

## Custom Of Driving To Right In U. S. Started In Colonial Days When Conestogas Hauled Freight

By DAN MURDOCH

Once in the last war the Americans were moving out of a Pacific airbase and the Australians were moving in. So the Americans thoughtfully learned to drive to the left in order not to confuse the Australians. The Australians had the same idea: they learned to drive to the RIGHT to make it easier for the Americans. You can guess what happened. Not just an ordinary traffic-jam, but a super-duper mix-up.

Why do people in America keep to the right while in England and many other countries they keep to the left?

It all goes back hundreds of years to wagon-driving days.

end of the wagon with his load of hay or vegetables piled high behind him.

If you were the driver, where would sit on the board? If you sat on the LEFT end, the load behind you would get in your way every time you lifted your RIGHT arm to handle your whip. But if you sat on the RIGHT of the board, you'd have plenty of elbow-room for your right arm and whip.

What would you do if you met another driver? Roads in those

days were narrow and slippery. If the two drivers didn't pass carefully, there'd be a collision, and perhaps a spill. If you kept to the RIGHT, you'd be on the OUTSIDE of the road. You couldn't see the space between the two wagons. But if you kept to the LEFT, you'd be closer to the center of the road and could watch the other fellow carefully and avoid trouble.

That's how the custom of driving to the left started in England. It was a "different story in

colonial America. Here was a big, sprawling land, with large, heavy loads going long distances. The colonists used long, narrow wagons, shaped something like a boat, and pulled by six or eight horses. These wagons were called Conestoga wagons, because the farmers of Conestoga Valley, Pennsylvania, first used them to ship wheat to Philadelphia. Later this kind of wagon was used by west-bound pioneers—the famous "covered wagons" of fact and fiction.

Which rear horse would you sit on if you were the driver—left-hand or right-hand horse? If you sat on the RIGHT-hand horse, you couldn't use your whip very well on horses to your left. But if you sat on the LEFT-hand horse, or

walked beside him, you could easily reach every horse. They'd all be in front and to your right.

Every kind of wagon in the colonies had to follow Conestoga rules. The wagons were big and heavy and fast, and their drivers were tough and touchy. If you passed a Conestoga on the wrong side, you generally found yourself pushed off the road or maybe sending yourself in a fight.

And that's the way the custom of driving to the right started in America.

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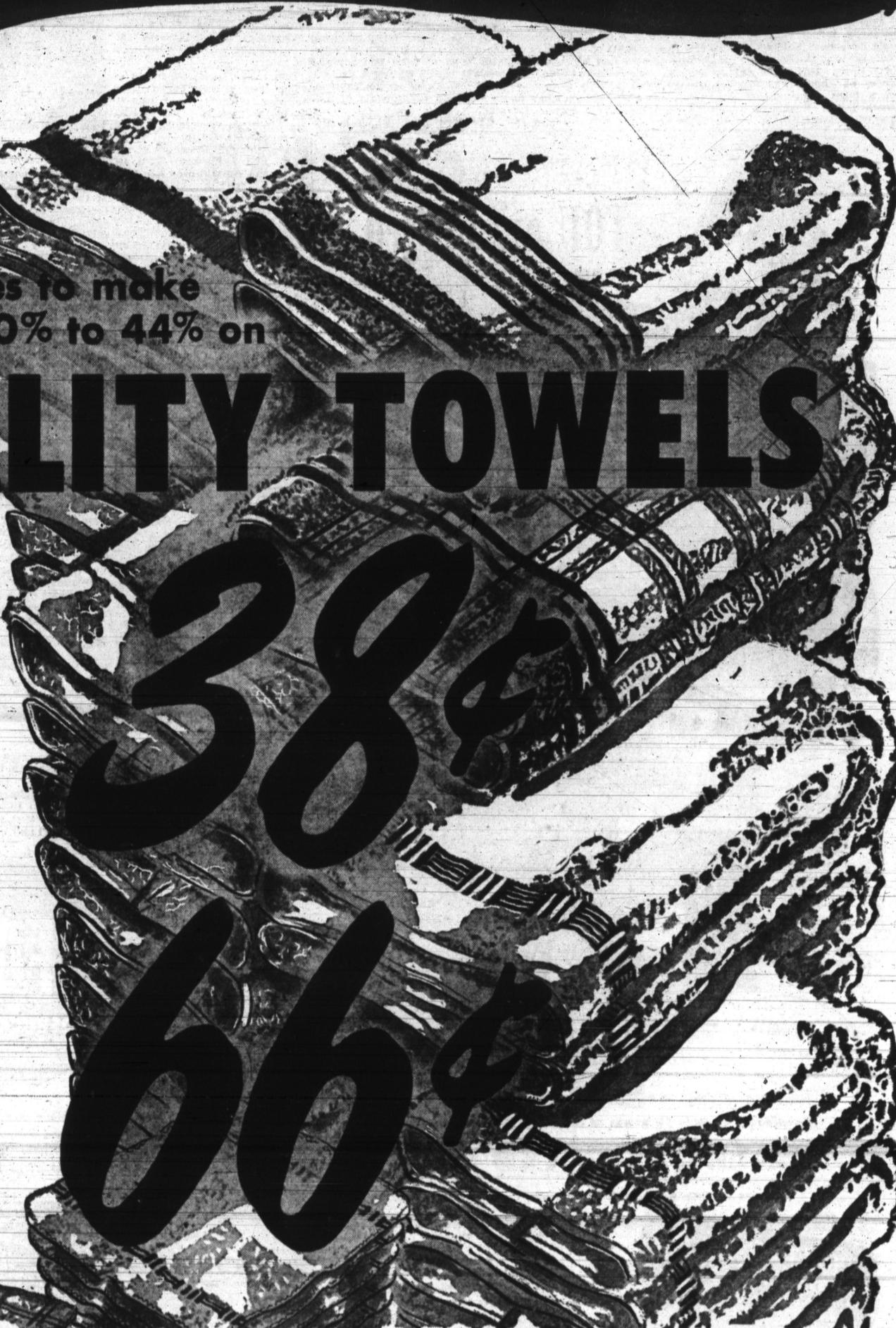
- Nationally advertised at 49c to 79c
- 18 x 36-in., 20 x 40-in., 22 x 44-in. sizes
- Plaids, pastels, white with colored borders

First time in many long years! Famous make, first quality towels for a tiny 38c! As usual, Sears strives to save you money. Always keeping a watchful eye on quality, Sears believes it must be First Quality . . . like these thick, thirsty towels. Second-rate goods are no bargain at any price! . . . choose from plaids, whites with colorful stripe borders and frosted pastels. Buy them by the dozen . . . benefit by extra savings during Sears January White Goods Sale.

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15 x 26-inches . . . . . 11 1/2 x 11 1/2-in., 12 x 12-in. . . . .



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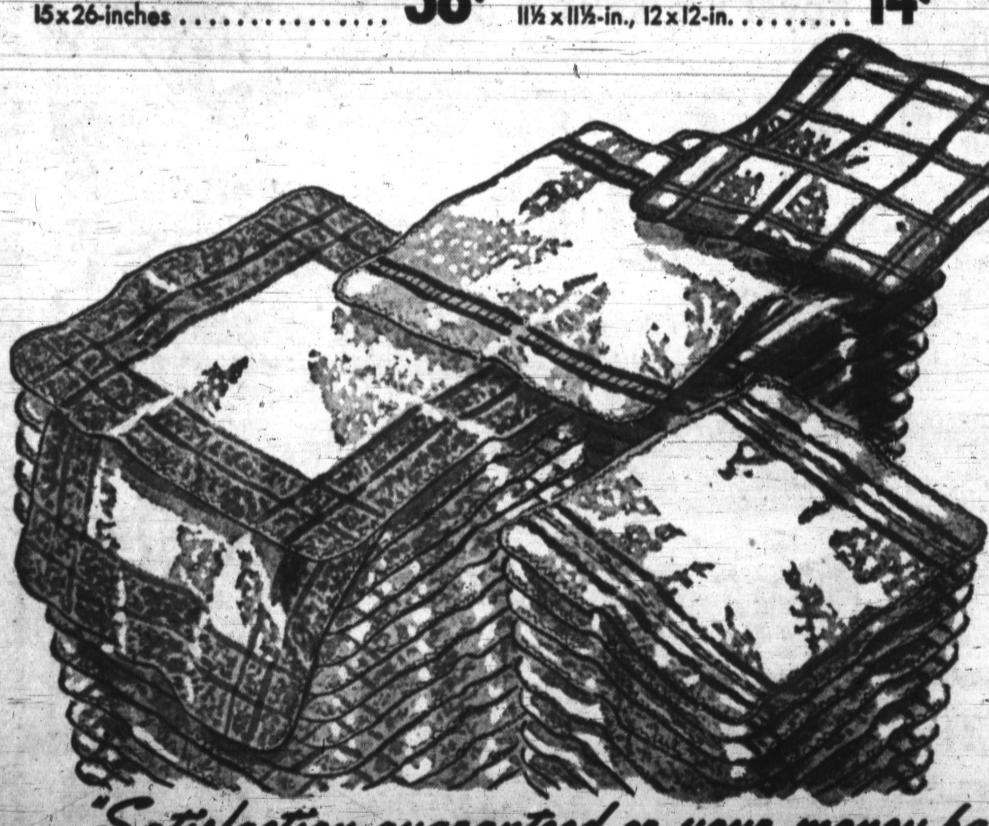
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for

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