

## Small Categories Series

### Conestoga Wagons

There are at least two different interests here. There are those collectors who collect Conestoga Wagons in and of themselves, and there are those collectors who collect them as part of a larger interest in a 'Western' category, which would also include things such as Cowboys, Wagon Wheels, Prospectors, Brands, etc. A lot might depend on the art work involved. It's the art, for example, that would make the cover shown at the lower right much more attractive to me than the others.

The Conestoga Wagon is probably best remembered for its role in bringing the pioneers west across the Oregon and Santa Fe trails, popularized as it was in Western movies. In actuality, it was rarely used on the Oregon Trail; its smaller cousin, the Prairie Schooner was the vehicle of choice for the tens of thousands of hardy pioneers in the mid to late 1800's.

I know of at least one collector who makes what may seem to be a rather fine distinction between Conestoga Wagons (which he collects) and Chuck Wagons (which he doesn't collect). "What's the difference?" you're undoubtedly wondering (just as I did). I always thought that they were basically the same wagons. As it turns out, that doesn't matter. It's how they're used. A Conestoga Wagon was primarily used for transportation, whereas a Chuck Wagon was a travelling kitchen. Again, when someone really gets into such categories, these seemingly relatively minor differences may make a world of difference to that person, depending upon his own particular proclivities, especially when you consider that that collector is pursuing his particular interests for his particular reasons

