

# Camp Printing Office

*“The Great Depression started, some say, October 29, 1929. In 1932 the future looked bleak to many people. I think this poem was written by my grandfather to “buck up” the spirits of Livingston citizens.”*

*Howard Harlan*

## WHAT THE JAYBIRD SAID

—By John E. Camp—

A Jaybird sat on top of a fence,  
Singing a song like fifteen cents,  
And this is the chorus of the song he sung  
Just work and live for Livingston.  
It's not the man with a wad of dough,  
That's most inclined to make things go;  
It's the man with a hump, shovel and pick  
Who steals 1st base & lands with a stick.  
But the baseball fans don't seem to root,  
The coal mine whistle's lost its toot,  
And the Jaybird sings from sun to sun,  
Just work and live for Livingston.  
The birds still sing and flowers bloom,  
Beside the brook and around the tomb,  
There's fun for living, peace for the dead,  
In living for Livingston the Jaybird said;  
Get frowns from face, tears from your  
eye,  
Keep on humpin' and never say die,  
Never give up 'til life's race you have  
won  
By doing your stuff for Livingston

P.S. He also advises that you get  
Your Printing from the  
HERALD PUBLISHING CO.

John E. Camp was the editor of the *New Douglas World* in 1904. In 1906 he bought the *Staunton Star* and later purchased the *Staunton Times* consolidating the two newspapers into the *Staunton Star Times*. He sold the Staunton newspaper in 1916 and in 1921 bought the *DeSoto Press* in DeSoto, Missouri. He sold the DeSoto Press and bought the *Court Printery* in Clearwater, Florida in 1926.

Due to ill health he returned to Illinois in 1929 settling in Livingston. His first office was in a building he shared with the Alfeld - Healey Grocery Store on the corner of Livingston Avenue and Nichols Street. He lived on the southwest corner of the intersection of Livingston Avenue and Oak Street and built a building south of the house. In this building he opened The Herald Printing Company and did job printing until he was injured in an accident in July 1940.

John Camp's grandson, Merlin Menk, helped his grandfather during the summers in the late 1930s. When John had his accident, Merlin stepped in and took over the printing office. After John's death in August 1940, the family offered Merlin the opportunity to stay and manage the business for his grandmother, and he accepted. He finished high school in Livingston, playing guard on the Livingston basketball team in the fall of 1941. Merlin enlisted in the Navy and was called to active duty in September 1942, and so it was necessary to close the printing office.

The above poem was found on an ink blotter given out by John Camp in 1932.

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## Langer's Store

Oscar and Anna Langer operated a little deli store in their home on Oak Street about 1937. They offered such items as lunch meat, cheeses, soda, bread, and of course candy. Young children called it the “candy store” and enjoyed making purchases with their pennies. The store closed about 1939. Competition from more stores and lack of room made the closure necessary. The store was converted to living quarters for the Langer family. Their son Alfred was born in this house and has resided there for the past sixty-seven years.