

Information Sheet

R Houts & Stallcup.
1128 Journal, 1816-1817.
One folder, photocopies; 173 pages.

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This is a journal or daybook of a mercantile operation at the village of Winchester in what was then New Madrid County (now Scott County), Missouri. The proprietors were Christopher G. Houts and Mark Hardin Stallcup. Entries begin on 13 December 1816 and continue through 27 December 1817.

The village of Winchester was laid out along the King's Highway in 1814 and was briefly the seat of New Madrid County. It was named for Col. Henderson Winchester and his family, residents of the neighborhood. Among the first lot holders were Daniel Sparks, Edward N. Mathews, Samuel Phillips, Stephen Ross, Thomas Phillips, John Shields, Sr., and Moses Shelby. The village thrived for a few years as the seat of New Madrid County, but declined after 1822 when the county seat was removed to New Madrid. In 1860 the Cairo & Fulton Railroad built to within a half-mile of Winchester, whereupon most of the residents moved north to the rail line and the new town of Sikeston.

Proprietors Christopher G. Houts and Mark Hardin Stallcup were among the prominent early residents of southeastern Missouri during the Territorial period, most notably in the area along the border between what are now Scott and New Madrid counties. Both men were active in commercial, public service, and political concerns. Christopher Houts helped locate the New Madrid County seat in 1817, was a representative to the constitutional convention in 1820, and served as circuit clerk and recorder of New Madrid County, 1820-1822. Mark Stallcup, who married a daughter of Joseph Hunter, became a judge of the New Madrid County Court, 1820-1821, and was a judge of election in 1830.

The Houts & Stallcup business is thought to have begun in late 1815 or early 1816. It was a typical mercantile operation of its day, handling everything from whiskey and tobacco to gunlocks, housewares, fabrics, and medicines. The entries begin on 13 December 1816 and continue through 27 December 1817. The last page features a list of notes referred for collection, April 1816—May 1817. Among the most frequent customers at the Houts & Stallcup establishment were Hartwell Baldwin, Isaac Cullipher, Joseph Essery, Matthew Gillaspie, Drakeford Gray, Thomas Hignite, Enoch Ligget, William Netherton, Stephen Ross, Thomas Scott, John Shanks, Richard H. Waters, and various members of the Hunter, Matthews, Maulsby, Myers, Phillips, Sikes, Speer, Trotter, and Winchester families. An index listing the customers of Houts & Stallcup is available with the journal.

Included with the journal is an undated newspaper clipping featuring an historical essay based on the Houts & Stallcup journal by Miss Annette Smith.

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