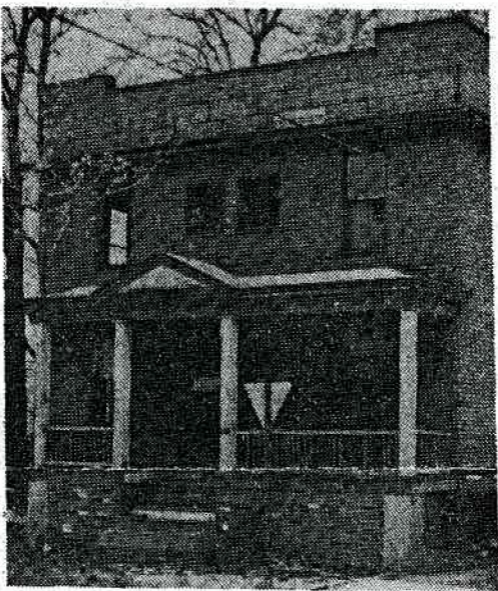


Historic Site

The wrecker's ball, which is clearing the way for Caterpillar's new training center, is at the door of the last of Peoria's classic houses of prostitution, 411 E. State Street.

It was here that the late Baby Doll Cowan, Ethel Lamar, Pam Miller — all of the infamous madams of the Forties, Fifties, and Sixties — played house.

It was this place at the corner of State and Aiken and Warner that anchored the storied Merry-Go-Round, where men in search of prostitutes were joined by an occa-



sional police cruiser and carloads of joyriders who rode round and round the block for kicks.

Aiken Avenue was called Prairie Alley when prostitution was in its heyday. They could change the name, but that did not stop the prostitution or keep the name of Aiken from becoming equally as notorious as Prairie.

The bricks in the street and on the sidewalk and even in the foundation of 411 are being collected today by souvenir hunters. Tacky.

Let's hope nobody tries to get the place declared a Historic Preservation Site.

5-8-80

P. J. Staw