Welcome to Butte, America’s Story. I’m your host, Dick Gibson. 3:45

Elizabeth Warren – not the Senator from Massachusetts, but the namesake of the street in Butte – was born about 1891. When she was 21, in 1912, she married Wallace McClintock White in San Francisco, and the couple moved to White’s home in Butte.

Wallace White, thirty years Elizabeth’s senior, was born in Burlington, Iowa, in 1861, and came to Montana in 1889. He worked as a superintendent on the Northern Pacific Railroad in Livingston, but when he came to Butte in 1891 he began a partnership with his brother Luther offering “real estate, loans, mines, and investments” from his office at 21 West Broadway.

Within a few years, White had acquired property on Blacktail Creek one of the tributaries of Silver Bow Creek. He built a dam there in 1895 to create Lake Avoca, which became the main source of ice for the Butte Ice Company. Wallace “Maxie” White was Butte Ice Company’s president from 1904-1910, but he was becoming a real estate tycoon at the same time. The Tidewater Investment Company, established about 1909 with his brother William, developed the Atherton Addition in the area of today’s Butte Country Club on the Flats in the southern part of Butte.

Atherton was White’s mother’s maiden name, and other names in the neighborhood commemorate his family. Blacktail Lane today was once Atherton Avenue, and White Boulevard and White Way both honor Wallace and his brothers. Elizabeth Warren Avenue got its name soon after the couple married. In 1914 they built a new house at 2926 Elizabeth Warren which became their family home. Wallace, McClintock, and Luther Streets no longer exist, but they were found between today’s Elizabeth Warren and Meadowlark, west of Blacktail Creek, from when the neighborhood was platted about 1913 until around 1960.

Wallace and Elizabeth became pillars of the community. In the 1920s, he was manager of the Columbia Gardens Amusement Company and President of the Silver Bow Club. Lake Avoca once boasted 75 boats for rowing on the lake, but it was drained in 1939 by the Butte Country Club. The golf course had been south of the cemeteries on Montana Street, but moved to the Lake Avoca area about 1905. Wallace was the last surviving charter member of the Butte Country Club when he died in 1953, age 92.

Elizabeth was Secretary of her husband’s Tidewater Investment Company from 1934 until her death in 1959. The street that bears her name has honored her for more than 100 years.

As writer Edwin Dobb has said, "Like Concord, Gettysburg, and Wounded Knee, Butte is one of the places America came from." Join us next time for more of Butte, America’s Story.

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