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## The Constitutional Postoffice

Benjamin Franklin served as joint postmaster general of the colonies from 1753 to 1774. Franklin's partnership with William Goddard in 1775 however played an important role in the development of a national postal system that would serve the United colonies and a model for what we know as our modern postal office.

Goddard and his associates created an alternative system known as The "Constitutional Postoffice", in opposition to the "Royal Mail".

The Constitutional Post would provide mail service to the colonies between New York and Philadelphia. Goddard had presented his plan to Congress on October 5, 1774, but it was delayed until after the battles of Lexington and Concord in the Spring of 1775.

On July 26, 1775 the plan, now known as the "Constitutional Post", was adopted and implemented, thus assuring communication between the colonies and keeping them informed of various events during the conflict with Britain.

Ultimately Goddard and his revolutionary post were so successful they finally forced the Crown post out of business in the American colonies by 1775. When the Continental Congress met at Philadelphia, Goddard's colonial post was flourishing, and 30 post offices operated between Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Williamsburg, Pennsylvania.

You can also see the use of what was called, the "long S", within the words Constitutional and Postoffice. This was common in early Colonial American printing.

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*—Adapted from Smithsonian Libraries, American Heritage Magazine & History.com.*

