

The American Geographical Society

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CHARLES PATRICK DALY
1816 - 1899

by Miklos Pinther



Chief Justice Charles P. Daly, drawn by a juror, October 1877

In July of this year, New York City observed the sesquicentennial anniversary of Central Park. Celebrations were held, articles were written, and the creators were hailed for their vision and design. But there was someone missing. No one recalled that it was Charles P. Daly who staunchly supported the project in Albany back in 1844 while he served as an assemblyman, and stood steadfast against considerable opposition. Fifty years later, toward the end of his life, a proposal appeared in the December 22, 1894 issue of the *New York Sun* to erect a statue in the Park in his honor, but he would not hear of it. There is, however, a short street named after him leading to the Bronx Park, the “Daly Avenue.” The last owner of the land that now constitutes the Park was his father-in-law Philip Lydig. The park includes the New York Botanical Garden which he, and in particular his wife, helped to establish and support.

Who was Charles P. Daly?

The story of Daly’s early life lacks the details that one would like to have. As his biographer Professor Harold Earl Hammond intimated in his book *A Commoner’s Judge*, perhaps Daly preferred a little aura of mystery about himself. We do know that his parents, Michael and Elizabeth Daly emigrated from Omagh County of Ireland around 1814. Michael Daly was a master carpenter in the old country, but in New York it was easier for him to get a job as a manager of a small hotel on Broadway (not too far from the present location of the offices of AGS) where they also lived and where their only son, Charles Patrick was born on October 31, 1816.

Unfortunately, young Charles was hardly three years old when his mother died. His father remarried and tried his best to provide a decent life for his family. At first, Charles was sent to private parochial schools, but within a decade his father fell ill and died. Charles did not get along with his stepmother, and one day, after being severely scolded, he simply walked away and traveled south. He was only twelve years old when he somehow ended up in Savannah, Georgia. There he worked for a quill maker for a short while. Then, following a serious quarrel and probably to escape punishment, he signed up as a cabin boy on a trader ship. For over two years he sailed the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea, North Sea, and the Baltic Sea. During this time he learned much about Europe and became proficient in several languages.

In 1832, he managed to find an opportunity to return to New York. Eager to establish a decent life, he signed up as an apprentice to a cabinetmaker. To further his education and general knowledge, it became a habit of his to spend hours in libraries and to attend various social clubs in the evenings where he would listen to lectures on a wide variety of subjects. He was interested in everything, but he particularly liked poetry and songs, and a good debate. One of these clubs was the Literary Association where he was actually “discovered.” William Soule, an older member and a lawyer, was so impressed by the logic and erudition of this youngster that he offered to support his education and urged that he consider the field of law.

The Lawyer

Based on admittedly limited polling among lawyer friends, few in the legal field today remember the name Chief Justice Daly. Perhaps because the Astor riots took place more than 150 years ago, and there are no more riots of the kind in New York City? Or is it because the cases the Judge handled were generally not reviewed and overturned? For one of the longest services in jurisprudence, over 42 years as a judge of the Court of Common Pleas, that would indeed be a remarkable record. A more likely reason is what Daly himself wrote in his, *A History of the Court of Common Pleas for the City and County of New York*: “...life of a lawyer is usually devoted to attaining results that cease to be of interest when the end is accomplished, and it matters not how great may be his talents, how extensive his learning, or unwearied his industry.”

Daly’s entrance to the legal field took the usual route of the 1830s. He did not accept Soule’s monetary support (throughout his life he remained protective of his independence); rather he accepted employment as clerk in the law offices of Rowley and Soule. Young Charles was industrious and soon distinguished himself as being able to carry a considerable workload and study at the same time. In 1839, he was granted a special waiver of the seven-year requirement, and passed the bar exam with ease. (Only a dozen years later, he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Law from Columbia University). At the young age of twenty-two, he became a junior partner of the firm McElrath, Bloomfield and Daly.

While he took on increasingly more difficult and complex cases he continued to pursue his social interests. He maintained his membership in the Literary Association where he now debated such topics as, “Would a Reduction of the Present Tariff Law be Beneficial” and “Ought the Usury Law to be Abolished?” He also became a member of the Law Association, and regularly attended the fairs at the Mechanics’ Institute. He was a vice president of the Young Men of the City and County of New York, and a corresponding secretary of the Democratic Republican Association. All at the same time! He was a great “platform speaker” and received a constant

stream of invitations for a variety of engagements. It was just a matter of time when he would be completely sucked into politics. During 1841 and 1842 he spent much time in Albany. Finally, in 1843 he was elected to the State Assembly from the Fourth Ward of New York City, one of the wealthiest at the time.

With the backing of some of the most prominent politicians both at the state and at the national level, Daly's political future would have been well paved. But what interested him most was the legal, judicial science. After two years in Albany, he decided to return to the legal profession. During those two years he made new, powerful friends including Governor Bouck who were sorry to see him go, but pressed him to accept a vacant seat on the Court of Common Pleas. Thus, in May 1844, Daly took his seat on the bench. He served until the end of 1885, the last 27 years as Chief Justice.

In 1856 the *Sunday Times* carried this "Portrait of the Bench" written by an ex-court Clerk:

"He is not a brilliant man, nor a very quick man, nor a gigantic man; but he is cool, wary, studious, well balanced, logical and honest. He is fearless, too, and courteous - although sometimes a little stiff. This arose from obedience whilst younger to the dignity imposed by etiquette; but I have seen him, in his hours of ease, funny, familiar, jocose, sparkling, and tossing off the claret with the air of a Parisian - for he has traveled abroad."

"Fearless" is perhaps one of the most apt descriptions of the Judge. His celebrated cases of the Astor Riots and the impeachment trial of Mayor A. Oakey Hall are among the best evidences of it. Soon after the Astor Riots, the October 7, 1849 issue of *The Era* had this to say, "Hon. Charles P. Daly. - The wisdom, firmness, and integrity manifested by this learned Judge at the recent trial of the rioters, has excited the admiration and elicited the gratitude of all good citizens... We can truly say of Judge Daly,

'An upright Judge, who, faithful to his trust,
With warmth gives judgment, and is always just.'"

The Geographer

Given the achievements of this immensely talented, useful, and popular citizen of New York, it is both remarkable and satisfying to geographers to know that a century later it is The American Geographical Society that keeps the memory of Charles P. Daly alive.

Some wrote that, "Daly fathered the American Geographical Society." Considering that he was President of the Society for 35 years, more than a generation long, perhaps this slight exaggeration can be forgiven. Daly had a passion for geography from his early teens when he took the direction of his life into his own hands. In 1851, when the Society was founded, we find Daly traveling in Europe. One of the men of fame he visited in Potsdam was Alexander von Humboldt. Daly admired Humboldt for what he achieved with his explorations, and Humboldt in turn wrote this about Daly on July 18, 1851, "Few men leave behind them such an impression of high intellect upon the great subjects that influence the march of civilization." He also added that what is more, he is a man of poetry! In the same year, Daly traveled to Cuba, in a time of great turbulence when expansionism and slavery were hotly debated. This trip produced a series of six "letters" from

Daly's pen, which were published by the *New York Chronicle* and simply signed as *D.* The first letter appeared on September 22, 1851 and introduced the writer thus, "We are happy to present to our readers this week, the first of a series of letters by a gentleman holding a distinguished judicial station in this city, who recently visited the Island of Cuba and enjoyed many advantages for an accurate observation of its condition, the administration of its laws and government." And typically, Daly dove right into the heart of the matter in his introductory paragraph, "The thirst for territorial acquisition, so characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon race, was never more strikingly shown, than the late insane attempt upon Cuba, and in the popular sympathy felt in the movement, especially in the South. No one acquainted with the actual condition of Cuba, and of its people, could have had any doubt of the result."

These two events illuminate Daly's tenure at AGS. He correctly perceived that he lived at a time of heightened explorations and therefore, he could be useful in promoting geographical discoveries for the benefit they may bring in the future. And, he did not shy away from problems because he believed that astute observations and careful analysis would lead to just solutions.

1855 was a momentous year in Judge Daly's life. On February 16th, he was elected as an "ordinary member" of AGS. In December, he was invited to a theatre party where he met Maria Lydig, the daughter of a wealthy Dutch-German family. Now at the age of 39, Daly finally found the love of his life. They were married in the following year and remained deeply devoted to each other until the ends of their lives. The marriage bore no children, instead, they dedicated their talents, energies, and stations in society to do good for their fellow citizens. Following the footsteps of her husband, Mrs. Daly was active in a number of charity organizations. She was a founder of the Union Home and School, which provided shelter and education to thousands of orphans of soldiers of the Civil War, and she was a life-long supporter of what eventually became the New York Botanical Garden.

Next to law, The American Geographical Society was the Judge's principal professional commitment. He never joined an organization just to be a member, he wanted to be useful, and he wanted to make a difference. By 1858, the year he was elected as Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, he was elected to the governing board or Council, and in 1864 he became the President of the Society -- a position he held until his death in 1899. During his first years as a member of the Council Daly was preoccupied with a number of other matters chiefly among them the North-South conflict. As a Union Democrat he was an active supporter of the views of President Lincoln and spent considerable time advising him and the Union Generals. And as always, he was a welcomed speaker at many events. For example, on September 18, 1862, the *Albany Evening Journal*, reported on an "Immense War Meeting, Grand Reception of Gen. Corcoran" where the Honorable Charles P. Daly spoke for nearly an hour. "His speech was one of the very best we have ever heard" reported the *Journal*. "It was full of patriotic fervor and eloquence; and was listened to with intense satisfaction. The frequent cheers which it elicited indicated the warmest sympathy between speaker and audience."

After the War, Daly again focused his energies on the Society in spite of the fact that he now gained national prestige. He was even broached on the subject of a Supreme Court appointment, which he quietly turned down. How could he leave his beloved New York? Now, for a period of several years, he and the Council's Recording Secretary, Dr. Edward R. Straznicky, were the two most active officers. They set out to make significant improvements in the way the Society

conducted its business. Daly brought great visibility. To be sure, Grinnell, Hawks, Bancroft, Cullum, and Stout were distinguished fellows of AGS and eminent citizens of society at large, but none enjoyed the popularity of Daly in New York City. Relying on his experiences when he was a young lad, Daly sought to enlarge the Society's library and improve its occasional lectures. During his tenure, and with considerable help from Straznicki, the library was enlarged by donations and purchases. Years later, on his seventy-fifth birthday, Daly donated to the Society his private collection of geographical books consisting of about 700 volumes and numerous scrap-books of articles from newspapers and magazines relating to geography, which he collected since his youth.

Soon after Daly became President of the Society, he introduced his annual lectures which summed up the status of geography and explorations of the previous year. During the 1870s and 1880s, these "public sittings" became enormously popular and were extended to special meetings to discuss topics of particular importance or to host visiting explorers. Prominent scientists of the field now sought out the Society and considered it an honor to be invited for a presentation. These were the years of "great explorations", particularly to the Arctic and to central Africa, in which the Society was very much involved. These were also the years of "great projects" like the proposals for canals connecting the Mediterranean and Red Seas and the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Every month brought some exciting news, and often it was at the Society's meetings where they were first described in detail. Thousands attended the public sittings where well-known explorers were hosted.

When Daly visited the Royal Geographical Society in London, on June 23, 1874, no less than five major New York papers (*The Morning Post*, *The Daily News*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Times*, and *The Harpers' Weekly*) reported on the event and said that the Judge was "treated with marked consideration by the officers and members." Matthew Hale Smith said this about Daly in his article on "Successful People and How they Win," "As a geographist his fame has crossed the seas. In a recent visit to Europe he was honored by the Scientific World. The treasures of the Museums were thrown open to him, and he was the guest of the prominent jurists of London." In December 1874, the *New-York Daily Tribune* reported, "The American Geographical Society of this city now has a membership of more than 1,400 persons, the number of members having been very largely increased within a year... largely due to the efforts of the President, Chief-Justice Charles P. Daly." At the March 1880 annual meeting Daly himself summed up the status of the Society thus, "...we are now firmly enough established to be able to say that we can carry out Prince Henry's motto of '*Talent de bien faire*,' the ability to be useful."

Yes, above all, being useful is what Daly wanted the Society to be. In 1887, the *Transactions* section in the Society's *Journal* (Volume 19) contained this statement, "The Council begs to congratulate the Society upon increasing prosperity in all its departments. Its membership is rapidly growing in numbers and importance, and in no period since its formations have a greater willingness and desire been manifested to join its Fellowship and to consult its library and collections. The *Journal* and *Bulletins*, now edited under the supervision of the Committee, contains bibliographical and critical notes by the librarian, which are frequently inquired for by students and scholars." While Daly constantly sought improvements in the affairs of the Society, and he certainly maintained a sense of vitality late into his life, he essentially remained rather conservative in his last decade. The permanent working staff of the Society rarely numbered more than four, and in spite of prominent professors on the Council, academia was kept at arm's length.

In Daly's last years two significant events stand out. In 1895, accompanied by William Libbey professor of physical geography at Princeton and a member of the Council and Cyrus Adams editor of the *Bulletin*, Daly attended the Sixth International Geographical Congress in London. There he was asked to present the response, on behalf of the delegates, to the Duke of York's and the President's welcoming addresses. He always considered this as one of the greatest honor bestowed upon him and the Society. And one can't help but wonder whether at that moment Daly reflected on his life's journey from a poor, orphaned boy to one of the most respected geographers in the World. The second event was one of Daly's last official acts. A few months before he passed away (September 19, 1899), he addressed a circular to the Fellows of the Society in which he gave his full support to the purchase of a new, considerably larger home, and called upon the Fellows for their support and financial backing. Two years later the Society was installed in a grand building, which in a way both marked the end of Daly's tenure and the beginning of new directions for the Society.

The obituaries issued by the Council and published in the papers were profoundly moving. They celebrated the life of one of New York's most beloved sons. Daly's character was that rare combination of intellect, honesty, bravery, expedience, and personal charm. How fortunate or us that geography was one of his life-long interests. How befitting it was for the Council to establish the Charles P. Daly Medal in 1902, awarded "for valuable or distinguished services or labors."

Footnote

The more important sources on Daly's life and achievements include a lengthy and detailed biography, *A Commoner's Judge, The Life and Times of Charles P. Daly* by Harold Earl Hammond (1954); reports of the court tenure of Charles P. Daly in the New York Bar Association Library; a collection of correspondence, writings, legal papers, diaries, notebooks and personal papers of some 15 linear feet in the Manuscript Division of the New York Public Library; the Archives of the American Geographical Society; and for his geographical contributions, especially to AGS, *Geography in the Making, The American Geographical Society, 1851-1951* by John Kirtland Wright (1952). Hammond's book also includes an extensive bibliography of secondary sources.

Considering Daly's prominent role in 19th century Geography, there are very few articles, books, exposés, etc., which discuss his thoughts or the influences of explorers, like his good friend Paul Du Chaillu, may have had on him. John K. Wright noted that his annual addresses (mostly only available now from the Society) would amount to more than 500 pages - certainly fertile ground for further studies.

EARTHWORKS

By Peter Lewis

Tilt (Simon & Schuster) is a slim, top-drawer chronicle of Pisa's wonderful, drunken campanile, from Nicholas Shrady.

For more than 800 years, the famous Romanesque bell tower "has teetered on the brink of oblivion, but neither earthquakes, war, misguided architectural interventions, or even the relentless onslaught of contemporary tourism has ever managed to topple it," writes Shrady in this clear-eyed

yet delightfully infatuated tribute to the tower. He sings its praises--the lustrous marble, the weightless open galleries: a column of columns--while at the same time sending a few of its myths to the trash bin. It lists, for instance, not because of devious laborers or incompetent craftsmen or God, but because it was built on the shifting ground of a bog; nor is it likely that Galileo ever threw anything more than a gaze from the top of the tower. Still, there are mysteries: who was the architect, why did construction start and stop and start and stop again and again, and why, with its progressive degrees of inclination--slowly, implacably on the move until it was over 5 degrees out of plumb--has it not simply gone south?

Helping to make sense of this unintentional folly, Shrady situates the campanile within the sublime landscape of the Campo dei Miracoli, with its cathedral, hospital, baptistery, and graveyard, and also within the greater context of Pisa's rise and fall as a city-state and maritime power. Readers are also introduced to the many individuals who had a hand in the centuries-long construction of the tower, and the commissions seeking to right the tower's skew, including Mussolini's near-disastrous tinkering (Il Duce hated the tower, making it that much more lovable). And running through the story is the tower's evolution from civic embarrassment to a source of pride: "this tilting, defiant campanile symbolizes all that is wondrous and strange in a world that is fast losing good measures of both."

Comfortably erudite, Shrady covers the tower's history without diminishing its gratifying improbability.

Novelist Chuck Palahniuk squires readers through Portland, Oregon, at its outlandish best in *Fugitives & Refugees* (Crown). Palahniuk moved to Portland fresh out of high school, in the footsteps of those who went west and fetched up in the cheapest city they could find. "This gives us the most cracked of the crackpots," a theory suggested by a Portland friend of Palahniuk's, "the misfits among misfits." In this city of the strange, the fugitive, the refugee, it stands to reason there would be many odd entertainments, and Palahniuk reports upon a mighty selection.

In cool stride, Palahniuk marvels at the oral storytelling talents of those before the eviction court, gazes at the world's largest hairball (2 ½ pounds of solid calcium and hair), stands in awe before the holdings of the vacuum cleaner museum, encounters "spirit orbs" ("glowing balls of light that hover and veer," messengers from the beyond), recommends places to get lucky on the sex front, including the Dirty Duck Pub ("for you fans of big men with hairy backs"). Not all is peculiar; Palahniuk remembers that Portland is a city of gardens, has a crack toy museum, and some neat shops where you can obtain used clothes, used magazines, and chunks of recycled architectural details.

But he is far, far happier taking a ghoulish tour of the city's fabled tunnel system: "Down tunnel after tunnel the rope pulls you past scenes of incest and torture...in the pitch dark, a crowd of strangers rush the tour group, groping their breasts and genitals...Did I mention the big *legal waiver* everybody signed?" Tucked into the proceedings are "postcards" from Palahniuk's own, somewhere between warped and twisted, experiences with the city: getting beat mercilessly, the victim of a wilding, for instance, or attending the Apocalypse Café ("the idea is, we're going to the first potluck after a nuclear holocaust"). For Palahniuk, the more acute the angle the better, but his is another solid entry in the Crown Journey series, which puts a premium on deep-dish subjectivity.

Set amid a homey and observant history of the early trading ventures in the Pacific Northwest, Laton McCartney's *Across the Great Divide* (Free Press) tells the story of the overland trek that revealed to Americans the wagon route West.

In 1812, a young fur trader, Robert Stuart, working for John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company, set off eastward from Astoria, with six companions, to find a suitable route across the continent for traders. Working from letters and the journal Stuart kept (when the ink ran out, he used berry juice and his own blood), McCartney, who is a descendent of Stuart, tells of the journeys ups and many downs: from fleas, bloodsuckers, and rattlesnakes, to mental illness, horse theft, hunger, and despair. Yet he tells the story with command, never getting breathless.

McCartney manages to bring the native populations into focus as distinct entities--Chinooks, Clatsops, Brules, Mandans, Absarokas, Wishrams, Wahkiacums, Echeloots, Tetons, Yankstons, and many more; makes sense out of the rivalries between Russians, British, French, Canadians, natives, and Americans; broadly paints the landscape, for Stuart had an interest in nature and culture as well as trade and exploration; discusses Astor's political gamesmanship, first in securing Astoria and then in efforts to circumvent the embargo of the War of 1812; and details the even more arduous voyage of Wilson Price Hunt, who had followed the Lewis and Clark route four years later.

And McCartney relates finding the true gold of the expedition--and it wasn't beaver pelts--with cool understatement: South Pass, located by Stuart on a tip from the Shoshone, an Old Crow trail through the Rockies and the only one traversable by wagon: "Though they were preoccupied at the time of the crossing with immediate life-and-death concerns--finding firewood, food and water and retaining their scalps--the returning Astorians clearly understood the significance of what they'd discovered." Though the thrill here is in the finding of South Pass, the meat of the story is in its political and economic setting, and McCartney handles both with aplomb.

A crisp historical study of the sensations and emotions that humans have brought to and taken from the mountain landscape, *Mountains of the Mind* (Pantheon) is laced with Robert Macfarlane's own experiences scrambling among the peaks.

Long ago, Macfarlane writes, mountains were thought of as godless and lawless places, best all around to be avoided. By the 17th century, those associations were changing, as the first cracks at a geology beyond scripture were being undertaken, and by the 19th century the hills were being read like great stone books, "ghostly landscapes which had suddenly opened up under the scrutiny of geology." Also by that point, the mountain landscape had been vested with a complex aesthetic, one that embraced terror and elation, a filter to an ancient and atavistic world, one that scorned the appalling transience of a human life, literally: "What makes mountain-going peculiar among leisure activities is that it demands of some of its participants that they die."

Macfarlane intelligently probes the push/pull of the peaks, the odd but real pleasure of fear--its very centrality to the experience--and the exhilaration of a moment reduced to the neat binaries of danger and safety, right move and wrong move, living and dying, the "human paradox of altitude: that it both exalts the human mind and erases it. Those who travel to mountain tops are half in love with themselves, and half in love with oblivion." George Mallory is a good example of the type, whose Everest days Macfarlane finely sketches.

A certain amount of melodrama is inevitable when the stakes are mortal, as is a measure of magniloquence--"The unknown is so inflammatory to the imagination because it is an imaginatively malleable space"--yet Macfarlane works hard to keep his sojourning in the Cairngorms, the Rockies, and the Tian Shan expressively sharp and enticing, placing them neatly into the end position of mountaineering's timeline, the accumulated baggage of which he shoulders with knowledge and relish. Our cultural and emotional associations with mountains have been given much mulling of late; Macfarlane adds his bit, but it is his encounters with the peaks that have special presence and acuity.

Robert Emmett Ginna takes a good-natured, noodling walk down the length of Ireland, full of agreeable digressions and historical marginalia, in *The Irish Way* (Random House). This is a satisfying Baedeker of a book, unhurried and curious, not preoccupied with politics in a land rife with them, though not averse to showing its oar into the debates that warm conversations in the pubs. Ginna would like to know if the recent technological investments, Euro infusions, and the go-go economy have changed this land he knows and loves so well: the green, bosomy hills; the thatched cottages, peat, and Travelers; the theater and universities; the rural and agricultural.

So he takes a walk, from wild Donegal's Malin Head to Cork. Ginna is good company, happy to stop at the pique of any fancy, with a ready humor (at one point in his walk he is diagnosed with gout: "I had been living like a mendicant friar. Could this be?" [55]), and only the occasional affectation: "Mike Mullins, for so he was, ushered me in to a large room." He is also a whiz at local history and will, it is guaranteed, make even those readers without a religious bone in their bodies fascinated by the crumbling monasteries, abbeys, and churches he visits. He is everywhere and all at once, describing ring forts, racehorses, Irish literature, Bronze Age tombs, casting a fly on the Blackwater, the work of the ancient scholar-monks at Clonmacnoise ("neither prudish nor humorless. Thanks to them the lusty sagas of the pre-Christian Irish were preserved"), the peerless beauty of an old Irish Romanesque church, a fiddle jig, a tin whistle reel. He does report upon the economic development of the country, but he prefers pubs and ruins and the Foyle Film Festival.

Ginna's appealing Ireland is a place where both society and solitude can be easily had, where the many remains of the ancient past can be entered at will and communed with, and where the present--from Troubles to high-tech--is abating and abiding in proper order.

"I can't be objective where Chile is concerned," writes novelist Isabel Allende of this evocative and, yes, highly personal, social geography cum memoir: *My Invented Country: A Nostalgic Journey through Chile* (HarperCollins). "A series of reflections, which always are selective and tinted," is how Allende describes the tour, and readers wouldn't want it any other way. It starts with her childhood--which "wasn't a happy one, but it was interesting"--then proceeds by caroms, letting her memory lead this way and that.

It may be the physiography of the country she wants to explore: the inhospitable big north, where the flamingoes are "brush strokes of pink among salt crystals glittering like precious stones," the central valley's apples and grapes and Santiago ("the pretensions of a large city but the soul of a village"), or the volcanic southern zone, with its wind and rain. Yet this is primarily a social and personal journey through Allende's Chile: there is much on her family's history, but also her experiences with the politesse that hides the unbreachable class system, though also how the poor stay fast on their feet ("well educated, informed, and aware of their rights"); the nation's sobriety and its violence ("experience has taught us that when we lose control we are capable of the worst barbarism,"); the belief in the supernatural and the pervasive influence of the Catholic Church; women, with their "blend of strength and flirtatiousness that few men can resist," then too as "abettors of machismo: they bring up their daughters to serve and their sons to be served."

There are organ grinders, gypsies, and hot bread. There are the connections to her books. "Each country has its customs, its manias, its complexes. I know the idiosyncrasies of mine like the palm of my hand," and there lies her nostalgia. The musicality in Allende's voice bevels all but the melancholy, especially the sad day--another September 11th, this one in 1973--when when the CIA orchestrated a coup against Salvador Allende, her uncle.

Dazzling as a kaleidoscope, Allende's memoir proceeds with the same organization, an artful tumbling and knocking, throwing light, revealing strange depths.

Feeding a Yen (Random House) finds chowhound Calvin Trillin in pursuit of good food--soul-stirring, pulse-elevating good food--one eatery to the next, over many a mile.

When the times were hard--or most any time for that matter--"there was nothing to do but keep eating," writes Trillin, in this collection of pieces that relate to foodstuffs as others might refer to passages from holy books. Let us give thanks to the saving graces of Chinese restaurants, from Ecuador to Nauru, Paris to Prague; to that gnarly pumpernickel bagel that might lure his daughter back to his hometown of New York; to all those bistros and neighborhood joints and markets that fill him up in ways that the more famous destinations never do, those temples where he "can't seem to help wondering, when my mind wanders between forkfuls, whether God really intended all that to be done to food."

Likewise, he is willing to pay the dues of the pilgrim on a quest, journeying far, enduring the foul in search of the sublime. For example, a string of boudin, abiding by the Cajun dictum, "the best boudin is always the boudin closest to where you live," as long as you live in Louisiana; or, better yet, the Cajun wisdom that says you ought to eat your purchase in the parking lot of the establishment you bought them, minutes after having made the purchase. He is ready to sample twenty bowls of ceviche, knowing "I would wake up the next morning feeling a bit fragile." His Register of Frustration and Deprivation, foods he is denied because he isn't geographically positioned to gain their access, is as plentiful as his turn-downs are rare: "Would it be fair to say that you're wimping out on the guinea pig?" his daughter asks on a visit to a restaurant in Peru. He admits it.

Fighting for human rights, writing the perfect poem, discovering cures for mortal diseases--Trillin would find these endeavors deserving of our admiration, thanks, and more; so too, "the ability to read the wall signs in Chinese restaurants."

It was a murderous storm to cap a punishing decade--in *Sudden Sea* (Little, Brown) R. A. Scotti offers a darkly intense portrait of 1938's hurricane. With her mystery-writing background, Scotti knows well how to bring suspense to a story, and the material provided by the Great Hurricane of 1938 is manna in her hands. She, like the New Englanders before her, follows the storm as it touches land in Florida, pushes up the coast, and races from Cape Hatteras to Long Island in a mere seven hours. Where appropriate, Scotti adds brief backgrounds to the nature of hurricanes, the quality of weather forecasting at the time, histories of the towns the storm hit--particularly in Rhode Island--and compares the storm to other great storms in the past.

The most powerful writing here is saved for the hurricane itself; Scotti follows the storm watch, then the havoc as it runs to land, using a wide sampling of first-hand accounts ("The scene around us in the attic was unbelievable. The waves, at the level of the attic floor, beat unceasingly against the house, which trembled and shook."); a handful of short, sad stories chosen for the strangeness of their imagery; as well as her own flair for descriptive narrative: "The ocean banged on doors and windows...then it went upstairs into the bedrooms where families sought refuge, and chased them higher yet, into third floors and attics, onto rooftops, until there was no place to go but into the sea."

Almost 700 people died--433 in Rhode Island alone, where the storm surge buried Providence under twelve feet of water and where Scotti concentrates her story--and the shoreline devastation was complete: "What they eye saw, the mind could not process and the heart refused to accept." "Hurricanes are supple tricksters," writes Scotti, but she is referring to unpredictability

rather than playfulness, for all this trickster left in its wake was pain and sorrow and an ever-deepening Depression.

THE CHALLENGES OF GEOGRAPHIC ILLITERACY

Dr. David J. Keeling
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Jaded by reports that have highlighted the generally poor performance of U.S. students in science, math, and history compared to other industrialized societies, most Americans probably were not shocked by the recent news that they are also among the most geographically illiterate people in the Westernized world. Although most Americans are more aware today of distant lands such as Afghanistan, Iraq, North Korea, and Venezuela, in part because of global media reports on political and economic crises, few have the ability to find these places on a world map or to discuss critically their cultural characteristics. This lack of geographic awareness permeates all segments of our society, from students to presidents, and from ordinary citizens to senators and businesspeople. We might laugh when a student pronounces erroneously that people speak Belgish in Belgium or snicker at the news that our president does not know the capital cities of some important countries. Many will ask whether it really matters that many Americans cannot locate their home state on a U.S. map, that few realize Iranians do not speak Arabic and that most Indonesians practice Islam, or that a significant number of Americans believe Australia has the same size population as the U.S.! Is this growing level of global ignorance really a serious and undeniable problem for our society?

Indeed it is! As the undisputed global military superpower and a key player in the economic globalization of the planet, the U.S. exerts significant influence throughout the world and the world exerts tremendous influence on Americans. For example, in my own small community of Bowling Green, Kentucky, more than forty immigrant groups live in the city, we wear clothes produced in China, the Dominican Republic, and Guatemala, many of our vehicles and electronic goods are assembled in Mexico, and we have direct commercial links with dozens of countries. Many of the students attending Western Kentucky University are destined for careers that are significantly international in a variety of ways, and even those students whose careers are primarily local or regional will interact with the global system in ways unimagined a decade or two ago. U.S. Education Secretary Rod Paige has argued that geographic illiteracy is unacceptable because we live in "a world of 24-hour-news cycles, global markets, high-speed Internet and big challenges for all who inhabit it. And in order for our children to be prepared to take their place in that world and rise to those challenges, they must first understand it." Without a doubt, our need for a higher level of global literacy, for a broader and deeper understanding of the world around us, is critical and compelling. How can we possibly understand the impacts of globalization on our society if we have no basic knowledge of the world in which we live? Across the globe, the "ignorant American" routinely is derided, and the level of contempt for U.S. policy and, at times, American culture has risen dramatically since the 1980s. More than ever, especially after the events of September 11, 2001, we can no longer afford to ignore the rest of the world, its people, politics, and cultures.

Yet how can we overcome the astonishing depth of global ignorance and geographic illiteracy that permeates our society? How do we connect the myriad geographic threads that bind the world together and develop a meaningful and rewarding understanding of global diversity and interrelatedness? One of the major complaints frequently heard about geographic literacy is that it involves the rote memorization of physical features, major cities, and countries - the highest mountain, longest river, deepest ocean, and state capital approach to understanding the world around us. This type of information is certainly important as the foundation of geographic knowledge, but it is not how today's geographers approach the study of our planet. Nevertheless, in defense of learning this basic geographic vocabulary, imagine speaking or writing English with no concept of syntax, grammar, spelling, or word structure. Or imagine trying to understand history with no concept of time, social development, or political relationships. Knowing the capital of North Korea or the major waterways of South America may seem tedious to some, but this information serves as the essential framework or skeleton around which we can construct more meaningful global knowledge.

Perhaps our greatest challenge as geographers over the coming decades, therefore, is to overcome the public's perception of global knowledge as simply a collection of place names. Global literacy is more about understanding and explaining geographic or spatial interrelationships than it is about basic location or collections of isolated facts. Indeed, the core mission of the American Geographical Society in the 21st century is to identify geographic themes of importance to the scholarly and policy-making communities and to offer its perspectives on those issues. The AGS aims to promote science, research, scholarly study, and informed debate on issues of relevance to contemporary society and to help develop more meaningful global knowledge about these issues.

The power of geography, and its importance in eliminating global ignorance, lies in its ability to provide insights into complex human-environment relationships. Geography helps us to make sense of the ever-changing landscapes and spatial networks that make up our planet. Moreover, new spatial technologies such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Global Positioning Systems (GPS) are providing better ways for us to gather, analyze, display, and interpret global information. In the early 21st century, we face a world where political and economic relationships are changing rapidly, where human alteration of the environment is accelerating, and where human patterns of interaction (migration, trade flows, transport, and communication, for example) constantly are shifting. Geographic literacy matters because having a good level of global knowledge is fundamental to the enlightenment of society, and democracy is absolutely dependent on the people's enlightenment.

Democracy only works well when voters are educated enough to make a conscious decision about candidates and issues. In other words, if people know a lot about, say, Iraq, Afghanistan, or North Korea, they might make better decisions when asked to support an invasion, a new trade package, or some other policy initiative. Thus, universities, governments, journalists, students, and ordinary citizens cannot afford to ignore global relationships or their underlying geographies. As a society, we can no longer remain ignorant about the world around us, a world with which we increasingly interact, or about the rapid and dramatic environmental, political, and economic changes that are reshaping our planet in profound and fundamental ways. If individuals and societies become more educated about global diversity and the intricacies of geographic

relationships, they can better understand the limitations and potential of human action and transition from a narrow, parochial view of the world to one that is truly global.

The Helen and John S. Best Research Fellowships for 2004

The Helen and John S. Best Research Fellowship program is intended to help bring to the AGS Library scholars who reside beyond commuting distance of UWM, and whose research would benefit from extensive use of the AGSL. John

S. Best was, for many years, a prominent Milwaukee attorney, book-collector and conservationist. The Best family members are longtime supporters of UWM and the UWM Libraries. Fellowships can last up to four weeks and provide a weekly stipend of \$375.00 (\$1,500 maximum) to help defray the travel and living expenses relative to the residency.

Research projects supported by the Fellowship program must fall within the wide range of subject areas that could be supported by the Library. Examples include history of cartography (including cartobibliography), history of geographic thought, discovery and exploration, historical geography, and other history themes with a significant geographical component.

The awards will be made by the UW Milwaukee Director of Libraries, based on recommendations from the AGS Library Curator and the AGSL Advisory Committee.

On the conclusion of their tenure, fellows will be expected to submit short written reports on their research and to make acknowledgment of the Fellowship program in any publication or dissertation issuing wholly or in part from the Fellowship.

Eligibility: Candidates for Fellowships are either established scholars, or doctoral students who have completed their course work and are at the stage of writing their dissertations.

To Apply: Application must be made in writing to the AGSL Curator. The application shall include 1) a two page letter describing the project to be pursued, the proposed end result of the project (publication, dissertation, etc), an explanation of how the AGS Library will be utilized in completing the project, and the number of weeks of support requested (up to 4); 2) a brief curriculum vitae; and 3) a letter of support from a reputable scholar in the field.

Timetable: Applications must be postmarked by September 15, 2003. Awards will be announced on or before October 31, 2003 for fellowships to be held between December 1, 2003 and November 30, 2004.

McCull FAMILY FELLOWSHIP Fifth Annual Competition

The McColl Family Fellowship, given by Dr. and Mrs. Robert W. McColl, consists of round trip air fare to any place in the world of the candidate's choosing. The candidate must secure funding for other expenses from other sources.

The only obligation of the Fellow is to write an article based on the visit abroad that is suitable for publication in *FOCUS on Geography* magazine and that is submitted to the editor within six months upon return from the trip.

As is true of all *FOCUS on Geography* authors, candidates must be geographers or others "who think like geographers and write like journalists." Currently, one fellowship is being offered for each year. Selection is by a committee chosen by the AGS Council.

The winner of the first McColl Fellowship was Dr. Joseph Hobbs of the Department of Geography, University of Missouri-Columbia for travel to Madagascar in 2000 for first hand study of the human use of caves there. His article appeared in the summer 2001 issue of *FOCUS on Geography*. The second McColl Fellowship was awarded to Dr. Kendra McSweeney for work on indigenous response to hurricane damage in the rain forest of eastern Honduras; her article appeared in the Spring 2002 issue of *FOCUS on Geography*. The third award went to Dr. Roger Balm for work in Peru in 2002; his article is slated to appear by Fall 2003. The fourth fellowship was awarded to Josh Lepawsky for research in Malaysia this year.

The fifth McColl Fellowship is to be awarded for the year 2004. Applications for it must be received in the AGS offices by October 15, 2003. **They are to consist of the candidate's curriculum vitae; a covering letter of no more than three pages that describes a) the proposed trip, b) the reasons for selecting that itinerary, and c) the candidate's particular competence for doing field there; and a statement of the sum requested.**

Applications should be sent to:
McColl Family Fellowship Committee
The American Geographical Society
120 Wall Street, Suite 100
New York, New York 10005-3904

For further information contact Mary Lynne Bird at (212)422-5456 voice, (212)422-5480 fax, MLBird@amergeog.org or see the AGS website at <http://www.amergeog.org>

New AGS Councilors

A geographer who is a senior member of the staff of the United Nations Development Programme and an academic geographer long associated with the business community are the two newest members of the AGS Council. They were elected at the May 24th meeting of the Council.

Juha Uitto is the Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator of the Global Environment Facility Coordination Office of UNDP in New York. Dr. Uitto comes from Finland, where he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in geography in 1981 and 1982 at the University of Helsinki. His doctorate, in social and economic geography, is from the University of

Lund, Sweden in 1989. His previous UN positions were in Washington and Tokyo. Before becoming associated with the UN, Dr. Uitto worked on rural development and population for Finnconsult Ltd. in Finland, as a research fellow for the Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, and for the International Fund for Agricultural Development in Italy. His work has taken him to almost twenty countries in Asia, Latin America, and Africa and has resulted in a working knowledge of six languages in addition to his native Finnish. Dr. Uitto has been a visiting lecturer at numerous universities in Japan, Finland, and the United States. His ten books deal with issues related to sustainable development, water resources, economic and social change, and environmental change.

John W. Frazier is Co-Chair of the Department of Geography and Director of the GIS Core Facility at Binghamton University—State University of New York, where he has been on the faculty since 1976. He was Chair of the department 1977-1986 and has been Co-Chair since 1995 and Director of the Graduate Program since 1994. Dr. Frazier is the founder of GeoDemographics, Limited and was its CEO 1988-1999. The firm does contract work for private and public sector firms and for the federal government. Dr. Frazier continues to be an active managerial consultant in New York State. In 1978 Dr. Frazier created and co-directed for 17 years the Applied Geography Conference, attended by geographers from the public and private sectors as well as academics. Recently he has created a new conference, “Race, Ethnicity and Place.” His four books and several dozen book chapters and articles have focused in particular on demographic, environmental management, housing, and economic development issues.

--MLB

“Doing Fieldwork”
Being Reprinted

“**Doing Fieldwork,**” the special double issue of the *Geographical Review* (Vol. 91, Nos. 1 & 2), is being reprinted.

The original printing of the issue was unusually large. Nevertheless, greater-than-anticipated sales of the issue have almost depleted the original printing. That has made it necessary to print an extra run to meet continuing demand. The fresh supply is expected in AGS offices in late March.

Instructors ordering classroom quantities are apparently using the volume as a supplementary text, especially for classes in fieldwork methods.

“**Doing Fieldwork,**” co-edited by GR Editor Paul Starrs and guest editor Dydia DeLyser, contains 56 essays by geographers about their fieldwork experiences and their views of the role of fieldwork in the life of the geographer. One reviewer has described these as “mini case studies” of the issues bound up in the fieldwork experience. A four-and-a-half page introduction by the editors asserts the indispensability of fieldwork for the true geographical scholar and celebrates the remarkable variety of paths fieldwork research can take.

The 508-page volume sells for \$39.00 plus shipping and handling. There are discounts for bulk purchases. For ordering information, contact James W. Thomas at (212)422-5456 or at JWThomas@amergeog.org

LIZZY'S LEAVING!!!

Last summer I graduated with Honors in Geography (BSc) from University College London. Like many of my contemporaries the thought of the 'real world of work' was not only daunting but quite frankly something to be put off! I have been very fortunate in the past to have traveled widely, having lived abroad for much of my life and in between my studies traveled through Southern Africa and South America. The travel bug in me remains; however, my sensible side told me that it was about time I began to focus on my career. It was therefore time to compromise--work abroad.

I came across the American Geographical Society internship program in a book regarding internships overseas. Having been passionate about geography all my life, the chance to work for the AGS in New York was the perfect solution for my near future. I arrived in New York at the beginning of January and began my work with the AGS soon after.

My time at the AGS has been extremely varied in terms of the size and type of projects that I have undertaken. From day one, I noted down a quick summary of my endeavors as I completed them. To my surprise and delight these notes last pages and pages and are evidence of what I have achieved through my time here. One of the larger projects that I took on was carrying out some research for the AGS travel program. Every trip that is organized has a set itinerary. My assignment was to go through these itineraries and subsequently find related websites that could be enjoyed by travelers before embarking on their trips of a lifetime. The websites not only had to be of some educational value, but also had to be respectable, eloquent and of course, of interest. This assignment was very interesting as not only did I learn an incredible amount of history, culture and politics of many different countries, but also it was fascinating to see what 'site', 'place' or 'person' got World Wide Web coverage. I am sure there could be a very interesting study into the geography of websites!

Another large project that I took on was biographical research that was followed up by writing a detailed summary on the signers of the Fliers and Explorers' Globe. The Globe is one of AGS's wonders. All 68 names signed on the globe can be recognized as some of the greatest explorers of all time, with the likes of Charles Lindberg, Robert Peary and Neil Armstrong. Delving into the lives of these great men and women was an inspiration. It was also extremely satisfying to search for the contact addresses of some of the present day explorers who may in the future have their names signed on the globe, thus doing my small bit for the globes future history.

These two assignments were just a small fraction of the work that I carried out at the AGS. In fact I have named myself photocopying, fax machine and envelope stuffing queen! However I reveled in my work as a researcher as I am one for a good challenge. My research varied from searching for contact addresses for some 4000 names to ensure that our databases were up to date, finding relevant articles from the Geographical Review and FOCUS to meet with requests from other researchers in the field, to finding suitable information and photographs to go on the AGS conference display board. I have also had the satisfaction of getting to grips with the organizing of the onsite AGS library, proof reading the newsletter 'Ubique', attending lectures on a range of

fascinating topics, and making suggestions toward a marketing strategy for the showing of the explorers globe. The list is endless.

My stay with the AGS has been remarkably interesting and enjoyable which is evident by the fact that I was due to be here for just 12 weeks but ended up staying for 5 months! I am also so grateful to the AGS as it has given me the opportunity to get to know New York properly. I have fallen head over heels in love with this fantastic city and will be very sad in returning to the UK and back to the 'real world'! Who knows what may lay ahead in my future, but one thing is for sure Geography will always be a key factor in it.--Elizabeth

MAY AGS COUNCIL MEETING

Deborah Popper, AGS Council

The May AGS Council meeting was held at the center of North America. It was there to meet a Council obligation: to supplement a business meeting with a visit to see geography in practice. Council member John Kelmelis, Chief Scientist at the Geological Survey in charge of geography research and mapping, had persuaded the group that the USGS's Earth Resources Observation Systems (EROS) Data Center near Sioux Falls, South Dakota, would be worth a visit. The fifteen Council and Galileo Circle members who went all agreed he was right.

The EROS Data Center is the leading spatial data archive in the country, and most likely in the world. For spatial data, it is the equivalent of the Library of Congress. With a \$64 million dollar budget, it is the fourth largest USGS facility. Established in 1966, it has been collecting and managing LANDSAT data for decades. It gets direct feeds as satellites pass over—our group watched the download from LANDSAT IV. It also receives data from all over the world (it shares data with the UN Environment Programme Global Resources Information Database, for example) and supplements the satellite material with aerial and ground information as well, historic as well as current. Its wealth of information on vegetation, wildlife habitats, land use, climate effects, changes in water bodies, transportation patterns, and urbanization is breathtaking.

The Center houses numbers of geographers, some working directly for the government and others for private contractors. We got an overview of the center and its research, discussions of several projects, and a tour. The building itself is worth a visit. Absolutely enormous (now 180,000 square feet), it sits alone in the middle of the prairie. The building has grown as the Center's mission and materials expanded. It has one of the largest computer centers in the world and a sophisticated photographic laboratory. The center must constantly innovate to make sure it can safeguard its materials, protect them from deterioration from exposure to heat and light, keep the data collected usable as formats change.

The Center's mission is not only to collect data, but to use it and make it accessible to others. We were briefed on several ongoing projects. The Changing Face of the African Sahel involves careful observation both through satellite and ground observation of land cover. The project, ongoing since the 1980s, keeps close tabs on 600 sites to spot changes in land use, vegetation, and biodiversity. Its careful attention to issues of tree cover and agriculture provides useful data for programs like local governments and U.S.AID. Changing urban patterns affect pressures on wood, the primary fuel for those in the region. Interestingly, the numbers of trees has

remained higher than expected as users lop off branches rather than cutting down a whole tree. As the trees remain, agriculture moves into the wooded areas. Shifts keep occurring. Land in agriculture has increased, but when the price of peanuts, one of the area's major export crops, declines, more land is turned to range instead. Over all, biodiversity has suffered with declines in forest area and quality while land devoted to settlement and agriculture has increased.

The Famine Early Warning System also dates back to the 1980s. The project's regular bulletins help various government agencies act to minimize harm. The program, in collaboration with NOAA, brings together current information on rainfall, soil moisture, and population and matches them with crop and seed requirements. In Afghanistan, this data was combined with locations of secure areas to determine the best places to begin planting of staples. As a side benefit of the close monitoring, the group has found that atypical spikes in rainfall serve as the best indicator of malaria epidemics.

The EROS Data Center is responsible for a continuously updated U.S. National Map. Resolution capability gets finer and finer. Our presenter tuned into the neighborhood of some in the group, the Withingtons of Louisville. (If only I'd have asked first, I might have been able to see if my painters were at work on my house in my absence.) The constant and thorough coverage allows improved analysis and discussion of important questions—as opposed to monitoring my painters. It allows better analysis of where and how sprawl is occurring and whether there are different regional patterns. It is useful for monitoring forest fire threats, how these have changed over time, and how to respond. It can be used to monitor changes in land cover before and after a dam is breached.

By the time we left, our brains were spinning. Some had already worked with EROS Data Center. For those of us who had not, visions of new projects were dancing in our heads.