BAS 122 the Coughlins Welcome to Butte, America’s Story. I’m your host, Dick Gibson.

Julia Coughlin’s death at age 66 in 1929 ended the 45-year tenure by her family in the 200 block of East Granite, between Arizona and Ohio Streets, straight across from the Washington School. For nearly 30 years of that time, Julia ruled the household and the businesses there as a widow.

Julia was born in California about 1863 and came to Butte in 1881. James H. Coughlin came to Butte about the same time and they married around 1889. James was a carpenter, working that year in the Anaconda Mine and living in a home at 219 East Granite. By 1896 he was working at the Ground Squirrel Mine #1, low on the flank of the Butte Hill just above East Mercury Street and about eight blocks east of the Coughlin home on Granite.

In 1891 The Coughlins moved down the block to a new, single-story duplex at 227.

James Coughlin died in 1900, leaving Julia with six children. They continued to live at 227 East Granite until 1908, when daughter Ellen was in high school. But that year, the family moved to the big duplex just to the west at 223-225 where Julia established a confectionery (candy store); it’s likely that Julia bought the property. In 1909, daughter Ellen was a student at the Butte Business College; and children William, Julia (Nettie), Helen, Ray, and Tom were also living at the 223-225 address.

By 1913, Ellen was a teacher, William was a student, Ray was a machinist at the Black Rock Mine, and Tom was a bellboy at the Thornton Hotel, a couple blocks from home. He moved a little further afield the next year, becoming a bellboy at the new Leggat Hotel. In addition to her ongoing management of the confectionery and working occasionally as a clerk, mother Julia became a teacher at Emerson School in 1914. By the early 1920s, the place at 223½ East Granite was a full-blown local grocery store, with Julia listed as the storekeeper, and she was still teaching school as well. Ray was delivering for the Ryan Fruit Company. About 1927, Ray joined his mother in managing the Coughlin Grocery. It appears that Tom and Ellen had moved away or died by then, but mother Julia, daughter Julia, Ray and his wife Pearl, and William were all still living in the big duplex with the grocery.

Julia died June 6, 1929, and son William, who moved to the old home at 227 E. Granite, apparently committed suicide by drinking cyanide November 7, 1932. The following year there were no Coughlins living in this block for the first time since 1885. Ray was an attendant at the Broadway Service Station and living with Pearl at 110½ N. Wyoming, not far from the old family home, and he was also president of the Butte City Council. Daughter Julia followed in her mother’s tradition, becoming a teacher at the Blaine School in Centerville. She died July 24, 1947.

A grocery store continued at 223½ East Granite until 1939, managed successively by Mrs. Ann Krisk, Mrs. Ann Condon, and Harvey Fort. After the store closed, the place became residential only. A few people continued to live there until 1977, when the building was demolished. Today, this entire block is vacant except for a lone surviving miner's cottage.

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.