

Anno 12<sup>mo</sup> Annæ. Stat. 2. Cap. 15.

*An Act for providing a public Reward for such Person or Persons as shall discover the Longitude at sea.*

**W**HEREAS 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 public, 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; but besides the great difficulty of the thing itself, partly for the want of some public reward to be settled as an encouragement for so useful and beneficial a work, and partly for want of money for trials and experiments necessary thereunto, no such inventions or proposals hitherto made, have been brought to perfection; be it therefore enacted by the Queen's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal,

14 Geo. II.

C. 39.

26 Geo. II.

C. 25.

2 Geo. III.

C. 18.

3 Geo. III.

C. 14.

5 Geo. III.

C. 11.

5 Geo. III.

C. 20.

Commissioners appointed for discovering the longitude, and receiving proposals.

poral, and Commons in parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That the Lord high admiral of *Great-Britain*, or the first commissioner of the admiralty, the speaker of the honourable house of Commons, the first commissioner of the navy, the first commissioner of trade, the admirals of the red, white, and blue squadrons, the master of the trinity-house, the president of the royal society, the royal astronomer of *Greenwich*, the *Savilian*, *Lucasian*, and *Plumian* professors of the mathematicks in *Oxford* and *Cambridge*, all for the time being; the right honourable *Thomas* earl of *Pembroke* and *Montgomery*, *Philip* lord bishop of *Hereford*, *George* lord bishop of *Bristol*, *Thomas* lord *Trevor*, the honourable Sir *Thomas Hanmer* baronet, speaker of the honourable house of Commons, the honourable *Francis Robarts* esquire, *James Stanhope* esquire, *William Clayton* esquire, and *William Lowndes* esquire, be constituted, and they are hereby constituted commissioners for the discovery of the longitude at sea; and for examining, trying, and judging of all proposals, experiments and improvements relating to the same: And that the said commissioners, or any five or more of them, have full power to hear and receive any proposal or proposals that shall be made to them for discovering the said longitude; and in case the said commissioners, or any five or more of them, shall be so far satisfied of the probability of any such discovery, as to think it proper to make experi-

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Commissioners to certify the probability of such discovery to the commissioners of the navy

who shall  
make out a  
bill for 2000*l.*  
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experiments.

Explained by  
14 Geo. II.  
c. 39.

More money ap-  
plied to experi-  
ments.

26 Geo. II.  
c. 25.  
2 Geo. III.  
c. 18.  
5 Geo. III.  
c. 11.

The commis-  
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Reward to the  
first discoverer.

ment thereof, they shall certify the same, under their hands and seals to the commissioners of the navy for the time being, together with the persons names, who are the authors of such proposals; and upon producing such certificate, the said commissioners are hereby authorized and required to make out a bill or bills for any such sum or sums of money not exceeding two thousand pounds, as the said commissioners for the discovery of the said longitude, or any five or more of them, shall think necessary for making the experiments, payable by the treasurer of the navy; which sum or sums the treasurer of the navy is hereby required to pay immediately to such person or persons as shall be appointed by the commissioners for the discovery of the said longitude, to make those experiments, out of any money that shall be in his hands, unapplied for the use of the navy.

II. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That after experiments made of any proposal or proposals for the discovery of the said longitude, the commissioners appointed by this act, or the major part of them shall declare and determine how far the same is found practicable, and to what degree of exactness.

III. *And for a due and sufficient encouragement to any such person or persons as shall discover a proper method for finding the said longitude,* be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the first author or authors, discoverer or discoverers of any such method, his or their executors, administrators, or assigns,

signs, shall be intitled to, and have such reward as herein after is mentioned; that is to say, to a reward, or sum of ten thousand pounds, if it determines the said longitude to one degree of a great circle, or sixty geographical miles; to fifteen thousand pounds, if it determines the same to two thirds of that distance; and to twenty thousand pounds, if it determines the same to one half of the same distance; and that one moiety or half-part of such reward or sum shall be due and paid when the said commissioners, or the major part of them, do agree that any such method extends to the security of ships within eighty geographical miles of the shores, which are places of the greatest danger, and the other moiety or half-part, when a ship by the appointment of the said commissioners, or the major part of them, shall thereby actually sail over the ocean, from *Great-Britain*, to any port in the *West Indies*, as those commissioners, or the major part of them shall choose or nominate for the experiment, without losing their longitude beyond the limits before mentioned.

IV. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That as soon as such method for the discovery of the said longitude shall have been tried and found practicable and useful at sea, within any of the degrees aforesaid, that the said commissioners, or the major part of them, shall certify the same accordingly, under their hands and seals, to the commissioners of the navy for the

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When to be  
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The commis-  
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A method  
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certify to the  
commissioners  
of the navy,

the time being, together with the person or persons names who are the authors of such proposal; and upon such certificate the said commissioners are hereby authorized and required to make out a bill or bills for the respective sum or sums of money, to which the author or authors of such proposal, their executors, administrators or assigns, shall be intitled by virtue of this act; which sum or sums the treasurer of the navy is hereby required to pay to the said author or authors, their executors, administrators or assigns, out of any money that shall be in his hands unapplied to the use of the navy, according to the true intent and meaning of this act.

V. And it is hereby further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any such proposal shall not on trial be found of so great use as aforementioned, yet if the same on trial, in the judgment of the said commissioners, or the major part of them, be found of considerable use to the public, that then and in such case the said author or authors, their executors, administrators or assigns, shall have and receive such less reward therefore as the said commissioners, or the major part of them, shall think reasonable, to be paid by the treasurer of the navy on such certificate as aforesaid.

Anno

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for payment  
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