of said cession of 1855 to the mouth of the Wild Rice; thence up the channel of the Red River to the mouth of the Sheyenne; thence up the Sheyenne to Stump Lake ["Place of Stumps," otherwise called Lake Chicot], near the eastern extremity of Devil's Lake; thence north to the international boundary and thence eastward to the place of beginning.

Thus the territory acquired embraced practically all of the Red River Valley in Minnesota and Dakota, except a small portion previously ceded, and was estimated to contain 11,000,000 acres. The treaty, with certain amendments, was ratified by the Senate March 1, 1864, the Indians assented to the amendments in April following, and President Lincoln confirmed it May 5.

As finally confirmed, the treaty provided that the Indians should receive for their lands ceded as above $10,000 annually to the Red Lake band and $5,000 to the Pembina band, to be distributed equally per capita among the members of the band. The Government also agreed to expend annually, for fifteen years $8,000 for the Red Lake band and $4,000 for the Pembina band in the purchase of fishnet twine, dress goods, blankets, provisions, farming tools, etc. The Government also agreed to furnish each band for fifteen years with a blacksmith, a physician, a miller, and a farmer, as also $1,500 worth of steel and iron and other articles for blacksmithing purposes and $1,000 for carpentering.

The treaty made by Ramsey and Morrill, at the "Old Crossing of the Red Lake River," in 1863, provided that the Chippewa contracting parties should "not be held liable to punishment for past offenses." This clause referred to an incident which occurred at the "Old Crossing" of the Red Lake River the previous year, and which may here be described.

The treaty of 1863 with the Chippewas was originally ordered and planned to be held in August, 1862. In his report of Indian affairs in Minnesota for that year Superintendent Clark W. Thompson, says that the Chippewas of Red Lake and Pembina were notified to "collect at the mouth of the Red Lake River (italics compiler's), on the 25th of August, 1862."

There they were to meet the commissioners appointed by the Government for their lands and the right of navigation of the Red River of the North. "The Indians assembled at or near the point designated" (italics compiler's), says Superintendent Thompson, "but the Commissioners were unable to meet them." They had started up from St. Paul and reached St. Cloud on the 19th of August, and the next day received the news of the great Sioux uprising of that season, and also learned that Chief Hole-in-the-Day and some other Chippewas were acting menacingly and threateningly. The commissioners therefore feared to go farther up into the Indian country at the time, and turned back to St. Paul.

The Indians waited until they had consumed all the provisions they had with them, and all they could procure in the vicinity. Mr. Kittson was then passing through towards Pembina with about $25,000 worth
of goods, a portion of which belonged to British sub-
jects, agents of the Hudson’s Bay Company. Some
of the goods consisted of flour, canned goods, etc.,
and the hungry Indians at once seized them and every-
thing else eatable, and finally took of the stores any-
things and everything they wanted. They said to Kitt-
son that they knew he was their friend, but that for a
long time he and other traders had traveled through
the Indian country without paying anything for the
privilege and they were determined that the white
men should no longer use their trails as thoroughfares,
unless the owners of the country, the Chippewa In-
dians, should be paid for the trespass. They said they
would take and use the goods before them as a part
payment for what was due them. They finally prom-
ised that if the United States would make a treaty
with them, either that or the following year, they
would consent to pay for them out of any sum prom-
ised them in the treaty for their lands. This promise
they kept when the treaty was made.

The “Old Crossing” treaty provided that $100,000
should be appropriated to the Indians to “make compen-
sation to said injured parties [the traders that
owned the seized goods] for the depredations com-
mitt ed upon them.” Some of the goods, while they
were transported by Kittson’s carts, really belonged
to Hudson’s Bay traders about Pembina.

A subsequent treaty, made at Washington in April,
1864, by Clark W. Thompson and Ashley C. Morrill,
as representatives of the Government, and the chiefs,
head men, and principal warriors of the Red Lake
and Pembina bands of Chippewas, amended the pro-
vision in the “Old Crossing” treaty above quoted. The
amendment provided that $25,000 of the $100,000
mentioned in the first treaty should be paid to the
chiefs of the bands to enable them to purchase pro-
visions and clothing to be used as “presents to their
people upon their return to their homes.” Of this
$25,000 there was to be $5,000 expended for the ben-
efit of the head chief, May-dwa-gwa-no-mind. From
the $75,000 remaining, the injured traders and the
steamboat people were to be paid, and then if any
further sum remained it was to be paid for the debts
of the Indians which had accrued since January 1,
1859.

Scrip for 160 acres of the land ceded by the treaty
was, by the Old Crossing treaty, to be issued to every
mixed blood of the bands “who has adopted the
habits and customs of civilized life and is a citizen
of the United States;” but this restriction as to citi-
zenship, etc., was stricken out by the Washington
treaty, so that any mixed blood, whether civilized or
not, was entitled to scrip for 160 acres of the ceded
land as a homestead; but if they accepted the scrip
and located it, then it was to be “accepted by said
mixed bloods in lieu of all future claims for annui-
ties.”

There was to be set apart from the tract ceded a
reservatio n of 640 acres near the mouth of the Thief
River for Moose Dung, a chief of the Red Lakers,
and a like reservation of 640 acres on the north side
of the Pembina River, for Red Bear, a chief of the
Pembina band. In recent years an extensive saw-
mill was built on the Moose Dung tract and there was
much litigation connected with the acquirement of the
site. Article 6 of the “Old Crossing” treaty reads:

The laws of the United States now in force, or
that may hereafter be enacted, prohibiting the intro-
duction and sale of spirituous liquors in the Indian
country, shall be in full force and effect throughout
the country hereby ceded, until otherwise direc-
ted by Congress or the President of the United States.

This provision was not disturbed by the Washing-
ton treaty made by Thompson and Morrill, and pro-
bhibitionists have claimed that under it no liquors can
be sold on the great expanse of country mentioned
in the treaty. It will be noted, however, that the tem-
perance provision quoted makes no reference what-
ever to beer or any other malt liquors, nor to wines.

Clark W. Thompson, who signed the treaty at
Washington, was Superintendent of Indian Affairs
for the Northwest. For a number of years he lived
at Wells, in Faribault County, and was prominent in
Minnesota affairs.
The Indians who signed the treaty made by Ramsey and Morrill at the Old Crossing were as follows: Moose Dung, Crooked Arm, Little Rock, and Leading Feather, chiefs of the Red Lake band; Red Robe, Big Man, Four Skies, Falling Wind, and Berry Hunter, principal warriors of the Red Lake band. Representing the Pembina band were Chiefs Red Bear and Little Shell, and Warriors Wolverine, Joseph Gornore, and Joseph Montreuil, the last two mixed bloods.

It was Indian war time when the Old Crossing treaty was made, and Commissioners Ramsey and Morrill had a formidable military escort of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, all Minnesota volunteers. Some of the witnesses to the Indian signatures were Joseph A. Wheelock, the commission's secretary, afterward the well-known editor of the St. Paul Pioneer Press; Maj. Geo. A. Camp, Capt. Wm. T. Rockwood, and Surgeon F. Rieger, of the Eighth Minnesota Infantry; Capt. P. B. Davy and Lieut. L. S. Kidder, Company K, First Minnesota Mounted Rangers; Lieut. G. M. Dwelle, Third Minnesota Battery, and Pierre Bottineau, the famous old mixed-blood scout. Benj. Dolbee, a member of Capt. Davy's Company, was present at both the treaty and the celebration and pointed out the exact site.

At Washington and the treaty of April, 1864, the Indian signers of the amended treaty were as follows: From the Red Lake Band, Head Chief May-dwa-gwa-no-nind (or One Spoken to) and Chiefs Moose Dung and Little Rock; Warriors Leading Feather, the Boy, Falling Wind, Little Shoe, White Hair, Straight Bird, Makes the Earth Tremble, and Bad Boy. From the Pembina Band, Chief Red Bear and Warriors Equal Sky and Wants Feathers. The witnesses for the Indians were Paul H. Beaulieu, J. G. Morrison, and Hon. Peter Roy, interpreters; for the United States; T. A. Warren, interpreter, Chas. E. Gardell, and Chas. Bottineau. All of the witnesses for both sides were Chippewa mixed bloods.

As has been stated the treaty was held near the village of Huot, which was first called Louisville. Both names were derived from Louis Huot, the pioneer owner of the site.