



THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

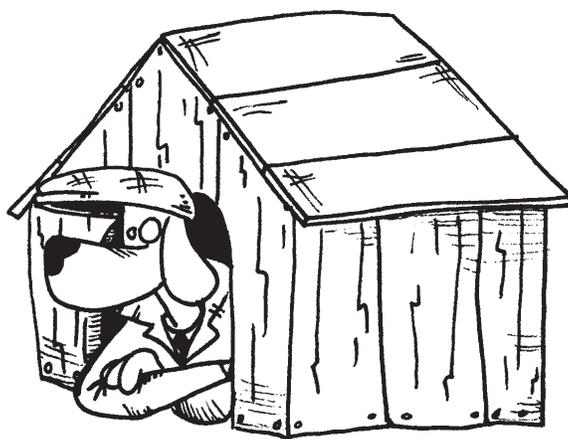
Jeff Coakley

PROOF GAMES Royal Dances

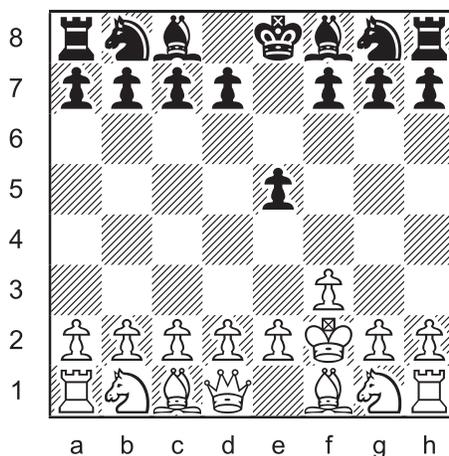
number 203

September 27, 2021

Certain unnamed pop psychologists have postulated that chess puzzles are an effective antidote for the blues and blahs of modern life. This column presents some proof that they may be right.



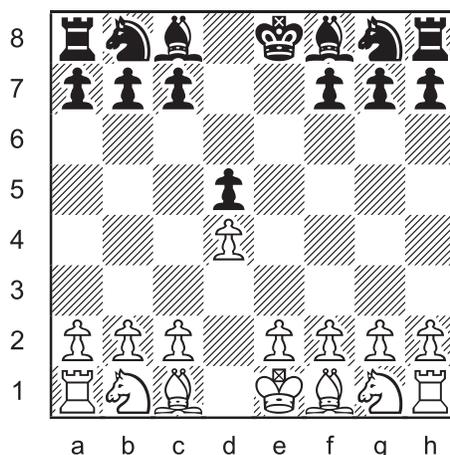
Proof Game 92



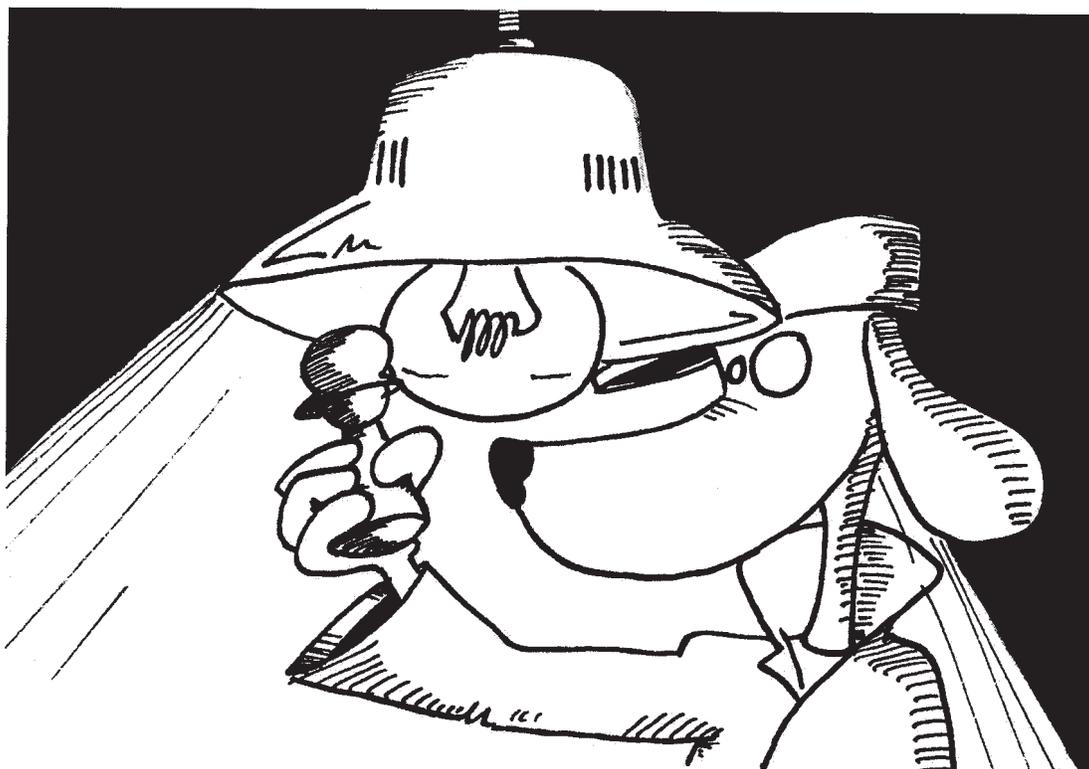
This position, with White to play, was reached in a game after each player made exactly four moves. What were the moves?

The general aim of a proof game is to *prove* that a position is legal by showing that it could happen in an actual game. In most puzzles of this type, the goal is to reach the given position in a precise number of moves. No sooner, no later. The positions may be wacky, and the strategy lacking, but the moves are legal.

Longer Proof Game 88 (4.5 moves)



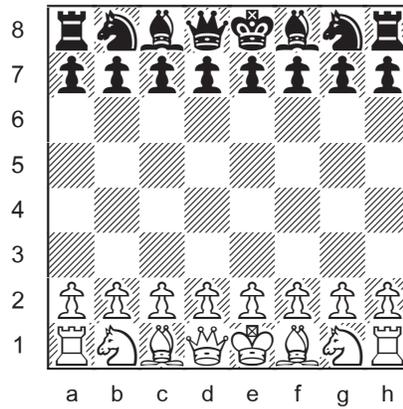
This position was reached after White's fifth turn. What were the moves?



Unblinded By The Light

The next puzzle is a *synthetic game*. 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. In this case, the shortest game with mate by en passant.

Synthetic Game 46



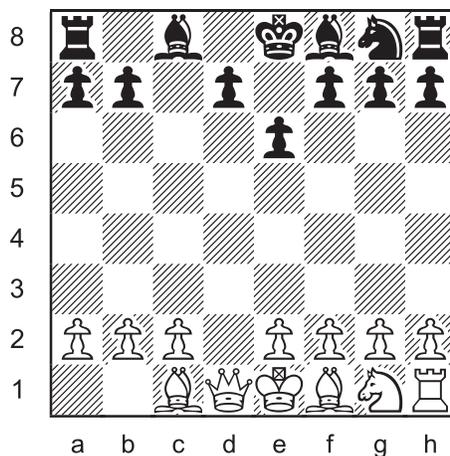
Compose a game that ends with mate by an en passant capture on White's 6th turn.



Alien Transmission

The following two problems are twins. The second position is the same as the first except there is no bishop on c1. Solve one and the other should be easy.

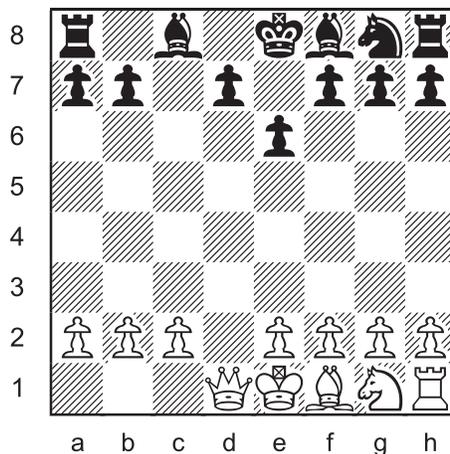
Longer Proof Game 89 (6.5 moves)



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



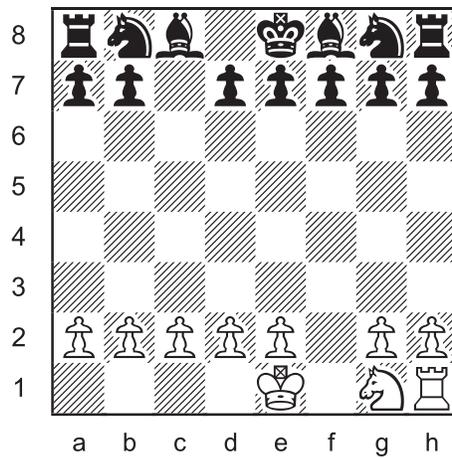
Longer Proof Game 90 (6.5 moves)



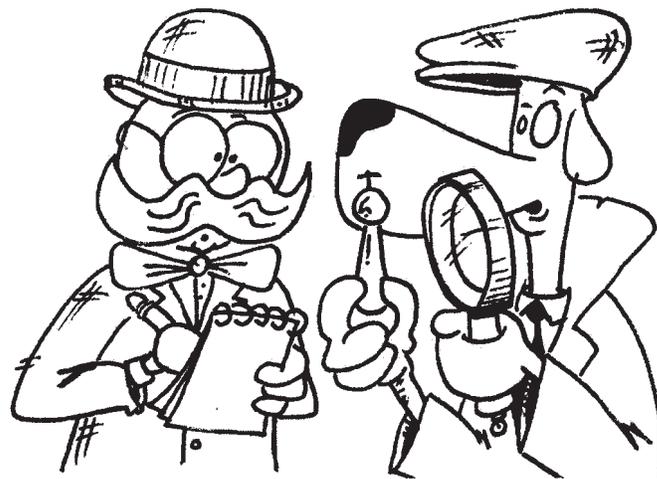
This position was reached after White's seventh turn. What were the moves?

The final PG takes things a few steps further. A homebase position, with all remaining pieces on their original squares.

Longer Proof Game 91 (9.5 moves)



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



A Noteworthy King

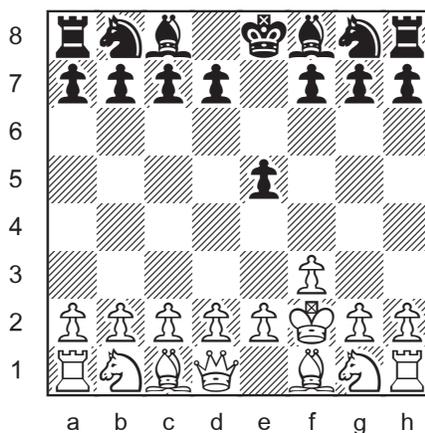
SOLUTIONS

All proof games by J. Coakley, *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2021).

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.

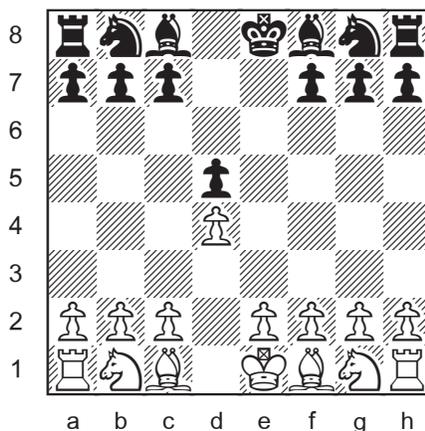
Archives. Past columns and an index of problem-types, composers, and side themes are available in the *Puzzling Side of Chess* archives.

Proof Game 92



1.f3 e6 2.Kf2 Qh4+ 3.Ke3 Qf2+ 4.Kxf2 e5
Three step king.

Longer Proof Game 88 (4.5 moves)

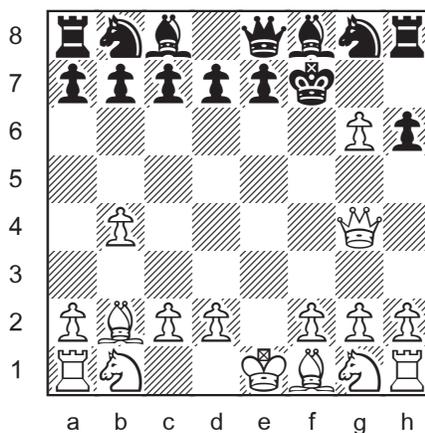


1.d3 e6 2.Qd2 Qg5 3.Qxg5 d5 4.Qxd5 exd5 5.d4
Two queen tango.

Synthetic Game 46

Charles D. Locock 1921

Chess Amateur

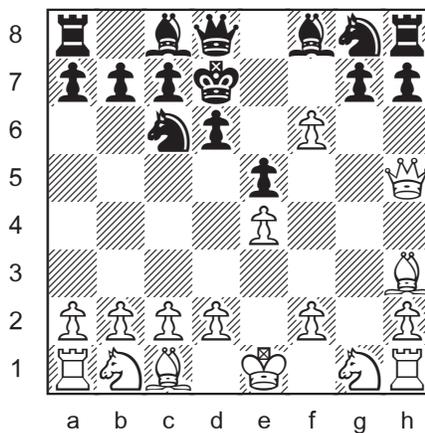


1.b4 h6 2.Bb2 f5 3.e4 Kf7 4.exf5 Qe8 5.Qg4 g5 6.fxg6# e.p.

The shortest game with mate by *en passant* is 5.5 moves. There are several solutions.

Pal Benko 1973

The Guardian



1.e4 e5 2.Qh5 Nc6 3.g4 d6 4.g5 Kd7 5.Bh3+ f5 6.gxf6# e.p.

[August 2023: German composer Hans Klüver (1901-1989) published six solutions in the Hamburg magazine Stern in 1967. They included the two given above plus the following:

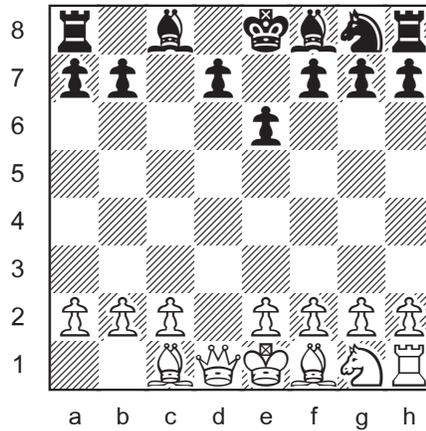
1.e4 e6 2.e5 Nh6 3.Nc3 g5 4.Ne4 Ke7 5.Qh5 f5 6.exf6# e.p.

1.e4 e6 2.e5 Nh6 3.f4 g5 4.fxg5 Ke7 5.Qh5 f5 6.gxf6# e.p.

1.e4 h6 2.Bd3 f5 3.Qe2 Kf7 4.exf5 Qe8 5.Qe5 g5 6.fxg6# e.p.

1.d4 d6 2.Qd3 Kd7 3.Qg6 f5 4.d5 Nc6 5.Bg5 e5 6.dxe6# e.p.]

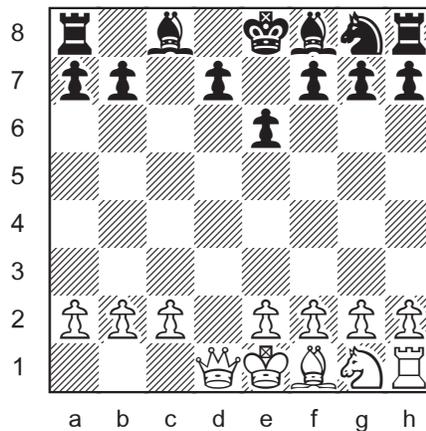
Longer Proof Game 89 (6.5 moves)



1.d4 e6 2.d5 Qg5 3.d6 Qxc1 4.dxc7 Qxb1
5.cxb8=B Qxa1 6.Bf4 Qc1 7.Bxc1

Pronkin theme. The bishop on c1, apparently on its original square, is actually a promoted pawn. This is achieved in the minimum 6.5 moves.

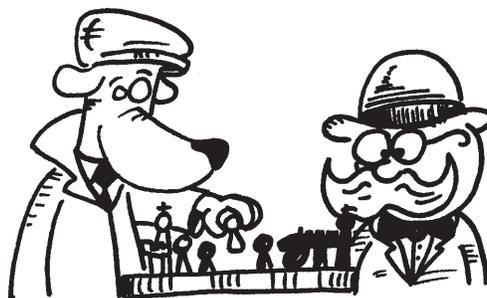
Longer Proof Game 90 (6.5 moves)



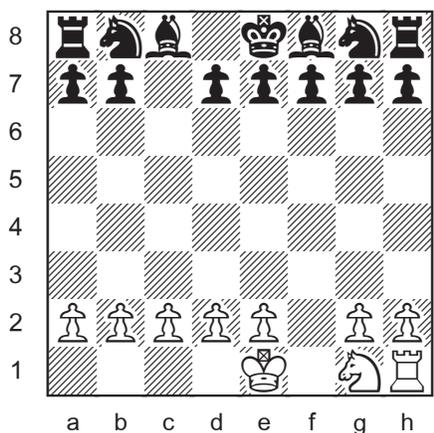
1.d4 e6 2.d5 Qg5 3.d6 Qxc1 4.dxc7 Qxb1
5.cxb8=Q Qxa1 6.Qd6 Qxd1+ 7.Qxd1

Pronkin queen.

These twins (89/90) were entries in the *2020 FIDE World Cup*.



Longer Proof Game 91 (9.5 moves)



1.f4 c5 2.Kf2 Qc7 3.Ke3 Qxf4+ 4.Kd3 Qxf1 5.Kc4 Qxd1
6.Kxc5 Qxc1 7.Kd4 Qxb1 8.Ke3 Qxa1 9.Kf2 Qe1+ 10.Kxe1

The white king shuffles his way to c5 before returning home!
Wandering a step further than proof game 72 in column 175.
Retro humour.



Until next time!

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