

Short Street in Harrisburg's Old Eighth Ward, 1871–1879

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Harrisburg's Old Eighth Ward

Short Street was located in the Old Eighth Ward of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.¹ The Eighth Ward sat directly behind the Pennsylvania State Capitol building. Beginning in 1912, the state took over twenty-nine acres, which included the entire old section of the Eighth Ward, to expand the Capitol Park grounds. Thousands of people lost their homes in order for this park area to be constructed.

As its name describes, Short was a small side street just a little less humble than an alley. Short ran between two main streets of the Eighth Ward—Walnut to its south and South to its north. House numbers on Short Street began at 100 near Walnut and ran to 143 at its intersection with South. This study attempts to enumerate those individuals living on Short Street in the Eighth Ward between 1871 and 1879.² Research for this study was conducted at the Historical Society of Dauphin County in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where information was collected from Boyd's Harrisburg directories between the years of 1871 and 1879. In addition, the Mercantile Directory of Dauphin County for 1875-1876 was used.

During the years of this study, cross streets were often used to help locate individual houses within Harrisburg city directories, so neighboring streets are often referenced in the data tables of this paper. It should be noted, however, that individuals grouped under these types of

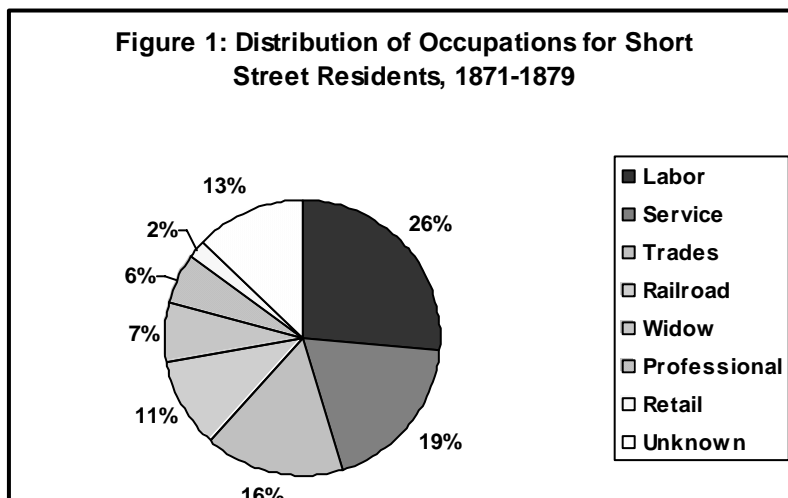
¹ Although Ms. Miller conducted the research on which this paper was based, little of her original essay was used to produce this paper. Extensive rewriting and expansion was necessary in order to use the data in a meaningful way. This was accomplished during the fall of 2005 by Stephanie Patterson Gilbert.

² See data tables at the end of this paper for a listing of residents by year.

addresses most likely did not live in the same household. For example, an address denoted as “Short n Cranberry” referred to houses that were located on Short Street near Cranberry Alley. How many individual houses this type of address referred to is unknown, as well as how close to the alley a house had to be located to be denoted as such. In addition, tenements were common in the Eighth, so many individual households were located within the same building. Increasingly through the period of study, house numbers became more common; in 1871, only five of ten unique addresses were referenced by street number, but by 1879, every residential location was identified by house number.

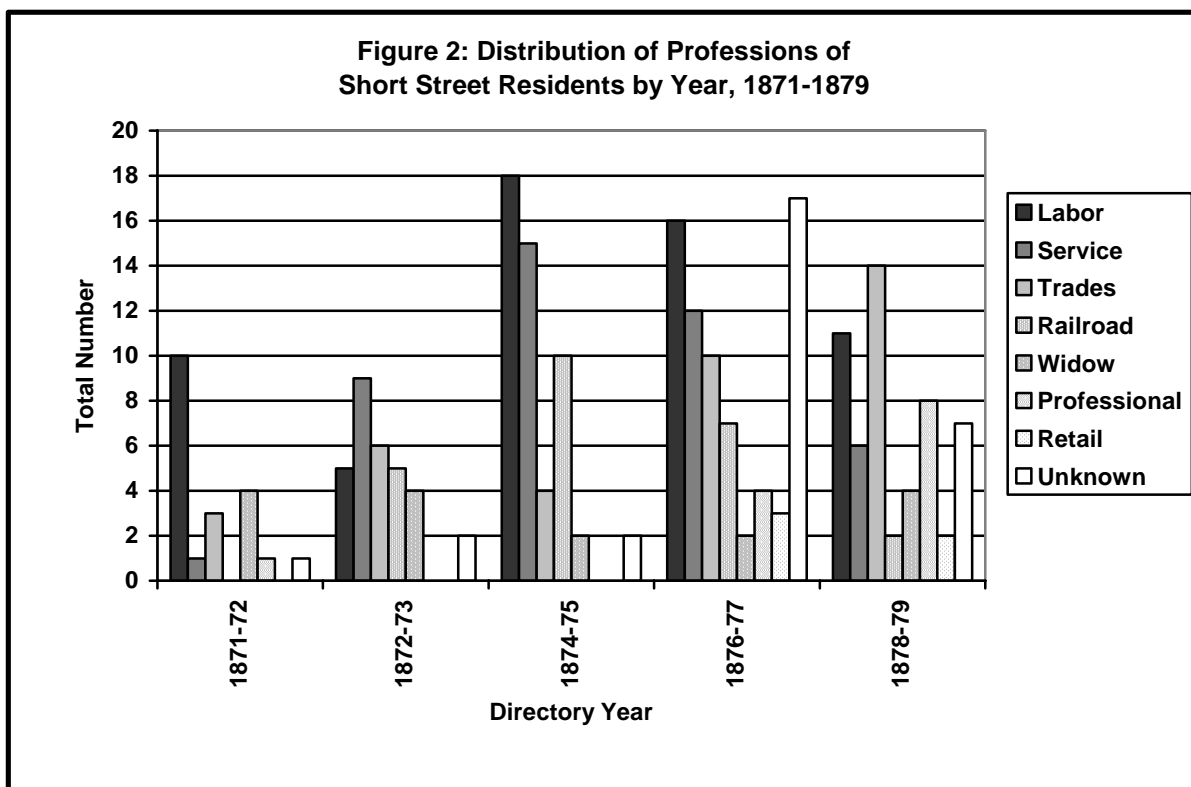
The residents of Short Street during the 1870s were, for the most part, working jobs that required little specialized training or skill (Figure 1). Nearly half of those residents whose employment could be determined, or 45%, were employed as laborers or in menial service positions, such as waiters and porters. Only 16% of Short Street residents during this period could be termed skilled or semi-skilled tradesmen, such as blacksmiths, shoemakers, or carpenters. Railroad workers and widows accounted for 11% and 7% of Short Street residents, respectively. A mere 6% of the street’s residents during this period held professional positions, such as teachers or clergy. While 13% of residents had no occupation listed in the city

directories, only 2% practiced retailing as their occupation. Overall, these results were not surprising, considering the findings of earlier Eighth Ward research. The ward was home to far more unskilled and

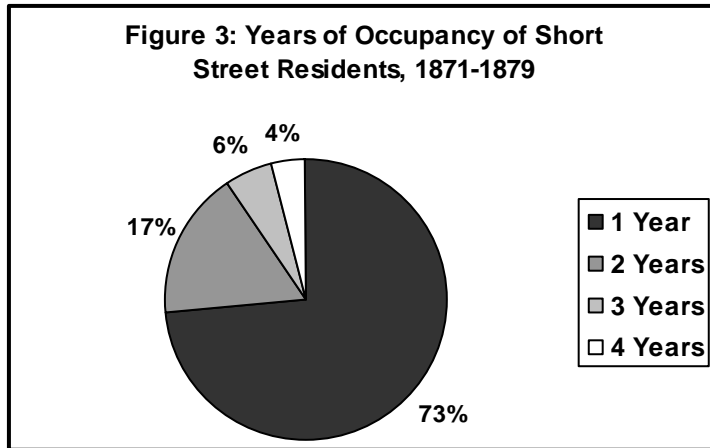


service workers than any other type of laborers. But by the end of the 1870s, the number of unskilled laborers was declining, while the number of skilled tradesmen and professionals was increasing, perhaps indicating an increase in economic viability for ward residents (Figure 2).

There were some success stories on Short Street, however. William Rudy, first listed as a flagman in 1872, climbed the ranks of railroading throughout the 1870s. By the end of the decade, he had become a conductor. Isaac G. Smith experienced a similar rise, beginning as a laborer in 1871, becoming a flagman in 1873, and ending as a freight conductor in 1878. Although he began as a saloon keeper in 1871, William Toop was a restaurateur and a boarding house operator during the 1870s. His last occupation, oysterman, would most likely have attracted a more affluent clientele than his saloon would have earlier in the decade.



Even so, Short was still populated by some of the most economically disadvantaged people found in Harrisburg during the 1870s. This undoubtedly caused the general transience



found on the street, which is another established characteristic of the Eighth Ward. Few residents seemed to stay settled in the same house for very long (Figure 3). In fact, 73% of all residents uncovered during this research were listed in the city

directory as living on Short Street for one year. Only six residents, or 4%, were listed as living on Short for the entire period of study. Although some residents may have actually resided on Short Street longer than a year but were excluded from the directories, this cannot account for the overwhelming number of individuals who appear on Short only once in the 1870s. Again, there were exceptions. Joseph B. Popel took up residence on Short in 1872 and was still living there, in the same home, in 1877. Levi Friver lived at 108 Short in 1871, where he still lived in 1878. But established residents such as these were rare.

Overall, Short Street appears not to break from the patterns of employment and occupancy found elsewhere in the Eighth Ward during the 1870s and in other decades. The ward was, no doubt, a lower class neighborhood, where life was uncertain and unstable. It is not surprising that the Eighth was chosen for the Capitol Park Extension because its residents had little political or economic power with which to resist. Although Short Street was destroyed, its residents moved into new neighborhoods and continued living their modest lives.

Residents of Short Street, 1871-1872			
Address*	Name	Occupation	Notes
Short n Walnut	Edward F. Never	Butcher	Lives @ same
100	Samuel Sounders	Carpenter	Boarder
106	George H. Imes	Teacher	
108	Levi Friver	Laborer	
	Levi Friver, Jr.	Laborer	Boarder
112	William Toop	Saloon	Lives @ same
Short n Cranberry	Joseph Berry		
	Charles Lucas	Laborer	
Short c Cranberry	M.B. Boon	Widow of Evans	
	Evan Boon	Laborer	Boarder
	Mary Snoddy	Widow of James	Boarder
Short n South	Annie M. Armstrong	Widow of Samuel	
	George Fisher	Laborer	
	Jones Howard	Laborer	Boarder
	Isaac Smith	Laborer	
	William Smith	Laborer	
	John Snyder	Laborer	
141	Lydia M. Hoffman	Widow of David F.	
	Eratus B. Hoffman	Machinist	Boarder
Short c South	Jennings and Stoever Franklin Iron Works	Factory	
n=near c=corner *Note—residents of addresses are grouped together when their addresses were described by the city directory in exactly the same terms; however, this does not mean that all individuals grouped together under these headings resided in the same household.			

Residents of Short Street, 1872-1873			
Address*	Name	Occupation	Notes
102	John W. McKinney	Printer @ Telegraph	
104	James Butler	Laborer	
106	Alexander Sample	Porter	
	John Sample	Waiter	Boarder
	Peter Sample	Waiter	Boarder
	Jefferson Graham	Laborer	Boarder
108	George Duncan	Laborer	
110	George A. Lee	Waiter	
	Albert Dockins	Waiter	Boarder
	Fraud Williams	Waiter	Boarder
112	William Toop	Restaurant	Lives @ same
Short c Cranberry	John Boone	Moulder	
	Martha Boone	Widow of Evan	
	Sarah E. Spangler	Widow of Strange	
122	Christopher Greene	Laborer	

Address	Name	Occupation	Notes
	L.O. Earley	Waiter	Boarder
124	Margaret Smith	Widow of Philip	
129	Joseph G. Popel	Barber @ 442 South	
	Joseph Popel	Waiter	
130	William Scott	Coachman	
	John Snyder	Porter	
131	George Thomas		
133	Jonas J. Rudy	Letter Carrier	
	Jonas Rudy	Plasterer	Boarder
135	William Rudy	Flagman	
139	David K. Rudy	Plasterer	
141	Lydia M. Hoffman	Widow of David F.	
	Clara E. Hoffman	Dressmaker	
143	John White	Hostler	
145	Isaac G. Smith	Flagman	
147	Terrance McManus	Laborer	
Short c South	W.W. Jennings		
c=corner			
*Note—residents of addresses are grouped together when their addresses were described by the city directory in exactly the same terms; however, this does not mean that all individuals grouped together under these headings resided in the same household.			

Residents of Short Street, 1874-1875			
Address*	Name	Occupation	Notes
102	Henry G. Miller	Blacksmith	
	Amelia Miller	Domestic	
	Adam J. Swope	Laborer	
	Albert M. Fleming	Laborer	Boarder
	John Armstrong	Laborer	Boarder
104	Henry Butler	Laborer	
	Peter Turner	Porter	Boarder
105	Lewis A. Carter	Patternmaker	Boarder
106	Alexander Sample	Porter	
	Jefferson Graham	Porter	
108	Levi Friver	Waiter	
109	A.L. Hammaker & Co.	Broom Factory	
	Jackson Reber	Broommaker	Lives @ Manada n Reilly
110	Mark Gaitor	Barber	Lives @ Tanners
	James Blade	Laborer	
112	William Toop	Boarding House	
	Elias M. Stanton	Waiter	Boarder
	Walter W. Williams	Porter	Boarder

Address	Name	Occupation	Notes
113	George Thomas	Laborer	
115	John Butler	Waiter	
	Alexander Dennee		
al ab Short n Cranberry	Joseph Brown	Laborer	
	Thomas Burrill	Laborer	
	William Christie	Laborer	
	Jacob Christie	Waiter	Boarder
	Thomas Christie	Waiter	Boarder
	Elizabeth McClintock	Domestic	
	Henry Meads	Whitewasher	
	Andrew Meads	Laborer	Boarder
	Noah Meads	Laborer	Boarder
	Charles Porter	Laborer	
Short n Cranberry	William P. Scott	Laborer	
	Frazer Clendennin	Blacksmith	
119	J.U. Nixon	Waiter	
	George E. Douglass	Porter	
	Richard Thompson	Waiter	
122	Christopher Green	Laborer	
	Elizabeth Early	Widow of Thomas	Boarder
	Loverture Early	Waiter	Boarder
124	Charles E. Lucas	Laborer	
129	Joseph B. Popel	Waiter	
	Joseph G. Popel	Barber	Boarder
130	Harriet Howard	Domestic	
131	William H. Bond	Porter	
	Hamilton Jones	Laborer	
133	William H. Rudy	Railroader	
135	Samuel Cook	Conductor	
141	Lydia M. Hoffman	Widow of David F.	
143	William Taylor	Laborer	
145	Isaac G. Smith	Conductor	
	Mrs. Kate Millhouse	Warper	Boarder
147	William S. Gardner	Trucker	
149	John H. Thomas	Laborer	
149 Short n South	George Galbraith	Saloon	
Short n South	J.D. Marshbank & Son	Hot Water Furnaces	
Short c South	W.W. Jennings	Architect. Castings	

c=corner

n=near

al=alley

ab=above

*Note—residents of addresses are grouped together when their addresses were described by the city directory in exactly the same terms; however, this does not mean that all individuals grouped together under these headings resided in the same household.

Businesses of Short Street, 1875-1876			
Address	Name	Occupation	Notes
Short n Walnut	S.W. Scott	Grocer	
137	J.W. Simpson	Shoemaker	
Short n South	AME Church		
Short c South	Franklin Iron Works		
	J.D. Marshbank and Son	Heaters	
n=near c=corner			

Residents of Short Street, 1876-1877			
Address*	Name	Occupation	Notes
Short n Walnut	Joseph Porter	Laborer	
100	Roger Sheehy		
102	Jacob O. Stees	Printer	Boarder
106	Alexander Sample	Porter	
	John Sample	Waiter	
	Peter Sample	Waiter	
	George H. Washington	Waiter	Boarder
	Jefferson Graham	Porter	Boarder
r 106	Charles Porter	Laborer	
108	Levi Friver	Laborer	
	Ananias Green	Waiter	
109	Edward Masoline	Carpenter	
	John Staab	Cart Manufacturer	Boarder
110	James Blade	Laborer	
	Samuel E. Hughes	Restaurant	Lives on Church
110 Short n Cranberry	Jacob Christy	Waiter	
112	William Toop	Oysterman	
	Walter Williams	Porter	
112 Short n Cranberry	Mary E. Belt		
r 112 Short n Cranberry	Mary Whiten		
	Frank Robinson		
113	Rev. Clemens A. Koppnagle	Priest @ St. Lawrence	
115	August Karle	Organist @ St. Lawrence	Boarder
117	Samuel W. Scott	Porter	
118	John D. Young	Express Messenger	
119	George E. Douglass	Porter @ Lochiel Hotel	
	Elijah Mormon	Porter @ Kirkwood House	Boarder

Address	Name	Occupation	Notes
	George W. Debois		Boarder
120	John A. Krause	Teacher	
	Lizzie Sherger	Dressmaker	Boarder
122	Elizabeth Early		
	Lonvitcher Early	Waiter	
	Christopher Green	Laborer	
124	Charles E.W. Lucas	Cook @ State Capitol	
127	Abraham Hall	Laborer	
	George Hall	Laborer	
	Henry J. Hall	Laborer	
129	Joseph B. Popel	Barber	
	Joseph G. Popel	Barber	
	Charles S.S. Popel	Shoemaker	
	Joseph Popel	Laborer	
	Robert Nixon	Laborer	Boarder
130	Elizabeth Baker	Widow	
	William Moselu	Porter	
	Robert Thompson	Laborer	
	Samuel Houston	Laborer	Boarder
	Thomas Coats	Laborer	Boarder
r 130	William Pope	Laborer	
131	Rev. Theodore Gould	Reverend	Boarder
133	William H. Rudy	Brakeman	
135	Elizabeth Jones	Widow of Thomas	
	William T. Jones		
	George J. Vogt	Tobacconist	
137	Isaac P. Taylor	Waiter	
139	David K. Rudy		
	Harry K. Rudy	Plasterer	
141	William Buehler	Blacksmith	
143	Samuel Snowden	Laborer	
	William J. Taylor	Laborer	
145	Isaac G. Smith	Freight Conductor	
	Catharine Martin	Warper	Boarder
146	John Marshall	Varieties	Lives @ same
147	William S. Gardner	Huckster	Lives @ same
	William Gardner	Teamster	
Short c South	Alexander Boyle	Foreman	Lives @ 524 State
	W.W. Jennings	Iron Works	
Short and South	J.D. Marshbank & Son	Foundry	
c=corner n=near r=rear *Note—residents of addresses are grouped together when their addresses were described by the city directory in exactly the same terms; however, this does not mean that all individuals grouped together under these headings resided in the same household.			

Residents of Short Street, 1878-1879			
Address*	Name	Occupation	Notes
102	Clark M. Brown	Shoemaker	
	John M. Brown	Shoemaker	Boarder
104	John J. Coleman	Machinist	
	William Coleman	Laborer	
	Michael F. Maloney	Moulder	
106	John Sample	Waiter	
	Charles Mason		
108	Levi Friver	Laborer	
109	Edward Masoline	Carpenter	
	John Staab	Carpetmaker	Boarder
110	James Blade	Laborer	
111	Rev. Clemens A. Koppnagel	Priest @ St. Lawrence	
112	Elizabeth Toop	Widow of William	
	William Thomas	Whitewasher	
	Rev. George M. Bonner	Reverend	Boarder
113	Sister Attala	Nun	Sisters of Christian Charity based @ St. Lawrence Church
	Sister Domittila	Nun	
	Sister Maxima	Nun	
	Sister Meinolpha	Nun	
114	John D. Young	Express Manager	
	Thomas M. Ritner	Tailor	Lives @ 622 North
116	John A. Krause	Teacher	
117	Samuel W. Scott	Porter	
	Susan Barnes		
119	George E. Douglass	Porter @ Lochiel Hotel	
	Annie Howard		
120	Mrs. Kate Sherger	Dressmaker	
	John Sherger	Laborer	
	Lizzie Sherger	Dressmaker	Boarder
	Peter Albright	Laborer	
121	Ellen Dungen		
	Isaac Downey	Laborer	Boarder
	Samuel Jackson	Laborer	
122	Elizabeth Early		
	Leovetur Early	Waiter	
	Christopher Green	Laborer	
123	Joseph B. Popel	Laborer	
124	John A. Smith	Waiter	
	William Stewart	Porter @ Lochiel Hotel	
127	William H. Rudy	Conductor	
129	George J. Vogt	Tobacconist	Lives @ same

Address	Name	Occupation	Notes
130	Elizabeth Baker	Widow	
	Elvin B. Miller	Laborer	Boarder
	Andrew Ward	Laborer	
131	John W. Simpson	Shoemaker	
133	Rudy & Rupp Plasterers	Job Plasterers	
	David K. Rudy		
	Harry K. Rudy	Plasterer	
	Charles E. Rudy	Printer	Boarder
	Elizabeth Jones	Widow of Thomas	
136	Charles S.S. Popel	Shoemaker	Boarder
137	John Marshall	Varieties	Lives @ same
139	Henry Rothrock	Tailor	
	Marcus Vogt	Tinner	
143	Martha Battis	Widow of John	
	Ellen Johnson		
Short c South	David W. Dickey	Clerk	Boards @ U.S. Hotel
	Franklin Iron Works	Foundry	
	Seamless Steelware & Frog Co.	Foundry	
	Toucey & Buchana	Switch Company	
	J.D. Marshbank & Son	Heating Apparatus	
c=corner *Note—residents of addresses are grouped together when their addresses were described by the city directory in exactly the same terms; however, this does not mean that all individuals grouped together under these headings resided in the same household.			