

BOOK REVIEW

Charles Anthon: American Classicist. By F. J. SYPHER. Ann Arbor: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 2015. Pp. xii + 222. Hardcover, \$55.00. ISBN 978-0-82011566-5.

This is the first full length study of the well-known and well-published American classicist, Charles Anthon (1797–1867), and its author, who is not a classicist, deserves our thanks for producing a deeply researched and meticulously edited volume. Dr. Francis Jacques Sypher, Jr. is among the fourth generation of his family to attend Columbia, and after receiving his B.A. in 1963 earned his M.A. with a study of Tennyson's poetry in 1964 and his doctorate with a 186 page study of Swinburne's poetry in 1968. His interest in classics (and in Anthon) was stimulated in 1964 when he enrolled in a class on Vergil taught by the Anthon Professor of the Latin Language, Gilbert Highet (1906–1978).

The book pays homage in large part to the history of Columbia University, a localized approach which limits Dr. Sypher's work. As Christopher Stray notes the book lacks a "wider comparative analysis" and does not situate "Anthon's work within nineteenth-century American scholarship" *BMCR* <http://bmc.brynmawr.edu/2015/2015-05-17.html>. Readers would have profited for example from a fuller treatment of Anthon's German-born father, Georg Christian Anthon (1734-1815), who after passing his medical exam in 1750 in Eisenach joined the Dutch West India Company. After his ship was captured by the British during the French and Indian Wars, he ended up in Detroit in 1760 where he not only served the British garrison as its sole physician, but also helped the civilian and native American populations. While in Detroit, he married into a French family, the St. Martins, twice. His first wife was the widow of Jacques Baudry St. Martin, Marie Anne Navarre (d. 1773) and his second was St. Martin's niece, Geneviève Jadot (1763-1821) whom he married in 1778. The groom was several decades older than his teen-aged bride, and according to the historian Silas Farmer (*The History of Detroit and Michigan*, Detroit, 1889, p. 340) "when Dr. G. C. Anthon married Miss Jadot, she had a doll in her arms."

By 1787 the couple and their four children were settled in New York City where their ninth child, Charles Anthon, would be born in 1797. Analysis of the

Anthon's Detroit connections explains the mystery Sypher sees concerning a singular visit that Charles Anthon made to Detroit—the only time he ever left New York. Close inspection of the St. Martins' family history indicates that Anthon's trip must have been in August of 1826, and not "the summer of 1831", a date given by Anthon's pupil, Henry Drisler (Sypher, 122).

In a letter quoted by Sypher (122) to Anthon's brother, John, Anthon described his visits to "the old family mansion," the St. Martin homestead (built in 1703; demolished in 1882), and to Moy House. Archange St. Martin, the daughter of his father's first wife, Marie Anne Navarre, was still in the area. She had married the Scottish clan chieftain, Angus McIntosh, (1762–1883), who moved to Detroit leaving behind his family seat, Moy Hall, after the defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie. When the Americans took power in 1796, McIntosh moved across the Detroit River to the Canadian city of Windsor (f. 1749) where he built Moy House (Judy Jacobson, *Detroit River Connections* Baltimore, 1994, 49, 51). Anthon noticed that Archange, (who was Anthon's step-sister, not niece as Sypher states), "was quite advanced in age" (122), and her death less than a year later in July, 1827 makes Drisler's 1831 date for the trip impossible. Additional evidence from the letter also supports the earlier date. Anthon mentions meeting "the mayor of the city" of Detroit. This was Angus and Archange's son-in-law, Henry Jackson Hunt (1788-1826) who had been elected in April, and who would die suddenly in an epidemic in September just after Anthon's departure (Clarence M. Burton, "Influences that Made Michigan, *The Gateway: A Magazine of the Lake States and Canada* (February, 1905), p. 35).

Anthon never came back to Detroit. He went on to fame and some fortune by a lifetime of hard work in the classroom and with his pen at his desk writing book after book—detailed by Sypher (192–208). In a twist of irony not only did Anthon make extensive, profitable and unremunerated use of other scholars' work (Sypher, 77–100), so too did his descendants. His nephew, history professor and numismatist Charles E. Anthon (1823–1883), stipulated in his will the interest his heirs would inherit from "the contract between the Harper Brothers and the late Prof. Charles Anthon relating to the latter's publications" (*NYT*, 10 July 1883, 2). Anthon never married, but his nieces and nephews did well. Marion Graves Anthon (1853–1915), the granddaughter of his older brother, became a grande dame of the Gilded Age after marrying Stuyvesant Fish (1851-1923). Back in Detroit a street near Fort Detroit (f. 1701) was named in the family's honor in 1877, and though many are familiar with Nobel Peace Prize winner Ralph Bunche, few today could connect Bunche's birthplace at 434 Anthon

Street to the Anthon. Dr. Sypher has given us much to think about, and a craving for similar studies of eminent classicists.

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