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This is the journal of John S. Ault, collector and city marshal of Salem in Dent County, Missouri. The entries concern the collection of fees for business licenses and fines for violations, citations for public nuisances, and arrests for disorderly behavior and public intoxication.

John S. Ault was appointed on 3 December 1883 as assistant marshal and collector of Salem. He filled the unexpired term of the previous officeholder. Ault was later elected marshal and collector, and in 1887 was admitted to the Dent County bar.

Ault’s journal contains entries from 3 December 1883 through 1 October 1887. The volume offers an entertaining account of the duties of a local law enforcement officer and city marshal, and also the rough side of society in a small rural county seat. Although he had to deal with a wave of burglaries in June 1884 and arson in January 1885, most of Ault's time was spent collecting fees for business licenses and fines leveled by the municipal court, and in the abatement of public nuisances. The latter included the inspection of sidewalks, chimneys, and privies, and the removal of dead animals. Ault also suppressed fighting and other disruptive behavior, public intoxication, illegal liquor sales, gambling and bawdy houses. He commented freely on the perpetrators he arrested, and noted whether the subjects resisted arrest or submitted peacefully to incarceration. Of one repeat offender of the sobriety laws who jumped bail, Ault wrote “good ridance [sic] to bad rubbish.” It would be hard to argue in this individual’s case that Ault was unfair, but in March 1885 the board of aldermen heard charges of partiality in office against Ault and the mayor of Salem. Ault noted the incident in his journal but there is no evidence that the charges were upheld.

Ault was primarily concerned with less-than-exemplary conduct occurring in Salem, but he also noted occasions and gatherings when good order prevailed. Among those events so noted were meetings of the Democratic and Republican parties, Independence Day celebrations, and performances by circuses and theatrical troops. Ault wrote that, during a performance of Peck’s Bad Boy by a traveling troupe, good order prevailed despite the show's being “a great humbug.”

This is the journal of John S. Ault, collector and city marshal of Salem in Dent County, Missouri. The entries concern the collection of fees for business licenses and fines for violations, citations for public nuisances, and arrests for disorderly behavior and public intoxication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Selected Contents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03 Dec 1883</td>
<td>John S. Ault appointed assistant marshal and collector for City of Salem, to fill unexpired term of John R. Mitchel</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 Dec 1883</td>
<td>Received order from mayor to inspect flues and chimneys in city.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 Dec 1883</td>
<td>John Hopkins, “Lame Tomb Stone Agent From Steelville,” intoxicated in public but was allowed to leave town with his brother-in-law.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 Dec 1883</td>
<td>Ordinance prohibiting fireworks suspended during day by order of mayor. The</td>
</tr>
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city was full of people, many intoxicated, but good order prevailed.

13 Mar 1884 Seven dogs shot during rabies scare.

03 May 1884 “Arrested and calaboused” Con Sullivan for public intoxication. Sullivan resisted and was “clubed[sic] into submission.” He was released later on own recognizance but did not appear in court. Ault reported Sullivan as having left for parts unknown and commented, “good ridance[ sic] to bad rubbish.”

17 May 1884 Issued business license to Sam’l K. Campbell, a crippled boy with peanut stand. “An object of charity bravely trying to support himself.” License issued without charge on order of mayor, after “small business men” complained Campbell was doing business without license.

17 May 1884 Committed a “vagrant tramp” from Reynolds County. Released 19th and ordered to leave town.

02 Jun 1884 Three burglaries during the night, including one at home of Frederick Dent. No clue to the robbers.

04 July 1884 Firing of anvils and other demonstrations for Independence Day celebration. Ordinance forbidding fireworks and discharge of firearms temporarily suspended by the mayor.

07 Jul 1884 Angry dispute at Board of Aldermen’s meeting.

13 Sep 1884 Burglary of post office.

06 Oct 1884 Pullman, Mack & Co. Circus in town, 2,000 attend.


12 Nov 1884 Ault builds furnace for Victor Mill Co.

24 Dec 1884 Burglary of Adams Express Co.

16 Mar 1885 Aldermen hear charges of partiality in office against mayor and city marshal.

25 Apr 1885 Con Sullivan[ sic] clubbed into submission and jailed for public intoxication. A repeat offender, Sullivan signed a pledge of abstinence for twelve months.

06 Jun 1885 Landlord given notice to evict prostitute from his property on 4th street. Another landlord given notice on 10 June.

11 Jun 1885 Ault temporarily relinquishes duties so that he could go to Steelville to work on courthouse as bricklayer. Deputy Marshal J. F. McCrea assumed duties.

11 Sep 1885 “House of doubtful reputation” raided.

30 Dec 1885 Arsonist attempts to burn house of J. F. James but fire is suppressed with little damage. Another fire of suspicious origins on 18 January 1886 destroyed the depot. Other fires 18, 19 and 28 January also suspected to be arson. Special deputy marshals appointed to assist marshal.

27 Apr 1886 “A desperado named Wadliegh” in Salem. A gunfight ensued when sheriff attempted an arrest, but no one hurt. A posse pursued but did not catch.

29 May 1886 Democratic meeting draws 2,000 to Salem. R. P. Bland carried the county.

09 Aug 1886 A. D. Taylor’s skating rink was closed as it had not business license. Taylor re-opened after obtaining a license, but there were complaints of excess noise at the rink on 19 August, and a great deal of disorderly behavior on 28
August. The rink was closed 13 September in lieu of back rent.

24 Sep 1886  Ault reported that the city had been sober for two days in consequence of no ice in town and hot beer.

07 Nov 1886  State officials begin a series of prosecutions for selling liquor in less-than-gallon lots, which Ault referred to on 14 November as “the war path against the saloon men.”

27 Feb 1887  Arrest of prostitute, Alice Curtis, who spent 22 days in jail. Two others, said to be from Steelville, arrested on 19 March.

26 Jul 1887  Balloon ascension draws crown in Salem.

26 Aug 1887  Many complaints made concerning bad behavior at the various churches, apparently by rowdy young men. The officers propose to put a stop to it.

19 Sep 1887  “Peck’s Bad Boy, a third rate one horse show” held at opera house. Good order prevailed despite the show’s being “a great humbug.”

Final entries in October 1887. The pages have been torn from the volume and the entries are not legible.

Index Cards

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