

## About the Picture on the Cover . . .

### THE CONESTOGA WAGON

This is a drawing of a Conestoga Wagon which played a big part in American History. It was used at one time for transportation, but, like everything else, modernization has replaced it with new inventions.

The name Conestoga is Iroquois; these were called the Conestoga Wagons from the vicinity in which they were first in common use, viz. Conesoga Creek, Lancaster county, Pennsylvania; also known as the Pennsylvania Wagon; Quaker Wagon, and in the middle and western states they were called the Prairie Schooner.

This type of wagon was developed in Pennsylvania by topographical conditions; by the soft soil, by trade requirements, and by native wit. It was truly an American product, evolved and multiplied to fit perfectly, existing conditions. It was the highest type of a commodious freight carrier by horse power that this or any other country has ever known.

The first appearance of the Conestoga Wagon in history was in 1755, when Franklin advertised for 150 of them for the use of General Braddock's army. They were also furnished to the continental army in the War of the Revolution, being mainly supplied from Pennsylvania. During the War of 1812, these wagons transported arms, ammunition and supplies to the army on the frontier; they were in constant use, in peace, as well as in war, and their numbers were vast. At one time over 3,000 ran constantly back and forth between Philadelphia and other Pennsylvania towns; sometimes 100 would follow in a close row. They were conspicuous in the winter seasons while their competitors (the canals) were frozen. From the middle colonies the Conestoga Wagon found its way to every colony and every settlement. Their life did not end in the eastern states, or with the establishment of the railroads. Renamed the "Prairie Schooner," it carried civilization and emigration across the continent to the Golden Gate. The bleaching bones of these wagons may still be seen in our far west, and are as distinct relics of that old pioneer western life as are the bones of the buffalo.

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