

*Do not use any kind of tape
to tape runners to the floor,
to other runners or to
anything else.*



HISTORIC CHARLESTON FOUNDATION

JAMES MISSROON HOUSE

**40 East Bay
c. 1808-10**

Headquarters for Historic Charleston Foundation

2017

The site at 40 East Bay St. served in the late 17th century as Granville Bastion, the southeastern corner fortress built to protect the new walled colony of Charles Town from naval invasions of pirates, Spanish and French, and later the British during the Revolution. Portions of the brick bastion & wall were rediscovered during renovations.

British merchant Harry Grant purchased the site in 1789, at which time a portion of the bastion remained. Grant sold the property in 1796, which passed briefly through the Kinloch and Fraser families before being purchased in 1808 by Captain James Missroon, who probably built the Charleston single house that makes up the heart of the building that stands today. The original dwelling included a tripartite pediment window on the second floor, an elliptical fanlighted doorway on the ground floor, stucco quoining, and intricate moldings and plaster, all of which have survived.

Captain Missroon and his descendants occupied the house, which faced the family's wharf, for 60 years. Information about the Missroon family has survived, including details of Capt. Missroon's nephew's funeral, held in the house in the 1820s; information from the Schirmer diary about the marriage of Henry Missroon to Claudia Holmes in 1844; and the Missroon family's investment in building a large steamship that ran between Charleston and New York.

Probably the most important documentation is the room-by-room inventory of Mrs. Margaret Missroon, taken after her death in 1854. The inventory describes a three-story single house with very fine furniture, six family portraits, gas light fixtures on both levels of the entry hall, and fine furniture in the second floor drawing room, which included "6 cornices gilt and curtains." Mrs. Missroon owned four adult slaves and three slave children who probably lived on the property at the time of her death and are mentioned in her will.

The Missroons sold the property in 1855 to John Milnor and the house went through several different owners over the next 50 years. One important record of the house during this period is the earthquake damage assessment of 1886: the north, south and west sides of the building were "badly cracked over the openings" and the kitchen house had to be rebuilt.

JAMES MISSROON HOUSE - PAGE 2

The property was converted in 1901 to the Shamrock Terrace boarding house. The hurricane of 1911 left the house so badly damaged that it was subsequently abandoned and stood vacant until the Masonic Order of the Omar Shrine purchased it in 1925. Charleston restoration architects Albert Simons and Samuel Lapham converted the house into the Shriners' new headquarters, rebuilding the third story and adding a northern extension and brick-columned piazzas on the south and east sides.

The piazzas were later enclosed. The Shriners kept the property for the next 75 years.

When the property came up for sale in 1996, community leaders raised concerns that the large building might be converted to uses that would negatively impact the historic residential neighborhood, as well as the historic fabric of the building. The Carolina Yacht Club allayed these fears by purchasing the property and selling it to Historic Charleston Foundation. After a renovation and restoration process, the Foundation reopened the building in the fall of 2001 as its new headquarters and preservation resource center.

One of the most interesting aspects of the renovation is that the Missroons' original single house is easily distinguishable within the context of the 20th century additions. One can discern the original house by its exposed brick façade and original window replacements. The architects for Historic Charleston Foundation were Eddie Fava, Phil Dufford and John Young. NBM Construction was the contractor.

Late 18th and early 19th century furnishings, along with period reproductions, are used to decorate original historic interior spaces on the first two floors. These furnishings would have been appropriate for a merchant such as Capt. Missroon. Stylish but not overly lavish, the furnishings reflect the Neoclassical and Empire styles that were fashionable between 1789 and 1858 and highlight the importance of maritime trade to the owners of the house. Margaret Missroon's inventory provided the basis for the furnishings plan.

The original four rooms house a library, the Sally Reahard Reading Room, the Granville Room, and office for the Foundation's Executive Director. Throughout the building the window treatments are a Hunter Douglas brand installed by Ging and Company. In the non-original rooms, the enclosed piazza areas on the first and second floors and on the third floor the furniture is Knoll and the built in panels and file drawers were made by Carolina Joinery.

JAMES MISSROON HOUSE - PAGE 3

ENTRY

The hallway in the Missroon period was referred to as the "entry." It contained a barometer that we have also acquired. The furniture now in the entry includes a pier table and black chairs from the Historic Charleston Reproductions program. The door surround in this room and the stair windows are original. The staircase would have originally extended to the third floor. The color of the walls in the entry and stairhall is HC 32 Standish White trimmed in Linen White.

Chairs, reproduction, black lacquer

Chandelier, reproduction of a circa 1800 glass globed hanging lantern, the type often seen in hallways in American houses in this period.

Console table, reproduction, mahogany, by Baker Furniture Co.; adaptation from the Grecian-style pier table currently exhibited at the Aiken-Rhett House.

Engraving, 18th century, depicting the Temple at Concord in the Roman Forum, by the Italian artist Giovanni Piranesi (born 1720); whose engravings inspired classical architecture throughout the western world; Lent by Mrs. Celestine Lehmann-Haupt, L.2003.003.001.

Architectural print, 18th century architectural print of a three story villa, by the Italian artist Giovanni Piranesi along with prints from Andrea Palladio's folio entitled, *Four Books of Architecture*, 1726.

DINING ROOM / LIBRARY

The overall philosophy for furnishing the Missroon house has been to follow as completely as possible the estate inventory of Mrs. Margaret Missroon. It indicates to us that the front first floor room was used as a dining room and contained a number of the things we now have in the room, either antiques or reproductions from the Historic Charleston Reproductions program. Some of the woodwork in the room, including the guilloche mold of the wainscoting shutters, are original. The walls are Weathered Stucco from Lord and Evans trimmed in Linen White.

Clothes press, reproduction, Charleston, in the early Neoclassical-style by Baker Furniture Company.

Telescoping Dining Table, by Baker Furniture Company.

Dumbwaiter, reproduction, late eighteenth-century, with two graduated dish-shaped drop-leaf tiers by Baker Furniture Company.

Sideboard, reproduction, Charleston, Federal, from the Foundations' collection by Baker Furniture Company.

Chairs, reproductions of Charleston originals, reproduced from a Charleston original in the collection of the Kaminski House in Georgetown.

Candlesticks, c.1810, bronze and ormolu, French or English, in the Empire style, on the sideboard.

JAMES MISSROON HOUSE - PAGE 4

LIBRARY - *Continued*

Mirror, American or English, Chippendale-style, c.1780-1800, given to the Foundation by a local donor, hangs over the sideboard.

Portrait, over the mantelpiece, is of the Englishman James Warrington, painted by the noted English artist, Northcote, circa 1810-1820. Mr. Warrington may have known James Missroon and in the background of the painting, one can see a view of Charleston apparently copied from a 1772 engraving. The provenance of this painting is uncertain. The portrait was purchased by the Foundation at auction at Christies some years ago because of its Charleston connection. Historic Charleston Foundation Purchase, 89.1.1.

Steel engraving by J. Wells after a drawing by W. Ridgway of *Birds-eye View of Charleston, S.C. and Its Vicinity*, c. 1863. Collection of the Historic Charleston Foundation, 2006.001.003.

Print depicting the Siege of Charleston after a painting by Chappel, published by Johnson, Fry & Co., Publishers, New York. Collection of the Historic Charleston Foundation, 2006.001. 004

Sculptures, bronze, pheasants, on the mantel, by artist Jules Moigniez 1835-1894, French, late 19th century. Gift of an Anonymous Donor, NA.2001.007.011.

Chandelier, reproduction of a Dutch-style brass eight-light, from the 18th century. Gift of Mr. Richard H. Jenrette, 78.4.4.

Fender and fire irons, brass, possibly English, 19th century.

Rug, wool Kayseri, Turkish, probably 19th century. Gift of Mrs. Margaret McLernon.

Watercolor painting of the Aiken-Rhett House, by local artist George Roberts, 2009

BACK PARLOR /GRANVILLE ROOM

The room was described in the Missroon inventory as the “back (parlor) room” and contained such things as an icehouse and seven chairs. It would have functioned in that period typically as a family sitting room and possibly for late night supper. The kitchen outbuilding and pantry hyphen wing would have been just beyond the French doors in this room. The mantel and wainscot seem to be original to the room. The walls are Martin Seymour Pumpkin Seed trimmed in Linen White.

Chair and desk, from the Historical Charleston Reproductions collection by Baker Furniture Company

End table, adapted from a Charleston area example, reproduced by Baker Furniture Company

“Russell House” toll urn with decoration, derived from Neoclassical iconography, Historic Charleston Foundation reproduction

Armchair, reproduction, in the style of a late 18th or early 19th century example

Mirror, in the Rococo style, pair

Bookcase, mahogany, also known as a “breakfront,” c. 1830, English William IV style. Gift of Mr. Richard H. Jenrette, 78.4.12.

JAMES MISSROON HOUSE

PAGE 5

GRANVILLE ROOM - *Continued*

Sofa with gilt inlays and ormolu mounts of winged horses, bust heads and anthemia, c. 1810-1820, French, in the empire style. Gift of Mr. Richard H. Jenrette, 78.415.

One of a Pair of candelabrum with center branch surrounded by five candle branches on leaf-capped scroll and twisted arms, stamped on the feet "EE" and "FTI." Gift of an Anonymous Donor, NA.2001.007.015.

Original portrait of Henry Edward Drayton in its original frame, dated 1859, by Edward Bowers, dated 1859, hangs above the table. Henry Drayton, a descendant of the original builder of Drayton Hall, was part of the Drayton family that moved to Philadelphia in the early 19th century. Gift of Mr. Gifford Cochran, 74.4.1.

Map, *North and South Carolina*, by S. Augustus Mitchel, c. 1872.

Map, *Carte De La Partie Sud Des Etats Unis de a L'Amérique Septentrionale*, by M. Bonne Ceramics, HCF Reproductions, throughout the room, by Mottahedah.

Side chair, federal-style, c. 1800, Mahogany with new upholstery, Gifted by Emily Farrow Mirror, gilt gesso and pine, in the Rococo taste having rectangular-shaped body with leaf and "C" scroll decoration, Gift of Emily Farrow, NA.2004.006.008

Print of Colton's map of *The City of Savannah, Georgia and The City of Charleston, South Carolina*, dated 1859.

UPSTAIRS

STAIRCASE AND SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY

Sofa, Regency, upholstered in ivory damask

Architectural prints, along the walls leading to the top of the staircase, from Andrea Palladio's folio entitled, *Four Books of Architecture*, 1726.

Torchieres, bronze, date from the mid 19th century and were supposedly used in an antebellum house in Columbia, South Carolina.

SALLY REAHARD READING ROOM - *this room has been taken over by the CFO as her corner office by the water was trashed by Hurricane Matthew and is still under repair - ribbon off*

The Sally Reahard Room originally served as the drawing room. The wainscot, mantle, and other details in this room are original and of particular note, especially the door surround of the entry door to the room with its original, oval paterae corner blocks and palmette motifs, much like some of the work found in Russell House at 51 Meeting Street. The cornice is the only known Charleston example of a cornice based on a plate showing similar cherubs and garlands from the 1785 pattern book of the English architect-designer William Pain. The walls are plaster white trimmed in grey with a cream cornice.

SALLY REAHARD READING ROOM - *Continued*

Painting "The Economist", a Civil War era painting of George Trenholm's blockade-runner, oil on canvas, by William York, c. 1864; Fort Sumter flying the Bonnie Blue flag as well as the city of Charleston is visible in the background. Historic Charleston Foundation Collection, 75.1.1.

Colored engraving (aquatint) over the sofa is a copy of the 1851 *Birdseye of Charleston* executed by Hill and published by Smith Brothers. The Missroon House and its promenade to the wharf are visible in this original engraving as well as the High Battery promenade & White Point Gardens.

Between the years 1850 and 1855, John William Hill traveled from as far north as Nova Scotia, Canada all the way south to New Orleans documenting America's cities. These panoramic views not only capture the country and urban landscapes of American cities, but also provide historic documentation of cities like Richmond, Charleston and Savannah before the Civil War ravaged the urban landscape.

This view of Charleston was published in 1851 by the Smith Brothers & Co. and forms a part of a series of large folio engravings and lithographs published between 1848 and 1856.¹ In the tradition of Hill's other city vistas, this view of Charleston is taken from a slightly elevated viewpoint. Visible in the tinted lithograph are many of Charleston's most important historic residences and the churches, for which

Charleston receives its attribution as the Holy City, including the First Presbyterian Church, St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Circular Church and St. Philip's Episcopal Church.²

Sofa, in the Neoclassical style, with four front tapering and reeded legs ending in spade feet and decorated with Price of Wales feathers and fans in the upper corners, c. 1790, probably New York. Gift of Mrs. Henry Sage, 72.1.5.

End tables, pair, mahogany, with Chippendale or rococo decorative carving; late nineteenth or early twentieth century, handmade adaptations of earlier forms from the period.

Armchair, in the klismos form with a carved splat depicting two joining cornucopias, ca. 1825, American. Gift of an Anonymous Donor, 2001.007.056.

Pier table with marble top and mirrored back flanked by two columns, in the late Neoclassical style, c. 1820, New York. Gift of Mr. Richard Jenrette, 79.8.9.

Mantel Clock and pair of lighting devices on the pier table are in the Empire-style, also known as the late Neoclassical style in America.

Chairs, pair, American empire style, c.1830-1840, in the gondola form with an interesting lyre brass decoration, mahogany. Gift of Mr. Don Baucom, 2001.009.001-2.

Gaming or sewing table dates from the second quarter of the 19th century, made from rosewood, and, like the pier table, it is probably of New York or Philadelphia origin. Gift of an Anonymous Donor, 2001.007.002.

Set of mahogany side chairs, each having shield-shaped backs with serpentine crest rails, c. 1800, probably Philadelphia. Gift of an Anonymous Donor, 2001.007.007a-d.

Prints, from Andrea Palladio's folio entitled, *Four Books of Architecture*, 1726.

¹ John William Reps, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America: Lithographs of Towns and Cities in the United States and Canada, Notes on the Artists and Publishers, and a Union Catalogue of their Work, 1825-1925* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1984), 183-184, 206.

² For further reading see: Gloria Gilda Deák, *Picturing America: Prints, Maps, and Drawings Bearing on the New World Discoveries and on the Development of the Territory that is now the United States, 1497-1899*, Vol. I (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).

JAMES MISSROON HOUSE - PAGE 7

SALLY REAHARD READING ROOM - *Continued*

Looking glass with egomise upper panel in silver and gold of a seascape, c. 1790-1810, American or English. Historic Charleston Foundation Purchase, 58.1.64.

Black basalt, five examples, by Wedgwood, three bowls and two pitchers, c. 1810, English, are placed on the fireplace mantel. Gift of Mrs. Morris Everett, 83.2.11.

Fire fender, brass, with pierced decoration of circular floral, thistle, and leaf patterns over a rope band center, early 19th century, probably American. Gift of an Anonymous Donor, NA.2001.007.014.

Glass lamps, pair, with chinoiserie decoration depicting figures of monkeys, squirrels, rabbits and ducks on a circular base and fitted with silk. Gift of an Anonymous Donor, NA.2004.006.014a-b.

Chandelier, reproduction, replica of an original owned by Thomas Jefferson that hangs in the entry hall of Monticello dated circa 1800-1810. This feature is an Argand type chandelier based on the patent of the Swiss National, Amee Argand --a patented type of lamp that burned whale oil with special wicks. It was favored type of lighting particularly among prominent Americans like Jefferson and Washington in the early 19th century.

Bookcase desk, the Pembroke table and center table are reproductions from the Historic Charleston Reproductions program.

BEDCHAMBER / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

The Executive Director's office was originally the "best" bedchamber in the house. In this room the mantel, cornice, and the gouged woodwork are all original. The walls are Eliza Lucas from Lord and Evans trimmed in Linen White.

Clothes press, reproduction, part of Historic Charleston Reproductions program made by Baker Furniture Company

Chest of drawers, part of Historic Charleston Reproductions program made by Baker Furniture Company

Tables, part of Historic Charleston Reproductions program made by Baker Furniture Company

Table, regency style, used as the Director's desk, part of Historic Charleston Reproductions program made by Baker Furniture Company

Mirror, over mantel, mid 19th century, rococo-revival, gilt, from a Charleston house of the same period

Portrait, over the card table, of Mary Brady Drayton, wife of Henry Edward Drayton, whose portrait is downstairs, also painted by Edward Bowers in 1859. Historic Charleston Foundation Collection, 74.4.2.

Small etching behind the Director's desk is an original etching by Charleston Renaissance artist Charles White, of the front of the Russell House, apparently completed in 1907 when the house was still in the hands of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy. Historic Charleston Foundation Purchase, 77.1.8.

China, Blue Canton, reproductions, from Mottahedah

Direct visitors down by the back stairs - DOCENT needed at back stairs - they can see the still existing damage from Hurricane Matthew just before they descend

FIRST FLOOR

BACK HALL/ MODERN ENRY

To scale model rendering of the Walled City of Charlestown, c. 1713

Painted caned settee

Card table, Baker Furniture Company reproduction; in the early Neoclassical style with eglomise decoration