



THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

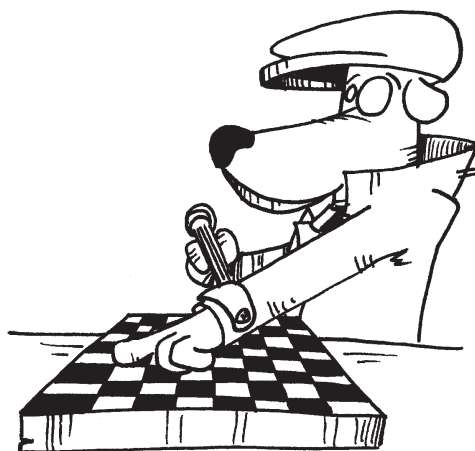
Jeff Coakley

PROOF GAMES Unexpected Reversals

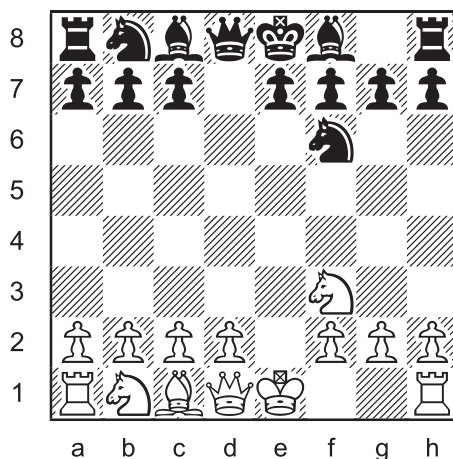
number 206

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Proof games are a great exercise in reverse thinking. Deducing past events from present circumstances is the essence of a chess detective's expertise. Here are six new cases to test your skills.



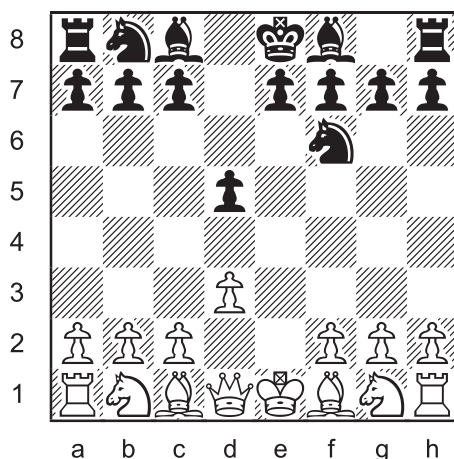
Proof Game 93



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 unusual, and the strategy delusional, but the moves are legal.

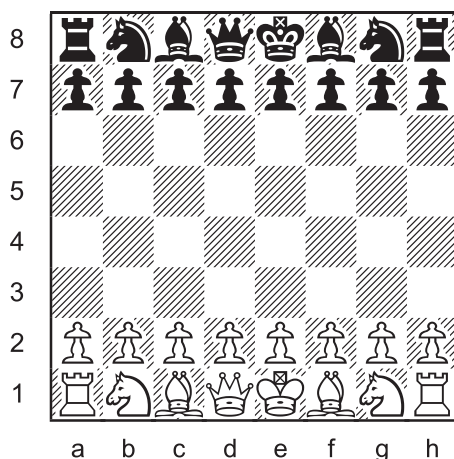
Longer Proof Game 92 (4.5 moves)



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

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.

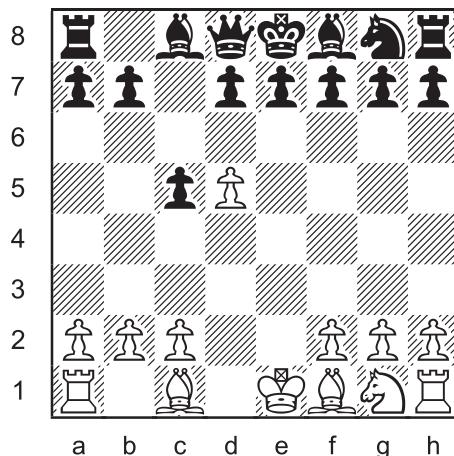
Synthetic Game 47



Compose a game that ends with the move 4.Nd5#.

The following two problems are approximate twins. In the second position, White has a pawn on e2 and a knight on b1 instead of g1. The *Curious Case of Benoni Innovations*.

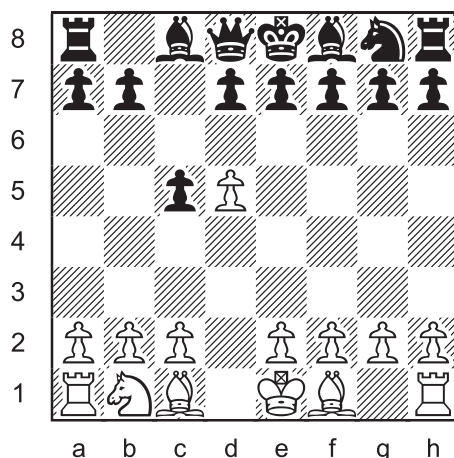
Longer Proof Game 93 (5.5 moves)



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



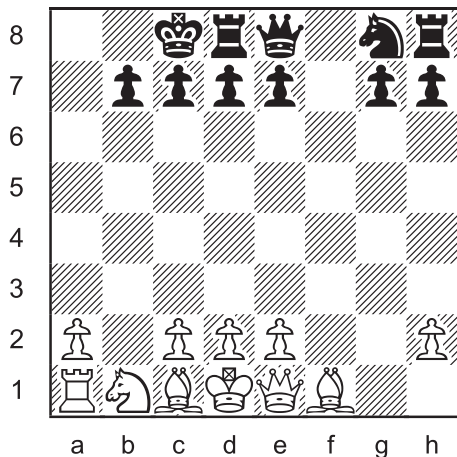
Longer Proof Game 94 (5.5 moves)



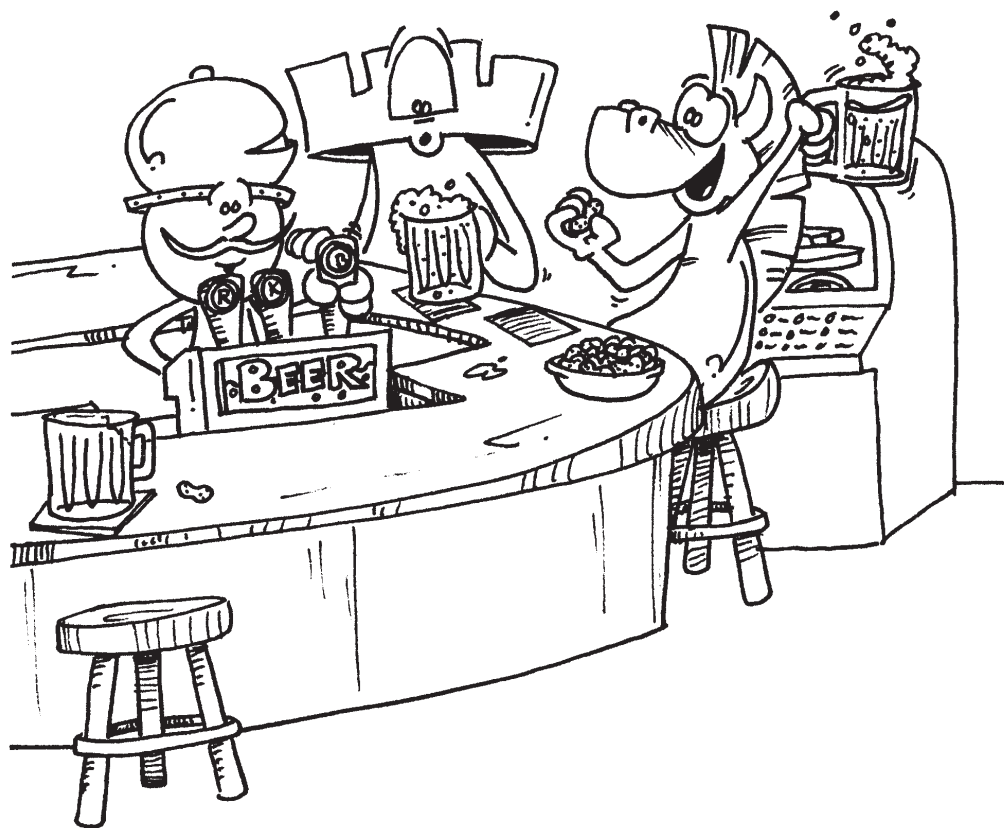
This position was reached after White's sixth turn. What were the moves?

The final PG brings us to the end of another *happy* year. Happy to get through it, that is. The position appears normal enough until you peer a bit closer. Dedicated to friends of long ago in Pierre, South Dakota.

Longer Proof Game 95 (13.0 moves)



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



"To old acquaintenances and auld lang syne!"

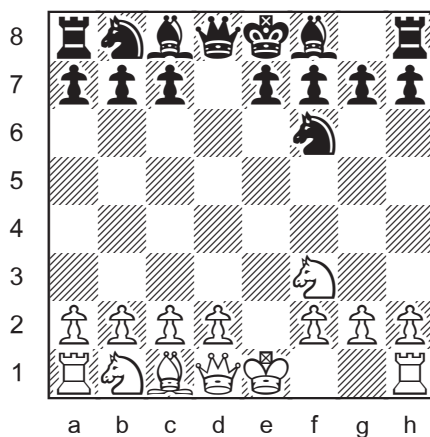
SOLUTIONS

All problems 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.

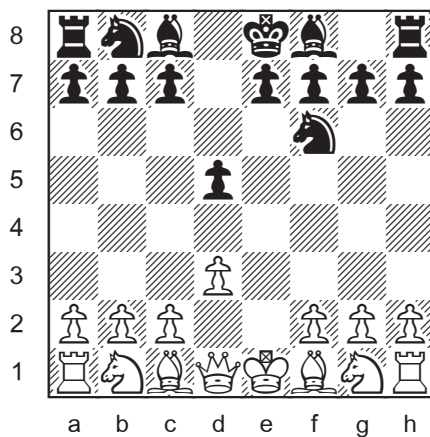
Archives. Past columns and an index of problem-types, composers, and side themes are available in the *Puzzling Side of Chess* archives.

Proof Game 93



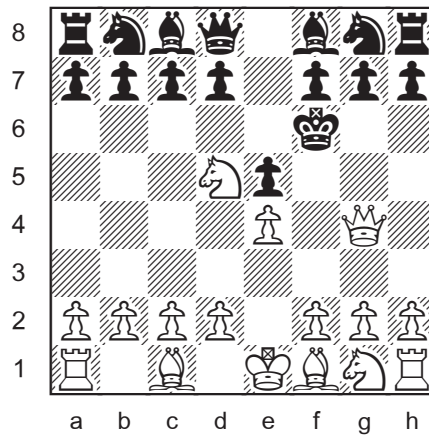
1.e4 d5 2.Be2 dxe4 3.Bf3 exf3 4.Nxf3 Nf6
Perhaps more interesting if 5.0-0 is appended.

Longer Proof Game 92 (4.5 moves)



1.e3 d5 2.e4 Qd6 3.e5 Qf6 4.exf6 Nxf6 5.d3
E-pawn tempo.

Synthetic Game 47



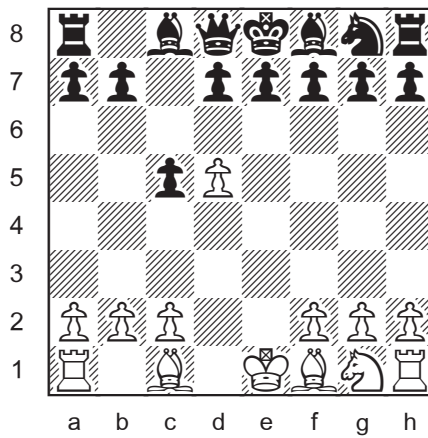
1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Ke7 3.Qg4 Kf6 4.Nd5#

White can play 1.e3 instead of 1.e4. White's first three moves can be played in different orders.



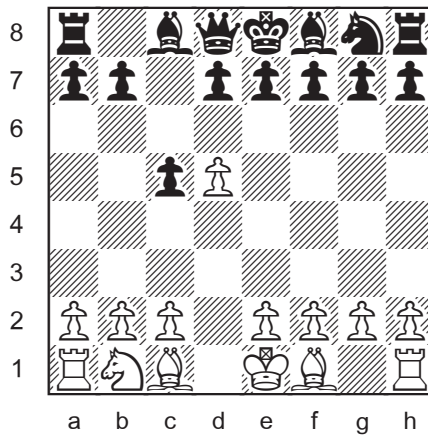
Illuminating the Reconstructed Past

Longer Proof Game 93 (5.5 moves)

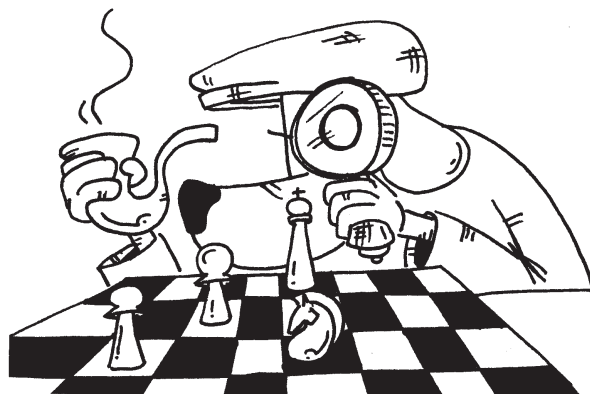


1.d4 c5 2.d5 Nc6 3.Qd4 Nxd4 4.Nd2 Nxe2 5.Ndf3 Nxg1 6.Nxg1
 Impostor white knight.

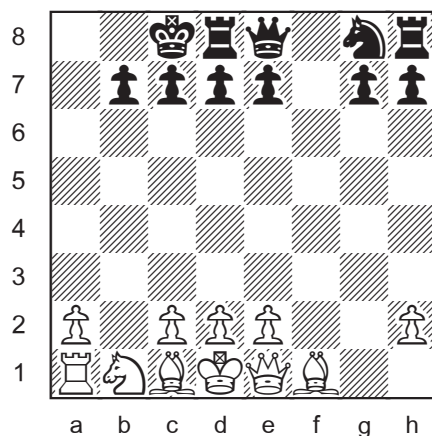
Longer Proof Game 94 (5.5 moves)



1.d4 c5 2.d5 Nc6 3.Qd4 Nxd4 4.Nf3 Nxf3+ 5.Kd1 Ne1 6.Kxe1
 Switchback white king.

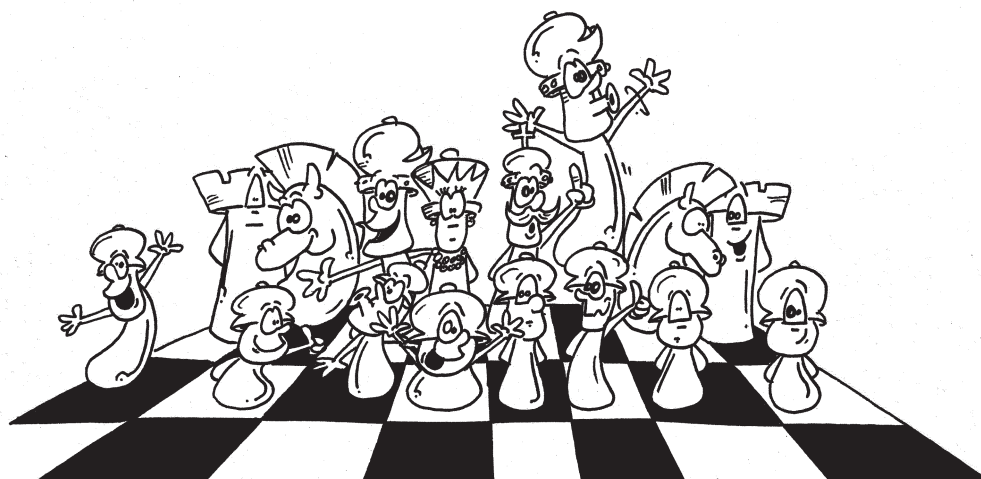


Longer Proof Game 95 (13.0 moves)



1.b4 f5 2.b5 f4 3.b6 f3 4.bxa7 fxg2 5.axb8=Q gxh1=N
6.Qxc8 Nxf2 7.Qb8 Nxd1 8.Qa7 Qb8 9.Qf2 Qa7 10.Kxd1 0-0-0
11.Qxf8 Qxg1 12.Qf2 Qg6 13.Qe1 Qe8

Uncommon placement of kings and queens.
Retro comedy.



Until next year!

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