Blunt Portsmouth Map from the American Coast Pilot 1800-1850

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THE AMERICAN

COAST PILOT;

CONTAINING THE

COURSES AND DISTANCES

BETWEEN THE

Principal Harbours, Capes and Headlands, from Paſſama-quoddy through the Gulf of Florida, with Directions for ſailing into the ſame; deſcribing the Soundings, Bearings of the Light-Houſes and Beacons from the Rocks, Shoals, Ledges, &c.

TOGETHER WITH THE

COURSES AND DISTANCES

From Cape-Cod and Cape-Ann to Georges'-Bank, through the South and Eaſt Channels, and the ſetting of the Currents,

WITH THE

LATITUDES AND LONGITUDES

OF THE PRINCIPAL

HARBOURS ON THE COAST,

TOGETHER WITH A

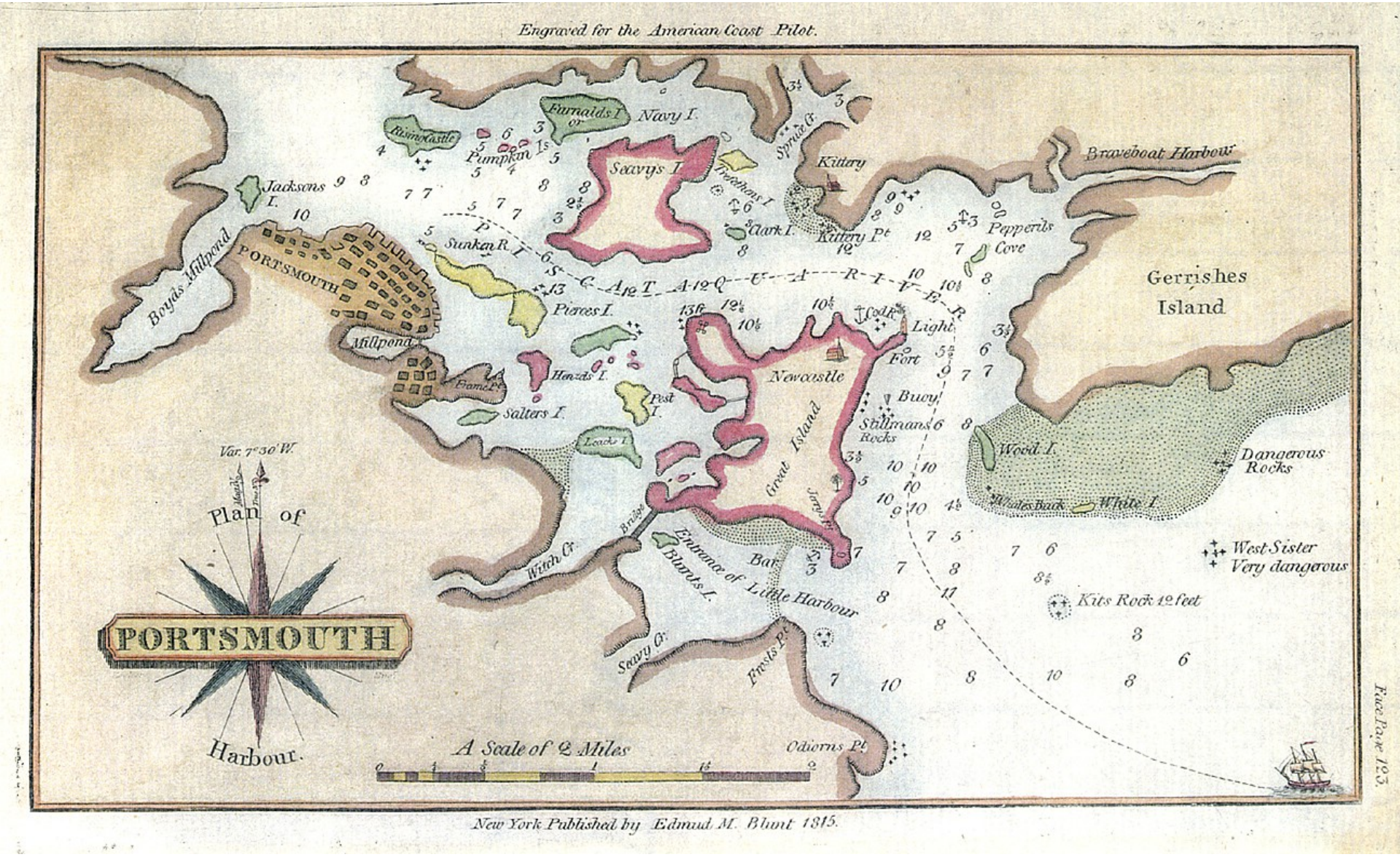
TIDE TABLE.

Factoids.

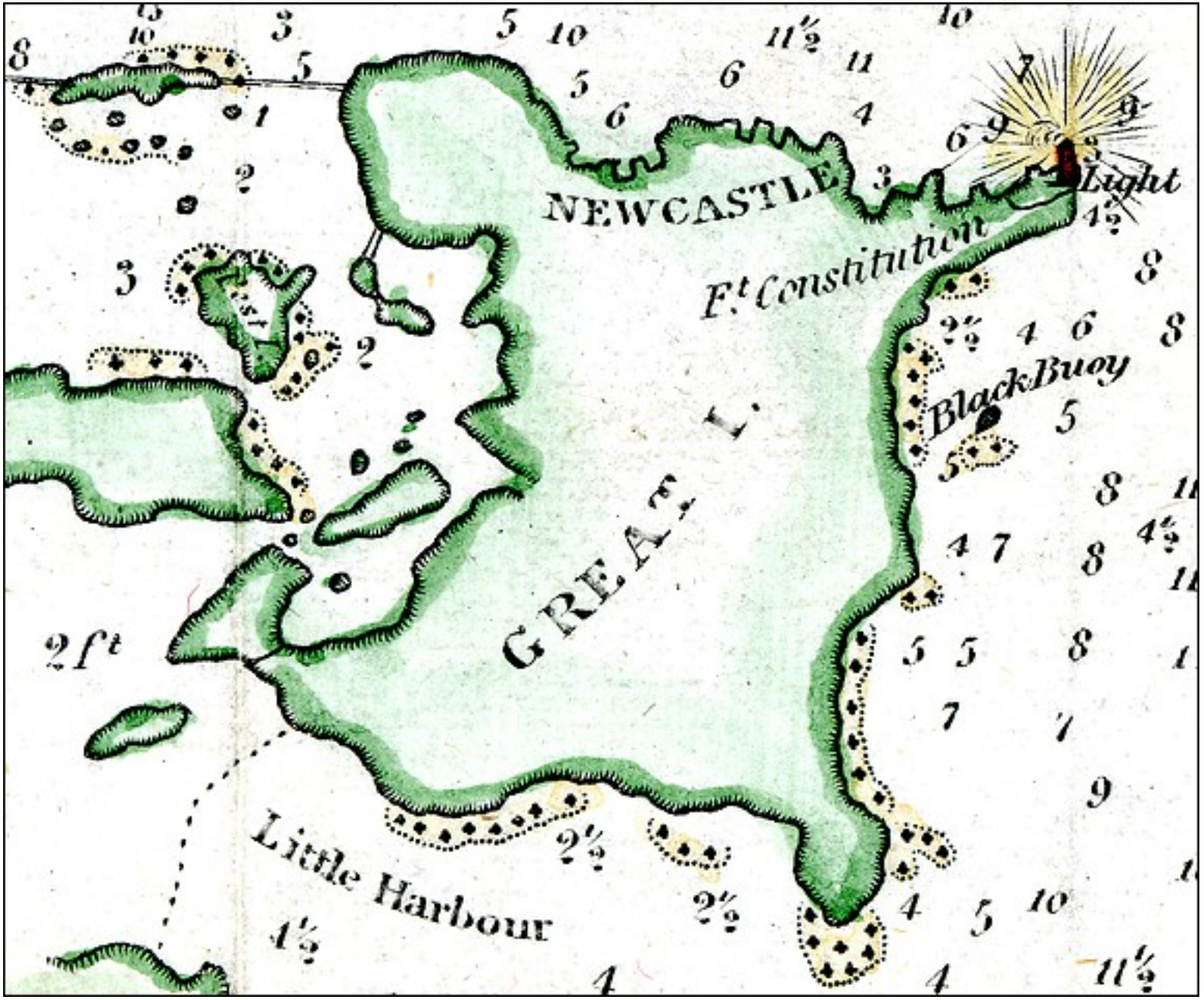
- Edmund March Blunt, was born in Portsmouth, NH, but lived in Sing Sing, NY, primarily as a publisher.
- Not to be confused with other Portsmouth Blunts. John Samuel Blunt (artist) and Robert Whipple Blunt (mariner).
- There were 21 editions from 1796-1867.
- The book was primarily text, with a handful of small, bound-in maps, folded once.
- Some maps were hand colored.

Blunt, Portsmouth, 1815 edition

(9.50 inches by 5.75 inches)



Blunt, New Castle detail, 1833 edition



Directions for *Portſmouth*, (New-Hampſhire.)

[Blunt, 1800 edition, p. 37]

WHEN you fall into the eaſtward and make *Cape-Neddock*, and are bound to *Portſmouth*, when within half a mile of ſaid *Cape*, your courſe is S. S. W. 4 leagues which courſe you are to continue till you bring *Portſmouth* †Light-Houſe to bear north, and run within $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile of the Light, then ſteer N. b. E. or N. N. E. until you are abreaſt of the Light, when you muſt ſteer N. W. until the Light bears S. S. E. and anchor in 9 fathoms at low water, good bottom.

If, when coming from ſea, you make the *Iſle of Shoals*, and you are to the eaſtward of them, you muſt run for them till within one mile of the eaſtern Iſle, then ſteer W. N. W. until *Portſmouth* Light-Houſe bears North, then follow your directions as above.

If you come to the weſtward of the *Iſle of Shoals*, give it a good birth and ſteer N. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. which courſe will carry you up with the Light as above directed. If you have a head wind and are obliged to beat into the

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* *At the eaſtern ſide of the harbour lies a ledge on which it always breaks.*

† *The Light-Houſe has but one Light in it and ſtands on* Fort-Point, *(New-Caſtle Iſland) at the entrance of the harbour. N. by W. and S. by E. Moon makes High Water at full and change.*

Blunt Map
of Portsmouth Harbor

by Jim Cerny

Edmund March Blunt.
(Source: NOAA)

From the 1790s to the 1850s, Edmund March Blunt published some 30 editions of the *American Coast Pilot*—sailing directions for mariners that included a handful of maps, including one of Portsmouth Harbour [sic]. He was born in Portsmouth, NH, and lived to be over 90 years old.

See the accompanying enlargement of New Castle from the 1833 edition of that map, which was printed at the widely used 1:24000 scale. These maps did not show land features; water depth is in fathoms. They were published in the decades between the Atlantic Neptune charts of the 1770s and the maps produced by the U.S. Coast Survey that was established in 1832.

New Castle enlarged from Blunt map of 1833. (Source: Jim Cerny)

The pilot book had over a dozen bound maps, about 8x8 inches in size, folded once to fit. Often, these maps have been removed, and you find copies for sale from the various editions. Most were printed in black and white, but some, such as this one, were hand-colored.

Islander Magazine, November 2018, p. 9