

THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

Jeff Coakley

PROOF GAMES Tempo Here, Tempo There

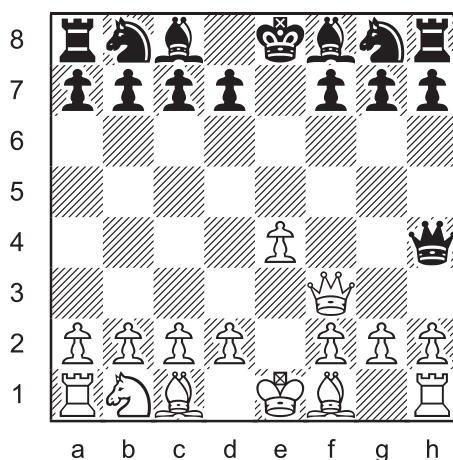
number 163

August 11, 2018

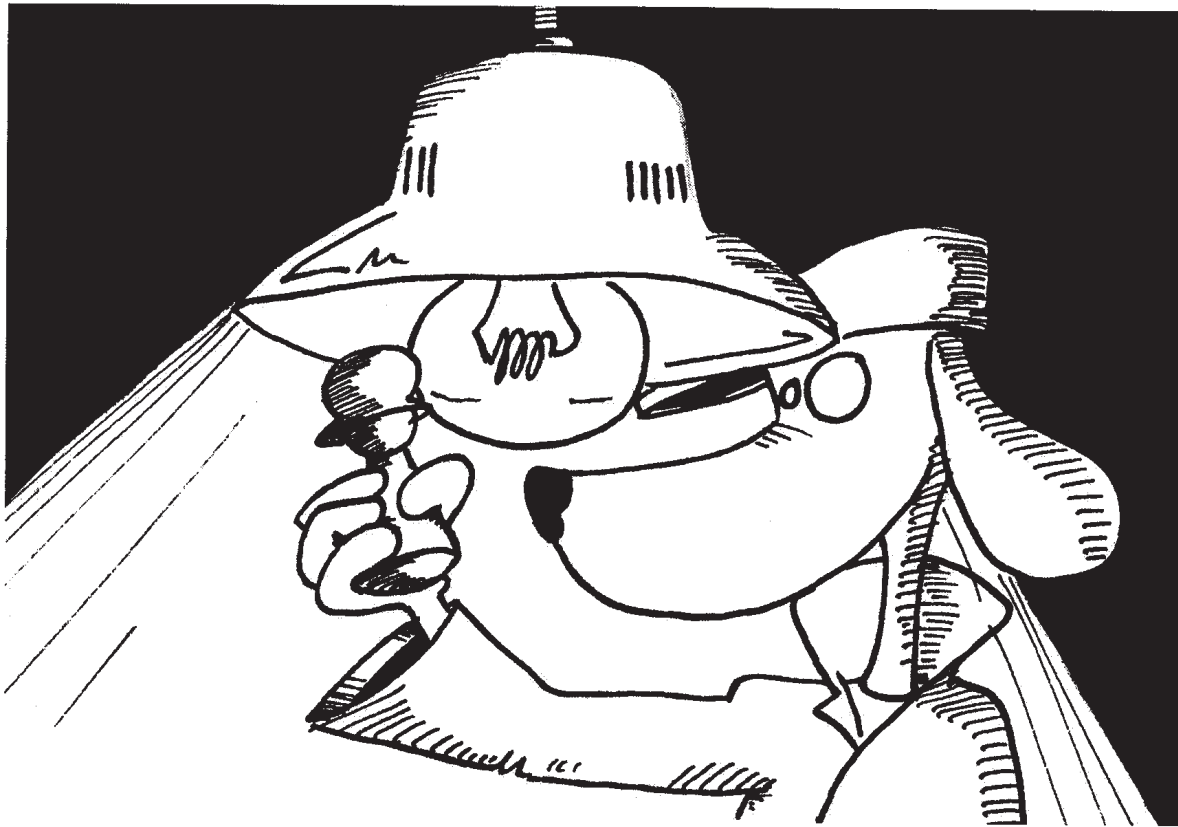
The task in a *proof game* is to show how a given position can be reached in a legal game. The puzzles in this column have a *move stipulation*. The position must be reached in a precise number of moves, no more and no less. The first two problems are proof games in 4.0 which means four moves by each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

The positions may be illogical, and the strategy diabolical, but the moves are legal.

Proof Game 80

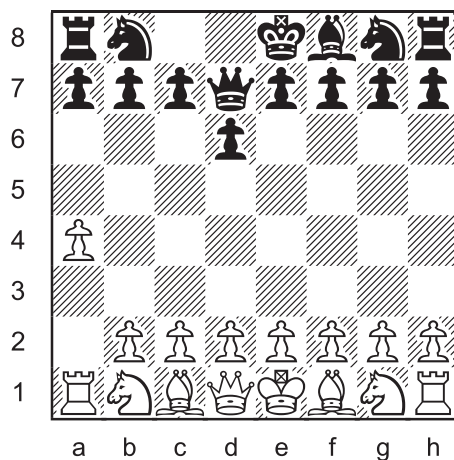


This position, with White to play, was reached in a game after each player made exactly four moves. What were the moves?



In Search of the Lost Tempo

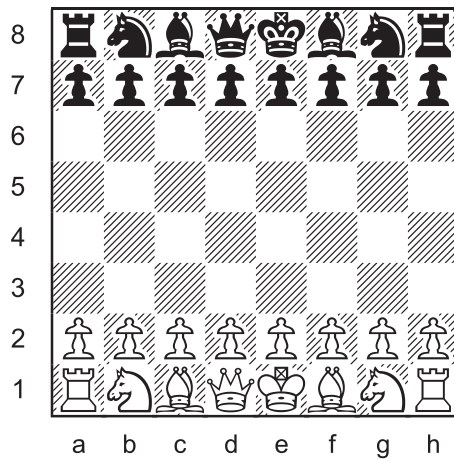
Proof Game 81



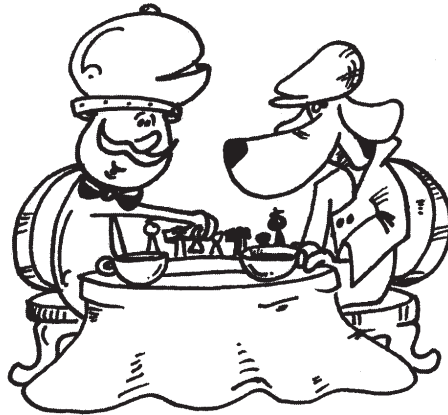
This position was reached after Black's fourth turn. What were the moves?

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 40

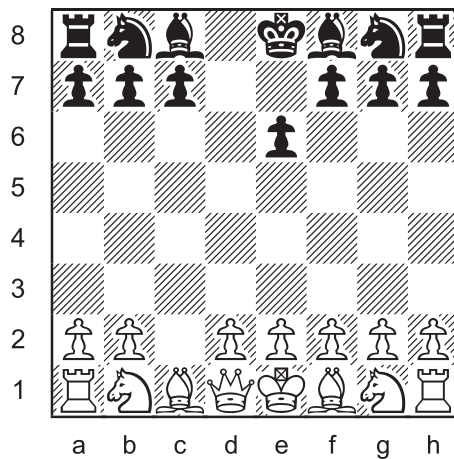


Compose a game that ends with the move **4...Nd4#**



The game below is 4.5 moves. One step deeper, one step trickier.

Longer Proof Game 60 (4.5 moves)



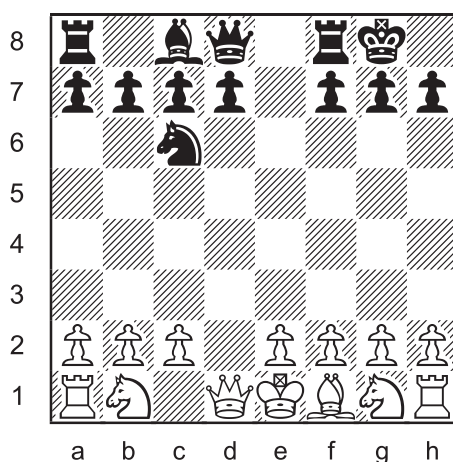
This position was reached after White's fifth turn. What were the moves?

PG SHOWCASE

The following proof games exceed the normal limits of solvability for most chess detectives. They are presented here, not as puzzles, but as artistic endeavours, demonstrating some of the compositional possibilities in this type of retro problem.

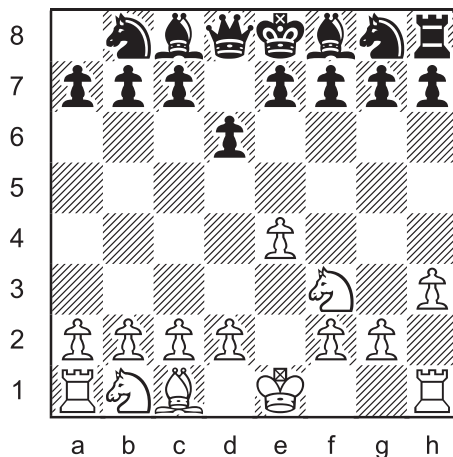


Longer Proof Game 61 (6.0 moves)



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

Longer Proof Game 62 (6.0 moves)



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

Can you explain the missing black rook?

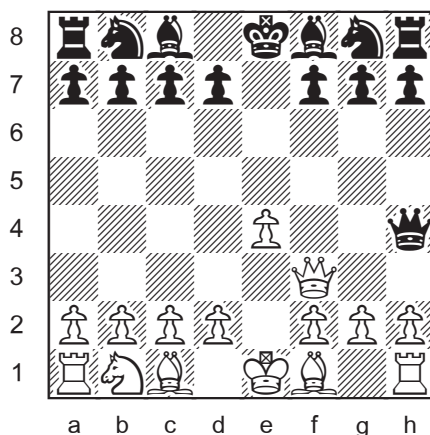
SOLUTIONS

All problems by J. Coakley, *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2018). Proof game 80 is from *Winning Chess Puzzles For Kids Volume 2* (2010).

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.

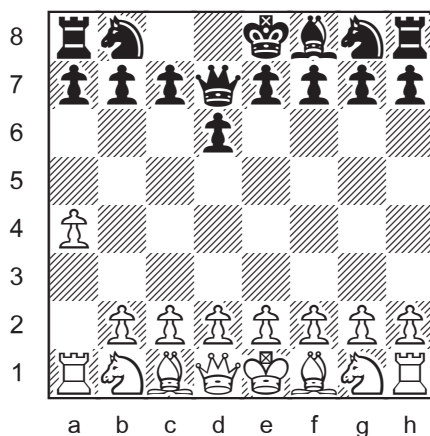
Archives. Past columns and a detailed index of problem-types and composers are available in the *Puzzling Side of Chess* archives.

Proof Game 80



1.Nh3 e5 2.Nf4 exf4 3.e4 f3 4.Qxf3 Qh4
Perhaps White's first move is the hardest to find.

Proof Game 81

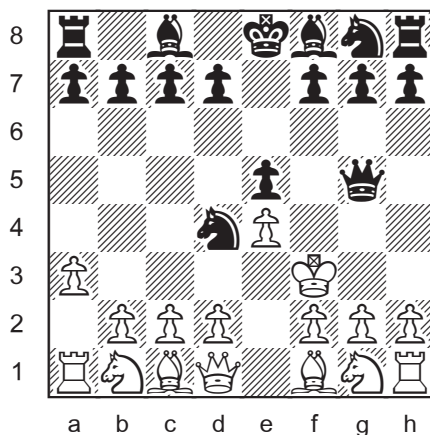


1.a3 d6 2.a4 Bh3 3.Nxh3 Qc8 4.Ng1 Qd7

A tempo white, a tempo black.

Proof games with 3...a6 4...a5 or 3...e6 4...e5 are also unique.

Synthetic Game 40

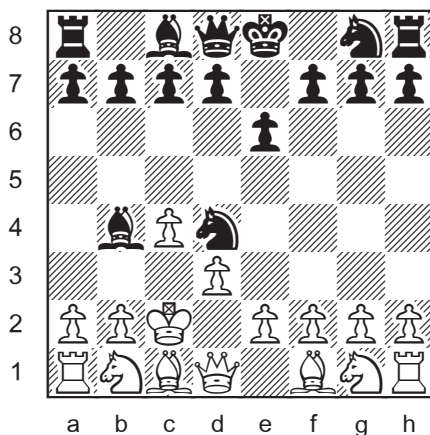


1.e4 e5 2.Ke2 Nc6 3.Kf3 Qg5 4.a3 Nd4#

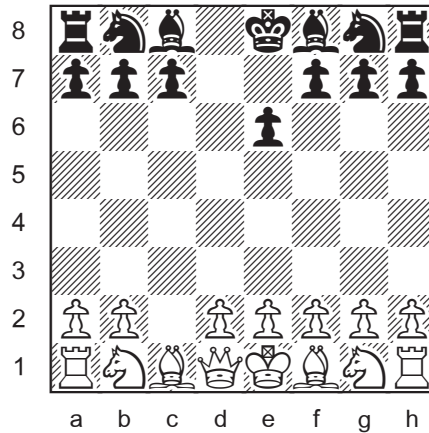
The moves for both sides can be played in various orders. Black can play 1...e6 instead of 1...e5. White can replace 4.a3 with any move except 4.Ne2, 4.c3, 4.g3, 4.g4, or 4.Ke2.

White can also play to lose a tempo with 3.Ke3 Qg5+ 4.Kf3 Nd4# or 1.e3 e5 2.Ke2 Nc6 3.Kf3 Qg5 4.e4 Nd4#.

A different approach is 1.c4 e5 2.d3 Nc6 3.Kd2 Bb4+ 4.Kc2 Nd4#. See diagram below. Or similarly, 1...c5 and 3...Qa5+ 4.Kc2 Nd4#.



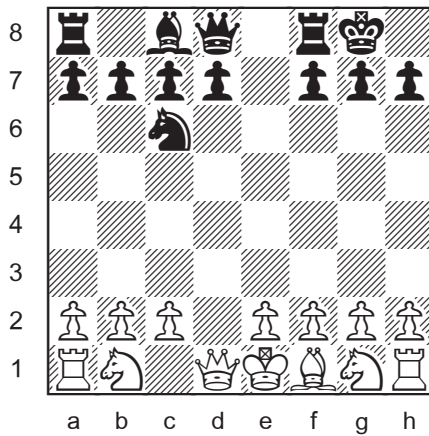
Longer Proof Game 60 (4.5 moves)



1.c4 d5 2.cxd5 Qxd5 3.Qc2 Qb3 4.Qxb3 e6 5.Qd1

White queen tempo and switchback.

Longer Proof Game 61 (6.0 moves)

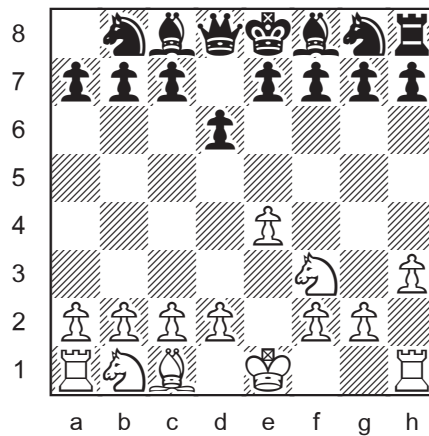


1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 Ne4 3.Bxe7 Nc5 4.Bxc5 Bxc5 5.dxc5 0-0 6.c6 Nxc6

Plenty of strange moves, but real castling.



Longer Proof Game 62 (6.0 moves)



1.e4 d6 2.Ba6 Bh3 3.Qg4 Nxa6 4.Nf3 Rc8 5.Qxc8 Bxc8 6.h3 Nb8

Two black switchbacks, with *Orbán effect* on c8.

Until next time!

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