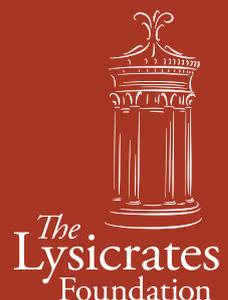


Martin Oration 2022

**‘On classic ground’:
Martin’s monument
and civilizational
yearnings in colonial
New South Wales**

By The Hon A. S. Bell Chief Justice of NSW



‘On classic ground’: Martin’s monument and civilizational yearnings in colonial New South Wales

The Fifth Sir James Martin Oration

17 August 2022

The Hon A. S. Bell

Chief Justice of New South Wales*



[**Figure 1:** Extracted portrait of Sir James Martin (c. 1880s) by Henry Samuel Sadd, mezzotint on paper, held by the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra]

- 1 On Monday 17 November 1873, a banquet was held in the Refreshment Room of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly to mark the retirement of Sir James Martin from the Assembly, and his elevation to the position of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. According to the *Herald*,¹ the banquet was ‘one of the most sumptuous and recherché ever given in this city’. The food was ‘served in a style of elegance which left nothing to be desired’, and the Refreshment Room was ‘tastefully decorated with flowers and foliage’. The same could be said about tonight’s dinner. The *Herald* further noted that, at Martin’s banquet, the vestibule and corridor leading to the

* I am enormously indebted to Mr James Monaghan, Researcher to the New South Wales Court of Appeal in 2019, for his research and assistance in the preparation of this paper.

¹ ‘Parliamentary Banquet to Sir James Martin’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, Tuesday 18 November 1873.

Refreshment Room were 'handsomely ornamented with bananas.' That is a tradition we seem to have lost.

- 2 Nearly 150 years after that banquet, thanks to the vision of Patricia and John Azarias and the generosity of Danny Gilbert and his partners, we are gathered once again to reflect on Sir James Martin's contribution to public life. As the only person in the history of New South Wales to serve as Attorney-General, Premier, and Chief Justice (although fortunately never simultaneously), that contribution is profound and wide-ranging: Sir James played a role in the enactment in 1850 of 'An Act to incorporate and endow the University of Sydney';² in response to the gold rush, he was involved in the establishment of the Mint;³ and he played a leading part in the attainment of a State Constitution and responsible government in the colony.⁴
- 3 Rather than exploring Martin's contributions to these institutions, however, I want to examine the history of a particular material legacy that Martin left behind – namely, the replica of the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates that Martin commissioned for the garden of his Potts Point home, 'Clarens'. The Monument now stands, as many of you know, in Farm Cove in the Royal Botanic Gardens.



[Figure 2: The restored Choragic Monument of Lysicrates as it appears today near Farm Cove, Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney.

² 14 Vic No 31; JM Bennett, *Sir James Martin: Premier and Chief Justice of New South Wales* (Federation Press, 2005) 75-6; JM Bennett, 'James (later Sir James) MARTIN' in David Clune and Ken Turner (eds), *The Premiers of New South Wales: Volume 1 1856-1901* (Federation Press, 2006) 103, 106; Elena Grainger, *Martin of Martin Place: a biography of Sir James Martin* (Alpha Books, 1970) 54.

³ Bennett, *Sir James Martin*, 80-82; Bennett, 'James (later Sir James) MARTIN', 107; Grainger, *Martin of Martin Place*, 58-9.

⁴ Bennett, *Sir James Martin*, 48-65; Bennett, 'James (later Sir James) MARTIN', 107; Grainger, *Martin of Martin Place*, 63-70.

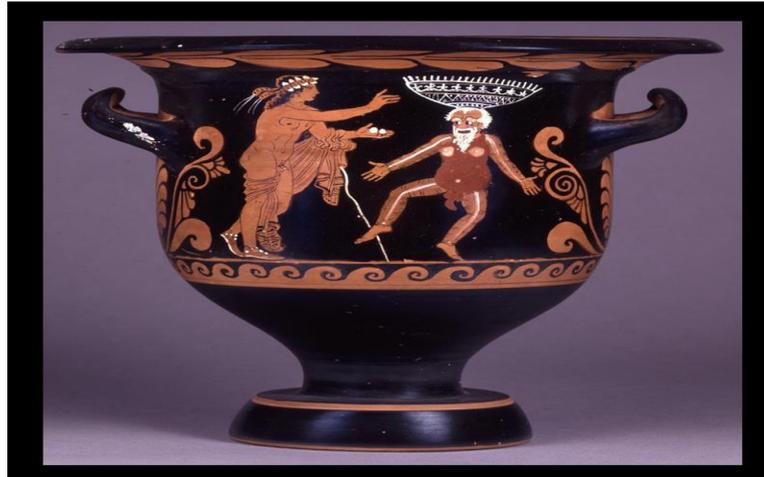
- 4 If you pause to think about it, it is somewhat puzzling that an Irish-born Australian, who, after migrating here as an infant and having never travelled to Athens (or indeed to Europe),⁵ would commission a replica of a Monument that still stands not far from the Acropolis. I hope to shed some light on this puzzle by answering three questions: first, what did the original monument commemorate?; second, how did a copy come to be made here, on the other side of the world?; and third, what might the monument have meant in colonial New South Wales?
- 5 To answer our first question – what did the original monument commemorate? – we need to travel to classical Athens, so it's to that distant time and place that I now turn.

What did the original monument commemorate?

- 6 The ancient Greek religious festival that I expect is most familiar to most of us is that held at Olympia in honour of Zeus, and which, in a different form, continues today as the Olympic Games.
- 7 There were, of course, other religious festivals in ancient Greece. Many of them involved drama. In Athens, the largest dramatic festival was the City Dionysia – a festival held in honour of my favourite Greek god, Dionysus or Bacchus, a god associated with wine, ecstatic dancing, and theatre.⁶

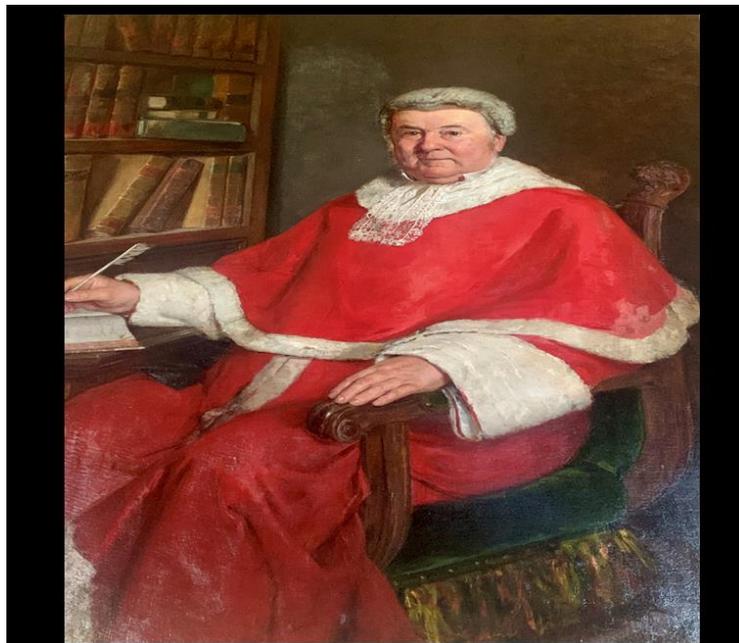
⁵ One oral account suggests that Sir James Martin and his wife, Isabella, had visited Athens and seen the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates: Jane Lennon, 'Paradise Lost: the garden of Sir James Martin at 'Clarens'' (1994-5) XII *Australian Journal of Art* 113, 119. The better view, however, is that after migrating to Australia from Ireland as an infant, Martin never travelled to Europe: JM Bennett, *Sir James Martin*, 2, 121.

⁶ Eric Csapo and Peter Wilson, 'Dramatic Festivals', in Hanna M. Roisman, *The Encyclopedia of Greek Tragedy: Volume 1* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014) 292, 292-3.



[Figure 3: A comic actor dances before Dionysos/Bacchus on a red-figured bell-krater (c. 360BC–340BC). Held by the British Museum, item number 1772,0320.661]

- 8 I note in passing that the English author Anthony Trollope apparently once described Sir James as ‘the prince of caterers’ and that one of Martin’s contemporaries, William Walker recorded that ‘Sir James considered himself a great connoisseur of wine.’ I suspect he would not have objected to a bit of Bacchanalian revelry of a weekend.⁷ He certainly looks well fed and contented in the portrait which hangs in the Banco Court but I should be careful not to encourage comparison!



[Figure 4: Oil portrait of Sir James Martin, Chief Justice of NSW, by Ms E Bell (1885) Banco Court, Supreme Court of New South Wales]

⁷ Williams Walker, *Reminiscences* (Turner and Henderson, 1890) 76. Thanks to the staff of the Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection for their assistance in accessing this work.

- 9 Returning to Athens, the City Dionysia, held in March, ‘marked the beginning of the sailing season in the eastern Mediterranean’ – and thus the arrival of staple and luxury goods in Athens after winter’s commercial lull.⁸ The festival was an enormous affair, costing the equivalent of millions of dollars, drawing a huge number of visitors to Athens for the week or so over which it ran,⁹ and bringing the city to a standstill: the Assembly and the courts were closed, legal proceedings were put on hold, and prisoners were released on bail to attend the festival.¹⁰ What would Ray Hadley and Alan Jones have thought of that?!
- 10 Dramatic contests were central to the festival.¹¹ Over time, there came to be four categories of contest: boys’ lyric performances, men’s lyric performances, comedy, and tragedy.¹² At the heart of each of these dramatic forms was a group of singers and dancers called the chorus.¹³ To take an example, for the boys’ lyric performances, a chorus comprised 50 people. At the City Dionysia, each of the ten tribes (*phylai*) of Athens was represented in the boys’ lyric performances – so each of the ten tribes had to provide a chorus of 50 boys. Further, all the members of the various choruses at the festival were required to be Athenian citizens.¹⁴ Preparing to perform as part of a chorus was a time-

⁸ Eric Csapo and Peter Wilson, ‘Dramatic Festivals’, in Hanna M. Roisman, *The Encyclopedia of Greek Tragedy: Volume 1* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014) 292, 293.

⁹ Peter Wilson and Eric Csapo, ‘Economic History of the Greek Theatre’, in Hanna M. Roisman, *The Encyclopedia of Greek Tragedy: Volume 1* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014) 307, 308. See also Simon Goldhill, ‘The Great Dionysia and Civic Ideology’ (1987) 107 *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 58, 61-2.

¹⁰ Eric Csapo and Peter Wilson, ‘Dramatic Festivals’, in Hanna M. Roisman, *The Encyclopedia of Greek Tragedy: Volume 1* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014) 292, 293.

¹¹ Peter Wilson remarks upon the differences between athletic competition and choral competition in ‘The glue of democracy? Tragedy, structure, and finance’ in D M Carter (ed), *Why Athens? A Reappraisal of Tragic Politics* (OUP, 2011) 19. At 22, he writes: ‘...choral competition is so much more than a neutral cultural analogue to the long-standing practice of competitive athletics, or even of solo musical performance. Choruses body forth in dance and song broad, constructive images of social and political order. Athletic contest has at least an aspiration and claim to clear objectivity in its determination of success: judging relative speed, for instance, applies criteria that hardly ask of its judges to reflect very deeply on the assumptions that underpin their way of life, which is what drama does. Choral contest, especially in tragedy, presents a radical novelty: the offer for consideration of complex, competing visions of society. The very offering of such alternatives is to my mind something that can only be envisaged from a complex society like that of democratic Athens. Making choruses compete at once implies an openness to cultural and political polyphony.’

¹² Eric Csapo and Peter Wilson, ‘Dramatic Festivals’, in Hanna M. Roisman, *The Encyclopedia of Greek Tragedy: Volume 1* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014) 292, 294.

¹³ Graham Ley, ‘Chorus’, in Hanna M. Roisman, *The Encyclopedia of Greek Tragedy: Volume 1* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014) 220, 220;

¹⁴ Maarit Kaimio, ‘Chorus and Citizenship’, in in Hanna M. Roisman, *The Encyclopedia of Greek Tragedy: Volume 1* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014) 224, 224. The same size choruses were required for the

consuming matter that occupied many people in Attica for a substantial part of the year.¹⁵

- 11 Naturally, all of this was costly. The Athenian funding solution was a striking kind of public-private partnership. Upon taking office, one of the first tasks that fell to the Eponymous Arkhon – the highest official in Athenian democracy – was to nominate wealthy Athenians to the office of *khoregos*.¹⁶ The essential task of a *khoregos* was to bankroll a chorus for the City Dionysia. A *khoregos* had to recruit a chorus, employ a trainer to assist the poet-playwright in producing the performance, provide a space for the chorus to train and rehearse, and provide food and money to maintain the members of the chorus during the long period of training. The *khoregos* also had to fund incidents of the performance like costumes.¹⁷
- 12 It was always the case that the Eponymous Arkhon appointed the *khoregoi* responsible for funding the tragedies performed at the City Dionysia. This reflects the central political importance of tragedy as a dramatic form in classical Athens – a topic on which there is a huge amount of scholarship.¹⁸ For a long while, the Arkhon also nominated the *khoregoi* for comedies, though eventually the tribes of Athens came to have responsibility for appointing them. Because the boys' and men's lyric performances were in the nature of competitions between the tribes, it appears that the tribes themselves nominated the

men's lyric performances as for the boys' lyric performances. The choruses for comedies and tragedies were smaller.

¹⁵ Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (CUP, 2000) 71.

¹⁶ *The Constitution of the Athenians*, pt 56.3, in H Rackham (tr), *Aristotle in 23 Volumes* (Harvard University Press, 1952; William Heinemann Ltd, 1952) Vol 20, accessed online at: <http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0086.tlg003.perseus-eng1:56.3>. Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (CUP, 2000) 51, 55.

¹⁷ Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (CUP, 2000) 71.

¹⁸ See, eg: Simon Goldhill, 'The Great Dionysia and Civic Ideology' (1987) 107 *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 58 (a seminal piece in the contemporary literature); Peter Wilson 'Tragic Honours and Democracy: Neglected Evidence for the Politics of the Athenian Dionysia' (2009) 59(1) *Classical Quarterly* 8 (an article that helpfully collates some important contributions between Goldhill's 1987 article and the time of publication). More recently, see DM Carter (ed), *Why Athens? A Reappraisal of Tragic Politics* (OUP, 2011), and several entries in Hanna M. Roisman (ed), *The Encyclopedia of Greek Tragedy* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2014).

khoregoi for those events, and the Arkhon then ‘received’ or approved those choices.¹⁹ Not unlike the Chief Justice and the appointment of silks.

- 13 I described the role of *khoregos* as a kind of public-private partnership – and it was, for the city contributed to the funding of the Dionysia too – but it is important to stress that this was not a voluntary contribution to the common life of Athens: ‘[a]t base, it was legally obligatory on the Athenian rich to fund choruses.’²⁰ We should not think, however, that this was a crudely coercive system; as Peter Wilson, Professor of Classics at the University of Sydney, has argued, this system of elite expenditure on an enormous scale provided a context for competition for honour between elites.²¹
- 14 Interpolating here, Professor Wilson, a world authority on the Athenian institution of the *Khoregia*, was a student at and is now a trustee of Sydney Grammar School, the successor of Sydney College which Sir James Martin attended. Indeed, Martin, as Attorney-General, was one of the first trustees of Sydney Grammar on his appointment to that office in 1856. Wheels within wheels.
- 15 Returning again to Athens, in the boys’ and men’s lyric contests, the prize awarded to the winning performance was a tripod – 3 metres high for the boys’ contest, and 5 metres high for the men’s.²² The tripod was not a prize given to the *khoregos* in recognition of his financial contribution, ‘but a prize for a complex performance to which poet, *khoregos*, tribal chorus, and musician contributed. It is in fact surprisingly difficult to pin-point just who or what was the formal recipient of the Athenian Dionysian tripod – tribe, poet, chorus, or

¹⁹ *The Constitution of the Athenians* Pt 56.3. Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (CUP, 2000) 55.

²⁰ Peter Wilson, ‘The glue of democracy? Tragedy, structure, and finance’ in D M Carter (ed), *Why Athens? A Reappraisal of Tragic Politics* (OUP, 2011) 19, 34.

²¹ Peter Wilson, ‘The glue of democracy? Tragedy, structure, and finance’ in D M Carter (ed), *Why Athens? A Reappraisal of Tragic Politics* (OUP, 2011) 19, 34.

²² Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (CUP, 2000) 206.

khoregos.²³ A tripod was neither useful nor of any particular material worth; its value was symbolic.²⁴

- 16 For a *khoregos* whose chorus had been honoured with a tripod, there was a further substantial cost to bear after the Dionysia: namely, the cost of erecting a monument in which the tripod would be set. Again, though, it would be a mistake to see this as a burden foisted upon the *khoregos*; rather, it was an opportunity to create a lasting monument to one's self in a conspicuously public context. Many of these monuments were erected in a street that came to be known as Tripodes – 'Tripod Street.'²⁵
- 17 With all this in mind, we can now approach Lysicrates' monument with, I hope, some measure of understanding. To start with the name, it was a *Choragic* monument because it was erected by a *khoregos*.²⁶ The inscription on the monument tells us that during the year in which Evaenetus served as the Eponymous Arkhon, 335-334 BC, a man called Lysicrates, from the tribe of Akamantis, was the *khoregos* responsible for funding his tribe's chorus in the boys' lyric contest.²⁷ The boys' chorus from Akamantis won the contest. Accordingly, Lysicrates built his monument to commemorate the victory.
- 18 This was a period of great ferment in classical Athens. Only three years earlier, Phillip II of Macedon was in the ascendancy, having defeated the city states of Athens and Thebes at the battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC with plans to establish the Hellenic League, an incipient federation of Greek states. By the time Lysicrates was *khoregos* in 335-334 BC, Phillip II's son, Alexander the Great, had succeeded him, following Phillip's assassination by a bodyguard.

²³ Peter Wilson, 'The glue of democracy? Tragedy, structure, and finance' in D M Carter (ed), *Why Athens? A Reappraisal of Tragic Politics* (OUP, 2011) 19, 26.

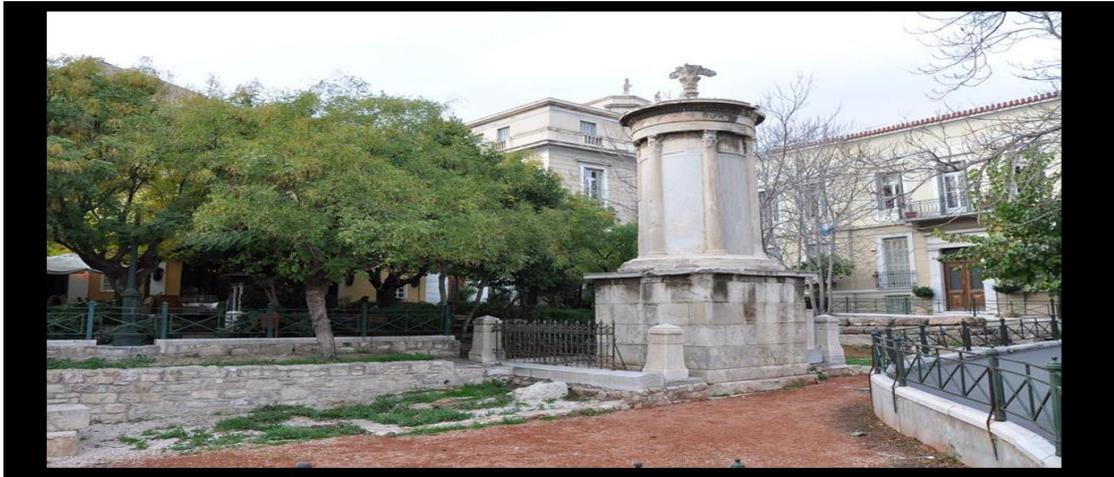
²⁴ Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (CUP, 2000) 207.

²⁵ Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (CUP, 2000) 209.

²⁶ 'Choragus' (from which 'Choragic' is derived) is a latinised rendering of the same Greek word transliterated in the text as *khoregos*. See Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (CUP, 2000) 5.

²⁷ James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athen (Vol 1)* (John Haberkon, 1762) 28; Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (CUP, 2000) 219.

19 Lysicrates' monument still stands on Tripod Street in Athens.



[Figure 5: The original Choragic Monument of Lysicrates, Odós Tripódon/Epimenidou 3 Athens, Greece. Photograph by Jorge Lascar in J Foer, E Morton and D Thuras, *Atlas Obscura: An Explorer's Guide to the World's Hidden Wonders* (Workman Publishing Co, 2019)]

- 20 Unlike Martin's replica, it stands on a base of breccia blocks that is 2.93m high and if, as some have speculated, the tripod was placed on top of the monument, then the whole structure would have towered over the street – and perhaps significantly for Lysicrates, over the monuments of other *khoregoi*.²⁸
- 21 So the answer to our first question is clear: the original monument commemorated the victory of a tribal chorus funded by Lysicrates at the City Dionysia in 334 BC. But grasping something of the meaning of the original monument makes it all the more puzzling that a choragic monument should end up *here*. In our third question, I'll address what the monument might have meant in colonial New South Wales – but before that, our second, practical question, demands attention: how did a copy come to be made here, on the other side of the world?

²⁸ Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (CUP, 2000) 222.

How did a copy come to be made here, on the other side of the world?

22 When Sir James Martin married Isabella Long at St Peter's, Cook's River in 1853, they set up their matrimonial home at Clarens, a property on Wylde Street, Potts Point.²⁹ Isabella was the daughter of William Long, a convict who served his sentence and then became a prosperous licensee and liquor merchant.³⁰ Isabella's sister, Eleanor Jane, married Martin's friend, William Bede Dalley,³¹ another great public figure of the period whose statue stands at the Queen's Square end of Hyde Park.³²



[**Figure 6:** Bronze sculpture of the Rt Hon William Bede Dalley PC in Hyde Park North, by James White (installed 1897). Photograph held by the City of Sydney, accessed online at <<https://www.cityartsydney.com.au/artwork/william-bede-dalley/>>]

23 Though of considerable means and of independent spirit, Isabella was sensitive about her status as a 'currency lass', that is, as a first-generation Australian-

²⁹ Elena Grainger, *Martin of Martin Place*, 73-4; JM Bennett, *Sir James Martin: Premier and Chief Justice of New South Wales* (Federation Press, 2005) 121.

³⁰ 'Long, William (1797–1876)', People Australia, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://peopleaustralia.anu.edu.au/biography/long-william-28042/text35768>, accessed 6 November 2019. See also the obituary for Long published in *Evening News*, 18 October 1876 <<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/107193402>>.

³¹ Martha Rutledge and Bede Nairn, 'Dalley, William Bede (1831–1888)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/dalley-william-bede-3356/text5057>, published first in hardcopy 1972, accessed online 6 November 2019.

³² On Dalley, see Robert Lehane, *William Bede Dalley: Silver-tongued pride of old Sydney* (Ginninderra Press, 2007).

born woman.³³ For Martin's critics, aware of his humble origins as the son of Governor Brisbane's groom, his marriage to Isabella confirmed their low-view of him.³⁴

24 Perhaps to prove his class credentials, Martin set about making Clarens a sophisticated residence. According to one of his biographers, Elena Grainger, whose research drew on the oral testimony of one of Martin's daughters, Mary, the property at Clarens offered rich material from which to craft a home. The house itself was a 'charming two-storey villa with open verandahs (later glassed in) front and back, upstairs and down';³⁵ but the real beauty of the place was its location. As Grainger described it:³⁶

'From the upstairs front verandah you could look right over the Botanical Gardens to Government House, and far away beyond, fold on fold of undulating blue distance, purpling to the just discernible Blue Mountains. The southern windows looked straight up Macleay Street...

But all of this was nothing compared to the glorious vistas from the northern and eastern windows. Beyond the wooded inlets and headlands of Vaucluse was the Macquarie Lighthouse with a hint of Bondi and the ocean. Facing north you could see the whole shipping lane from North Head to Bennelong Point.'

Location, location, location.



[Figure 7: The façade (left) and an interior view of Clarens (right) (c. 1892–3). Albumen prints by Laura Praeger, held in Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW]

³³ JM Bennett, *Sir James Martin: Premier and Chief Justice of New South Wales* (Federation Press, 2005) 121.

³⁴ Bennett, *Sir James Martin*, 121.

³⁵ Grainger, *Martin of Martin Place*, 74.

³⁶ Grainger, *Martin of Martin Place*, 74.

25 Martin's great project at Clarens was the garden. According to one report published in the *Maitland Mercury* in 1868, over the preceding twelve years, Martin had³⁷

'expended no less a sum than £20,000 in embellishing his private residence at Potts' Point ... had lost another £20,000 in legal practice by becoming his own architect and superintendent ... [and] was continually employing the most skilled labour in the colony to carry out his conceptions, namely, to make a square block of rocks and land on the eastern side of Potts' Point resemble the private residence of one of the Archons of ancient Greece.'



[Figure 8: (Left) James and Isabella Martin and members of their family at Clarens (c. 1860). Albumen print by Major Thomas Wingate, held in the Caroline Simpson Library and Research Collection, record number 52475. (Right) The Choragic Monument of Lysicrates at Clarens (c. 1892–3). Albumen print by Laura Praeger, held in Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW]

26 Whether or not Martin did indeed aspire to the grandeur of the Archons, the style was in fact decidedly Italianate.³⁸ Balustraded staircases in Pyrmont freestone descended through the terraces in the garden, leading down from the residence to the water's edge.³⁹ The garden was filled with plants from all around the world: figs from Smyrna and Singapore, acacias from Egypt,

³⁷ 'The Premier's Residence, Potts' Point, Sydney', *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, Saturday 20 June 1868. The article was extracted and reprinted as 'The Hon James Martin's Residence Potts' Point, Sydney', *Empire*, Tuesday 23 June 1868. Lennon cites the reprint as a source for the proposition that Martin had 'sacrificed £90,000 in fees from his legal practice in order to act as his own architect and superintendent', but, with respect, it is not clear that either the *Maitland Mercury* article or the *Empire* reprint lends support for a figure of £90,000: see Lennon, 'Paradise Lost', 115.

³⁸ Colleen Morris, *Lost Gardens of Sydney* (Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, 2008) 91.

³⁹ Grainger, *Martin of Martin Place*, 117; Lennon, 'Paradise Lost', 115.

camellias from Japan, pines from New Caledonia, bamboo, ferns, orange and bread-fruit trees, cocos palms, rhododendrons, cinnamon, azaleas, and more.⁴⁰

- 27 There was a fountain in the centre of the lawn, and throughout the garden, there were statues, urns, a summer-house with bay windows, a bathing house, and even a pair of sphinxes.⁴¹ It was, by all accounts, a quite extraordinary place – and was apparently open to the public every Saturday.⁴² Anthony Trollope, in his two-volume work *Australia and New Zealand*, published after a year-long tour of the colonies, wrote that Martin ‘has a garden falling down to the sea, which is like fairyland.’⁴³
- 28 Two sculptors worked on the garden at Clarens: a Welshman, William Lorando Jones, and a Scot, Walter McGill.⁴⁴ Our interest tonight is in McGill – for it was he who Martin commissioned to craft a replica of the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates.
- 29 McGill was born in 1826 in Edinburgh, and raised in Glasgow. It is likely that famine and changes in agricultural practices in the Scottish highlands motivated him to migrate with his family to Australia.⁴⁵ They arrived in Portland, Victoria in 1855, and McGill enjoyed steady work as a stonemason in Port Fairy from 1855

⁴⁰ ‘The Premier’s Residence, Potts’ Point, Sydney’, *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, Saturday 20 June 1868; Grainger, *Martin of Martin Place*, 117; Lennon, ‘Paradise Lost’, 115.

⁴¹ ‘The Premier’s Residence, Potts’ Point, Sydney’, *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, Saturday 20 June 1868; Lennon, ‘Paradise Lost’, 115; Colleen Morris, *Lost Gardens of Sydney* (Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, 2008) 91.

⁴² ‘The Premier’s Residence, Potts’ Point, Sydney’, *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, Saturday 20 June 1868.

⁴³ Anthony Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand* (George Robertson, authorised Australian edition, 1873) 137. On the critical, and rather sensitive, reception of Trollope’s memoir in Australia, see: Nigel Starck, ‘Celebrity blows: Anthony Trollope and those touchy colonials’ *The Conversation* (online), 1 September 2014 <<https://theconversation.com/celebrity-blows-anthony-trollope-and-those-touchy-colonials-30730>>.

⁴⁴ Colleen Morris, *Lost Gardens of Sydney* (Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, 2008) 91.

⁴⁵ Christie Hamilton, *Walter McGill: A Colonial Sculptor 1826-1881* (Randwick & District Historical Society Inc, 2011) 9-10.

to 1859.⁴⁶ In 1860, the family moved to Sydney. McGill struggled to find work here, so they settled near Maitland in 1861.⁴⁷

- 30 In 1861, the Maitland School of Arts hosted an Exhibition of 'colonial products, arts, and manufactures'.⁴⁸ It was a diverse affair, with all sorts of items on display: samples of silk and cotton, 'colonial tweeds', hogskin saddles, kangaroo wellington boots, stuffed birds, artificial teeth, millet brooms, wheat, cayenne pepper, white and red wines, woodwork, bridal bonnets, wax flowers and fruit, and a mowing machine for which the appropriately named Mr Lawn was awarded a certificate of recommendation.⁴⁹ McGill was awarded a certificate for 'sculpture, modelling, and outline drawing',⁵⁰ and among the items he exhibited were⁵¹

'sketches of the designs of some vases executed for Mr Martin, representing a bacchanalian feast – the figure of Bacchus being shown reclining on the limb of a vine, the leaves and branches of which overhang the group under the lip of the vase, the male figures being nude, and the female in transparent drapery.'

It seems likely that the vases depicted in these sketches were destined for the garden at Clarens.

- 31 In 1864, McGill and his family moved to Sydney,⁵² where McGill started working with the Colonial Architect, James Barnet. McGill's careful stonework can still be seen today around Sydney on the Woolloomooloo Gates which stand on the eastern side of the Botanic Gardens, the Corinthian Capitals on the College St

⁴⁶ Christie Hamilton, *Walter McGill: A Colonial Sculptor 1826-1881* (Randwick & District Historical Society Inc, 2011) 10-13; 'Walter McGill', Design & Art Australia Online, last updated 5 October 2014, accessed 6 November 2019 <<https://www.daa.org.au/bio/walter-mcgill/>>.

⁴⁷ Christie Hamilton, *Walter McGill: A Colonial Sculptor 1826-1881* (Randwick & District Historical Society Inc, 2011) 19.

⁴⁸ 'The Maitland Exhibition', *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, Tuesday 2 July 1861.

⁴⁹ 'The Maitland School of Arts Exhibition', *Empire*, Tuesday 30 July 1861.

⁵⁰ 'The Maitland School of Arts Exhibition', *Empire*, Tuesday 30 July 1861.

⁵¹ *Maitland Ensign*, Wednesday 3 July, 1861.

⁵² Christie Hamilton, *Walter McGill: A Colonial Sculptor 1826-1881* (Randwick & District Historical Society Inc, 2011) 21; 'Walter McGill', Design & Art Australia Online, last updated 5 October 2014, accessed 6 November 2019 <<https://www.daa.org.au/bio/walter-mcgill/>>.

façade of the Australian Museum, and on St Jude's Fountain, which stands on the corner of Alison Road and Church Street in Randwick.⁵³



[Figure 9: (Left) Woolloomooloo Gates at the Royal Botanic Gardens, by Walter McGill (date of photograph unknown), held in the NSW State Archives. (Right) St Jude's Fountain, Randwick, by Walter McGill (constructed 1866). Digital photograph by Marilia Oliva (December 2015), held in the State Library of NSW's "Dictionary of Sydney" digital archive]

32 In 1868, McGill was at work on his replica of the Choragic Monument for the Premier.⁵⁴ As I mentioned earlier, it does not seem that Martin ever visited Athens to see the original; nor does it seem that McGill ever visited Athens. So how was it that McGill produced a largely faithful replica, albeit in Pyrmont freestone,⁵⁵ not marble like the original?⁵⁶

33 The likely answer is found in an influential architecture text first published in 1762. In 1751, a young Scot, James Stuart, and an Englishman, Nicholas Revett, decided 'to visit Athens, and to measure and delineate with all possible diligence, whatever [they] might find there, that deserved [their] attention.'⁵⁷

⁵³ 'St Jude's Fountain', Randwick City Council, accessed 6 November 2019 <<https://www.randwick.nsw.gov.au/about-council/history/historic-places/plaques/st-judes-fountain>>.

⁵⁴ 'The Premier's Residence, Potts' Point, Sydney', *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, Saturday 20 June 1868.

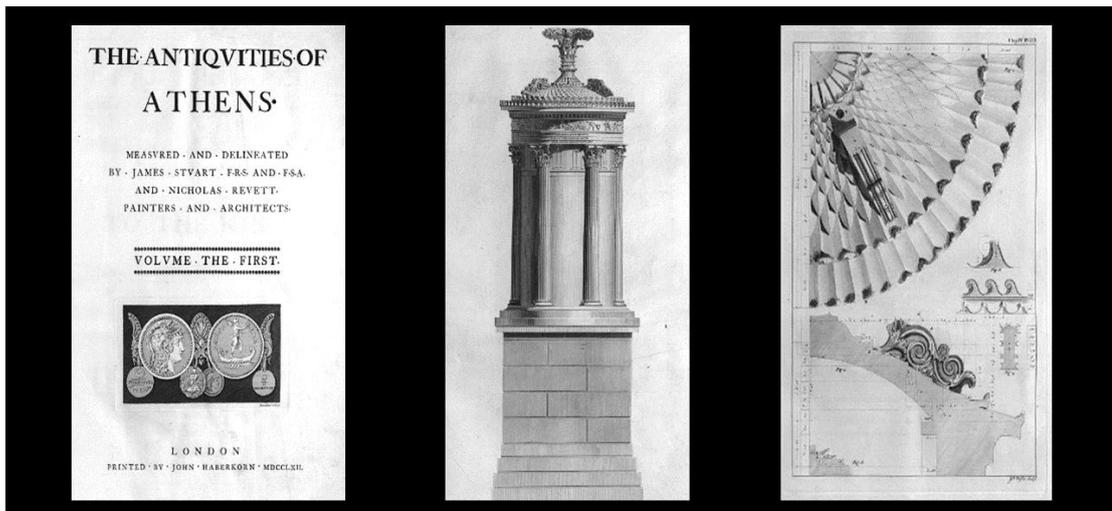
⁵⁵ 'The Premier's Residence, Potts' Point, Sydney', *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, Saturday 20 June 1868. On the minor differences between the replica and the original, see Andrew Hartwig, 'Ideas in Stone: The Ascent of James Martin' in *Lysicrates and Martin: Two Arts Patrons of History Return to Give Again* (MUP, 2017) 98, 103.

⁵⁶ Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (CUP, 2000) 221.

⁵⁷ James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athen (Vol 1)* (John Haberkon, 1762) v.

They arrived in March 1751, and stayed there until the end of 1753, preparing detailed diagrams of various antiquities that they encountered.⁵⁸ After further travels to Thessalonica, various islands in the Aegean, and Smyrna, they arrived back in London at the beginning of 1755.⁵⁹

- 34 In 1762, they published the first volume of a proposed three volume work, *The Antiquities of Athens*.



[Figure 10: Details from James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens* (vol 1) (John Haberkon, 1762). Accessed online through Internet Archive <<https://archive.org/details/antiquitiesAthe1Stua>>]

- 35 It was, and is, a remarkable book, placing descriptive prose alongside paintings that put the antiquities in their urban context. The heart of the book, however, is the extraordinary architectural diagrams. These diagrams – complete with fine measurements – show details of friezes and stonework. Stuart and Revett hoped that, by presenting such diagrams, they might not only help their readers to better appreciate the state of architecture in the ‘best ages of antiquity’, but they might ‘contribute to the improvement of the Art [of architecture] itself’.⁶⁰ The book had the desired effect, helping to spark the Greek Revival in European architecture. It took twenty-five years for the second volume to appear, so in the meantime, the Antiquities detailed in the first were some of

⁵⁸ James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athen (Vol 1)* (John Haberkon, 1762) vi-vii.

⁵⁹ James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athen (Vol 1)* (John Haberkon, 1762) vii.

⁶⁰ James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athen (Vol 1)* (John Haberkon, 1762) i.

the few 'physical remains of ancient Greece fully revealed to a public increasingly avid for Hellenic style.'⁶¹

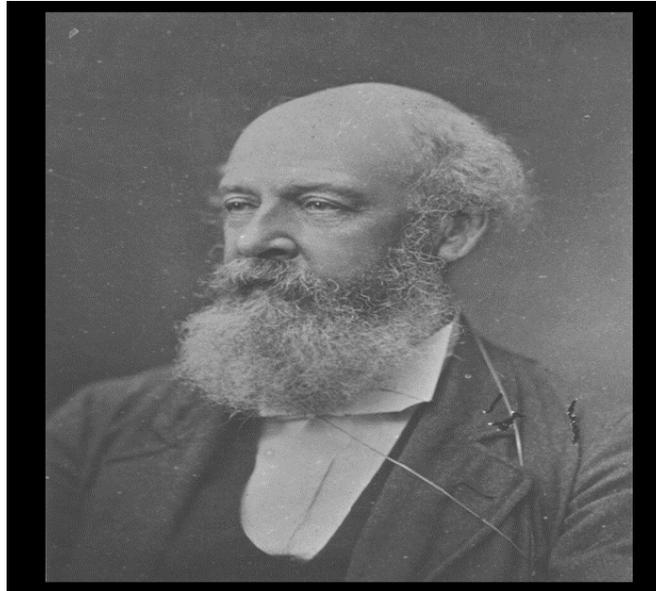
- 36 The Antiquities detailed in the first volume included the Choric Monument of Lysicrates. Stuart and Revett's drawings made the monument famous, and importantly, enabled its reproduction.
- 37 Martin and McGill must have had access to a copy of Stuart and Revett's book. That seems by far the best explanation of how McGill could have sculpted such a close replica of the monument so far from the original, especially given the influence of the work in British circles a few generations earlier.
- 38 Somewhat surprisingly, a lifestyle piece published in the *Maitland Mercury* in 1868⁶² profiling Martin (then the Premier) and his garden provides some strong indirect evidence that a copy of the book was circulating in the colony. When the author of the piece visited Clarens, McGill was still working on the monument. Though the Australian replica was not yet complete, the author gives an incredibly detailed description of the Athenian original. Unacknowledged, that description is taken from Stuart and Revett. Thanks to this cribbing correspondent, we can confidently conclude that there was a copy of Stuart and Revett's work circulating in the colony – indeed, it might even be the case that Martin or McGill supplied the author of the piece with a copy, as we know that Martin had an extensive library.⁶³

⁶¹ Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (CUP, 2000) 219.

⁶² 'The Premier's Residence, Potts' Point, Sydney', *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, Saturday 20 June 1868.

⁶³ Williams Walker, *Reminiscences* (Turner and Henderson, 1890) 76. On Martin's death in 1886, his law books were acquired by the government, and formed part of what would become the Supreme Court's library. For a long time, Martin's books were kept in a separate room: J M Bennett, *A History of the Supreme Court of New South Wales* (LBC, 1974) 188. They are now held in the Rare Books Room of the Joint Law Courts Library in the Law Courts Building in Queen's Square.

39 Another possibility – and one that might provide a clue as to why work on the monument began in 1868 – is that Charles Badham, the famous professor of classics at the University of Sydney, arrived in the colony in April 1867.⁶⁴



[Figure 11: Professor Charles Badham (date of photograph unknown), held in the University of Sydney archives, record number G3_224_1625]

40 Martin was Premier and a Fellow of the University Senate at the time,⁶⁵ so we can safely assume that he and Badham would have rubbed shoulders from an early stage. If Martin did not already have access to a copy of Stuart and Revett's book, it is entirely possible that a connection with Badham might have facilitated such access. One of Martin's biographers suggested that Badham had some input into the garden, and also suggested that the Governor, Sir John Young, obtained for Martin 'the exact measurements of some Athenian relics', though it is unclear what sources might have supported those suggestions.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Wilma Radford, 'Badham, Charles (1813–1884)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/badham-charles-2915/text4203>, published first in hardcopy 1969, accessed online 6 November 2019.

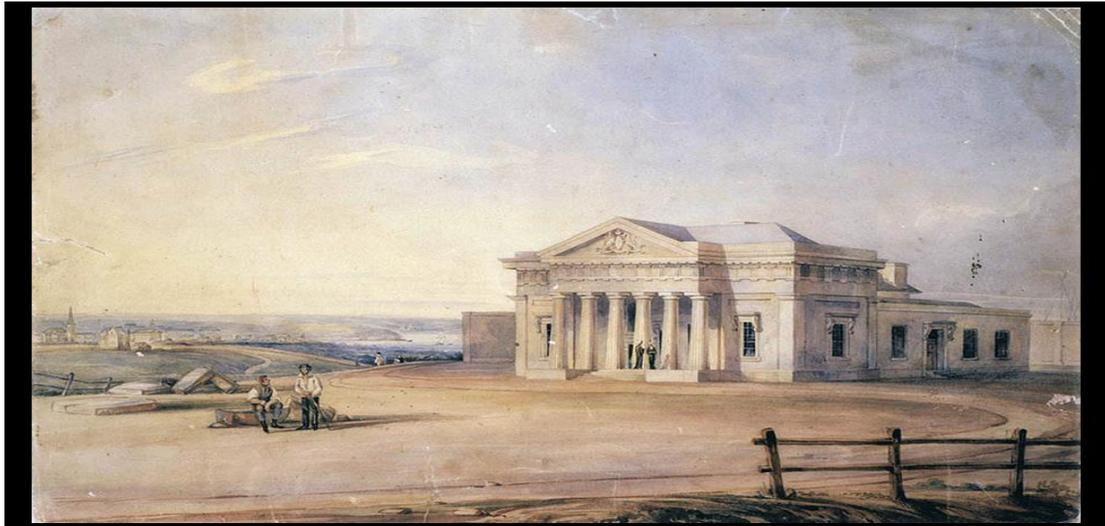
⁶⁵ Grainger, *Martin of Martin Place*, 128-9; JM Bennett, *Sir James Martin*, 316.

⁶⁶ Grainger, *Martin of Martin Place*, 116. For similar theories as to how Martin and McGill might have had access to Stuart and Revett's book, see Andrew Hartwig, 'Ideas in Stone: The Ascent of James Martin' in *Lysicrates and Martin: Two Arts Patrons of History Return to Give Again* (MUP, 2017) 98, 103-4. In addition, Hartwig notes at 104 that a copy of *The Antiquities* had been part of the collection of the Australian Subscription Library (later the State Library of NSW) since 1826.

- 41 Whatever the precise details, it seems very likely that the answer to our second question – how did a copy of the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates come to be made here? – is that Martin and McGill had access to a copy of the first volume of Stuart and Revett's work, *The Antiquities of Athens*, and used the drawings in it to make a faithful replica of the Monument.
- 42 With an understanding of what the original monument meant, and of how a replica ended up here on the other side of the world, we can now approach the third question: what might the monument have meant in colonial New South Wales?

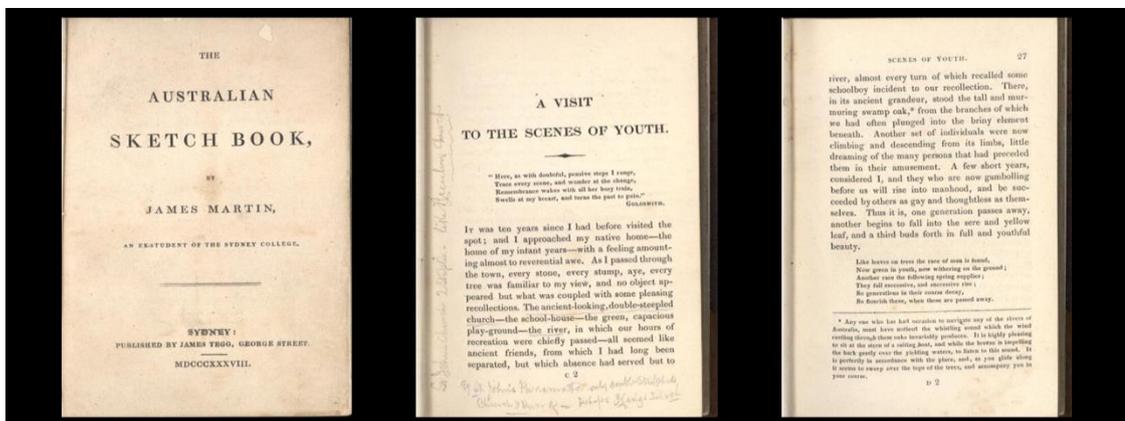
What might the monument have meant in colonial New South Wales?

- 43 In seeking to answer this question, it is necessary to place the monument in its colonial context, and by doing so, to seek to understand what the monument might have meant socially – that is, what it might have communicated to those who encountered it in Martin's time.
- 44 The monument and the garden in which it sat at Clarens represented points of connection to the classical world and to the British world. For colonists – whether migrants or born here – who found themselves in a distant land, far from the physical and cultural environment in which they had been raised or which they had been taught to call 'home', a classical monument in a carefully crafted landscape garden was a concrete connection to an otherwise far-off heritage. Or to put the point in loaded, but in this context, appropriate, terms, the monument and the garden were an expression of, and a way of satisfying, *civilizational* yearnings, that generation of colonists and many generations that followed being largely oblivious to the ancient civilizations that had existed on these shores for thousands of years.
- 45 It was common for colonists like Martin to imagine or create Greek or Roman echoes in the landscape around them. Indeed, one only has to look at the façade of the Darlinghurst Court House in Taylor Square designed by Mortimer Lewis in 1836, with its Ionic columns, to make good this proposition.



[Figure 12: Darlinghurst Court House (c. 1840). Watercolour drawing by Frederick Garling, son of the synonymous second solicitor admitted to practise in New South Wales, held in the State Library of NSW, reference code 423597. The artist's descendant, the Hon Peter Garling, is a current judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales.]

- 46 Making these connections was both comforting and aspirational: comforting, because, in an antipodean setting, it gave them a 'legitimate historical past'; aspirational, because it opened up the possibility that this place could become an 'Athens of the South'.⁶⁷
- 47 In Martin's own work of juvenilia, *The Australian Sketch Book*, published when he was just 18, we see both of these dynamics at work. He frequently interprets the landscape around him through a classical lens, either to invest the local with historical meaning, or to celebrate the local through favourable comparison with the classical.



⁶⁷ Lennon, 'Paradise Lost', 113.

[Figure 13: Details from James Martin, *The Australian Sketch Book* (James Tegg, 1838) 15, 27. Accessed online through NLA Trove <nla.gov.au/nla.obj-33334605/view?partId=nla.obj-33334618>]

- 48 In one essay, he describes a journey to Maitland by steam-boat, and while contemplating the ‘richly cultivated farms’ that he sees on the way, is moved to quote from Virgil’s agricultural poem, *The Georgics*.⁶⁸ In another, while walking along the banks of a river where he had climbed trees as a child, he sees a new generation of youngsters doing the same and is inspired to quote from Alexander Pope’s translation of *The Iliad* to try to capture the moment.⁶⁹ In yet another, he senses ‘an air of antiquity and veneration’ in a bay past Bedlam Point on the Parramatta River.⁷⁰
- 49 And when writing of Sydney’s most famous beach, he invokes three lofty, sacred sites in Greece, and says that ‘Sunium, or Helicon, or Parnassus ... possess many charms to captivate a poetic mind’, but Bondi, he is convinced, ‘could for natural scenery, dispute the palm with any of them.’⁷¹
- 50 The lifestyle piece mentioned earlier employs the same interpretive strategy, reading classical associations into Martin’s monument and garden. As noted earlier, the author reports second-hand that Martin intended to make Clarens ‘resemble the private residence of one of the Archons of ancient Greece’.



⁶⁸ James Martin, ‘The Steam-Boat’, in *The Australian Sketch Book* (James Tegg, 1838) 69, 89.

⁶⁹ James Martin, ‘A Visit to the Scenes of Youth’, in *The Australian Sketch Book* (James Tegg, 1838) 15, 27.

⁷⁰ James Martin, ‘The Old Farmer’, in *The Australian Sketch Book* (James Tegg, 1838) 107, 112.

⁷¹ James Martin, ‘Bondi Bay’, in *The Australian Sketch Book* (James Tegg, 1838) 177, 185.

[**Figure 14:** James and Isabella Martin with members of their family and household on the terrace at Clarens (c. 1860). Albumen print by Major Thomas Wingate, held in the Caroline Simpson Library and Research Collection, record number 52476]

- 51 The author draws a quote from Shakespeare's play *Troilus and Cressida*, set during the Trojan war, to describe Martin playing with his children. Passing statues, friezes, and Grecian vases in the garden, the author wrote: 'From what we have read "in tale or history," we felt almost convinced that we were in one of the classic retreats of ancient Greece.' And the article concludes that a visitor to Clarens would 'be on classic ground, surrounded by classic associations and those evidences of pure taste so congenial to the cultivated mind.'⁷²
- 52 The passages I have quoted, both from Martin and about him and his garden, indicate that, for colonists in Martin's time, imagining or creating classical associations in the environment around them was a way of expressing civilizational yearnings: invoking the classical was both a way of pining for a history in a strange southern land, and a way of building a history here.
- 53 Seen in this light, the Choragic monument both points back to Europe – emphasising the 'immense distance from the seat of civilization and improvement',⁷³ as a young Martin put it – and also serves as an expression of elite participation in classical culture – a marker of Martin's status as a 'civilized' Australian.⁷⁴ In inviting the public into the garden at Clarens, however, we also see a genuine open-handedness on the part of Martin that gels well with his broader concern for the education of the polity: his invitation to others to join him 'on classic ground'⁷⁵ can be read as an expression of faith in the possibility of the colony becoming a great hub of civilization, as he understood that vision.

⁷² 'The Premier's Residence, Potts' Point, Sydney', *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, Saturday 20 June 1868.

⁷³ James Martin, 'The Steam-Boat', in *The Australian Sketch Book* (James Tegg, 1838) 69, 71.

⁷⁴ Lennon, 'Paradise Lost', 121.

⁷⁵ 'The Premier's Residence, Potts' Point, Sydney', *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, Saturday 20 June 1868.

- 54 The meaning of the monument in colonial context is not just found, however, in yearnings to be associated with the classical. The placement of the monument in a *garden* is also a key part of its meaning.



[Figure 15: The Choragic Monument of Lysicrates in its original position at Clarens (date and source unknown). Accessed online at <<https://www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au/stories/2018/the-winner-of-the-annual-lysicrates-prize-has-been>>]

- 55 In colonial New South Wales, gardens – especially grand landscape gardens – were symbols of the ‘continuing participation of “distant colonies” in the culture of the mother land.’⁷⁶ Though appropriately lauded in his time as the first

⁷⁶ Robert Dixon, *The Course of Empire: Neo-Classical Culture in New South Wales 1788-1860* (OUP, 1986) 105.

Australian Chief Justice,⁷⁷ and though a man who loved Australia,⁷⁸ Martin nonetheless self-consciously sought to identify himself and other colonists as inheritors of British virtues and traditions.⁷⁹ In *The Australian Sketch Book*, after remarking on the progress that had been made by colonists, the young Martin put that progress down to the 'the extraordinary fitness of the British people for successful and extensive colonization.'⁸⁰ And though he had lived in Australia for his whole life since infancy, much later in life, in 1885, a year before he died, when addressing the NSW Bar, Sir James complimented the Bar for maintaining the same 'high standard as that which characterised their brethren *at home*.'⁸¹

⁷⁷ 'Parliamentary Banquet to Sir James Martin', *Sydney Morning Herald*, Tuesday 18 November 1873. The President of the Legislative Council, the Hon John Hay, in proposing a toast to Sir James Martin, said: '...I may add a few words regarding what I consider as peculiar on the present occasion. Sir James Martin is not, I believe, altogether an Australian – he was not born in this country. [An hon. member: "Next door to it."] There were many of us who would willingly claim the name of Australian. There are many of us in the present company who have spent here the best years of our lives, and whose exertions here have been very well rewarded, and who would willingly testify our gratitude, as I would willingly do myself, by calling ourselves Australians. But that training, that education, those influences which formed our characters belong to other countries, and we cannot ignore or forget them. We cannot forget that we are Englishmen, or Scotchmen, or Irishmen. But although Sir James Martin was not born in this colony, he has every reason to call himself an Australian. His education, all the influences, all the training, all the associations under which he has grown up to manhood, are Australian. And I say it is a remarkable occasion, when we hail the appointment of the first Australian Chief Justice. (Continued cheering)...'. See also the remarks made by the then Attorney-General, the Hon William Bede Dalley, on the occasion of the Bar Association presenting to Martin a portrait of him to be hung in the Supreme Court: *Report of the Proceedings Attending the Presentation of the Portrait of Sir James Martin JC by the Bar of New South Wales on the 22nd Day of May, 1885* (Thomas Richards, Government Printer, 1885) 8.

⁷⁸ See, for example, the essays 'Bondi Bay' and 'Christmas in Australia' in *The Australian Sketch Book* (James Tegg, 1838). In 'Bondi Bay', he writes (at 180): 'England, Ireland, America, and many other countries, can justly boast of their lakes, their mountains, their rivers and their bays, but there is not one amongst them, but would feel proud of the possession of a spot, so picturesque and enchanting as Bondi. This is by no means the language of partiality, prompted by a patriotic love of my country, but it is the result of a feeling the force of which upon inspection, not only those who claim this as their adopted, but also those who claim it as their native soil, must equally acknowledge.' In 'Christmas in Australia', observing that the 'festive season, in our country, has not yet been described', he endeavoured 'to convey to the reader unacquainted with our genial clime, an idea of the twenty-fifth of December in this portion of the Southern Hemisphere' (at 258).

⁷⁹ For example, in a lecture on Lord Byron's poetry that he delivered in 1841 (aged 21), Martin said, 'In a young community like this, where down to the present time, the pursuit of wealth may be said to have engrossed our attention, we cannot bring forward too often the loftier and more imaginative branches of that literature which has placed our parent country on a higher pinnacle of glory than was ever attained by either Greece or Rome, in the proudest days of their prosperity.' 'Lord Byron – Lecture delivered at the School of Arts, Sydney, on Tuesday the 9th day of November, 1841, on the Genius and Character of Lord Byron, by James Martin', *The Australian*, Saturday 13 November 1841.

⁸⁰ James Martin, 'The Steam-Boat', in *The Australian Sketch Book* (James Tegg, 1838) 69, 71.

⁸¹ *Report of the Proceedings Attending the Presentation of the Portrait of Sir James Martin JC by the Bar of New South Wales on the 22nd Day of May, 1885* (Thomas Richards, Government Printer, 1885) 12 (emphasis added).

- 56 The idea of landscape gardening in the colony as an expression of British civilisation is evident in some lectures given by Thomas Shepherd in the 1830s.⁸² A Scottish migrant (via London and New Zealand), Shepherd was the proprietor of the Darling Nursery on Parramatta Road. In 1834, he delivered a series of four lectures on horticulture in New South Wales at the Mechanics' School of Arts in Sydney.⁸³ In 1835, Shepherd was due to deliver a further series of seven lectures on *Landscape Gardening in Australia*. But after giving the first lecture of the 1835 series, he died. The full set of seven was nonetheless published a year later and proved to be influential in the colony.⁸⁴
- 57 In his lectures on *Landscape Gardening in Australia*, Shepherd was explicit about the fact that the pre-eminence of English and Scottish gardens was, in part, due to 'the high state of civilization' in England and Scotland'.⁸⁵ He was also very clear that the proper British thing to do as a colonist (presumably of some means) was to set about 'improving' Australia one garden at a time. He wrote:⁸⁶

'Gentlemen, we are Britons, and the offspring of Britons; we are subject to the same King, we are governed by the same laws, we profess the same religion, we have had the same education, and let us be proud to hope we have the same noble spirit. Permit me then, my fellow Britons, and fellow Colonists of New South Wales, to recommend to you to follow the example of our Kings, Nobles, and Gentry, our fathers, our friends, and our countrymen in Britain, in the embellishment and general improvement of your parks, gardens, farms, and landed possessions of every kind in this Country'.

- 58 One commentator on Shepherd's lectures summed up Shepherd's position in these terms:⁸⁷

'Shepherd reminded his audience that "God commanded Adam to keep and dress the Garden of Eden." In the same way, he believed, the British colonist must devote his wealth, taste and influence to converting the Austral wilderness

⁸² Obituaries for Shepherd, which contain some basic biographical information, were published in *The Colonist* on 3 September 1835 (<<http://oa.anu.edu.au/obituary/shepherd-thomas-15327>>) and in the *Sydney Monitor* on 23 September 1835 (<<http://oa.anu.edu.au/obituary/shepherd-thomas-15327/text26535>>).

⁸³ Thomas Shepherd, *Lectures on the Horticulture of New South Wales* (William McGarvie, 1835).

⁸⁴ Thomas Shepherd, *Lectures on Landscape Gardening in Australia* (William McGarvie, 1836).

⁸⁵ Thomas Shepherd, *Lectures on Landscape Gardening in Australia* (William McGarvie, 1836) 3.

⁸⁶ Thomas Shepherd, *Lectures on Landscape Gardening in Australia* (William McGarvie, 1836) 4.

⁸⁷ Robert Dixon, *The Course of Empire: Neo-Classical Culture in New South Wales 1788-1860* (OUP, 1986) 156.

into “landscape” scenery. By following the example of the landed proprietors of Great Britain, whose seats and genteel residences were objects of universal admiration, the gentleman settler might create a work of art as rich in meaning as a poem or a painting. His estate would become a symbol of utility reconciled with beauty; of the natural and patriotic use of wealth; of Australia’s glorious contribution to the global dominion of the British Empire.’

- 59 To the extent that Martin, a wealthy, prominent colonist, explicitly sought to identify himself with British virtues and traditions, it is likely that his extraordinary expenditure on the garden at Clarens would have been understood in light of British traditions concerning landscape gardening. In that context, the garden, and the monument in it, express yearnings to participate in British culture by making one plot of land in Potts Point that little bit more ‘civilized’.



[**Figure 16:** Details of a statue of Sir James Martin at 12 years of age, “striding off from home in Parramatta to high school in Sydney” and carrying a copy of the works of Homer, by Alan Somerville (unveiled on 5 November 2020, for the 200th anniversary of Sir James’ birth). Accessed online at <<https://lysicratesfoundation.org.au/news/james-martin-statue-in-martin-place>>]

- 60 When Martin and his contemporaries were young, the dominant cultural narrative was that of civilizational progress: ‘it was possible to trace the movement of civilization from ancient Greece to Augustan Rome to Georgian England’ – and perhaps also to the English colony of New South Wales, as

Professor Robert Dixon wrote, sadly perhaps the last Professor of Australian Literature at Sydney University.⁸⁸

61 In this narrative, ‘the glory of Australia lies not in that which is unique, that which is indigenous, but in that which derives from its participation in the universal laws of human history’ – where the laws of history were understood by reference to the rise and fall of empires, especially those of Greece and Rome.⁸⁹ A longing for connection with the classical world was not different in kind from a longing for connection with the British world: in both cases, the point was to position *this* place in a grand historical narrative that moved from primitive wilderness to cultivated order.

62 So the answer to our third question – what might the monument have meant in colonial New South Wales? – is this: placed in the garden at Clarens, the Choragic monument was an expression of civilizational yearning – yearning for connection with an idealised ‘civilized’ past while living in a strange land, and a yearning that this place might become ‘civilized’, in the 19th century sense of that word, in the years ahead.

⁸⁸ Robert Dixon, *The Course of Empire: Neo-Classical Culture in New South Wales 1788-1860* (OUP, 1986) 2.

⁸⁹ Robert Dixon, *The Course of Empire: Neo-Classical Culture in New South Wales 1788-1860* (OUP, 1986) 3.