

# *Words to Know before You Go!*

**artifact**

**urban**

**rural**

**suburbs**

**retired**

**treaty**

## *Fun Facts*

**John Jay was the eighth of ten children.**

**Today King's College, the school where John Jay was educated, is called Columbia University.**

**John was almost kicked out of college when he refused to tell on some of the other students who had broken some furniture.**

**There were only two people in John's graduating class: Richard Harison and John himself.**

**Before proposing to Sarah, John had asked another woman to marry him. She said no.**

**When John and Sarah were married in 1774, John was 28 years old and Sarah was only 17!**

**John's brother James invented a type of invisible ink.**

**When John was negotiating the Treaty of Paris, his wife Sarah stayed in Ben Franklin's house in Passy, France until their daughter Nancy was born. Ben Franklin was a famous printer, publisher and inventor.**

**John Jay was good friends with George Washington. In fact, when Washington was sworn in as President of the United States, John Jay was standing on the same balcony**

## WHO WAS JOHN JAY AND WHY IS HE IMPORTANT?

John Jay was one of America's founding fathers, just like George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. During his life, Jay was a lawyer, diplomat, the first Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court and a governor of New York.

He was born in New York City in 1745 into a well-to-do family. Jay grew up on the family farm in the town of Rye in Westchester and was sent to King's College when he was 14. After graduation he worked as an apprentice in a law office.

In 1774, John married Sarah Livingston, the same year he was elected to the Continental Congress, which had organized to protest Britain's taxes on products used in the American colonies.

Angry that Britain would not listen to the colonists complaints, John Jay became a Patriot.

When the American Revolution began John and his wife Sarah traveled to Spain to try and raise money to help the colonists.

In America the British surrendered at the battle of Yorktown and John Jay traveled from Spain to Paris in order to help negotiate the treaty which ended the Revolutionary War.

When the Jays returned to the United States, John supported a new Constitution that created the government we have today. He wrote essays called the *Federalist* papers to convince New Yorkers to ratify the Constitution.

The Constitution was ratified in 1789 and George Washington appointed John Jay to be the first Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

In 1794 John Jay was sent by President George Washington to Britain to negotiate a treaty that would solve the problems that had not been fixed when the American Revolution had ended.

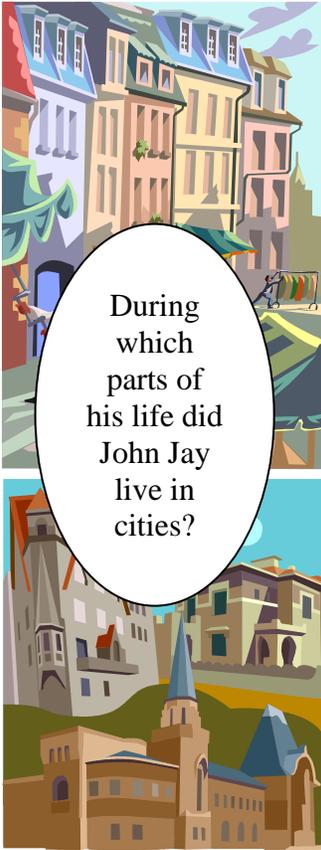
Americans disliked the Jay Treaty because they felt that it was more favorable to Britain. Today historians think that the Jay Treaty prevented a war that the new American nation would not have been ready to fight.

After returning to America John Jay became the Governor of New York.

In 1801, Jay retired to his farm in Bedford with his wife and three of their five children. John died in 1829 and was buried in the family cemetery in Rye, New York.



## Was John Jay a city slicker or a country boy?



During which parts of his life did John Jay live in cities?

Throughout his life John Jay moved back and forth between living in the countryside and living in a city.

During his childhood John's father made the decision to move the Jay family to Rye, New York (at that time considered the country) due to a disease epidemic that was sweeping through New York City.

This was a wise decision. In cities people live very close together which helps disease spread more quickly. There are also higher levels of waste in cities with less free space to put it. This pollutes the air people breath and the water they drink.

As the governor of New York, John Jay lived in New York City and then Albany.

In colonial times cities were a good location for government offices because information could spread quickly between the members of the government.

This was before the invention of the telephone and if members of the government were living spread out in the countryside it could take days for messages to go back and forth. Living close to each other in a city allowed government officials to send messages more quickly and meet together more often.



When John Jay retired he moved to a part of the countryside called Bedford.



John's life on his farm in Bedford was much different than when he lived in the city. There were no longer bakers, blacksmiths, tailors and fishermen right down the road. Instead of buying soap from a local store, Jay's servants would have to make soap.



If something was needed that could not be made at the farm, it would be shipped up the Hudson River from New York City to Ossining. The shipment would then travel by carriage from Ossining to Jay's farm in Bedford.

How was Jay's life in the country different from his life in the city?

**Activity:** Imagine you live on John Jay's farm in the 1800s. You want to bake an apple pie. What ingredients do you have on your farm?

What would need to be shipped?

What do you have at your farm that people in the city would have to buy at the store?

Where would you rather live in the 1800s, the country or the city? Why?