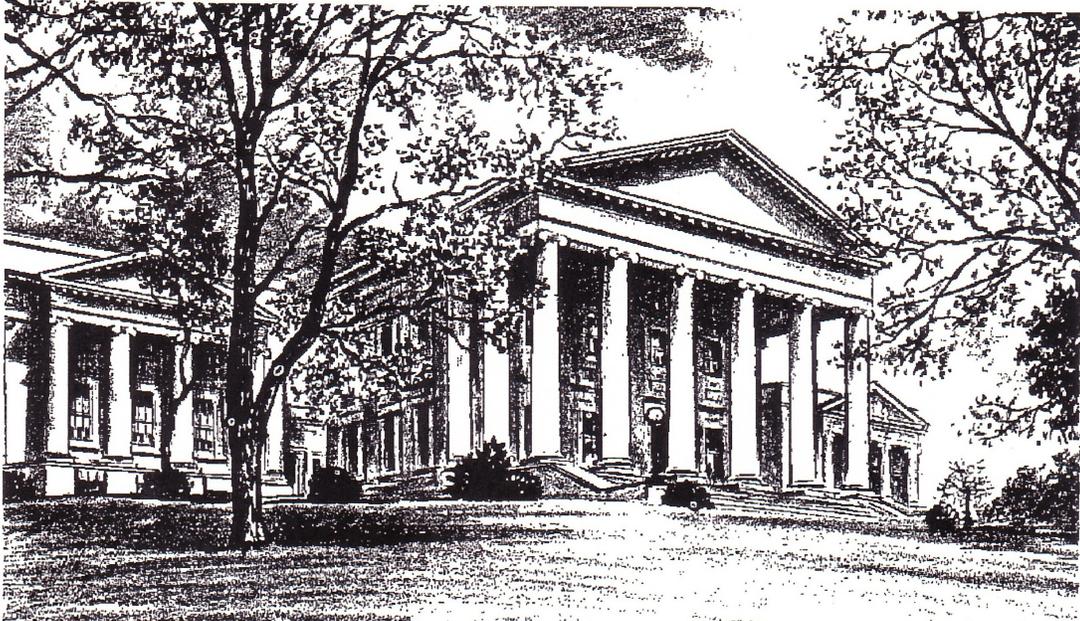


RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

1786-1799

Richmond, Virginia lies at the upper limit of navigability of the James River, and was named by William Byrd II, after Richmond upon Thames, England. A street grid for a settlement was laid out in 1737, and it was designated as a town in 1742. Under Governor Thomas Jefferson, the Virginia capital moved from Williamsburg to Richmond in 1780, to be more secure from British attack, That did not prevent Benedict Arnold from sacking and burning the town in 1781. Rebuilt, Richmond became a city in 1782, and the construction of the state capitol, designed by Thomas Jefferson, began in 1785, with Governor Patrick Henry presiding.



Finlay's Journal of 1773-1774 lists Richmond as a 'place of trade' but no post office. Other records indicate Richmond as having a post office, and a manuscript townmark of 1773 is recorded by Lowe and Sampson. Franklin's 1776 ledger included Richmond as having a post office; records indicate that James Hayes served as Postmaster from 1782 to 1786, with Augustine Davis succeeding him in 1786. Location of the post office is unknown but we thought that during Davis' tenure that it was located in his newspaper office. Postal markings were made up from loose type as needed, accounting for their variety. Virginia ratified the Constitution June 26, 1788 and it was one of only seventy-five post offices in the United States in 1789. The population in 1790 was 3,761.

The Confederation Post [1786-1791]

The Continental Congress established an independent General Post Office on July 26, 1775 with Benjamin Franklin as Postmaster. Under the Articles of Confederation, conveyance of mail between the colonies was regulated on July 9, 1778. An ordinance of October 18, 1782, supplemented October 28 & December 24, formed the basis of the Confederation and the United States Post Office until 1792. Postal rates, which had risen to 40 times those originally in effect, were restored to 1775 levels.

RICH^D. Jan. 14

First handstamp type from Richmond
In use October 1786 to November 1787

Richmond to Fredericksburg November 23, 1786
rated at 2 pennyweight of silver.

<i>Postal Rates of 1782:</i>	<i>Up to 50 miles</i>	<i>1 dwt. 8 Gr. of silver</i>
	<i>60-100 miles</i>	<i>2 dwt.</i>
	<i>200-300 miles</i>	<i>3 dwt. 8 gr.</i>
	<i>and 16 gr. per 100 miles thereafter.</i>	

All postal markings of the 18th century are struck in black ink.