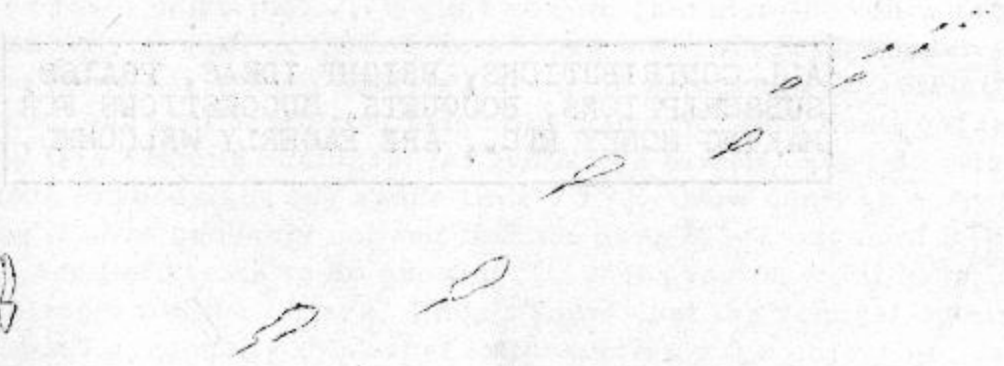
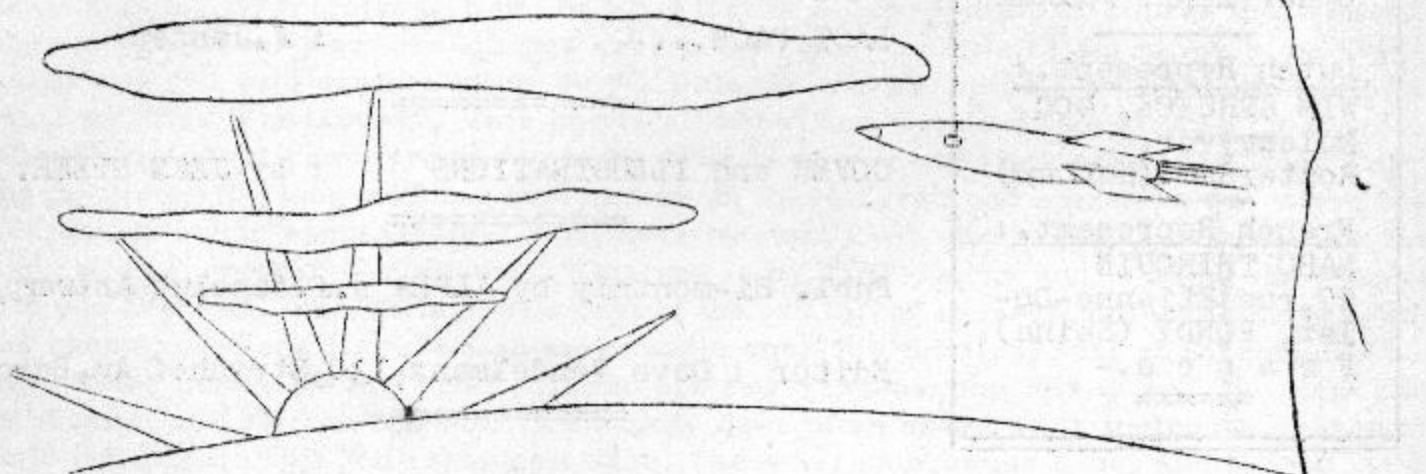


# Alpha



# ALPHA

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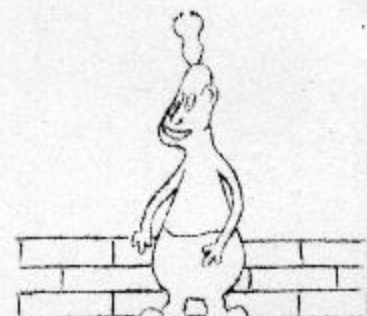
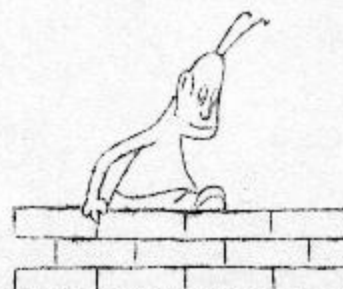
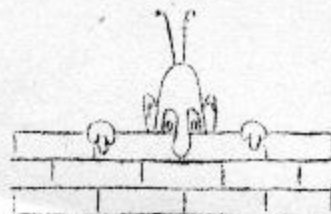
CALLING ALPHAS	:	E. Vendelmans	p.1
IN THE BEGINNING...	:	W. Dale Graham	p.3
THE "BLASTED" WINDOWS	:	T. Van Ingen	p.7
GRUNCH GOES TO THE TWERPCON	:	Ving Clarke	p.9
LIBRARIAN'S CORNER	:	Delplice/Jansen	p.11
AMBROSIA	:	The Readers	p.11
LAST PAGE...	:	J. Jansen	p.21

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ALL CONTRIBUTIONS, FRIGHT IDEAS, PRAISE,  
SUBSCRIPTIONS, ECQUETS, SUGGESTIONS FOR  
MAKING MONEY ETC., ARE EAGERLY WELCOMED.



Introducing..... ? ? ? ? ?

.. the ....

" TWERP " ...

# CALLING AL PHANS . . .



HI !

Well, what do you think about it ? The cover I mean. It's another Jean Steer special. I'm not quite sure what it's supposed to represent, but anyway, I like it. Methinks my roving eye (sit down, Stu Mackenzie) has uncovered, damn this machine, I mean discovered a female form

creeping up on us from the left hand side of the page. I think we came in a bit too soon. I notice that our roving mascot, the "Terrible Twerp" has also managed to coze himself into the picture. He keeps bobbing up in the strangest places. I think he's rather cute don't you ? Another one of Jean Steer's diabolical creations which I've adopted.

As usual, I shall now give you a short introduction to the ish, together with the usual apologies, promises, lies etc. . . First of all, providing of course that you manage to slash your way through this er. . . pistol, er. . . epistle, I am happy to be able to present you with another story by W. Dale GRAHAM, which I hope you will enjoy as much as "The Wanderers". This one is all about how Fandom was started on Earth. . . That should start some arguments! Next we have a devastating article by Teun Van Ingen, giving the long-awaited explanation on these "grab and smash raids" we've been hearing so much about lately. What have we next ? Oh yes ! A Con report. Now don't say "What ? another Con report ! This one is by Ving Clarke and is about the Twerpcon. Did you hear me, Ron Ellik ? The rest of the ish is, of course, self-explanatory, with the exception of one item, which may puzzle you. It's the first part of Librarian's corner, which starts off in French. There are two reasons why this is so. The first one is because our French friends, in France, have often asked us to include a French article (all right, Walt Willis) in our 'zine. The other is because I just didn't have the time to translate it (Jan will probably tell you in his last page(s) that I was too lazy, but

of course you just ignore that. . . When I stop to consider the other things I have to do apart from fanning myself, (I think I've slipped somewhere) I wonder how I manage to do this much. Some day I shall make a list of my numerous eccentricities and publish it in "A", then you will be able to judge for yourself. Now don't get the impression that I don't enjoy this fanning business; far from it; I love it, but I do wish I had a bit more spare time (Anybody got any spare time ???). Now don't go away ! I haven't finished yet ! You'll have probably noticed that we have 8, 1/2 pages of Readers' letters this time. This section seems to be growing. . . if it goes on we'll have to scrap all the rest to make room for the letters. I don't know what the general opinion is in respect to letters, but I personally think that letters are always enjoyable. We should like your opinion too though, so don't be so d. . . . lazy and drop us a line will you ? Won't you ? I have left Jan three Last Pages for this ish. I trust this will be sufficient for him to blow off steam (Regd. Tr. Mk. H. K. R.); if it isn't there's always OMPA !

And NOW, if you still want to read on, in spite of everything, please turn the page and I shall transport you for a few moments into another world. . . the World of JAZZ !!! (If this isn't your line, you'd better skip it, but after all, if Boyd Raeburn and John Magnus can talk about this fascinating Art, I don't see any reason why I shouldn't. . . I

In the April ish of ALPHA (the nutty one) there appeared, amongst other very interesting articles, a column by Eric Bantcliffe, in which this noble gentleman stated that there seemed to be a tendency for s.f. fans to be also Jazz fans. (He also stated that there was a tendency for s.f. fans not to be Jazz fans, but I think we may ignore that for the moment).

Amongst those who are Jazz fans, allow me to mention a few noteworthy personalities: Mal Ashworth, John Brunner, John Magnus, Boyd Raeburn, Archie Mercer, Dave Vendelmen, etc... (well, I did put myself last). Now, for the sake of the "record" and for those who may be interested, I might add that the last-named character, apart from being just a Jazz fan, is also an active participant in this particular branch of the Arts. This "nu" also plays the drums, the tenor sax and the guitar, and sometimes even writes orchestrations for his six-piece combination (not to be confused with "combinations") Now, before continuing, I should like to correct Ah-Chee's impression that I was "probably a Traditional Jazz addict". Well, I'm not, although I love all Jazz! That is, all Jazz that is properly executed of course, and when I say "Executed" I don't mean "put to death". But at heart, I'm a modernist, or if you prefer it a "cool style" enthusiast. I expect this is probably all Greek to most of you, but then, so is Alpha, and you can understand that, can't you?

---

To be, or to Hop ??? That is the question . . . .

---

I expect the majority of Jazz enthusiasts will no doubt condemn my "heathenish tastes" (Yes, I even go nuts over Stan Kenton), but let me hasten to assure you that, before you take such a rash step, modern "cool" Jazz needs listening to very carefully before being condemned without a trial; a very careful trial.

I therefore suggest that you try listening to some of Jerry Mulligan's recordings, such as, for instance "Funny Valentine" or "Cherry" etc... or else try those remarkable pianists: George Shearing, Erroll Garner or Oscar Peterson, and then, if you still want to condemn modern Jazz, go right ahead... there's no hope for you anymore.

---

A clarinet is an ill wind, that nobody blows good

---

I realise of course, that this treatise on my "other love" probably only interests a small minority of the "faans", but still, if I can go so far as to interest a small minority, I shall at least have accomplished something . . .

Notwithstanding my love for "cool" jazz, I went to see "The Glenn Miller Story" the other day and I think it is one of the best films I've seen for a long time. The music was very good, although a bit commercial, but quite entertaining nevertheless, and of course, the acting was superb.

Being a Jazz fan has several advantages of course, for instance: supposing a Convention takes place... Conventions are always taking place; even us twerps hold conventions . . . and supposing also that 30% or even 10% of the faans are at the same time Jazz fans... well, they at least should have something in common to talk about.... Oh well, of course... if there are women.....

To finish off the page, I should like to tell you that this er... editorial is being written on another type of type; an all-electric affair. Very nice and all that, but you have to be so careful; the spacing is all different; the words are much closer together (Ving, this is one of those machines that would allow me to get a review of both Hyphen and Eye in practically the same space), in fact it's ~~the hell~~ it's most confusing. Also, it's not at all certain it comes out well on the duplicator. Still, one can only hope for the best....

Ha, I managed to get to the bottom of the page after all. I had to include these two last paragraphs on the spur of the moment as I had written my original editorial 2 cut on my old machine, and that left me with half a blank page on this one. 'Bye now!

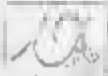
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# IN THE BEGINNING . . . .

by

W. Dale GRAHAM

\*\*\*\*\*

 A space-ship hung glinting in the void like a hawk waiting to pounce upon its prey, ready to plunge downwards to the blue-green planet spinning serenely below. The ship was great, constructed in immense sweeping lines and on its prow the glitter of the star insignia rivalled the very constellations themselves. Within its metal walls, in the quiet, orderly, efficient atmosphere characteristic of a highly intelligent race, an important decision was being made.

"You believe this the most suitable planet for the experiment?" the Controller inquired of the various officers grouped around him in the conference room.

"If I may speak for the scientists Sir" said one, detaching himself from the rest; "We are agreed that the conditions on this planet below us are excellent and we recommend that the creatures be left here."

The Controller ruffled his wings in thought. "Very well Thorg, we shall use this planet," he decided.

Nuclear power flowed to the propulsion chamber and the ship plummeted downwards, the scream of its passage rising from a sibilant whisper to a shrieking crescendo of noise as the atmosphere outside became progressively denser, until at last the surface of the planet was reached and the ship settled its keel into the soft verdant turf. Its resting place was a green meadow beside which a merry stream gurgled happily, birds whistled in the clear blue sky and ripe fruit hung heavily from the branches of the trees.

"It is indeed an excellent planet," commented Thorg to his companion the biologist as they looked in admiration through a viewport.

"There are few like it in the galaxy, my friend, but of course we chose the best possible location in the whole planet to give our creatures a good impression of their new environment."

"In a way, I envy them," replied Thorg. "They have no worries or cares, no efficiency to maintain, no memories, no hereditary duties, no..."

"Come, my dear fellow, you are becoming morbid. You surely do not mean that you would rather be a synthetic, deformed automaton than a member of the star race? Besides, these creatures are not as mindless as you suggest. They have memories and they are capable of care and worry and they will have much to worry about when they begin their new existence on this perimeter planet. Our encephalologists were careful to implant in their brains a complete set of mental impressions and emotions as decreed by the designer. Their emotional pattern, in fact, closely resembles our own except that their instincts to kill and possess are purposely made much stronger than in us. They will even remember us as their great, mysterious benefactors and they will remember this ship, if only in a hazy, vague sort of way."

Thorg smiled wryly. "I know, I know; you need not wax so eloquent. It was merely a passing whim and I suppose you are right."

The biologist laughed. "I am glad you see it my way, but come now, let us see how our creatures are faring this momentous morning."

They made their way to the special compartment which housed

the experimental creatures whom they found in good spirits and gazing in wonder through their viewport at the idyllic scene outside. So great was the perfection of the biological sciences among the star race that, had Thorg and his companion not known it, they would never have been able to detect the unnatural origin of the creatures except for one important thing, one vital difference which distinguished them at once: THEY HAD NO WINGS.

They had heads, arms, bodies and legs just like the star race, but their backs were plain and showed not the slightest vestigial trace of pterocornal organs.

The two members of the star race watched, with mutual interest, their synthotic counterparts, who were as yet unaware of their presence.

"You know" said Thorg, "I have often wondered why the designer made those creatures without wings. It is certain to handicap them terribly in their new environment."

"Exactly"; replied the biologist. "And that is precisely the idea. We want to severely handicap them so that we can study the methods they adopt to overcome their weakness. We want to see how they will develop means of transport from one place to another, ways of crossing chasms and seas; in short, we want to build a hardy, versatile race. You should read the reports more closely, Thorg."

"Yes, my friend, I admit I have not studied the matter very closely. My own work in planetary analysis keeps me busy enough. Do you know I have never read the Controller's dossiers on the subject? I believe they have some bearing on the two names he chose for the creatures."

"Well, Thorg, those dossiers are only intended to be read by those actually engaged in research work, but as you are an advisor I think it could be arranged for you to look them over. As for the names, I can explain their origin. But look, they are aware of us now." He stopped speaking as the two creatures suddenly turned away from the viewport and ran forward towards them. They halted before Thorg and the biologist and knelt on their knees with bowed heads.

"It is evident that they have the factors "respect" and "awe" firmly implanted in their consciousness," said Thorg, motioning them to rise. "But what a pity their backs are deformed like that."

"We hope they will reach the stars without wings," replied the biologist quietly but with emphasis.

Thorg was a little sceptical.

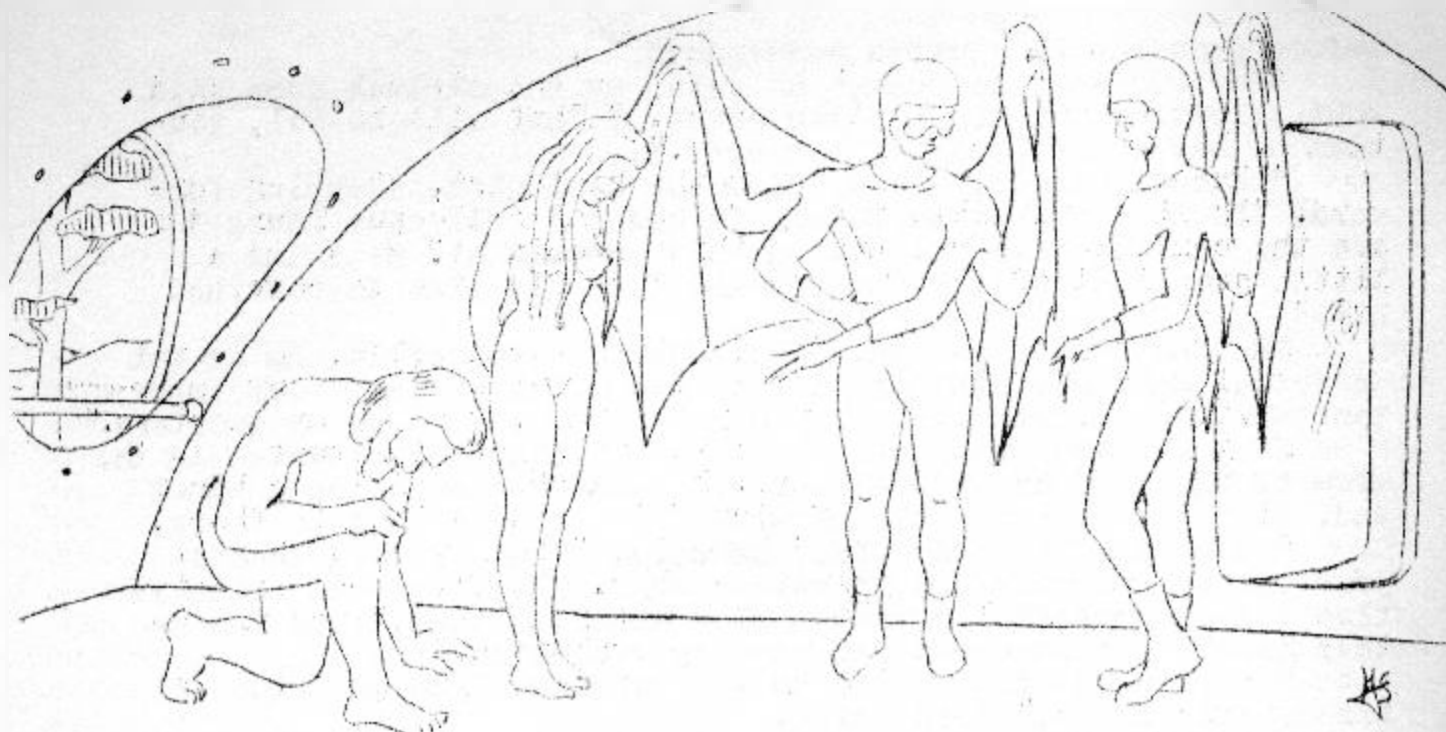
"It is my private opinion that they will reach primitive atomic culture within five thousand of their planet's revolutions around its sun and then obliterate themselves with it before we can do anything to stop them. You know very well that a high percentage of the factors "kill" and "possess" always result in a negative solution when equated with atomic power; you do not need to be a psychologist to know that."

"Yes, I know Thorg; your argument sounds good, but I repeat you have not studied the records of this experiment or you would realise that it is the designer's wish to evolve a new race which will successfully bridge the gap between pre-atomic and atomic culture without falling into the abyss of barbarism."

"But so many races have fallen into the abyss of barbarism as you term it, except us, and that was because we alone have very low "kill" and "possess" factors in our emotional patterns."

The biologist was exasperated and showed it in the rapid vibrations of his wings.

"Thorg, Thorg, you are a most irritating fellow. Do you not see that we must have a new race of hardy individuals who will fight



and conquer to gain what they desire and who will one day join forces with us on the frontiers of our galactic empire. We are too civilised to take part in wars of colonisation, but we can breed a race who will do it for us."

Thorg smiled. "The progenitors of your super-race are a little bored by your eloquence", he said, indicating the two creatures, who had wandered back to the viewport while the biologist had been speaking. "By the way", he went on, "You were going to tell me their names and the origin thereof."

The biologist nodded. "So I shall. Their names are...."

The wall speaker suddenly boomed into life: "Calling Planetary analyst Thorg and Biologist Uzlam. Planetary Analyst Thorg and Biologist Uzlam. Report at once to airlock corridor with the two experimental creatures."

"The moment has come", commented the biologist. He beckoned to the creatures and when they obediently ran towards him, he and Thorg ushered them out of the compartment which had been their foetal chamber, for now they must leave forever the safety of the great metal mother.

The Controller awaited them in the airlock corridor and with him were the other three scientists in charge of the experiment.

"We are ready now, gentlemen", he said, nodding to the newcomers. "I wish you all to witness the release. I trust the creatures are also ready Uzlam?"

"Yes Sir, they are ready."

The Controller nodded again and pressed a button at his hand. There was a sighing as of a soft wind and the airlock door slid slowly open, allowing the bright sunlight to flood into the corridor. A warm breeze, smelling strongly of growing things, wafted gently among them and the songs of the birds fell musically on their ears. The two creatures, who had hitherto gazed about them in awe and wonder, now broke into a gay, excited chatter and ran forward, past the members of the star race, out of the airlock threshold to the springy, green turf of the meadow.

"They needed no compulsion to enter their new existence." said the controller, with a smile of amusement on his lips. He continued to gaze after the creatures abstractedly for a moment

before pressing the button a second time.

"Now our work is done," he said, as the airlock door slid shut, blotting out the idyllic scene. "That will be all, gentlemen. Let us prepare for take-off."

"Excuse me Sir," said Uzlam the biologist, stepping forward. "Is it permissible for my friend and colleague Thorg to see the confidential reports on this experiment? He seems a little sceptical of its success and I should like to convince him."

The Controller nodded. "It is quite permissible. He is not an actual member of the scientific team, but he is a very important adviser nevertheless. You may see them. Come to my quarters."

They followed the Controller to his sanctum, situated in the prow of the ship and, once there, he unlocked a filing cabinet and, withdrawing two reels of microfilm, handed them to Thorg.

"Here are the dossiers," he said. "You may view them at your leisure on your own private viewer. The first one is entitled: "Anthropoidal development - apterous male," and the other is: "Experimental volitional evolution."

"My friend was puzzled by the two names you invented for the creatures Sir," said Uzlam.

The Controller smiled broadly and his wings throbbled with obvious pleasure.

"I am really quite proud of that Uzlam. You will notice, Thorg, if you study these titles, that the names consist of the initial letters of each word in order."

Thorg scrutinised the plastic labels on the dossiers for a moment.

"Why, of course," he exclaimed: "ADAM" and "EVE".

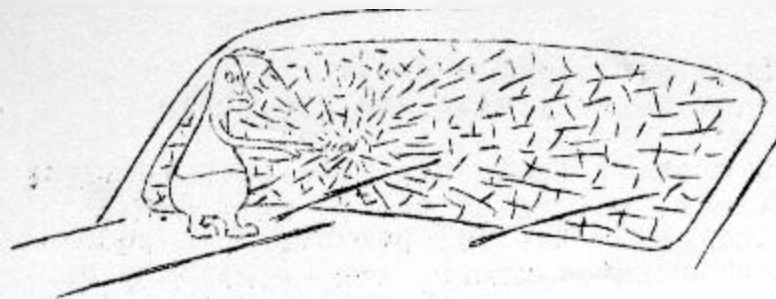
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(carrying on with AMBROSIA (shame) from page 21)

- ever someone uses fan-language he doesn't understand, that the other chap is talking gibberish and then goes on to blast the fan for making a fool of himself. We all have our troubles... California's happens to be Vorzimer... Belgian Fandom has a peculiar taste to it (come now). When I discovered British fandom I found they were different, and unusually entertaining. It's the same with you continentals: Your sense of humor isn't American, isn't British. Even better, it is different. You ought to get a United States representative and some contacts over here and get to know us better (We'd love to. Any offers chaps ???) My "Annish" will be out October 15th. or earlier, and will contain Convention reports from San Francisco, Manchester (Ch no) Bellefontaine and maybe Detroit...

+++ - We enjoyed Mercer's "Apology" too. Yep, Ah-Ches is a real name; only it's usually spelt "A-r-c-h-i-e". Something like "e huh ? Crazy ain't it? Seems this guy Vorzimer has been sticking his neck out eh? Wanting to fight everybody... Well, that's one way of becoming famous, or is it "notorious"? I don't think it's the right way though and certainly is most unfannish. Still, let's forget and forgive this time eh. Let's all be friends huh ? What say Pete ? Did you say something about Conventions??? Ron ??? This concludes AMBROSIA for to-day, so, until next ish, thisish your old friend...etc... This station is now closing down. Good-night everybody, Good-n..... all right Jan, all right...





## THE STRANGE CASE OF THE BLASTED WINDOWS A 'SMASHING' REPORT BY:

TEUN VAN INGEN

On April 3rd. 1952, Mr. F. Woods was driving, on a 1/2 mile section of road between Chobham and Fisher in Surrey, England, when suddenly, without warning, his windshield shattered and glass fell on the front seat. The road, which had a perfectly smooth surface and was banked on each side by a grassy verge, was quite deserted. There were no houses or habitations of any kind nearby...

On the same day and on the same road, another man had his car's windshield inexplicably shattered. He stopped the car and found a small hole on the left-hand side of the glass pane. On April 23rd., again on the same road, Mr. F. Smith was suddenly startled by a sharp report, his car swaying from the impact. He alerted the police, who made a thorough examination of his car and discovered a small hole, a third of an inch in diameter, in the door of his car.

These are only three out of 32 cases of shatterings that occurred between March 1951 and June 1952. In all these cases, no missile was found and the police authorities are convinced that the shatterings and holes are not caused by stones, but by missiles of high velocity. There have been so many of the incidents that there is now a permanent patrol in this part of the country.

The shatterings are usually preceded by a loud report, but the actual cause of these strange phenomena has not yet been found.

From England we move to the U.S.A., where similar cases have been reported, especially in Illinois, where sixteen of these "attacks" have occurred. In the city of Kokomo, Indiana, 22 business premises sustained damages from shattered or perforated windows. On September 24th. already 43 damage reports had come in; most of the damage was in an area where streets are rarely deserted, but no one reported anything unusual. The holes were all similar: a small opening, too small for an air-gun pellet and at eye-level or slightly above. Although the police investigated thoroughly, not a clue could be found of what could have caused all the damage.

From America to Belgium.- Mr. Van Bredam was driving his car from Putte to Mechelen when his vision was suddenly obstructed by his windshield shattering... At Doornik a driver experienced the same phenomenon, and also in Laeken.

Such shattered windows are impossible to look through because of the opaqueness of the cracked glass. Mr. G. Claes was waiting for his wife, in Brussels, when he noticed that the windshield of his car suddenly burst along the whole length. At that particular moment, no other car had passed him. Mr. C. of Ghent, was driving to Kortryk, when he suddenly heard a small "pop". His whole front window was cracked completely. Near the driver's place, a still transparent piece of glass of about 15 cm. in diameter had fallen out.

In a book by Mikkelson, an arctic explorer, entitled "Lost in the Arctic" we discovered a passage which may or may not have a bearing on the present case, and which reads: "In the last few days we have been astonished by a remarkable occurrence: On October ... 1919, an empty petroleum can was found riddled with tiny holes such as can be made by shots. But a charge of shot is not likely to materialise out of nowhere. It is none of our doing, but why should anybody go to such

trouble just to make a few holes in a petroleum can ???  
We could find no prints of Eskimos or anybody else and the whole thing has mystified us".

Since writing this article, two other incidents have been reported: The first happened in June 1954. A car, belonging to the firm D.M., of St. Amandsberg, Belgium, was standing in the Tulpstraat, when suddenly the pane of the left-hand door burst asunder, accompanied by a loud report. In Gasteau, a similar occurrence... this time with a street car (no, not Desire) conducted by a certain I. Dorner. Again the windshield of the conveyance burst apart without any apparent reason. Finally, in the Leopoldstraat (Malines) a large window pane suddenly erupted with a loud report without the source of the shattering being found. (I can't count anymore... I guess it makes three incidents...)

Although we hesitate to pronounce ourselves in any way as to the possible explanation of these strange occurrences, we can nevertheless offer some tentative suggestions:

First of all, is it possible perhaps that beings from another dimension are harassing us or trying to frighten us? This would explain why most of the shatterings occur on highways or in the open country. Perhaps they are trying to shoot a hole or doorway or something into our dimension, through which they could eventually enter our world. This would assume them to be of infinite smallness, unless the shots and holes become bigger and bigger until they are big enough to let these creatures through. It is dreadful to contemplate. I would suggest that the areas where the shatterings occur be watched night and day and cages be kept handy in order to capture the creatures should they make an appearance. It is also possible of course, that the holes are caused by some time-travelling bullets which have run wild. They could be either from the past or from the future. Being as the holes are not caused by any known calibre of gun, we must assume them to come from the future. This would also explain why no trace of a missile is ever found, because an object cannot exist in the future and the present at the same time.

Another possibility is that the holes are caused by flying saucers. They may even be small "saucers" themselves, a sort of toy that the "children" of these beings play with, just to annoy the "drivers of these silly, slow-moving vehicles of the Earth people..."

Whatever the solution may be, I am of the opinion that the people of Earth are faced with a new menace. Something should be done about it. I should appreciate hearing the readers' views on this palpitating subject....

Ivan Van Ingen.

=====

#### ADVERTISING SECTION

=====

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=====

# GRUNCH GOES TO THE TVERPCON

BY VINQ CLARKE.

I won't say much about the trip over; the boat broke down twice and most of the Conventioneers spent their time breaking bottles on the bow and calling it names. You'd never believe some of the names they called that poor boat. Bob Shaw and myself, being mechanically minded, spent a lot of time in the engine room trying to figure out a way to harness some of that energy to a rotary duplicator we'd brought along with us. By the time we'd got to Ostend we had thought of a really good system and any time we can get hold of a steam-ship we can say good-bye to all the hard work of handle-turning.

---

He's behaving in a very Ostendaticus manner

---

Unfortunately, the Customs wouldn't believe us when we told them we were only bringing the duplicator in for a day so that we could publish news of the Con. whilst it was actually happening, and we had to leave it behind in the Custom's shed. We found that Belgian trains ran on rails, just like the ones at home and the taxi-drivers in Antwerp were the same as ours too. By the time we'd paid the fares- and I still don't know how they guessed that we were foreigners, except perhaps by the way Stu Mackenzie was waving a Union Jack- we were too bankrupt to pay our entrance into the Convention Hall. Luckily, Ted Tubb found an open coal-hole at the back of the place, and we slipped in one by one.

---

Maybe they'll think we're a delegation from the Deep South...

---

I was introduced to various people by Jan, twice as Norm Wansborough and once as "the fellow behind the bottle is.. er.. excuse me", but spent most of the first hour looking at the pictures and stuff on the walls. The sound equipment had, of course, broken down whilst we were testing it and there was little to be heard except the low glug-glugging of up-ended bottles, the wolf-whistles from Ackerman and Tucker as they toured the walls of the hall, and frantic screams from Marger and Harris as they chased each other with soda-siphons. Willis had his trousers drenched and retired to a quiet corner to change them, and a group from London was just making plans to drag him out when Dave Vendelmans saw what was happening and hastily opened the Con. half an hour early. A number of the older fans immediately marched out of the hall and got drunk in an estaminet down the street.

---

We must have crossed the International Date Line and it's 23 1/2 hrs late

---

The rest of us were shaken by this too. Luckily, the sound equipment was still broken-down and Dave was apologising for the rain or something, so by the time he finished by saying something about the "membership of the local club hovering between 3 and 4, and if this Con. was a success they might even get another member..." things were back to normal and no-one was paying any attention to him. Someone - I think it was Tucker - had gone down to a local bar and had found some vin rouge selling at fr.12,50 a bottle. Fans were coming in loaded with them, and a group of Northerners led by Peter Hamilton were tearing up the floorboards in one corner of the hall and trying to make a barrel, thinking they'd get the stuff cheaper in bulk. There was a hell of a noise going on, completely drowning out some funny little guy who was making a speech about s.f. in the Low Countries. Everyone knew it was going to be published, anyway.

---

Tell that speaker his electrocution was superb.

---

A couple of fans - Dave Newman and Tony Thorne I believe - managed to get the sound-equipment working again just after the end of the speech. Everyone was walking around and shouting, getting ready for the London Circle show, and a crowd of Londoners were around Brian Burgess and were persuading him to take Shirley Marriott's place in the sketch - she was flat out behind the stage curtains, and he was screaming - when mes White shot a zap-gun at the microphone, short-circuited it and collapsed in a heap. Everyone thought he'd had an electric shock, but it appeared that he'd just seen where they'd put one of his pictures on the wall... Yes, right next to the one he and Tucker had been hunched over for 20 minutes.

I expect Belgium's most popular s.f. author is Frie Frank Brussels.

As most of the London Group were too incoherent then to have been heard without a microphone, the show was postponed, James was revived by a zap-gun shot down his spine, and Dave Vendelmans announced lunch break. A whole crowd went down the road to a local café and about twenty sat down to lunch. Only fifteen came back, and we think the other five must have been innocent pedestrians who'd been caught up in the mob and dragged along.

I ordered crottled greops and got roast beef.

Lunch was the usual fannish meal, and after the proprietor had threatened to call the police, we went back to the hall and hung around drinking until the afternoon sessions opened with a speech by Walt Willis. It was long, but the first few minutes were good; he mentioned my name and made a pun at which the Irish crowd laughed. After that he got serious and there was some unrest, and when he shouted "Science-fiction is NOT enough" and stood with arms outstretched, there must have been nearly two dozen zap-guns discharged at him. He went out to change his trousers again and there was a lot of confusion. It seemed that Willis had actually been scheduled to appear later in the day... the last turn in fact... and had pushed himself forward in his usual ostentatious manner. No one knew who was to follow him and there was some talk of the Gen. ending and rooms being found in the nearest hotel, but Ken Slater leapt up on to the stage and started pulling wads of money from his pockets. Everyone thought it was a good conjuring trick and we only found out afterwards that it was the money the Army had paid him to leave it. Ken soon had the Convention organised, and there were orderly little groups of four drinking all over the place and a group of volunteers going around demanding to see passes so that they could pick out the people who were supposed to be on the stage.

Sergeant Buckmaster... Arrest that fan.

Ken Slater held an auction (no one could find Ted Tubb), made a couple of speeches and danced a short ballet, and was just organising a drinking contest when there was a hell of a crash at one side of the hall. From where I was lying I couldn't see what was going on, but there was a wave of cheering and cries of "Good old Bert" and "Eoard, Beard..." and someone threw a copy of AUTHENTIC at Ted Carnell (Carnell was only in the hall at odd intervals--- he was out getting material for NEW WORLDS most of the time-- he said), and after the shouting had died down, we heard Bert talking about his American trip again. Luckily, the microphone was still out of action and it didn't really interfere with the enjoyment of the audience.

Have you got inhibitions ? - No, I've got lumbago.

The next few hours were very good. I wandered around a little, taking notes... : "I know somebody who'll laugh when they hear that" -- "X is acquiring a head early; it goes with the one he's got." --- "You've got to have a supple backbone for this sort of thing." ---

" For some unaccountable reason, I shook hands.." -- "He is a classic lover, he likes his women without arms."--- "Take your head out of that book, it's disgusting".--- "Even Bradbury couldn't describe that".--- "I'd like to see Ted Tubb auctioning off a harem"--- " I said "Are you a fan" and he said "Sorry, I don't speak French"--- "I've just thought of the last sentence for a story"--- "John is lighting cheese straws again"--- "It was an old window anyway"--- " He speaks English with an English accent"--- "I can't say it was worse than death, it was death."--- " It's a pity they don't make waterproof motorbikes"--- "Jansen is taking Dave Cohen outside to see the sun"-- " Is that your moth"--- " Ask Ghed what time the next flaming chariot leaves"--- "I thought the SuperMancon was superb too."--- "I wonder if I'm sublimating anything by taking an interest in science-fiction?"--- " It was just the vague rumblings of an idea"--- "Clay feet and clay head too"---"The London circle is full of squares"--- " Everyone here must be insane, or they wouldn't be here" --- " I speak Flemish like a native, a South-sea Island native".--- "But two bottles of rum won't last us twelve hours" --- "

QUOTES : Bulners, Puckmasters, Mackenzies, Brunner, Youd, Campbell, Tubb, Godwin, Clarke..

Most of the British and Irish contingent had to leave early to catch the boat and a rictous crowd saw us on the train to Ostend (This train has feet).

The voyage back was indescribable (in any decent publication) and if some of the messages that were put into bottles and tossed overboard ever reach the shore, there'll never be another continental s.f.Con. Which would be a great pity... It was terrific.

Tucker, Tubb and Shirley were playing strip poker and Tucker laid down 75 aces.

But make it two days next time, Jan and Dave.

\*\*\*\*\*



# LIBRARIAN'S CORNER



CEUX DE NULLE PART... (roman d'anticipation - par Francis CARSAC.)

Il existe deux catégories d'auteurs: ceux qui n'ont pas de succès et ceux qui en ont. La dernière se subdivise en: auteurs qui se sont imposés lentement, et ceux qu'un seul roman ou même un conte a rendus célèbres du premier coup. CARSAC, l'auteur de "Ceux de Nulle Part", appartient à cette dernière catégorie. Son livre a connu, chez les S.F.fans du continent, un succès foudroyant que peu de romans français d'anticipation ont connu. Et il faut reconnaître que ce succès est entièrement mérité.

Le thème est original à l'extrême. L'histoire est celle d'une guerre non à l'échelle galactique, mais cosmique. Les deux ennemis sont les races intelligentes humanoïdes et des races mystérieuses: les Misliks. Les humanoïdes sont les fils de la Lumière; ils ont besoin pour vivre de la chaleur et du soleil. Les Misliks, eux, sont les fils des Ténébres, qui ne peuvent vivre qu'aux environs du zéro absolu. La race humanoïde qui dirige la guerre est le peuple Hiss. Se basant sur une vieille prophétie, le peuple Hiss se déclare élu pour conduire la guerre qui devra exterminer les Misliks. Dans ce but ils ont fondé la puissante "Ligue des Terres Humaines", qui groupe toutes les races humanoïdes, unies dans le même but. Leurs astronefs, les 'ksills' fouillent les galaxies pour découvrir des allies et surtout pour rechercher les fameux peuples à sang rouge, qui vaincront les Misliks. Ces derniers émettent un rayonnement mortel à toutes les races à sang vert, bleu et jaune, mais, toujours d'après la vieille prophétie, les races à sang rouge sont immunisées et le rayonnement Mislik est, pour elles, inoffensif.

Coup sur coup, deux races à sang rouge sont découvertes. L'une, les "Sinzus", a réussi à trouver le voyage interstellaire et à découvrir

les Hiss; l'autre, les Terriens, a été découverte par une petite expédition; mais, comme les guerres existent encore sur Terre, il est impossible de l'admettre dans la Ligue. Cependant, un terrien, le bicycliste Vsevolod Clair, est enlevé et emmené sur Ello, planète des Hiss. Grande est sa surprise d'apprendre tout ce qui a trait aux Misliks. Volontairement, il descend dans une cave où est enfermé un Mislik. La preuve est faite: les terriens ne peuvent être atteints par le rayonnement Mislik. Plus tard, les Sinzus se prouvent également capable de résister aux Misliks.

Clair est adopté très rapidement par les Hiss, au point de devenir un des leurs. Pendant ce temps, la Ligue avait décidé d'attaquer les Misliks et non plus de se cantonner sur la défensive. Il est décidé que les soleils éteints par les Misliks seraient rallumés pour tuer les fils des Ténébres. Clair, le terrien (Franc-nomination Hiss) tombe amoureux d'une Sinzue et l'épouse. Puis, ayant participé à de nombreuses expéditions, Clair rentre, avec sa femme Ulma, sur Terre pour recruter des volontaires qui participeront à la lutte contre les Misliks....

Ouf... c'est fini; pour le résumé du moins. Voici une appréciation: Francis Carsac a fait un coup de maître. Sans verser dans le "space-opéra", il a décrit une guerre galactique palpitante à souhait. Il tient à la fois de Bradbury et de Van Vogt; du premier par ses idées sociales, sa force poétique, et du deuxième par son imagination fertile pour l'invention de grandes machines. Tout ce qu'il décrit est logique et clair. Il est vrai qu'il avoue lui-même être rationnel à l'extrême. A la différence de beaucoup d'auteurs, Carsac a tenté de rendre, non seulement les progrès scientifiques, mais encore sociaux normaux et artistiques.

Il n'a pas cherché non plus à faire de ses héros des surhommes; les Hiss, par exemple, possèdent une certaine froideur de cœur. Les Sinzus sont pourris d'orgueil; Clair est vicieux et un peu froussard. Bref, tous les personnages ont leurs défauts et leurs qualités. De ce fait, ils sont humains et très proches de nous. La philosophie adoptée, celle du Bien contre le Mal, pour motiver la guerre, est beaucoup plus valable, à mes yeux, que les autres habituellement employées comme causes des guerres galactiques. L'incompatibilité des Humancides et des Misliks, l'impossibilité qu'ils ont de vivre l'un près de l'autre, justifient ample-

ment les méthodes de combat des opposants.

Que dire en plus ? Cette œuvre est fraîche, reposante, spirituelle. Je crois que, plus tard, elle sera considérée comme un classique de la S.F. et que beaucoup payeront cher pour en posséder une des premières éditions (parce que j'ai la première). Habituellement, le talent d'un auteur augmente à fur et à mesure qu'avance sa carrière. Dans ce cas, Van Vogt, Bradbury, Asimov.. GARE A VOUS. Voici le Roi de la S. F. qui s'avance: Francis CARSAC.

J'espère beaucoup qu'un éditeur anglais ou américain sera intéressé par ce livre et qu'il le publiera. Il ne le regrettera pas.

Maurice DELPLACE.

FICTION n° 10 - Septembre 1954

Un coin rêvé pour les vacances  
 W. Morrison  
 Hachures F. Carsac  
 Une Chasse P. A. Hourey  
 Ces Terriens et Terre à Terre P. Anderson  
 Mathématiques et Vaudou  
 H. Nearing Jr  
 Le Dernier Bobard R. Robin  
 Epaves A. B. Chandler  
 Dînes de Lacataires W. Tenn

le n° 11 Octobre

Claude Farrere  
 Fritz Leiber  
 Bruce Elliott, etc.  
 100 francs le numéro - 17,50 francs.

LA TE NEWS FLASH:

All OWPA members beware:  
 Pete Vorzimer wants in!

Martians are parading round France, according to today's evening newspaper. Scepticism is of course the general rule. One farmer claims being paralysed by a green beam. Shades of War of the Worlds?

If this page looks and reads disconnected, blame it on me, I'm in the same state of mind.

W A N T E D

No, not someone to love me. I manage quite well in that respect. But on our shelves we find some magazines missing. Nobody has taken any away they've never been there. Any offers for supplying us with:  
 Amazing March 1951  
 Fant. Universe Vol 1 n° 1 & 4  
 Galaxy Oct 1950 Vol 1 n° 1  
 Either to Berchem or Bergerhout.

FOR TRADE: FRENCH EDITIONS OF  
 Needle H. Clement; When Worlds collide & After worlds collide, Balmer & Wylie; City at World's End, Hamilton; Out of the Silent Planet, Lewis; Odd John, Stapledon; Sinister Barrier BF Russell; Dreaming Jewels, Sturgeon; World of Nul & vVogt; Voyage of the Space Beagle, vVogt; The demigods, Gordon Bennett; Vandals of the Void Walsh; The starkings, Hamilton; Genus Homo, de Camp & Schuyler Miller.

All in excellent to mint condition  
 Eds. Le Rayon Fantastique  
 Offers to  
 Jansen J. 219 Berchemlei Bergerhout

J. J.  
 (and don't we know it... DV).

# AMBROSIA

After having had such distinguished fannish characters as Walt Willis, Forry Ackermann, Bob Tucker, Redd Boggs, and others in this part of our fanzine, we are overjoyed to be able to bring you yet another of these Big Names. I want to thank all these people, along with ALL the various other fans who do write in, for their letters, which provide us with the moral support which we certainly appreciate. If we had half that amount in cash-subscriptions, we'd be millionaires before the year was out. So here comes the US Willis: (or is Willis the Irish?)  
BOE BLOCH:

Alpha arrived and its contents devoured in about alpha hour. I note on the mailing-side that I received it because I am a "pubber". This puzzled me for a moment, because I do not publish a fanzine - then I realized this was not English slang for "publisher" but rather a literal statement. A "pubber" is obviously somebody who frequents pubs. How did you know?

However you knew, I am grateful for the knowledge and for a change to acknowledge the 'zine. Of course, with the Belgian postmark, I expected something a bit on the exotic side --- imagine my surprise to discover therein comments by such local (and vocal) yokels as Vorzimer, Boggs, and Tucker! To say nothing of Walt Willis (which is always a good idea I think).

The thing that interested me particularly was the presence of the convention reports, including the interlineations and the Antwerpitations. As I believe I've already mentioned, to some of my English correspondents, the conventions abroad are rapidly becoming broader and more unconventional than our little scrry scirees. I'd say that Willis managed to see the last fullblown dc held over here: Philadelphia must have appeared quite pallid to Bert Campbell when he abbeard. And this year's little midwescon at Bellefontaine, Ohio, was quite mild.

In just ten days, however, San Francisco will play host to the annual earthquake. It remains to be seen if the Califoreigners can revive the old fannish traditions (which consists of reviving old fans after they pass out).

In a spirit of scientific inquiry, I intend to take off for San Francisco around the end of the month. One has to take off for San Francisco as it is usually quite warm out there. At any rate (2¢ a word and up) I expect to indulge in a bit of research: though it presently appears that this will be largely a West Coast affair --- so many easterners and middlewesterners indicating that they're not attending. After all, for a New York fan to go to a con in San Francisco is the equivalent of a Belfast fan visiting a convention in Moscow. (By the way, how was the Moscow convention this year?) But there are enough fans in California to put on a fullscale convention all their own, and I am hoping for the warmest best.

By the way, did you ever happen to run into an oldtime fan name of Baruch Spinoza? He used to correspond with me years ago: nice guy, but with some rather childish notions of working out a system of philosophy. Used to send me his stuff and I'd rewrite it and put in a few ideas; clever it up a bit. Often wonder whatever become of the chap. Had a heard like Bert Campbell, only without the gin-stains. If you ever bump into the fellow, give him my regards.

Also recall another oldtime Dutch fan name of Anton van Leeuwenhoek. Good old Tony --- the original Peeping Tom, always puttering with a microscope; you know how these kids are when they get hold of a few gad-



gets to fool around with. Perhaps Tony was before your time, though: I doubt if he's known to anyone younger than Tucker.

Surely wish I could someday attend a Continental con. My forebears were ~~Willed out~~ ~~of~~ emigrated from Alsace-Lorraine and Besse-Darmstadt, so I've sore roots in the vicinity. Unfortunately, none of them were Flemish, and I can't speak a word of Flem.

Many thanks, Jan, for ALPHA - just as it is, it could hardly be any BETA.

And many thanks, too, for the honour. So, I haven't come across the fans you mention. I don't get around much in Holland. But perhaps Plantin and Moretus are known to you? They sure gave us invaluable help setting up our first issues! And perhaps you heard of Charlotte, a femme who did start off to the first convention, but somehow or other got lost in the wilds of Mexico instead.

Nowadays, femmes do far better by staying at Bournemouth, since

SHIRLEY HARRIOTT reports that:

"...In a bookshop near here, I managed to buy a complete set of UNKNOWN WORLDS at 6d per copy. The owner of the shop must have thought I'm crazy because of the way I grabbed them. (Oh well, he's probably correct in his diagnosis).

§We reserve our opinion upon this point, but in the meantime you could perhaps oblige by admitting guilt to

DEAN A. GRUBBELL's question:

"Did Shirley really spell it 'knecking'? If so, I can't help but wonder what sort of activity this may be. I'm familiar (through hear-say, you understand) with the activity that goes by the slang-term of 'necking' but this puzzles, mystifies and fascinates me no end.....Cover didn't make sense till I'd read Ah Chee's morsel of superb nonsense, and then it all added up. Delightful! Loved your Twerpcon report, Jan. Especially the reprint of Willis's speech. Very very fine indeed! I spot a small inaccuracy in the reproduction of the Goja (over here, we say Goya) portrait. For one thing, I seem to recall the Duchess was a brunette, not a blonde.....Oh, man, I got such a charge out of the Lacerised alibi! would have given anything to have had this in Grue. Of all the interlineations, the one I liked most was the one on page 15 - the one about Holland being a low, lying, country. Very clever. and I do hope it never seems necessary for you chaps to get 'dead serious'. I like a very much precisely the way it is.....

§And so do quite a few others, we are happy to say. Yet it isn't easy to please everyone, and the variety that goes in making up Alpha's readers obliges us to pay heed to such as

CHARLES LEE RIDDLE, amongst others, saying:

"Received the latest issue of Alpha, and am afraid that I was a little bit disappointed in it this time. It seems that most all of the fanzines arriving out of Britain try to be humorous, so, it seems, to disprove the old impression that the British didn't have a sense of humour. In me, most of these fanzines are forced in their humour and just don't sit right with me - and this issue of Alpha, while not from Britain, I know, appears to try to follow that pattern. I see that you said you were experimenting with this type of issue. Believe me, I'd much rather see the old style of Alpha back!

§Accept, first of all, congratulations from the chaps here at Alpha for daughter Alice Elizabeth, 7 lbs 10 1/2 oz, arrived on 8 August 1954, and is predestined to tell three boys (and an old foagy -) how to run Feon. May we still be around to witness it.

as for your particular comments, we have received an epistle, entitled 'Peeved out of me!' from a friend of yours. From

WIM STRUYCK the following parallelism:

this is written on special request. A request by a very good friend of mine. ( § This kindness being due to his forthcoming visit, when he HOPES to sleep at my place !! § )

And I want all of you to know that without such a request, this letter would never have been written, when everyone would have been far better off. Except Jan. That fellow is never satisfied unless he hears about A. He wants criticism, he tells me. Comments and criticism about that silly rag of his. But does he really want it? Comments, possibly. But criticism? I suspect that he only covets remarks on how good, how rich or how well written that rag is. And honestly, how could it be, when he wants stuff from people like myself, who never wrote a thing before. But THAT is his criminal cunning! Being Dutch representative for the worthless rag, how can I possibly, without dishonouring myself, ever say all I would like to? Can I confess that the Thing I represent is a "stinker"? I may not be a genius, but I'm not that dumb! And so our dear Jan, with a sweet smile on his cherubic face with fearless heart asks me to give my opinion on Alpha. Honestly and with a clear conscience. He even refuses to get angry, if the opinion is impolite. Oh no, he likes to hear bad things in order to improve, knowing all the time that only the better parts will be mentioned. Did he ask YOU to write a letter? (§ Sometimes! §) No, he didn't! He must be sure about you before he takes the risk of inviting comments. And even in my case, will he PRINT everything I write? (§ Obviously not, I left out all the errors! §) This is going to be a 30,000 words letter, and you will see for yourself how much he left. Now

HE COUNTS EVEN SOME FROM HIS SPELLS!

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please don't misunderstand me. You may have the impression that I don't like A. That is where you are wrong. I love it. (Remember I'm representative!) (§ We all know by now, another word I'm cutting out from now on §) For one thing, the paper on which the Thing is printed, is really good quality material. Rather expensive too. And what's more, every word can be read. No spots, stains, blots or blemishes. (§ Of course, we treat Re very, very carefully! §) As for the binding: well, the pages are kept together, all except the last page. I would recommend three of these metal clips instead of two. Look at Feon for instance, Jan. (§ I did, the last page still falls off! §) It opens more easily too. Let me give a short review on the issues appeared.

Nº 1 was not yet a real fanzine. Only a try-out, which was immensely improved with issue nº 2. Reading this nº made me part with with Fl 2.50, enough said. As a rule I am not at all quick when it comes to parting with my money. Nº 3 had three staples to keep it together, (§ That was your subscription money! §), as I have just discovered. Good work! It carried the announcement of the Twerpcon, not such a bad joke at that, then. However, after nº 5, in which people still are talking about it, I'd say, let's drop the subject. Back to 3, where we read "Meet me Tonight in Dreamland", by Dave, which I enjoyed very much. There were some humorous "news" items, some book reviews and a library list. Yes, I liked 3 - 2.

Next issue had the Wanderers, a very good story, though I admit having difficulties with it. My fault most likely. The other story, Shooting Line, however, was too farfetched in my humble opinion. Maybe I didn't understand the puns in it, but I certainly did not enjoy it. In Librarian's Corner, I would have appreciated some book reviews. What's the good of having French and Swedish magazines mentioned when I can't read them? An excellent improvement was finding Last Page on the Last Page. Good idea! Both that cover, and the one for nº 5 were wonderful. As long as we can't have printed covers like the prozines (beautiful, seductive, and sparsely clad females, and I confess blushing, that I love them) (§ The females on our covers? §) I wouldn't know how our covers could be better. The contents of that issue though! No story! Twerpcon again! And as I see now, there were spots, blots and blemishes! (§ Must have had the wrong copy! §) Then again the Twerpcon! And

again!

After these, another report on a convention. This time a real one, and can she write, that Shirley! Ask HER for more articles, Jan. HER article was excellent, and would have come out better if you had dropped all the Twerpoon stuff. Let's have Shirley's adventures, especially when tipsy! I can't let us guess the exciting details. Or did you think we couldn't stomach them? Don't be so Victorian next time, please.

DAVE SAID LOW - BUT IT'S LOWER THAN I THOUGHT

I think this has gone on for long enough. Be sure and make 6 better, otherwise I'll want my money back. Until then, I'll trust you.

§Until, and including issue 10, you'll take whatever we shove over though you can always return it unopened. Remind me to take that Grunch part out will you, Dave? But there are others who grumble:

DEREK PICKLES laments:

I write you a letter of comment - what happens - you print the PS --- I'm not putting a PS on this letter - then you'll be stymied. Thanks for the plug though!

§And you really believed I was to be taken in that easily? Now see what happens to your long letters. But as you admitted not being in the mood for commenting, we'll take

MAL ASHWORTH's praise:

Alpha 5 was thoroughly digested and greatly enjoyed; I'm sorry I wasn't able to get to the Twerpoon, but I just had to finish those reviews of FUTURISTIC SCIENCE STORIES for HYPHEN. It sounds to have been quite an affair (who was the Minister of Infernal Affairs?) (§Two Bemed's.§) but Archie's adventures were outstanding; some real fine humour in that and I had several hearty chuckles at it. The piece de resistance of the whole issue though (excluding Shirley Marriott; I'm not qualified to opine whether she is a piece de resistance or not), was that miraculous interlineation: "Holland is a low, lying country and is damned all around". Whoever is responsible for putting the strain of laughing so hard on my vocal chords, please give them a large pat on the back - with a steam hammer if you have one handy. That is one of the most spontaneously hilarious interlineations I have come across. Was sorry that Shirley Marriott's Con Report was not more detailed: if there's one thing I would have liked to read it's a detailed Con report by Shirley. Ah well. That was another fine issue, Jan - keep on doing that sort of thing for a long time, about a lifetime or so should be long enough.

§You don't want me to use a steam hammer on Dave, do you? Alpha is a two-man job & I don't feel like doing all work myself. I'm even keeping these comments as short as I can. So on to

ERIC JONES, 4 given already:

Ghod! The man will never 4give me 4 not commenting on Alpha! Ghu! I shall be stretched on fandon's rack from here to Ursa Major! Weeeee yi! That artwork on pages 10 & 24! Colossal! Stuperendous! Get Ben to do some more of this... Reminds me of the noods we used to see in the old Zenith..... But back to the day when I received (§Remember eggs next time!§) Alpha 5. 'Twas a wet and windy morn and a very mundane postman who slithered... yea! slithered my copy of Alpha thru the box. It hit the floor like a wet haddock, visibly swelling as it absorbed water all over. After duly administering vocal denunciation to the postman I retrieved Alpha and lay her gently on the radiator to dry out. Three hours later I enjoyed the Twerpoon Report and the Mercatorial 'Apology' (try 1 & 2 selections). Production still maintains its high standard, but please! please return to the old method of addressing for mailing..... Y'know, I once received a zine from the States

which was neatly folded in half and 'stapled up to the eyebrows; after considerable investigation and theorising I removed what I thought to be the correct staples, only to find that I had erred and was left with a mass of paper which had to be sorted and restapled.

May I, through the medium of your rag, notify all fans that the West Country S-F Group is defunct thru many reasons, and that, having severed connections with a certain 'fan'(?), I can now announce the Cheltenham S-F Circle as being extant. Briefly the idea is this: the Circle is composed of reliable local fans, who, up until the present, have not joined any organisation merely because of the spare time factor. We do not have a library, fans obtain mags thru trading on their own initiative (thus, I hope, adding interest in S-F). In this connection we need U.S. traders, and any U.S. fans wishing to exchange for British mags is invited to send /his /her address to 44, Barbridge Rd, Hesters way, Cheltenham, Glos, England. I hope that in a short while the Circle as a whole will consist of active or semi-active fans.

§Here's wishing you all the best, Eric. As to your request on the mailing: paper is rather dear, and we can't afford even that extra half page that used to go round each 'zine. So please bear with us until such time your Circle has made enough subscriptions to cover those expenses. But as the saying goes: One bird in the hand is better than ten in the bush, so for subs, and

NIGEL LINDSAY did send us one, saying:

I don't know just what I expected but I was most agreeably surprised when it arrived. I had been thinking the contents would suffer in the struggle of translation, but no; the whole thing was very readable, not to mention witty and interesting. Reproduction is excellent, and so is the neat, uncluttered cover and the rest of the artwork. It is quite CK by me that most of this ish is Con material. I never tire of reading it. Glad to hear the Twerpoon was such a success. Now I hadn't heard about it before, and when I saw the title I thought it was going to be a skit, on the lines of Mal Ashworth's Dashcon. Still, I guess it was authentic enough; even YCU couldn't have written that speech attributed to JAW! Ah-Chee's Apology was a riot. I liked that Flying Luxemburger idea, and the three witty little verses. Mic gives an amusing account of how Planet folded, tho' it must have been very disappointing. Still, it's nice to be able to smile at your troubles - the only way to stop going off your rocker, I think. I was enjoying Shirley's piece when I suddenly realised it rhymed. Then - as I don't like poetry - I tried to stop enjoying it, but couldn't... Incidentally, you happen to be the first person I've written with my beanie on (which I've just made!). I must confess I'm rather disappointed - it doesn't make it any easier...

§Rather a doubtful honour then?... Funny what a small word can do. Leave EVAN cut, and one of the nicest compliments I've received turns the whole sentence in a rather dubious statement. Thanks, Nigel. And how is Mother's Cat getting along? Perhaps you should show her the way to the fish-lover

ARCHIE MERCER whom we have obligingly granted his request:

Well, for a start, words fail me. That cover! I knew of course that my apology was good, naturally - but it must have had something about it that even I overlooked, to inspire a picture like that! I keep on even now pulling the mag out just to look at it. The only thing that keeps me from pinning it up on the wall, is that it'd spoil the mag. I suppose you haven't got a spare copy print about anywhere? Have you? To Jean Steer, my heartiest congratulations. (§Later.§) However, thanks very much, all along the line. Tonight the Bonnie Fishie's going up above the foot of the bed, in place of Terry Macre.

§We would gladly have given you the original, but Jean draws directly on stencil from sketch. And though I have been trespassing on Dave's territory for quite some time, let me include

JOHN HITCHCOCK's advice:

I think you could stand a couple more illos. Not as many as the average fmz, because they would detract from the content; you need milk--(excuse me, but the radio is blaring out a commercial by Maryland Cooperative Milk Producers) you have something to offer.

§Thanks John, but illos depend on artists turning out stuff! On to J. BRIAN TANFIELD who was very interested:

".....to hear about your endeavours in the science fiction world. Although I'm not yet a member of any fan club I have read many of the English magazines and have enjoyed the stories... One of my ambitions at the moment is to build a wireless controlled FS and to have some fun in making it appear in all sorts of places. I don't know whether I shall ever make one but it would certainly make life exciting for a while...

§You haven't yet met fander! All fans in Yorkshire please note: the chap lives at 12 St John Street, Beverley, L. Yorke; his FS idea seems to show a glimmer of fannish spirit; indoctrinate him!

§I'd love to continue but I am really getting scared of the things my dear friend Dave is liable to do to me, if I leave him no room to fill up. I could actually use some more pages, Dave, how about it? Out of MY money? Eh! I'll be seeing you, next ish, boys.

\*\*\*\*\*

... I know you could use more pages Jan, but after all, we must consider our poor subscribers mustn't we?

Talking of subscribers, a number of persons have asked us to include the addresses of the blokes whose letters appear in this column. Well, I don't mind personally, although Jan seems to be against the idea. However, if we get enough requests for same, I shall include the full addresses in the next ish, and risk the horrible consequences.

I seem to have found a number of interesting letters too amongst a pile of circulars, Compazines, music scores and electricity bills... I must say I haven't received many letters lately. I wonder why? Is it because I haven't written many myself? Could that perhaps be the reason? Or doesn't anyone love me anymore? O thank you Shirley.... In any case, I bet I'm not the only one who's been neglecting his correspondance, eh Stu? However, I'm digressing. Here's a nice one from:

VINZ CLARKE : ... 'fraid the cover didn't connect. Symbolic of what?  
===== Sorry, I'm dim. The "Apology" of course. Good.

Smooth editorial; wish I could have seen more of Dave, but I usually get up to the Globe very late in the summer; I bicycle up after tea, about 12 miles. TWERPCON... Good, especially the Campbell bit, and the answer to the Campbell letter. Is that supposed to be Goya's Duchess of Alba painting? (Yep, that's it - D.) The layout is excellent.

APOLOGY : rather involved punning; too deliberate. The best is the odd one slipped in here and there; the fishy episode was good though. THE SUCCESS, etc....: Hawwww. Very good indeed. I have a copy of "FLANNEE", the first, because (1) it was a n°1, and (2) it mentioned Ken Bulmer and myself in an advert. This points the way to the possibilities of increasing sales. Make every issue a n°1, which will mean all the collectors will buy it; and have pages of people's names in, so that they buy it for the ego-bcc. Why, look how popular the Telephone Directory is, using these principles...

SUPERWOMANCON REPORT : Another one, very interesting to see how the various reports coincide and differ from various viewpoints. Don't think this is very feminine though... no fashion notes, or detailed accounts of how to deal with the Convention welf approach, etc... Shirley is a little bitter too (I hsvn't tasted her yet...D.) I don't think Manchester is a lot dirtier than London around the railway stations, but being smaller, it's laid on thicker. "AMEROSIA" : like these nice long letter sections. (You should like this one then Vine!) It's lucky you are, getting letters from Eggs himself, Tucker himself and even a note from Ghed. Stu's letter raises so many unprintable ideas that it's best not to dwell on it. LIBRARIANS CORNER : A little confused. A little more colloquial English would have improved it, even the odd apostrophe 's. But I don't like criticizing the English used in Alpha, seeing how little I knew of your language. Tho' it occurs to me I don't put out a fanzine in it... RAMBLING WOMAN : Wonder how long the readers read before the verse became apparent ? 3,1/2 lines, me. The extra syllable ("ships") suddenly reared up its ugly head and I realised that it was rhyming. This is goodish for about 3/5ths, but the "tone" at the end is out of place, of de Camp: "It is not fair to the reader to start off on one tone and then shift to another. Kuttner did this in "A gnome there was", which begins as a jolly fantastic romp and then at the end, quite suddenly, and for no special reason, condemns the hero to a horrible fate. Such a shift in tone makes the reader resentful, as if somebody had pulled a chair from under him. The same applies to stories that end with the hero's awakening and learning that it was all a dream". (S.F.Handbook).... Not that I feel resentful about our dear Shirley becoming active; I'm all for it. Nice drawing that page too.

LAST PAGE : I should behave like you want to behave in fandom. For years I was a lone-wolf active fan in London, and it was pretty lonely on my particular plane of publishing activity, but things are flourishing now. If you want to include serious and constructive fan tastes, I suggest you adopt an idea that has been tried out in the States: two magazines, stapled together, but one upside down, so that you get two front covers... like the pro pocket books have just tried, the Ace Double PB things. One magazine trufan, the other s.& c. Like DAVE NUTTY. Has Ben's name two 'B's' ? Stencilling and duplicating is excellent as usual; pity you havn't got an "elite" face type tho'... it either (a) saves paper, or (b) allows you to get more things (like for instance a review of "Hyphen" and "Eye" ) into the same space. Like the coloured paper.... You don't really use nail varnish do you? It's all right as an emergency substitute, but much too thick usually. Maybe yours is thinner than ours...

+++ - Well Vine, I started off by including just a few interesting extracts from your letter and finished by including almost the whole of it, as I think it is certainly worth more than just a few extracts. We've had a lot of praise about the cover, especially from Ah-Chee, who, I believe, has a copy hanging above his bed... That's a good point you raised about making every issue a n°1. although we've had several demands for back nos. of "a" and they weren't all for n°1. (Ad.) Seems I slipped on Ben's name - only one "B" - Sorry Ben, I'll stick the other one in my bonnet, for future use (I may be able to use it). Now, re. "OMPA", the "Off-trail magazine publishers association"; I should like to fulfil a promise here by saying a word about this meritorious organisation, : "OMPA", as most of you already know. is composed of persons with a common interest in s.f. and fantasy (and other pursuits, vaguely connected therewith). The organisers and people generally responsible for inflicting this on the unsuspecting pu-

blic are those able stalwarts of Fandom : H.K. BULMER (President) "Chuck" HARRIS (Treasurer) and A. Ving Clarke (Editor) (sorry Ving, I forget the capitals). Memberships total 29 at the moment, but I believe there are another five on the waiting list. Needless to say Jan and myself are members of course and have already submitted - and received - the first mailing.

As I already stated in my letter Ving, we don't really use nail varnish for our typos. That's only our fancy name for "correcting fluid".

JAN HILLEN, of Wassenaar, Holland, writes... :  
===== " Let me begin by saying that I think Alpha is quite a good effort. Where you fellows find the energy and spirit to fill the respectable and rising number of pages Alpha contains monthly (wishful thinking ?) is a riddle I have not yet solved. The convention hoax was extremely well done, even if a few points such as the mention of the City Festival Hall, the estimated attendance figures etc. made it clear, at least to me, that there was "something rotten in the state..."; to say nothing about the date, which I noticed only afterwards. Nevertheless, you seem to have caught a good number of readers with it. I know from personal observation that Ben Abbas was one of them... As you have probably heard from Ben or NicO already, I have been more or less of a fan for quite some years, having started in 1937, when I found my first Science fiction in a small Chinese bookshop in one of the lesser frequented streets in Batavia (now Djakarta) - Java. With an interruption of about five years during the war, I have been reading and collecting the stuff fairly continuously. As I am a technician myself, working in the Patents Office, my interest goes in the direction of s.f. with the accent on Science, so that for instance Smith's "Venus Equilateral" made quite a hit with me, a fact which seems to surprise many other readers of the book in question.

+++ - Thanks for the kind words Jan (not you Papa, sit down). As to where we get the energy from to fill the rising number of pages I really don't know... unless it's from the repeated words of praise we receive and which spurs us on to still greater efforts. Where we get the spirits from is, of course, our own business, but there is a good little shop just down the road....

So you guessed there was something phoney about this Twerpcon business did you ? Well, all I can say is that you must be a very bright young man, as we caught several ~~styx~~ illustrious persons. I must say you pick the queerest places to look for science fiction. I'm not quite sure I remember "Venus Equilateral", but I do like Smith, so if I read it, I probably enjoyed it. A Californian,

RON ELLIK, writes : " This fifth issue of "A" arrived to-day. I thought ~~xxxxxxx~~ it was a new "Hyphen" seeing the mess on the backcover... but I used to collect stamps and that was obviously a Belgian stamp.. Now, I'd only heard that there was a group of fans in Belgium, I didn't know there was a fanzine, so it didn't quite hit me right. I skipped most of the issue because it contained Con reports and I've read enough Con reports to stretch from here to Antwerp and back, what I did read was "Ah-Chee" Mercer's (is that a real name? - sorry if I offended, but it doesn't sound quite right) APCIOGY and a few letters. The former was hilarious. In some spots it was better than Willis -- and Willis is best in most spots, so that's saying something (altho' what I couldn't tell you). It reminded me most of Installment 2 of WILLIS DISCOVERS AMERICA in QUANDRY.

Peter Vorzimer's letter had his typical inurbanity, conceit and intolerance displayed all over it. I sure as hell hope that you don't take your opinion of American Fandom from Vorzimer. He assumes that when-

# Last Page

by JAN JANSEN

ART WORK THIS PAGE MUCKED UP BY DV  
Those relations I talked of in the previous edition of this column are far quicker on the uptake than I had thought. It must run in the family! I have just received three books in the Doubleday editions. Thanks! They'll be publishing a fanzine next. Who knows?

I have this time managed to swipe three pages, so I shall get some fanzine reviews in this time. Some will be old, but as far as possible I'll try to take only the more recent ones. For instance OCEPSIA, which arrived day before yesterday from Gregg Calkins, 2217 Eleventh Street, Santa Monica, Calif. Why don't you people number towns and states as well, Gregg? After that names, and in the end we could address all our mail with a stamp numbered from 1 to 0. For Britain from Wolt Willis. At 15p; 25p for 2. Apart from the considerably cut-down Therbliggs department, this issue is up to the excellent standard noted for fanzines where NAW is actively participating. Fine editorial, and an interesting column by Dean Grennell. McCain talks of the effect of the sudden slump in the field, where it concerns the quality of the stories and novels. Very well done, I agree with his conclusion that this might indeed raise the level which has perceptibly sunk during the boom of the last few years; and which was felt even in the high quality promags. Prelude to a Convention brings to light the evil workings of the London Circle in an attempt to make the Supermencon a riot. Happily the attempt did not go through. Mutual understanding was reached before regrettable events happened. Perhaps Walt will continue with the series and explain this about-face. Bloch's Unsolicited Testimonial about Wilson Tucker deserves praise for the way it handles this author's works,

while Gregg's fanzine poll seems to be able to grow into a real topten list, by relying on the opinions of the people who see most of the fan mags published: the faneds.

FECON, from Charles Lee Riddle at 103 Dunham Str. Norwich, Conn. U.S.A. 10p or 12 issues for \$1. - arrived here a couple of days earlier. Tho' Oopsia was late, this one was later still, being the first ish since March. Its quality makes up for the delay though. Missing in this fanzine is the letter column, a feature that really should be added. Harmon's I remember Fecon, is easily the best in this issue, scanning it from number one to the present. The short story by L. Stark as good as usual, Watkin's article on dreams, and McCain's on paranoias interesting. Carol McKinney does justice to justifiable margins, and the trouble it takes to get them done properly, whilst Terry Carr rambles along on about every possible subject even slightly connected with it. Mocauley handles the fanzine reviews, some unfortunately a bit outdated by now. I did enjoy the reviews though, especially Alpha's. We've got other worries now. Fecon notes would make me blush. Thanks for the attention given me, Lee. Another fine issue, with another? one coming very soon, it seems, to try and catch up on the 4 times yearly schedule.

Way back we received the second issue of THE NEW FUTURIAN. Michael Rosenblum of 7 Grosvenor Park, Leeds 7, England, has again managed to present us with a very readable number, especially of interest to the more serious fans. Most of the material consists of reviews of new and old books, discussions on literary quality and factual news. Eric Bentcliffe's article however carries some misleading information in that the French magazines have no Belgian edition, they are



only available in the original, and both are now monthly.

Two new fan-magazines have reared their ugly (?) heads in the British field: TRIODE from E. Jones 44 Barbridge Road, Festers Way, Cheltenham Glos. I've been hearing all sorts of things about the wonderful mag this would be, so perhaps it is due to this fact that it disappointed a little when it finally did arrive. Really, without this bragging I would most likely have gone ahead and put it near the top of the list of "bests". For it is very good indeed. Special mention for bringing Walt's The Alien Arrives for those who missed the Superman-con. Other top hits are Ving Clarke with Future History of Fandom, Mal Ashworth's Abacchus, and P. Economou Behind Bars. Sorry, that was M.B. The Art Folic presented is a terrific start-off in this series, and I hope they can keep up the standard set here. 9d per copy or 4 for 3/-. The other mag is "i", an apt abbreviation for the square root of minus one. This has just about hit the top of the field with this 1st attempt. With such contributors as EC Tubb, WAW, HJ Campbell, Stu MacKenzie, F. Arnold and Bryan Perry, ably complemented by N. Lindsay & Daphne Buckmaster, there's hardly any need for further compliments. Worth it at 1/6 a go. Address Hans Place, 5 London SW 1. (Stu MacKenzie.)

From Canada comes ABAS, to be exact Boyd Rayburn, 34 Lynd Ave, Toronto 3. Quite a bit of the issue before me is devoted to telling about a nice little chappy at Los Angeles, Peter Verzimer, and his continual meaning and dirt-raking. I enjoyed this, not because, as some of my correspondents seem to think, because I am at Daggers drawn with Pete, but because of the way it was written. Truly, very well done. Sounds is a regular feature devoted to sounds, which reminds me to boast about the Glenn Miller Story, which I've been to today. At least THIS was music. Some more features to round off the mag. No rates are given, so I can't quote, sorry.

Ben Grenfell also sent GRUE, his FAPA mag, although also available

from 402 Maple Ave, Ford Du Lac, Wis. at 15¢ per copy. Contents included I remember Degler, by Bob Tucker, an article on a semi-mythological fan character of the States. Unknown to me, I could personally find little interest in it, though it may have been ideal fare for the fan in the US. It was Bellefontaine Buffet, a report on the Midweacon by Phyllis E. Economou which runs off with the prize this issue. The idea of presenting the whole report as a menu is certainly original, and very effectively carried out. A page by Eck Bloch on a FAPAian congress, certainly sounds good, and two pages of humorous rhymes, followed by another highlight: Miscellania. Perhaps I was influenced by the opinion the editor holds on Gene Atry, but I certainly enjoyed this part. Besides Atry, you can read all about duplicators, the second Question, and a trip to R.T. in this section. Miscellania indeed. The FFW letter section enjoyable too. Must be amongst the best FAPazines of the present year, I should say. If not, then what must the others be like!

Back to England where Eric Jones (see Triode) publishes and edits SIDEREAL. Whilst this was the club-mag for the WCSEFG, it will now be continued independently. First ish carried a story by P. Mabbey, quite good, though nothing to rave about, some pro- and fanzine reviews. Very much enjoyed, a couple of weeks before SID arrived, was Con-Crastination. The things these Eric get up to! A second report by Joy Goodwin, I believe, (I have the issue filed away far too carefully, can't find it!) was also well-written, although it couldn't compare to EP's effort. Mention should be made of the method of production, which I had explained me at great length, and in my opinion is still far too much of an effort unless one has a large carriage typer. Size is 1/2 foolscap.

And this is all of the fanzine reviews for this time? I know I have left out a couple of dozen, but the paper costs too much to add still more pages to this issue of Alpha.

Perhaps some of you had thought to be rid of me, when you arrived at that last line. Indeed, had I tried, I would never have been able to make a double column like that and as neatly as it now does. However, there were a few further notes to be written about sundry subjects, which was why I reserved this page for them. I'd like to thank several American correspondents for the unexpected support I received in my seeming pen-fight with Peter Vorzimer. But I just can't understand why people who are themselves so free in the use of ostensibly disparaging remarks, should feel they have to enlighten me when I set out on the same track, because one unfortunate blighter happened to start alighting them at me. If Pete can call me an ugly cuss, after all I may be, surely the remark that I think he has a low taste is appropriate, and can be taken in the same spirit the first was made in. I accept the calling of names as part of fandom done without malice. But when you guys do it with that intention, why assume that we are dead-earnest in our derisions? Please, both of us here can take it just the same as any of you, possibly even better and more, but don't be surprised to get back more than you bargained for. That's called the boomerang effect, I believe.

I am writing this on the 14th; part of a particularly bright idea of dear Davy to get Alpha out every six weeks. I happened to be in his office in the beginning of the month, and mentioned Alpha. It's all ready, says the guy, excepting your Librarian's Corner, though we have ME's article for that, Last Page & the letter column. So I said, nice of you, what's happened, you going to be early? We agreed that it'd be a nice change from the usual course of events in the fanzine field. So here you are. I had a nice easy time this issue. Handed to me on a platter. And Wim, don't grumble at ME because you do not under-

stand French. Dave was too lazy to translate it, and it does add some variety to the 'zine. Let's say it is a special feature for the francophile of the Emerald Isle, then everyone will just adore it! We are considering going on a 6-weekly schedule, depending on suitable material being handy. So would those who have something to say, and (preferably) know how to say it, consider us as possible publication medium? It WILL depend on you! Before quitting let me voice another grouse against some people. Alpha has been sent out from the first issue on a rather haphazard basis of just hoping the people receiving it would be interested. This has obviously proved not to be so in several cases, as we have never heard from these people. This will therefore be their last ish. We have also sent out issues as exchange copies for coming, or already existing, but now defunct 'zines. We don't mind this folks, but I would appreciate it if you would at least inform us of the trouble which caused you to fold, or why you can't get started, or why issues are delayed ages. Unless we receive this information, we must believe that you have no interest whatsoever in Alpha, and feel it rather silly to send further issues. Which may explain the red cross at the bottom.

Yours in sorrow  
See you tomorrow.

JAN

~~.....~~ %%%  
 YOU RECEIVED THIS ISSUE BECAUSE  
 ..... YOU ACTUALLY SUBSCRIBED  
 ..... YOU ARE ON OUR TRADE LIST  
 ..... YOU DESERVE A GIFT SUE  
 - OR -  
 ..  .. WOULD YOU CARE TO SUBSCRIBE  
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 THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST ISSUE FOR  
 A/M REASONS IF A RED CROSS FIGURES  
 unless you ~~can~~ explain.