

British Vehicle Camouflage 1939-45 Part 3.

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BS.987C: Camouflage Colours 1942, amended 1944 & 1945.

Coloured paints produced in enamel for wood and metal and bituminous emulsion for canvas. Only S.C.C. 15 Olive Drab and S.C.C. 16 Very Dark Drab of this set were named, all others are colloquial terms from contemporary sources.

S.C.C. 1A (very dark brown)

Mix: Revell 84 + Humbrol 33 + 113 in ratio 8:2:1. A reasonable match can be made with 170 + 33 in ratio 6:1. WEM ARB015 is a very good match.

In use: 1941 -45 as disruptive in M.T.P. 20 and M.T.P. 46/4A schemes and as alternative dark shade in 1942 ME patterns.

Description: The colour of plain chocolate - a warm black or deep rich brown. Medium contrast with S.C.C. 2, an alternative colour was S.C.C. 14 Black.

S.C.C. 2 (brown, khaki brown or service drab)

Mix: Revell 84 + Revell 86 in ratio 16:5. Acceptable results can be had with Humbrol 98 + 29 in ratio 5:4.

WEM ARB05 is slightly light but can be used on a model as is.

Dyed tilts in S.C.C. 2 can be represented by Humbrol 29 mixed with slight touches of white, black or grey to detail variations in dye.

In use: 1941 - 1945 as basic colour with S.C.C. 1A or S.C.C. 14.

Description: Rich dark brown with a hint of 'khaki'.

S.C.C. 4 (cup of tea)

Mix: 29 + 74 in ratio 16:1. Straight 29 may be a fair match.

In use: Possibly and only occasionally 1942 - 44 as basic shade with S.C.C. 2

disruptive in unofficial M.T.P.46 scheme.

Description: Dull medium earth colour - what we would call "dark earth" but NOT the R.A.F. colour which is lighter and more yellow.

S.C.C. 7 (warm green and Dark Green in Australian orders)

Mix: 195 +154+174 in ratio 7:2:1. A reasonable match is equal parts of 150 and 116.

In use: 1941-45 on canvas tilts, tents and penthouses in European schemes. As disruptive colour in Australian orders with Light Stone No.61 or Portland Stone No.64 in Trans-Jordan and Palestine.

S.C.C. 13 ('Jungle Green')

Mix: 159 + 155 + 33 in ratio 4:3:1.

In use: A basic colour only. Replaced ME and UK colours in India, Burma and Far East 1943-45.

Description: Very drab/ muddy dark green. Darker than U.S. Olive Drab.

S.C.C. 14 (blue-black or charcoal)

Mix: 33+67 in ratio 4:1 or straight Revell 9 anthracite grey.

WEM ARB16 a very close match.

In use: 1941-45 in M.T.P. 46 scheme and with S.C.C. 15 in N.W.Europe.

Disruptive colour in Middle East schemes.

Description: A very noticeably blue-black.

S.C.C. 15 Olive Drab.

Mix: 150 + 159 + 33 in ratio 5:5:2. A reasonable match is 159 + 33 in ratio 8:1. Dyed tilts can be represented by Humbrol 150.

In use: Introduced April 1944 in A.C.I. 533 as new basic colour with or without S.C.C.1A or 14 disruptive paintwork as M.T.P.46 for operations in N.W.Europe and Italy.

Description: Fresh olive drab, a very dark drab inclined towards green.

Unlike the US colour which it resembles when new, this fades green.

Noticeable contrast with black and less so with S.C.C. 1A. Definitely NOT blue-green or like any Humbrol colours.

S.C.C. 16 Very Dark Drab.

Mix 155 + 66 + 33 in ratio 10:2:1. A slight lighter colour than the standard, OK on a model.

In use; Possibly introduced as early as mid-1944 for use in India-Burma, colour S.C.C. 207 of same name mentioned in Far East documents.
Description; A dull dirty brown green, darker than S.C.C. 13.

U.S. Colours.

No.319/ No.9 Olive Drab.

Mix: 159 + 33 in ration 11:2 or Humbrol 155 + Revell 42 in 1 : 1 for true colour, adding more Humbrol 155 gives a good faded average. When fresh it is close to British S.C.C. 15 Olive Drab.

In use: 1860 - 1970. But 1941- 45 on Lend lease equipment on its own or in Italy with Light Mud and rarely black.

Description: Varies with manufacturer and fading. FS595A 34087 in some version is too brown and light, despite being widely cited as a match.

Nearest is FS595B 33070 a dark drab with a green hint when new , fading brown or grey in use.

Non BS Theatre colours.

Desert Pink Z.I.

Mix: 34 + 118 in ratio 4:1. A provisional mix. Use as is for model.

In use: 1942-43 Egypt, Western Desert and Tunisia; Introduced by G.O1650 of October 1942 as new basic colour with disruptive colours on certain classes of vehicle or on its own.

Description: Earthy pink or warm sandy pink locally produced.

Dark (Olive) Green PFI.

Mix: 116 + 150 in ratio 2:1 or could be slightly greener. A provisional mix.

In use: 1942-43 Egypt, Western Desert and Tunisia; Introduced by G.O1650 of October 1942 as new disruptive colour on certain classes of vehicle. Alternatives are Black, very dark brown or Slate No.34.

Description: A dark olive green colour locally produced.

Light Mud

Mix: 187 + 31 +34 in ratio 6:1:1. A provisional colour according to colour photographs and verbal descriptions. WEM ARB17 is very close, use as is on a model.

In use: Tunisia, Sicily and Italy 1943 -45 as basic colour in disruptive

patterns. Seldom if ever on its own.

Sometimes used as disruptive over Khaki Green No. 3 or S.C.C. 2 when units moved to Sicily from Tunisia and over U.S Olive Drab on some Lend Lease vehicles.

Description: Dirty sandy grey. Described by veterans as "light grey" and "dirty grey-beige".

REFERENCES

Much is still being written up by Mike Starmer but the basic framework is given here and in: Hodges, P and Taylor M. 'British Military Markings' (revised edition) Cannon Publications 1994. Note that the information is not contained in the earlier edition. Mike Starmer, who has added a wealth of primary research, has matched colours against original British Standards where possible or advice and confirmation sought from authoritative sources. Paul Lucas has researched 'Dark Sand' from Primary Sources and Ian Scrivener has provided much information and advice into colour history. See also <http://www.milifax2003tripod.com> by Steve Guthrie for coloured illustrations and some colour notes.