

L7: 4d

WATERLOW & SONS 'SHIFT MARKINGS'(1941 - 1945)



These are a most interesting, not fully researched, series of markings applied to certain plates during the period when Waterlow's were making emergency printings on behalf of De La Rue & Co., after the latter's premises were damaged by bombs in the London Blitz of 1940-41.

The markings are stated to have been intended as an internal indication (to Waterlow's) as to which shift had printed any particular sheet, and take the form of progressive series of dots (in the colours of the stamps concerned) on the selvages of issued sheets – at top centre in the 4d and 8d, and at right centre in the 5d and 6d. As far as is known at present none of the markings was subsequently removed, so all continued to appear (in their final forms) on later printings from the plates involved.

Shift markings are recorded on the following issues: **L7c, L07c, L7d, L07d, L7e, L07e, L8d, L8e, L8f, L9c, L09c, L09c (z), L9d, L09d, L9e, L09e, L10d, L010d, L10e, L010e.** For many years, it was believed that these 'shift dots' were a short-lived phenomenon, restricted to the issues detailed above, but more recently similar markings have been found in the 1946 and 1947 Health issues and 1946 Peace 3d. It is therefore probable that much remains undiscovered about both the nature and extent of use of shift markings by Waterlow's. All pieces showing shift markings are worth a considerable premium over the stamps they contain.