John “Longitude” Harrison

(24 March 1693 – 24 March 1776)
22 October 1707: Shipwreck!
Board of Longitude

• Scilly naval disaster 22 October 1707
• Sinking of a British naval fleet off the Isles of Scilly
• Four large ships (Association, Eagle, Romney and Firebrand) and 1,400 sailors lost
• One of the greatest maritime disasters in the history of the British Navy
• Cause of the disaster was the navigators' inability to accurately calculate their positions
• Led to the First Longitude Act passed in July 1714 during the reign of Queen Anne
• Created the Board of Longitude and offered a 20K Pounds for anyone who could find a simple and practical method for the precise determination of a ship's longitude
Most promising method: Lunar Distances
John Harrison
H1 The Sea Clock 1735
St. John-at-Hampstead