



## Governor Jay, 1798

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John Jay was born in New York City 12 December 1745, and attended the First and Second Continental Congresses. In 1777 he guided the drafting of the New York State Constitution, and became Chief Justice of the State supreme court the same year. Jay left that post to become President of the Continental Congress in 1778, and was sent to Spain in 1779 as a minister plenipotentiary to seek aid for the revolutionary cause. He was chosen to accompany Benjamin Franklin to Paris for the successful peace negotiations, and became Minister of Foreign Affairs under the Articles of Confederation 1784-89. An early supporter of the proposed new constitution, Jay was the author of five of the famous *Federalist Papers*, and became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court under the new form of government. When war with Britain loomed in 1794, he successfully negotiated "Jay's Treaty." His last public post was the governorship of New York, 1795 to 1801, after which he retired to his home in Bedford, New York, where he died 17 May 1829.

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Type/Rig/Class: Schooner; *Diligence* Class

Builder: New York

Dates of Service: 1798 - 1799 (?)

Disposition: Sold

Displacement: 187 tons

Length: 58' (keel)

Beam: 20' (mean)

Draft: 9'

Complement: 70

Armament: 14 x 4- & 6-pounders

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### Cutter History:

The schooner *Governor Jay* was one of seven large cutters built to supplement the Navy and the smaller revenue cutters in service at the start of the Quasi-War with France. She was built at New York in 1797 for the Treasury Department. By arrangement between the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of the Treasury in July 1798, *Governor Jay* was put under the direction of the Navy for use as a cruiser in the developing war with France. With Captain J. W. Leonard commanding, she received orders to cruise out of New York between Cape Henry and Long Island with *Ganges* 20 July 1798. *Governor Jay* made several cruises in protection of American commerce during the undeclared war with France. September saw her cruising with USS *Retaliation*, under William Bainbridge, and 11 December 1798 she was ordered by the Secretary of the Navy to convoy ship *America*, in company with *General Green*, to the West Indies. This accomplished, the two ships joined Captain Decatur in *Delaware* and patrolled the waters north of Cuba from Matanzas to Havana capturing French privateers and protecting merchant vessels. Returning to New York in May 1799, *Governor Jay* was determined by the Navy Department to be unfit for further service and shortly thereafter was returned to the Revenue Service. She captured the schooner *Maria* off Sandy Hook, New Jersey, in June of that same year. There is no further record of the *Governor Jay*.

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### Sources:

*Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships.*

Donald Canney. *U.S. Coast Guard and Revenue Cutters, 1790-1935.* Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995.

U.S. Coast Guard. *Record of Movements: Vessels of the United States Coast Guard: 1790 - December 31, 1933*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1934; 1989 (reprint).

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