

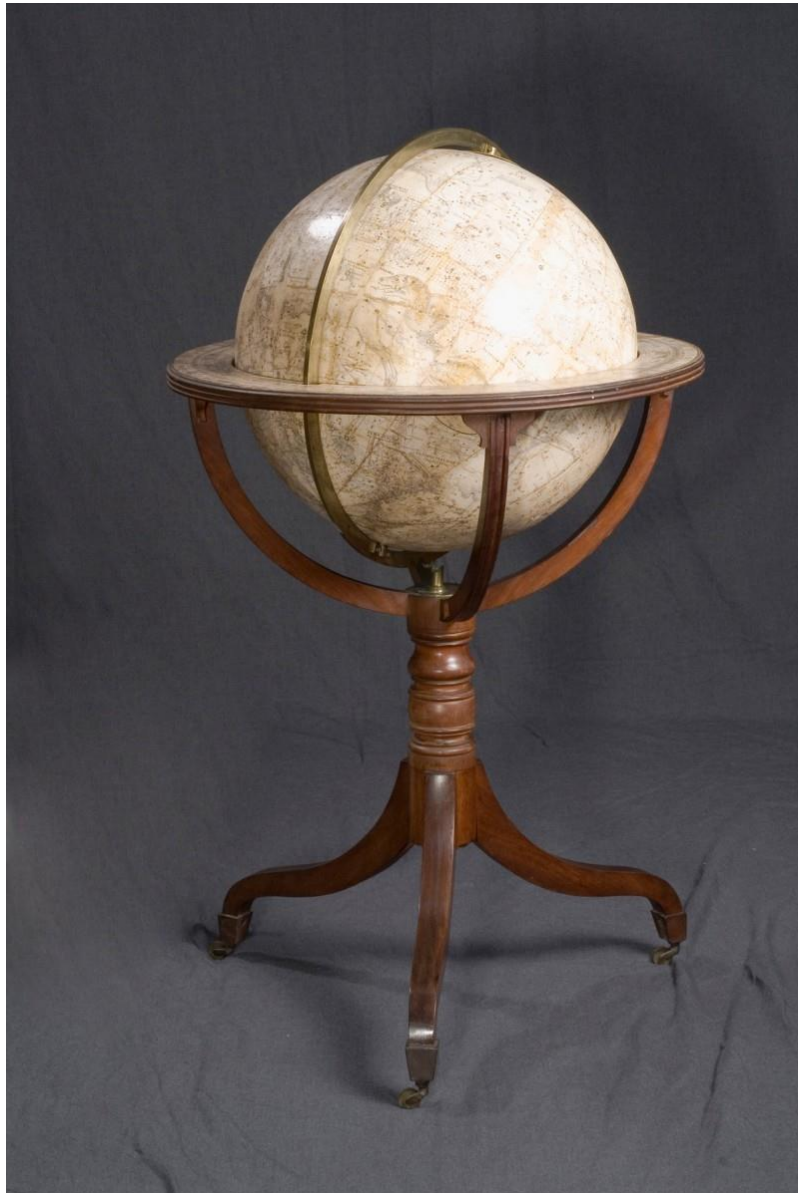
Celestial Globe

1800

Paper; Mahogany; Brass

English; W & T.M. Bardin

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behind it is that the globe is a sphere that shows the Earth as its imaginary center on which the stars, constellations, and various astronomical circles are drawn. It is mounted in a harness that allows it to rotate and be tilted to different latitudes. There were a few problems with this type of globe, however; for example, it depicts the figures of the constellations facing outward, toward the user, rather than inward, toward the center of the globe. The third type of globe, invented in the later 17th century, was essentially an optical planetarium. The stars are represented by small holes, and by looking in to the globe through one of four larger holes, the stars are seen in their correct configuration as points of light against a dark background.

Our globe is the second type of celestial globes, the optical planetarium. – a celestial globe with the celestial bodies shown facing outward, made by notable British globe makers William Bardin and his son Thomas Marriot Bardin, who began production of their globes in 1790. The celestial map shows positions of stars, clusters, nebula, and planetary bulae. The months of the year and corresponding zodiac signs are around the base. The globe is based upon a charting from 1800 by Nevil Maskelyne, Astronomer Royal of Britain at the time, and one of the pioneers in the field.

The globe is made of two hemispheres of molded card. These were originally joined smoothly but now are separated.

It is likely John Jay had a matching terrestrial globe, as they were generally sold in pairs. The terrestrial globe would have been based on the latest mapping by Sir Joseph Banks, who was at the time President of the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge – one of the oldest learned institutions on the planet.

Jay also owned a reflecting telescope, purchased in 1791, demonstrating an interest in astronomy, an interest shared by other Founding Fathers. In fact, Thomas Jefferson owned a very similar celestial globe, also by the Bardins; however, his globe was lost over time.