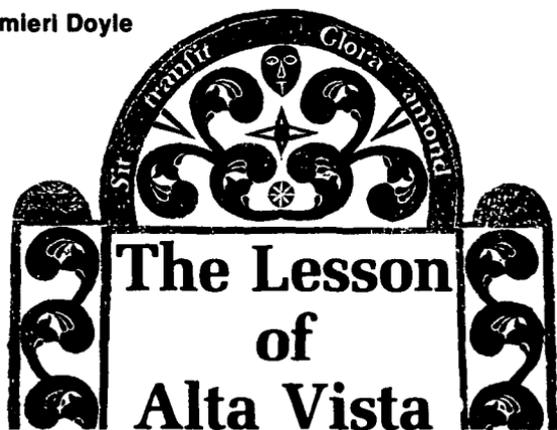


Dorothy Palmieri Doyle



THE auto repair jack lifted my car from the oil-spattered floor. Were it not for a contrary device called an alternator, I could have been winding into misty, morning clouds on a shaded mountain road. Instead, I trudged across the red, Georgia clay toward the only excitement the city of Gainesville held within the reach of my tender, city feet—the cemetery. It beats looking at motel walls for two hours, I reasoned.

The old city with its noisy, dashing, morning traffic disappeared into the trees and rolling countryside as I climbed the hill. *Alta Vista*, highest view, they had called it. The peaceful hillside provided a classic scene of gentle, green Georgian beauty. I followed the grassy path strewn with wildflowers to the headstones.

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Some gravestones marked the resting spot of people born in the 1700's, but most were from the 1800's and early 1900's. The family unit had been treasured judging from all those buried in family plots. The ghastly reason was revealed in cold, stone figures. Members of households were often little more than transients. Memorial cradles dotted the hillside. The number of graves of children and babies horrified me. I stifled a belated cry of grief as I passed a plot holding eight tiny headstones. Many graves held the remains of young women, evidence that new life had been a risk to mother as well as child. Men, too, were no strangers to early death. Carved Bible quotations and messages revealed the pain of those who had loved, their unshakable faith, and finally, their acceptance.

I was overwhelmed by a sense of

loss that I could never meet those I walked among. In the relative history of man, only brief seconds had passed, yet their lives were remote from ours. They had lost wives, children, husbands as routinely as we in our mobile society lose addresses. Nevertheless, almost in defiance of the power of death, they had found the strength to cope with their mortality. The enormity of their courage made me feel insignificantly small.

I moved through the grass at the edge of the trees to the grave of James Milton Smith, Governor of Georgia, Lt. Colonel in the Confederate Army, Chairman of the Georgia Railroad Commission, and Superior Court Judge. I pictured Georgia as it was when Jim Smith was growing up—horses, carriages, kerosene lanterns, small academies and one-room schools. It was difficult for me to conceive of an American having the background to meet his many challenges without modern education. Yet, as a child, Governor Smith had been educated with little more than a few books and a slate—no electronic equipment nor standardized assessment tests, no alien experts were his measure. Magnificent simplicity.

I felt indebted to James Smith and all those buried at *Alta Vista* along with the multitude like them across the United States. They had striven valiantly to plant the seeds for our world of longer, better lives. They

had been free to choose an alternate path, but in their innate goodness, they had chosen to improve the quantity and the quality of our existence. I was awed with admiration. I had to admit I was also envious. It must have been glorious to have such freedom, such control over your own life! Though I shared the goals of those I walked among, I had to admit that the impassable gap that lay between us was larger than death.

Something frightening had happened between the lives of the people buried at *Alta Vista* and ours. It had begun innocently and benign. "They should do something about it!" was the cry and catalyst. The chorus of *they shoulds* grew larger and louder. They should widen this road. They should do something to prevent the deaths of pedestrians. They should protect us from unscrupulous merchants using dangerous chemicals to hide the fact that they are selling stale, spoiling food. They should help the poor. They should see that no one is denied a college education. They should assist those who cling to life by a fragile thread. The requests that *they* take action are endless.

To those buried at *Alta Vista*, *they* meant us. Today it is different. *They* has a life of its own, a life apart from ours. It is unapproachable, unreachable, untouchable. It is all powerful. It renders us helpless. Somewhere

through the busy years without our noticing, progress became more important than those it served. We created a monster of technology and information that turned on its creators diminishing the brilliant minds that conceived it, dehumanizing our good will. We stopped believing in ourselves and accepted the notion that we are no longer worthy of our own control. We are left stumbling, bewildered by a way of life that tells us what we may eat, where we may walk, and what medical treatment we may have.

The fruit of our labor is taken from us and the half-eaten remains are given back grudgingly, turning the pride of men and women into childish anticipation. We are so grateful to the provider for recognizing our right to consume and so pleased by the fruit's pleasant taste, that the means of its creation escapes us. We tend to think of the provider as an all-powerful god that created something from nothing. The fact that the provision's existence depends on individual initiative, effort, talent, and trade is as relevant to us as a traffic jam on the other side of the world—it means nothing to us far away on the receiving end. The flashy new packaging obscures our vision of the product. We don't even recognize our own creations and sacrifices. We forget that *they* took from someone in order to give—*they* took from us.

At the end of the road is our ultimate loss of human dignity. After being denied all the medical "long shots" at life, ironically, we lie with arms secured to prevent our interfering with the perverse, mechanical magic that forces cold, institutional air in and out of our weary, unwilling lungs in an absurd attempt to make human bodies last forever.

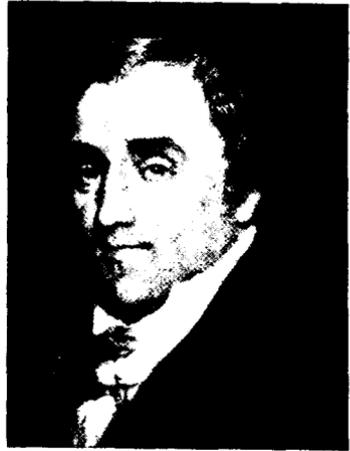
I reluctantly descended the grassy hill, my face and arms prickling with the sun's growing intensity. I had come to aging *Alta Vista* cemetery looking for something to entertain my city mind. I had received, instead, a country lesson from those who had long ceased to speak. We are a nation rich in people, each one different from the rest, each valuable to the others because of his unique way of meeting life's challenges, each a temporary gift to our nation. We are descendants of the courageous, intelligent, resourceful people buried at *Alta Vista* and across our nation, magnificent people who turned the death of children into long life spans and kerosene lanterns into laser spectaculars. Can we be any less than that we are made of?

I passed through the iron gates of *Alta Vista* into the buffeting gusts from passing cars, the ageless wisdom of Wordsworth resounding in my brain—"The world is too much with us."

Gregory Wolfe

Fisher Ames:

Forgotten Defender of Liberty



WHEN students of the free society look back into history for the first exposition of the private enterprise economy, they rightly turn to Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*. Smith contended that the wealth of a nation is not dependent on how much gold or other precious metals it has in its coffers, but on the quantity of the goods and services produced by the people. Individuals, if left alone by the state, Smith wrote, would work together in the competitive market to produce wealth for the whole of society.

Another outstanding historic defender of ordered liberty is the French economist, statesman and author, Frederic Bastiat. Writing at the time of the Revolutions of 1848,

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Bastiat combatted the socialist fallacies which were threatening to take over European society. Both in such written works as *The Law*, and in his role as statesman, Bastiat upheld the principles of limited government, private property, and the market economy.

In the context of early American history, and especially the founding of the United States, two of the best known proponents of a free economy were Pelatiah Webster and Thomas Jefferson. Webster warned Americans that inflation would destroy the economy by increasing the money supply without a corresponding growth in production, and thus debase the currency to worthlessness. And Jefferson is often quoted as saying that individuals competing freely in the marketplace will