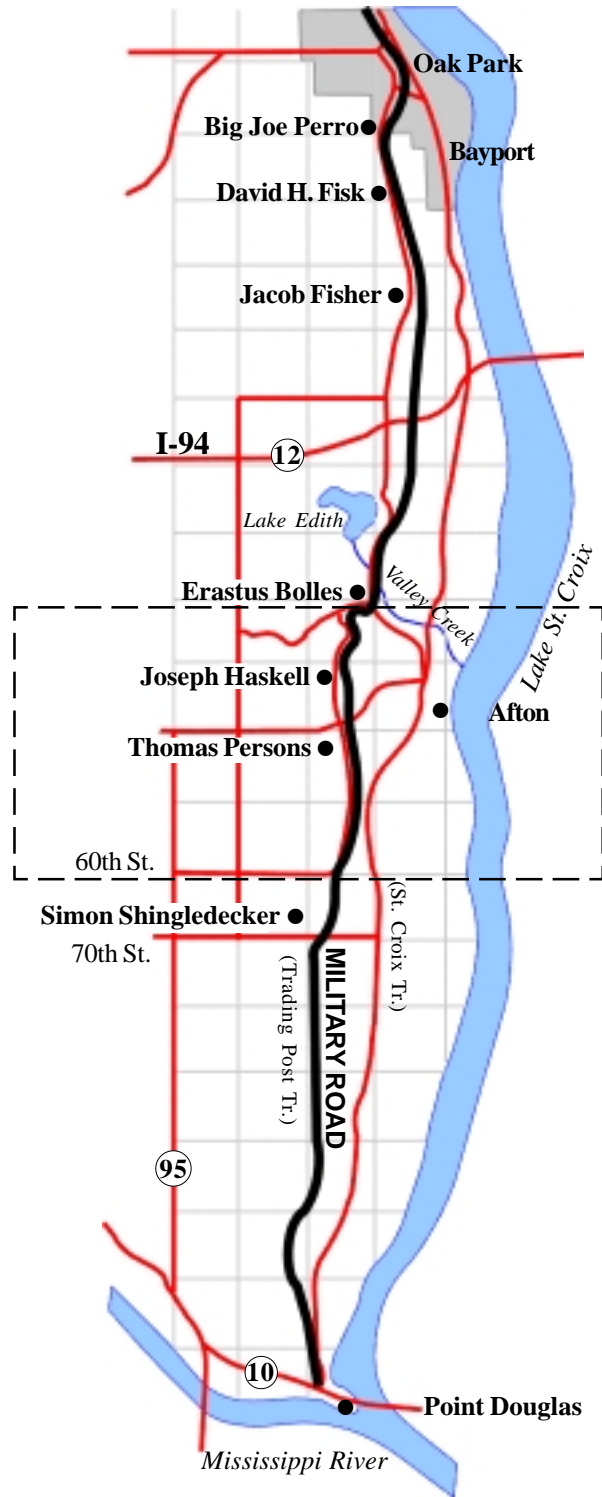


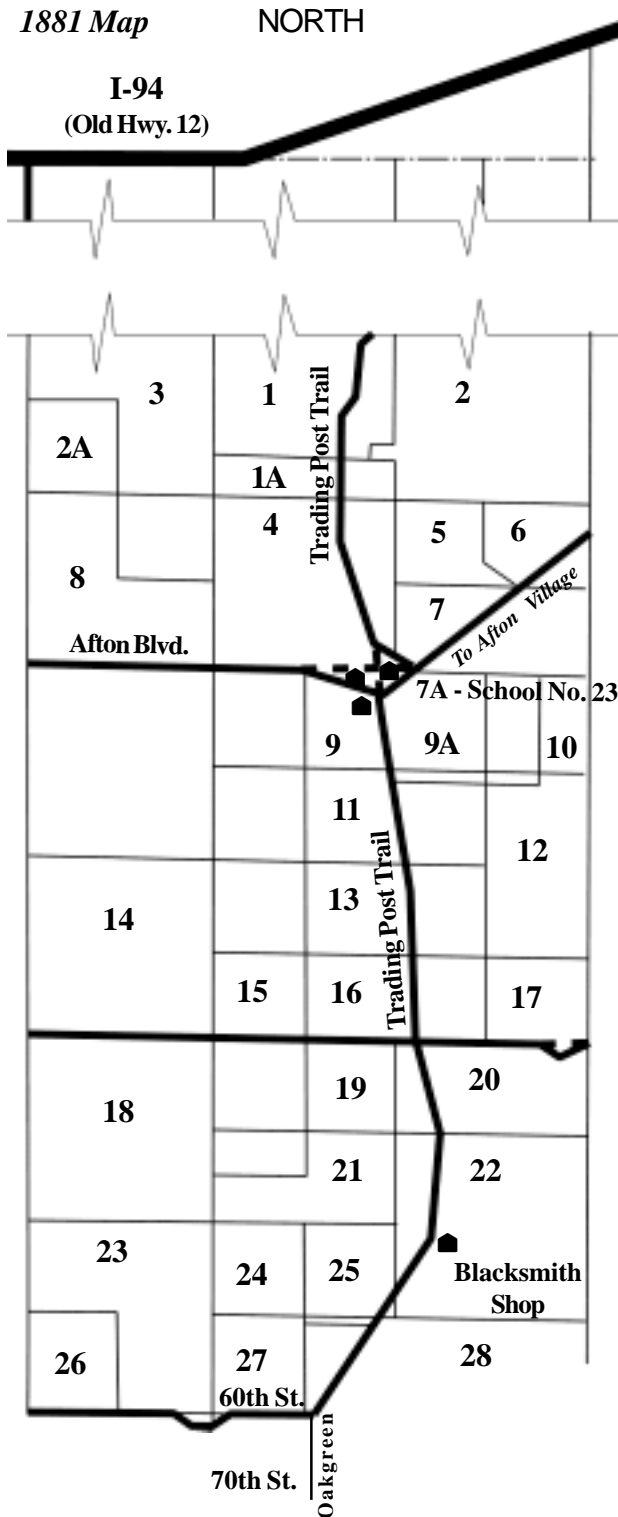
1. Joseph Haskell
Came from Kennebec, Maine; settled in Afton in 1839. Was the first farmer to raise a crop for sale in Minnesota. In 1849 was county commissioner for Wisconsin Territory; 1869-71 State Representative, on the board of Normal Schools of Minnesota, chairman of the first board of supervisors for Afton.
 - 1A. O.K. Haskell
Olive K. Furber of Maine married Joseph Haskell in 1849 and had 4 children.
 2. J. C. Hablutzel
Came to Afton via Wisconsin from Switzerland in 1870; farmed over 200 acres with wife Amelia and 3 children.
 - 2A. Fred Meyer
Came to Afton from Germany in 1865 with wife Christina and 3 children, to farm.
 3. B. Fred Pechuman
Came to Afton in 1870 with wife Sophie and 5 children from New York, to farm.
 4. Ferdinand Frederick
Came to Afton in 1875 with wife Dorethea and 8 children from New York, to farm.
 5. John Lofgren
Came to Afton in 1870 with wife Cecela and 4 children from Sweden, to farm. Prominent in the formation of Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church.
 6. Peter Peterson (Onion Pete)
Came to Afton in 1882 with wife Christine and 5 children from Sweden; very successful truck gardener.
 7. Machil Broadbent Eastwood
Came to Afton 1851, a widow with one child Thomas. Machil was born in Wales. Son Thomas attended the St. Croix Valley Academy, was director of Farmers Mutual Insurance, Treasurer of Afton Telephone Co., and Afton Township Treasurer for 48 years.
 - 7A. Haskell Eastwood School Dist. No. 23
Organized April 1855 as Haskell district. A tax of \$400 was voted to build the house on land donated by Jesse Jackson. First session was held for 3 months commencing July 12, 1856. Has been a private residence since 1952.
 8. William Pennington
Came to Afton from Stillwater in 1861, never married, farmed 500 acres in Sec. 29 & 30. Retired to village.
 9. Alice Berry Eastwood
Daughter of David and Elizabeth Berry, who came to Afton in 1854. Alice was born in Afton, married Thomas Eastwood and had 3 children. She was a school teacher.
 - 9A. Thomas Persons
Thomas and Maria came to Afton in 1851, farmed 200 acres. Thomas held office as treasurer of Afton for 13 years and had 4 children.
 10. C. I. Persons
Came to Afton in 1875 with wife Christine and 3 children from Sweden, to farm.
 11. Joseph Oldham
Born in Afton to Francis and Betty Oldham who came to Afton in 1854 from England, to farm. Married to Marie Oldham, they had 5 children. He attended St. Croix Valley Academy at Afton, became a surveyor and civil engineer, was employed by the St. Paul and Duluth Railroad Co., was county surveyor for 14 years, and a member of the Modern Woodsmen of America.
 - 11A. Michael McClure
Michael and wife Ellen came to Afton about 1860 from France, to farm.
 12. Thomas Cooney (See James, No. 17)
 13. James Jackson
Moved from England and then parents' farm in Denmark Twp. to Afton in 1879.
 14. James Pennington
Born in New Brunswick; was in charge of Hersey-Staples lumber camp in Stillwater.
 15. Francis Dick
Came to Afton from Scotland in 1867, to farm. Attended Columbian Exposition in 1893 and won 5 first prizes in grains.
 16. Francis Oldham
Born in England in 1826, came to Afton in 1850, claimed 160 plus 40 acres. County Commissioner; held many town offices; 23 years Clerk of School District 23.
 17. James Cooney
Came to Afton with wife Mary and 3 of their 5 children in 1857 from England. James enlisted in Civil War in 1864 and was mustered out in 1865. Son Thomas attended St. Croix Valley Academy at Afton and University of Minnesota and became a civil engineer working for Northern Pacific Railway; also served in Spanish-American War. Owned more than 500 acres in Afton at one time.
 18. Adam Willock
Came to Afton in 1862 from Montgomery County, New York. He owned 240 acres, 120 under cultivation.
 19. Paul Lindgren
Paul and Swenborg and 5 children came to Afton from Sweden about 1880, to farm.
 20. John Oldham
Came to Afton with wife, Ann, in 1854 from England. Had 3 children: Francis, Alexander, and Nancy. Their first claim was 120 acres.
 21. Archibald McCullum
Came to Afton from Scotland in 1870 with wife Maggie, to farm.
 22. Esther E. Gage
Putnam and Esther Gage came to Afton in 1866 from New York. He ran his own blacksmith shop on Trading Post Trail. He also held many township offices.
 23. Charles Schuster
Charles and Wilhelmina with 7 children arrived in Afton in 1869 from Prussia.
 24. Tim O'Connor
Arrived in Afton in 1874 from Ireland, to farm.
 25. Peter Quinahan
Peter, wife Mary, and son Tim came to Afton in 1869 from Ireland, to farm.
 26. Gorham Davies
Came to Afton in 1845 from Maine, to farm.
 27. Ida Siebolds
Frederick and Ida with 5 children came to Afton in 1867 from Prussia, to farm.
 28. Robert Jackson
Robert came with his parents to Afton in 1848 from England, to farm.
- Blacksmith Shop
Belonged to Putnam Gage.



Much of the country between Point Douglas and Stillwater was settled by 1857, and some of the old farms still serve as guides to the route. One is the Simon Shingledecker place; another is the home of Thomas Persons, which was located where the military route crossed the old Afton-Cottage Grove road. A half mile farther north the government road passed the house of Joseph Haskell, who in 1839 was the first man to take up farming as a way of life on the Washington County prairie.

From Haskell's place the route ran north among some low hills, then down along the west side of a deep ravine to Valley Creek. There it turned east and followed along the creek to a high hill, turned left around the foot of this hill and then went north on a line now followed by Stagecoach Trail. At about the time the military road was built, Erastus Bolles located and set up a blacksmith shop. The old Bolles house still stands beside the road in a grove of trees south of the town hall in the community of Valley Creek.

The county road makes a short bend to the west, then continues north again. The military road did not turn but went straight ahead, and the county road comes back to the old route again. North of here is another settler's place—the Jacob Fisher farm—and a mile and a half farther on is the homestead of David H. Fisk, still to be seen among some trees just west of the railroad crossing. Soon after leaving the Fisk farm, the road ran down through a winding ravine to the home of "Big Joe" Perro (or Perreau) on the bank of Perro Creek. Big Joe was a retired river pilot whose house stood on the north bank of the stream, a short distance south of the walls of the present state prison. From his place the road ran up what is now Main Street of Oak Park, then along the bluffs by the St. Croix into Stillwater.



Historic AFTON Military Road Tour



With the creation of Minnesota Territory in 1849, better roads were necessary for settlement, commerce, and protection against Indian attacks. Without funds to build the roads, Henry H. Sibley, Minnesota's first territorial delegate to Congress, asked for appropriations for military roads in a bill introduced in the House of Representatives on February 4, 1850. Congress passed the bill on July 8, 1850. Colonel Sibley was in charge of the necessary surveys with John S. Potter, civil engineer, laying out the roads: The first road, 150 miles long, would start from Point Douglas, on the Mississippi, via Cottage Grove, Stillwater, Marine Mills, and Falls of St. Croix with appropriations at \$15,000.

The engineers made use of rough existing trails doing the minimum amount of road work: building bridges, clearing timber, eradicating undergrowth, and making swamps passable. Sections of road over open prairie necessitated little or no roadwork at all. The road right-of-way was 100 feet wide with a center strip for wheeled vehicles to be cleared for a width of 50 feet. Before Lieutenant Simpson could construct the roads, he received a petition originating in Stillwater and Point Douglas, requesting that Cottage Grove be bypassed and the road run from Point Douglas by way of the Bolles Mill near Afton. Congress approved it in 1853 but construction on the southernmost 19 miles was delayed until 1857 and due to dwindling funds and poor construction, few traces of the old road can be found in Denmark Township.

We hope you will enjoy exploring Afton and discovering what it has to offer. This guide does not attempt to list all the historic sites and points of interest. We will be happy to answer your questions and to help make your visit pleasant.

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