

Curator's Choice

Perpetual Calendar

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The perpetual calendar is a common feature of modern men's watches that many take for granted. These mechanics display the month, date, and day of the week. However, the use of a perpetual calendar as both a decorative accessory and tool dates to the Victorian era.

This copper alloy and iron "Perpetual Almanac" was recovered from the excavations of the Oxon Hill Manor/Addison Plantation site (18PR175), a late 17th–19th century plantation in Prince Georges County, Maryland. The features of this artifact indicate the day, date and month just as modern time pieces. However, this particular example also displays the approximate time of sunrise and sunset as well as the approximate hours of day and night.

This diminutive accessory would have been a practical item that also exhibits the wearer's wealth and status.



Figure 1: Copper alloy and iron "Perpetual Almanac."



Figure 2: Ruby lane auction house.



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