

THE COLOURS ON THE GAS WAR COUPONS

by Don Roebuck #848

What are the colours on the Gas War coupons? The Bilodeau Guide (6th ed., vol. 2) doesn't say, but the Charlton Catalogue does, and the colours are also listed in an article by Roger Fox in the Collector (vol. 3, no. 2):

	Charlton	Fox
2 cents	gray black	gray
5 cents	light green	green
10 cents	orange	red
25 cents	mauve	mauve

The problem with these coupons is that the coloured area (or, to be precise, what appears to be the coloured area from a few feet away) is made up of tiny dots, about 0.2 mm in diameter, which cover only about 20 per cent of this area.¹ As a result, the colour of this area is a very pale version of the colour of the individual dots, which makes it harder to identify. And the solution to this problem is to use a 10- or 20-power loupe and the Stanley Gibbons Stamp Colour Key. This is the only colour identifier, made for stamp collectors, that I know of that you can use with a loupe, because the swatches are solid, rather than being made up of halftone dots.²

The two lists of colours disagree on the colour of the 10-cent coupon. On my 10-cent coupon, the nearest Gibbons colour – nearest, that is, to the colour of the individual dots – is “Rose-Pink”. But there are two reasons why the Charlton Catalogue people may have thought that this colour was orange.

One is that the coupon that they examined may actually have been orange. Remember that the Gas War coupons were printed by CTC, and that the “red” on the Sandy McTire coupons, which were also printed by CTC, is sometimes closer to orange. The other possible reason is that the coupon that they examined may have been yellowed, and the “yellow” may have combined, visually, with the rose-pink to give an overall impression more like orange.

But my main concern was the 2-cent coupon, because to me it looked bluish. So I asked my wife what colour it was, and, without hesitating, she said “Blue.” Well, the nearest Gibbons colour is “Slate-Blue”. But this is a very dull (i.e., grayish) blue, so I can see why people might think that it's gray.

What all this shows is that the colours on the Gas War coupons are basically the same as the colours on the corresponding store coupons that were then in use (CTC S1), except that the lowest Gas War denomination was 2 cents instead of 3 cents.

Notes

1. These are not halftone dots. The pattern is of a type that appears, in several variants, on the “cartographic and geological patterns” page of my old Letraset catalogue.
2. The Stanley Gibbons Stamp Colour Key has 200 swatches. You should be able to buy it from any stamp dealer. It's a bit expensive (\$39.50 in the 2006 Unitrade catalogue), probably because of the way it was printed. And you should keep it in a dark place!

NEW GRAND OPENING TRUCK DISCOVERED

by John Merrick #905



Well it's not a rumour anymore. This is the Vegreville 2008 Grand Opening 1928 Chevy Pick-up. The payload in the box of the truck is 4 bags of earth, a shovel, a leaf rake and a wheelbarrow. It was issued for a store in a tiny little town with a population of only 5,834 in Alberta. I have included a full set of photos. The reported quantity that was ordered was 252 units. The store owner that commissioned this truck is no longer at this store.