

**BARRED NUMERAL  
CANCELLATIONS  
OF  
ENGLAND  
AND  
WALES**

JOHN PARMENTER, DAVID LUCKLY,  
KEN SMITH

PROF. CEDRIC PRYS-ROBERTS (WALES)



**RUTLAND**



# BARRED NUMERAL CANCELLATIONS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

JOHN PARMENTER DAVID LUCKLY KEN SMITH  
WITH  
PROF. CEDRIC PRYS-ROBERTS (WALES)

This download is from the six-volume edition published between 2011&2013 by  
John Parmenter 23 Jeffreys Road, London SW4 6QU.

It incorporates the following:

- 1/ Status of the Offices that used barred numeral cancellations.
- 2/ A list of the Sub Offices of major Offices that used barred numeral cancels.
- 3/ The later numeral allocations that were made after barred numerals ceased to be issued.

Dates, codes and times in red are new to the published volumes.

Dates of a change in status are derived largely from the Post Office Guide for January of each year, if a change occurs in say the 1865 edition, it actually took place sometime in 1864.

## Status of the Offices

**Head Post Offices / Post Town** collected, sorted, cancelled and distributed mail from and to a series of Subordinate Offices.

The address of mail sent to a place with a Head Office would end just with the name of the town i.e. Bedford.

**Independent Sub Offices** evolved in the second half of the 19th Century having an address that was independent of the nearest Head Office, most of their mail could come straight to them.

Mail sent to these addresses ended with S.O. and the county name.

i.e. Shefford S.O. Beds. (from 1873 to 1886)

## Railway Sub Offices (R.S.O.)

These were offices that received and sent their mail to a travelling railway post office rather than a conventional head office.

i.e. Shefford R.S.O. Beds. (from 1886 to 1905)

When the term "Railway Sub Office" was abolished in 1905, these became Independent Sub Offices; in 1909 they became Post Towns. Although the term R.S.O. was abolished in 1905 it remained in use in many cds's for several years afterwards.

**Subordinate Offices** The address of mail sent there had to include the name of the Head Office:-

i.e. Potton, Biggleswade. (1844 to 1854)

i.e. Potton, St Neots. (1854 to 1872)

i.e. Potton, Sandy. (1872 to present)

These normally received and sent most of their mail direct to a Head Office.

In the text the dates given are for the length of time that they were sub offices not the period of use of barred numerals.

A Sub Office in an urban environment, before 1892 was called a Town Receiving Office.

**LETTER BOXES.**

Pillar Boxes and Wall Boxes, did not normally have their own cancellation, exception were Late Fee Letter Boxes at Railway Stations. The cancellation was applied either in the Travelling Post Office, eg. Euston Square Station with its provincial style 964 cancellation, or in transit the Manchester/Liverpool/Leeds/Bradford Late Box cancellations which were cancelled in London.

**THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE CANCELLATIONS:**

1844 type for the single obliterators issued to all the offices in the lists to 1850.



1844

**3HOS** is a 3 Bar Horizontal Oval Single obliterator

The 3HOS replaced the 1844 type in the 1850's. They can sometimes be very similar in that the 1844's can have three bars at the top and base. The key characteristic to separate these from a subsequently issued 3HOS is the length of the uppermost and lowermost bars. These are long in the 1844 type and short and often convex in the 3HOS. The figure 4 almost always has a serif on the horizontal bar in 1844s and is always sans serif in the 3HOSs.



3HOS



3TH.HOS

**4VOS** is a 4 Bar Vertical Oval Single obliterator

**3VOS** is a 3 Bar Vertical Oval Single obliterator

Obliterators that were first issued as a 4VOS can through wear and local recutting become a 3VOS or indeed rarely a 2VOS. As these always derive from the original 4VOS they are placed in that category. The evidence is that the size of the figures and letters stay the same despite the reduction in the number of bars. True 3VOS's are separately proofed as such and frequently replace a 4VOS.



4VOS



3VOS



3CD

3 bar Circular oval Duplex



4VOD



3VOD

Spoon and sideways duplex are pre-existing categories that have been used

4 bar Vertical Oval Duplex    3 bar Vertical Oval Duplex

**3VODX** A distinctive pattern of 3VOD was sent to 21 towns on 10 MAY1873. In the Proof Books the cds and obliterator were separately entered, with the cds often at an angle and some distance from the obliterator. In use the cds and obliterator were also some distance apart, they were the first 3VOD cancels to be issued. They are often described as a 3VOS in the literature. Of the 21, three are common Birmingham, Manchester and Cheltenham, 11 are very rare, and 7 have never been seen. They might have been for use in an experimental new style of handstamp or cancelling machine. Whatever the nature of the experiment it appears to not to have been successful.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

The majority of the illustrations are face different Proof Book entries. These have been photocopied from photocopies held in the Post Office archive.

There are very few examples of the 1844 type in the Proof Books, most examples in the catalogue have been traced from actual examples.

If there are two identical copies of a cancel entered at the same in the Proof Books this can often be shown to be the issue of two different cancels. The official stamping the entry found it easier to make two impressions of the same cancel rather than one of each.

## DATE OF ISSUE

The date attached to each illustration is the first date of entry in the Proof Books. Just the month and year are quoted because of the ambiguities in the various possible dates: -

1/ The date a cancellation was sent to a Head Office, this was not always the final destination.

2/ The date in the cds of the cancellation, this is not always the same as the date sent. It can indeed be almost a year out. Volume 15 of the Proof Books consists of cut outs of cancellations, these are often duplicate entries of cancels that are in other Proof Books - however the cds date in volume 15 can often be much earlier in the year than the date in the other Proof Books. The earlier date is certainly the correct one.

3/ The date a cancel was proofed – this is in a column marked “sent” in the Proof Books.

In the literature any of these three sources could have been used for the “date of issue”.

## RARITY & PRICE

The rarity index ranges from A = abundant to H = very few recorded. H\* has been used for proofed cancels that have only been recorded on loose stamp.

GPO means that the cancel has only been seen in the Proof Books.

Prices for coloured cancels have not been quoted, there is too much variation.

Prices have not been updated from those quoted in the six volume set issued 2011 to 2013 - i.e. they are at least 10 years old.

## POST OFFICE LISTS

The list of numeral allocations comes from a combination of several sources:-

1/ The Official Lists held in various forms in the Post Office Archives and several that are privately held.

2/ Individual changes in allocation listed in the Post Office Circular, which was a set of weekly instructions to Postmasters.

**The Official Lists** that have been used:-

1844 – contained in Dendy Marshall’s book. Thus seen by Brumell.

1845 - 1847 - 1855 - 1856 - 1857 contained in the relevant Post Office Directory.

1874 - 1882 - 1887 - 1892 - currently available in the Post Office Archives, in their file Post 55. The 1882 list is new, it was not seen or mentioned by Brumell.

1899 - Brumell mentions a list that he had not seen that was quoted by Whitworth (Southport 1905) as the “1899” list. Post Office Archives have an 1887 list with manuscript additions up to about 1900. This is certainly Whitworth’s “1899” list.

1902 - seen and listed by Brumell, but there is no longer a copy in the Post Office Archives.

1906 - currently available in the Post Office Archives, in Post 55. This was the last list used by Brumell.

1924, 1929 and 1949 - these have recently become available in the Post Office Archives, in Post 55, called Post Office Form 1013. They were not available to Mackay.

1954, 1959 - listed by George Pearson in his 1959 publication. The lists are not in the Post Office Archives.

1962 - an original list seen and quoted by Mackay. Given by him in 1990 to the Post Office Archives, but no longer available. A privately held copy has been downloaded from the GBPS website.

## **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

George Brumell, *British Post Office Numbers 1844 – 1906*. R.C.Alcock Cheltenham 1946 and 1971. The collectors "bible", the first edition had a section on postmarks, which was unfortunately left out of the later 1971 edition. It also contained a good description of earlier books published on Post Office numbers.

George Pearson, *List of Index Numbers used in Surcharge Explanatory and other Stamps in Great Britain and Northern Ireland*. Privately printed 1959. The only source for the 1954 and 1959 lists. A rare publication.

James A. Mackay, *British Post Office Numbers 1924 to 1969*. Published by the author 1981.

A good summary of what information was available at that time.

Marshall, Dendy *The British Post Office from its beginnings to the end of 1925*. Oxford University Press 1926. An interesting collection of information on the history of stamp issues and an index of people, places and items associated with British Postal history. Contains a good annotated bibliography.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This has been a cooperative effort, with over two hundred and fifty correspondents over the last forty years. Their input varies from a making a few additions to complete editing of whole chapters.

Particular help has been provided over many years by Grahame Blackman and David Tolfrey.

Post Office Archives: Many thanks for all their help in the past, although under the current regime research is becoming increasingly difficult. This follows a general tendency amongst archivists to make preservation the all-pervading priority and making access secondary.

RUTLAND

CALDECOTE H12

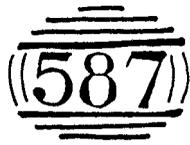
OAKHAM 587

UPPINGHAM 825

**587 OAKHAM**

Head Office from 1844, Head Office to Sub Office in 1967, Branch Office to Modified Scale Post Office in 1992.

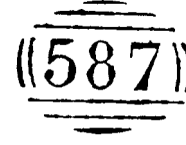
Allocated number 587 in all the lists from 1844 to 1962



1844  
APR1844



3HOS  
MAR1857



3HOS  
MAR1857

**1844** Used from 6 JUL1844 to 20 DEC1856 Price G £30

**3HOS** Used from 4 JUL1857 to 4 AUG1868 Price F £15



4VOS  
AUG1872



3VOS  
NOV1876



3VOS  
DEC1884

**4VOS** Used from 7 NOV1873 to 14 APR1875 Price H £40

**3VOS** GPO



3CD  
FEB1862



4VODA  
MAY1869

**3CD** Used from 8 SEP1862 to 5 JAN1871 Codes: B C D none Price B £3

**4VOD (Straight Oakham)** Used from 1JUN1869 to 16 APR1889 Codes: C D O none  
Price A £3



4VODB  
JUL1872

**4VODB (Curved Oakham)** Used from 10 AUG1872 to 1 JUN1894 Codes: B C D E H K M N  
Price A £3

RUTLAND



3VOD NOT  
ENTERED IN  
THE PROOF  
BOOKS

**3VOD Time in code** Used from 14 APR1890 to 21 NOV1892 Codes: B D M Price E £6

**3VOD Time in asterisk code** Used from 5 NOV1894 to 7 MAR1902

Codes: F\*A KK\*A AB\*P E\*P EC\*P HD\*P HDinv\*P HF\*P Price A £5

**3VOD Time in full** Used from 23 MAY1902 to 21 OCT1920

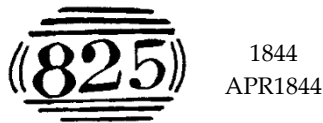
Times: 515AM 6AM 1015AM 1045AM 11AM 1130AM 1230PM 130PM 2PM 330PM 415PM  
5PM 6PM 715PM 8PM 815PM 9PM 915PM Price A £2

**825 UPPINGHAM**

Head Office 1844 to 1928, Independent Sub Office 1928 to 1974, Sub Office of Oakham 1974 to present.

Uppingham was allocated number 825 in all the lists from 1844 to 1962.

*Sub Office (that used barred numerals): Caldecote 1888 to 1923.*



**1844** Used from 7 SEP1844 to 25 APR1864 Price A £4

**1844 in blue** Used in DEC1850

**3TH.HOS** Used on 4 DEC1871 Price H £50



4VOD  
JUL1864

4VOD  
JUL1870

4VOD  
AUG1870



4VOD  
FEB1871

4VOD  
SEP187?



## RUTLAND

**4VOD** Used from 15 MAY1865 to 3 SEP1890 Codes: A B C D P 2 3 5 Price A £3  
Squared Circles in use: JAN1890 to AUG1907

### **H12 CALDECOTE**

Sub Office of Leicester 1864 to 1872, Railway Sub Office 1872 to 1888, Sub Office of Uppingham 1888 to 1923, Sub Office of Market Harborough (Leics) 1923 to 2011, closed 2011.

Caldecote was allocated number H12 in the 1882 to 1906 lists

**3VOS** GPO



3VOS  
MAY1884