

# U.S. Post Office

## Livingston, Illinois

The first postmaster, David G. Livingston, was appointed to his position on December 23, 1904. The post office was located in the Livingston Lumber Company office. In earlier years, postmasters were appointed according to political affiliations. If a Democratic President was in office the postmaster was a Democrat. If a Republican President was in office the postmaster was a Republican. Today postmasters are appointed through the Department of Civil Service. The Livingston Post Office occupied several locations over the years – Livingston Lumber Company office, Thomure’s Drug Store, the north side of the one-story section of the bank building finally moving to its current location in the lower level of the two-story section of the bank building.

Prior to 1957, the mail was delivered several times a day by railroad. The postmaster took a mailbag to an area directly west of the depot. The mailbag was hung from a pole on brackets to await the next passenger train with a mail car. The mail car was always positioned immediately behind the engine and tender. Standing in a large door of the mail car was a clerk with a pole equipped with a claw to grab the mailbag. Another clerk threw out the mailbag that held incoming mail for Livingston. After 1957, the train service was discontinued and mail was delivered several times a day by truck. The mail is now delivered by truck once a day.

Over the years, the change in character of the mail, tremendous increase in mail volume, and the revolution of in transportation coupled with the rise in manpower cost led the Post Office Department to seek more improved methods of massing, sorting and distributing mail. This helped produce the ZIP Code or Zoning Improvement Plan. On April 30, 1963, Postmaster General John A. Gronouski announced that the ZIP Code system would begin on July 1, 1963. At that time, Livingston was assigned 62058 as its five-digit ZIP Code.

### Postmasters

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date Appointed</u>
David G. Livingston .....	Postmaster.....	12/23/1904
Robert A. McFarland.....	Postmaster.....	07/22/1914
Edna McFarland .....	Acting Postmaster.....	03/07/1916
James W. Donaldson .....	Postmaster.....	04/13/1916
D. E. Aylward.....	Acting Postmaster.....	02/01/1920
Francis A. Thomure.....	Postmaster.....	06/05/1920
Jessie A. Livingston.....	Postmaster.....	05/20/1924
George A. Kreuter .....	Acting Postmaster.....	05/01/1936
George A. Kreuter .....	Postmaster.....	06/01/1936
Mike Kopuster .....	Acting Postmaster.....	10/31/1948
Mike Kopuster .....	Postmaster.....	06/22/1950
Mrs. Loris C. Bernardin.....	Acting Postmaster.....	07/12/1957
Joseph P. Kucinick .....	Postmaster.....	08/31/1959
Robert Maroon.....	Officer-In-Charge .....	06/24/1983
Bobby D. Prather .....	Postmaster.....	08/20/1983
Darlene D. Hosto .....	Officer-In-Charge .....	01/02/1987
Carolyn J. Ruyle .....	Postmaster.....	01/31/1987
Mrs. Denise L. Brown .....	Officer-In-Charge .....	11/16/1990
Richard R. Gregory.....	Officer-In-Charge	
Carolee A. Castiglione-Gordon .....	Postmaster.....	04/20/1991
Nancy Allison.....	Officer-In-Charge .....	08/10/2004
Cheryl A. Shultz .....	Officer-In-Charge .....	09/03/2004
Cheryl A. Shultz .....	Postmaster.....	10/30/2004



The first U.S. Post Office in Livingston was located in the Livingston Lumber Company office. The lettering on the building was actually scratched into the negative of this photo and did not appear on the building.

1930s. Post office on left of building, Reeves Variety Store and the Livingston Bank,



Site of the current Post Office.

# EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRA!

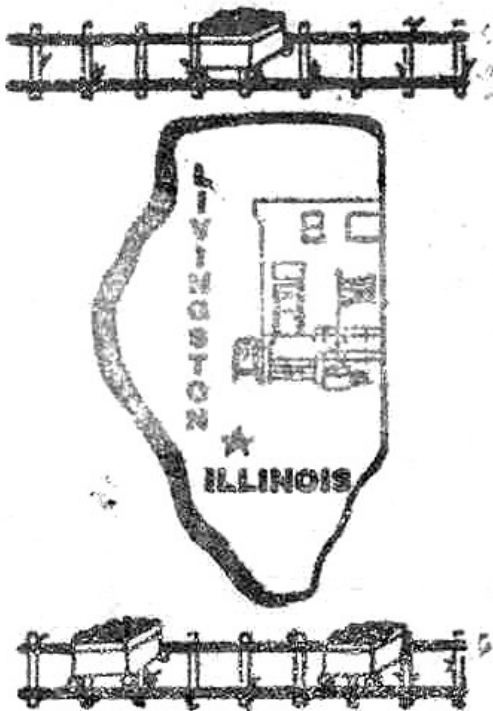
## February 19, 1909

**SAFE BLOWN OPEN: CASH GONE** — Early last Friday morning the people residing in the vicinity of the Livingston Post Office were awakened by a loud explosion, but as the people have grown accustomed to hearing the report of firearms at all hours of the night, the supposition was that someone had fired a shot and no further notice was given it.

Later in the morning when Dave Livingston, the postmaster, went down to the office he was surprised to find it in a great state of confusion, the safe blown open and over \$60.00 in cash, \$150.00 in postage stamps, and legal papers, such as notes, mortgages, insurance papers, etc., were missing.

About four o'clock in the afternoon two young men were arrested in a saloon at Livingston and Saturday morning brought to this city enroute to Edwardsville where they were placed in jail on suspicion of being connected with the burglary. When searched a burglar's outfit was found in their pockets.

*Staunton Star-Times*



Livingston Special Edition Postmark. September 9, 1995  
Sponsored by Livingston Streetfest Committee

# Village of Livingston

## 1905—2005

(A Time Line)

The village was laid out on Sections 15 and 16 of Olive Township, Madison County, Illinois by the heirs of John Livingston on property Mr. Livingston purchased in 1861. The first post office was operated from the Livingston Lumber Company office beginning December 23, 1904 with David Livingston, son of John, as postmaster.

When the “Big Four Cutoff” was built in 1903 followed by the sinking of the New Staunton Coal Mine in 1904, a village was born.

- 1904 The first five houses were built. Today one of the houses is still standing on the northwest side of the intersection of Main and South Second Streets. The coal company purchased lumber from the Chicago Wrecking Company who demolished buildings at the St. Louis World’s Fair. From this lumber numerous houses were built.
- 1905 The village was incorporated on November 15<sup>th</sup> and was named Livingston in honor of the family of John Livingston. David Livingston became the first village president. Other officers were Henry Meyer, village clerk; Thomas McCullister, treasurer, and Sam Nash, William Atkins, Fritz Neuenschwander, James Watson, John Kniser and August Busker, trustees. Meetings were held in the McKittrick Building.
- 1906 The Staunton Telephone Company owned by C. Godfrey and managed by S.P. Williamson had given Livingston service since the first buildings were erected in town. The old lines went by way of DeCamp and were built of oak poles, which reduced its capacity. In September, new lines were built of white cedar posts with a ten pin cross arm which could carry ten lines. This gave much better service and ran from Mill Street in Staunton south to the Litchfield and Madison railroad tracks east of Mt. Olive and Staunton Coal Mine #2 to Williamson and south to Livingston.
- 1907 A village hall and jail were constructed just north of the present A.R. Graiff Elementary School. The first frame schoolhouse was built on what is now School Street. Before that, school was held in various buildings in town.
- In an article found in the Staunton Star-Times, an early resident described the village in 1907 as a raw mining town – no lights, no sidewalks, lots of mud and no fire department.
- 1909 Two factions of Russians were in Livingston in 1909 – the Roundheads and the Screwtows. On July 4 they had a fight in K.E. Bartulis’s Saloon completely demolishing the fixtures, mirror and bar. Seven participants were arrested and brought to an all day trial. At the end of the day, they were assessed a bail of \$500.00 each and ordered to appear before the County Grand Jury in Edwardsville in September.
- 1910 On March 31 a fire destroyed the saloon of John Yeakel, a saloon owned by Highland Brewing Company and run by John Neuenschwander, a saloon run by Tony Josup and the restaurant of Ely Wilkinson. The fire was contained on the west side of Livingston Avenue. The post office and lumberyard escaped damage.
- 1911 The first bank was opened. The first church was built on Livingston Avenue north of the present day Catholic Church. It was of the Methodist denomination.
- 1912 The school was enlarged due to the influx of miners with children.
- September 27<sup>th</sup> a fire broke out in the largest building in town owned by George Kitrush. Kitrush ran a store and Kokovitch and Kondroitits were proprietors of the Red Devil Tavern in the building. The fire reached the city hall and jail, which were located in a building on the south. Two prisoners

were in the jail but they were removed before the building caught fire. The village board met in the Bertulis Hall for the rest of 1912 and part of 1913.

- 1913 A new village hall at the cost of \$4,450 was built in the wedge between South Second and Nichols Streets. It was a two-story brick building containing a jail, meeting room and firehouse downstairs with a hall used for social activities upstairs. On June 2 the board held its first meeting in the new building.

**Friday, April 25, 1913** — Another tragedy was connected to the Village of Livingston last Sunday night, as five shots rang out and Mitias Gorenz fell to the ground mortally injured, while his assailant made his escape, and to date has not been apprehended.

Mitias Gorenz, a saloon keeper of good repute, who was a popular man with his patrons, who hardly knew what the name “enemy” was and who, entirely defenseless, walked forth from his saloon into the very paws of death at the hands of an assailant, presumably with robbery as his intent, and who probably commanded Gorenz to hold up his hands, and upon being refused pumped five shots at him and fled. But two of the shots took effect to Gorenz, one in his arm the other in his shoulder. Neither of them were necessarily dangerous, had not the ones in the arm severed an artery in his arm. From this wound Gorenz died from hemorrhage in the Litchfield hospital at 3 a.m. Monday.

Gorenz was unable to talk much after the accident, but protested at various times that he did not know the assailant.

It is barely probably, and this theory is advanced by many, that the unfortunate Gorenz was mistaken for another man and that the unknown assailant assaulted him with murderous intent, mistaking him for an enemy.

Doctors were immediately summoned, but they feared to operate on Gorenz, and he was taken to the St. Francis Hospital in Litchfield where he died as above stated.

The body was taken to Dodd’s undertaking parlors in Litchfield where the inquest was held. The man’s wife and grown son and daughter were sworn in as witnesses.

The body was then brought to this city where the funeral services were held on Wednesday morning at the St. Michael’s church. The funeral was largely attended, three lodges of which Gorenz was a member, attending in a body.

Gorenz bore a good reputation and had had no trouble with anyone who could have taken the murderous means of resenting a past argument.

He leaves a wife and four children, the youngest of whom is 13 years of age. (*This article reprinted from the Staunton Star-Times edition of 4/25/1913.*)

- 1914 Shade trees were planted by the village board along all the major thoroughfares. Electric lights were installed and concrete sidewalks were laid.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ Catholic Church was dedicated.

- 1915 A celebration was held on September 5th and 6th under the direction of the Miner’s Band with the cooperation of the businessmen. The picnic was held in the Livingston family orchard with various organizations having stands. Horse racing was held at the tracks with purses of \$220. Prizes totaling \$400 were given for contests of skill and strength.

The Livingston Volunteer Fire Department was established.

- 1916 The roads were in terrible condition; six rigs were stuck at one time coming from Staunton to Livingston. Six horses pulled Luker Brothers beer wagon, which had a light load, in order to get through.

Saint Michael Uniate Greek Catholic Church was dedicated. The Bank of Livingston became American State Bank

- 1917 An oil pipeline that went from Wood River to Indianapolis through Livingston was completed in February.

In March the village ordered road oil from Standard Oil Company for five cents a gallon. Cinders had been put on the roads for sometime. The road to Williamson had cinders twelve inches thick. After grading and rolling the road oil was applied

Signs for the railroad crossings, public schools and speed limits were acquired.

In May a resolution was adopted to close saloons at 11:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday and 12:00 p.m. on Saturday. Saturday night dances were to close at 1:00 a.m. and Sunday night at 12:00 p.m.

In June a street commissioner was employed at a salary of \$3.00 per day.

When the new creamery was erected east of the depot, a street was opened between the depot and the creamery. On the north side of the tracks, a road was opened to Livingston Avenue. It is now known as North First Street.

A carload of vitrified sewer tile was purchased in July to make culverts and to close ditches in various places in town. A red danger light was placed on both sides of the Main Street crossing. Six hundred dollars was appropriated for more sidewalks.

Village clerk John Arkabauer announced in November that he had birth certificates without the child's Christian name. He needed the names before he could register the certificates with the State of Illinois.

The first high school was built.

1918 In January a law was passed that anyone who applied for a dram shop license or tended bar must be an American citizen.

January 24<sup>th</sup> the mine closed at 9:00 a.m. because of no cars, the food stores closed at noon, and all other businesses including the taverns remained closed all day. The mayor at the request of President Garfield proclaimed it a heatless Monday. This was in effect for nine more Mondays.

The street and alleys department were to have snowplows made.

Mayor Healey made a proclamation in March – all Alien Enemies living within the village city limits were to surrender their firearms by March 15<sup>th</sup>. Anyone failing to comply would be assessed a fine from \$5.00 to \$100.00.

The village placed handbills about town stating that alleys must be cleaned.

May 1<sup>st</sup> all stores closed at 10:00 a.m. in observance of "May Day."

In one month in 1918 six peddlers purchased licenses to sell their wares in the village. The fee was \$1.00 per day.

Women registered to vote and when the township election was held there was a woman's ballot and a men's ballot – identical to one another. The votes were counted separately and then totaled.

The building committee was to investigate a location and a price for a bandstand.

On May 30<sup>th</sup> Decoration Day, now called Memorial Day, was observed in Livingston for the first time. All businesses were closed. A number of citizens and veterans visited the cemeteries to decorate the graves of heroes. At 10:30 a.m. C.H. Burton and D.H. Mudge of Edwardsville made speeches in the city square about the loyalty of the people during the war. This celebration was under the direction of Mayor Joseph Healey, Sr., Joseph Hebenstreit and D.E. Aylward.

In November the board prohibited girls from tending bar in the taverns.

Street laborers were hired for 45 cents per hour.

American State Bank became First National Bank.

1921 The village officials had a municipal Christmas tree in front of the city hall and Santa came for a visit. The Livingston Band rendered music and the school children had a program. Packages were distributed to the children.

A campaign for the sale of Christmas Seals to fight tuberculosis was waged in Livingston and the surrounding area. Dr. R.C. Berry was chairman, and \$1,000.00 was collected.

1924 Wagons, automobiles, bicycles and dogs had to have a license or owners would be arrested and fined.

Happy Jack Caves who was on a walking tour around the world was in Livingston for two days. He had been walking since April 1, 1919.

On Labor Day a big celebration was held in the city under the leadership of the village, the American Legion and the miner's union. This was also to celebrate the paving of Livingston

Avenue from the railroad tracks to what is now Veteran's Memorial Drive. A parade was held at 9:00 a.m. and was followed by a speech by George Burok of Chicago. Attorney L.M. Geers of Edwardsville delivered the dedication address for the new pavement. In the afternoon there was a ball game featuring the Livingston Red Sox and the East St. Louis Giants. After the ballgame, the remaining athletic events were cancelled due to rain. The weather required the street dance to be moved into Vanzo's Hall.

- 1925 The American Legion Post took charge of the Christmas tree and the treats downtown. That year, seven hundred children and two hundred adults attended.
- 1926 A Fourth of July celebration was held in Livingston under the auspices of the American Legion and the Livingston Miner's Band. The band gave a concert and fire works drew a large crowd.

At right is Livingston Avenue as seen in 1907. The streets were dirt and no sidewalks existed.



Below, Livingston Avenue as seen some forty years later. At far right is the Skamenca Building (currently Bob's Auto Service), then the Schwartz Hotel (now Kirkwood's Bar and Grill). The furthest building is the site of Gasperoni's Italian Store. You can see the old water tower in the background.



A party was held on New Year's Eve at the high school. Three basketball games were held.

7:00 p.m. Grade School vs. High School

8:00 p.m. High School vs. Benld

9:00 p.m. Town Team vs. Former High School Teachers

Later in the evening a program was presented.

The second high school was built

1930 The New Staunton Coal Company was closed.

1932 Livingston - Mt. Olive Coal Company was opened by a group of businessmen.

1933 First National Bank closed.

1936 Holy Cross Lutheran Church began.

1937 The village board issued an order for people to cinder their sidewalks in December to prevent falls on the ice.

1938 Fire partially destroyed the tipple at the mine.

The position of village president, which had been a two-year term, became a four-year term.

1938 The state legislature passed a bill that all Illinois drivers would need a license by May 1, 1939.

The fire department held the first homecoming in Livingston on September 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. It was held north of the tracks on the ground bordered by Main, North Second and North Third Streets. A St. Louis booking agency was contracted to furnish eight professional acts. Dancing was provided by Jodo and His Swing Band and concerts by the WPA Band. A large parade was held on Sunday at 2:00 p.m. with drum and bugle corps, bands and floats. The usual rides, concessions and refreshments stands were on hand.

1939 In 1939 the homecoming was moved to the city park. The village purchased the park property from D.E. Aylward for \$300.00.

The coalminers purchased Livingston - Mt. Olive Coalmine.

1940 Local volunteers as well as the National Youth Association laid the pavilion floor.

Route 66 built southeast of Livingston.

1941 The pavilion was completed by the summer of 1941. Mr. Courtney of Staunton was the contractor.

The First Baptist Church was built.

1942 The village board started work on a project to get a water and sewer system in the village but due to the war there was a shortage of materials and so the project was halted.

1952 An election to issue bonds for water only was passed and financing was provided by the bank. In May water was supplied to the people of Livingston from wells with Hurst-Rosche of Hillsboro as construction engineers. The cost of the water project was \$165,916.65.

1954 The tipple at the mine was completely destroyed by fire.

1955 Mrs. Marie Wall president of the Staunton Telephone Company converted the telephones to dial operation at the cost of \$50,000.00. The highly technical equipment was housed in an all steel building on Livingston Avenue. Other companies who have owned the telephone services are: Central Telephone Company of Illinois, who later changed their name to CENTAL, Sprint, Gallatin River and now Madison Telephone Company.

1960 Residents voted to establish a sanitary sewer district.

1962 The A.R. Graiff Grade School was dedicated.

1964 May 11<sup>th</sup> residents were permitted to connect onto the sanitary sewer system. They had to have a permit from the village clerk and final inspection had to be made by the village engineer or a member of the village board.

The Livingston - Mt. Olive Coalmine closed.

1983 Construction of a new firehouse was begun in April; the builder was Boeker Construction Company of Hamel. Dennis Schuette, a Livingston High School graduate, was the architect on the project. He worked with trustees Jim Rausch, Dennis Boston and Kevin Keiffer.

Jack Frandsen, a member of the community development board, was instrumental in helping the Olive Fire Protection District get a grant of \$100,000.00. Bridget Kopuster, township supervisor,



was able to secure another \$27,000.00.

1984 On February 22<sup>nd</sup> the building in the wedge between South Second and Nichols Streets was demolished. The seventy-one year old building had served as the city hall, jail and fire department. Just east a new fire station had been erected and so it was demolished to make room for a landscaped area.

In October a dedication of the firehouse was held with H. Jack Frandsen as speaker.

The First National Bank of Livingston opened in December.

Mine reclamation was completed.

1986 Miniature golf course was opened at site of mine reclamation.

1989 Illinois Department of Health provided mass inoculation of Livingston residents due to an outbreak of meningitis.

2004 Last class graduates from Livingston Community Consolidated High School.

Livingston School District consolidated with neighboring Staunton School District.

2005 National Bank of Livingston closed. Livingston High School building sold.

Livingston celebrates its centennial on July 8, 9 and 10.

