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## The Town of Millville, Illinois

Millville was initially established in 1835 along the northern Chicago-Galena stagecoach route, which is now in the Apple River Canyon State Park. A roadway today known as the Stagecoach Trail.



John R. Smith and the Burbridge family were responsible for the village's first buildings and a saw mill was erected between 1835 and 1836. It developed as an important rural service stop along that stagecoach route. Millville was significant in the early history of Jo Daviess County, serving as a civic and commercial hub from 1838–53. The town itself was platted on April 14, 1846 within Rush Township by John R. Smith.



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Millville faced decline after the railroads entered Jo Daviess County during the 1850s. Still, the town served as a minor commercial center for several decades after. In 1853–54 the Illinois Central Railroad bypassed Millville relegating it to a future as a "backwater town". Despite this, two prominent commercial operations remained in business into the late 19th century, the grist mill and a blacksmith shop. The blacksmith shop, eight buildings, two homes and a school are shown in town maps as late as 1872.

The town's fate was sealed by a June 1892 flood which reportedly swept away all of the town's remaining buildings, leaving no trace of Millville in its wake. Heavy rains swelled the pond at the Cox Mill, 1/4 mile from Millville, causing the mill dam to burst. The mill pond waters tore down Clear Creek and poured into the South Fork Apple River, rushing toward Millville. The town's buildings, unable to withstand the deluge, were swept away by the violent river.

The park was purchased by the State of Illinois in 1932. No visible remnants of its structures remain today. The site of Millville was added to the U.S. National Register of Historic Places as the Millville Town Site in 2003.