



HORIZONS

iy

I think that this issue of Horizons marks my 25th anniversary as a fan. Without looking it up, I suspect that my first prozine letter appeared in the late summer of 1936 in Astounding. But a hot spell and a barely mended hip have combined to take away any inclination to celebrate with a giant or well-written issue of Horizons. So this is volume 22, number 4, whole number 87, and FAPA number 81, published in the summer of 1961. Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, did the writing, and the cover should be by Jean Young, and probably is, in fact.

In the Beginning

The Fantasy Amateur: The ruling on the contradictory amendments was the only sensible course to take. I still feel it is a mistake to allow any waivers on the basis of fewer than 22 signatures. My preference would be for a 22-signature waiver, with the secretary-treasurer deciding on the period of grace on the merit of each individual case. "Why Is a Fan?" is quite eligible for FAPA distribution on both constitutional and traditional grounds. The second section of the constitution says that the mailings contain material written or published by members. FAPA distributed for years The Reader and Collector, which was published by a person whose name is lost to history, but definitely not a FAPA member: H. C. Koenig's secretary. Day*Star: The item about the bad cat did not horrify me at all. I thought it was a completely tender and charming story of how approaching maternity affects favorably a person, and I was glad to see the villain come to a suitable end. Two pages like this contain better, more memorable writing than two or three of Marion's novels and I wish she would sell this sort of thing. The Vinegar Worm: I'd like very much to contribute to that Bagby fanzine. It would be an outlet for my pet theory: that Mark Twain wrote The Moswell Plan and possibly one or more of the other books under the Bagby name. The discovery that the bearer of that name is still alive shakes me a trifle, but I still think that my theory is sound. Her insanity may be an elaborate hoax to prevent people from asking her questions that would reveal the truth, or she may have lost her reason in an overstraining effort to maintain the lie. I haven't read those other five books, but there are so many Twain hints in The Moswell Plan that I think he inserted clues deliberately for those who would heed them. "I didn't feel sorry for overweight persons until I got into the hospital and heard what doctors tell them nowadays: "There were no fat persons in the concentration camps!" This is intended to mean that there is only one way to be fat: eating well. But it made the overweight patients suffer from a sense of guilt, the feeling that they were personally responsible for the suffering of Dachau. I wish it worked the other way around: I'm thinner than the average rail. Ailleurs: There's no reason why Pierre should have compunctions about distributing or getting page credit with this. It isn't the first French-language FAPA publication. Russell Chauvenet did the same stunt many years ago. I would guess that as many FAPA members can understand the French language as the number who found intelligible the math puzzles and discussions that Stanley, Rothman, and Davis used to devote vast amounts of space to. I experienced trouble with only an occasional word without resorting to a dictionary, and I particularly liked the Dermeze story.

To monolingual FAPAns, let me provide assurance that this publication rescues French science fiction from the difficult position in which it landed as a result of Hugo's search for translation rights. Horizons: Abject apologies for inflicting a fanzine as typo-ridden as this one upon you. I discovered after proofreading the entire issue that my correction fluid had petrified. There wasn't time to send anyone in search of some more. One monumental blunder that I intended to correct was in the mailing comments, where I unaccountably wrote about the census in connection with Christ's birth. I'm perfectly aware that it was taxes in question. Descant: Agreed that the election of judges is a bad thing. When the law calls for a judge to serve ten years or so, it may remove some of the impulse to return campaign favors but makes it difficult when the voters pick a lemon. '' Of course the nationalizing of American property is the cause of the violent way the United States has reacted to Castro. This nation gets along perfectly well with countries in which complete tyranny has existed for decades, and would probably fight to preserve the precious status quo in some of them. '' My only preparation for enemy action in any coming war will consist of keeping a shortwave, battery-powered radio handy. In case of a real devastation, power or domestic stations or both are apt to be gone and this will be the only way to learn just how the world is ending. '' I hope that your description of the Jew meets with a better fate than your mailing comments did a few mailings back. Lark: The FM situation has suddenly become perfect for anyone within 100 miles of Baltimore-Washington. The two cities have a half-dozen powerful FM stations producing virtually nothing but good music, drama, serious discussion, and other Third Programish fare, plus several weaker ones. '' Bill can stop watching the newspapers for a fireworks accident in the local garbage disposal system. The stuff is buried, so you can toss anything into the garbage pail without fear of explosion, poisoned hogs, or other calamities. A Fanzine for Now: Please hurry up like all getout with that fanzine index for the 1950's. I need such a thing the worst possible way for history purposes. '' Now that Wollheim and Silverberg have both said farewell to numbered fandoms, I suppose that that particular nuisance is dead. If I had to consider fandoms in this sense, I think I'd define only three fandoms: the first originating when the first stf. reader began to save books or dime novels, the second dating from the introduction of prozine letter columns that permitted fans to contact one another, and the third arising with the collapse of pro-oriented fandom around 1937 after Fantasy Magazine folded. '' Would the birth rate drop off in this country during a new major depression? Very little, I suspect. In the 1930's, almost nobody carried medical insurance that paid maternity bills and few persons earned enough money to get discounts on the cost of raising kids through smaller taxes. '' In all the discussion about raising the membership limit, nobody has mentioned that it came up for vote and was defeated about ten years ago. '' I must be impervious to commonsense, because I still read everything in each fanzine I receive. Helen's Fantasia: The worst thing about New York's street dangers is the way women in perfectly safe cities take fright. We are having a terrible time at the office, persuading the girls to walk the two blocks to the post office for the mail at 9 p.m. Nobody has ever been damaged at that hour in

the business district. But they react as if we were dispatching them to Hell's Kitchen at 2 a.m." I wonder if modern Western dress really is nondescript compared with native garb in the remainder of the world. With certain regional exceptions, the majorities of the peoples impress me as wearing drab and colorless garments in comparison with what emerges from Macy's or Sak's.

" French is being taught in the third through sixth grades in this county's school system. It's started in the first grade in at least one nearby town, York, Pa. The Bull Moose: One blank and one illegible page reduce my comment opportunities drastically. But it's nice to see that someone else agrees that The Once and Future King is butchery of three superlative books. Poor Richard's Almanac: The article by me had disappeared completely from my memory. I wonder how many Warner mss never got published because of suspended fanzines, and were never salvaged because I forgot their existence? " Thanks to Rich and the others who pointed out that the review of The Immortal Storm preceded Norm Metcalf's success in persuading me to write fan history. I'd forgotten to mention this in the last mailing. I might also point out that I chose TIS as a column topic on editorial request, not my own initiative. " Until I read Marion's essay, I amused myself in spare moments for several days, fitting the last line from Tolkien into possible situations. I believe I could have plotted a long novel around any of two or three possible contexts. " Most animals on this continent do not attack man unless provoked or aren't dangerous enough to be worried about. The bull doesn't conform on either count. " The best thing to do about that big FAPA treasury is to wait a little until we happen to come up with one or two extra-large mailings. It will vanish as if by magic. Astra's Tower: This is the only thing I've read about Tolkien that gave me any sense of desire to read Tolkien. Simultaneously, it left me wondering if it would be worth the effort, because of the direct quotations, the longest that I've seen from the books. The man must be totally style-deaf. Still, this is a remarkably good essay, comprehensible even though it assumes intimate knowledge of the fiction. I could quibble with the designation of these as "the only books written for adults in the past twenty years or so which are almost devoid of overt sexual motivation". Much recent Faulkner could be cited, or Mann's Dr. Faustus or James Agee's A Death in the Family. " One thing annoys me no end: the increasing habit of referring to the books as the Ring trilogy or tetralogy. Those terms are so established for Wagner's operas and Tolkien owes so much to the same sources as Wagner that confusion can result. Phantasy Press: Dan's statistics reveal something I hadn't realized before: that FAPA mailings are holding up well despite decimation in the ranks of the most active publishers. Of the top five in 1960, one is no longer in the organization, one couple has cut back sharply on all forms of fan activity, and a third has tailed off alarmingly. It will be interesting to watch if the recent activity growth continues, now that Mrs. Carr is gone. There is a theory that she is good for an ayjay group as a source of page-filling controversy. But SAPS pagecounts zoomed up immediately after her departure a pair of years ago, and something similar may be happening to FAPA. It is quite possible that more members are inhibited by her presence than anyone admits. " It isn't safe to assume that a

democracy and freedom are synonymous. (I assume Dan is referring to the United States, a republic, when he says democracy.) It isn't hard to visualize certain trends in this country leading it into a totalitarian state in every way except regular elections. Mark Twain was probably right when he wrote that most men prefer to be ruled, rather than assume decision-making themselves. Mark thought that the result would be a monarchy in the United States, because that was the tyranny with which he was familiar. If he were alive today, he would undoubtedly predict a dictatorship here. So I think that it would be much better to concentrate on the job of convincing the residents of this country about the benefits of freedom. Just as a captive animal usually prefers the security of his cage, the peoples in nations that have never known freedom aren't likely to be convinced that this is such a fine thing by a few leaflets falling from the sky or clandestine listening to shortwave broadcasts.

' I wonder which fan holds the alltime high for number of fanzine pages published? I'd guess that I'm somewhere between two and three thousand by now, but even some fairly new fans like the Coulsons must be over that figure after just a few years.

' In theory it is a fine thing to take an active part in community improvement groups. In practice I've found their membership to contain so many individuals interested only in sticking their noses into other people's business that I've gotten out faster than I got in. Nov Shmoz Ka Pop: First of all, Otto should tell us how many initials of the words in his title should be capitalized. I'm not certain whether ka is an unimportant preposition or a key word. Next, I'm particularly happy to see this new member, because his sentences run on and on just like mine sometimes. It makes me feel less conspicuous. Talking Rain Country Blues: I don't think student groups are usually justified in throwing around weight violently in efforts to obtain changes in college policy. It's pretty hard to combine an education and politics. Limbo: Isn't it about time to drop the San Francisco rumpus for a while? In FAPA and outside FAPA, the thing is trying to take on the proportions of a combined John Brown raid and the storming of the Bastille, and it wasn't that important. Besides, nothing can be done about it now, in contrast to such a cause as Chessman, in which continued probing might uncover new evidence. ' I'm not too fond of Bach's most celebrated works. I feel that Buxtehude did almost everything better and at less tedious length. ' It's nice to find someone else admitting that he likes Walt Disney movies. I enjoyed The Absent-Minded Professor, despite the hoary plot, and the conspiracy of silence about it in the fanzines is unpleasant. ' I couldn't have gypped that desk clerk out of the money. He probably wasn't to blame for the absence of a bellboy. Even if he was a slob, the money probably represented a day's wages, he probably had to make it up when his cash drawer proved to be short, and unoffending dependents might have suffered.

Light: Mark Twain has already appeared too frequently in these comments, so I'll let others explain about Captain Stormfield. This story is pretty good, and I assumed that it was something written very recently, until I encountered Les' notes. It's a considerable cut above the fiction that he was writing ten years ago and I'd like to see what he could do with a complete reworking right now. Celephais: I could have gotten started on this

project of hooking up fandom via teleprinters. I was offered a new job with the newspaper office, that of operating a newly acquired first cousin to a teletype, which punches a tape that is then fed through a linotype to set copy fast. But I turned down the job shift: the pay wouldn't have changed much, the only advantage would have been strong union representation, and the disadvantages would have involved such things as a high noise level and pain in the fingertips when they crack open each winter. '' Just one adult in Hagerstown rides a bicycle consistently all over the city. She is a nurse and must be surrounded by a force field to stay alive on the narrow streets that contain one lane of parked and two lanes of moving vehicles. '' The telephone doesn't affect me that way. I feel no inclination to answer it when I want to continue to do something else, unless it's music which the bell breaks into. This, incidentally, is a good spot for another warning to any fans who may plan to stop by during convention journeys: you'd better write ahead. I'd hate to see anyone make a long detour to come to Hagerstown, then fail to get together, simply because I didn't happen to be home or was in a telephone unanswering mood. Target: FAPA: Don't stop writing now about that Detention trip, just because it happened a little while ago. People don't complain about the datedness of The Odyssey, and that's not nearly as exciting. Churn: After reading about all the pre-nuptial confusion, I'm even more touched and grateful that Nancy somehow found time to return my copy of The Starmaker. '' If you think it's exciting to drive past ICBM missiles, you should really get a kick out of having one zooming right at you. It happened to me recently, as I rounded a curve on a rural road, right into the path of a truck lugging one down the very center of the narrow highway. Null-F: Many cheers for the defence of TWS. This has been the most unjustly neglected prozine in history. Its fiction was always literate. Even if many of its stories were aimed at juveniles, they were excellent reading for older persons, just as Heinlein's recent novels have been. '' Did any form of transportation do better than the trains during this past winter's blizzards? I know that buses required two or three times the usual time for runs and frequently air service stopped altogether. '' All those reiterations of the fact that wars have started under Democrats in this century fail to add that this involves three wars in 60 years, exactly the same rate of war-getting-into that occurred under Republicans Lincoln and McKinley in the preceding 40 years. Type Specimens: Wouldn't it be fun if Bill needed the page credit and a ruling was needed on how many pages of credit this provided? Alif: I don't normally associate songs with times or places. But it will be different for certain tunes that were popular at the start of 1961. I heard them incessantly in the hospital, and a repetition today brings back instantly all the emotions of that place. I still haven't tracked down the title of one item, always played in the same arrangement with a trumpet solo going up from sol to do to mi, slowly and plaintively. '' While you're talking about the spelling of names, can you think of any good reason why Jine hasn't become a given name? Almost every other vowel has been used with great success between the j and n. '' Expand the Ferdinand and Isabelle item a little and it'll be a sure sale with Ace Double Novel Books. The Rambling Fap: Every time someone mentions a distant sector of Route 40, nostalgia surges up. When

I was small, I loved to stand in downtown Hagerstown, look out West Washington Street as far as I could see, and realize that by going out that way and not stopping, I could reach the West Coast. I told myself that some day, I'll do that. But now I know that I never shall, because that street has become one-way, east-bound only. ' ' I know what happened to all the semi-pro publishing houses: they were doomed from birth to early dissolution, because they operated on reputations of books other publishers had issued or magazine reprints, and it didn't take long to run through the supply of big name titles and writers. Then they couldn't afford to pay the going rates for new stuff of any quality, because of their tiny editions. Ice Age: I thought that Russ Wilsey's article sounded familiar. It took quite a while to figure out the reason: this is just the pompous and bloated style into which I frequently lapse when writing about non-fannish matters. I hope it'll be a lesson to me, realizing how foolish it sounds. The article aside from the style contains nothing that isn't in the basic Madison Avenue primer, aside from the curious statement about Homer reading the Iliad. Self-Preservation: We want Science Fiction Five-Yearly. Meanwhile, this is a good substitute. I must tell you sometime about the problem I wasn't equipped to handle, how to get rid of a quarter-ton of hay in my backyard while I was still unable to haul it away myself. I thoroughly agree that snow which has slushed and refrozen is a bloody hazard and I'm pleased to learn that I wasn't the only person who was knitting during the past months. Laundry Mark: This issue clears up a minor matter that had worried me for quite a while. I could not remember what Ohio fan had visited me right after World War Two ended. I inclined to the theory that it was Harold Cheney, but I'll accept Stefnews' evidence that it was Chidsey. It was not at trainside, however. His parents were driving him, and permitted only ten minutes of chatting with me. An Amateur Publication for Mrs. Moskowitz: It's ironic that this first plunge into reprinting of comments on comments should be directed to the person who complained about them even before they got reprinted. Bandwagon: Do robins go south? As I understand it, there is a theory that they just retreat into sheltered areas in the nearby countryside when they vanish from cities. ' ' Eviction of Higgs from the waiting list was no hasty decision. He had been a member of FAPA for a dozen years without contributions of merit. He was winner of the first poll to determine the worst FAPA member after only a year's membership and I don't think he ever lost the distinction. He got kicked out after he lied about a publication which reprinted mailing content listings from The Fantasy Amateur. He claimed it as independent work, despite errors common to both incarnations of the listings. Le Moindre: The Norelco tapers sold in this country weigh from 40 pounds up. Apparently your nearness to the magnetic pole has a tendency to buoy up your machine via a magnetized head, so you'd better not degauss it. Gasp!: This is a good example of what I meant about people disliking freedom. Intelligent young men make a hobby of seeing how precisely they can carry out detailed orders involving something that is generally considered a symbol of freedom, an auto of one's own. Sercon's Bane: The circuit court judge in the nearest Pennsylvania county keeps smashing up other people's autos in tailend collisions. He's old but healthy and seems likely to continue to have crashes and wear his robe indefinitely. Two attorneys on the

directorates of the local newspapers' former ownership used to assure us reporters that "alleged" is a useless word as a legal action shield. Its presence in a story might pacify someone and decide him against a libel suit. It means nothing if suit is filed. '' Some quotes from the Postal Manual, section 124.32, describing unmailable matter: "b. Anything advertised or described so as to lead another to use it for preventing conception. c. Any written or printed matter giving information as to how to obtain any article or to use any means for preventing conception. d. Any other written or printed matter intended to induce, or incite to, the prevention of conception or the production of abortion." Translation: You can't mail recommendations to use contraceptives, you can't tell where to get contraceptives and you can't describe contraceptives. '' Maybe you read about the macabre kind of discrimination in a restaurant down the canal a piece from Hagerstown. The proprietress threw out a supreme court justice, the secretary of the interior, one senator, and an assortment of smaller fry who were hiking the towpath and sought shelter from the rain. A friend who saw the incident said that she got mad enough at the puddle that formed around the justice, but really lost her temper when the senator pulled soggy sandwiches from his pocket and began eating them instead of ordering food. '' A most interesting note on cancer. It's obvious that cancer which may have been dormant in the body for a long while suddenly grows rapidly when an illness or operation has left the individual weakened for a short time. Maybe the metastasis that is blamed on the surgeon's knife really occurs during the time that the patient is unable to eat normally. Salud: I recognize one cover quote. The one about the grandfather clock is usually attributed to Yogi Berra, and I wonder if you found it in some earlier source. Marginal pencilings are few this time, but I always look forward to Salud as the one FAPA publication that talks about good mundane fiction in general. This is much better than lists of unread books or mentions of the latest paperback thriller. Vandy: A Carl Carmer book features the drum legend in a different form. I don't guarantee the accuracy of my memory of its title as "Listen for a Lonesome Drum". '' I see nothing awful in the soul-weighing experiments. The suffering is usually over by the time the moment of death approaches and the dying person isn't apt to be aware of anything that might be done to or around him. Louisa Mae Alcott claimed that she once saw the soul of a relative depart in a half-dark room, in the form of a little cloud of white vapor. '' One troop of peace marchers came by Hagerstown. Inadvertently they made a lot of residents happy, by picketing the Fairchild airplane factory. This industry hasn't been able to get a new government contract for years, and the populace assumed that the marchers had insight into some government business that deserved picketing. In fact, the stock even went up the next day on Wall Street. As it turned out, it was a mistake all around. Open Season on Monsters: This is splendid as a case of devil's advocacy or a finger exercise in invective and rhetoric. But it's quite inaccurate and liable to fool some of our more recent members. As one who was there, I can assure everyone that things happened in FAPA's past to account for all the apparently useless clauses in the current constitution. The thing about others helping officers to carry out duties, for instance, goes back to official editors who failed to get out mail-

ings on time and rejected offers of assistance on the grounds that nobody else was allowed to do the task. And the two-page document that Redd praises was the cause of two or three controversies and imbroglios to every mixup that occurs under the incumbent document. It would be nice if brevity and simplicity were the most satisfactory procedure in human affairs. Unfortunately, they usually lead to such widely differing results as turmoils in FAPA and the belief that niggers just ain't any good. ' The other aspect of Redd's case, "a member gets out of FAPA only as much as he puts into it," ignores the fact that it's only fair to give others a chance to see how much they can get out of it. Every time a borderline case is allowed to retain his membership for another year, fifty-odd individuals find three months or more added to the time in which they are waiting to try their own luck. Minimac: Maybe I've never disclosed the fact that I always get Lee Jacobs mixed up with Ed Cox. I hope this chronology will help to straighten them out as separate individuals. As a result of several biographical successes in this mailing, I suspect that someone could make himself very popular by publishing a modern equivalent of FAPA parade, which featured fairly extensive biographies of most members around 1949. Why Is a Fan?: If I'd known that this would contain something more than statistics, I'd have written something more suitable than that silly paragraph. Meanwhile, careful reading of the completed volume has brought a number of observations. First, someone near a big library should attempt to find what other work has been done on any significant traits of first-born and only children. Hagerstown's institution offers nothing on the topic, other than generalizations in child care books. Maybe monarchies adopt primogeniture systems as a result of observation of the characteristics of the children, rather than the sense of fairness to the guy that got there first. Next, I'm surprised at the number of contributors who admit flatly that fans are their best friends or fandom is the only place where they are happy. I doubt that I'll ever come to such a conclusion. Then there's the fact that I seem to be unique in fandom, in that I didn't care for fantasy as a child. I disliked fairy tales and didn't even like stories about foreign lands, preferring settings that seemed familiar. It wasn't until I was nine or ten and read abridged Jules Verne that I got off this realist-only bandwagon. It's nice to see that nobody is as violent about fandom as Laney was. Laney's tragedy was his inability to see that his description of fandom could be applied as well to mankind in any collective form; if he'd admitted that to himself, he might have gone on to be a writer of at least the calibre of Mencken or Swift. I disagree completely with the Lewis Grant theory: the whole 19th century saw science evolve from "something of passing interest", not just its final decades. I think the wisest things in this symposium are the remarks of Kirsten Nelson, whose single sentence presents a logical theory that I haven't seen before about fans, and Ted Johnstone, for his equalizer reference. This discussion of gafia caused me to wonder what I'd do with the time I devote to fandom, if I went that way. I suspect I'd turn either to baseball fandom (research, statistics analysis, and the like) or amateur dramatics, or I might even retire into fantasy collecting, the way I started as a fan. Shadow Mailing: A pity, but there just isn't space for comments on it this time. I'll try to write to each publisher a personal letter.

The Undermen

After the lecture, John Dessin hurried backstage and waited for his old friend to complete handshaking with the committee and other wellwishers. Scraps of the conversation emerged from the babble of voices: "I wouldn't believe it, if anyone else told us that." "It's the start of a new era." "How did you ever get such an idea?" "Should I tell my wards about it?"

Dr. Carter, looming three inches above anyone else in the cluster, looked impatient. He finally ignored the last few outstretched hands, lowered a powerful shoulder, burst through the clump of people, and rushed up to John, ruddy face beaming. "It's so good to see you," he cried in a voice as loud as he had used during the lecture, when he had refused the microphone.

"It's been years," John said, letting Dr. Carter urge him away toward the back exit from the auditorium. He felt a trifle embarrassed to have served as an excuse for Dr. Carter to demonstrate his disdain for amenities. "And I never thought we'd get together again quite like this. I mean, when you've just announced this serum."

Dr. Carter grabbed his enormous coat, then waved John to a halt, just before the street door. "There's one thing you'll have to do for me," he said, trying to tone down the giant voice without success. "Don't say anything direct about my theories in front of Lisa. She doesn't know everything yet."

"You brought her along with you? I thought she was too timid to get into a gyro."

"Not any more. She loves them now. You see, I've been trying to prepare her for what's to come." The big man groped for words with both hands. "After all, I can stand on that stage and announce that we'll be able to get the undermen up to human intelligence levels in a few months and it sounds splendid. But when you start to apply the change to your wife, you realize that we aren't dealing with an abstract collection of millions of people, but millions of individual cases. Sometimes I stand back from myself and get frightened at the awful times there'll be in millions of readjustments."

"Don't worry about it, Ralph. Nobody could be a doctor if he spent all his time worrying about the times he'll prolong a useless life or make a wrong diagnosis. And you've got to realize that not many of the undermen are married. What's the average? One in fifty? Take me. I've got three wards helping around the house, and I honestly don't care how much misery they go through in a few weeks of readjustment. It'll be worth it to them and to us, the way you described it."

The two moved into the street, toward the gyro park. "I hope so," Dr. Carter said. "Of course, I didn't bring up the economic effects in my talk. If my serum puts millions of near-morons into competition with normal people for jobs and scholarships—and suppose the wards refuse to work as servants when they come up to human intelligence?"

"I wouldn't worry about that. Legally they'll be bound to obey their guardians, no matter how smart they get. They'll get free gradually by outliving us. It'll give the world decades to readjust." Dr. Carter opened his mouth, then shut it without saying anything and nodded toward his gyro.

John was startled when Lisa smiled timidly as the men

climbed in. Undermen were normally afraid of strangers. He stroked her short black hair and his surprise grew when she frowned and recoiled from him.

"You'd better not pet her," Dr. Carter said. "Lisa feels inferior when you do." He frowned and added swiftly: "Prenez garde. Elle nous comprend." John waited until the gyro was lifting and the roar masked his words, because he couldn't remember enough French to use this concealment. Bluntly he whispered: "My God, Ralph, you haven't experimented on your own wife?" The big man nodded but said nothing until Lisa's attention was riveted on the gyro flight control system in the sky ahead. Then he said cautiously: "See how she's watching for the proceed signals? A month ago she couldn't have made heads nor tails out of them. I know it sounds callous to inject an uncertain substance into the person you love more than anyone in the world. But that's the very reason I chose Lisa for the test. I want her to be the very first underman to get the intellectual gifts that they've been missing all these years." Lisa suddenly turned to him and pointed. Dr. Carter shoved forward the control stick. Lisa's eyes were on his every movement.

"Well, it's strange," John said, fighting for an inspiration that would permit him to retain the subject but change its course. "All these years we've blamed some kind of mysterious stress set up by civilization on the coming of the undermen. And you prove in just a few months of research that it's coming from solar radiation characteristics. Tell me something. You didn't come right out and say it, but weren't you hinting that eventually almost all babies would be undermen without your serum?"

"Absolutely. I didn't say that bluntly, just in case something turns up to prevent the serum from going into general use. But you can see what the world faces without it. There was a time when we had homes for the feebleminded. Then when nearly half of all the babies turned out to be so subnormal in intelligence, we set up a new category for them, undermen, and absorbed them into society as slaves."

John winced and looked at Lisa. She nodded as if she understood the meaning of her guardian's words. Dr. Carter put an arm around her and drew her to him protectingly. "I'm not afraid to use the word, now that we're changing the situation. It was the only thing to do. Normal men couldn't have supported that many idle undermen. We had to put them to work at simple tasks they could do. We called them wards but they're slaves, even when they're also wives or husbands."

Lisa closed her eyes, happily. Even more softly, Dr. Carter said: "She can talk now, you know. When we get home, she'll prove it. Now she's worn out, from concentrating on how I pilot this thing." He looked up at John. "What's the matter? You look so solemn."

John stared silently at the wrinkles that had appeared in Lisa's relaxed face and the unusual folds of skin in her throat. "How old she she?" "Forty," Dr. Carter answered. There was another silence, then: "Ralph, are you sure this serum is safe? I've never seen your wife before. But she looks like a human forty, not a underman forty."

With infinite caution, Dr. Carter disengaged his arm and eased the dozing Lisa back against the cushion. He looked straight at John and said: "There's a law of compensation. It

bobs up everywhere. Radiation took away intelligence from the undermen and gave them a normal life span of a couple of hundred years. My serum gives them ~~most of the~~ intelligence they were cheated out of. Of course I can't be sure, but everything indicates that they'll age at a human rate after they get the serum. Maybe some day I'll isolate the factor that provided increased longevity and everyone can benefit. But for now—" His hands waved meaninglessly and he suddenly looked old himself. The gyro wallowed gently, with no hands on the controls. Lisa twisted into a more comfortable position and muttered something inaudible without rousing completely. John stared straight at the older man.

"You mean that you've deprived your wife of a century's life, just to raise her IQ?"

"I don't like your way of putting it. I had to make a choice, for Lisa and for the whole race of undermen. A normal lifespan with full capacity to enjoy life, or nearly an animal existence for two or three times as many years. The undermen don't have the intelligence to make their own judgment. We humans have the right and duty to decide for them. I think most of us will make the same decision that I did. Besides," he added lamely, "it might not be so. The apparent aging may simply be a byproduct of the injections." His last word seemed to waken Lisa. She blinked, peered over the side, and clutched Dr. Carter's arm. "Let me," she said. John started. Her voice had none of the typical underman slur. Gently, Dr. Carter thrust back her eager hands. "She's getting a little ahead of herself. She keeps pestering me to let her land the gyro. See how she spotted our house down there? Now, you're my guest and let's enjoy ourselves and forget serious matters."

John barely looked at the unexpected luxury of the house. His eyes were glued to Lisa, who completed without error the complex finger motions that unlocked the door, then scampered into the kitchen and dialed methodically but accurately the evening meal. Then she walked straight up to John as if she were a full human and said confidently: "I'll show you to your room." John glanced at Dr. Carter, who nodded in delight, and followed her upstairs.

"We've both changed, Lisa," John told her, as they were alone for the moment. "An hour ago I was trying to reassure your husband. Now he's trying to reassure me. No, don't try to understand me. I'm talking about things that are still out of your range."

"I'm not so dumb," she said defiantly. "Then prove it. Ask him to stop sticking you with that needle for a while." Lisa's face made him regret his words instantly. But she was gone before he could try to explain. John sat on the bed thinking for a few minutes. He had just begun to unpack when he heard the gyro. He frowned, wondering why his host should be leaving before the meal, walked into the hall, and almost collided with Dr. Carter.

"Where's Lisa? In there?" The big man thrust past to look before John could answer, then grabbed John's shoulder convulsively and shouted into his face: "What did you say to her? Did you challenge her in any way? She loves to show off, and—"

The gyro roar began to mount. It ended in a thud. The windows rattled slightly. Dr. Carter was racing for the stairs. John looked through the hall window and saw that haste was useless.

One Man's Environment

About a year ago, I decided to spring a big surprise on FAPA. It would consist of a tremendous essay on Hagerstown, dumped into the bundle without preliminary warning and eclipsing by its 200-page bulk anything in ayjay history, quantitatively. Then I had mimeographing troubles, my father died, I broke a hip, and got into fan history research. This kayoed the project for an indefinite time. In fact, I thought about it so much during the past year that I lost all confidence in the likelihood that it would please FAPA members enough to justify all the work. But I hate to waste the first draft for some portions of this magnum opus and my mental preparation for the rest. Besides, I'm curious to determine whether I have the ability to make interesting a non-fiction and factual description of a city that means nothing to any of my readers. So I intend to inflict upon you some of the material that was intended as the first portion of this formidable publication. I long ago gave up efforts to decide in advance how FAPA members will react to anything I write, so I don't know if you'll ever see any more of this in Horizons or elsewhere. The response will help to decide. So will my skill at walking on icy sidewalks this coming winter.

I had intended to start out with a parallel between the beginnings of Hagerstown and the first issues of many fanzines. They have much in common, including stupidities and ambitions and drastic transformations as the years pass. Like certain famous fanzines of the past, Hagerstown even has a misspelled name.

Jonathan Heger was, to begin with, a draft dodger. He must have been one of these wild teenagers who distrust authority and don't want to waste several years peeling potatoes and learning how to take care of a gun in the armed forces. But he got out of the draft in a way that isn't very practical today. He left his home in the German Palatinate and put himself into indenture for a free trip across the ocean. As soon as he landed in North America, he hotfooted it away from the civilized part of the country and went far out west, a hundred miles beyond the shoreline. In what is now the western part of Maryland, he was beyond the frontier, safe from anyone who might know about his legal obligations to both a civilian and an army.

We who live in Hagerstown must be careful not to think too much about Jonathan Heger. He constantly threatens to expand into epic proportions, a combination of Paul Bunyan and Davy Crockett. So much is known about certain aspects of his life that it's easy for the imagination to cut free from its traces and run wild over the unknown areas of his history. He certainly showed no particular talents for a while. He looked around until he found the swamiest spot in this general area, built himself a house smack in the middle of it, and began to trap the small fur-bearing animals that were plentiful in the middle of the 18th century. Nothing remains today in the woodlands and thickets but possums, rabbits and skunks. But there must have been a profusion of beavers, otters, wolves, and other fauna. And here is where the imagination must be allowed slack reins, because something that we know nothing about must have happened to Heger. For a while he is a sneak and a fugitive, and then with magical suddenness he is almost a renaissance-quality man, talented in a dozen fields, respected all over the colony and founder of the town. Solitude has

done good things to many persons, and Heger couldn't have had many white men to talk to out in this wilderness. Whatever the cause, he became a member of the Maryland Legislature, a friend of practically every general in the Revolution, he made rifles that bring fabulous prices from collectors today, he became rich, and even turned into a big shot in the Reformed Church. Somewhere, he also found the time to lay out a town. Fortunately, he chose higher and dryer ground for this purpose. This occurred in 1762, and he named the new city Elizabethtown in honor of his wife, the local historians assert. I strongly suspect the real reason was the fear that if he named it for himself, it might cause a visitor from the East to come calling about that indenture that Heger had skipped. Elizabethtown was a long word for painting on signs and printing in stagecoach schedules, so after a few decades, its residents decided to change the name to honor the family. By then, English-speaking people had moved into this area. Either through ignorance or an attempt to anglicize the German name, the city became Hagerstown. In primitive 1984 tradition, even the historians have succumbed and have adopted Hager as the spelling for the founder's name.

The only thing that keeps Jonathan down to human proportions for me is the accidental survival of his waistcoat. The local museum cherishes a few mementoes of the founder: a Bible, some silverware, and this waistcoat, which legend says that he wore on his last day. The waistcoat is very small and very wide, and would fit only a miniature, plump German of Katzenjammer Kids dimensions. I look at it every so often to rid myself of any false hero-worship about Jonathan Heger. It isn't the sort of waistcoat that you'd expect to find on a man who lived in a swamp so he'd be nearer a source of furs. It's made of a shiny, yellowed stuff with fancy embroidery on the edges, a garment you'd expect to see on an 18th century Frenchman, not a German. There are several small spots of brownish discoloration, that are supposed to be dried blood, although they could just as easily be ketchup stains. Heger died accidentally, but there are two versions of his death: at his lumber mill where he was supervising the preparation of building materials for a new church, or at the site of the church itself while helping with its erection. The waistcoat is again helpful, because it is quite impossible to feel emotionally lifted by the sad end of the founder, if he was wearing that kind of a dandified waistcoat while assisting in manual labor. If the spirit of the founder has lived on in the present inhabitants of Hagerstown, I think I can reconstruct what happened. Heger waddled up to the hill on which Zion Reformed Church was building, stared at each workman to make sure he was not jaking it, then inspected the piles of lumber, decided that it was an unnecessary expense to have boards lying along this part of the sidewall, pulled out one of them to try to save a little money, and was crushed when half the wall came down kerplunk atop him.

Until Peyton Place was published, with its castle-building Negro, I had dreams of writing a novel about a disguised Hagerstown in which the founder would prove to be a Negro, to the horror of all the prominent citizens who claimed direct descent. I don't think that this was really so, but there are odd things about Heger. He left no writings of any kind, aside from a few legal documents, in a period when almost every pioneer wrote let-

ters and kept journals from a sense of destiny in a new world. His signature is quite shaky, and it is conceivable that he was barely literate, of course. Stranger still, no portrait of him has ever been found. Artists stayed alive by painting prominent citizens back in the last part of the 18th century, and anyone who had two or three dollars in the bank in those years became the subject of at least a few portraits. Strangest of all, he did not sire the enormous clan of descendents that was traditional for German settlers of the period. The Hegers had only two children and the line of direct descent died out completely in the next generation. I'm also amazed at the absence of legends about Captain Heger (he fought in the French and Indian War) and his adventures with the Injuns. We know that they were around because his house has loopholes in the basement through which he could shoot them down. Presumably they helped him with the trapping. But there isn't even a half-hearted legend about fights or peace pacts with the redskins.

The start of things often determines their future course. The misspelling of Hagerstown has been mirrored repeatedly in recent years. The local American Legion post's name is misspelled, for instance. It was named for Maurice Frock, the first Hagerstown soldier to die in World War One, and his mother was too timid to point out at the time that the founding Legionnaires were wrong when they put Morris on the charter. Every new reporter who comes to work for the Herald-Mail Company faithfully maintains and even expands the tradition of poor spelling ability. In similar fashion, the mysteries about Jonathan Heger spawned a major mystery about Hagerstown: why anyone ever decided to live in it. It would be hard to find a less promising location for a city east of the Mississippi. There was the swamp, such an unpleasant place that even today, after it has been pretty well drained dry, there is not a dwelling house within one-half mile of Heger's original home. There was no major source of water. The nearest river is six miles away, there is no creek within two miles, and the only stream that goes through Hagerstown is the puny Marsh Run which after several centuries or more of activity has still not dug for itself a set of banks more than a foot in depth. There was one big spring in the town, hardly a sufficient source of water after the first few hundred residents arrived. It is true that Hagerstown was on an old Indian trail that became the National Pike in stagecoach days and Route 40 when the motorcar arrived. But the north-south road that is now Route 11 came after the founding of Hagerstown and couldn't have been an incentive for the city to grow. It is true that Hagerstown is blessed with a freedom from tornadoes and fairly mild winters, thanks to its valley location between two mountains, but this virtue could hardly have become apparent for several decades. The soil in the area is fertile but plagued with an abundance of limestone on or just under the surface. The mountainsides are too steep for cultivation. It is too far north for tobacco, a major crop of the southern part of Maryland, to grow properly. Getting supplies into this area from the seaboard was nearly impossible in those days, with two mountains between here and there, no roads, and a river that was useless for this purpose because of the Potomac's Great Falls a few miles upstream from Washington. Within a dozen miles of Hagerstown, there are a number of spots that possessed every advantage for a new city, yet the towns that were founded on

those favored spots have languished and failed to grow, while Hagerstown has bloated immoderately. True to form, a different aspect of the same situation prevails today: the city's big industry has fallen upon evil days, there is an enormous unemployment problem, nothing but the prospect of starvation holds thousands of families in the city, and yet they remain as if glued solidly in their places.

Heger built two houses: a flimsy one when he was new to the section and poor, a larger and solid one when he had begun to gain some wealth and fame. The latter still stands. A dozen years ago, history enthusiasts arranged for its acquisition by the city and did a considerable amount of renovating. This was a slow process and complicated for a time by the constant disappearance of the roofing materials that had been specially manufactured for authenticity. Finally police discovered the leak: shacks in the surrounding hobo jungles were being made waterproof with genuine Williamsburg tile. The goal of opening the founder's home to tourists by the bicentennial of the city's founding may not be accomplished, because nobody has figured out where to put the caretaker. He wouldn't be comfortable in the rooms with 18th century furnishings and it would spoil the effect to build him a house of his own within sight of the old one. But a fortunate side effect of all these efforts has been the gradual conquering of the wilderness that had surrounded the old house. Persons who come to Hagerstown only once every five years or so can note as a symbol of the progress of civilization that the jungle recedes at the rate of about 50 feet every five years.

Heaven only knows what Heger expected Elizabethtown to be like in the future. But he founded it in a completely unimaginative, conservative way that demonstrated no particular confidence in much growth. He arranged for two wide main streets at right angles, one of which followed the course of the Indian trail. The original plat provided a few other streets parallel to each of the main ones, much narrower, and rigidly straight with no nonsense about curves or varying lengths for blocks. This plan led to complications when the town outgrew the original design. That trickling Marsh Run proved to be an intolerable nuisance, not large enough to deserve bridges but wet enough to cause streets in the southern part of town to be designed to avoid it. Just southwest of the center of town and on the edge of the original plat is a minor precipice; when the town expanded beyond it, one block remained closed to traffic because of the geography until 1933, only three blocks from the town square, and it was necessary to build a dry bridge to repair the distressing fact that another intersection two blocks away put one street 30 feet above the one it intersected. There is no really level ground in the area where Heger put downtown Hagerstown and drainage must have been a dreadful headache before streets were paved and the present system of only slightly inadequate storm drains was installed. During about eight months of the year, the rising and setting sun glares directly into the eyes of drivers of stagecoaches or automobiles on all the east-west streets, a bother that could have been eliminated by twisting the grid of streets slightly in any direction. Heger put the town square at the top of one hill and base of another. Even when the town was brand new, the block's walk from the east to

the square must have caused many an overweight housewife to buy in the future at the neighborhood grocery instead of the downtown store.

The practical sense demonstrated in other phases of the town's creation appears in the naming of its oldest streets. That main east-west thoroughfare became Washington Street, presumably because you could eventually get to Washington by going far enough east in that direction. Paralleling streets on either side became Franklin Street, probably in order to emphasize that to the west was an intersection which if taken carried the traveler into Franklin County, Penna., and Antietam Street, which went, sure enough, to the Antietam Creek, or at least made a start in that direction before petering off into wilderness. The north-south street going into the square became Potomac Street, in honor of the river, although by following it today you must travel nearly 20 miles to reach that body of water, and you can get there within six miles in a different direction. Other streets in this same direction came to be named Jonathan Street (more evidence that Heger thought his first name was safer than his family name) and Locust Street. Sooner or later, he was bound to run out of geographical destinations, you see. A stranger trapped in Hagerstown might be able to get out a little faster if he knows that Pennsylvania Avenue does go to Pennsylvania. On the other hand, Virginia Avenue has been betrayed by time and politics: it now goes to West Virginia, because that part of Virginia split off and set itself up as a state of its own a century ago. The symmetry of the street design didn't last long, once the town began to expand. I have mentioned the cause of the mess in the southern part of town, where I live. To the northward, all went well until former farmland was converted into new residential blocks and a rich, influential woman couldn't bear to see a couple of large trees cut down. The streets were adjusted to save the trees by means of several Y intersections. The trees dropped dead a few years later. The railroads bisect the town west of the business section, causing some blocks to be very long and others to last only a few score of feet. I have not yet determined what caused the intersecting sidestreets to go awry on West Washington Street: they do not enter the intersection at the same point at which they leave it. The results on traffic control signals are catastrophic.

Almost a half-century ago, Hagerstown leaders finally decided that something must be done about the noxious vapors from the swamp where Heger had built his home. A few huddles produced a plan to drain off some of the water and form a lake with the rest of it, turning most of this uninhabitable tract of land into a municipal park. At that time, even small expenditures by the city required a referendum for enactment. Hagerstown voters a generation earlier had turned down a proposal for free public schools, and the sons and daughters of those taxpayers followed suit by rejecting the park plan. It would have cost, as I remember, some \$17,000 for completion. As a result, it was necessary to do some pretty shady and undemocratic political finagling to scrape together money intended for other purposes. The park was built and everyone in Hagerstown agreed that it should have been done long ago. Everyone in Hagerstown is firmly convinced that it is the second most beautiful natural park in the nation, although people are hazy about such minor details as where the most beautiful nat-

ural park is located, what standards are used to determine the champions, and who spends his time going around making these decisions. If Heger could come back to his old home, he would see from his front door a quite imposing park, covering an area of six or eight normal city blocks.

Unfortunately, people have a bad habit of refusing to let well enough alone. Charlie Chaplin and Charles Lindberg were ruined when they decided that they were Significant, and the park, the one attractive thing in Hagerstown, is gradually losing its good qualities because people try to improve it. It originally contained little but the lake that covers perhaps one-fifth of its total area, a few large lawns, walks through the non-grassy portion, and a few sketchy buildings. Then the people in charge began to think that this couldn't possibly be as good as it should be, because it hadn't been planned with committees and conferences and such things. I can remember the little rotunda that was still used by the town band for Sunday concerts when I was a small boy. It was circular, with a log roof and no real walls, just enough logs to hold up the roof, and it fitted superbly into the semi-wild environment. Then someone started a drive for funds to build an appropriate bandshell and a few years later, the present monstrosity went up. It looks almost exactly like one of those bridges that are built when one dual highway must pass above another, split down the middle and painted a bilious yellow. Its rectangular form and rear wall requires benches to be placed symmetrically in front of it, in place of the pleasant confusion of the seating scattered around the old circular bandstand. Next, park caretakers realized that not all of the new swans and ducks were growing up. They blamed it on rats and carefully fenced off certain portions of the lake for breeding purposes. I'm sure that this causes more trouble to the human eye than to the rodents. When kid baseball became a commercial, organized proposition after World War Two, the semi-civilized baseball field at the park's western end was manicured and brushed to disgusting perfection. Each year, a few more swings or seesaws go into place, chopping up another section of greenery. The Western Maryland Railway began to give away steam locomotives upon its conversion to diesels a few years ago. Hagerstown accepted the offer of one as a gift and put it in the park. It is not too conspicuous, screened by some trees, but new approach paths were laid and a very ugly fence was built around it that even the trees can't masquerade.

Then came the museum. A Hagerstown girl named Anna Brugh had married an eternity ago an heir to the Singer Sewing Machines fortune. This heir, William Singer, thought he was a great painter and became a partially black sheep of the family. He tried to live as a bohemian in Paris for a year or two, but he didn't feel right there so he moved to Norway. The family supported him and he turned out enormous quantities of paintings that look as if they were done by the son of a sewing machine manufacturer. When both Singers were quite old, they decided to present Hagerstown with a museum. The suggestion was received enthusiastically in this city until further information trickled out of Norway: this would not be a building to house stuffed dinosaurs and the skulls of dead Indians, but a museum of the fine arts. Nobody in Hagerstown had ever looked

at an oil painting or a piece of sculpture up to this time. But the more adventuresome souls decided that they would like a museum of this kind, anyway, as long as it didn't cost anything. To avoid paying municipal money for some place to put the thing, the park was chosen as its home. It is not exactly an architectural eyesore, but a brick building at a prominent point above the lake does not harmonize with the natural surroundings, and after it was built another hunk of parkland was sacrificed to a parking lot, then the garden club ladies planted all around the area vast quantities of unspeakably vile hedge and shrubs, and some unknown culprit implanted a totem pole in this same area. To complete the crime, just last year someone tried to break into the place, and to avoid a repetition the entire building is now spotlighted all night long. The ducks look bleary-eyed all the time, as if they hadn't gotten good nights of sleep.

I don't trust myself to write about the green fountain inside another wire fence that has been placed near the main entrance. All that I can do is express the hope that you'll come soon if you want to see any survivals of what was once a very pleasant place to stroll or to picnic or to sit idly on the turf.

Just to the north of Heger's house, in the other direction from the park, the land begins to slope upward. This formed the nearest healthy land, and on it were built Hagerstown's first good houses. It became known as Quality Hill. There was a city ordinance regarding Prospect Street, which runs atop the hill: no house on the east side of this street could be more than two stories in height, in order not to spoil the view from the top stories of the houses on the other side, that looked down on the center of Hagerstown, the rest of the valley beyond, and South Mountain in the distance. Quality Hill continued to be the area to which the moneyed class adhered until around the end of the 19th century. Industries and large chain stores began to produce in Hagerstown a nouveau riche class who chose the expanding northern part of town for conspicuous consumption purposes. The last big houses were built there around 1930, and they are gargantuan. One has been converted into a college; most of the rest are chopped up into eight or ten apartments apiece. Since then, the proper residential district has gone still further north, to a new development that began as soon after the depression as anyone possessed enough money again to build a house. Already this area seems doomed to the same Outism that has afflicted its predecessors, and some important people are simply purchasing old farmhouse and renovating them, in the absence of a new fashionable residential section.

I've never lived in any other town long enough to know if it's customary for a town to have names for all its hills. Hagerstown does. In addition to Quality Hill, almost any rise in the ground has its nickname. The next hill to the westward is Academy Hill, a survival of the days when the Hagerstown Academy stood there, before public schools went above the eighth grade. Porterfield Hill is the first high ground to the south of town, on Route 11. It was named for a family that owned a gigantic farm in that area. Honey Hill is a name of uncertain derivation but fighting connotations, because it contains the poor white trash of the city. Visitors from mountainous states are often puzzled by all this attention to gentle slopes in the lay of the land. They think that hill should be reserved for the objects

in this vicinity which we enthusiastically call mountains. There is no denying the fact that nomenclature is quite bad on these mountains. They are named inaccurately, like South Mountain, which is south of nothing except perhaps Vermont and is certainly to the north of North Mountain, or there is equivocation, as in the unfortunate case of Sideling Hill Mountain, on which someone obviously tried to be all things to all men. The situation is much better for other geographical components of the area surrounding Hagerstown. There is really and truly a Polecat Hollow about 25 miles west of town. It can be entered by only one road and it got into the news a few years ago when a resident became pregnant. She lived in a house accessible only by a precarious, swaying bridge. Her physician warned her in advance that he refused to try to drive his auto over it, there might not be time for him to walk back there, and the woman insisted on having her baby at home. I forget how the thing came out. We have a Hog Maw Road whose name has been officially changed to something bourgeois by its residents, but fortunately the Washington County Roads Department never has a budget large enough to permit altering names on its signs. Within five miles of one another, there are Paradise Church and Hades Church. The latter should have an apostrophe, because it is named for a man and not a place even worse than Hagerstown. But the apostrophe has disappeared from Harpers Ferry and there is no reason why we shouldn't try to speed up this process in the case of the church.

In any event, Hagerstown lies halfway across the valley formed by South Mountain and Fairview Mountain. As you drive across Maryland to the west, the first mountain you encounter is Braddock Mountain, then comes South Mountain, and after that Fairview. Fairview Mountain once formed the Atlantic shoreline and even today it is quite possible to pick up shells and small bones and similar relics that are usually left by picnickers but occasionally turn out to be genuine fossils. After Fairview, the mountains come thick and fast, five of them rearing up in the 35 miles to Cumberland, and still further westward you get not only mountains but a high plateau between them that produces a radically different climate from that in the Hagerstown area. There is the old chestnut about Washington's weather: if you don't like it, wait a minute. In Maryland, it might go like this: if you don't like the weather, go for a walk. The southeasternmost part of the state is pretty close to Dixieland in weather conditions, with only a couple of real snowstorms in the average winter, fine growing conditions for fruit and tobacco, and little industry either on the surface of the earth or in the bodies on the inhabitants. In the westernmost part of the state, sometimes known as Little Switzerland, you risk a night's sleep without a blanket only a half-dozen times a year, there are skiing clubs active all during the winter, and it starts to snow in September, rarely stopping until May. Maryland looks infinitesimal on any map of the nation but there is quite a distance between these two extremes. In fact, the person who stands in the westernmost part of Maryland is closer to Canada than he is to the southeastern end of the state, in actual mileage.

Hagerstown is right smack in the middle, geographically and in some senses spiritually. If there is any explanation for the growth of the town, it might be that the adventurous spirits managed to get over two mountains as they pushed westward, then lost

heart when they realized that when you've seen a couple of mountains, you've seen them all, and didn't feel like hiking across the interminable number of additional mountains that lay further to the west. Germans and Englishmen did almost all of the settling of the town and surroundings for the first century or longer. In fact, the local newspapers as recently as 1900 and the reabooks did not run the names of members of other races who got hurt or otherwise entered the public eye. A typical story would begin: "An Italian employed at the Security plant lost an arm yesterday when...." In all fairness to the tolerance of the local press, I must emphasize that even Italians got their names in the paper when they were locked up for drunkenness or died. I like to think that the conservative German influence and the slightly more adventuresome English spirit have held joint sway over the thinking and doing in Hagerstown down to this very day, for the town is a strange mixture of bullheaded refusal to change and sudden bursts of enthusiasm for things that haven't been tested anywhere. Thus, the local school system got enthusiastic support when it decided to install educational television five years ago in the largest experiment of its kind in the nation, yet the junior college is the constant victim of abuse and scorn from people who can't understand why anyone should need more than a dozen years of education unless he has enough money to go to Yale. German as a spoken language must have been more frequently used than English until well into the 19th century in Hagerstown. It wasn't until the end of that century that the local almanac ceased publishing a German edition along with its English edition. One church continued to conduct services in German until World War One hysteria stopped it. Today, you can find Pennsylvania Dutch influences in the talk of Hagerstonians who don't know a word of German. "Where are you at?" someone will ask. Or: "The coffee is all," or "Come here once."

So conservative and liberal influences can be spotted instantly by a walk through downtown Hagerstown. In one block of Jonathan Street, the stores are impervious to the passage of time. B. Eller, the shoe repair man, Al's Loan Shop, and Dean's Barber Shop have not changed perceptibly since I became old enough to retain memory of what I saw, 35 years ago. They have the same dingy display windows, the small, grayish men whom I first saw in them remain on the job today, and I don't think that they've acquired any new stock or tools of the trade since the day Jonathan Heger met his violent end. And yet a block away, Hagerstown is almost unrecognizable, if today's town is compared with that which I knew during World War Two. The huge Heyser building that sprawled all over one side of the town square is gone and a sleek, one-story drugstore stands in its place. One bank has a sign that flashes in large letters first the temperature, then the time; only a few years ago, I never dreamed that these conveniences would emigrate from the largest cities.

As you might suspect from all this, Hagerstown is an architectural nightmare. The town doesn't have a building that I consider attractive in the sense that the eye likes to linger over it. Certain parts of some buildings are nice to glance at for quaintness or for unexpected evidence of rococo influences. I think that my favorite part of town, in the visual sense, is

a section of Washington Street about one-half mile west of the center of town. There are a couple of blocks of brick houses, all apparently constructed about the same time, possibly in the 1890's. They are small and look topheavy but they have a fascinating wealth of ornament around the gables and unexpected delights in the cornices, sometimes a tiny stained glass window in the most unexpected place, each differing radically from the others in minor detail although all look as if they might have been designed by the same man. But the more important buildings are not such happy accidents. When Carl Sandburg came to Hagerstown for a lecture some years back, I had the job of escorting him from the bus station to the sponsoring group. I noticed him staring at something as we walked along, and I guessed what was wrong. "It's the ugliest building in the world, isn't it?" I asked him. "Yes," he said sadly. He never did recover his good spirits, even during his lecture. It was the Washington County Court House that we were talking about, an awful combination of such influences as The Tombs, a Gothic castle, and a cheesebox. There was absolutely no excuse for it, not even ignorance, because on this very spot once stood a building that was a beautiful thing, judging from surviving sketches and the reputation of its architect, Benjamin Latrobe, who was architect for some of Washington's better buildings. But that court house burned down in the 1870's and with unerring instinct for the ghastly, this one was erected, rather than a duplicate of the old one. No architect has ever dared to assume responsibility for it. For many years, I didn't mind it too much, because it wasn't very noticeable when one walked past at night. Then the city put in mercury vapor lights at that corner and the county painted the court house white, and now the thing rushes against your eyeballs like the ghost of every misbegotten piece of cheap design that the building trade has ever known, day or night.

Most of the major buildings in Hagerstown from the first four decades of this century were designed by a man with the superbly appropriate-sounding name of A. J. Klinkhart. I never knew this gentleman personally, but his working procedure can be deduced by a look at the office structures and schools that he created. First, make sure that your client has a site so badly cramped by solid surrounding structures that there will be no opportunity for expansion in the future and as little light and air as possible from at least two directions. Put most of your windows in these directions. Make sure that the building is as squat as the human eye can bear, then attach to each corner and at several other random places along the sides some fake Grecian columns of no particular order. Attach several balconies to which there is no access from inside the building. At the top, there must be an overhanging entablature that will permit ample room for starlings and pigeons to roost undisturbed; care must be taken that the birds' dirt shall fall on the sidewalk below. The stairways must be steep, narrow, and constructed of a special material that soaks up any quantity of light that may be used in an effort to illuminate them. If the structure is to be a school, enough landscaping must be done before the start of construction to insure steep banks at least 15 feet tall down which youngsters can fall and suffer broken arms as a penalty for enjoying themselves on the playground or for running on the walks.

Yet when I try to decide whether I want to leave Hagerstown and make my home in some other city or some other land, I realize that I would miss these clumsy agglomerations of brick and stone, not for their appearance but for the associations connected with them. Franklin Street is probably the most wretched for dinginess and unimaginative structures in Hagerstown. But I can stand anywhere along the street and sense myself in the midst of personal history. This grubby little electric appliance store is in a slightly remodeled building where my Great Aunt Berry lived many years ago. She was the only relative who gave me unlimited time for pounding on the piano during visits and once when she went on a trip my parents and I spent two or three days there, to safeguard the worthless survivals from the last century that were her prized furnishings. Just up the street is a row of cramped little offices owned by the second worst real estate man in town. But above one of them lived friends of my mother, the Rileys, a unique couple. He was blind and she was deaf, both were too educated for their own good in Hagerstown, and Mrs. Riley worked until her last months on an autobiography. I know nothing of its contents except the title of which she was so proud: "Knocking Elbows with My Life". She never lost her certainty that it would be a best-seller, as soon as she completed it, even when she was on relief and became a widow, tottering around town with an inevitable velvet ribbon around her throat, on mysterious errands which she never seemed to finish. In another apartment in the same row lives my old music teacher, Grace Washburn Tewalt, an eccentric coloratura soprano beyond all comparison. She still possessed most of her once imposing vocal powers while I studied piano with her, had sung in Beethoven's Ninth under Stokowski as a chorus member, knew every note of a dozen big operatic roles, and had never been able to do anything with her talent because of her outlandish notions of dress and deportment. On the other side of the street is the city hall, a WPA project that contains an odd blunder. Until the building was practically complete, nobody bothered to look up at the tower where the clock was to go. Then when it was too late the authorities realized that the building hid the clock unless you were at least a block away. The next building to the west is the Myers grocery store. It is the last survivor of the locally owned and operated grocery stores in the downtown section, where chain stores have taken over. In season, signs appear in the windows that must seem like code messages to strangers to this area, but are bearers of glad tidings to natives who rush to buy when they see the proclamation of the arrival of a new supply of a regional delicacy like ponhaus. You buy garden seed there from big bins nearly a century old, not flimsy little packets with colored flowers on the front, and you never believe that Christmas is really coming until one of the Myers windows is turned over to a display of fruit cake ingredients. In another timestream, I might be assistant manager by now. Once when out of work I inserted a classified advertisement in the newspaper announcing my status and was offered a job with a future there, but I took instead a railroad job.

Of course, Hagerstown is like every other medium-sized town in the East, in the transformation it has undergone in its business section from local, independent ownership to predominantly chain store management. Most of this transformation occurred before I was old enough to be aware of it. The same changeover has

afflicted the city's industries, but it has taken longer to accomplish in the factories. Just the other day, Lionel Corporation purchased the Porter Chemical Company, reducing by one the number of Hagerstown family factories, but there are still a half-dozen or more remaining, big and small. The dominance of chains in the retail field caused much wailing and prophesying of doom in this city years ago, but nobody seems to mind the industry transactions, and I think that they are potentially more dangerous to the community. The retail stores will remain in one form or another, since people can't go to Washington or Baltimore for all their shopping. But every time a factory becomes a branch of some large, far-flung corporation, the town becomes in danger of losing it as soon as the corporation enters upon hard times or acquires a new management that feels like centralizing operations. It's a tossup which is worse for a town, growth through the acquisition of new industries, or shrinkage through the loss of old ones. Besides, I miss the type of men who owned and operated their own factories. Not many of them remain, now that outside interests are moving in. They are Babbittish in the extreme, they rumble and erupt in the most alarming fashion when unions finally succeed in putting on enough pressure for raises, and they look down on their employes. But they have the self-confidence that comes from possession, they are not ambitiously pressing for promotion to a higher echelon in another city, and they were caring for decrepit and maimed employes long before pension plans became widespread in industry. The men who are sent to operate the Hagerstown factories of outside corporations are usually afflicted with twitches and indignation, they take out on their workers their own miseries when they are manhandled by the executives in national headquarters, and they never put down roots in the community but live on its surface, knowing that they may blow away at any time. It is impossible to imagine one of them allowing his employes to call him Tubby, the name by which the owner of a local metal working plant is known to everyone, or stopping to talk to a friend while walking down the street. Richard S. Boutelle, general manager of the local airplane plant for Fairchild Corporation, was believed to have set foot in the city of Hagerstown only seven times during the ten years he was assigned here. He spent his time at his home in the country or at the factory just outside the city limits or in the big cities of the Eastern Seaboard.

Unfortunately, Hagerstown's industrial output is mostly junk. The airplane plant sold a lot of aircraft during the war years because it outbid most manufacturers, and made ends meet by maintaining the next to the lowest wage scales of any aircraft manufacturer in the nation. Now it can't even sell cut-rate airplanes and its employment has dropped from 10,000 to fewer than 2,000. Moller Organ Works, largest of the locally owned industries, manufactures sturdy instruments but is one of the big culprits in the awful degeneration of organ sound from bright, crisp voices to a muddy and sleep-inducing assortment of pipes. It should be noted that under the third generation of the Moller clan, this factory has been engaging in a back-to-baroque transition in its voicings. The only quality product manufactured in Hagerstown is Brandt furniture. It is not highest-price stuff, but it is attractive, solidly made, and sells well in big cities to families that can't afford the very best but want furniture that one can bear to look at. As most former kids know, the Porter chemistry sets were in-

ferior to the Gilbert product, and its microscope outfits suffered a staggering blow the pre-Christmas season when Gilbert scored the great shrimp eggs coup. Otherwise, the factories in Hagerstown are mainly devoted to attempts to beat Japan at its own game; one shoe factory makes such a flimsy product that its employes won't accept free the footwear that is rejected as slight irregulars, there are some dress factories that sell to dime stores, a few mills, a couple of manufacturers of small electronic parts, a paperbox factory, and a sandblast machinery manufacturer. Mack Trucks is moving one of its factories from Plainfield, N.J., to Hagerstown, and this caused great jubilation in the city until the wage scale was posted: no job except executive posts will pay more than \$2.90 per hour.

If I had to sum up in a single word Hagerstown's principal characteristics today, I think that the best choice would be stagnation. The conservative and progressive influences just about cancel out one another and the result is neither a sleepy backwoods village nor a modern and thriving city. Two centuries ago, those who were daring enough to obtain land grants in this area went the whole hog and gave them fancy names. Old deeds contain such names as "Near the Navel", "The Third Time of Asking", and "The Widow's Last Shift". Now when someone risks money on a housing development, he names the streets Colonial Drive or Lincoln Avenue. Slightly more than the normal proportion of the city's high school graduates go to college, but the intelligence that they may acquire there is wasted on the community, because almost no college graduates return to Hagerstown to settle down: there isn't much work here that necessitates a college education and many employers look suspiciously on those who possess this learning. The wife of a banker imported to fill a sudden vacancy caused by a death tried for weeks to find work, listing her considerable educational record. After all else failed, she filled out an application form, mentioning only her high school studies, and got the job instantly. The United States Public Health Service has conducted studies here for the past half-century, in part because the city's characteristics are so close to the national averages, partly because so few complete families move into or out of town that it is easy to follow up illnesses down through the generations. The city is becoming isolated in the most alarming way, as far as public transportation is concerned. Stagecoaches and trolley cars have become obsolete, the only passenger train service consists of one train in each direction in the early morning hours, only two daily airline flights stop at the local airport, and the number of inter-city bus runs daily has been halved in the past five years. Most of the remaining bus service will undoubtedly vanish when interstate highways in this section are completed, permitting buses to make fast enough time between major cities to eliminate the rest stop here.

In short, the city is stuck in between: it's not big nor small, neither wealthy nor poverty-stricken, its residents are both kind and mean, the Negro is not segregated but is underprivileged, life here has some of the disadvantages and some of the advantages of both a tiny village and a metropolis, the climate is neither severe nor tropical, it's impossible for an individual to starve to death or grow rich here, and it's quite likely that this condition will remain unchanged until a hydrogen bomb overshoots Washington. It's enough to drive a person to be a fan.