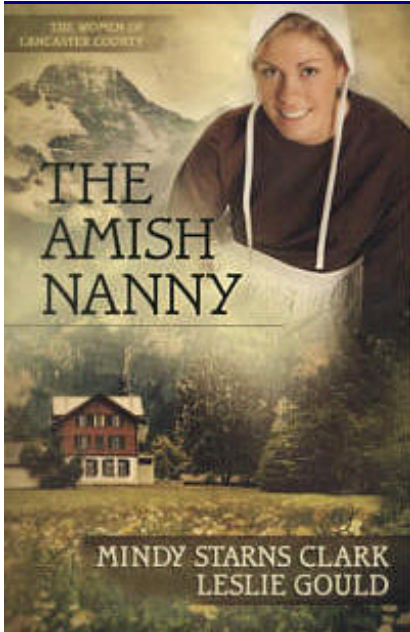


**Christian Fiction: Amish/Mennonite**



**The Amish Nanny**

The Women of Lancaster County: Book Two

by Mindy Starns Clark & Leslie Gould

published by Harvest House Publishers

in Paperback (978-0-736-93861-7)

Jun 2011

at £8.99

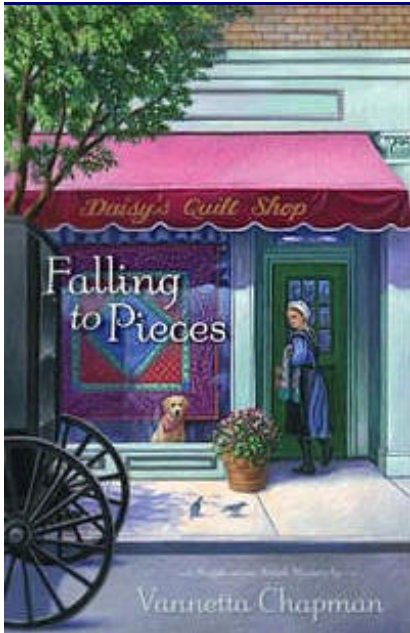
I took this novel on holiday with me, thinking to read it in an evening or two. It kept me reading three or four, it has a lot to say, and I learnt a lot of history while engrossed in the story of Ada Rupp who we first met in - The Amish Midwife - (equally good). -

Ada is in love with widower Will Gundy, but Will seems to be courting Leah. Ada is set to become a teacher at a nearby Amish school, when away at her sister's wedding, she hears that Leah has been given 'her' job. Not a happy state of affairs, so when she is asked to represent her family in Switzerland where her Mother lives, she realises that God has other plans for her, and accepts willingly. -

The journey is necessary to resolve a question of land ownership and an agreement, long lost, between Ada's and Will's ancestors and a question of saving for posterity an historical Anabaptist site or a hydro-electric plant being built there, desecrating the area for ever. -

The fictional story is gripping, but it weaves around historical sites and happenings of which I knew nothing. Totally absorbing.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



### Falling to Pieces

A Shipshewana Amish Mystery

by Vannetta Chapman

published by Zondervan Publishing House

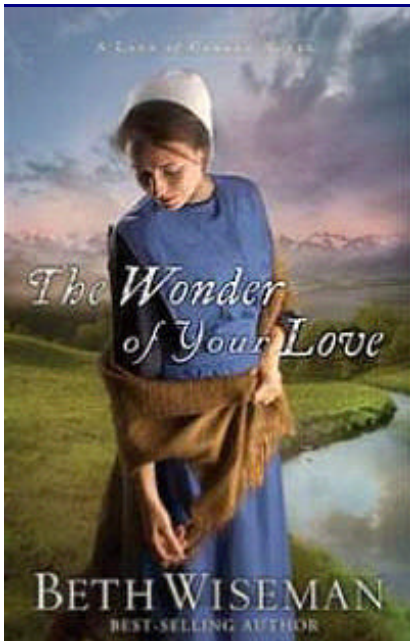
in Paperback (978-0-310-33043-1)

Oct 2011

at £9.99

This is the first Amish novel I've read, and I'm clearly rather late to the party as there seems to be a vast amount being published these days. - - Falling to Pieces - - was marketed as an Amish mystery but in some ways both the Amish aspect, and the mystery aspect, were secondary to the story of Texan Callie Harper finding herself anew after making friends with Deborah, an Amish woman. - Callie is Englisch (not Amish) and arrives at Shipshewana, where both Amish and Englisch live, to pack up and sell her deceased aunt's Quilting shop. She meets Deborah, an Amish woman, and finds herself drawn into life in Shipshewana, making friends and meeting a variety of people, both Amish and Englisch. - The mystery aspect of the story was perhaps a little simplistic (the 'baddie' seemed a bit cardboard-cut-out), and there were some slight loose ends about Callie's personal circumstances when the story finished, but the development of Callie through her friendship was well handled. We meet other Amish characters and learn about their life and this made the book more enjoyable. Overall I was pleasantly surprised, especially as the Christian aspect of the story was natural and believable, not preachy and forced. - I enjoyed this, my first Amish novel, and look forward to reading another from Vannetta Chapman.

Notes by [Helen Hancox](#)



### The Wonder of Your Love

A Land of Canaan Novel

by Beth Wiseman

published by Thomas Nelson from Trust Media Distribution

in Paperback (978-1-595-54886-3)

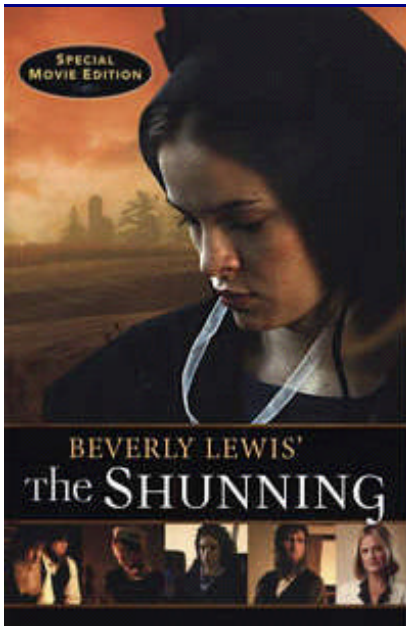
04/10/2011

at £9.99

Katie Ann has a baby boy, Jonas, her husband's child, yet her husband left her for a woman outside their community. Now this 'other woman' wants to visit her. Ivan is dead and his death is going to have repercussions for both women. - Katie Ann has a faithful Englisher (non-Amish) friend, Martha, an endearing character who treats Katie Ann and Jonas as dear family but Martha has issues of her own. -

The scene is set for an unusual Amish story, and rest assured, after many twists and turns, there is a happy ending and I thoroughly enjoyed this book.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



## The Shunning

by Beverly Lewis

published by Bethany House imprint of Baker Pub from Lion

in Paperback (978-0-764-20960-4)

Jul 2011

at £8.99

Originally published in 1997, this - Special Movie Edition - has a letter from the author and photographs from the set of the motion picture between pages 160 and 161. -

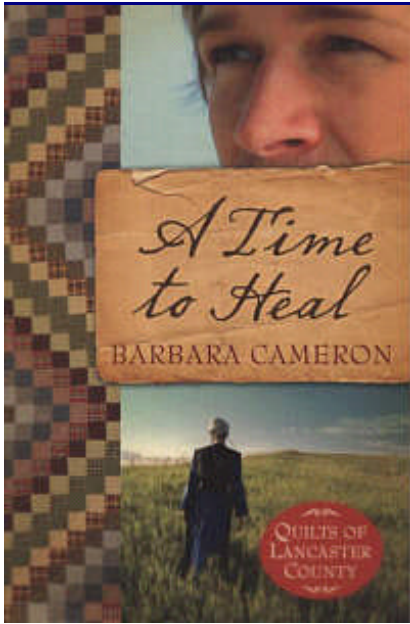
The story is loosely based on a true story of a shunning as Beverly Lewis explains. It is the story of her own grandmother that inspired her to write about her character Katie Lapp. I wonder if the movie is closer to the truth, or the book? No matter! The book held my attention all through. -

Katie has been baptised into the Amish church, but feels more and more uncomfortable with the various rules and restrictions that she is supposed to adhere to. The love of her life, Daniel, has been drowned in an accident, and part of her died with him. She is resigned to her betrothal to the widowed Bishop John, and has accepted that her role will be to look after his five children and bear him more. -

But she struggles! She longs for more colours in her life instead of the drab clothes the women of her community all wear. She longs to free her hair from the tight bun she is expected to wear, to be able to speak out about her inmost thoughts instead of always having to defer to her father or some other man, and above all she longs to have music in her life. It is forbidden to sing or even hum anything other than the hymns in the prescribed hymn book. Daniel had a guitar – which Katie now has hidden away – and the tunes they composed together go round and round her head. -

Her father never acknowledges the secret he and her mother have hidden from Katie, but truth finds a way of coming into the open. A thoroughly good read.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



## A Time to Heal

Quilts of Lancaster County Book Two

by Barbara Cameron

published by Abingdon Press from Alban Books

in Paperback (978-1-426-70764-3)

Apr 2011

at £8.99

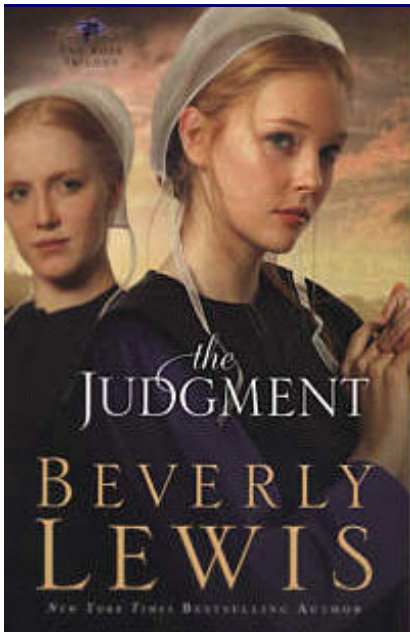
We first met this family in - A Time to Love. - Jenny is now happily married to Matthew, and Matthew's sister Hannah has moved in with Jenny's grandmother Phoebe across the way. The two families are very close; Hannah is realising that she longs for a family of her own, Phoebe is getting older and unwilling to own up to how she is feeling. Along comes a recently de-mobbed soldier, Chris, recovered from his injuries abroad, and seeking Jenny who he met briefly in a hospital and who he is sure will understand his unsettled feelings. -

Hannah surprises Chris asleep in the hayloft, waiting for the family to come home, and immediately there is a spark between them.

Problems straight away! Chris is an Englishman and a soldier to boot! Hannah is a sheltered Amish young lady with a forceful personality and firm convictions about war. -

This ongoing story is not so easily guessed at as you might think. There are some surprising twists and turns along the way that keep you reading – in my case, into the night.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



## The Judgement

The Rose Trilogy Book Two

by Beverly Lewis

published by Bethany House imprint of Baker Pub from Lion

in Paperback (978-0-764-20600-9)

Summer 2011

at £8.99

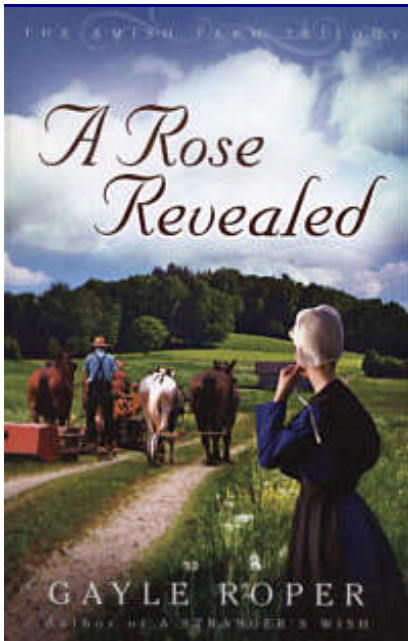
The story of Rose Ann, her sister Hen and their families moves on. Nick has disappeared from the scene and Rose is now being seriously courted by Silas. Hen is still separated from her 'Englischer' husband Brandon and living in the Dawdi Haus with her young daughter Mattie Sue, across from the main farmhouse where her invalid Mother and the rest of the family live. Her father would like her to reconcile with Brandon however hard that might be, she made her choice when she married him after all.

More than one life has been turned upside down by what has happened in the past, and Rose's courtship is not plain sailing: hope comes to her mother from a surprising source, and when Brandon has a serious accident possibilities open up for Hen.

A good read and more to come....

- - - The Mercy - Book Three in The Rose Trilogy - is due in September 2011

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



### **A Rose Revealed**

The Amish Farm Trilogy Book Three

by [Gayle Roper](#)

published by [Harvest House Publishers](#)

in Paperback (978-0-736-92588-4)

Jan 2011

at £6.99

- The Amish Farm Trilogy - are stand alone stories that are nevertheless more enjoyable if you have read the previous titles. -

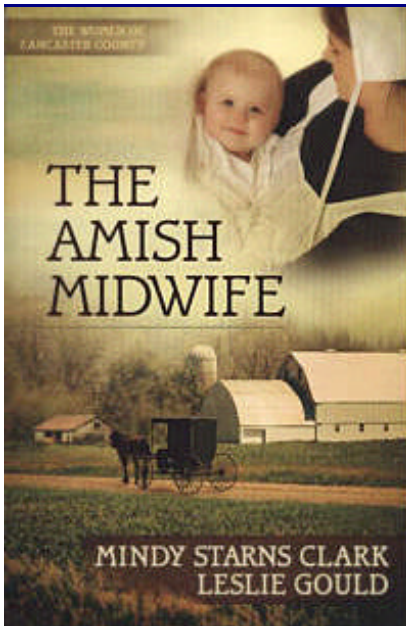
In this one, it is Rose, the nurse who helped Jake when he had his motor-bike accident, who ends up in the rooms above Jake in the adapted - gross-dawdy haus. - -

As Rose is returning to her own car, having seen her patient safely into her car with her sons, there is an explosion that throws her to the ground and she rises to find the car behind her enveloped in flames and the occupants beyond help. After moving her own car to a safe distance she goes back into the house to find one of the sons has escaped death by dashing back into the house for his sun glasses. Rose is distraught. On her way home she is crying so much she needs to stop and pulls into the Zook's yard for safety. She has previously nursed Mary, the Amish artist mother of the family, and discovered that Jake is still very much alive though paralysed from the waist down. -

Rose is offered shelter by the Zooks, but only Jake knows she is hiding from whoever planted the bomb, who seems to think, Rose knows more than she does. -

After many twists and turns we reach the inevitable happy ending but only after a thoroughly satisfying read.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



### The Amish Midwife

The Women of Lancaster County: Book One

by Mindy Starns Clark & Leslie Gould

published by Harvest House Publishers

in Paperback (978-0-736-93798-6)

Jan 2011

at £8.99

I enjoy all Amish stories, but this one shines out as one of the very best, long and satisfying. -

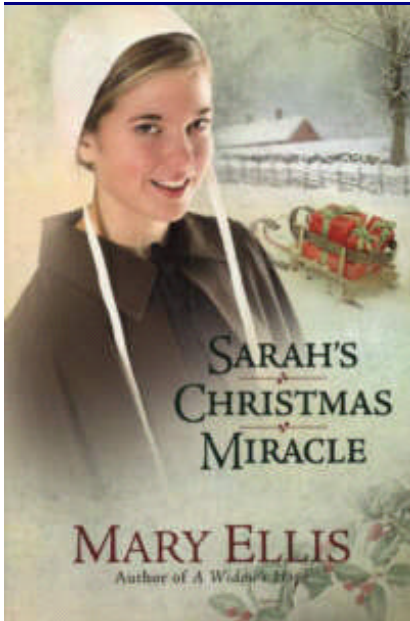
Alexandra has been brought up as a Mennonite and knows she is adopted and arrived wrapped in an Amish quilt, but not until her father is on his death bed does he reveal that when she was handed to him and his wife, now long dead, they were also passed an exquisitely carved wooden box with two locks of hair and a letter written in High German. She also learns that it was her grandmother who brought her to them, insisting that she was dearly loved.

Along with Alexandra's (Lexie's) grieving for her beloved father, she struggles to cope with this new information and the fact that she has not been told this before. James, who she met at school, and now many years later is dating, is very supportive and with her very dear family friend Sophie's encouragement, decides to have a break from her job as a nurse/midwife in Oregon, and seek temporary work in Philadelphia, to look for her birth mother and finally learn 'her story.' James is dismayed at her actions but agrees to keep in touch as a friend. -

So far, so good, but it doesn't work out at all as she expected. She finds herself helping a lay midwife in Lancaster County among the Amish, and immediately seems to have been recognised. -

There are many twists and turns to this story, and I kept reading late into the night, intent on reaching the end.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)

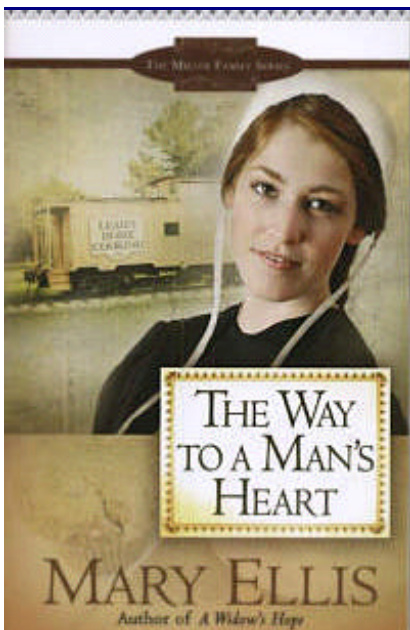


### Sarah's Christmas Miracle

by Mary Ellis  
published by Harvest House Publishers  
in Paperback (978-0-736-92968-4) Sep 2010  
at £6.99

An unashamedly plain and simple story about an Amish family with an estranged son and a daughter whose desire is to bring him home in time for Christmas. This is short and engagingly written for the American market but we all love to read a story that ends happily at Christmas with a family reconciliation. In Britain we have very little experience of the Amish community other than what we see in films or in documentaries, but what comes across in this story is the deep sense of faith lived out along with principles of simple living. It also shows the some of the conflicts that young Amish people have as they go through the Rumschpringe (living/working outside the Amish community) prior to making a definite commitment to the Amish community. Lightweight and it will appeal to younger people who may identify with some aspects of youth rebellion!

Notes by Jackie Scott



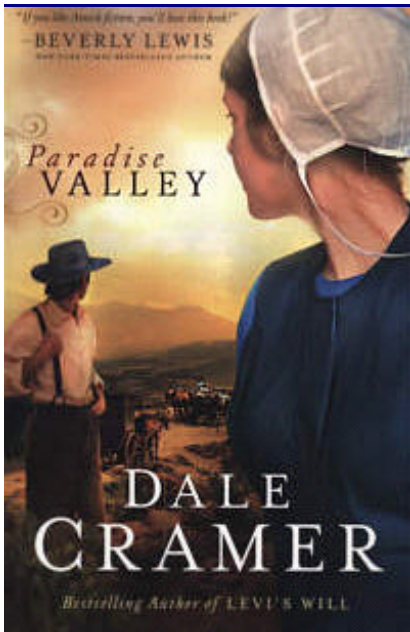
### The Way to a Man's Heart

The Miller Family Series

by Mary Ellis  
published by Harvest House Publishers  
in Paperback (978-0-736-92734-5) Aug 2010  
at £8.99

This is another story about the Amish community by the same author that again deals with youth and their discoveries about life and love prior to their making a full commitment to the Amish way of life. There are some nice touches in the story but I found this fairly 'clunky' in places where the reader is told exactly how the character is feeling when it is not needed. Some of the characters are weakly developed and didn't ring true to me, and some aspects of Amish life were explained several times over to make sure that the reader 'understood'. Much is made about the difference between those who follow the ways of the Amish but don't necessarily have a full understanding of the faith and the person of Jesus Christ behind it, and those whose faith is coming alive to the full. For me it was over long in its attempt to make a spiritual point and I found myself skipping through bits to get to the end, but the central character was likeable and it ended happily, so with those caveats in mind it is a gentle story allowing one to relax into an afternoon cup of tea.

Notes by Jackie Scott



## Paradise Valley

Daughters of Caleb Bender

by Dale Cramer

published by Bethany House imprint of Baker Pub from Lion

in Paperback (978-0-764-20838-6)

Feb 2011

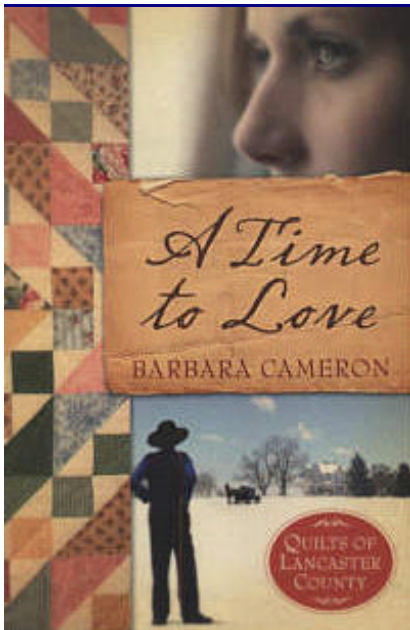
at £8.99

A fresh view, to me at least, of what it meant to be Amish back in the 1920s. Ohio passed a law that meant all children, Amish included, had to attend a state school. To many Amish fathers, this was a terrible decree to be avoided at all costs. Amish children were taught the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic by their Amish teachers, and the ethics of their faith, which included hard work, family unity and the skills they needed to farm, or to look after children and run a busy house. - To go to state school meant long walks, and exposure to worldly things that their parents viewed with horror. -

This is the story of a family who emigrated to - Paradise Valley - in far away Mexico, to be free to live their chosen way of life.

A story based on true facts, of confrontations with bandits, of learning about a new climate, new terrain, and meeting people who spoke a mixture of languages, a story of young love, and growing to maturity. A thoroughly good read, and all the better for being based on historical research.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



## A Time to Love

Quilts of Lancaster County Book One

by Barbara Cameron

published by Abingdon Press from Alban Books

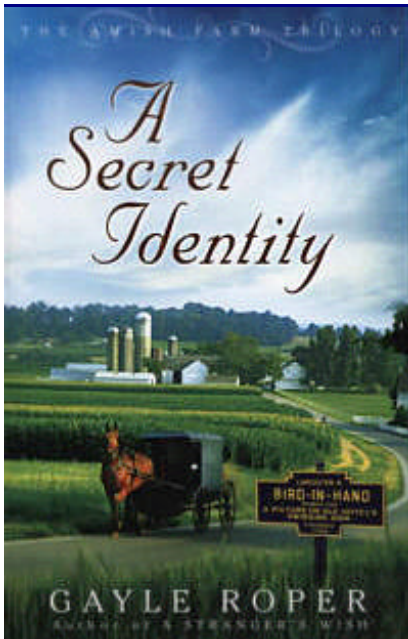
in Paperback (978-1-426-70763-6)

Dec 2010

at £9.99

Jenny has been very badly injured by a terrorist bomb thrown at the group she was with, in Afghanistan, where she was reporting for her radio station about the effect war was having on the children in particular. Having been discharged from hospital, her good friend David, brings her to her Amish grandmother's small farm, for some TLC and further help with physio and speech therapy. Her father had refused to be baptised into the Amish community, but her mother having died, she had spent some summer holidays here as a teenager. When her father realised she was getting too close to an Amish neighbour, he took her home and made sure her contact with Matthew was lost. All these years later, Jenny finds her love for the lifestyle undiminished, and her feelings for the now widowed Matthew and his three young children, grow stronger by the day.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



### **A Secret Identity**

The Amish Farm Trilogy Book Two

by Gayle Roper

published by Harvest House Publishers

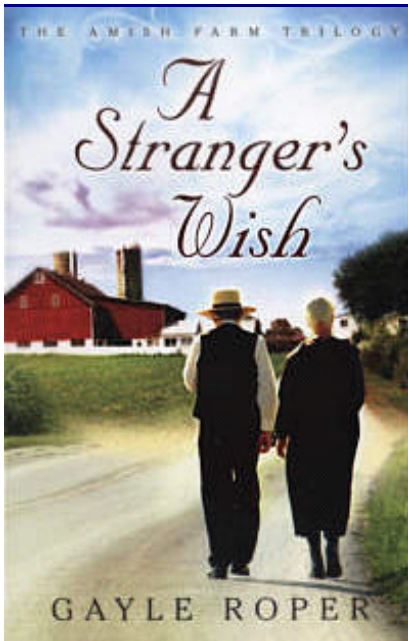
in Paperback (978-0-736-92587-7)

01/10/2010

at £6.99

Cara comes from a loving, wealthy family, but she has discovered that her Grandfather was adopted, and wishes to find her 'true' family. Cara tells her story herself, and Gayle Roper, the author, makes her come alive for the reader, and I was very soon involved with all Cara's activities. We first meet her in a motel in Bird-in-Hand, Pennsylvania, where she has come to seek professional help from a lawyer. This turns out to be Todd, who we met in the first of this trilogy, - A Stranger's Wish. - There is an immediate attraction between the two which develops through the rest of the story. At Todd's suggestion, Cara moves from the motel into the room above Jake, at the Amish farm of the previous book, and her search continues. Meanwhile both Todd and Cara blossom to their own amazement, becoming more rounded personalities. Very enjoyable.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



### A Stranger's Wish

The Amish Farm Trilogy Book One

by Gayle Roper

published by Harvest House Publishers

in Paperback (978-0-736-92586-0)

Apr 2010

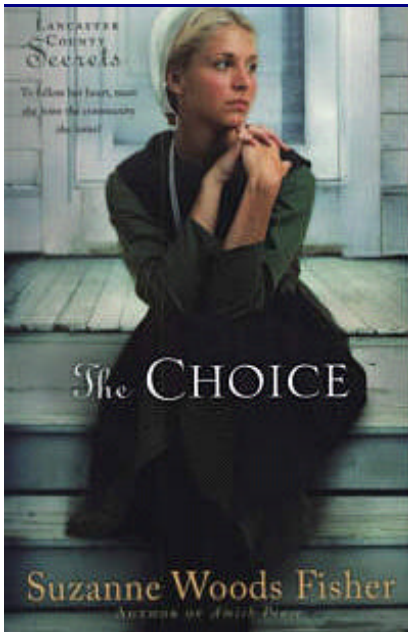
at £7.99

Kristina is artistic, with absolutely no wish to follow in her family's footsteps and become a lawyer. To stand up to pressure from her parents has taken a great deal of courage, but here she is, lodging at an Amish farm, painting to her hearts content in her spare time away from teaching at a local school. -

The Zooks have had to accept an 'Englischer' lodger as they need the money to support their son disabled in a motorbike accident during his - rumspringa - the time when youngsters are allowed their freedom before committing to the Amish - ordnung - . This son, Jake, lives downstairs in the - grossdawdy - wing, Kristie in the rooms above. -

In the opening chapter Kristie is at the local hospital having been bitten by the Zook family's dog – entirely her fault she admits. Jon Clarke had happened to drive into the farmyard as it happened and she had gratefully accepted his offer of a lift, so there they are together at the hospital. What a way to meet! - With a boyfriend approved by her parents, but not approving of her move, with her attraction to Jon Clarke, and the added complication of her meeting with Mr Geohagen at the hospital the scene is set for a thoroughly good read.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



## The Choice

Lancaster County Secrets

by Suzanne Woods Fisher

published by Revell imprint of Baker Pub from Lion

in Paperback (978-0-800-73385-8)

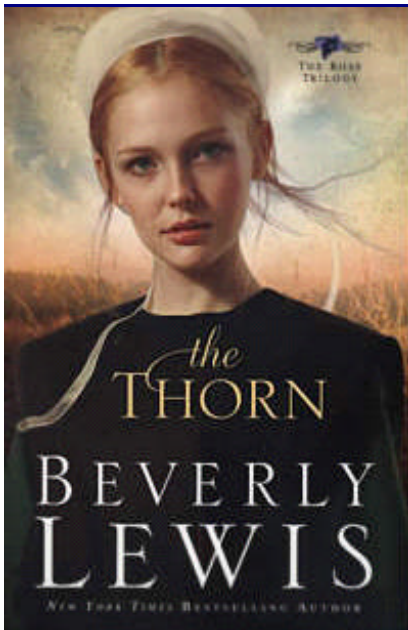
01/02/2010

at £8.99

I happen to love the film - Witness - with Harrison Ford which is about an 'English' man living in an Amish community – and this book is written on a similar theme, but without the grisly murder. It is essentially a love story with sad bits and surprises, and I liked the characters involved and the story moved along at a good pace. It appealed to me because it had several sub-plots interweaving through the main story of how a young Amish girl copes with the death of her father and enters a marriage that was not what she had expected. There are 'English' characters who help the story along by showing the conflict between community living and a materialistic life-style; and also we see the theme of how the Amish can live for their community alone without fully understanding the Christian Faith that underpins it, as several of the young people struggle to determine whether they will stay with the Amish or leave the stable family life that they have had, to experience life with the English. -

The simplicity of the Amish life is described well and the rhythm of life throughout each year is very evident in the farming community – the author manages to make it a very appealing lifestyle. I read the book in two sittings – I enjoyed the twists and turns and was satisfied with the ending, which although I am a hopeless romantic, wasn't over mushy and left enough loose ends to leave you thinking - 'I wonder what happens afterwards...'

Notes by Jackie Scott



## The Thorn

The Rose Trilogy Book 1

by Beverly Lewis

published by Bethany House imprint of Baker Pub from Lion

in Paperback (978-0-764-20574-3)

01/10/2010

at £8.99

The inspiration for this trilogy was found when Beverly Lewis and her husband visited the area 'just southeast of Quarryville, Pennsylvania', and discovered the 'rugged ravine below Bridle Path Lane' This set her imagination racing into what has become - The Rose Trilogy - . I 'Googled' Quarryville and looked at the photographs of Amish farmland and families. -

Rose Ann is of marriageable age, but her time is taken up with looking after her badly injured Mother, who some time before, fell into the local ravine when she was catapulted from her buggy as the young driving horse was startled. -

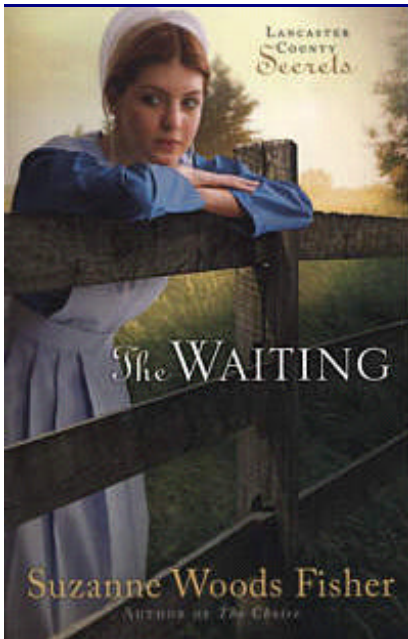
On their farm Rose's father employs his friend the Bishop's adopted son Nick, who has never taken to Amish ways, and is constantly warring with the Bishop's natural son Christopher. -

Nick and Rose Ann have always been close friends, nothing more, but when an old acquaintance, Silas Good, seeks to court her things change. -

Alongside this thread of the story is that of Rose's sister Hen, who married an Englisher and is now, to her surprise, desperately missing her previously well ordered way of life. -

All these elements are woven together to make another excellent book from this well loved author.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



## The Waiting

Lancaster County Secrets

by Suzanne Woods Fisher

published by Revell imprint of Baker Pub from Lion

in Paperback (978-0-800-73386-5)

2010

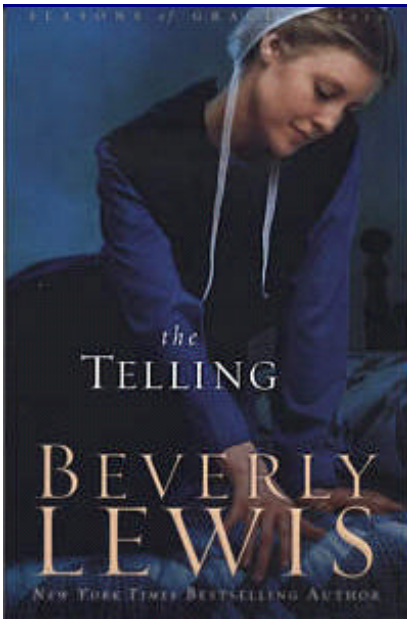
at £8.99

The second of this series of stories set within the Amish community of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, USA. They can be read as separate books as they do not link to each other. -

In - The Waiting - Jorie King has long loved one of the Zook brothers, but Ben has gone off to Vietnam as a non combatant to help with wounded soldiers. The Amish are conscientious objectors but still have to serve their term in the forces and unbeknown to his family Ben had volunteered to go abroad. He was always the wild one of the family with no wish to settle down as an Amish farmer.

The plot of this story is for ever springing surprises and many things happen to disturb the peace of Jorie, her family and friends. I have struggled with how to tell more without spoiling the story. Suffice it to say that there is more to this book than a soldier coming back from the war, a love story and what happens in a one-room school, much more, and it makes for a gripping read. Specially recommended.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



### The Telling

Seasons of Grace Book Three

by Beverly Lewis

published by Bethany House imprint of Baker Pub from Lion

in Paperback (978-0-764-20573-6)

10/10/2010

at £8.99

Grace still has no idea why her Mother has left her Amish family and gone to Ohio. The only reason Grace knows that is where her Mother has gone is because a neighbour's relative saw her there. With the help of her Englisher friend Heather, who has her own problems, the two girls travel to Ohio only to find Lettie Byler has moved on. -

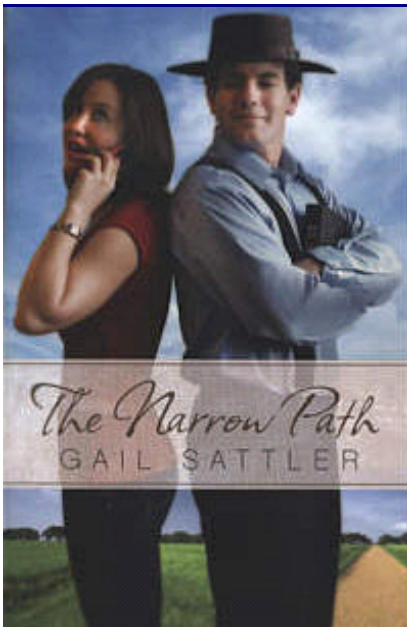
This is a very moving story in many ways. The reader knows far more than Grace, and can feel the pain felt by many of the characters.

I was desperate to get to the end of the book and see how all was to be finally resolved, but was disappointed when there was no more to read! I would love to hear more of these people who had become more friends than characters in a book.

- -

October 2010 - The trilogy of - Seasons of Grace - is now available as a set for £22.99, ISBN 978-0-764-29419-8 Lovely for a gift. Editor

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)



### The Narrow Path

by Gail Sattler

published by Abingdon Press from Alban Books

in Paperback (978-1-426-70237-2)

May 2010

at £8.99

Miranda is a gifted musician, composer and producer, who comes from her urban Mennonite community in Seattle to rural and little changed Old Order Piney Meadows Full Gospel Mennonite church to help with their combined Christmas and Anniversary celebrations. -

There was deep shock all round! -

Miranda had not bargained for the extreme cold of a Minnesota winter and the old fashioned clothes and attitudes of her new church. They had certainly not expected a fashionably dressed young woman with modern tastes and requirements. -

I couldn't see how this story could reconcile the two, but Gail Sattler has managed it with a book that kept me turning the pages till I had finished. A thoroughly good read.

Notes by [Mary Bartholomew](#)