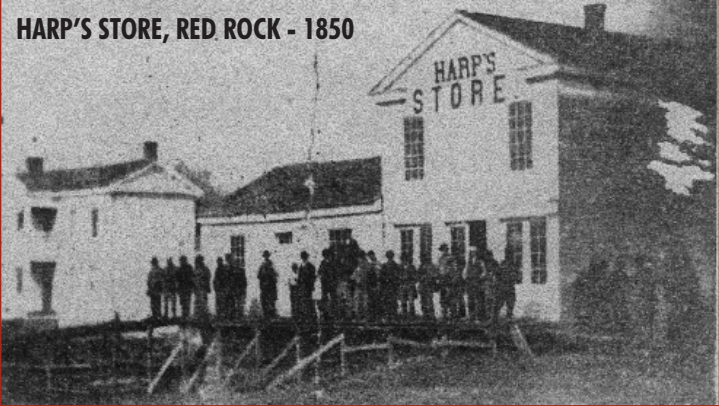


ROUSSEAU

At the request of William Kent, the town of Rousseau was laid out April 15, 1850 by surveyor James Rousseau. The town plan had 99 lots. Flat bottomed boats stopped there on their way to Red Rock four miles upstream. The population in 1884 was 200. At one time there was a school, a Baptist Church, a grist mill, and a general merchandise store. W. O. Benson in an undated article from the Knoxville Journal writes about his memories of the store where one could weigh out sugar (brown) from a barrel and coffee (green) from bags. The store also sold dry goods, boots and shoes.

The Post Office existed from 1873 to 1903. Rousseau was part of a Star post office route which started at Knoxville, stopped at Rousseau, then on to Red Rock and ended at Otley. There the mail carrier fed and watered his horse, ate lunch and reversed course. This route took an entire day and was run three times a week.

Many horse drawn wagons crossed the river on the ferry at Rousseau. When a single passenger carrying a basket of eggs wanted to cross the river to trade at the store, the ferry operator would row the person across in a small boat. In the late 1800's, a steel bridge was built at the site. This was a great convenience but not nearly as exciting as crossing the river on a ferry.



COALPORT

In 1842 L. W. Babbitt discovered an outcropping of coal along the Des Moines River. The first coal to be mined in Marion County was dug out of the bluffs at Coalport to fuel the passing ships that were previously fueled by wood. William Welch platted the town in 1857. Coalport had a store, a saw mill, a grist mill, a blacksmith shop, a shingle factory and a pottery. In 1903, when the river changed course, it left the town one mile from water leading to its demise.

CORDOVA

Cordova, platted in 1887 by the Wabash Railroad, was on the north side of the lake on Hwy. 14 and south of G28. Although never incorporated, it had several businesses including a depot, a grain elevator, stock yard, grain office, garage, machine warehouse, bank, two stores, newspaper, post office and a coal loading ramp. The population was always small, numbering only 17 in the 1950's. The town ceased to exist in the early 1960's. For many years, resident Grace Karr wrote the Cordova News, a folksy weekly column for local papers. Her writing is preserved in the book, The Best of Grace Karr's Cordova News.



The **LOST TOWNS** under
LAKE RED ROCK

Six Marion County river towns and other historical points of interest that were lost in the development of Red Rock Reservoir.

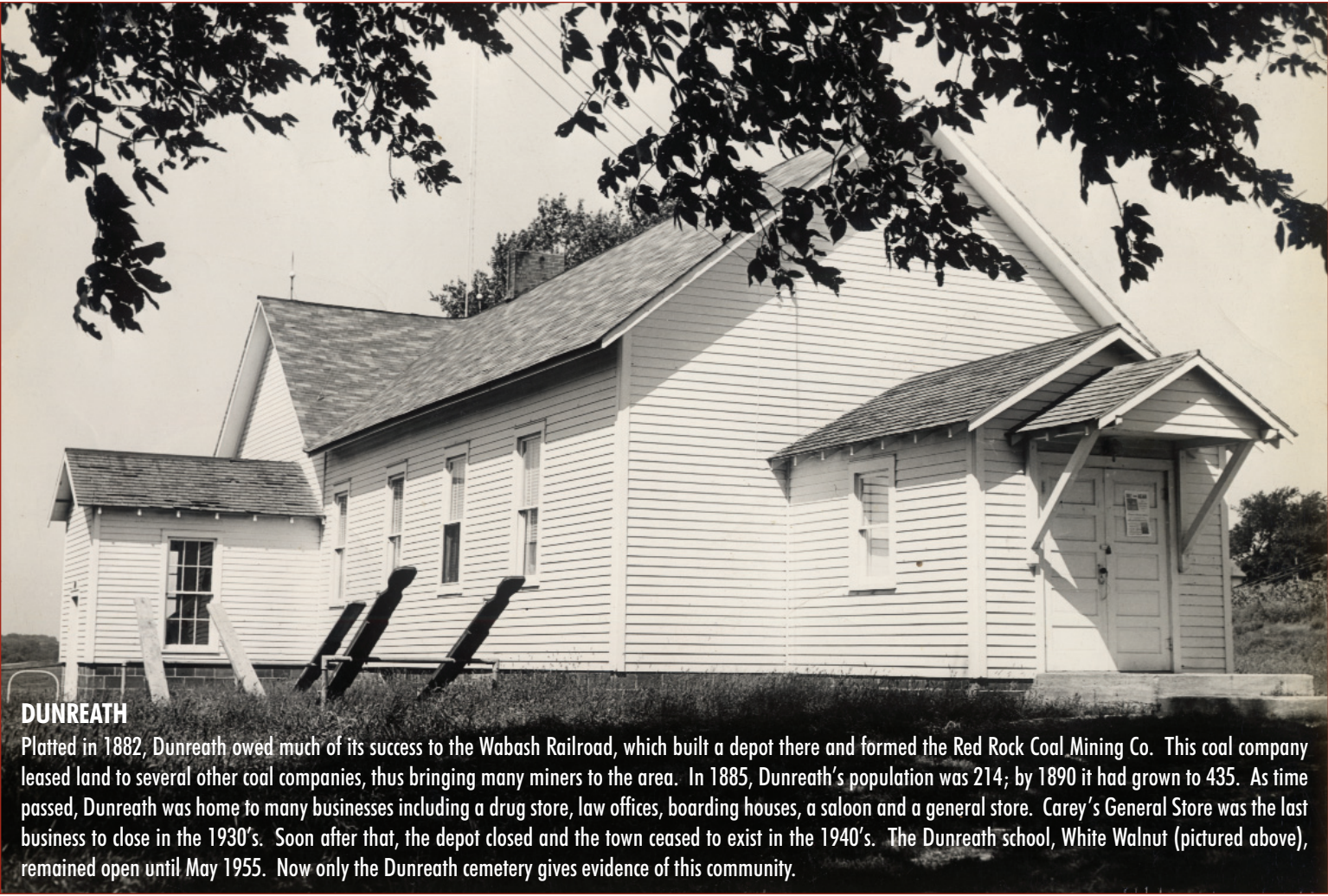


RED ROCK

The town of Red Rock, which had its first trading post in 1842, continued to exist until the Corps of Engineers purchased the properties for Lake Red Rock in the early 1960's. Its early existence and growth were partly due to its close proximity to the red rock bluffs, a familiar landmark to both Indians and early settlers. It was close to the Red Rock Line, which separated the Indian and white man's territory in 1843. Being on a navigable river just a few hundred feet from Indian territory made Red Rock a destination for adventuresome whites as well as Indians who wanted to buy whiskey or trade.

John Bedell surveyed the town in 1845. The flood of 1851 dashed early hopes of its being named the county seat. Red Rock had four saw mills, a flour mill, a hotel, a general merchandise store, a drug store, a book store, and a doctor. A Methodist Church was built in 1855 at a cost of \$1,000. Both the post office and the first school were built in 1857. The school which enjoyed a 100-year history closed in the spring of 1958.

In the 1890's, the Wabash Railroad built a spur to the bluffs to facilitate the removal of the quarried red sandstone, but the rock was too soft and the quarry was soon abandoned. Red Rock existed longer than any other town under the lake. In its early years, it is said that there were more homicides in Red Rock than in any other town, while in later years it became a respectable and pleasant place.



DUNREATH

Platted in 1882, Dunreath owed much of its success to the Wabash Railroad, which built a depot there and formed the Red Rock Coal Mining Co. This coal company leased land to several other coal companies, thus bringing many miners to the area. In 1885, Dunreath's population was 214; by 1890 it had grown to 435. As time passed, Dunreath was home to many businesses including a drug store, law offices, boarding houses, a saloon and a general store. Carey's General Store was the last business to close in the 1930's. Soon after that, the depot closed and the town ceased to exist in the 1940's. The Dunreath school, White Walnut (pictured above), remained open until May 1955. Now only the Dunreath cemetery gives evidence of this community.



FIFIELD

Known as the Whitebreast settlement, Fifield was started in the 1840's and survived until the 1930's. A post office was not established until the 1890's. The Wabash railroad was very important to Fifield. It not only had a depot, but also had a railroad repair crew, a refueling station, and a large water tank to fill the steam boilers. The town had two general stores (one pictured below), a sawmill, an ice house and a creamery, which made excellent butter that was shipped by rail to other areas. Nearby was a Dutch Reformed Church and a stock yard to which farmers drove their livestock to be shipped to market. The Whitebreast School (pictured left), first organized in 1851, continued to operate until May 1959.



