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title:	The House at Nine North Front St.
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Adjacent to the Shot Tower, at 9 N. Front Street, sits the only survivor of a group of homes in this area. The house, built around 1790, was home to many gentlemen through the years but the most famous was Thorowgood Smith, Baltimore's second mayor.

Born in Accomac, Virginia in 1743, Smith came to Baltimore as a youth, and with the growth of the port, prospered as a shipping merchant. By 1793, Smith was registered as the owner of five ships, ranging from 59 to 91 tons.

Baltimore had become a boomtown following the revolution because of its large traffic in grain export. Smith's fortunes had grown with the trade. He owned a house on Water Street, a wharf on Philpot Street, seven slaves, two carriage horses, a cow, and valuable furniture.

Also during these prosperous times, Thorowgood Smith was involved in the Baltimore political scene. In 1790, he was part of a group of prominent persons who were authorized to take subscriptions for the Bank of Maryland, which survived as the Union Trust Bank, and now as Signet Bank. He was a county justice in 1797 and when James Calhoun became the first mayor, Smith was a judge of elections.

But, late in the 1790's, Smith was driven to bankruptcy by the loss of his ships. The French and British were at war and his ships were seized. Smith was forced to sell everything at public auction.

In 1802, he moved into 9 N. Front Street as a tenant of the owner, Charles Torrance. At that time, it was a house suitable for a gentleman in reduced circumstances. Smith was down, but never out. In 1804, he was appointed Mayor of Baltimore, a logical step

in his political career. It was at that time that he moved out of the house on Front Street.

Smith applied the same energy and skill to his political career that he had in his business endeavors. In just four years as mayor of Baltimore, he improved police protection in the city by replacing a group of watchmen with a "patrole composed of constables of the city". He instigated a lottery for funding a Free School. Also during his four years, an ordinance was passed to bring water to the city, a volunteer fire company was started on Fleet Street, and a bureau of weights and measures to regularize the sales of food and coal was put in place.

On August 13, 1810, Thorowgood Smith died, ending a busy, productive, and highly successful life -- a life during which he accomplished much despite losses and ill fortune -- a life of a survivor.

The house at 9 N. Front Street is a survivor too. After 1804, when Smith left, the house was occupied by many families until, in 1864, it became the Gardiner's Hotel. In 1876, it was William Suess's Restaurant. Later, the house was a boarding house, an apartment house, and even an auto parts shop. Finally, in 1972, the city of Baltimore and the Women's Civic League of Baltimore purchased the house.

In a remarkable way, both the house at 9 N. Front Street and Thorowgood Smith define what it means to be a survivor. The man overcame financial ruin to become mayor and the house, outlasting all its neighbors, has survived to benefit from all the improvements and innovations made by the man. Restored by the

Women's Civic League, the house remains to grace Shot Tower Park and to bear witness to the transformation and renewal of Baltimore's neighborhoods.