

HISTORY OF THE BAR

- 1868:** The first known owner of 3349 20th Street was Ms. Marie Grother. It is not known if she was a widow or a single woman owner.
- 1891:** Two German immigrant businessmen rented the property from Ms. Grother and Schlichtmann & Bredhofy “Grocery Saloon” opened their doors. Many German immigrants ran grocery stores in the West during this time, often with a “back room grog shop.”
- 1894:** Mr. Henry Schlichtmann bought out his partner and ran the grocery saloon as Schlichtmann’s. He moved the Schlichtmann family into the apartment above the store.
- 1906:** After the Great Quake and Fire, City Hall decreed that grocery saloons were no longer allowed to exist as a combined business in an effort to keep children out of saloons. To further clean up the City, the number of saloons were also newly restricted. Mr. Schlichtmann was able to obtain one of these limited saloon licenses and became known simply as Saloon. He ordered the wooden back bar you see today from Maine and had it shipped to California. The bar and immediate neighborhood did not incur significant damage in the great quake and fire.
- 1909:** Mr. Schlichtmann sold the Saloon and building to Mr. C. Mich Cribbin. Taking the proceeds Mr. Schlichtmann bought a bar on 17th and Capp, known today as the Uptown. Mr. Cribbin moved into the apartment above the Saloon.
- 1920-1933:** Prohibition in the United States took effect and Mr. Cribbin converted the Saloon back to a neighborhood grocery, fortunately keeping the beautiful backbar.
- 1934:** With the end of Prohibition, the grocery was converted back to a saloon and listed as a beer parlor. It is believed that around this time Mr. Cribbin added the current corner entrance and deco doors, which you see today.
- 1976:** “Old man Cribbin’s,” as he became known, was no longer occupying the apartment above the beer parlor where he had lived for over six decades. Cribbin’s Tavern closed and the building fell into disrepair.
- 1982:** Mr. Schipero, the owner of Light Soda On Tap (a San Francisco business since 1947), bought the building from Cribbin’s sister without the liquor license, which was sold separately.
- 1983:** Mr. Schipero’s first renter was a Danish gentleman who lived in the apartment and used the bar space as “some sort of movie theater.”
- 1988:** The second renter tried but could not obtain a full liquor license because of a new moratorium enacted by the City in “high crime” neighborhoods. The ban is still in effect today in the Mission and Tenderloin. El Trobol opened as a beer-only bar, catering to a predominately Hispanic clientele.
- 1995:** The bar changed hands and became Shotwell 59 for four years, named for a British motorcycle club.
- 2000:** Two bartenders from The Crowbar in North Beach bought the business and named it Thieves Tavern.
- 2006:** In honor of the tavern’s rich history, the new owners name the current bar Shotwell’s.