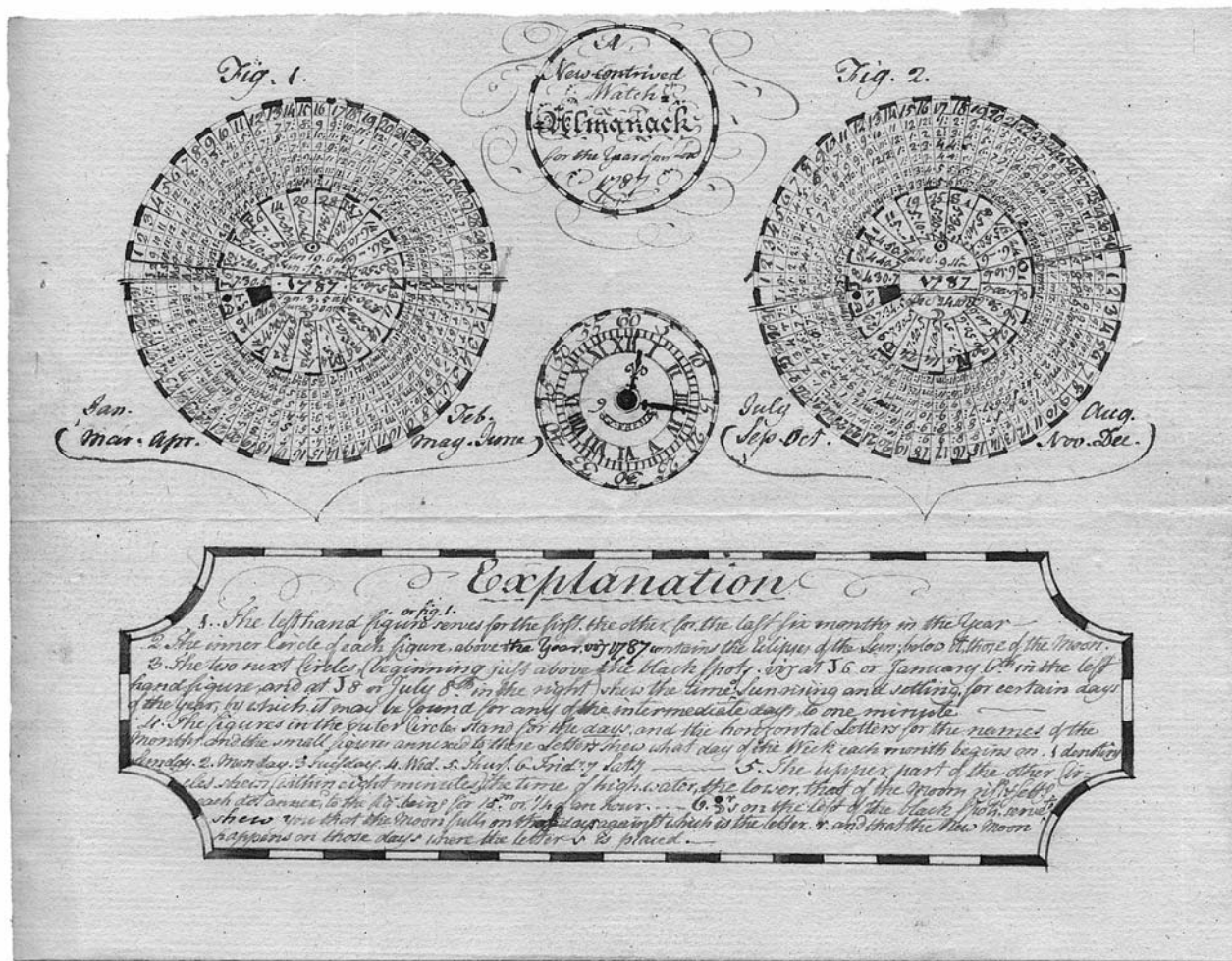


From the Archives

In July 1787, Samuel Freeman (1743 – 1831), a prominent citizen of Portland, Maine, sent the American Academy a description and drawing for a new device that he called a “watch almanack.” This device, designed to fit into the case of a watch, provided a yearly calendar as well as information about sunrises, sunsets, lunar cycles, and tides.

In his letter to the Academy, Freeman wrote that he found the almanacks “convenient myself and wish to afford a like Convenience to others.” His communication was read at an Academy Stated Meeting on August 22, 1787.



A New Contrived Watch Almanack for the Year of our Lord 1787

Explanation

“1. The lefthand figure or fig. 1 serves for the first, the other for the last six months in the Year — 2. The inner Circle of each figure above the Year viz 1787 contains the Eclipse of the Sun, below it, those of the Moon. 3. The two next Circles, beginning just above the black spots viz at J 6 or January 6th in the left hand figure and at J 8 or July 8th in the right shew the time of Sun-rising and setting for certain days of the Year, by which it may be found for any of the intermediate days to one minute — 4. The figures in the outer Circle stand for the *days* and the horizontal Letters for the *names* of the Months and the small figures annexed to these Letters shew what day of the Week each month begins on, S denoting Sunday, 2. Monday, 3. Tuesday, 4. Wed. 5. Thurs. 6. Frid. 7. Saty — 5. The upper part of the other Circles shew (within eight minutes) The time of high water, the lower that of the Moon rise & Sett. each dot annexd to the fig. being for 15^m or 1/4 of an hour — 6. [4 symbols: • D r s] on the Left of the black spots serve to shew you that the Moon falls on the those days against which is the letter *r* and that the New Moon happens on those days where the letter *s* is placed —”