

**BARRED NUMERAL
CANCELLATIONS
OF
ENGLAND
AND
WALES**

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KEN SMITH

PROF. CEDRIC PRYS-ROBERTS (WALES)



BEDFORDSHIRE

BARRED NUMERAL CANCELLATIONS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

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WITH
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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 obliterators were separately entered, with the cds often at an angle and some distance from the obliterators. In use the cds and obliterators were also some distance apart, they were the first 3VOD cancellations 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.

BEDFORDSHIRE INDEX 18-20

AMPTHILL 18
 BEDFORD 61
 BIGGLESWADE 71
 DUNSTABLE 266
 LEIGHTON BUZZARD 450
 LUTON 482

POTTON D80
 SANDY D79 & F79 & 979
 SHEFFORD D93
 SILSOE 20
 WOBURN 906

18 AMPTHILL

Head Post Office 1844 to 1919, Salaried Sub Office 1919 to 1929, Sub Office of Bedford 1929 to present.

Ampthill was allocated number 18 in all the lists from 1844 to 1962.

Sub Office (that used barred numerals):- 20 Silsoe 1844 to 1929.



1844
 APR1844



3CD
 FEB1863

1844 Used from 20 MAR1845 to 30 NOV1868 Price B £5
 3CD Used from 6 APR1863 to 5 JUN1865 Code: B Price F £15



4VOD
 FEB1869



4VOD FEB1869 ENTERED IN A
 PROOF BOOK COMPOSED OF
 CUT OUTS



4VOD
 JUL1873



4VOD
 MAR1877

4VOD Used from 18 JAN1875 to 5 APR1920 Codes: A Ainv B C none Price B £3
 Squared Circles in use: SEP1880 to MAY1907

20 SILSOE

Sub Office of Ampthill 1844 to 1929, Sub Office of Bedford 1929 to present.

Silsoe was allocated number 20 in the lists from 1844 to 1906.

Number 20 was later allocated to Aberdovey (Mer) 1950 to 1962.

1844 Used from 18 FEB1846 to 1 MAY1854 Price F £50

With a Silsoe cud and an Ampthill cds

After 1860 all mail was cancelled at Ampthill



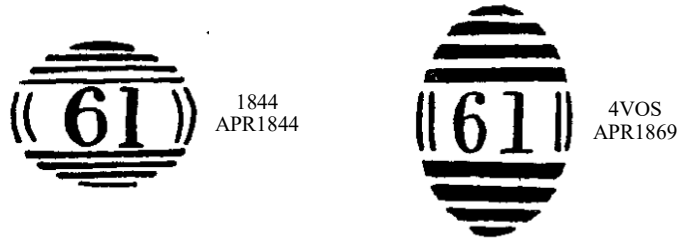
1844
 APR1844

BEDFORDSHIRE 61

61 BEDFORD

Head Post Office 1844 to present.

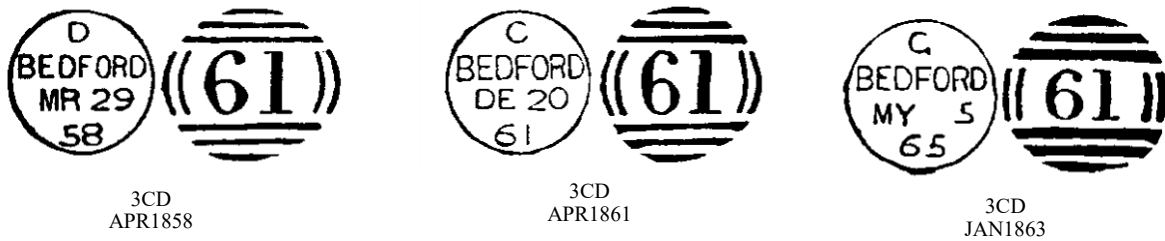
Bedford was allocated number 61 in all the lists from 1844 to 1962.



1844 Used from 19 JUN1844 to 13 OCT1858 Price B £5
4VOS GPO



3VOS Used from 25 NOV1881 to 13 MAR1928 Price H 19th century £50, 20th century £20
SDWYS Used from 24 JUN1856 to 12 JAN1861 Codes: A B C Cinv D O Price D £12



3CD Used from 21 APR1858 to 27 JUL1871 Codes: A B C D E F G O Price A £3



BEDFORDSHIRE 61-71

4VODA (Straight Bedford) Used from 18 APR1869 to 24 MAR1870

Codes: A C D E F G 8 Price D £6

4VODB (Curved Bedford) Used from 22 NOV1871 to 15 NOV1886

Codes: A B C D Dinv E F H I J L Price A £3



3VOD Time in code Used from 19 SE9 1874 to 6 NOV1894

Codes: A B Binv C D E F G H I J Jinv K L P T V Vinv W Price A £3

3VOD Time in full Used from 1JUL1895 to 10MAY1899

Times: 230AM 1245PM 345PM 430PM 515PM 545PM 630PM 645PM 730PM 815PM 845PM
9PM 915PM 1115PM Price B £3

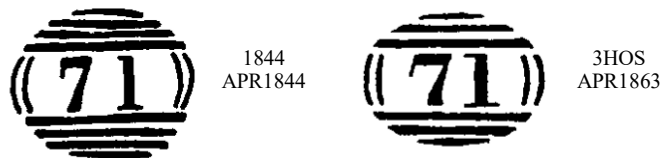
Squared Circles in use: OCT1887 to SEP1905

71 BIGGLESWADE

Head Post Office 1844 to ? Branch Office to Franchised Post Office in 1992.

Biggleswade was allocated number 71 in all the lists from 1844 to 1962.

Sub Office (that used barred numerals):- D93 Shefford 1844 to 1873.



1844 Used from 22 JUL1844 to 24 SEP1862 Price D £8

3HOS Used from 29 DEC1863 to 18 JAN1868 Price F £12



3VOS No dated copies recorded Price H* £40 (Price if found on dated cover)

4CD Used from 22 DEC1863 to 7 JUN1868 Codes: A C Price E £10

BEDFORDSHIRE 71-266



4VOD
JUN1868



4VOD
FEB1871



4VOD
JUL1876

4VOD Used from 21 AUG1868 to 6 MAY1894 Codes: A B C D E Einv F K L M Price B £3



3VOD
JAN1879



3VOD
DEC1883

3VOD Time in code Used from 18 AUG1879 to 18 OCT1887 Codes: A B E F Price G £12

3VOD Time in full Used from 21 SEP1902 to 25 JUN1910

Times: 10AM 1245PM 1PM 430PM 445PM 515PM 7PM 715PM 8PM 9PM Price A £3

Squared Circles in use: FEB1889 to MAR1905

266 DUNSTABLE

Head Post Office 1844 to present.

Dunstable was allocated number 266 in all the lists from 1844 to 1962.



1844
APR1844



3HOS
OCT1858

1844 Used from 30 JAN1847 to 18 AUG1858 Price E £12

1844 in blue Used in SEP1852

3HOS Used from 18 MAR1860 to 28 NOV1865 Price C £3



4VOS
MAR1866



3VOS
SEP1872



3VOS
MAY1880

4VOS GPO

3VOS Used from 4 AUG1873 to 21 DEC1916 Price G £50 on QV cover, £30 later.

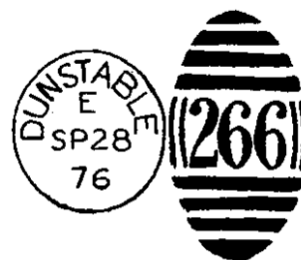
BEDFORDSHIRE 266-450



4VOD
MAR1866



4VOD
MAY1874



4VOD
SEP1876

4VOD Used from 26 APR1867 to 14 AUG1878 Codes: B C Cinv D E Price C £3



3VOD
SEP1879



3VOD
MAY1880



3VOD
DEC1883

3VOD Time in code Used from 23 APR1880 to 22 JUN94 Code: C Price F £10

3VOD Time in full Used from 29 APR1901 to 6 SEP1901

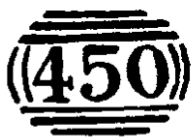
Times: 845AM 11AM 245PM 945PM Price G £12

Squared Circles in use: JAN1889 to SEP1906

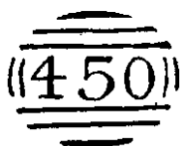
450 LEIGHTON BUZZARD

Head Post Office 1844 to present.

Leighton Buzzard was allocated number 450 in all the lists from 1844 to 1962.



1844
APR1844



3HOS
APR1856



3HOS NOT ENTERED
IN THE PROOF BOOKS
PRIVATELY
PRODUCED?

1844 Used from 23 MAY1844 to 16 NOV1855 Price E £12

3HOS Used from 17 APR1857 to 18 SEP1860 Price E £10 Seen in blue

What appears to be a privately produced 3HOS occurs on 20th C. undated postcards and philatelic covers in 1960 & 1977, illustrated above:



3TH.HOS
UNDATED



3CD
MAY1861

BEDFORDSHIRE 450-482

3TH.HOS Used from 6 DEC1870 to 9 DEC1870 Price H £50

3CD Time in code Used from 7 JUN1861 to 4 SEP1890 Codes: B D E G H I Price A £3

3CD Time in asterisk code Used from 20 SEP1895 to 14 DEC1895 & 13 MAY1898 to 2 JUL1898 Asterisk codes: LF*A AI*P DI*P FB*P HD*P I*P ID*P Price F £12

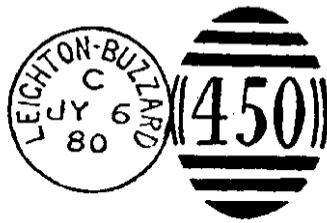
3CD Time in full Used from 16 JUN1903 to 1 MAY1922

Times: 1015AM 1130AM 1245PM 145PM 3PM 615PM 715PM 730PM 815PM 1110PM

Price A £3



4VOD
OCT1871



3VOD
JUL1880



3VOD
MAR1887

4VOD Used from 3 FEB1872 to 30 JUN1880 Codes: A B C D E Price C £3

3VOD Time in code Used from 5 NOV1882 to 6 MAR1894

Codes: A C D Esdwys F G H I J L Price B £3

3VOD Time in asterisk code Used from 15 APR1894 to 29 APR1898 & late use on 17 OCT1904 Codes: LE*A LF*A CE*P FB*P FD*P HD*P HI*P ID*P IG*P K*P MI*P Price E £10

3VOD Time in full Used from 15 JUL1898 to 13 MAR1915

Times: 7AM 1130AM 1145AM 1245PM 315PM 6PM 615PM 630PM 645PM 715PM 815PM 845PM 85PM 110PM Price A £3

482 LUTON

Head Post Office 1844 to present.

Luton was allocated number 482 in all the lists from 1844 to 1962.

482 1844 TYPE
NO EXAMPLE
SUFFICIENT
QUALITY TO
TRACE



3HOS
OCT1852



3HOS
MAR1855



3HOS
OCT1858



3HOS
JUN1860

1844 Used from 19 AUG1844 to 31 OCT1852 Price H £50

1844 in blue Used on 31 OCT1852

3HOS Used from 16 JUN1855 to 28 JAN1864 Price F £15



3VOS
JAN1876



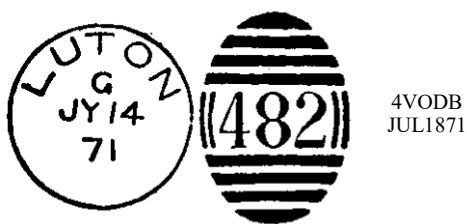
3CD
JUL1861

BEDFORDSHIRE 482-906

3VOS Used from 3 MAY 1880 to 15 SEP1953 Price H £60 early 20th C. £10 late 20th C.
3CD Used from 3 FEB1865 to 1 SEP1876 Codes: B C E F 5 Price D £6



4VODA (Straight Luton) Used from 14 SEP1866 to 7 DEC1877 Codes: C D E Price C £3



4VODB (Curved Luton) Used from 28 JUL1871 to 3 DEC1879 Codes: C D E F H Price B £3



3VOD Time in code Used from 15 APR1878 to 5 OCT1896

Codes: A B C D E F G H I J K M N S U W Price A £3

3VOD Time in full Used from 10 SEP1897 to 11 AUG1904

Times: 6AM 10AM 1015AM 12PM 215PM 230PM 315PM 445PM 7PM 715PM 730PM 845PM 915PM Price B £3

Squared Circles in use: MAR1892 to MAY1905

906 WOBURN

Head Post Office 1844 to 1898, Railway Sub Office 1898 to 1905, Independent Sub Office 1905 to 1922, Sub Office of Bletchley 1922 to 1973, Sub Office of Milton Keynes 1973 to present.

Woburn was allocated number 906 in the lists from 1844 to 1929.

Number 906 was later allocated to Wigston, Leicestershire in the 1938 to 1962 lists.

BEDFORDSHIRE 906



1844
APR1844



3HOS NOT ENTERED
IN THE PROOF
BOOKS

1844 Used from 24 SEP1844 to 3 FEB1857 Price F £15
1844 in blue Used from 20 JAN1850 to 14 JUN1853
3HOS Used from 24 SEP1856 to 7 DEC1862 Price E £12



4VOS
AUG1868



3VOS
NOV1879

4VOS GPO
3VOS GPO



3CD
FEB1863

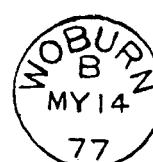
3CD Used from 21 MAY1863 to 7 JUL1871 Codes: A B C Price E £15



4VOD
FEB1872



4VOD
JUN1874



4VOD
MAY1877

4VOD Used from 6 MAR1872 to 25 SEP1879 Code: B Price D £6
 All three issues from the Proof Books are now illustrated.



3VOD
NOV1879

3VOD Used from 31 MAY1880 to 4 MAR1891 Codes: A B Binv C Price E £8
 Squared Circles in use: JUN1894 to DEC1905

BEDFORDSHIRE D79-D80

979 Sandy

Sandy was allocated number F79 in the lists from 1874 to 1924 and 979 from 1928 to 1962.

D79 SANDY

Sub Office of St.Neots 1844 to 1872, Head Post Office 1872 to 1919, Salaried Sub Office 1919 to present.

Sandy was allocated number F79 in the lists from 1874 to 1924 and 979 from 1928 to 1962.

Number D79 was allocated to Twyford, Berkshire in the 1882 to 1906 lists. The D79 allocation to Sandy was not in any list, it was either a very short lived allocation just before the publication of the 1874 list or an error of number D79 instead of F79. The first numeral D79 was sent to Sandy in 1868, the first numbered F79 was in 1873.

4VOS Used from 3 JUL1870 to 31 JUL1872 Price H £100+
Squared Circles in use: JUL1885 to JUN1918



4VOS
AUG1868

D80 POTTON

Sub Office of Biggleswade 1845 to 1854, Sub Office of St.Neots 1854 to 1872, Sub Office of Sandy 1872 to present.

Potton was allocated number D80 in the lists from 1874 to 1906.

D80 was only allocated to Potton.



4VOS
AUG1868



3VOS
NOV1879

4VOS Used from 6 MAR 1869 to 1 NOV1879 Price H £60
3VOS GPO



3VOD
NOV1879

3VOD Time in code Used from 28 NOV1879 to 28 AUG1894 Codes: A B C D Price D £6

3VOD Time in asterisk code Used from 13 MAR1895 to 23 APR1899

Codes: CC*P EF*P GG*P Price G £15

3VOD Time in full Used from 18 SEP1899 to 25 AUG1905

Times: 830AM 1130AM 530PM 715PM Price E £6

BEDFORDSHIRE D93-F79

D93 SHEFFORD

Sub Office of Biggleswade 1844 to 1873, Independent Sub Office 1873 to 1886, Railway Sub Office 1886 to 1905, Independent Sub Office 1905 to present.
Shefford was allocated number D93 in the lists from 1874 to 1924.



4VOS
NOV1868



3VOD
JUN1883

4VOS Used on 7 NOV1878 Price H £80

3VOD Time in code Used from 14 DEC1883 to 26 MAY 1892 Codes: A B C D Price E £15

3VOD Time in full Used from 9 FEB1895 to 25 APR 1906

Times: 10AM 145PM 245M 3PM 515PM 615PM 730PM 75PM 10PM 1015PM Price C £3

F79 SANDY

Sub Office of St.Neots 1844 to 1872, Head Post Office 1872 to 1919, Salaried Sub Office 1919 to present.

See D79 above for the earlier use of a D79 4VOS at Sandy.

Mail from Sandy was cancelled at Potton in 1879, despite Potton being the subordinate office.

Sandy was allocated number F79 in the lists from 1874 to 1924 and 979 from 1928 to 1962.

Sub Office (that used barred numerals):- D80 Potton 1872 to present



3VOS
DEC1873



4VOD
AUG1872

3VOS No dated copies recorded Price H*£80+ (Price if found on dated cover)

4VOD Used from 3 SEP1873 to 17 MAR1904 Codes: B C D E H I J Price C £8



3VOD NOT
ENTERED IN
THE PROOF
BOOKS

3VOD Used from 25 AUG1904 to 12 MAY1910 Times: 930AM 1245PM 230PM 545PM 6PM
645PM 7PM 745PM 8PM 845PM 915PM 930PM 945PM Price A £3