

In Ante-Bellum Days



Two young Charlestonians a few years before the War between the States.

These are James and Anna Morrison. The former ran away from school to join the Confederate army at the age of 18. He became a member of the Washington Light Infantry. He was in this last regiment when he died, but his sister, who became Mrs. Anna Gruber, survived until some few months ago. Her daughter, Miss Thayer Gruber, married Rear Admiral William S. Allen, commandant of the Charleston navy yard.

The photograph reproduced belongs to Miss Celia P. Morrison, daughter of James Morrison, and is one of a series being published by The Evening Post, showing scenes of former years. Those having antebellum photographs they are willing to lend are invited to submit them.

Date / Source not indicated

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CLAUDIA THAYER (HOLMES) MISSROON



HENRY MISSROON

Claudia Thayer Holmes was born in 1824, the only child of Anna Maria Thayer and Isaac Keith Holmes, a planter on James Island.

In 1844 she married Henry Missroon, son of Margaret McBride Bard and Captain James Missroon. Claudia Holmes and Henry Missroon had three children:

- i. James Missroon He entered the Confederate Army at 16. He received a leg wound and lost his leg. He recovered and married Clelia Porche.
- ii. John Missroon He died at the age of 6 years of membranous croup (now "diphtheria")
- iii. Anna Margaret Missroon She was born in 1854.

Claudia and Henry Missroon lived at 40 East Battery (East Bay?). The house was built by Harry Grant, circa 1789. It was purchased in 1808 by Captain James Missroon, whose family owned it until after the Civil War. Captain Missroon and his descendants were in the maritime trade. Captain James Missroon and his wife Margaret are buried in the churchyard of St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C. Their grave is marked by a likeness of his triple-masted ship etched into a stone that crossed the ocean as ballast.

The house, which retains much of its original woodwork, became the Shamrock Hotel in 1905. In 1925 it was enlarged for the Omar Shrine Temple. During the construction, part of Granville Bastion was found. The house is now owned by the Historic Charleston Foundation. According to family tradition, Anna Margaret Missroon, aged 6 years, stood on the top gallery of the house with her Mammy "Cha Cha" (Charlotte) when the first gun was fired on Fort Sumpter which opened the Civil War.

In 1842 a French artist residing in New York painted a portrait of Claudia Thayer Holmes on ivory.

On his last trip to New York Henry Missroon had a dream the night he landed that his wife, Claudia Thayer, had died and was laid out in the dress that he always liked the best. It disturbed him so much that he did not attend any of the business he had come to do, but started right back to Charleston only to find that the dream was true in every detail. She died of angina, leaving three children: James, ten, John, four, and Anna Margaret only 14 months old. Henry Missroon died at the age of forty-four of typhoid, when Anna Margaret was only six.

Anna Margaret was brought up by her grandmother, Anna Maria Holmes, and an aunt, Miss Mary Thayer. She lived in the William Gibbes house at 64 South Battery, Charleston, with "Aunt Mamie" Gibbes, until she married Rev. William Henry Capers in 1869.

SOURCES: Primarily, the information above was obtained from letters written by family members. Other information was obtained from research done by Mrs. James Boswell.