

**BARRED NUMERAL  
CANCELLATIONS  
OF  
ENGLAND  
AND  
WALES**

JOHN PARMENTER, DAVID LUCKLY,  
KEN SMITH

PROF. CEDRIC PRYS-ROBERTS (WALES)



**CHANNEL ISLANDS**



# 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 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.

CHANNEL ISLANDS INDEX 324

ALDERNEY 965  
 GUERNSEY 324  
 JERSEY 409

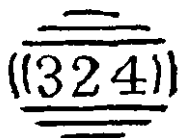
**324 GUERNSEY**

Head Post Office 1844 onwards.

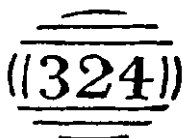
Guernsey was allocated number 324 in all the lists from 1844 to 1962.



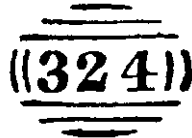
1844  
 APR1844



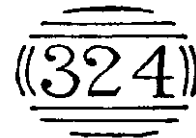
3HOSA  
 OCT1853



3HOSA  
 JUN1858



3HOSA  
 JAN1858



3HOSB  
 MAR1856

**1844** Used from 17 JUN1844 to 17 SEP1853 Price C £30

**3HOSA (Less than 7mm figs)** Used from 16 NOV1853 to 24 JAN1871 Price F £30

**3HOSB (7mm figs)** Used from 19 MAY1856 to 11 JAN1880 Price D £30



4VOS  
 JAN1872



3VOSA  
 JAN1874

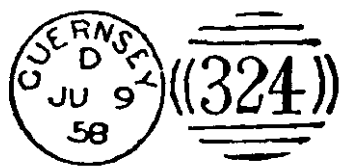


3VOSB  
 FEB1874

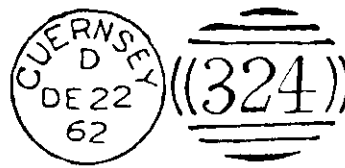
**4VOS GPO**

**3VOSA (Serif on 4)** No dated copies seen Price H\* £60+ (Price if found on dated cover)

**3VOSB (No serif)** Used from 30 OCT1874 to 29 OCT1905 Price G £40

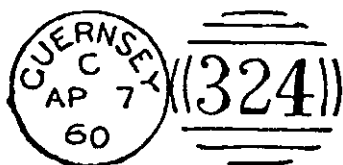


3CDA  
 JAN1874

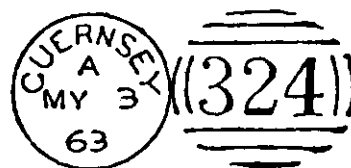


3CDA  
 JAN1874

**3CDA (cds separate from the side arcs)** Used from 23 AUG1858 to 9 OCT1867 Codes: A B C  
 Price A £15



3CDB  
 JAN1874



3CDB  
 JAN1874

CHANNEL ISLANDS 324-409

**3CDB (cnds touches the side arcs)** Used from 6 AUG1860 to 15 JUN1867 Codes: A B C  
Price E £20



4VODA  
OCT1867



4VODA  
OCT1870



4VODB NOT ENTERED  
IN THE PROOF BOOKS



**4VODA (Thick bars)** Used from 30 OCT1867 to 10 JAN1880 Codes: A B C Price A £15

**4VODB (Thin bars and smaller figures)** Used from 28 FEB1880 to 26 SEP1887 Codes: A B C

Price A £15

Squared Circles in use: DEC1887 to JAN1905

**409 JERSEY**

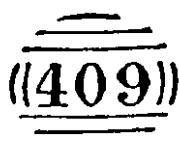
Head Post Office 1844 onwards.

Jersey was allocated number 409 in all the lists from 1844 to 1962.

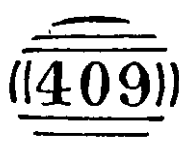
*Sub Office (that used barred numerals):- 965 Alderney 1854 to 1885*



1844  
APR1844



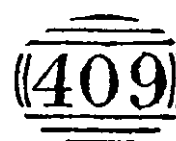
3HOS  
JUN1857



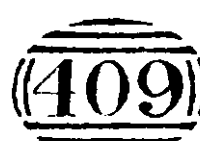
3HOS OC-  
T1857



3HOS Not entered  
in the Proof Books



3HOS  
JUL1860



3HOS  
SEP1862

**1844** Used from 22 MAY1844 to 5 NOV1895 Price A £25

**3HOS** Used from 31 JUL1857 to 13 MAY1869 Price E £30

Types A B C & D have been placed together



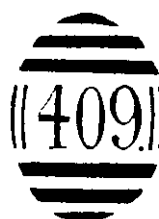
4VOS  
DEC1870



4VOS Not entered  
in the Proof Books



3VOS  
APR1873



3VOS OC-  
T1874



3VOS  
DEC1875

**4VOS** Used from 8 MAY1872 to 25 JUN1895 Price D £30

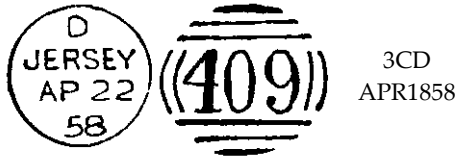
Types A & B have been placed together

**3VOS** Used from 22 APR1879 Price H £50

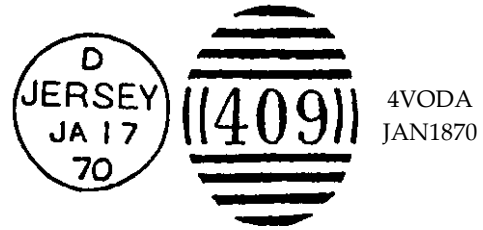
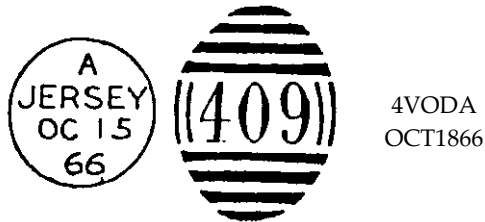
Types A B & C have been placed together



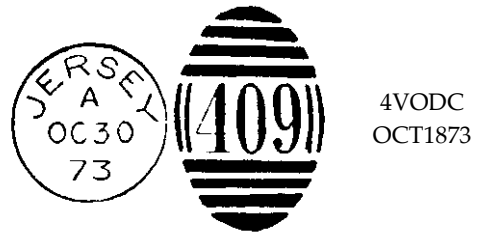
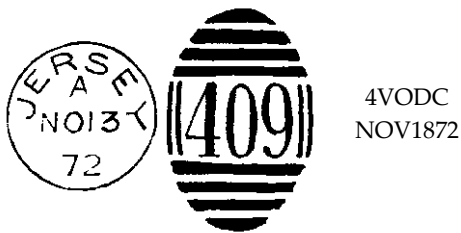
CHANNEL ISLANDS 409



**3CD** Used from 11 JUL1858 to OCT1872 Codes: A B C Price C £15  
Types A & B have been placed together



**4VODA (Straight Jersey)** Used from 21 OCT1866 to 30 OCT1872 Codes: C Cinv  
Price C £15



**4VODC (Curved Jersey)** Used from 13 AUG1871 to 6 JAN1882 Codes: A B C D  
Price A £15  
Square Circles in use: MAR1881 to OCT1905



**3VOD** An entry occurs in the Proof Books for a 3VOD to be used in a "stamping machine".  
This has not been seen in use

## CHANNEL ISLANDS 965

### 965 ALDERNEY

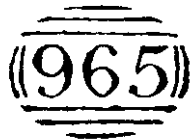
Sub Office of Guernsey 1854 to 1885, Railway Sub Office 1885 to 1905.

Alderney was allocated number 965 in the lists from 1849 to 1906.

Number 965 was later allocated to Heywood (Lancs) 1928 to 1962.



1844  
APR 1844



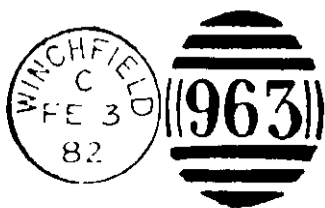
3HOS  
JAN 1862

**1844** Used from 12 DEC 1850 to SEP 1861 Price F £400++

**3HOS** Used from 27 SEP 1865 to MAY 1891 Price E £150++

There is a so called error of number with the 965 of Alderney used in Winchfield Hants.  
This is a 3VOD of Winchfield with a pronounced serif on the top bar of the 5 and a weak up stroke.

It is not an error of number!



The so called Alderney (965)  
error of number