BAS 285 Quartz and Main Welcome to Butte, America’s Story. I’m your host, Dick Gibson.

The southwest corner of Quartz and Main Streets in 1884 was a half-block west of the first house in Butte, and a half-block south of the new Miners Union Hall that was under construction. The buildings facing Main, south from Quartz, had a wholesale liquor store, druggist, and jeweler in a 1-story building under one roof made of tin. Just south of that was Butte’s Post Office, with club rooms on the second floor. Next door to it was a dry goods store with the Odd Fellows hall above.

A year later, in 1885, the 1-story building on the corner had added a second floor. The façade on the corner building (called the Leyson Building after 1885, for J.H. Leyson, the jeweler in one of the storefronts) was combined with the next building to the south, the former Post Office. The ground floor held Jimmy Lynch’s saloon at the corner (“one of Butte’s most famous”), together with the druggist, and Leyson & Truck jewelers in the northern block.

The adjacent building held J.E. Rickard’s Paint Company on the ground floor. It later became Charles Schatzlein Paint Co. Among more conventional paints, Schatzlein was also the supplier of paints and oils to artist Charlie Russell in the 1890s, and he also sold Russell’s paintings. Nancy Russell wrote for Charlie in 1902 that “Mr. Schaztlein has done more to raise the prices of my pictures than any friend I have.”

John Rickards who started that paint business, was born in Delaware in 1848, and came to Butte in 1882. He was elected the first lieutenant governor and second governor of Montana, serving from 1893-1897.

The second floor above Rickard’s Paint Store, which was interconnected with the building to the north, held the Silver Bow Club’s rooms until the Lewisohn Block was built on Granite in 1890-91. The third building to the south was also connected to those to the north in terms of its façade. That third store was Goldsmith’s men’s clothing (later Siegel Clothing), and the International Order of Odd Fellows still met in the room above.

Around the corner half a block west on Quartz Street, turrets marked the Beresford Building, built in 1891. It was built primarily as a 3-story lodging, but there were two stores on the Quartz Street level, including C.E. Miller’s Glass Store. The lodging was commonly known as Mrs. Armstrong’s Boarding House in reference to the manager. The Beresford had its own boiler, but the boiler for the corner building at Quartz and Main was beneath the Quartz Street sidewalk in the sidewalk vault.

Main Street boasted the cable line that served Butte from about 1888 into the early 1890s, when the electric trolleys replaced it. The cable line on Main ran from Galena and Main up Main Street until it reached the Lexington Mine. It went up an alley west of the Lexington to Daly Street in Walkerville.

All these buildings are gone today, represented by the small modern shop on the southwest corner of Quartz and Main, together with its parking lot and the parking lots behind the NorthWestern Energy building and the Montana Standard. The corner building was demolished before 1951, and the rest were torn down after 1960.

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.