

James Balance Westwick (1815-1899) of Stockley, England and Eliza Atwell (1828-1896) of Killarney City, Ireland met on board ship and were married in November of 1850, before they reached America. James' brother, John, and his wife, Mary, accompanied them to Galena, Illinois where the brothers operated a machine shop and foundry for 30 years.

All nine of James' children were born in Galena, Illinois. Robert and Eleanor were twins:

Annie (1852-1928)	Harriet (1860-1939)
Jane (1855-1928)	George (1862-1948)
Robert (1856-1916)	John (1864-1898)
Eleanor (1856-1941)	Martha Matilda (1866-1952)
Willie (1858-1887)	

In 1877 John W. Marsden (Jane Westwick's husband) came to Wyoming as a surveyor for the Creosus Gold and Silver Mining Company. After five years he filed on a homestead on Wagonhound Creek, on what is now the upper part of the George Wills' ranch. In 1884 the Westwick brothers' machine shop was partially destroyed by fire. As a result of this misfortune, John purchased the remainder of the shop and foundry from James. After many plans were made, James and Eliza and six of their children left for Wyoming. Those leaving were: George Westwick and wife, Nell; John Westwick and wife, Emma; Eleanor Westwick (later Mrs. Matt Kewan of Wheatland, Wyoming); Harriet Westwick (later Mrs. Tom A. Shaw of Wheatland, Wyoming); Jane Westwick (Mrs. John Marsden); and Martha Matilda "Tillie" Westwick (later Mrs. William J. Carothers of Douglas, Wyoming). They traveled by railroad to Rock Creek. There they made arrangements for wagons to bring them the remainder of the way. James and his family homesteaded on the lower end of Wagonhound Creek. It is now known as the Daly ranch. George homesteaded on the ranch later known as the George Wills ranch. John homesteaded on the ranch later to be known as the Milt Hammond ranch. John Marsden homesteaded on what is now known as the Redenbaugh ranch. These homesteads were all south of the present town of Douglas. The Westwicks received some of the earliest land grants issued in the area.

The nearest settlements were Fort Fetterman to the north and Rock Creek (now Rock River) on the Union Pacific Railroad to the south. Once or twice a year they went to Rock Creek for mail and provisions by team and wagon. James had a white frame two story house built for his family. All of the lumber was rough and had to be hand planed. This was at a time when most homes were log houses.

The Indians were supposed to be on reservations by 1884, but there were still some around. The story was told about Tillie (Martha M.

Carothers) who was alone at the ranch house one day when she heard the chickens making an awful racket. Tillie grabbed the broom and ran out of the house just in time to see a very drunk Indian with a squawking chicken. It made her so angry she started hitting him with her broom. He dropped the chicken and ran. Tillie was just four feet eleven inches tall. That must have been a sight to behold!!!

James Balance Westwick was known to his friends and neighbors as the "Old Granger." He was a formidable character with his mutton chop whiskers, his English accent and his stern attitude. Eliza was a dumpling of a person but she did have a temper. At times the "Old Granger" had to watch his step around his "Irish Lass." (This didn't happen often.)

We believe the Westwicks came to Wyoming because of the glowing reports John Marsden sent home. He covered a lot of the state in the five years working for the mining company, Laramie, Casper, and the area south of the present town of Douglas, Wyoming.

Robert Westwick (James and Eliza's oldest son) and his wife, Rose Ann, were the last Westwicks to come to Wyoming. Rose didn't like living the rugged pioneer life so they moved back to Peoria, Illinois where Robert was head machinist for the Northwestern Railroad.

The wedding of Martha Westwick, youngest daughter of James and Eliza, to William (Billy) J. Carothers, on March 7, 1888, was quite an event. Two of the guests were Tom Shaw and Matt Kewan, Billy's fellow riders for the Douglas Willan Horse Outfit. Matt Carothers, Billy's brother, was its manager. The horses were shipped from England by way of the Horn (pre-Panama Canal) to Oregon. The wranglers then hazed the horses overland to the ranch above the present town of Orin. (Others working there were Eli Peterson, George and John Westwick, and John Housiaux.) It is said between them, George and John built over 100 miles of fence for the outfit. At the wedding the two wranglers, Tom and Matt, met the bride's two sisters for the first time. Later Harriet married Tom Shaw and Eleanor married Matt Kewan. Both couples made their homes near Laramie Peak.

The William J. Carothers homesteaded on Wagonhound Creek. Their home was a three room log house. The roof was of sod. A clear running spring behind the house was their source of water. About 200 feet beyond the spring ran Wagonhound Creek. There were raccoon and beaver on the creek, wild turkeys on the meadows, and many deer in the foot hills near the ranch. Breaking horses took up a great deal of Billy Carothers' time. Martha had a garden and some chickens. On February 15, 1892 their only child, Samuel

Westwick Carothers, was born. Sam was only eight years old when his father died from injuries received while breaking a bronc.

Soon the "Old Granger's" family was really scattered. One son and one daughter stayed in Illinois. Two of his sons, George and John, with their families moved to California. Three daughters remained in Wyoming. In 1896 his beloved Eliza passed away. Three years later James Balance Westwick joined his Irish Lass and both were buried on the William J. Carothers ranch. After 1901 their remains were moved to the Douglas Park Cemetery.

Robert Westwick (eldest son of James and Eliza) and his wife, Rose Ann, had twelve children. After Rose's death, Robert's three sisters in Wyoming each took one of his younger children to rear as their own. Jane and John Marsden took Jennie E. Westwick (b. 1905). Jennie now lives in California. Harriet and Tom took Robert B. Westwick (1891-1971). After serving in WWII Robert came home to Wheatland, Wyoming where he and his wife, Tillie Patrick, reared their family.

Eleanor and Matt Kewan took William Westwick (b. 1900) for two years. However, due to a lack of school facilities near the Kewan ranch, in 1912 William "Bill" went to live with Martha "Tillie" Carothers. Bill attended Wagonhound School. Some of his classmates were Rose and Gordon Fitzhugh, Cecil and Ed Hammond, Mary, Jim and Nellie Marsden, Francis and Ruth Pollard, and Bill's sister, Jennie Westwick. One of his teachers was Irene Shaw (later Mrs. Harry Isaac). The children walked or rode horseback to school. If they rode to school, the horses were left at the Jim Marsden ranch. There was no place to care for the horses at the school.

Bill rode once a week to pick up the mail at the LaBonte Post Office on Wagonhound at the Pollard ranch (later the Fitzhugh ranch.) The LaBonte Post Office was first located at the Pollard ranch on LaBonte. At an earlier time this ranch had the Road House facility for the travelers on the Oregon Trail. Later the post office was moved to the Pollard ranch on Wagonhound Creek.

Branding time was a working and social time. The ranch carried three brands: RT (Martha M's); ZY (Sam's); and Lazy YN (Bill's - later transferred to Harold Carothers).

In 1919 Bill and his cousin, Jim Shaw, were hunting deer on the back side of Laramie Peak. they came across three bears and got two of them. This "news" made the Douglas paper.

The big social events of the year were the community dances in various homes with rooms large enough to accommodate all the neighbors and friends. The Matt Carothers' home on Wagonhound was

one of the most popular of these. Families arrived on horseback. in wagons, cars, trucks and by shank's mare. Many of the young ladies who came on horseback brought their dancing slippers and party dress along with their cake tied behind the saddle. During intermission at the dance, cake and coffee were served while some gentleman passed the hat for change to pay the musicians, a dollar was most generous. Square dances and waltz quadrilles were quite popular at these functions especially if a good "caller" happened to be present. Bill Westwick certainly enjoyed being a caller and had more fun than most because there were usually two or three in each set who were trying to square dance for the first time.

In the spring of 1924, the four local teachers who were all from Nebraska, sponsored a box supper at the Scott ranch on Wagonhound. The teachers were Ruth Furman (now Mrs. Walter Whitaker of Douglas) of the Matt Carothers School, Vallie Wiggains of the George Brow School, Zelda Stewart of the Frank Rogers School and Ethyle Wiggains of the Zaichkin School. Bill Westwick picked up his date, Ethyle Wiggains, on horseback. Ethyle had her beautifully decorated lunch box and a change of clothes in a sack on the saddle. The men weren't supposed to know whose box belonged to whom. Later these colorful, frilled and ribboned boxes were displayed for the gentlemen to bid on. Jim Willox was the very capable auctioneer who did a little under-handed work, when possible, to aide the gentlemen to bid on his date's box, so he could share the delicious supper she had brought. The five Curry brothers of Douglas were the musicians for the many hours of fun and dancing which lasted until sun up and was declared by many to have been their first box supper and bushels of fun.

On December 10, 1924 Bill Westwick and Ethyle E. Wiggains were married. Their first home was in the log house where Martha and Billy J. Carothers had started housekeeping on his homestead almost four decades earlier. I, Ramona Martha Westwick, Bill and Ethyle's only child, was born at the Douglas hospital on September 9, 1925. The following March 17, 1925, Samuel Westwick Carothers was married to Ferne Sadler. Their only child, Harold Samuel Carothers, was born on October 8, 1927. "Had" (Harold) and I had many good times on the ranch. I have many fond memories of growing up on the Carothers' ranch.

Ramona Westwick Roberts