



U.S. Philatelic Classics Society

Volume: 50 Number: 4 Year: 1998 Chronicle: 180

Article: Display Advertisement
Advertiser: Taylor Made Company

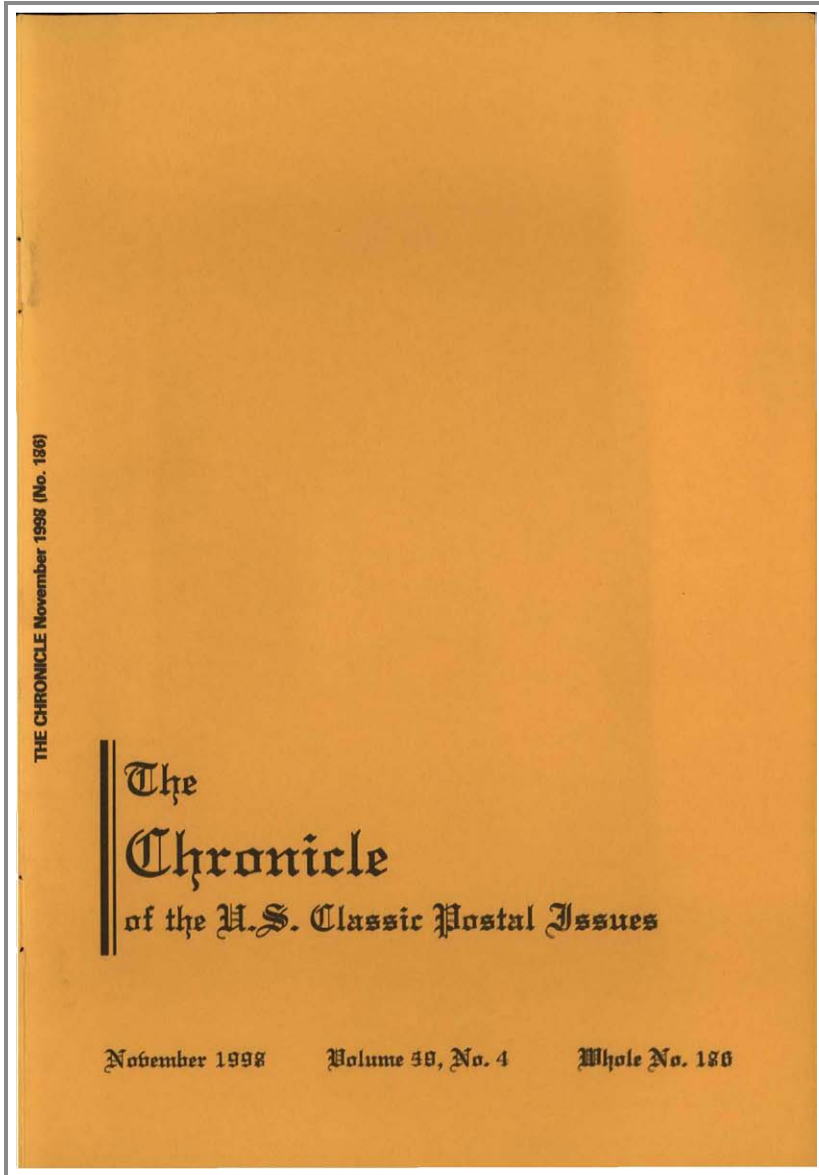


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Back Cover

The main island is located at 70 degrees longitude east of Greenwich (almost due south of Bombay, India) and 49.5 degrees south latitude and is part of an undersea plateau stretching southeasterly to the Antarctic Circle. (Figure 2). In the 19th century, there were a few shacks for the use of whaling ships to put in during an emergency. According to one source, there were enough rations to support 30 sailors for up to four months as well as medical supplies.

Mail, especially from France, was deposited in a box. Letters addressed to sailors on the whaling ships could be picked up by them if they chanced to put in to Kerguelen. Apparently, enough ships did so that this was not an unexpected practice for European whalers working the far south Indian or north Antarctic Oceans. While French covers to Kerguelen in this period are quite scarce, they are known.

On the other hand, this cover (Figure 1), franked with 2¢ and 10¢ 1893 Columbians on 1¢ Columbian postal stationery, paying the 8¢ registry and 5¢ U.P.U. rate, is the only 19th century cover yet recorded from America. Mailed from San Francisco on June 22, 1894, its other date stamps are New York City 6/28/94, Paris 7/9/94, Marseille 7/10/94 and Washington, D.C. Dead Letter Office, Registry Branch 11/20/94. These mailings show its trip to Kerguelen and its ultimate return as an undeliverable dead letter. There is no Kerguelen marking because there was no one there to postmark it, even if a date stamp had been available.

It is hard to imagine a more desolate, godforsaken and out-of-the-way address. For me, this cover has become the ultimate destination.



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