



Cancellation Club NEWS

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SOME INTERESTING 5 CENT TAYLOR COVERS

by HOWARD L. ROSENBERG

The United States was one of the founding members of the Universal Postal Union (originally the General Postal Union) that came into being on July 1, 1875. As a result the basic first class letter rate from the United States to member states was reduced to five cents per half ounce.

The United States issued the five cent Zachary Taylor stamps (Scott #179 and #185) for use in prepaying this new, basic international postage rate. U.P.U. regulations required that they be printed in blue for easy recognition by postal clerks of the rate the stamps represented.

This writer has been developing a specialized collection of the Taylor stamps, on cover, as a means of illustrating the changes and transitions brought about by the U.P.U. coming into existence. The period under study is 1875-1882. A variety of interesting usages and markings can be found on covers of this period. In this brief article several will be illustrated and examined as an introduction to what is available.

12 Cents to Parts of Australia

Figure 1 illustrates a cover to New South Wales. The United States Postal Guide

for 1879 sets forth a rate of five cents to Australia, even though Australia was not a member of the U.P.U. That rate was for mail sent via San Francisco. However, there were exceptions to that rate. Mail sent via San Francisco to either New South Wales, Queensland or Victoria were twelve cents per half ounce.

In the cover in Figure 1 either the sender or the postal clerk in Centreville, Michigan was not aware of the distinction in rates. When the letter arrived in San Francisco the clerk at the foreign desk recognized the underpayment, and marked it "HELD FOR/POSTAGE" in accordance with the postal regulation that prohibited the forwarding of mail to New South Wales that underpaid the twelve cent rate. As the additional postage was not paid the letter was consigned to the San Francisco Dead Letter Office.

New York Supplementary Mail Service

In Figure 2 we find a cover that utilized the Supplementary Mail service provided by the New York City Post Office. This service was applied to mail posted at shipside just prior to a sailing. A distinctive postal marking was used ("N.Y. SUPPLEMENTARY PAID/JUL 11), and a penalty of double postage was required. Also, please note the

Please PAY 1980 DUES Now!

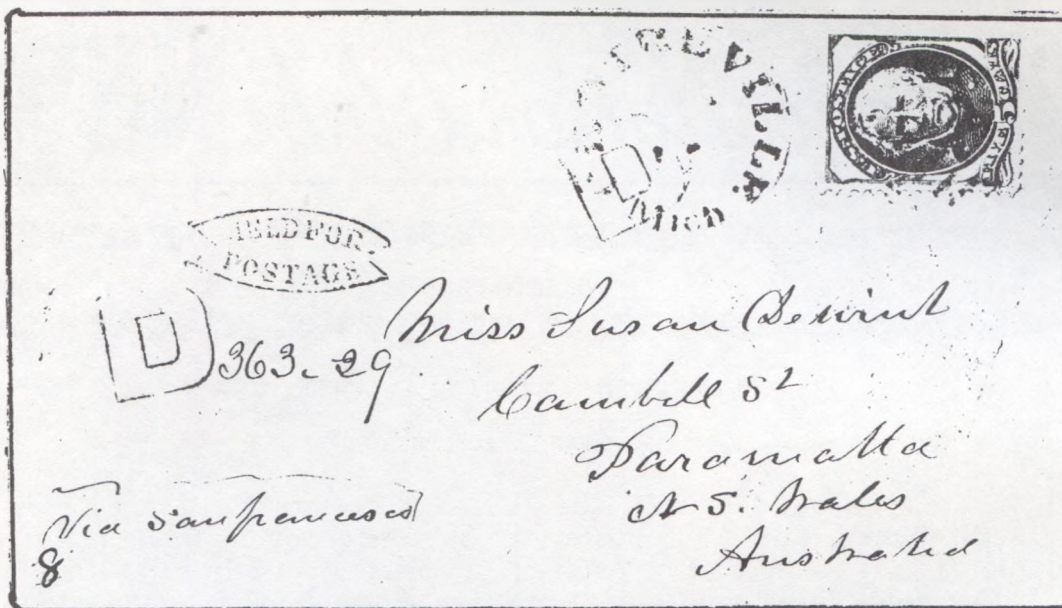


Figure 1

docketing "DONAU"/EXTRA MAIL. The Donau was a ship of the North German Lloyd Line.

Domestic/International Usage

"Ship Letters" is the term applied to letters conveyed on ships not regularly employed in the carrying of the mails. In Figure 3 we have a cover that apparently originated in Panama, but which was posted on a ship and mailed from New York City. It is either a "ship letter" or simply an underpaid cover. It is somewhat difficult to tell. According to

the postal regulations a ship letter is to be charged double the domestic rate. In this case it more properly should have carried a total of six cents in postage. It is possible that whoever mailed the letter confused rates and used the Taylor in payment of the U.P.U. rate (the cover was posted in 1882, and Columbia had joined the U.P.U. in 1880). The clerk in New York would then have just as matter of course assessed a penalty of five cents. If anyone has any thoughts on this the writer would be most anxious to hear them. An example of a cover used

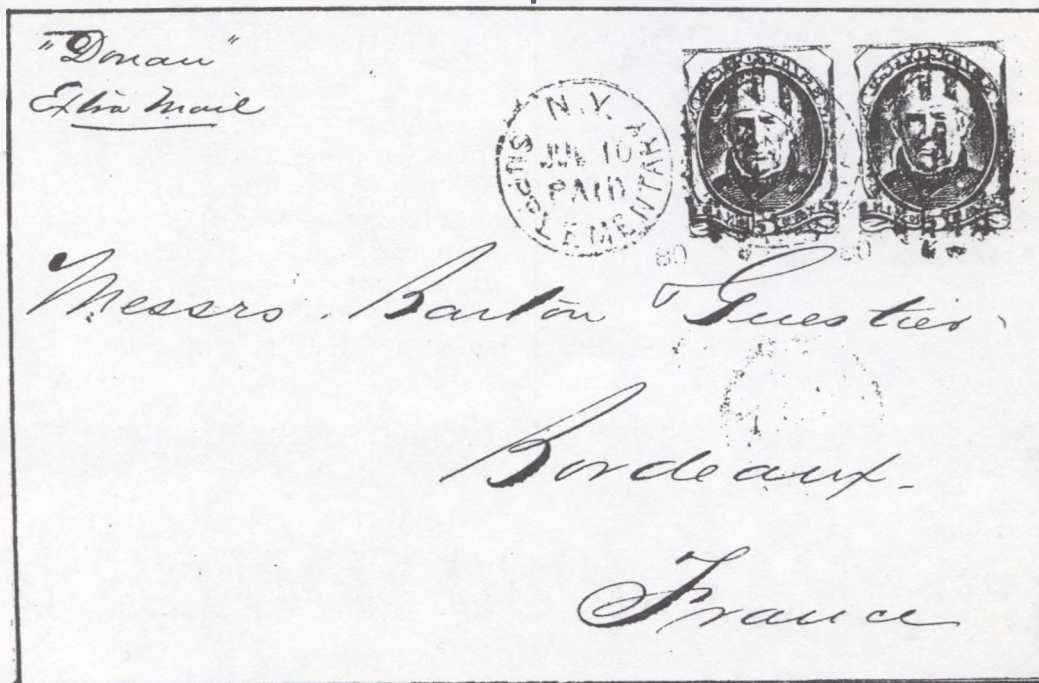


Figure 2

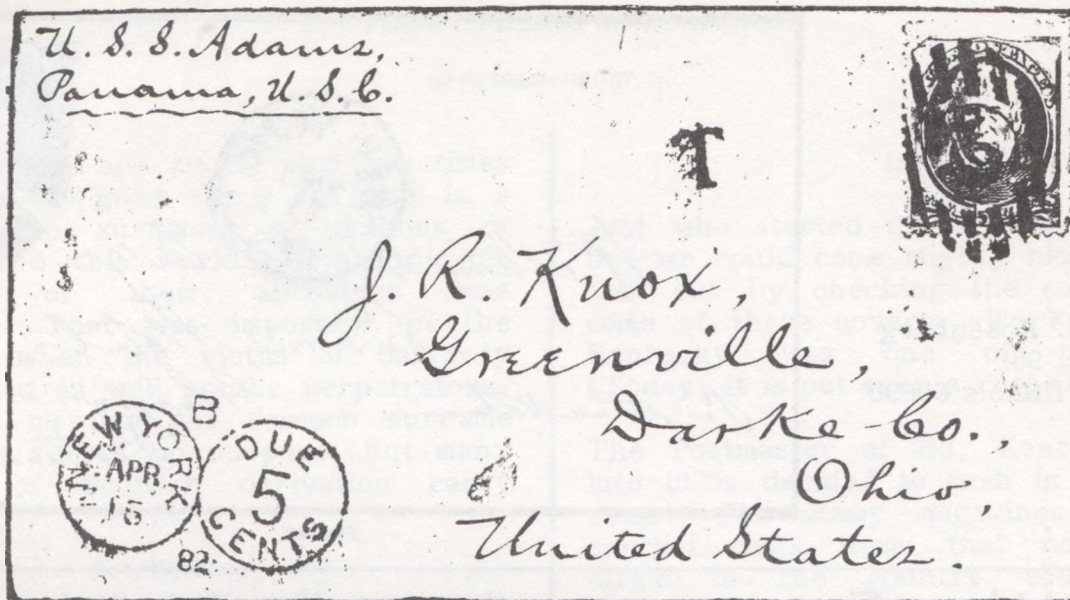


Figure 3

domestically and internationally is shown in Figure 4. The three cent Washington was used to prepay the postage between Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Cornwall, Pennsylvania. As the addressee had apparently gone on to London, England, the cover was remailed, not forwarded, with the Taylor added to pay the rate to England.

Free Hand Designs

The foreign desk in the New York City Post Office used during the 1870's a distinctive series of postmarks. Termed New York Foreign Mail cancellations examples can be found on the Taylor. In

Figure 5 we find an example of type F6 (Van Vlissingen and Waud, 1968) used in 1876. Type F cancels have been termed Free Hand Designs.

This writer would be interested in hearing from other collectors who are interested in this period of United States postal history. Ultimately, a comprehensive article will be prepared regarding the Taylor stamps and their role in the beginning of U.S. participation in the Universal Postal Union. Any assistance will be appreciated. All correspondence should



Figure 4

be sent to:

Howard L. Rosenberg
P. O. Box 951
Chicago, Illinois 60690

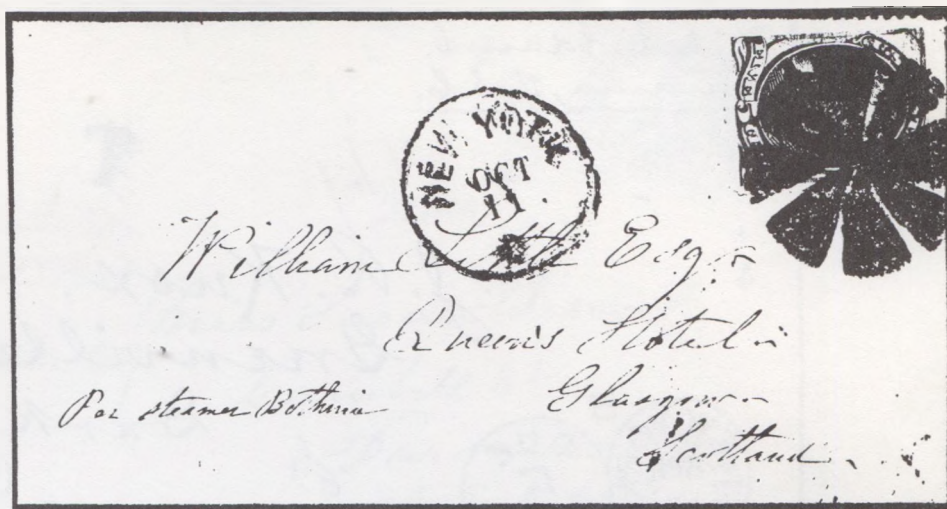


Figure 5

Question Corner

Dear Secretary,

I hope you will not mind my writing to you for advice. Mr. Luff gave me your address as a useful one to write to.

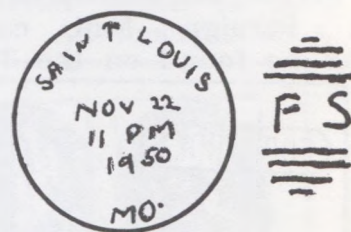
I've been collecting postmarks for over 35 years and, apart from S. African, one of my biggest collections is of U.S.A. postmarks. What I need is information. I have, for instance, a number of machine cancellations of the 1890 - 1920 period and I need to know how to distinguish the different makes of machines. Again, I am rather fond of your duplex handstamps and would like to know during what periods the different types were supplied. Yet again, the sketch below shows a duplex handstamp in my collection and I would like to know the significance of the letters FS. A station, I guess. But

then, my New York duplex marks from stations show the station in the date stamp too, so perhaps my guess is wrong Anyway I have said enough to indicate the sort of thing I want to be able to look up. Is there a book you can suggest? Or what would you recommend?

I enclose unused stamps to pay your return postage. Thank you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,

David Allison



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THE FOURTH CLASS MAIL RACKET

by HERMAN HERST, Jr.

Human memories are short, and sometimes that is a very good thing. There is a prefix to the surnames of millions of people around this world which indicates that one of their ancestors was illegitimate. That was important in the old days, when the victim of bastardy was punished as well as the perpetrators. We do not mention the common surname now, for it serves no purpose, but many Americans of Scottish derivation carry this name.

Early Rejection

In philately, too, what may once have been illegitimate with the passing of time becomes quite legitimate, and acceptable. The Scott catalog is full of instances which were at one time shunned, and are now greatly sought. Examples of it are commonplace.

While the collecting of Twentieth Century fancy cancellations will never achieve the popularity of their Nineteenth Century forbears, few today are even aware that when they started in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the outcry against them in our stamp magazines was loud and persistent. Today perhaps not one person in ten even realizes that almost every single one of the post offices which went in for outlandish fancy cancels was a tiny one . . . in other words, a fourth class office . . . the lowest classification of all, rated by the business done.

Until the early 1930s, the compensation of a fourth class post office was based on the amount of mail it sent out. It was not only based on it; it was the compensation. If a post office sent out \$372 worth of letters in the course of a year, the Postmaster got to keep the whole \$372. And the more he built up that figure, the greater his take home pay. It sounds wonderful, except that if he built it up too high, his office would go into the second class category, and he would find himself on a salary. One had to be careful.

Led by Ed?

Just who started it, we may never know, but we could come mighty close to finding that out by checking the early dates on some of these covers. We know that Ed, Kentucky was one of the earliest. (Today, it is not even a Post Office.)

The Postmaster of Ed, Kentucky, in the late 1920s decided to cash in on his short name. The stamp magazines of the time carried news items that no other post office in the country could be fully described with just four letters of the alphabet. There were other offices composed of two letters, and other states which abbreviated their names with two letters, so the Ed claim did not stand up, but by then, collectors from all over the country were sending covers to Ed to get them canceled. There was a serious depression at the time, and such things as cacheted covers were enjoying a great vogue. The postage rate was but two cents; what else in philately could bring such pleasure for an expenditure of two envelopes, and two two-cent stamps?

A Chicken Lays Golden Eggs

Other Postmasters began to see possibilities. Those with unusual names saw that stories found their way into stamp magazines. Chicken, Alaska capitalized on its name. Offices whose names consisted of numerals began to cancel with numbers instead of spelling them out: Hundred, West Virginia; Ninety-Six, South Carolina; Big Four, West Virginia. A big apple with the letters TON across it stood for Appleton; Appleton's Post Office was an important one, but the Postmaster wanted his town to achieve recognition. Liberty, Alabama; Hammer, South Dakota; Bass, Indiana; Bell, New Mexico; Bicycle, North Dakota; Goodwine, Illinois and Keysville, Florida all joined the parade.

Henton, Illinois took a leaf from Appleton. A hen with TON across it publicized the

town. A bird's wing, cancelled in red, with the letters COL on it stood for Redwing, Colorado; Flint, Michigan advertised its principal industry, the Buick auto plant, by showing a car.

Enter the Fakers

No one ever counted the different varieties of fancy cancels turned out in this period. By 1933 beyond any doubt, hundreds of offices were doing it. It was not long before the fakers got into the act. After all, there was nothing to prevent anyone's placing a two cent commemorative on an envelope, and having a rubber stamp made and canceling the cover. It saved sending the covers to the post office to be canceled, and it saved postage.

About the only defense against the fake covers was to insist that the cover be registered. The presence on the back of a government handstamp of the receiving post office was added evidence of the cover's authenticity, as was the handstamp in which the registry number would be inscribed. Further to assure the legitimacy of the cover, the collector often saved the original post office registry receipt, making sure that the number on the cover and on the receipt matched.

A generation later, these modern fancies are much more widely accepted than they once were . . . especially if registered. Knowing collectors will not approach an unregistered cover, even with the proverbial ten foot pole. Some of the unregistered covers we have seen offered in recent years at stamp shows give every evidence of having been manufactured in recent times. Beyond any doubt, many were. It is still the easiest thing in the world to put a 2¢ Yorktown on an envelope, obtain a rubber stamp with a Masonic Square and Compass, and offer it for sale for \$2 or \$3, without even the name of the post office from which it ostensibly came.

Zapped by a Zip

Most ridiculous of all, we saw in one dealer's book of covers just such a cover, with a zip code in the address, thus

proving its counterfeit status. There were no zip codes forty years ago.

Today, the fancy cancels of the 1920s and 1930s are increasing in popularity. Uncle Sam put an end to the idea about 1933, when the rules of compensation for postmasters were changed. One does find them from later years. The well known collector, Edwin Payne, of Salem, Oregon, a post office employee, canceled thousands of covers during the war with his own "V for Victory" cancel, and such covers are easily found today. Another collector, E. E. Morrison by name, had influence with the Postmaster of Mahomet, Illinois, and well into the 1940s, he was canceling mail with a device made from a Multigraph machine, calling attention to the fact that it was the only post office in the entire world named after the great Prophet.

Even today, we occasionally see fancy cancels on our mail, and Uncle Sam is too busy to do much about them, even though technically they are against the law. And as long as the Postmaster does not use them to increase his compensation, it is likely that Uncle Sam will continue to wink. It is just that he does not like to see anyone using a government service to line his own pocketbook.

But if nothing else comes from this article but one thing it is this: if you buy modern fancy cancels on cover, make sure that they are registered. We do not say that all of the unregistered are fakes, but how does one know that they are not? . . . unless of course they carry a zip code!

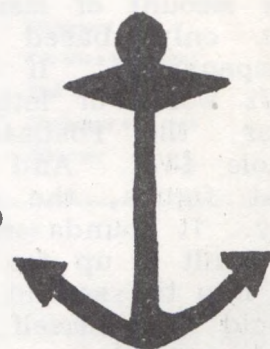
Hawthorne, NA.

Naval Ammunition Depot

F. C. 1/1/35

Magenta

(William C. Walker Collection)



Additional Cancellations on Full-Face McKinley Cards

Three additional used copies of UX17/S21 have been reported since our list of 62 was printed in the May 1979 issue of the U.S. Cancellation Club News. We now have reports of 65 identifiable used cards, or just over 20 % of the 312 originally found. We have also received photos or office machine copies of 37 unused copies, which are more difficult to distinguish, and can only be identified as different cards by carefully measuring the location of the printed indicium on the card. Discounting 10% as probably duplicate recordings, we have approximately 33 different unused cards, or about 22% of the 150 unused cards found by Lamscha.

In contrast, 19 "mint" cards have been reported during the same period. Again, the difficulty of measuring accurately the indicium shown on small size half-tone cuts in auction catalogs, even on modern full-size but sometimes distorted office

machine copies, makes it likely that at least ten or 20% may be duplicates. Even so, if we have recorded 15 different "mint" cards, and only 20 or 25% have been reported (as is the case with the used and unused copies), then there must be many more "mint" copies out there than previously suspected by collectors. Perhaps our census of the "mint" cards has been outstandingly more successful than for the used ones. Only a further study of the information at hand will confirm this, but that is not a matter of interest to cancellation collectors and will be published elsewhere.

We originally intended to use Art Bond's study of New York city post offices that appeared in the March 1968 issue of the USCC NEWS, but his paper was on late XIXth century locations and seems to vary slightly from a list in a 1902 publication by Bloomingdale Brothers, ROUND-ABOUT NEW YORK (page 47). This 1902 list is appended:

Post Offices

• General, Broadway and Park Row
Branch Post Office Stations

A—136 and 138 Greene
B—380 Grand
C—589 Hudson
D—25 and 27 Third Ave.
E—110-114 W. 82d
F—399 and 401 Third Ave.
G—1648 Broadway
H—Lexington Ave. cor. 44th
I—Columbus Ave., cor. 105th
J—Eighth Ave., cor. 124th
K—203 E. 86th
L—141 E. 125th
M—1905 Amsterdam Ave.

N—Broadway, cor. 69th
O—122 and 124 Fifth Ave.
P—Produce Exchange Building
R—Third Ave., cor. 150th (Morrisania)
S—Broadway, cor. Howard
T—3319 Third Ave.
U—Third Ave., cor. 103d
V—Cor. West Broadway and Canal
W—498 Columbus Ave.
Y—1160 and 1162 Third Ave.
Bedford Park—Southern Boulevard,
near Webster Ave.
City Island—Main and Fordham Ave.
Foreign Branch—Cor. West and Mor-
ton

High Bridge—Sedgwick Ave., near De-
pot Place
Kings Bridge—"Kings Bridge," near
Railroad Station
Madison Square—Madison Ave., cor. 23d
Tremont—719 Tremont Ave.
University Heights—University of the
City of New York
Westchester—Main near West Farms
Road
Williamsbridge—White Plains Ave.,
near Briggs Ave.

UPSS #	Dispatch Date	Time	Postmark City	Sta.	P.O. Mach.	Type	Rcvg Date	Pmk Time	Notes
0924-15	24	9 A	New York	B	1 C	E 32	24	12 M	Metro Sale #61, 1979
1005-19	5	3:30P	New York	?	H/S		5	7:30P	
1006-7	(Change to 1006-7B)								
1006-7A	6	9 A	New York	B	1 C	E 32	6	12 M	

Please make the following corrections to the May 1979 listing:

1006-6 Killer similar to 1005-6. (Add same note to 1008-7, 1009-13, and 1014-11.)

New Members

- 1285 Mario S. Giombetti
20500 107th St.
Bristol, Wis. 53104
- 1286 Larry K. Shick
P. O. Box 125
Pluckemin, NJ 07978
- 1287 Elliot Mitchnick
698 West End Avenue
New York, NY 10025
- 1288 Mark F. Hopkins
P.O. Box 5250
San Jose, CA 95150
- 1289 Daven A. Anderson
727 E. Seventh Ave.
Hindsdale, IL 60521
- 1290 Gerald F. Connolly
14 Bobwhite Lane
Hicksville, NY 11801

Change of Address

- 1269 Charles E. Sawyer
P.O. Box 22164
Houston, Texas 77027
- 733 Lt. C. F. H. Hemphill, Jr.
4326 Country Club Circle
Virginia Beach, Va. 23455
- 897 Eugene M. Espy
1383 Briarcliff Road
Macon, Georgia 31211
(zip code change)
- 645 David T. Skowlund
P.O. Box 8151
Maple Valley, Ohio 44320
- 999 Ltc Thomas R. Stone
6319 Stephen's Crossing
Mechanicsburg, Pa 17055
- 173 Rev. F. K. Smythe
Pineview Estates #306
Park Rapids, MN 56470
- 838 Barbara B. Fosdyke
P.O. Box 2568
Pomona, CA 91766

- 1265 John M. Jones
Box 867
Delaware, Ohio 43015
- 1115 Henry W. Beecher
P.O. Box 1377
Ashland, Ore. 97520
- 860 Henry Nowak
1550 N. Lake Shore Dr.
Chicago, IL 60610
- 339 Kenneth L. Rice
P.O. Box 6276
West Palm Beach, Fl. 33405
- 1090 Gerald F. Wiley
720 Davidson St.
Watertown, NY 13601
- 751 W. R. Bower
5 Zeela Jordan
Fontanelle, Ia. 50846
- 734 J. L. Haun
P.O. Box 522
State College, Pa 16801
- 3 Daniel A. Stone
Box 3
Blackhawk, Col. 80422
- 250 Charles R. West
P. O. Box 558
Berwyn, Il. 60402
- 1208 James R. Holloway
5330 Cleveland Rd.
Delray Beach, Fl. 33445

Want Ads

CONN WANTED. Early Conn stamped and stampless covers. Also, any Brookvale and South Cheshire, Conn cancels. Cash or trade. Ray Longobardi, P. O. Box 237, New Haven, CT 06502.

WANTED

Paid Cancellations on 3 cent 1861 on and off cover.

Daniel Knowles
39 East 12th Street
Apt. 308
New York, New York 10003