CONESTOGA

a modern prairie schooner

Feeling foot-loose and fancy-free? Then build this $150 trailer and spend your vacation roaming at will.

By Elsie D. and Vaughn Hunt

In cooking area, bucket holds spring water and fresh tea towels tuck between canvas and bows, which make a perfect "clamp" for holding them.

Dresser on opposite side has shelves above and storage bin below. Heating stove and stack are backed by asbestos to protect surrounding wood.
(Continued on next page)
Completed trailer weighs but 450 lbs., so it is
easy to handle. Since the road clearance is 18
in., you can take it anywhere your car will go.

Close-up showing hitch and two of the four pipe
stands that support trailer when stops are made.
One end of the bottled-gas tank appears at left.

If you're looking for something differ-
ent in the way of a trailer, you'll
want to hear about our covered wagon. We
built it for only $150. Let us take you
through the series of steps necessary to
duplicate it.

Before starting, of course, you should
have some knowledge of the use of hammer
and saw. You may build the project any
size that strikes your fancy. To meet our
particular needs for vacation trips, ours is
small. Set crosswise at the front of the
trailer are a double-bed spring and mat-
tress. There's storage space beneath the
bed for luggage and camp chairs. At the
back of the trailer, on both sides of the
door, dressers with shelves above provide
space for all our cooking equipment, uten-
sils, and supplies.

The completed trailer weighs exactly
450 lbs. It trails up steep mountain grades
like a breeze. Since the road clearance is
18 in., we can take it anywhere our car will
go. And it is easy to handle. When we get
into tight places, we often unhook the
trailer and turn it around by hand.

We had an ironworker build the 47x96-
in. frame from 2x2-in. angle bar. This is set
on car springs. Since we wanted to have
these flexible under the light load, we had
all of the leaves removed but three on each
side. For running gear, a pair of second-
hand 6.00x16 wheels and tires, complete
with axle, were employed. The V-shaped
tow bar consists of two lengths of
1/4x1 1/2x1 1/2-in. angle bar welded to the
frame.

Cement-coated nails and stove bolts se-
cure the 1x6-in. floor boards and their
1x4-in. cleats to each other and to the
frame. Eight lengths of 1x1-in. angle bar
were bent to Z shape and welded to the
frame by our ironworker friend. These
have 1x1-in. diagonal angle-bar braces.
They form supports for the sides, ends, and
wing flooring, which consist of 1x4-in. and
1x6-in. stock and are bolted in place. The
top boards on the sides and ends are joined
with sheet-metal straps. All flooring is
covered with linoleum to keep out dust.

The front and back ends are framed with
2x2-in. stock and covered above the end
boards with curved-top pieces of Masonite.
The wagon bows were purchased from a
hardware store. We had a carpenter rip
each in half on a power saw, which resulted
in four lightweight bows. These are fasten-
ted to the trailer sides with 1/4x1 1/2-in.
bolts. The frame headers are secured to
the uprights with 20d nails and the Mason-
ite is nailed to the framing and the bows.
Openings are cut in the Masonite for a
window and a door. Wire screening is
tacked over the outside of the window
opening and trimmed with screen molding.
Window glass is set between the framing
uprights and held in place with window
stop. The glass fits loosely enough to enable
us to raise and lower it from inside. The
door is constructed by building a 1x4-in.
frame and covering it with Masonite. The
window in this door is similar to the one
in the front of the trailer. Both windows
are set at the same height so the driver can
see right through the trailer to watch traffic
behind him.

At this point, the spring and mattress
were set in place. This is important because
they won't fit through the door, but must
be installed before canvas top is put on.

Wooden strips, 1/2x3 in., are set on top
of the side boards and bolted to the bows.
Seven 1/2x1 1/2-in. longitudinal battens are
then spaced evenly and bolted to the bows.
The canvas cover is stretched over this
framework and [Continued on page 160]
Conestoga

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secured to the sides and ends with 4d nails that are driven through short lengths of screen molding. The cover is treated with canvas preservative, which goes on just like paint and dries quickly.

The dresser tops and shelves are made from 1x12-in. boards and are supported by scrapwood frames. You can be as original as you like when building these. Our dressers are 31 in. high and have 24x36-in. tops. We covered all work surfaces with linoleum remnants fastened down with upholstery tacks. The inboard edges of the wing flooring under the dresser tops have ½x3-in. lips nailed to them. When working or eating at the dressers, the bed serves as a seat and a camp stool can be set up near the door.

Pipe stands support the trailer when stops are made. A welded assembly consisting of a 5-in. length of 1-in. pipe and a 9-in. length of 2x2-in. angle bar is bolted to each corner of the trailer. Through each pipe is slipped a 28-in.-length of ¾-in. pipe that has a 3x3-in. pad welded to the bottom. One hole through each corner assembly and ten holes through each ¾-in. pipe take ½-in. bolts and allow the stands to be adjusted to suit uneven ground.

**BILL OF MATERIALS**

(Approximate Quantities Required)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 ft. half-elliptic leaf springs</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 ft. ½x2x2 angle bar</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 ft. ½x1½x1½ angle bar</td>
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<td>42 ft. 3½x1 angle bar</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 pieces ½x3x3 flat bar</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 ft. 18-ga. metal strip, 1&quot; wide</td>
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<td>20 in. 1&quot; pipe</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 ft. ½&quot; pipe</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 lineal ft. 2&quot; x 2&quot; dimension stock</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 lineal ft. 1&quot; x 12&quot; boards</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>188 lineal ft. 1&quot; x 6&quot; boards</td>
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</tr>
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<td>48 lineal ft. 1&quot; x 4&quot; boards</td>
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<td>22 lineal ft. ½x3 wooden strips</td>
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<td>56 lineal ft. ½x1½ angle bar</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 lineal ft. window stop</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 lineal ft. screen molding</td>
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<td>3 sheets ½x4½x3 Masonite</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 12-ft. wagon bows</td>
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<td>8 20d common nails</td>
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<tr>
<td>½ lb. 6d box nails</td>
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<tr>
<td>½ lb. 6d cement-coated box nails</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1 box upholstery tacks</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 dozen ½x2½x½ stave bolts with nuts</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 dozen ½x1½x½ stave bolts with nuts</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 door hinges</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 hasp-and-staple set with padlock</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 screen-door lock</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 pieces wire screeing, 14½x20</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 pieces window glass, 12½x18</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 piece white canvas, 8½x12½x½</td>
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<td>1 piece spring, double-bed size</td>
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<td>1 pint canvas preservative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linoleum remnants and linoleum paste</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Paint

**FREE, FOR YOU!**

June, 1953