

June 28, 1874—The police spent a busy day today raiding the bagnios and honkytonks. They brought in 32 prisoners, including Lish Jones, alias White, alias Carrie Davis, Ad Cole and seven employees and customers, Mrs. Farren and four, Dan McAllister and seven, Nell Harris and four and the proprietor of the St. Charles hotel and seven hangers arounders.

November 13, 1875—The law went out in force last night to rout the ladies of the underworld from their usual haunts and to see if they could collect a few fines to pep up the city treasury and satisfy the righteous folks who were deploring at great length the activities of the little sisters of the shadows.

Mayor John Warner and Chief of Police Martin Daily called in their standing armies of bluecoats from all corners of the city and armed them with axes, ladders, night sticks and dark lanterns for the big putsch. The peelers all piled in the horse-drawn patrol wagon and began their drive for law and order. They visited twelve houses down in the districts and arrested 28 employes and 15 visitors.

Only Adaline Cole refused to go along peacefully and pay her assessments to the police judge. She told the police who called at her fine two-story brick building at North Washington and Hamilton that she had retired and didn't care to be bothered and would they please come around and she would see what she could do for them. To support her argument she appeared in her nightgown. But the police were not to be fooled this time and they grabbed Adaline, nightgown and all, and piled her into the patrol wagon with the others.

When they reached the jail, of course, the police judge was waiting for them and he spared Adaline any further inconvenience by holding court on the spot and placing a fine of \$28.05 on her. Adaline reached down in her stocking and brought out a \$1,000 bill in payment. No change could be made so she was allowed to go home after inviting all those present to come up and see her sometime.

May 25, 1876—Ad Cole went jail again today—this time appearing in public in a nightgown. She was released after an hour of questioning in the mayor's office.

July 20, 1876.—Adaline Cole, queen of the night lifers, broke into the public prints again by racing her stylish black carriage through the main streets until one of the wheels struck a rut and overturned the rig. Adaline was unhurt and continued to entertain the crowd. A policeman hustled her into a cab with intent to put her in jail for her wickedness. Crawling out on the seat beside the driver, Adaline seized the reins and gave a policeman and cabby a merry ride before she was again subdued.

July 21, 1876—Adaline Cole went on a bender again and drove her team of stylish blacks through the streets at breakneck speed until her carriage hit a rut and tipped over. Police called a cab to take her to jail and she seized the reins from the cab driver and was continuing her wild ride when the bluecoats put her under control.

October 10, 1878—The Red, Peoria's great baseball team, was playing the Unbeatable from Milwaukee and heavy bets were out on both sides. The grandstand and bleachers were filled and hundreds of other spectators dotted the field.

Among those present was Adaline Cole, that well-known woman about town, who sat in her carriage far out in the field. The score stood at 3 to 2 in favor of the Reds in the eighth when a long drive was sent out to Outfielder Alvaretta of the Peorias. Alvaretta started to make the easy catch when he saw Adaline's horses bolt and run. He saw the danger of the frenzied horses stampeding in the crowded field. Turning from the ball, he seized the horses' bridles and stopped the runaway.

The ball rolled away for a hit and two runs came in to win the game for Milwaukee 4 to 3. The local boosters lost their money but they stayed to cheer Alvaretta for stopping the runaway.

March 17, 1878 — Maggie Leonard, one of the little sisters of the shadows, took a shot at Ad Cole, underworld empress, today as the latter was driving down Washington street in her elegant turnout, drawn by sleek black horses and with one of her girls at her side. She missed. Police blamed jealousy over a circle.

September 22, 1879—The promoters of the Great Central Illinois Fair and Exposition opening today at Jefferson Park had given their gate keepers strict orders to keep out anyone of questionable character lest their presence offend the good people. Ad Cole, of the North Washington street Coles, announced publicly that she would get in or know the reason why. Today she attempted to pass, disguised with a heavy cloak and a veil. The gateman recognized her and turned her away. Later the dauntless Adaline got by dressed as a man.

September 15, 1897 — Adaline Cole, queen of the underworld for quarter or a century, died at her North Washington street resort three days ago and conniving for the fortune she was reputed to have left was already underway in the probate court. In fact there were some who said her expensive rings and other jewelry were stripped from her before the undertaker came. Rumors that she had been murdered for her money were called unfounded by the attending physician.

Chief claimant to the estimated \$100,000 estate was Dick Welsh, who as common law husband for ten years sought to have a saloonkeeper friend appointed administrator. A daughter was said to be living in Ohio and there was talk that relation in France would try to get a share of what was left.

Adaline Cole, once the colorful queen of Peoria's half world, had a fondness for spectacular displays featuring herself. One of her principal showoffs was to drive her elegant open carriage, drawn by a handsome team of horses, through the main streets with herself and girl friends, all dressed fit to kill, in the seats of honor. One day the stable in which her fine horses were quartered caught fire. Filling a hat with coins, Ad Cole ran up and down the street offering the money to anyone who would go in and rescue the animals.

February, 23, 1901 — Another claimant to the \$40,000 estate left by Adaline Cole was exposed as a fraud. This time the pretender was a woman who claimed to be a daughter of the spectacular madame who for a quarter century ruled the city's underworld.

The estate had been escheated to the county when Ad Cole died leaving no known heirs. An attempt by Dick Welch to claim it on the grounds that he was a common law husband was turned back. The county could well use the money and had no intention of giving it up without good cause.

So when Mrs. Mary E. Neikirk came forward claiming to be the daughter about whom so many fanciful stories had been told in the past, the county viewed her entrance with alarm. When she came in court and offered to bring witnesses to testify that they had seen Ad Cole publicly acknowledged her as her daughter and only heir. Sheriff Kimsey set out to investigate her claims.

The sheriff sent Detective H. C. Lincoln, former chief of police to pry into the woman's past. The detective did his job in good shape. He ransacked records, copied inscriptions on tombstones and talked with old timers until he had collected a batch of affidavits and certificates that proved the claim was false and that more than a dozen persons were involved in the plot to collect the estate.

Confronted with this mass of evidence and threatened with criminal prosecution if she dared go farther, Mrs. Neikirk faded.

May 14, 1905—Billy White, the sepia gentleman who tended bar in Ad Cole's building on North Washington at Hamilton before someone discovered he could play a cello like nobody's business, was back in town all dressed up fit to kill with calling cards advising people he was now "William White, Premier Cellist of the Great Williams & Walker Theatrical Company." His colored troupe was one of the best on the boards this season and was honored by an invitation to play before King Edward at Windsor Castle during a tour of the Continent.