



Living History of Illinois and Chicago®

[Living History of Illinois and Chicago®](#) – Facebook Group.

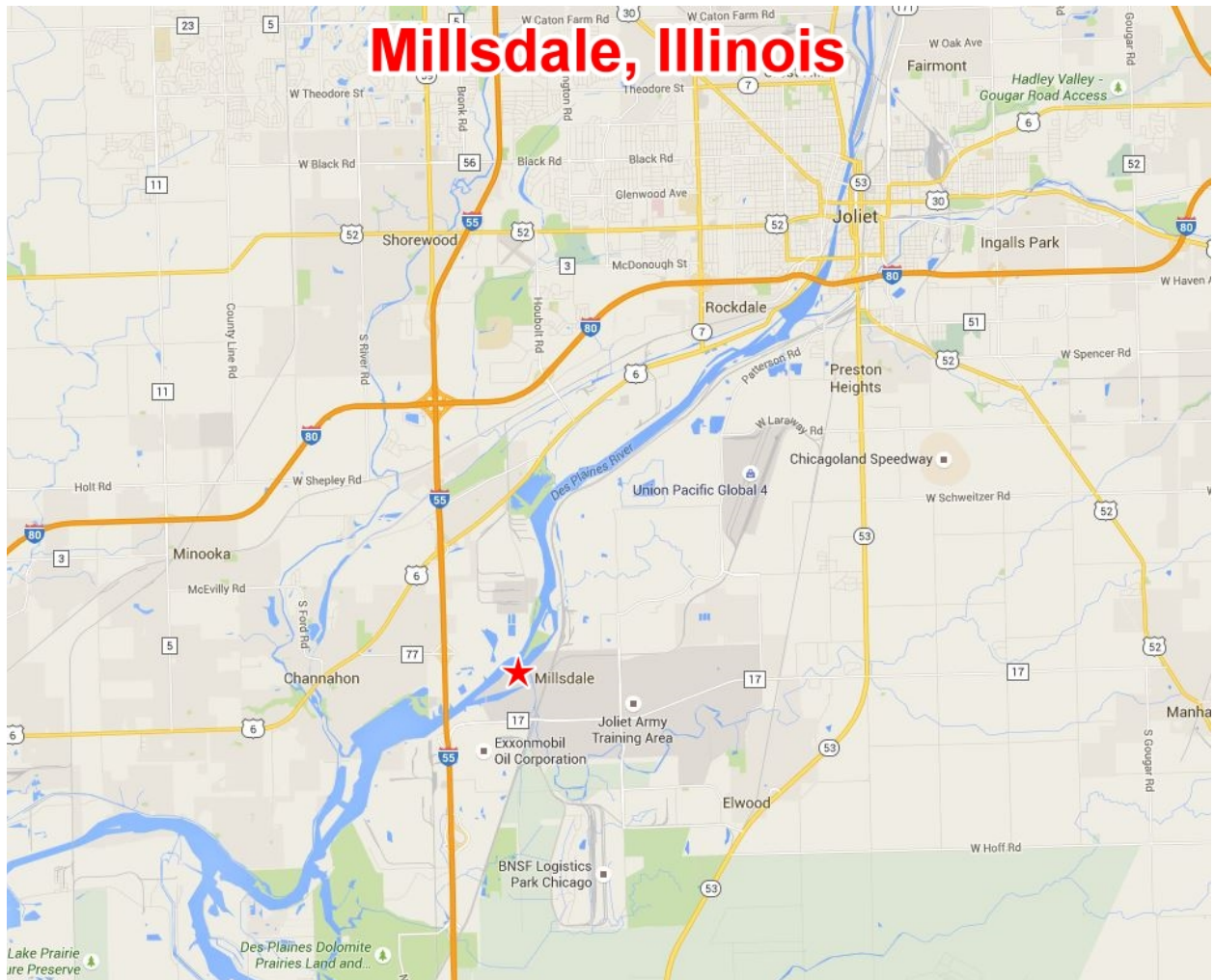
[Digital Library of Illinois History](#)

[Living History of Illinois Gazette](#) - The Free Daily Illinois Newspaper.

[Illinois History Store®](#) – Vintage Illinois and Chicago logo products.

Millsdale, Illinois

Millsdale was a small village located in Channahon Township, Will County, Illinois. It was named by Oscar Mills, a wealthy farmer whose property was on east bank of Des Plaines River south-west of Joliet, Illinois.





Living History of Illinois and Chicago®

[Living History of Illinois and Chicago®](#) – Facebook Group.

[Digital Library of Illinois History](#)

[Living History of Illinois Gazette](#) - The Free Daily Illinois Newspaper.

[Illinois History Store®](#) – Vintage Illinois and Chicago logo products.

Soon after Oscar Mills settled, he applied to be the postmaster for the area and a post office was established and named Millsdale in 1887. Oscar Mills constructed a brick factory but it was not a particularly successful venture.

The Santa Fe Railroad built a freight station at Millsdale. It was used as a feeding stop for sheep and cattle bound for the Chicago market. Mr. Mills who owns the large farm surrounding the station and operated the feeding station at a good profit. He raised alfalfa on his land and sold it to the people who unload their livestock to be fed and watered at his station. Sheep were frequently held there to await better market prices at the Union Stockyards at Chicago. They would be rushed to the market on short notice when word was sent that the market prices were right.



The Station Master for the shared Santa Fe and Chicago and Alton Railway depot was on call 24 hours a day. He could be called to tend to a train in the middle of the night if



Living History of Illinois and Chicago®

[Living History of Illinois and Chicago®](#) – Facebook Group.

[Digital Library of Illinois History](#)

[Living History of Illinois Gazette](#) - The Free Daily Illinois Newspaper.

[Illinois History Store®](#) – Vintage Illinois and Chicago logo products.

necessary. In 1916 the Station Master lived in a house adjacent to the depot with his wife and children and paid \$3 a month in rent (most likely to Mr. Mills). Millsdale with a population of 25 never grew much beyond that, however. The post office closed in 1902.

According to residents who lived in Millsdale around 1916, the community had a general store and a few nearby houses. The Mills house was said to be quite lavish. Less fortunate immigrant railroad section workers, however lived in converted boxcars. A one-room school was located at the edge of a nearby farm.

Oscar Mills son Arthur took control of the stock yards and railroad station in the early 20th century, and they were active as late as 1928. The community was still active through the 1920s, though still quite small. The real demise of Millsdale occurred in the late 1930s, when the U.S. Government bought up all the property in the area to create the Joliet Army Ammunition Plant. The population had dwindled to only 20 people. Homes were razed, as was the school. The train depot also ceased operation.

Today, there is nothing left to see in Millsdale, except for a few crumbling bricks. Stepan Chemicals Company opened a new plant on 380-acre site in 1954. The Millsdale Plant is located on Millsdale Road and is still in operation.