Louise Sneed, also called “Mrs. Astor of the West” was born right around the end of the American Civil War, a Southern Belle of a prominent family in North Carolina. After the death of her parents, she moved in with her sister living in Memphis, Tennessee. A post-civil war South provided few eligible (wealthy and prominent) suitors for Ms. Sneed, so she eventually moved to Denver to live with her cousins. At a roaring gala thrown in honor of her arrival, Louise was introduced to Crawford Hill, considered Denver’s most eligible bachelor at the time. After pursuing Crawford, the two were married in 1895, in what was proclaimed “wedding of the year” in Memphis. Upon their return to Denver, Louise immediately got to work conquering Denver’s social society, of which her mother-in-law was already a prominent member.

In 1905, the Hills built a large mansion on Capitol Hill at Tenth and Sherman Street (a mansion which still stands today and houses a Denver law firm). It was in this home that Louise founded and hosted a social group consisting of what she considered to be the Creme de la Creme of Denver’s high society, named the “Sacred 36,” intended to be the counter-part to New York City’s famed “400.” Louise hosted several other notable visitors like the Duke of Abuzzi, the Queen of Belgium, and President Taft. During a visit to Europe, she was entertained by royalty, even being presented at the Court of King Edward VII of England.

Around 1914, she met General Buckley Wells, president of the Smuggler-Union gold mine among other mining interests and a prominent Denver socialite. After Crawford’s death in 1922, Buckley broke Louise’s heart by marrying another woman. She eventually moved out of her mansion when it became too much to take care and into a suite in the Brown Palace, where she became a near-recluse there until her death in 1955.

Located in Block A.