

Ida's
Notebook
by
Ida Risser



How much more winter will we have? Your guess is as good as mine — so far, we haven't had much snow in Lancaster County.

Our county was separated from Chester County in 1729. That was the same year that my ancestor Hans Adam Shreiner came from Gommersheim, Germany. He claimed 500 acres and later returned to Europe and brought his family here in 1733.

We've been told that his grandson, Michael, brought home a Conestoga wagon in 1750. It was used to haul grain from the fields and also to transport crops to Philadelphia and return with goods they needed.

This wagon was kept in the family and stored in a shed. In

the 1930s it was photographed for a book on Conestoga wagons. Two years ago it was sold to Landis Valley Museum for \$52,000 at a public sale. It is being restored to show to the public. Most wagons were allowed to rot away instead of being preserved for more than 200 years.

A man from Roanoke, Va. wrote to me recently as he is interested in wagons. In his area a "Newtown" wagon was a puzzle until they realized it was a Conestoga wagon made in a place called Newtown. It was used to

move Roanoke College to Salem from Augusta in 1847. More than 150 years ago these wagons may have brought early settlers down the Great Wagon Road from Pennsylvania. Often only wheels remain from these vehicles, and it takes an expert to recognize them.

Six large horses pulled these wagons. One road used to cross the Conestoga River was "Peter's Road." Today it forms a boundary of our son's farm. Peter Bizelion was a French and Indian fur trader. The road ran from Chester County to the Susquehanna River more than 250 years ago.

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