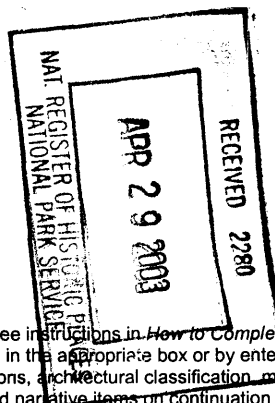


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Dodd Road
other names/site number (see continuation sheet)

2. Location

street & number (see continuation sheet) not for publication
city or town (see continuation sheet) vicinity
state Minnesota code MN county Le Sueur, Rice code 079 zip code 55046

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 4/16/03
Signature of certifying official Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Minnesota Historical Society Ian R. Stewart
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

**Entered in the
National Register**

Date of Action

6/13/03

Dodd Road
Name of Property

Le Sueur and Rice Counties
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
		sites
3		structure
		objects
3		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation - Road related (vehicular)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation - Road related (vehicular)

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

walls

roof

other Gravel

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Dodd Road
Name of Property

Le Sueur and Rice, Minnesota
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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Period of Significance

1853-1864

Significant Dates

1853

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Dodd, William B.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #_____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Dodd Road
Name of Property

Le Sueur and Rice Counties
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 104

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anthony Godfrey, PhD

organization U.S. West Research date 9/30/02

street and number 2395 Fisher Lane telephone 801-485-2526

city or town Salt Lake City state UT zip code 84109

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Dodd Road

Name of property

Le Sueur and Rice, Minnesota

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1) Name of Property

other names/site number: Circle Lake Trail, Rice County Road 61, 113th St. W., Falls Trail, Forest Township Road, 130th St. W., Garfield Avenue, Erin Township Road, Groveland Trail, Rice County Road 62, Halstad Avenue; Le Sueur County Road 136, 185th Avenue; Le Sueur County Road 148, Savidge Lake Road

2) Location

street and number: Circle Lake Trail, Rice County Road 61, 113th St. W., Falls Trail, Forest Township Road, 130th St. W., Garfield Avenue, Erin Township Road, Groveland Trail, Rice County Road 62, Halstad Avenue; Le Sueur County Road 136, 185th Avenue; Le Sueur County Road 148, Savidge Lake Road

city or town: Forest, Erin, Cordova, and Kasota Townships

vicinity: Lonsdale, Kilkenny, Cleveland

codes: 079 (Le Sueur), 131 (Rice)

zip codes: 55046 (Lonsdale), 56052 (Kilkenny), 56017 (Cleveland)

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National Park Service

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Dodd Road

Name of property

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Introduction

Dodd Road is an early historic road in Minnesota that runs from Mendota to St. Peter, a distance of approximately 73 miles. Dodd Road was constructed in the spring of 1853, by William B. Dodd of Rock Bend (now part of St. Peter). Built by Dodd through the subscription of private funds, Dodd Road passed through present-day Dakota, Scott, Rice and Le Sueur Counties. Later in 1853, Dodd Road was subsumed into a federal military road from Sioux City, Iowa to Mendota by the Bureau of Topographical Engineers. Today, as one of Minnesota's first roads, Dodd Road has great significance and will soon celebrate its 150th anniversary (ca. mid-July, 2003).

It was the creation of roads, like Dodd Road, that essentially formed the backbone for the state's future overland transportation network. These and other lesser roads and highways have historically advanced settlement, have facilitated commercial and industrial development, and, in many cases, have been instrumental in shaping the cultural landscape for entire regions within the state. There are three segments of Dodd Road that are eligible for National Register nomination as part of a discontinuous district. They are described in detail below.

In 1989, Demian Hess under contract with the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) completed a Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) entitled "Minnesota Military Roads." One property type – *military road fragment* – was defined in that document with associated registration requirements. Dodd Road is not considered a military road for the purposes of this nomination because it was built by private citizens who were not under contract with the United States government. When the road was later adopted as part of a military road, its route was not altered and the road was not substantially rebuilt. Therefore the Military Roads MPDF is not cited in Section 5 as a related multiple property listing. With some exceptions, however, the basic registration requirements of the Military Roads MPDF were applied to Dodd Road because structurally the roads were very similar.

"In the past, most roads have been nominated to the National Register on the basis of their engineering features or aesthetic qualities. The primary consideration in judging integrity of these roadways has therefore been their degree of physical preservation and alteration" (Hess 1989: F-2). A strict application of this approach, however, is not appropriate for this project because Dodd Road has been altered to a degree that none of it appears to conform exactly to its original construction specifications. A rigid standard of physical condition and adjacent setting would bar all sections of Dodd Road from consideration for the National Register.

Therefore, integrity considerations for eligible sections of Dodd Road for the NRHP have been determined in consultation with the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (MnSHPO) to be as follows:

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Dodd Road

Name of property

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1) The primary consideration in judging the integrity of a road segment of Dodd Road as eligible for the National Register is that it closely follows the original route of Dodd Road. Minor deviations from the exact path of Dodd Road within an eligible segment are still considered to be contributing because it is difficult to plot the exact path of the original road at any given location and the basic character of the road remains the same.

2) Physical appearance and approximate dimensions are the next most important criteria for determination of eligibility. An eligible segment of Dodd Road must fall into one of three categories of physical appearance similar to the original Dodd Road; (a) abandoned segments no longer used as roadway, but visible, b) gravel surfaced roads similar to original width and configuration, and/or c) graveled surfaced roads with some widening and ditch work. However, gravel road segments that have major widening (wider than 28 feet) and extensive ditch work, and segments of Dodd Road that have been paved with asphalt or concrete are not eligible for the National Register.

3) Following route and appearance, secluded rural setting is the next most important criteria for determination of eligibility. An eligible segment of Dodd Road should be in a setting characteristic of the original road during the period 1853 to 1864 (secluded rural or "country" areas). Though gravel road segments in urban/suburban settings may demonstrate the varying success of the historic communities that grew up along the historic Dodd Road, they are not eligible for the NRHP due to massive change of setting.

4) In addition to the above, an eligible segment of Dodd Road should be of sufficient length to evoke a sense of destination. There are several "mini" segments along the route of Dodd Road, which might meet all of the conditions listed above, but they do not reflect the destination of the original Dodd Road by being part of a larger road segment that meets the above conditions. Generally, segments less than one-half a mile long were not considered eligible, but this varies somewhat by the local topographic conditions.

5) Finally, an eligible segment of Dodd Road may have overt associational qualities. The road segment may possess some quality, which serves to associate it with historic Dodd Road, such as historic nomenclature or interpretive route marking indicative of its historic origin. Roads designated as the "Circle Lake Trail" or other such names in local usage, however, do not compromise the integrity of the original Dodd Road because these names may reflect relatively recent changes.

The three sections of Dodd Road described in this nomination all meet the first four of the above criteria involving route, physical appearance, rural setting, and sense of destination. The Le Sueur County segments also have obvious associational qualities because the route is still labeled as Dodd Road. These criteria reflect integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association.

After a survey of the entire roadway (Godfrey 2002) and consultation with MnSHPO concerning integrity of the entire roadway, U.S. West Research, Inc. (USWR) determined that no sections of Dodd

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Dodd Road

Name of property

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Road in Dakota and Scott County were eligible for the National Register. USWR recommended that one section in Rice County and two sections in Le Sueur County were eligible for the NRHP.

Description of NRHP Eligible Route of Dodd Road in Rice and Le Sueur Counties

Rice County:

There is one NRHP eligible section of the Dodd Road in Rice County, which is 6.8 miles long. It includes portions of Circle Lake Trail, 113th St. W., Falls Trail, 130th Street W., Garfield Avenue, Groveland Trail, and Halstad Avenue. This entire portion was also known as County Road 61 until recently when all but the one-mile long segment of County Road 61 between County Road 9 and Fairbanks Avenue was given to the appropriate townships. Thus Circle Lake Trail, that portion of Falls Trail west of Fairbanks Avenue, and 130th St. W. are now Forest Township Roads and Garfield Avenue and Groveland Trail are now Erin Township roads. Halstad Avenue at the south end of the eligible Rice County section is now also known as County Road 62.

The eligible portion of Dodd Road in Rice County begins just west of present-day Millersburg (UTM Point A). At this point, County Road 1/Millersburg Boulevard intersects present-day Circle Lake Trail, which heads southwest. Circle Lake Trail is a two-lane gravel and ditched road that runs along the north side of Circle Lake and along the original alignment of Dodd Road. The gravel road is approximately 24 feet wide and is ditched on both sides in a rural or "country" setting. From Section 15, T111N, R21W, the road runs westward and north of Circle Lake through Section 16, T111N, R21W. Agricultural fields and scattered housing are adjacent to the north end of this segment, but as the road approaches Circle Lake, the adjacent land is wooded and probably exhibits the highest integrity of setting of any of the eligible segments.

At the west end of Circle Lake, the eligible road segment crosses County Road 9 and becomes 113th St. W. in the northeast of Section 17, T111N, R21W. About one-half mile west of County Road 9 (UTM Point B), the roadway becomes Falls Trail and the Dodd Road alignment turns southwest across Section 18, passing just south of St. John's German Union Cemetery (established 1891). Just southwest of St. John's Cemetery, Falls Trail turns south through Section 19, T111N, R21W.

At the south line of Section 19, Dodd Road turns west onto 130th Street, and then soon goes south onto Garfield Avenue (UTM Point C). At the midpoint of the east line of Section 25, T111N, R212W the route turns west onto Groveland Trail. The exact path of the original route probably crossed the northwest corner of Section 30, T111N, R22W, where it was visible in 1974, but there are no traces or remnants visible today. This slight alteration in route was made in 1881, when Rice County authorized the change in the course of the road because of a petition by local citizens. They wanted the road to follow the section line instead of looping to the south on its original course (Rice County Historical Society, "Dodd Road" n.d.; Frank to Chairman of Board of Supervisors of Town of Shieldsville, 1881; and Hanlon to Nauman, 1977). The deviation from the original route here is minor.

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Groveland Trail follows along the probable original alignment of Dodd Road, skirting the swampy ground in Section 36, T111N, R22W west of Mazaska Lake. In the southwestern quarter of Section 36, Groveland Trail intersects with Halstad Avenue (County Road 62). The eligible portion of Dodd Road in Rice County ends at the intersection with State Highway 21 just west of Shieldsville (UTM Point D).

This portion of roadway through Rice County appears to basically conform to the original route of Dodd Road with its numerous curves, and the road still has a sense of function and destination. Parts of this Rice County portion of Dodd Road also have the physical appearance of the early Dodd Road because they are approximately 24 feet wide, graveled, and ditched. The setting is rural and, in places, wooded. Even though it has some widening and ditch work, the road is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP) because this portion of Dodd Road has not lost its integrity of setting, feeling and design, unlike portions of Dodd Road that pass through Dakota and Scott Counties. These graveled surfaced road sections do not have suburban and urban development along them, and they clearly still reflect an early historic Minnesota road.

Le Sueur County:

There are two eligible portions of Dodd Road in Le Sueur County: that portion of County Road 136 that extends from State Highway 13 near Kilkenny to County Road 2 at Cordova, and that portion of County Road 148 that starts just west of Cleveland at the intersection of State Highway 99 and extends to a north-south segment of the county road south of Goldsmith Lake. The entire path of Dodd Road through Le Sueur County is marked with brown signs reading "Dodd Road 1853."

The first eligible portion of Dodd Road in Le Sueur County is approximately 3.8 miles in length. It begins about a mile and a half west of present-day Kilkenny where County Road 136 intersects State Highway 13 (UTM Point E). At this point, County Road 136 is a graveled and ditched road which follows the original alignment of Dodd Road west by northwest all the way to the southwest shore of Gorman Lake. County Road 136 is still officially known as Dodd Road as indicated by street signs as well as the brown historic route signs. This is the only eligible portion of Dodd Road that still retains the original name. Along the way, County Road 136/Dodd Road passes through Section 20, T110, R23W, the very northeast corner of Section 19, T110, R23W, into Section 18, T110, R23W. In the western part of Section 18, the original route of Dodd Road has been slightly squared off to follow land ownership lines (near UTM Point F), but it is soon back on its original alignment as it enters Section 13, T110, R24W. The roadway is also known as 185th Avenue for a one-half mile segment in the southwestern portion of Section 18. Once around the southeast side of Gorman Lake, which blocked its path, Dodd Road intersects County Road 2 near the Gorman Lake Cemetery and the eligible portion of Dodd Road ends (UTM Point G). From this point, the route heads northwestward as a two lane paved highway into the village of Cordova. Cordova Township was settled in 1856 and organized in 1858, and bears the name of an ancient city of Spain. The village, located on Lake Gorman and the Cannon River was platted in 1867 (Upham, 2001: 324).

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The second eligible portion of Dodd Road in Le Sueur County is approximately 2.4 miles in length. It begins after one passes west of present-day Cleveland. From the west end of Cleveland's main street in Section 21, T110, R25W, Dodd Road crosses State Highway 99 and becomes a 28 foot wide gravel road now designated County Road 148/Savidge Lake Road (UTM Point H). The eligible route heads northwest from Cleveland through Section 21, diagonally across the tip of Section 16 and northwesterly across Section 17 where it eventually bends southwest (UTM Point I) into Section 18 as it passes around the north side of Savidge Lake. Near the south end of Section 18 (UTM Point J), this eligible portion of Dodd Road ends as the road heads directly south to State Highway 99 in Section 19, T110, R25W. The original alignment of Dodd Road would have continued to cut diagonally across the southern border of Section 18 and probably bent southwestward through Section 24, T110, R26W, rejoining State Highway 99 near the junction of County Road 21 in Section 23, T110, R26W. It is near this point, which is just north of Lake Emily, where Captain Reno may have "stumbled" upon Dodd Road during his 1853 survey.

The ramble of Dodd Road around Savidge Lake puzzled road historian Grover Singley, who in 1974 stated: "there is no satisfactory reason for making this loop north of the lake instead of going south of it" (the present-day route of State Highway 99). Furthermore, Singley stated that "off to the north and northeast of Savidge Lake lies an area of swamp [Goldsmith Lake], much of which must have been under water in 1853" (Singley, 1974: 45-46). However, a close examination of the early survey maps show that a farmstead (Cheedle's) was located near the north apex of Dodd Road as it went north around Savidge Lake. Captain Dodd may have diverted the road to accommodate this farmstead (Trygg, 1854-1857: Map).

Two portions of Dodd Road through Le Sueur County appear to conform to the original route of Dodd Road with its numerous curves, and they still have a sense of the original roadway function. Most of the eligible portions of Dodd Road in Le Sueur County also have the physical appearance of the early Dodd Road because they are approximately 28 feet wide, graveled, and ditched. Finally, the identification of the route as Dodd Road with signage throughout Le Sueur County suggests that the roadway closely follows the original route. Even though it has some widening and ditch work, the two above identified segments of the road are eligible for the National Register because they have not lost their integrity of setting, feeling, design, and association. These graveled surfaced road sections do not have suburban and urban development along them, and they clearly still reflect an early historic Minnesota road.

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Summary of Significance

Dodd Road is a Discontiguous Historic District that is significant at the state-wide level. The three segments of Dodd Road that are eligible for the National Register are significant under Criterion A in the Area of Transportation. The road segments make a significant contribution to the history of Minnesota, as well as the history of Rice and Le Sueur Counties. The Period of Significance extends from 1853 to 1864. Dodd Road is associated with the Minnesota state-wide historic context of Early Agriculture and River Settlement (1840-1870).

The construction of the privately funded Dodd Road in the spring/summer of 1853 facilitated trade and travel from Mendota to St. Peter at a critical period in Minnesota's history. Dodd Road became a useable overland "all season" thoroughfare between these two destinations. Prior to its construction, overland travel throughout Minnesota was extremely limited and difficult. In essence, Dodd Road improved any temporary trails through the wilderness in this part of Minnesota Territory, and for a time (1853-1864), became an arterial highway for the region. Dodd Road, as crude as it was, still was a thoroughfare sufficient to answer the needs of the people until they could themselves foster and improve roads themselves. Its construction has great significance to the State of Minnesota as one of its earliest roads, and to Dakota, Scott, Rice and Le Sueur counties as a significant early arterial that made communication with St. Paul easier. Dodd Road provided access and egress for these counties, and also acted as an outlet to the southwestern part of Minnesota Territory, making this country accessible as well. However, Dodd Road did not replace the use of steamboats on the Minnesota River for most travelers trying to reach St. Peter from St. Paul during the period of significance.

By providing a serviceable route for trade and travel between Mendota and St. Peter the presence of Dodd Road eventually led to the founding of many communities in the region by entrepreneurs, such as General James Shields. The construction of Dodd Road materially aided in the westward movement of thousands of immigrants into south-central Minnesota Territory following the signing of the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux in 1851. People settled in communities along its route such as Lakeville (1853), Eureka (1853), Millersburg (1855), Shieldsville (1856), Cordova (1856), Cleveland (1857), Hazelwood (1857), Rosemount (1858), and Kilkenny (1859). Dodd Road facilitated this settlement during the territorial period and early years of statehood. The destiny of these communities was intertwined with the construction of Dodd Road and it initially brought prosperity to the farmers along the route.

Nonetheless, this association promoted good fortune only until the conclusion of the Civil War when railroad development came into the region. The communities along Dodd Road most likely hoped that the first railroad through the area would parallel Dodd Road and service their communities. But instead, the Minnesota Central railroad line (1864-1865) out of St. Paul went south to Faribault and beyond, forever changing the economic dynamics of the communities along Dodd Road. The ambitious towns along Dodd Road found themselves in the backwaters of regional development. Not a single town was founded along Dodd Road after the construction of Minnesota Central Railroad with the exception of Eidswold (1896-1902) in Scott County.

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Finally, Dodd Road no doubt provided direct communication from Ft. Snelling on the Mississippi to the newly established Fort Ridgely on the Minnesota River and was improved by federal funding following the surveying of the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road. However, in the end, Dodd Road was never historically known as the Dodd "Military" Road. Because Dodd Road has never been known by as the "Old Government Road," the "Military Road," the "Reno" Road, or some other name indicative of any "military" or federal government involvement, there are no associative qualities that link Dodd Road to this consideration. On the other hand, throughout its length, there is signage relating to its historic origin attached to the historic role of William B. Dodd and his survey party that hacked out this road for commercial purposes. There is considerable signage with the nomenclature "Dodd Road," "Dodd Boulevard," or "Historic Dodd Road." Local residents, communities, county governments, and most historic maps examined recognized the route as Dodd Road, including the General Land Office (GLO), and not as the Mendota to Big Sioux River "Military" Road.

Historical Background

Minnesota's post-1850 history has been inexorably tied with the development of the state's overland transportation system. Few problems occasioned greater interest to territorial officials than the need to improve transportation networks.

Of course, the earliest means of transportation within pre-territorial Minnesota were the major waterways. The Mississippi and the Minnesota Rivers, and later the western waters of the Red River were important for the transportation of goods, people, and services. In addition to this waterway transportation network, various trails and land routes connected the more important and populous settlements. Traders, trappers, and Native Americans had traveled these largely unimproved routes for many years. The most important trails went along the Mississippi and the Minnesota Rivers, connecting St. Paul, the head of steamboat navigation of the Mississippi, with outlying settlements.

Minnesota Road Act, 1850:

The story of Dodd Road begins with the successful agitation for the creation of Minnesota Territory in 1849, and the hope of territorial officials that the federal government would thereafter be persuaded to launch a road-building program in the new territory.

To serve this goal, on January 28, 1850, Territorial Delegate Henry H. Sibley introduced H.R. 21 into the United States House of Representatives for the "Construction of Certain Roads in the Territory of Minnesota." A few days later, H.R. 21 was referred to the Committee on Roads and Canals, where it sat for more than one month (28 January 1850: 230; and 4 February 1850: 276 *Congressional Globe*).

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While H.R. 21 sat in the Committee on Roads and Canals, the legislative assembly of Minnesota sent several memorials (petitions) to Congress asking that it make appropriations to construct several roads within the newly organized Territory. Three of the four memorials pertained to roads other than the future route of Dodd Road.

One memorial requested a road to go northward from Point Douglas at the junction of the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers, through the St. Croix Valley to the falls or rapids of the St. Louis River. This road of 180 miles was reportedly needed as a mail route from the Mississippi River to Lake Superior and the settlements in the north in Wisconsin and Minnesota. A second memorial solicited that two roads be constructed. The first road requested by the memorial was for a road of 130 miles in length leading from St. Paul to Fort Gaines—later named Fort Ripley, to provide a supply route to this fertile country and the fort. The second road requested by the memorial was for a road leading from the Winnebago Agency to St. Paul. Finally, a third memorial called for an appropriation to lay out a road to run along the west side of the Mississippi between Mendota and the Iowa line. The fourth, and final memorial sent by the legislative assembly of Minnesota, asked for a “military” road proposed to be surveyed and constructed between Mendota and the mouth of the Big Sioux River on the Missouri River (now within Sioux City, Iowa). This road proposal became known as the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road. (House Report 172, 1850:1-2).

In 1850, when the Mendota to Big Sioux River “Military” Road was initially proposed, Minnesota territorial representatives certainly argued that the road was needed for military purposes, but this was done almost *pro forma* to obtain national support for the development of any territory, which the neighboring Wisconsin Territory had taken advantage of previously. A House congressional report on the matter stated:

No communication has, as yet, been opened between the Missouri and the Mississippi Rivers, above the line of the State of Iowa, and that this vast region of the [Minnesota] Territory remains almost inaccessible to the troops of the United States, as well as to individuals; that in the event of hostilities with the tribes of Indians within the limits of Minnesota and on the borders of Iowa, it would be difficult for a military force to penetrate into the country (House Report 172, 1850: 2).

The memorials asked for an “appropriation to provide as well for the safety of the frontier, as the advantage thereby derived from an early extinction of the Indian title to a large tract of country” (House Report 172, 1850: 2).

On March 13, 1850, H.R. 21 was referred to the Committee of the Whole with *House Report 172* accompanying the bill and recommending passage. *House Report 172* stated that it has been the “uniform policy of the government to aid new Territories by making improvements, such as the roads requested.” Furthermore, it stated:

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. . . being situated far in the interior, and surrounded by Indian tribes, and having them within her borders, in case of hostile encroachments by them, such improvements would be of importance for the transportation of troops and munitions of war. That same fostering care which has always been extended to new Territories of the country may in the opinion of the committee, well be manifested towards Minnesota, in opening and improving such thoroughfares as may be necessary for her protection, and useful in advancing her settlements. Such a policy will not only conduce to the general interest and welfare of the settlers, but will increase the value and sale of public lands to the benefit of the government (House Report 172, 1850: 2).

Soon thereafter, Congress passed the Minnesota Road Act and appropriated \$40,000 for constructing four roads and surveying one—the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road. Dodd Road would later become a component of this larger project.

That year Congress placed the road and survey projects in Minnesota Territory under the direction of the Secretary of War, who assigned the work to Colonel John J. Albert, Chief of the War Department's Bureau of Topographical Engineers. In September, 1850, Colonel Albert obtained the services of J.S. Potter, an "informed" civil engineer to conduct a necessary preliminary operation to have surveys made of the several routes and to determine the extent of grubbing, timber clearing, causeway work, and ditching required for the routes (House Report 12, 1851: 2).

Colonel Albert's First Annual Report, November 14, 1850:

On November 14, 1850, Colonel Albert submitted his first annual report on the project, describing the various roads and the survey projects. In regards to the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road, Colonel Albert stated that the road would go from Mendota on the Mississippi, to the mouth of the Big Sioux, on the Missouri. Colonel Albert estimated that the route would be 260 miles long and that the \$5,000 appropriated for it would cover only half of the project (Singley, 1974: 2, and 4).

Meanwhile, Territorial Governor Alexander Ramsey, impatient about the progress of all the road proposals, pushed the surveying of these routes with great energy. Evidently, Ramsey convinced Colonel Albert to organize a second surveying party to accomplish the work as soon as possible. To this end, in April 1851, Colonel Albert placed a second surveying party under First Lieutenant J. H. Simpson into the field, who began his work on May 1, 1851 (Singley, 1974: 3). While the War Department's Bureau of Topographical Engineers awaited the survey of the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road, the United States acquired an important cession of land from the Dakota (Sioux) Indians.

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Traverse des Sioux Treaty, 1851:

Clearly, *House Report 172* indicated that Congress and the legislative assembly of Minnesota sought and expected growth and the development of Minnesota Territory into statehood. But before legal settlement could materialize, they had to prevail upon the Dakota Indians to sign away their lands between Mendota and the mouth of the Big Sioux River on the Missouri River. Even before the first territorial legislature of Minnesota convened in 1849, this had been a goal of Alexander Ramsey and John Chambers, a former governor of Iowa. Ramsey and Chambers were named treaty commissioners to a gathering of a few Dakota chiefs at Mendota with a mandate to secure this land, but they failed to accomplish this goal prior to the passage of the Minnesota Road Act of 1850 (Blegen, 1975: 165-166).

A year later, the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux accomplished Ramsey and Chambers' goal. In the summer of 1851, the United States government negotiated a treaty with the Sisseton and Wahpeton (Eastern or Upper Sioux/Dakota) Indians that ceded all Dakota lands east of the Red River, Lake Traverse, and the Big Sioux River, and north of an 1825 Treaty boundary line. In exchange for this land cession, the Sisseton and Wahpeton received "reservations along the Minnesota River, temporary gifts, a trust fund, and cash payments which in large part would be diverted to satisfy debts to the traders." On August 5, 1851 eight chiefs and fifty-eight headmen signed the treaty and then awaited ratification by the United States Senate (Blegen, 1975: 166-171).

J.H. Simpson Report, September 15, 1851:

Only days after the signing of the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux in 1851, First Lieutenant J. H. Simpson submitted his report on the summer's work regarding surveying the various Minnesota roadways. In regard to the road from Mendota to the mouth of the Big Sioux River, Lieutenant Simpson wrote that he had not given any attention to it because of a lack of the requisite engineering force. Lieutenant Simpson estimated the length of the road to be 293 miles in length, but he could not state with any certainty the cost of its construction. While Simpson made a strong case for immediately opening and making available the other roads in order to open the territory, he did not see the need for immediate construction of this one as the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road ran through country where Indian title had not been definitely extinguished (House Report 12, 1851: 10-11).

Colonel Albert's Second Annual Report, December 22, 1851:

On November 15, 1851, the House of Representatives by resolution asked for information as to the progress made in the construction and surveying of certain roads in Minnesota. A month later (December 22, 1851) Colonel John J. Albert reported to Congress on the subject. In regard to the surveying and laying out of a road from Mendota, on the Mississippi, to the mouth of the Big Sioux, on the Missouri, Colonel Albert's report stated:

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The length of this survey will probably be not less than 260 miles. The appropriation for the duty is \$5,000. It will require the organization of one party, consisting of a chief and two assistant engineers, with the usual complement of rod-men, chain-men, laborers, etc.; and it will require one season to enable such a party to survey and mark out the road; the marking involving no other labor than affixing suitable stakes at specified distances along the centre line of the road. The party will be itself its own escort, as the Indians are not troublesome in that region.

To make this survey of two hundred and sixty miles as indicated, will, on a careful estimate, cost very near \$10,000. The amount appropriated being \$5,000, there will yet be required \$5,000 to make this survey. It is contemplated that the survey will exhibit the profile as well as the horizontal line of the road; and as in these surveys means of transporting the baggage and provisions of the party have to be carried with it, as well as the required provisions, they are more costly than surveys in a settled and populated country (House Report 12, 1851: 4).

Not seeing the immediate necessity for surveying the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road, Congress did not appropriate an additional \$5,000 for laying it out during the winter of 1851-1852, as requested by Colonel Albert.

Minnesota's Manifest Destiny, 1852:

Meanwhile, in 1852, irresistible forces were at work that would eventually pressure the federal government to act upon the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road. The "American westward movement, the pioneer determination to open lands for settlement, the belief that the Indian must make way for the white man, and the mercenary manipulation of unsophisticated natives" all contributed to this pressure. However, Minnesota settlement in this part of the territory had to wait until the United States Senate ratified the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux. The wait ended on June 23, 1852, when the Senate ratified the treaty with amendments almost a year after the Dakota had signed it (Blegen, 1975: 165-171).

With this hurdle behind them, many pioneer settlers believed that their dream of acquiring this land was fulfilled and soon there would be people, farms, towns, lumbering, businesses, and industry in the region. But the Dakota land cession did not at once convey the "Indian's domain to settlement. Public lands had to be surveyed, land offices established, and public sales announced under presidential authority" (Blegen, 1975: 173-174). Nonetheless, the ink had scarcely dried on the 1852 Treaty of Traverse des Sioux, before thousands of emigrants squatted on lands west of the Mississippi that once belonged to the Dakota. Roads leading into the newly acquired lands needed construction as well, and the squatters looked to the federal government to meet this obligation.

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In June 1852, in response to this settlement pressure, the United States House of Representatives passed a bill making further appropriations for the construction of roads in the Territory of Minnesota, and in July, 1852, the United States Senate Committee on Territories reported it out without amendment. Eventually, the congressional appropriation bill passed, but it did not contain an appropriation amount for the surveying, or construction, of the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road (9 June 1852; and 8 July 1852, *Congressional Globe*; and Singley, 1975: 4). Henry Hasting Sibley, Minnesota's Delegate to Congress, had argued that the road was needed to help manage the "warlike tribes of Indians in Minnesota." However, this "military" argument was rejected based on the fact that in December 1851, Colonel John J. Albert of the Topographical Engineers had stated in his report that the "Indians are not troublesome in that region" (see above) (17 June 1852, *Congressional Globe*).

This lack of action on the part of the federal government frustrated the thousands of settlers that had flooded into the area to squat on the rich lands along the Minnesota River. The lack of roads made it hard to not only reach the area of south-central Minnesota, but also to transport farm products to St. Paul markets. At that time, there were Indian trails into the region, but they were largely impassable by wagons and therefore did not meet the needs of Euro-American settlers. The only viable means of transportation into the region was by boat on the Minnesota River, which was limited much of the year by low water levels. Frustrated by these circumstances, local citizens began a local road-building initiative. For instance, during the winter of 1852-1853, Auguste Larpenteur, the son of the fur trader Charles Larpenteur, and a well-known St. Paul merchant and businessman took it upon himself to solicit contributions from "interested parties in the territorial capital" for the construction of a road from Rock Bend (later St. Peter) to St. Paul, Minnesota. At the same time, William B. Dodd of Traverse des Sioux also announced that he was seeking contributions for the same purpose. The exact amount of the contributions raised is not recorded, but in early January 1853, Dodd reported that he alone had raised more than \$400 (Singley, 1975: 41; and Larsen, 1938: 64).

Establishment of Fort Ridgely, December 1852:

In the interim, following the ratification of 1851 Traverse des Sioux Treaty by the United States Senate, where the Eastern Dakota sold 35 million acres of their land across southern and western Minnesota Territory, the Dakota were forcibly moved onto a small reservation along the Minnesota River that stretched from New Ulm to the South Dakota border. To keep the peace between the Dakota and the settlers, who now poured onto former Dakota lands by the thousands, on July 12, 1852, Henry Hasting Sibley, Minnesota's Delegate to Congress, recommended the construction of a fort on the Minnesota River. By the first week of December, a site was chosen on the Minnesota River just south of Fairfax, Minnesota. Shortly thereafter, the army prepared the site for the future Fort Ridgely. On April 30, 1853, barges of supplies, soldiers and their families arrived by way of the Minnesota River (Zempel, 2002). During this period, the federal government also built the Sioux Indian Agency on the south side of the Minnesota River about fifteen miles north of Fort Ridgely to serve the Dakota (Meyer, 1993: 89-90).

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Congressional Appropriation, January 1853:

The quieting of title to Indian lands, the removal of the Dakota to a permanent reservation, and the initial establishment of Fort Ridgely and the Sioux Indian Agency in early December, 1852, necessitated the construction of an overland year-long supply route to these destinations—one that the Minnesota River could not provide. These developments contributed to the release of the stalled Mendota to Big Sioux River Road project, which still lacked full funding by the federal government.

In an attempt to remedy this situation, on December 22, 1852 a House resolution was introduced into Congress instructing the Secretary of War to “furnish the House of Representatives, as soon as practical, with a copy of the report, estimates, and map of the survey of the road from Mendota to the Big Sioux River (House Executive Document 97, 1854: 1). On December 30, 1852, a few days later, Senator Auguste C. Dodge of Iowa introduced a bill into the Committee of the Whole that included a provision of \$5,000 for the “survey and laying out of a military road from Mendota to the mouth of the Big Sioux River, on the Missouri.” His bill also stipulated that “said road should be constructed under the direction of the Governor and Legislative Assembly of said Territory” (30 December 1852, *Congressional Globe*). Soon thereafter, on January 7, 1853, an appropriation of \$5,000 for the road followed (7 January 1853, *Congressional Globe*).

Dodd Road Building Expedition, April-July, 1853:

News of the appropriation to complete a survey of the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road no doubt reached St. Paul very soon after the event. Upon hearing this news, “interested parties in the territorial capital” hired William B. Dodd to cut a road from St. Paul to Big Bend in advance of the federal survey. Dodd had migrated to Minnesota Territory with a land company in the early 1850s, and was present at the 1851 Traverse des Sioux Treaty negotiations. Dodd was a trained civil engineer and he was considered “an energetic and enthusiastic booster for the settlement at Rock Bend (now part of St. Peter) and Traverse des Sioux on the Minnesota River” (Singley, 1975: 41; and Gresham, 1916; 128). Dodd was a captain in the militia and was often referred to as “Captain Dodd.”

It is not clear why promoters of the road from Mendota to Rock Bend chose to construct the road themselves at their own expense rather than wait for the completion of the federal survey. It also is not clear whether or not Dodd and his financial backers had advance knowledge of the actual course that the federal survey would take to St. Paul other than its general north by northeast course through the uncharted wilderness and Minnesota’s Big Woods. Nevertheless, they privately financed the construction of a “commercial” road to Big Bend prior to the arrival of the federal road survey crew. They may have gambled that their road to Rock Bend would somehow connect with the yet uncompleted federal road survey. They may have been tipped off by the actions of J.H. Simpson, now Captain of the Corps of Topographical Engineers for the state of Minnesota. In early April, Captain

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Simpson began making “inquires about the possibility of obtaining supplies at the mouth of the Big Sioux River” (Larsen, 1938: 65). Simpson may have discussed the point with St. Paul merchant, Charles Larpenteur, who had connections to a ferry over the Little Sioux near its junction with the Missouri River that was part of Fort Pierre to the Big Sioux River Road (Strong, 1853: Map).

Starting sometime in late March, or early April 1853, Dodd, with a surveyor, ten men, and two teams cut out a rudimentary road from Mendota south-southwest to Big Bend or St. Peter, bridging streams along the way. Beyond a few pioneer cabins east of the Minnesota River at the end of their destination, there were no other signs of Euro-American civilization in this deep wilderness of uncharted lakes, marshes, and thick woods. Staying as much as possible on high ground along the ridge separating the drainage basin of the Minnesota and Cannon Rivers, Dodd and his crew toiled for 109 days—surveying, cutting, and marking a crude road through an unexplored labyrinth of lakes and marshes southwest of Mendota heading for the Minnesota River settlements of Traverse des Sioux and Big Bend. Eventually, Dodd and his surveying party pushed their way through the last forty miles of Minnesota’s “Big Woods,” and arrived at Rock Bend. The Dodd Road, based on a departure date of circa April 1st, most likely was completed to Rock Bend during the third week of July, 1853—close to a month earlier than when the federal government survey party “stumbled” upon it (Reno, 1854: 8; Larsen, 1938: 64; and Trygg, 1966: Minnesota Sheet 3).

The estimated 70 mile-long rough trail of Dodd Road opened up a direct “all-season” overland commerce and communication route between St. Paul and Traverse des Sioux for the first time. Previous travel between the two communities was limited mostly to seasonal travel by boat on the Minnesota River, and to two trails, one on each side of the Minnesota River for a portion of the way. These trails were in use by at least the late 1830s (Larsen, 1938: 16).

Dodd was perhaps one of the first settlers to take advantage of the development of Dodd Road. He, along with Oliver Ames and William L. Ames, made a claim of some five hundred acres on both sides of the river (principally on the west side), built a claim shanty, which was the first Euro-American habitation on the original town site (St. Peter), and then laid out a town giving it the name of Rock Bend, (Gresham, 1916: 128). He thereafter established a ferry crossing on the east bank of the Minnesota River just north of the terminus point for his road linking St. Paul with Big Bend. Once a traveler crossed the Minnesota River on Dodd’s Ferry, they could take any number of routes to either Fort Ridgely, or to the Sioux Indian Agency beyond (Trygg, 1966: Minnesota Sheet 3). The name Rock Bend was changed to St. Peter in 1854. Dodd was killed in the U.S. – Dakota War of 1862 during the defense of New Ulm. He is buried behind the Episcopal Church in St. Peter.

Jesse L. Reno Survey, May 5th to September 8, 1853:

Though the federal appropriation for the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road came in January 1853, Colonel John J. Albert’s instructions for the survey work was not sent to Captain Jesse L. Reno until

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May 5, 1853. Reno was a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, took an active part in the Mexican War (Reno Papers, 1854: Appendix A by Dorothy Heinemann), and was the one for whom the City of Reno, Nevada was named after.

At the time Captain Reno was assigned to direct the survey, he was stationed at the U.S. Arsenal, Washington, D.C. According to Colonel Albert's instructions, the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road was to originate at Mendota and terminate on the Missouri River at the mouth of the Big Sioux. Along the route, it was to pass through Traverse des Sioux and Mankato, near the mouth of the Blue Earth River. The original orders made no mention of any military purpose for the road. However, the orders instructed Reno to pay "attention to the collection of such facts as are adapted to illustrate a railroad on that route, which will be matter of your report." Enclosed in his instructions was a map indicating the general indication of the route. In addition, for some unknown reason, Reno was instructed to begin his survey at the mouth of the Big Sioux River rather than at Mendota (Reno Papers, 1854: Letter 5 May 1853). Certainly, by this date, Colonel Albert should have been aware that Dodd had already begun a road from Mendota to Traverse des Sioux, but Colonel Albert made no mention of it in his instructions to Captain Reno.

Instructions and map in hand, Captain Reno proceeded by steamer to Council Bluffs from St. Louis and then overland to the junction of the mouth of the Big Sioux River with the Missouri River via the Fort Pierre Road. Captain Reno, accompanied and assisted by civil engineer James Tilton, arrived there on June 17, 1853. After a few days for rest and organization, Captain Reno started the survey on June 20, 1853—well after Dodd's party had begun their road building work from Mendota. During his expedition, Captain Reno stated that he would prepare a map whereby the "intelligent emigrant will be able to select either a prairie or a timber country for his future home, without the trouble of expensive and laborious personal examination." This statement is another indication that the survey's commercial purposes and value superceded its "military" objectives (Reno, 1854: 2-4).

For convenience, Captain Reno divided his survey into six divisions of 40 to 50 miles in length, each measured with a 100-foot chain and marked with a stake at the end of every 600 feet. The route of the first division ended in what is now Sioux County, Iowa. The path of the second division ended to the northeast at the Little Sioux River, south of Spirit Lake in Dickinson County, Iowa. The third division continued on a north-northeasterly course crossing Minnesota's southern boundary near present-day Fairmont in Martin County, and ended at the Chaniushka River, the Indian name for Elm Creek in the northern part of Martin County. The course of the fourth division crossed and followed the north bank of the Watonwan River and eventually reached Mankato, where the fourth division ended (Singley, 1975: 39-41). According to one source, Reno's surveyed work followed in the main an Indian trail (Hughes, 1909: 47).

Leaving the village of Mankato with a population of 200 or so pioneers and a few Dakota Indians who "lingered about their ancient village," in the fifth division, Captain Reno's party followed the east bank of the Minnesota River. Blocked by flooded bottomlands near Babcock's sawmill (built by J.W.

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Babcock in 1852), Captain Reno took to the high ground and entered the "Big Woods" of Minnesota, which Reno called the largest body of timber between the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. At this time, Reno estimated that the Big Woods extended 100 miles to the north and 40 miles to the east (Reno, 1854: 7-8). The Big Woods were a noted natural barrier and south of the Minnesota River were situated in Le Sueur, Rice and Scott Counties (Winchell, 1901: *passim*).

East of present-day Kasota and north of Emily Lake, Captain Reno "stumbled" upon Dodd Road. According to Reno's report:

Opposite Traverse des Sioux we struck a road, newly cut out, from Rock Bend (a short distance above Traverse des Sioux) to St. Paul, by Captain Dodd, of Minnesota. . . . It materially assisted in our survey, and enabled us to get through the "Big Woods" several weeks sooner than we would otherwise have done without this—our only guide among the unexplored labyrinth of lakes and marshes.

Once on Dodd's road, Captain Reno ended division five near Lake Eagle, in the "Big Woods" an estimated 43 miles from Mankato that would place him near Hunt Lake, southwest of Shieldsville, Minnesota. From Hunt Lake, Captain Reno pushed northeastward through the last vestiges of the heavily timbered country—completing what he called a "tedious month spent in the woods, during which we were excessively annoyed by mosquitoes and gladdened by evidences of civilization." With minor exceptions, Reno followed Dodd's road through the "Big Woods" all the way to Mendota. Captain Reno made only those improvements necessary to get the army wagon train through to its final destination (Reno, 1854: 8-9; and Singley, 1975: 41). According to one road historian expert, Reno found that the "road which Dodd had made was, with minor exceptions, the shortest and most practicable route to St. Paul from Traverse des Sioux, and his route, therefore, followed the Dodd Road." Dodd's men "did just enough construction work along the way to permit the passage of the army wagons which made up the train" (Larsen, 1938: 65).

Once out of the Big Woods, Reno's party entered what he called the "Oak Barrens" so-called from the stunted character of the timber. After passing through this kind of country for about fourteen miles, Reno entered a fertile prairie traversed by the Vermillion River, and soon encountered a town called Lakeville, which had recently been laid out and already had several buildings erected (Reno, 1854: 8-9; and Singley, 1975: 41-42). Lakeville was the first community of several to grow up clearly as a result of the opening of the Mendota to Rock Bend road by Dodd.

From Lakeville, Captain Reno followed near the northwestern boundary of the prairie for twelve miles until he entered broken country marked by oak openings interspersed with small lakes. There, he struck what he called the Mendota and Cannon River Road about six miles from Mendota (today called the Mendota-Cannon Falls Road). This road was more or less a trail leading southward to the Cannon River and Faribault beyond. From this junction, Reno proceeded another six miles or so until he struck the Mendota-Wabasha Road that led to Hastings, Red Wing, and beyond. Reno's labors and Division Six

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terminated at Mendota, having in his words “traversed 224 miles of prairie, forty miles of thick woods, and fifteen miles of oak openings; making the distance from the mouth of the Big Sioux, on the Missouri, to the mouth of the Minnesota, on the Mississippi, 279 miles.” Arriving in St. Paul on or about August 20, 1853, he conferred with several persons familiar with the geography, position and size of lakes, villages, roads, and timber he had just passed through, including Henry H. Sibley, Henry M. Rice, and William Dodd (Reno, 1854: 8-9; and Trygg, 1966: Minnesota Sheet 7).

The *Minnesota Pioneer* covered Captain Reno’s arrival and reported descriptions of his laborious trip and of the route and general country he surveyed. According to the newspaper, Reno’s party made an “average of little over six miles per day,” which was considered good time, “considering a great portion of the distance was through timber [Big Woods], where they could not make more than about two miles per day.” Furthermore, the newspaper stated: “From the Traverse the road follows the general direction of that recently completed by Capt. Dodd and his party, which road is described as being very good indeed, although a little longer than the new survey. This is owing to the fact that Capt. Dodd was supplied with a very limited means, and his road being constructed with funds obtained from individual subscription.” The newspaper concluded that the “fact that Captain Reno and party brought through from Missouri three wagons, is conclusive evidence that the road is practicable now. In no instance does the survey overcome a greater grade than five degrees” (8 September 1853, *Minnesota Pioneer*). The completion of “Reno’s journey immediately branded the [Dodd] road as ‘practicable’ for those eager souls crowding in upon the wilderness” (Larsen, 1938: 65-66).

With the completion of his survey in early September 1853, Captain Reno made three recommendations:

First, and foremost, he recommended that a portion of the road between Mendota and Mankato be constructed at once. In support of this position, Reno stated that the road was important to the prosperity of the Territory, stating that there were “several thousand inhabitants along the Minnesota [River] who have no other direct outlet for their surplus produce during a greater portion of the year.” Furthermore, Captain Reno concluded that the “20,000 inhabitants, of the best classes of our hardy pioneers and enterprising farmers, now scattered over its broad extent and busily employed in making solitudes, hitherto untrodden save by the savage, smile with beautiful villages, and the earth teem with abundant fruits, will not ask in vain the fostering hand of government.” However, it should be noted that no settlers were mentioned living along the Dodd Road route between Traverse des Sioux and Mendota with the exception of the community of Lakeville. As a military man, Reno also reported, almost as a footnote to his report, that the road was “. . . the most direct and practicable route from Fort Ridgely—the new post on the Minnesota—to Fort Snelling, on the Mississippi; and, as the river is only navigable a few months of the year, it is absolutely necessary that a route by land should be speedily opened” (Reno, 1854: 9-10).

Second, Captain Reno suggested that Dodd and his party be paid \$3,270 for their labor out of the project cost of \$52,475 needed for construction the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road (Reno, 1854: 9-10).

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And third, Reno advocated that James Tilton, his “able and accomplished assistant” be appointed to supervise the construction of the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road. Captain Reno felt that Tilton was a suitable person for the position because of his knowledge of the country and the route surveyed (Reno, 1854: 9-10).

Appropriations and Reimbursement, 1854:

In February 1854, the Minnesota Territorial Legislature recognized William Dodd’s accomplishment and helped him recover what he had spent on the construction of Dodd Road. On February 15, 1854, the Territorial Legislature passed a resolution, “respectfully requesting Congress to appropriate to Captain Dodd such sum as the engineers appointed to open the road may deem just and reasonable.” On the basis of Captain Reno’s recommendation and the Minnesota Territorial Legislature request, promoter and road builder Dodd was eventually reimbursed \$3,270 for his road-building project (Anonymous, 1966). No mention was made for compensation to Auguste Larpenteur.

During the appropriation hearings for 1854, Henry M. Rice, Minnesota’s delegate to Congress, distinguished himself in getting funds for the continuation of road construction in Minnesota. However, Rice’s appropriation measure, which passed in July 1854, contained no provision for work on the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road. This matter was rectified by including the sum of \$25,000 for the road in the army appropriations bill during that session of Congress. However, because of an error in the printing, this sum was to be used for “completing” the road—a “paltry amount for a road that was to be 279 miles long.” This sum was approximately half of that recommended by Captain Reno in his report (Larsen, 1938: 68; and Jackson, 1964: 59-60).

Mendota to Big Sioux River Road Construction, 1855-1857:

Now that the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road had been surveyed by the federal government, the Bureau of Topographical Engineers made plans for its construction with the measly amount allocated to it under the army appropriation bill.

Exact specifications for the road and bridges were laid out in Captain Reno’s April, 1854 report to Colonel James J. Albert, Chief of the Topographical Engineers. Construction specifications for contractors included the following (Reno, 1854: 12):

- The road will be opened one hundred feet wide; all trees, brush, and shrubs to be cut down for that width.
- All trees, brush, and shrubs of whatever size, on a centre strip of fifty feet in width, to be grubbed for at least nine inches below the surface of the ground, and all impediments to

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the safe and easy motion of vehicles removed from said centre strip.

- In all low or wet places, a good solid sufficiently embanked roadway, of at least twenty feet wide on top, to be made of good, firm, dry material, earth or gravel, or, where required, of logs, covered with earth or gravel at least six inches in depth.
- In places where the road is made on side-hill, the driveway will be eighteen feet wide, with a good ditch on the upper side, and such cross-ditches and culverts as will protect the road from wash. The road at such places to be provided with a substantial rail or log parapet, as the engineer may direct.
- All ascents to be reduced to eight feet nine inches to the hundred feet, and all inequalities upon the surface of the road to be smoothed off or filled up.
- The bridges of twenty feet span and less to be made of good, sound, durable timber, none of which is to square less than one foot; abutments made of logs flattened on two sides, well toenailed and tied together—flooring to be of two-inch plank, well spiked to the stringers, and the whole provided with a good and substantial railing.
- Bridges of more than twenty feet span will be made according to plans which will be exhibited in the office.
- The slopes of excavation will be one and quarter foot to the foot perpendicular; and of embankment, one and a half foot to the foot.
- Sufficient outside ditches to drain the road will be made, according to the direction of the engineer or agent in charge, at such points as he may direct.
- The whole construction of the road to be under the charge of the engineer or agent in charge, who retains the right to make such alteration in the location of the road, or the plans of the bridges, culverts, and mechanical work, as may in his opinion be advantageous to the work; and any difference resulting from such change shall be estimated by said engineer or agent in charge.

In late 1854, J.H. Simpson, Captain of the Corps of Topographical Engineers for the state of Minnesota, was placed in charge of the construction of the road. As Captain Reno recommended, the Mendota to Mankato portion of the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road was constructed first. However, it was not until the following spring of 1855 that any work was done on the project. Dodd's Road, which had been in use already for over a year, was adopted as the north end of Division 5 and all of Division 6 of the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road.

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In May 1855, two separate contracts were let for the construction work. One contract for Division 5 was let to William Dodd of Rock Bend for the construction of a 45.5-mile section from Mankato to the point where the surveyed route joined Dodd Road and then eastward to the 235th mile station of the route. A second contract for Division 6 was let to Patrick Nash for the construction of a 44-mile section from the 235th mile station of the route to Mendota. Separate contracts were let that year as well for bridges over Shanaska Creek and the Blue Earth River (Singley, 1974: 42; and Reno Papers, 1854: Dorothy Heinemann Appendix B).

Construction of the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road went slowly. By the fall of 1855, neither Dodd nor Nash had pushed forward their respective sections with the "vigor" that Captain Simpson had expected. Captain Dodd had completed about 13 miles of his contract eastwardly from Kasota through the heaviest portion of the Big Woods, while Mr. Nash had gone 28 miles westward from Mendota toward Kasota (Reno Papers, 1854: Dorothy Heinemann Appendix C). Nonetheless, by the fall of 1856, both bridges and the 90 miles road between Mendota and Mankato were roughly completed (Singley, 1974: 42).

By 1856, Dodd Road from Mendota through Shieldsville and onward to Traverse des Sioux was plainly marked on a map by J.S. Sewall and published in New York City. In addition, for a short time, William C. Dilley operated a stage on the Dodd Road (Stewart, 1929: 9-10).

During the next season, unspecified improvements were made on the middle sections of the road between Mendota and Mankato (Singley, 1974: 42). By the end of 1857, the road was practically completed from "Mendota to a point beyond Mankato, except for the corduroying of a section near Mankato . . . on the last 178 miles, from Mankato to the mouth of the Big Sioux River, no work whatever had been done" (Larsen, 1938: 107).

However, even its best sections were barely passable. The appropriation of 1857, the last made specifically for roads in Minnesota Territory, provided \$36,000 to finish the Mendota to Big Sioux River "Military" Road. However, total federal funding of the project to the tune of some \$52,000 was already depleted (Larsen, 1938: 106-107).

Nevertheless, the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road seemed to have served its "limited" purpose as a military road because in 1857 Congress cancelled a similar military road that would have run from Winona on the Mississippi River to Fort Ridgely (House Report 191, 1956: 1). Two years later, Congress cut off all federal funding for roads and bridges in Minnesota Territory because it had been admitted into the Union by the Act of Congress of May 11, 1858. Minnesota thereafter became subject to all the charges and assessments necessary to the construction of roads and other internal improvements (House Report 183, 1859: 1).

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Dodd Road, 1857-1864:

After its final improvements, the Dodd Road portion of the Mendota to Big Sioux River Road was never used or completed for the military purpose of bringing troops to the Missouri River. Even during the 1862 U.S. – Dakota War, troops and supplies to Fort Ridgely were transported by flatboats up the Minnesota River and not by way of Dodd Road.

On the other hand, Dodd Road did serve to open settlement in south-central Minnesota. Many settlements grew up on Dodd Road. They include Lakeville (1853), Eureka (1853), Millersburg (1855), Shieldsville (1856), Cordova (1856), Cleveland (1857), Rosemount (1858), and Kilkenny (1859).

With the departure of the army engineers in 1857, roads like Dodd Road came under the jurisdiction of various local townships. Unable to maintain roads like Dodd Road, the condition of these roadways eventually deteriorated. By the mid-late 1860s, in response to the situation, the general “public wholeheartedly embraced the cause of railroad promotion to replace the poorly maintained roads.” After the Civil War, the settlers along Dodd Road hoped to be beneficiaries of the first railroad through the south-central region of Minnesota. However, the first railroad did not parallel Dodd Road as some hoped. In 1864, the Minnesota Central railroad instead went from St. Paul south to Faribault and beyond. Thereafter, wagon roads, like Dodd Road were of secondary importance in the communication system in Minnesota. They were looked upon “simply as a means for getting to the railroads, and, for the most part, they were of local interest only.” The towns along Dodd Road found themselves in the backwaters of regional development (Hess, Demian, 1989: E-10). Not a single town was founded along Dodd Road after the construction of Minnesota Central Railroad with the exception of Eidswold (1896-1902) (Upham, 2001: 551).

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Dakota County:

1896	Union Publishing	Reel 175.2
1916	Webb Publishing	Reel 175.9
1916	Hixon Publishing	Reel 174
1928	Security Publishing	Reel 175.2

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1898	Northwest Publishing	Reel 175.4
1928	Hudson Publishing	Reel 175.4
1929	Webb Publishing	Reel 175.4

Rice County:

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1916	Hixon Publishing	Reel 174

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Boundary Description

There are three (3) sections of Dodd Road that are eligible for the National Register, one in Rice County and two in Le Sueur County. The total length of the eligible sections is 13 miles. The eligible portion includes all of the area within the road right-of-way from the beginning to ending point of each section. Acreage was determined by multiplying 13 (miles) times 5,280 feet times 66 feet (r/w).

Section #1: Rice County:

The NRHP eligible section of Dodd Road in Rice County includes a 6.8 mile length of graveled and ditched roadway beginning at County Road 1 on the north (Section 15, T111N, R21W) and ending at State Highway 21 on the south (Section 17, T111N, R21W). The section encompasses roads or portions of roadways now designated as Circle Trail, 113th St. W., Falls Trail, 130th St. W., Garfield Avenue, Groveland Trail, and Halstad Avenue. Portions of these roads are also designated as County Road 61, Forest Township road, Erin Township roads, and County Road 62. The section can be found on USGS 7.5' maps *Little Chicago (1960)* and *Lonsdale (1979)*. Beginning at the north end (UTM Point A), the Circle Trail section of road is approximately 1.5 miles in length. The route becomes 113th St. W./County Road 62 after it crosses County Road 9 and in .5 miles becomes Falls Trail (UTM Point B), which extends for 2.5 miles to the intersection with 130th St. W. The eligible portion of Dodd Road continues for .2 miles on 130th St. W. west to its intersection with Garfield Avenue (UTM Point C), which extends .5 miles south to Groveland Trail. Groveland Trail terminates 1.5 miles to the south at Halstad Road/County Road 62. Halstad Road intersects State Highway 21 within .1 miles to the south (UTM Point D) and this eligible section of Dodd Road ends.

Section #2: Le Sueur County:

The first NRHP eligible section of Dodd Road in Le Sueur County begins 1.5 miles west of present-day Kilkenny (UTM Point E) and can be found on USGS 7.5' Maps *Kilkenny (1966)* and *Cordova (1966)*. At this point, County Road 136/Dodd Road west of State Highway 13 is a graveled and ditched road which follows the original alignment of Dodd Road west by northwest all the way to the intersection of County Road 2 near the southwest shore of Gorman Lake. Along the way, Dodd Road passes through Section 20, T110, R23W, the very northeast corner of Section 19, T110, R23W, into Section 18, T110, R23W, and then into Section 13, T110, R24W along the southwest shore of Gorman Lake. Once around Gorman Lake, which blocked its path, County Road 136/Dodd Road intersects County Road 2 near Gorman Lake Cemetery (UTM Point G) and this eligible portion of Dodd Road ends.

Section #3: Le Sueur County:

The second eligible section of Dodd Road in Le Sueur County is along County Road 148/Savidge Lake Road just west of present-day Cleveland (UTM Point H), and can be found on USGS 7.5' Maps *Cleveland (1979)* and *St. Peter (1991)*. From the west end of Cleveland's main street in Section 21,

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T110, R25W, Dodd Road crosses State Highway 99 and becomes a 28 foot wide gravel road named County Road 148/Savidge Lake Road which heads northwest of Cleveland through Section 21, diagonally across the tip of Section 16 into Sections 17 and 18 and around the north side Savidge Lake until it reaches the bend near the south end of Section 18 (UTM Point I). The eligible portion of this section of Dodd Road ends at this point as the current road heads straight south to its junction with State Highway 99 instead of following the original path of Dodd Road, which would have continued diagonally to the southwest.

Boundary Description: UTM References – USGS 7.5’ Map Name and Year

Section #1: Rice County – County Road 61:

Point A:	Zone: 15	Easting: 472900	Northing: 4919300	Little Chicago (1960)
Point B:	Zone: 15	Easting: 469110	Northing: 4918900	Lonsdale (1979)
Point C:	Zone: 15	Easting: 467960	Northing: 4916090	Lonsdale (1979)
Point D:	Zone: 15	Easting: 466720	Northing: 4913340	Lonsdale (1979)

Section #2: Le Sueur County – County Road 136:

Point E:	Zone: 15	Easting: 451660	Northing: 4906900	Kilkenny (1966)
Point F:	Zone: 15	Easting: 448860	Northing: 4909060	Cordova (1966)
Point G:	Zone: 15	Easting: 446870	Northing: 4908760	Cordova (1966)

Section #3: Le Sueur County – County Road 148:

Point H:	Zone: 15	Easting: 432850	Northing: 4908150	Cleveland (1979)
Point I:	Zone: 15	Easting: 430900	Northing: 4909500	Cleveland (1979)
Point J:	Zone: 15	Easting: 429920	Northing: 4908580	St. Peter (1991)

Boundary Justification

The property boundary widths are based on the roadways’ current legal rights-of-way, which are generally 66 feet. Lengthwise, the eligible sections basically conform to the original route of Dodd Road with its diagonal path that continues to provide a sense of destination as a direct route between St. Peter and Mendota and numerous curves that follow landscape constraints rather than political boundaries. The eligible portions of Dodd Road resemble the physical appearance of the early Dodd Road because they have an unpaved surface that is approximately 28 feet wide with modest ditches.

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USGS Maps

Cleveland, Minn., 1965, Photorevised 1979

Cordova, Minn., 1966

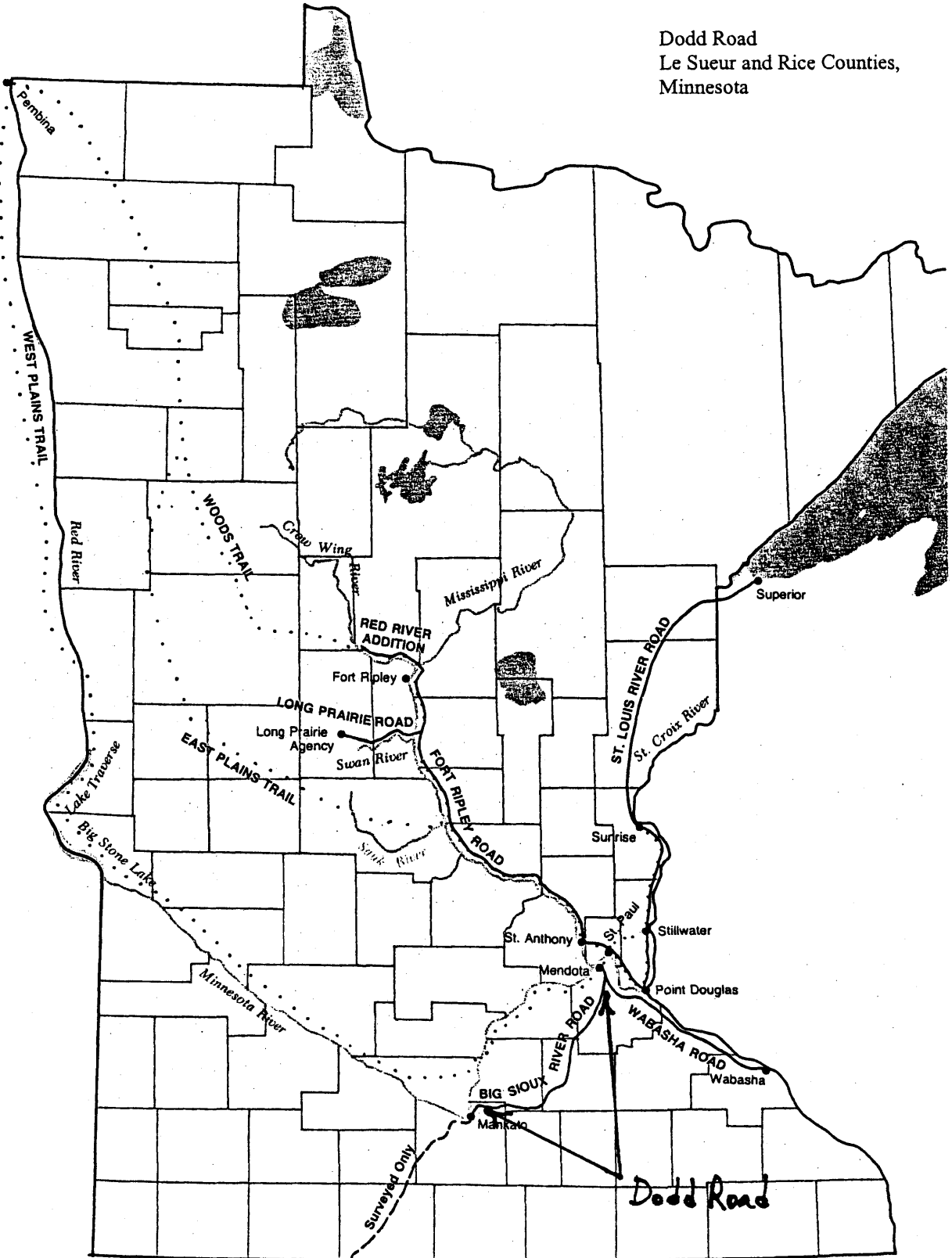
Kilkenny, Minn., 1966

Lonsdale, Minn., 1960, Photorevised 1979

Little Chicago, Minn., 1960

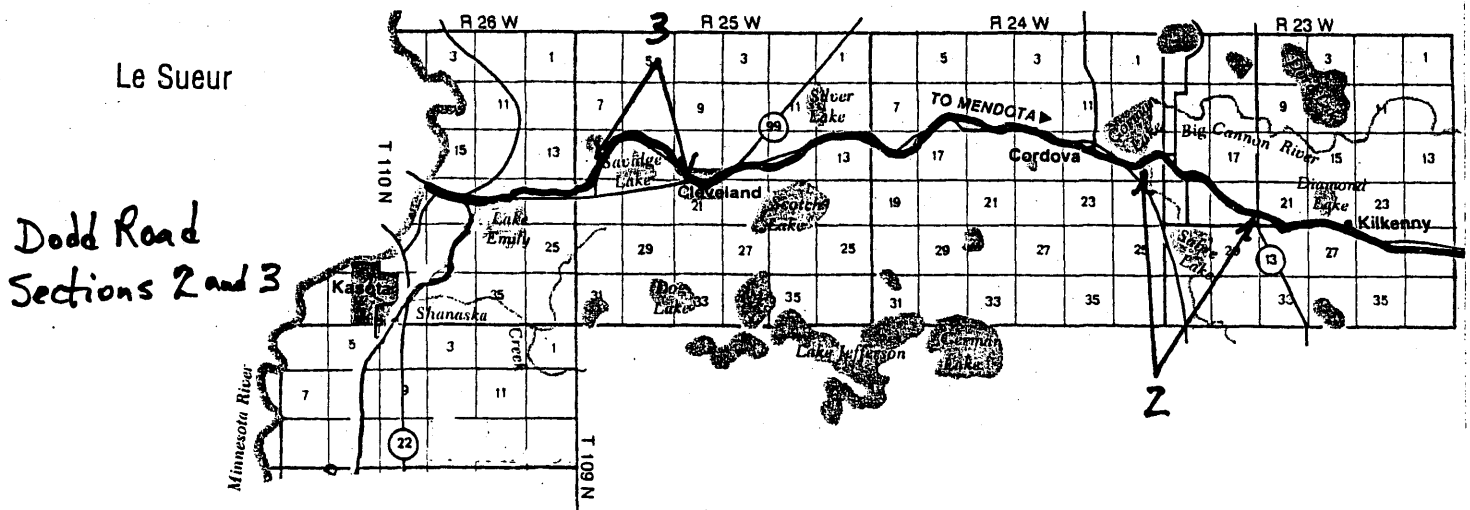
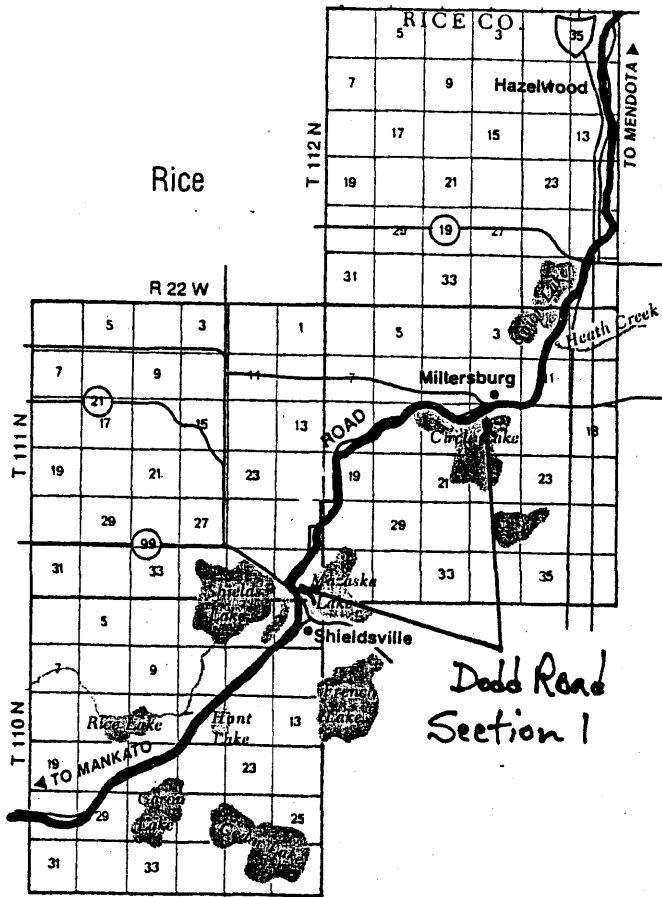
St. Peter, Minn., 1991

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Map of Minnesota Territorial Roads showing Dodd Road as part of the Big Sioux River Road (from Singley 1974)

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Composite County Maps of Dodd Road showing eligible sections in Rice and Le Sueur Counties (from Singley 1974).