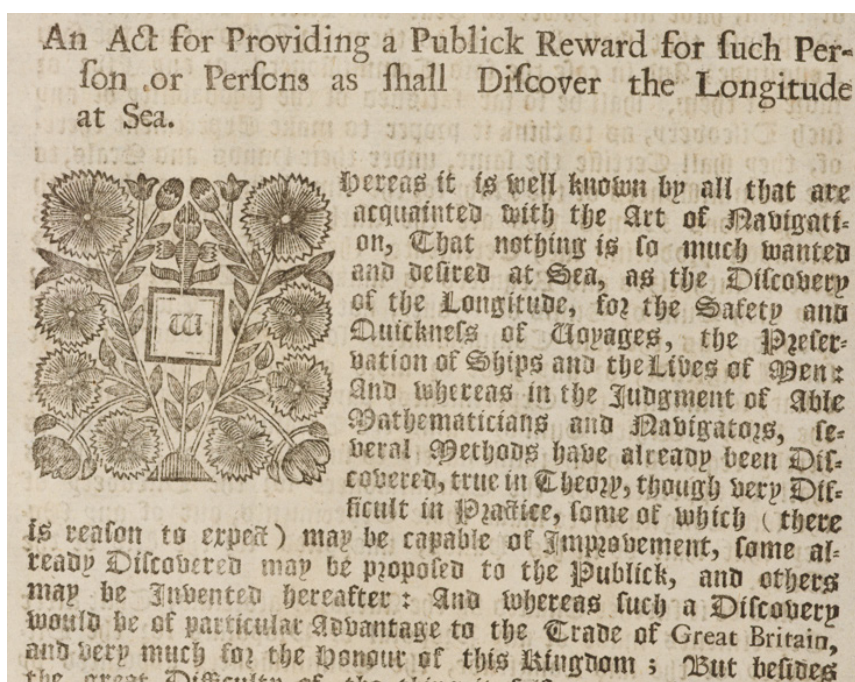


BOARD OF LONGITUDE Explorers



Transcription

'Whereas it is well known by all that are acquainted with the Art of Navigation, That nothing is so much wanted and desired at Sea, as the Discovery of the Longitude, for the Safety and Quickness of Voyages, the Preservation of Ships and the Lives of Men: And whereas in the Judgment of Able Mathematicians and Navigators, several Methods have already been Discovered, true in Theory, though very Difficult in Practice, some of which (there is reason to expect) may be capable of Improvement, some already Discovered may be proposed to the Publick, and others may be Invented hereafter: And whereas such a Discovery would be of particular Advantage to the Trade of Great Britain, and very much for the Honour of this Kingdom:...'

An Act for Providing a Publick Reward for such Person or Persons as shall Discover the Longitude at Sea (extract)

Date made

1714

Object ref.

RGO14/1: 11r

Credit

Cambridge University Library

Description

Parliament passed the Longitude Act in 1714. This Act offered financial rewards for anyone who could find a more accurate way of measuring longitude at sea. Sailors could already find their latitude (their position north or south) but not their longitude (their position east or west).

Questions

1. What was the problem with methods of finding longitude that had already been discovered?
2. What were the four reasons that people wanted 'the Longitude' to be 'discovered'?
3. Which of the four reasons listed do you think would have been Parliament's top priority? Why?