



THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

Jeff Coakley

PROOF GAMES: Rated PG

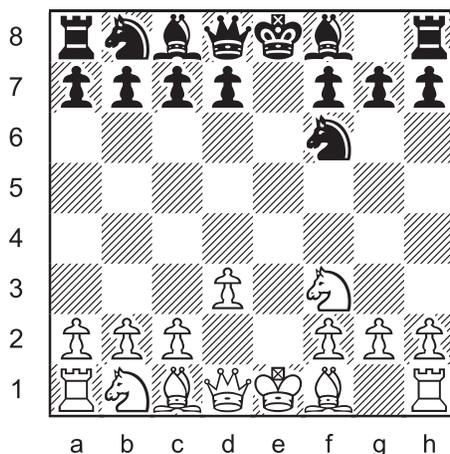
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The task in a *proof game* is to show how a given position can be reached in a legal game. The puzzles in this column have a *move stipulation*. The position must be reached in a precise number of moves, no more and no less. The first two problems are proof games in 4.0 which means four moves by each side.

The positions may be amusing, and the strategy confusing, but the moves are legal.

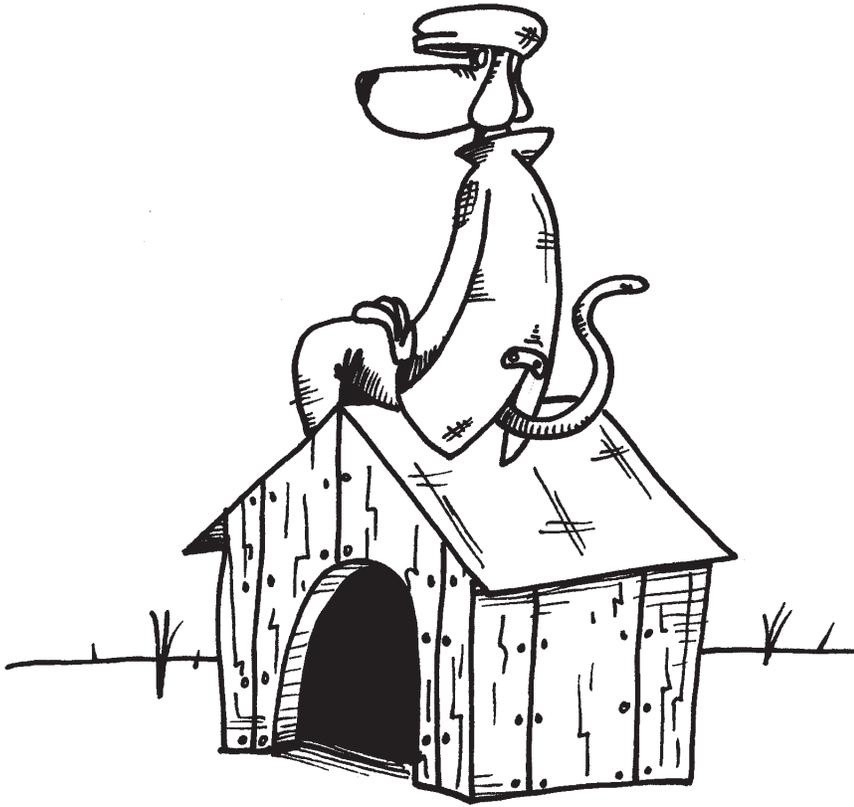
Proof Game 65



This position, with White to play, was reached in a game after each player made exactly four moves. What were the moves?

The Chess Detective's Handbook

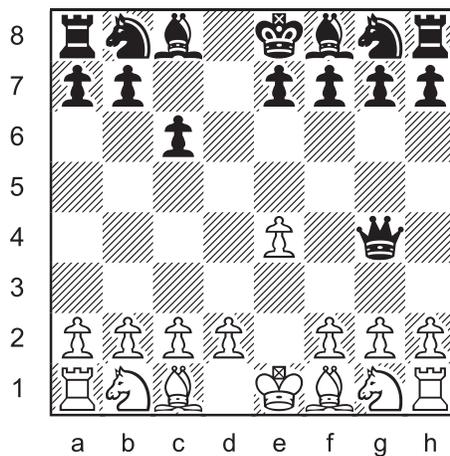
by Harmonius Hound



Chapter 7

A Quiet Place to Ponder the Facts

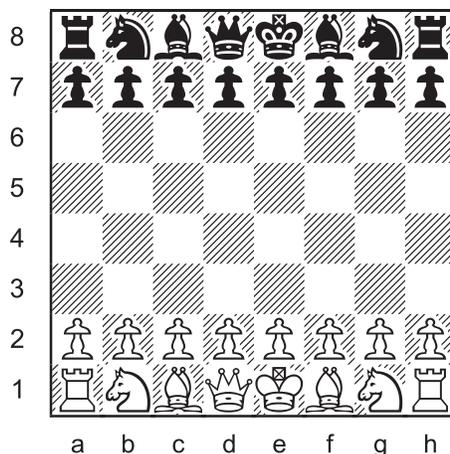
Proof Game 66



This position was reached after Black's fourth turn. What were the moves?

A *synthetic game* is similar to a proof game. But instead of finding the move sequence that leads to a given position, the task is to compose a game that ends with a particular move.

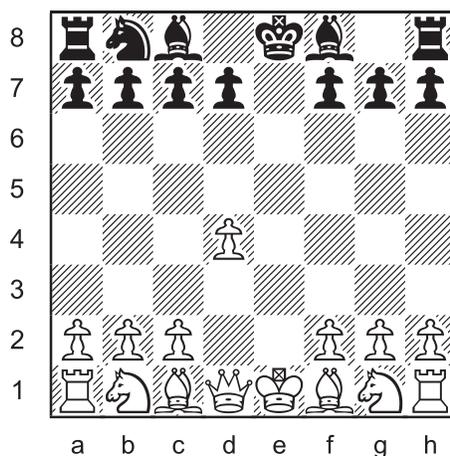
Synthetic Game 29



Compose a game that ends with the move **4...c4#**.

The two longer games this week are length 4.5 and 5.5. As usual, each step forward makes the path back more difficult to retrace.

Longer Proof Game 31 (4.5 moves)

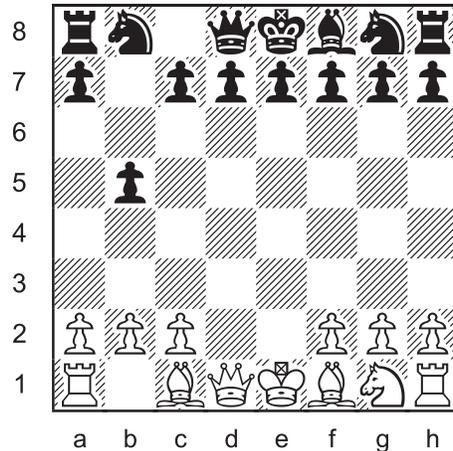


This position was reached after White's fifth turn. What were the moves?

The final proof game (PG) is pushing the limits of solvability for less experienced detectives. But the fact that Black has captured three pieces in five turns may encourage them to make the effort.

Harmonius Hound once referred to it as *The Peculiar Case of the Misguided Minors*. Perhaps more “parental guidance” was in order.

Longer Proof Game 32 (5.5 moves)



This position was reached after White's sixth turn. What were the moves?

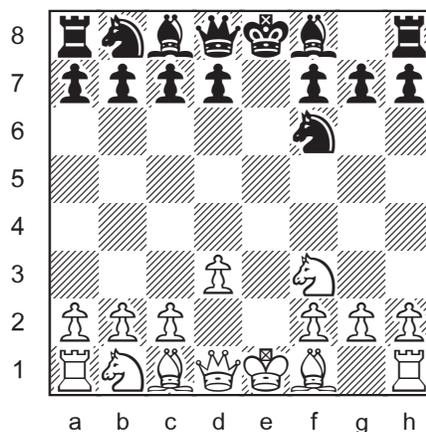
SOLUTIONS

All proof games by J. Coakley, *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2017).

PDF hyperlinks. You can advance to the solution of any puzzle by clicking on the underlined title above the diagram. To return to the puzzle, click on the title above the solution diagram.

Archives. Other columns with similar problems can be found in the Puzzling Side archives.

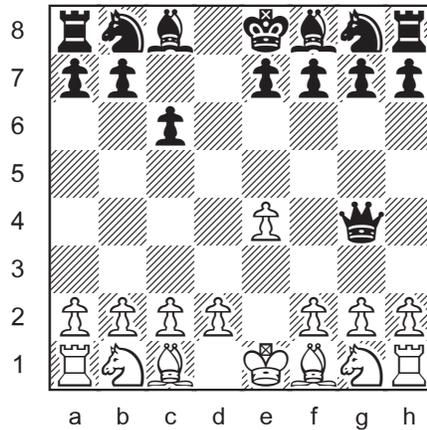
Proof Game 65



1.d3 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.Nf3 d3 4.exd3 Nf6

The position could also arise from a poorly played Russian Defence: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 Nxe4 4.d3 Nf6 5.Nf3. But that is 4.5 moves.

Proof Game 66

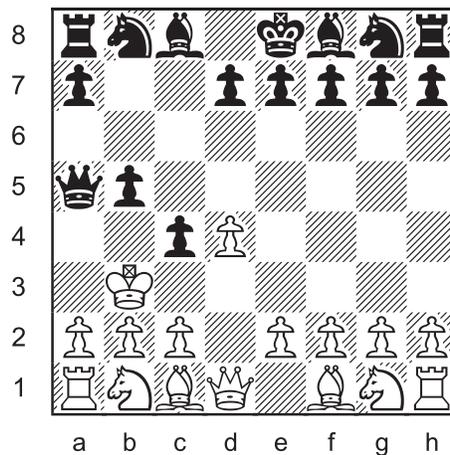


1.e3 c6 2.Qg4 Qc7 3.Qxd7+ Qxd7 4.e4 Qg4

A pair of tempo moves by the white pawn and black queen.

Synthetic Game 29

Hermann Stamm-Wilbrandt 2004



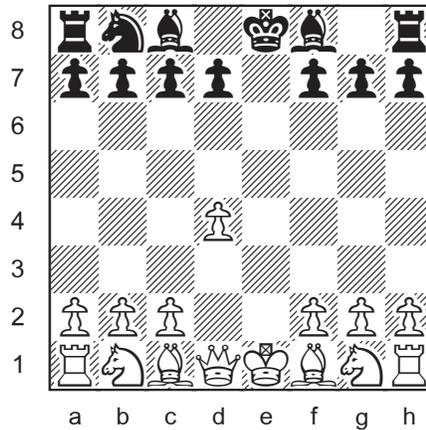
1.d4 c5 2.Kd2 b5 3.Kc3 Qa5+ 4.Kb3 **c4#**

Innovations in the Benoni Defence. 2...b5 can be replaced by 2...d5.
Black's first two moves can be interchanged.

[August 2023: Also possible is 2...d5 3.Kd3 Qa5 4.Be3 c4#.]



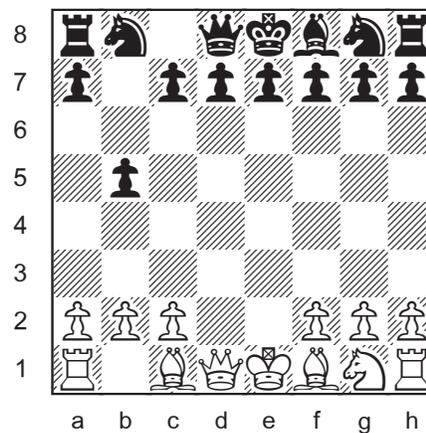
Longer Proof Game 31 (4.5 moves)



1.d4 e5 2.dxe5 Nf6 3.exf6 Qxf6 4.e3 Qd4 5.exd4

A pseudo-impostor on d4.

Longer Proof Game 32 (5.5 moves)



1.e4 b5 2.Bc4 Bb7 3.d3 Bxe4 4.Nd2 Bxd3 5.Nf1 Bxf1 6.Bxf1

Deceptive manoeuvres by the bishops and white knight, with Orbán effect on f1 (*when a piece captures on its original square*).

This proof game could be made even tougher by extending it to 6.0 moves with 6...b4.



Until next time!

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