

# BOARD OF LONGITUDE Explorers



## H4

**Date made**  
1759

**Object ref.**  
ZAA0037

**Credit**  
National Maritime Museum: Ministry of Defence Art Collection

### Description

This is John Harrison's longitude watch. He completed it in 1759. Harrison had been working on improving watches as a side-line to his development of a much larger sea clock. In 1753, he asked the watchmaker, John Jefferys, to make a pocket watch to his design. This watch kept time very well and work began on H4 in 1755. It was very expensive to make but kept time very accurately at sea during two separate tests. The Board of Longitude refused to pay him the full reward stated in the Longitude Act.

### Questions

1. John Harrison's watch met the Board of Longitude's criteria for 'exactness' but they weren't sure it was a practical solution. What problems could the sea pose to a watch like this one?
2. What other problems do you think the Board might have thought they would have in equipping the entire naval fleet out with watches like this one?
3. Do you think it was fair that John Harrison didn't get the reward? Why?