

The Building of a Camping Car

Sketches of Successful Vehicles for Touring Comfort

By GEORGE W. SUTTON, Jr.

IN the June issue we published a short article on motor camping. Since that time Mr. Will Hays' department of the Government has been enormously busy carting bags of mail to our door. It was the first time we had touched upon this subject and the response from readers was surprising, to say the least. It seems as if everybody in the country wants to go motor camping, and the list of camping equipment which we offered (and still offer) to send to readers has been in great demand.

There is, apparently, particular interest in the matter of camping trailers and special touring bodies for standard chassis. There is already a well organized industry of twelve or fifteen companies building excellent camping trailers, but very few manufacturers of camping cars. Therefore we have had made a number of sketches of special bodies, which have been built by experienced campers. These are offered merely as suggestions. They are not detailed building plans, with specifications. However, it should be possible to place these drawings before a local automobile body builder, carriage builder or even a carpenter and tinsmith, and obtain a definite set of plans of a camping car containing any special features you happen to think of.

The car of which two interior views are shown was built by Dr. Mark A. Newland, of Center Point, Iowa, and has proven a highly successful camping vehicle for from two to four people.

When Dr. Newland took his pencil sketches to a carriage builder he was not pleased at the price of \$400 they quoted him for the construction of the body without the interior cabinets. So he pitched in and did all the carpenter work himself. The body, when completed, represented an expenditure of only \$250. The lumber and mill work cost \$150, the sheet steel for sides \$10, the painting \$25, the hardware and fittings, about \$15. For the inside he used burlap painted battleship grey. He glued and bolted every joint of the frame which was made of oak, using 2" x 4" pieces 13' long, attached to his Reo chassis, with crossbars 2" x 2" which are 6' 4" long. The upright posts are 1½" x 1¾" x 5' 10" long.

In order to make the roof watertight, the doctor painted it with heavy white lead paint and, while this was still soft, spread over it a single piece of oiled rubberized cloth, similar

Camping Car

to that used in army slickers.

The interior cabinets are cleverly designed. They are built of one-half-inch poplar lumber. This entire camping body weighs but very little more than the five-passenger body and top previously on the chassis.

The other machine shown was designed by Mr. G. Carl Adams, a relative of Mr. Glenn Curtiss, the airplane manufacturer. It follows closely the pattern and arrangement of the well known Adams trailer, in which Mr. Curtiss' ideas had a large part. The machine illustrated is intended to supply camping comfort for two people but, by the installation of a folding double bed on the right hand side, it will accommodate four, with plenty of room on the floor for two more, if necessary. Entrance to this motor bungalow is by the two front doors. The rear is occupied by a water tank, refrigerator, pantry, clothes closets and other conveniences, all accessible from inside or outside. The bed, when folded, forms a comfortable davenport.

Both of the machines shown are lighted by electricity, and, while they are distinctly different in detail and arrangement, each is a comfortable motoring home, in which a party of campers may go from one end of the country to the other.

Out in St. Louis, there is a company which builds camping bodies, especially for Ford cars. Some of the custom body people have done some beautiful work in creating touring cars and sedans which can be used for camping and sleeping purposes with out disfiguring the interior. In Minnesota a well known company has placed upon the market an inexpensive arrangement which can be installed quickly in any Ford car bearing an engine number above 1,300,000, and which transforms the car into a cozy double bed.

Motor camping is in its infancy. It is already being enjoyed by many hundreds of motorists. With inventions of successful vacation machines the next few years will see a tremendous increase in this new and thoroughly practical sport.