

THIS SIDE UP!

ALPHA

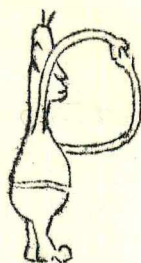
THIS IS NOT
THE BACOVER!

VOL II N°3

GRISHTTT !! WHOFFLITT
HORPUSTER BRESHITOT?



Editeur resp.:
Dave Vendelmans
130 Strydhof av.
Berchem (Anvers)



VOL. II n° 3

JANUARY 1956.

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Foreign repr.: You know.

Sub rates : see previous ish.

Exchanges : why not?

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" ALPHA " (this one) is edited and published by :
one Dave Vendelmans, who still lives at 130 Stryd-
hof avenue, Berchem; who has no reasonable excuse
to offer for same, and who insists on being a fan
(in spite of what a certain Greg Benford says...)

+++++

THIS ISSUE OF ALPHA, VOL. II n° 3 COMES TO YOU BECAUSE

(continued next ish).

CALLING ALPHAS!

(an editorial or something...)

Hi!

Well, we finally got it out. Hope you like it. Both of 'em. You see, it's still called ALPHA; at least mine is; Jan's is called "VHdTV" or something; which looks rather like Greek to me but may be Russian. Well, I hope you like it anyway...

Talking of likes and dislikes, may I respectfully remind you that any comments you may wish to make on thisish - and any subsequent ones of course- are to be sent to either Jan or myself, but on separate sheets of paper if possible. This is to avoid having to cut up your letter so that each of us will be able to keep the criticisms and/or praise that is destined to him for future reverence...

"Don't feel so cut-up about it" (Jack the Ripper)

I hope this will not cause you too much trouble. Oh thank you!

You will have noticed by now that my contribution is not very voluminous, only 18 pages in fact; still, I warned you about it... I told you that if I couldn't get enough "extra-special" material, you would probably be short-supplied this time. However, Jan has churned out a considerable amount of pages, so you won't be "done" on this issue anyway. Of course you'll say "it's not the quantity that counts..." and you'll probably be right, so why not send me something really terrific ???

I suppose you cats have been wondering what happened to the Jazz in my 'zine this month. Well, I have had quite a number of letters and articles on this subject, but I thought it would be a better idea to save them for a while and publish them later in my "JAZZ Parade" n° 2, which will appear some time in May or June, otherwise I shall be reprimanded again for publishing "old letters"... tcha! By the way, if anybody has any bright ideas regarding stories, articles, columns, illos, or whatnots that could be used to advantage in J.P., now is the time to start thinking seriously about it; so don't say I haven't warned you.

Vernon Mc'Cain sent me a llooonnng letter in which he made a thorough analysis of jazz music and people's comments thereon (very interesting) which would take up a considerable amount of space if I had to print it all -(and I must say it will be difficult to cut it...) so that the next J.P. will probably be bulky.

As you may know (or not) Jan has been to visit Gerfandom(?) or "Fandom über alles", or whatever they call it over there;

Personally, I think it's all "boche" myself...

They held some sort of a con over there, but I doubt if it even resembled a con! Apparently they talked about science-fiction

and probably guided missiles and suchlike... However, I suppose you will be hearing all about it from the Benfords or Anne Steul or somebody...

"I have an eye for beauty" said Jan, handing his copy to Ann Steul. I don't think he enjoyed himself much though; says he only had four bheers all night... and how can anyone enjoy himself on only four bheers??? Why, the other night, when I was at his place, he drank as many ports. I never touch it of course; gives me a headache. So he came up with something he called "Rum" (it looked it too!) and made me drink about a quarter of a bottle. Wasn't too bad though... However, when I finally returned home (I generally do you know), Yvonne said "Gosh, what a smell! One would think you had been drinking methylated spirits". "Oh" I answered, "so thash wa it wash... thought it wash Blog, hic!"

What is this thing..... called BLOG ???

I know it's a bit early, but it may interest you to know that we're putting on another TWERPCON this year - O.K. Ron Bennett, stop that howling like a wolf, you dog... I presume it will be in the month of June (and love) that we shall hold it and we can only hope that Milly and Jean Steer will fling open their doors and welcome us with open arms (and kick us out again with booted feet).... Oh thank you Milly and Jean (or, as Ron Bennett would say: "Thanks a Milly-Jean" (ugh!))

Now look folks, last year we only had one representative of British fandom over here. This year we want loads of them, you hear? Surely you're not going to risk leaving the British representation to a bloke like Ron Bennett??? He's got some queer notions at times you know... Sometimes he has some good ones too. If you don't believe me, ask Monique..... (owww! wowwwooooooo! grrrrr...! bow wow!)

Returning to Jazz (I can't stay away very long), I should like to remind you that Stan Kenton will be coming to England in the spring, presumably in April (maybe he's coming to Kettering to liven things up... He probably heard that Ah Chee would be there) After that, he's coming to Belgium around about the 29th., and although I've seen the guy here before, I'll be going to see him again. He's not bad you know - if you like that kind of music...

I saw Chet Baker a couple of months ago. Quite a show too, although I didn't think he was as good as on some records I've heard.

Lionel Hampton will be coming some time this month too, but I don't think I'll bother to go. He's got a good act of course, but he's been here before and he usually turns out the same kind of stuff each time. He's quite handy with the old vibes though. Things are beginning to look up on the jazz front! All we want over here (in Antwerp) is decent accomodation for these jazz do's. D'you know, there is only one decent hall in Antwerp and that can only hold about 500 people...

48 Get⁹⁹ returns...

(Eric Bentcliffe)

This issue of "YET" has orders: Yet must reach a conclusion about Sex! This would be easy if it were sex in general we were discussing, but when, instead, it's "sex in s.f.", things are not quite so simple.

The former could be stated to be a good thing, the latter to be a relatively good or bad thing. This topic has so many angles that in all honesty I can reach no one conclusion.

Let's take the pornography in s.f. for a start : this is a Bad thing. There isn't (fortunately) very much pornography in science-fiction and what there is, I feel is a result of crude writing technique rather than a deliberate attempt to arouse the reader.

A good writer can write about love-making and make it a word poem, obnoxious to no-one. The poorer craftsman attempts to do the same, but because of his lack of skill with words, fails, and comes up with something which appears off-colour to the more sensitive reader. Usually, the poorer writer errs by making his characters a little bit larger than life... his females always have breasts which are shaped like ripe pomegranates...., or hum like wineglasses when touched!

The more proficient craftsman sticks to the realms of believability. His females are just as attractive, but are more natural in form and emotions. They don't always walk with an insidious weave, nor go around with their mammary glands heaving and straining at the thin nylon of their garments...

However, I'm digressing again. As far as the pornographic sex in s.f. is concerned (and I think I've proved in the previous two columns that there is some porno in s.f.) I'm agin it! I don't think it's a good thing for science-fiction, because it can give readers the wrong idea about the media, especially when coupled with some of the "girlie" covers that we still have to suffer on certain magazines.

Before I leave the subject of obscene writings in s.f., I should like to say a word in the ear of a couple of folk who have written in and said that they believe there is no pornography in s.f. Look chums, neither you nor I found the examples of pornography I quoted to be particularly revolting. Most probably neither did the majority of the readers of Alpha, but then, most of

the long-term fan are a pretty broad-minded lot. I've taken the liberty of trying out one or two of the examples quoted previously on friends of varying degrees of broad/narrow-mindedness, and the results were much as I expected: some found obscenity therein, others did not.

Do you find the word "breasts" obscene or off-colour? No? Well, neither do I; but some people do. You'll find the word "bosom" used nine times for every one time you see "breasts" in print! At least in the English language. Presumably it is one of our hangovers from Victorian days, but nevertheless you'll find a heck of a lot of people affected to use the word in mixed company. Somehow, I seem to have gotten round to the theory of relativity!

Sex in s.f., other than that of a pornographic nature, can be an asset to the media if it is properly used and administered in the right places.

Those of us who remember the Gernsback days of mechanical monsters and mechanical characters, who thought that to kiss was the supreme thing for a man and woman, are glad that those days are over. But sex in s.f. can be overdone and unnecessary, and quite often is.

Quite often authors will bring in a little love interest to liven up a hackneyed theme. If this gives a new twist to the plot, then its use is quite legitimate.

Quite often too a writer, who is stuck for a couple of chapters to fill out a novel, throws in a romance just to make wordage. Sometimes he gets away with it and sometimes he doesn't. Here the usage is not legitimate.

If a story starts off with a highly technical description of a spaceship, then, after a couple of chapters we get a torrid scene of love-making in the passengers' quarters, then there are two ways the plot can go: and it can be either legitimate or illegitimate... and that's quite a good double-entente!

If the story continues with our love-birds in the background and resolves into a "thud and blunder pirates in space" thing, then, well... our author was trying to make a little bitty extra cash but he wasn't doing s.f. very much good.

There have been some quite notable s.f. stories, using sex as their basis, recently; notably in the Magazine of Fantasy and S. F. In these, sex has been used as it should be in science-fiction: in a natural manner, to enhance the plot theme, and to bring credence to the characters depicted.

There is an article by R.S. Richardson in the current issue of this magazine (Dec. 1955) which rather helps to illustrate the points I'm trying to make. The article is about the first colony on Mars. Richardson postulates a base camp of male personnel, who

EGOBOO INC.

"PUBLIC RELATIONS" DEPARTMENT.

OPEN LETTER TO FAN-EDITORS
=====

Dear Feds,

I have temporarily taken over the arduous task of reviewing the cream of contemporary science-fiction fan magazines, for the sole purpose of boosting our own insufficient and unsatisfactory production. This will become clearer in a few moments, perhaps... As a matter of fact, the word "cream" was, I think, a happy inspiration inasmuch that cream, as you are no doubt aware, can be either "fresh" or "rich", or else, -let's face it, "sour"... However, the main reason I've taken over this department is because Jan wasn't doing the job properly. Do you know, the guy was actually telling the poor struggling faneds exactly what he thought of their desperate efforts! Can you imagine that? Naturally, a lot of these unfortunates resented the merciless dissecting of their cherished brain-child, and, naturally they refused to comment favourably on our own 'zine, even though we knew of course that it was good...

So now you can see why I'm trying to remedy this unfortunate situation. I am naturally going to tell you what a wonderful job you are doing and how much we all appreciate the long hours of careful planning and drudgery you have put into your favourite brand of literature, so that you will feel obliged to do likewise and give us lots of moral and financial (?) support to our great cause...

Yours most unfaithfully,
(sgd.) Judas,
President,
A.S.F.F.C.,
"Public Relations" Dept.

And now, here they come :

A BAS - Nº7- Nov.1955 - Boyd Raeburn : Good cover by "Pat" Patterson and an interesting editorial containing two Con reports! However this only takes up about a dozen lines. I liked the pome about the "bus". "Derelicti Derogation" was amusing and contained some good humor; there were even a few laughs therein.

That was tough luck for old Thruppence Cadwalliger III. It just shows (agghh!) you doesn't it, what a bit of patience will do.

"Old Bill" I didn't fancy much, sorry. Alex (or Rich)Kirs' column wasn't bad, but contained some rather "crude" stuff again. However, I can take it... I don't know about the others though...

L'"Après-midi" and "B.N.F." were O.K., I suppose... "The Vice", a rather incomplete review of fanzines... Yep, there was no "Alpha"... Now the "Sounds"... ha! that really is something. Wish Rog Feather could do a review for me... could he? Rog ??? Preferably on modern stuff natch! Never mind what Archie Mercer says... or Ron Bennett! The "Scuto ... oh hell! you know what I mean business" was of course very interesting, especially Pete Vorzimer's violent outburst. I love violent outbursts. In fact I've a good mind to annoy someone on the off-chance of creating another violent outburst by some BNF or little F...

On the whole it was a good ish. Atta Boyd!

CAMBER N°5- Alan Dodd : Who poses for your cover Alan? Looks O.K. to me. She is real isn't she? You couldn't have drawn that out of your head, now could you? or could you?

This is quite a 'zine... 68 pages, of which 13 are used up on reviews of fanzines. This time Alpha made its appearance amongst the 36 'zines under discussion. I see Jan gets all the credit this time. Still, after all, he is more active than I am. I suppose I shouldn't be in fandom at all really... not enough "fan-hours" per day... However, ... as I said, this is quite a 'zine, containing columns, humorous stories, and fanletters (this takes up nearly half the 'zine and, altho' very interesting, is I think a leetle too long??? No?)

EISFA - Buck & Juanita Coulson (N°10) : Mostly about the Clevecon. Some good art and letters. I didn't think the "true but screwy dept" was so screwy... After all, the earth is an island isn't it? hah!

EPITOME- N°6- Mike May: Well, did you find Corey, or didn't you? Sorry, let's start at the beginning. An amusing column by Curtis D. Janke (what's the D. for?) altho' I don't believe it. I can't imagine a fan like Dean being so mean! and I don't believe the story of the poor little Grennelins, so there! I wonder about the sauce tho! Enjoyed the STEmag N°3. Haha! I'm lukiing forard to the nekst izzu...

GRUE N° 25- Dean A. Grennell: No need to go into details about this 'zine, which is up to its usual very high standard. One thing that impressed me were the very amusing illos. Some of them were a bit grim too... such as the one about poor little Julia huh? You're darned right you know dag about a tired fan not producing anything worthwhile. I enjoy fanning immensely but I'm not always allowed the necessary time and then I have to rush it... Consequently the result is rather unsatisfactory. Sorry to see some people are not going to have the pleasure of receiving "Grue" in the near future. I hope this doesn't include us!

FRONTIER N°5 - Dale R. Smith.: This is not a fanzine the like of which is not usually found in reviews, but I have long wanted to talk about it. This is what you might call a "serious and constructive" fanzine, but it makes sense and will probably still be going strong long after most fanzines are but a memory. It is actually the official bulletin of the "Society for the Advancement of Space Travel" and is edited by my good friend Dale R. Smith of Minneapolis. It contains seve-

ral interesting articles on rockets, artificial space sattelites, and, in short, anything connected with space or space travel. The price is \$ 3.00 for 6 issues to Dale R. Smith, 3001 Kyle Ave., Minneapolis 22, (Minn.) Those of you who wish to become members of the S.A.S.T. are requested to send \$ 1.50 to... well, I suppose Dale Smith (is it ?) or to Mike Wallace, who is the European Representative. I apologise to those of you who have already heard all about this, but I'm sure a lot of our local yokels haven't yet.

HYPHEN - N°15- Walt Willes & Chuck Harris: There's one thing about Hyphen that fascinates me : the paper! Practically every other page a different colour. I admit the general effect is quite remarkable but I should think it takes time... I mean to say, if you have to mix these different colours up before you dupe them... or maybe you just drop the various packets of paper from a certain height and sweep them all together, thus getting the necessary mixture...? Whatever the dreadful secret, there's only one thing I must say about Hyphen in general and this one in particular : it's a waw!

" I " n°5 - by Joy and Vinç: This is one of the lesser eyes. Personally I didn't think it was up to its usual standard. Apart from the letters, which are always interesting of course, and the "Symposium", it didn't contain anything of "world-shaking significance", still, considering the trouble you had with it, I think you did pretty well. Returning to the Symposium, it seems that one of the most ticklish problems at parties is the booze. Well, for those of you who are interested, this is how we did it at the Twerpcon: an arrangement was made with one of our local brewers to deliver us a liberal supply of bheer, for which of course he received payment (the Twerps chipped in of course). The bheer was bottled and any bottles remaining after the con were taken back at costprice. Naturally, anybody who wanted a drink at the con had to pay for it. The price was slightly higher than the price we paid 'per bottle', but still less than the normal price for a glass of bheer at any normal "café". We also supplied sandwiches, which could be bought for a reasonable sum, but of course this wasn't a "regular" con, 't was more like a party. There was also an admittance charge, payable in advance, to make sure we didn't lose too much on the deal... Actually, we split about even. I guess I'd better pack this up or it will develop from a fanzine review into a Conreport!

"O" Gary H.Labowitz - N°1 : Ha! his first! A jolly good cover. One can do with four arms in this racket! I'm sorry to say there's not a great deal in this 'zine; apart from the editorial and the chess column, it contains only ads and books for sale etc... However, next one promises to be better. Ye editor pleads for material and illos.

ORBIT - N°7 - George Gibson: At the bottom of the contents page it says that thish has been in the hands of Ron Bennett - as if we didn't know... with ads for PLOY all over the pages and Cecils in every corner... But apart from that it was a good ish with some damn good material by Don Allen, Ah-chee Mercer, Terry Jeeves and Henry Allen. There's also an interesting article on Astronomy for beginners...
(page 10)

ORION ÷ Vol.3 N°13 - Paul Enever : I like ORION. It's refreshing. It's got a binding of sorts too, and of course loads of stuff by John Berry (not bad) Archie Mercer (very good) haha! and (of course) the Eds who are always delightfully amusing to say nothing of the illos of course (that's the third of course - which makes this a three course affair I suppose) Good ish thish...

PHANTASMAGORIA Vol.2 N°1 - Derek Pickles and Stan Thomas: Two eds are always better than one I think (see Alpha) because then you get a longer editorial or else two of 'em for the same price. You also get a lot of competition, resulting in better material all round (at least sometimes you do) However... in all honesty I must say that, apart from the letters (yes again!) there was not a great deal that could be described as literary gems or humorous articles. Even Nigel was not funny... The profiles however I like. Interesting. How about having some female profiles next? yuk yuk! drooolll....

TACITUM - N°5 - Benny Sodek : a very neatly produced 'zine, like most American 'zines ('s right you know), containing fanzine reviews, a report on the Clevention and on the Agacon (both amusing). Also a "Dallas Derogation" along the lines of the A BAS "Derelicti" (also rather amusing) and of course the inevitable letter-column (what - or is it which- fanzine would be without them?). On the whole, quite a good ish.

UMBRA - N°9 - John Hitchcock : Thish contains the first part of John's life. Interesting too. It also contains Jan Jansen's fanlife, and the money he spent on various activities (fannish of course). I notice he doesn't mention the money he wheedled out of me for his nefarious schemes... nor the hours I spent wearing my fingers to the bone, not to mention my brain... Oh well, that's life I suppose. Not that I regret the time I spent on fanning, quite the opposite. I enjoy it; wish I had more time though...

VAGABOND N°2 - John W. Murdock : A beautifully produced 'zine. I thought once that Alpha was fairly neat at times, but this has "A" licked hollow! Good material too. Yep, this promises to become quite a thorn in the side of some of the "regular" 'zines. Attaboy John!

BIRDSMITH N°11 - Vernon L. McCain : This just arrived a couple of days ago so may still be included in the list. It appears to be a publication of the Society for the Preservation of Robert Bloch, and the first two pages contain some remarkable bargains to be had for a song (some of them would most likely have to be for an "opera"). The rest of the 'zine is all about F.A.P.A. and reviews of Fapazines. Interesting et al.

And that, I'm afraid, is all for the time being. No doubt there are a couple more I should have liked to include, but I haven't the room. Also please accept my humble apologies if some of these 'zines under review are a trifle "old-fashioned" by the time you get this... but then, I haven't yet received the new ones, yet...

'bye now,

Dave

to be...?

BEING AN EXCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN A CERTAIN MR. M. ASHWORTH (ALIAS "HARRY NORDEGG") AND A CERTAIN, OR RATHER UNCERTAIN MR. D. VENDELMANS (ALIAS "ADAM HALLAN") ON THE VERY IMPORTANT MATTER OF BEING "ALL RIGHT".

(Permission for publication gracefully granted by the above-mentioned Mr. Ashworth. May the Lord Ghu have mercy on his soul...)

To Mr. M. Ashworth,
40, Makin street
Tong street
BRADFORD 4 (Yoicks!)

130, Strydhof ave.,
Berchem-Antwerp.
September 23rd. 1955

Dear Sir,

I duly received your worthy "ROT" in this morning's mail. I have read it through and have found it most enjoyable. However.... one thing gives me cause for some considerable speculation : Having read your article on Englishmen and Foreigners etc., entitled "A GOOD THING", I should appreciate if you would let me know exactly where (or how) I stand. Am I "ALL RIGHT" ? or am I "ALL WRONG" ? or merely "ROUND THE BEND" ? I hope I am not "RUM" because that would certainly dampen my spirits...

I was born in England (Gateshead) in 1916; but only lived there for 2, 1/2 years, after which I left for Belgium (with my parents of course), where I stayed until 1940. With the advent of war I returned to England and stayed in London for nearly three years (off & on) under the watchful eye of the British Army. In between these short stays in London, I was moved successively (but not always successfully) or should I say "respectively" (but not always "respectfully") to : Birmingham, Bewdley, Carlisle, Warrington, Carke, Altringham, Chard, Liverpool, Watchett, Sheffield (almost) Barrow-in-Furness, St. Agnes, Bolton, Manchester (yes!) Wilmslow...etc., and, of course: Gibraltar. (And they talk about joining the navy and seeing the world!)

I may add that my Father is Belgian and my Mother was English; My Mother's Mother was Irish and her Father Scotch. My wife was born in Holland and, although she still retains her Belgian nationality, speaks English fluently and makes delicious Italian spaghetti. One day an Italian started talking to her in his native tongue, thinking she was an Ity, because she has dark hair and eyes. My daughter Patricia (an Irish name) although born in Belgium, nevertheless remains a British subject. Besides all this, I have a nephew who is a proper monkey... (now don't start jumping to unnecessary or disrespectful conclusions)!

In view of (a) this rather erratic globe-trotting on my part and (b) my somewhat involved ancestry, I can assure you it would relieve my bewildered heart considerably if you could let me know as soon as possible exactly what my position is (at the moment it is fairly perpendicular, but who knows how long this happy state of affairs will last...) as the matter is constantly on my mind (go on, sneer!) and will undoubtedly lose me many hours of much-needed shut-eye.

I also have a feeling (yes, it happens occasionally), that a friend of mine, a certain individual called Jansen (you know, Vlaanderen's leading authority), is in a similar situation. Of course, I've suspected for a long time that he was probably "ALL WRONG" - or at least "ROUND THE BEND", but perhaps you can define his correct social position (his financial position I already know of course) so that I may eventually take the necessary safety precautions.

Awaiting your prompt reply on this matter that is very dear to me, I am, Dear Sir,

Your obedient serpent,

Dave (snakehips?) Confusesus.

oooooooooooooh!

To: D. Wendelmans
130 Strydhof etc...

40, Makin street, etc..

September 29th. 1955.

Dear Sir,

Regarding your damnable impudent inquiry as to whether or not you are All Right. It sounds to me - and I say this merely as a preliminary opinion - that you are just a Crazy-Mixed-up-Cosmopolitan, but since this classification does not exist you can obviously not remain in it for very long.

Coming from Gateshead is a Bad Start; this makes you, unless I mistake, more or less a Geordie and you know What That Means. And then - to make matters worse - you go and live in a Foreign Country. Fortunately not one of the Worst Foreign Countries, but the fact remains. Then you come back and go to London. Now this bit is very controversial. It depends where you went in London whether you came anywhere near to being All Right at that time. If you went to the Wrong places you were about as Wrong as you can get and probably even a RUM type. If, on the other hand, you went to the Right Places, you were just about as Right as you can get. All very Controversial you see. The Right Places are: inside, just outside, and in the construction of Buckingham Palace. The Wrong Places are: down sewers, inside Big Ben and in Piccadilly Circus after 11 o'clock at night. Or in Bertram Mills! circus at any time. But I think you needn't worry too much. In view of your subsequent wanderings to the more respectable parts of the country, there is really quite a large possibility of being All Right.

Jansen, on the other hand, is probably a Bounder (you know, like a kangaroo). Shun him! (i.e. tell him to stand to atten- SHUN!)

Assuring you of my complete insanity at all times,

(sgd.) Harry Nordegg,

(English gentleman)

woooooooooooooooooow!

To: Harry Nordegg,
(English gentleman?)
etc...

130, Strydhof etc...

November 29th. (?)

(continued on next page
I hope).....

(continued from the other page- I hope):

Dear Harry,

Notwithstanding the fact that you designate yourself as an English gentleman - a term that appears not only contradictory, but highly improbable- I trust you will excuse the seeming latitude I allowed myself by using your first name.

Now first of all, I wish to apologise - not because of any feelings of inferiority, but merely as a matter of personal ethics - for the delay in answering your somewhat aggressive missile, but business matters had to be attended to and therefore all other personal - and, I may add, trivial- matters have perforce been temporarily abandoned.

Referring to your last letter and coming across your classification (~~unauthorised~~ I should say) of my international status, I noticed you used the term "Crazy Mixed-Up Cosmopolitan". Now, I admit that, not being perhaps a true English gentleman, the term may not have registered correctly on my brain (that is part of the cranium where you probably have a blank space; I'm sorry, I meant "part of the human cranium" which, in your case, does not apply), I am nevertheless of the opinion that this classification is, to say the least, extremely vulgar, and I should like to have a fuller explanation of same at your public convenience.

What you mean exactly by "the more respectable parts of your country" I cannot imagine. I can only hazard a guess that it is in or around Buckingham Palace, where I happened to be quite near one day in the summer of 1954. The only other place you didn't mention was round about Yorkshire, but that cannot, of course, be one of the Right Places, for obvious reasons...

As to Jansen (I presume you mean Jan Jansen) being a "Bounder" or "Kangaroo", I presume you are exceptionally correct, because when I showed him your last letter, he went "hopping mad", therefore the term probably suits him "down to the ground" - which is about as low as one can get, at least as long as one is alive-

Hoping to receive some more misinformation from you in some unpredictable future, and, in spite of everything, assuring you of my greatest depreciation of anything you may have to say regarding the matter of being All Right, and I, ham,

Yours sinecurely,

(sgd.) Adam Halian,

Foreign Correspondent.

huhuhuhuhuhuhuhuhuhuhuh!

To: Adam Halian, etc...

Strydner... etc.,

40, Makin street,

Hammers & Tongs etc...

December 20th.1955

Me Dear Fellow,

My Ghod, you know; I mean to say - My Ghod! You foreign bounders rahly do get worse you know. I mean to say- you do! By Gad! Why in my Jay - By Gad - we'd have sent a Gunboat up the river -you know- the first time you'd looked us right in the eyes. I don't know what the Old Empire's coming to, Bai Jove - I'll bet they haven't sent a Gunboat up a river in months now! Months, I mean- By Ghod! No wonder the Old Empire's going to the Dogs; I mean to say-Damn it-

No wonder! How the Devil can they hope to hold an Empire together without sending a Gunboat up somebody's river every other day... It's damned preposterous Sir, damned preposterous!

Once you let these hot-headed youngsters with all these damned new-fangled Peace-notions in their heads get into the Government, the Old Country (and, of course, the Old Empire) is ruined. I mean - ruined. A damnable state of affairs. Wasn't like that in my day you know! No Sir! - not in my day; then we'd just send a gun-boat up the river. That's all there was to it; no more trouble with anyone after they'd had a gunboat up their river, you know. Damn it, no. No nonsense after that. There's no arguing with a Gunboat up your river you know. No damme! Just no arguing with it. That's what we did in my day. You won't remember it though. The Old Empire was a Force To Reckon With in those days. Anyone who said it wasn't just got a gunboat up their river. No nonsense; no arguing. Just a gunboat up their river. You have got a river haven't you ?

Yours etc...

(sgd:????)

weeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeell!

Note: The Defence has nothing further to say at the moment. It has not even bothered to answer the above lot of sinister savageness, for the simple reason that it considers the whole thing merely as the insane rambling of a diseased mind. Mind you, the Defence would like to add, as a matter of interest, that it has got a river, BUT- and this is a matter of great speculation- HAS THE PLAIN TIFF GOT A GUNBOAT???

Thanking you all for your kind attention,

(sgd.): Slanders of the River.

????????????????????????????????

"CALLING AL PHANS" (continued from page 4)

Talking of halls, an amusing incident occurred here the other day at one of our cinemas; the "REX" I believe it was. During the course of the afternoon, the management received a phone call, presumably from the British Consulate, saying that the Duke of Kent was paying a flying visit to Antwerp and would like to attend the show that was running at the time, called "To catch a thief" , with the Grace Kelly woman, and would they be so kind as to accord him every facility. This of course they did, and when a beautiful Cadillac drove up to the door and parked right in front of the cinema (which normally would never be allowed), they came out and bowed him in and gave him the best place in the house. Half way through the performance, they brought him tea and cakes and finally, when the show was over, he was bowed out again and stepped into his car and was driven away.... only to be arrested shortly afterwards.

He was no more the Duke of Kent than you or me of course, but merely a Dutch seaman who had cleverly impersonated him. He did it all "for a joke" he said. Rather cute wasn't it? Too bad they caught him.... Is all for now. Tata!

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Done

Poste restante...

I have a few letters here that might be of interest to you. There are not many because the other ones I have received contain numerous references to jazz and I would like to keep them for the next issue of "Jazz Parade" which will be out in the early summer (or maybe late spring if I can get enough suitable material). The other reason there aren't many is because (probably) I haven't written many myself. You know, I've made quite a discovery lately : I've found out that if you don't write letters to fen or femmes very often, you don't seem to get half as many letters from the postman... Now I wonder how that is ? I must look into it...

First on my list we have a one from Ghod in America; Yes, BOB BLOCH:

" Tempus does have a way of fugiting, or so I've noticed in the last 38 years. During the fugation a number of things have occurred -- such as the Cleveland Convention and the postconventional activities here in Weyauwega, which you've probably read about in various fanzines.

More recently we were visited by the Palmers and the Hamlings. Bill and Frances had never been up here and it was the first time they'd met Marion. A pleasant enough occasion. Hamling asked me to take over Mari Wolf's FANDORA'S BOX, and so it looks as if I will be conducting a fan-column for IMAGINATION unless something intervenes. In addition, I've managed to scatter a few stories about, and hope to do more this winter. More mundane activities - appearing on TV and writing for it - have taken an undue amount of time this fall.

Healthwise, we're all in good shape and Sally Ann, my daughter((oops!)), is 12 years old now. Getting to the age where I have to hide all the fanzines in order to save her from corruption. Naturally, when Tucker came up here in September, I had her sent away during his stay ((maybe I shouldn't have printed this huh?))

Did I mention to you how pleased I was with the Bulmers? ((No.)) Very nice people indeed... and my opinion soars still higher after yesterday, at which time I received NEBULA and read Ken's powerful and moving story SUNSET; with, of course, a Harry Turner illustration which undoubtedly used Walt Willis for a model.

No, I hadn't heard that Alpha was undergoing fission. Will there be two titles in the future -- AL and PHA? Or perhaps ALPHA and BETA? In any case, we readers will have to make the most of it. Alpha loaf is beta than none..."

++++++ : Well Bob, you seem to be kept pretty busy these days.
I share your sentiments about the Bulmers. Very charming indeed! I hope to be able to renew my acquaintance this summer, if all goes well. You know, I have to do the same thing with my fanzines (and other things). I have to hide them from my daughter too, but not to save her from corruption (she's only four), but merely to save them for myself...

No, ALPHA remains as was, with the exception that Jan does exactly as he pleases with his half of the 'zine and I ditto with the other half. I suppose it has certain advantages... Tempus alone will tell. Anyway it was Jan's idea so... bare with us and perhaps you will be able to lift the veil that hides the naked truth behind it all...

And here's a letter from a femme-fan, yeowwwwoowwww!!!(sorry)
PHYLLIS ECONOMOU:

" You are forgiven ((that's nice)). Neglecting correspondence is one of my pet indoor sports. In fact, the only reason you are receiving this ever-so-prompt reply to your letter is because at Christmas time I'm so overflowing with the brotherhood of man (or is it the sisterhood of man -- no, that sounds odd, if colorful- So how would you express my holly-decked Yuletide feelings? That's a very interesting question. I think I'll take it up with Fapa.
((Why not take it up with Eric Bentcliffe??? He's the authority on matters concerning the sexes))

Wish I could attend one of your cons! I'm hoping in time to attend one in England, and will perhaps meet you there. Maybe in '57, as I think London has a good chance of getting the con and I shall go if I have to swim!

.... if inspiration strikes, and I get the pornographic sequel to "Behind Bars" off to Eric Bentcliffe ((see what I mean?)), I would like to be represented in Alpha. So stick around eh?

++++++: I'll stick. You know, I wish I could attend one of your cons too. Only it's a financial impossibility for me. You folks over there seem to be able to get over here much easier than we can get over there (you savvy?) I suppose the cost of living over there is lower than over here, or else the people over there have bigger wages than the people over here. However that's neither here nor there, or is it? Heck, shut him up somebody. Ta!

Now here's a problem. Rather ticklish. It's raised by :
ERIC BENTCLIFFE :

I received a copy of VOID from Greg Benford the other day; quite a nice little mag. Seems Continental fandom is gradually awakening... and it will be very interesting to watch it develop. Only one thing worries me: German fandom is bound to contain some people who fought against us in the last war... If they should happen to start boasting...

+++++ : Now there we have a point that was bound to crop up sooner or later. In fact I have doing a lot of thinking along similar lines. As a rule, I dislike and avoid anything that resembles politics... because there is such a lot of corruption going on nowadays that you can hardly trust your own mother. However, I don't think that this case can be classified under the heading "politics". It's more a matter of human relationship. Now, speaking for myself, I have never liked Germans much. I think they are impossible people; arrogant, selfish and... yes, destructive. Of course, I don't exclude the possibility of there being some decent Germans somewhere, but if there are, I have yet to meet them! As John Hynam said, in a letter to me some time ago;

" thanks for Alpha and the German mags - snag here is : I can read any French stuff you care to send me, but my German is rudimentary to the point of being non-existent. However, they weren't entirely lost : I passed them on to our Doktor Ludwig Schnurrer from Dinkelsbühl, who is with us for a year. He has a charming personality; between wars, Germans have, haven't they?"

Anyway, we all have our opinion on the subject. I suppose they can't stand us either, but just kid us along... I don't know. I should like to have your opinion on this subject, which I think is of major importance to us fen...

To round off this batch of missiles, I'd like to quote an extract from fandom's most glamorous personality, (well one of them anyway), that adorable hunk of flesh, that most interesting:

SHAMEY MARRIOTT: I have finally made the plunge and come to live in the Big Bad City, but it's great fun, absolutely fabulous. I have been here three weeks and have had more fun than in three months back home ((don't you ever work?)) Before I came to live in London I did not realise what an odd load ((yes, those were her words!)) the London O are, but I must say that they are the kindest and most generous load ((it's there again)) of people ((aha!)) I have ever come across or could ever hope to - with one exception... ((now you've got me curious))

+++++ : Well, as I said before, I enjoyed the Globe atmosphere too and only wish I had your luck to live in the great city...

And that folks is all for this time. I sincerely hope that you enjoyed it and look forward to your comments. Don't forget to send separate comments to Jan and myself, or, if you write only to one of us (it's cheaper that way) write your comments on separate sheets of paper will you? Ta!

' bye for now,

Dave

This half-issue of ALPHA, Vol.II N°3 is published by DAVE VENDELMANS who still lives (ain't it wonderful?) at 130, Strydhof ave. Berchem. (page 18 (and the last)).