



SKITTLES  
ROOM

## *From the Archives*

Hosted by  
Mark Donlan



## From the Archives...

Since it came online many years ago, [ChessCafe.com](http://ChessCafe.com) has presented literally thousands of articles, reviews, columns and the like for the enjoyment of its worldwide readership. The good news is that almost all of this high quality material remains available in the [Archives](#). The bad news is that this great collection of chess literature is now so large and extensive – and growing each week – that it is becoming increasingly difficult to navigate it effectively. We decided that the occasional selection from the archives posted publicly online might be a welcomed addition to the regular fare.

Watch for an item to be posted online periodically throughout each month. We will update the [ChessCafe](#) home page whenever there has been a “new” item posted here. We hope you enjoy *From the Archives*...

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## Dutch Treat by Hans Ree

### The Hermit of Geneva

The English chess writer Edward Winter has this in common with God, that his existence can only be deduced from his works. Nobody has ever seen him. There are no photographs of him. He has an address in Geneva and he answers his mail, but intrepid seekers for biographical information get a curt reply that tells them that only matters of chess can be discussed. Because Winter has clearly shown for more than fifteen years that his heart is with the old masters, more than with modern chess, his image is that of a very old man, but this is denied by those to whom it has been imparted by word of mouth that he has been seen in the flesh as recent as the seventies, in the form of an English schoolboy, and that even the notation of a chess game of his has been preserved. In the English magazine *Chess* Winter is always referred to as The Omniscient.

Winter is a just but stern supervisor of chess literature. Every chess writer in the English language knows: when he makes a mistake in a date, overlooks a mate in an analysis, or sins against the King’s English, he will be flogged by Winter, whose eyes see everything.

In 1982 Winter started the magazine *Chess Notes*, born from the realization that

chess literature is a garbage bin of made-up anecdotes, conjectures that pose as facts and mistakes that are given eternal life by the laziness of thoughtless plagiarists. *Chess Notes* would be a forum for serious investigators. And that it was for eight years. Then suddenly Winter closed down his magazine because his correspondents had not been as arduous as he had wished. A few years later he continued his labours of purification on his own in a column that is published in several chess magazines.

This year a collection of Winter's critical chess notes was published by Cardogan, London: *Chess Explorations, A Pot-Pourri from the Journal Chess Notes*. It is a rich album of games, brilliant, edifying or at least curious, chess trivia, scourging book reviews and deep investigations.

“What song the Sirens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, though puzzling questions, are not beyond all conjecture.” Those words of Thomas Browne could have been the motto for this book, were it not that the word conjecture is anathema to Winter.

An example how things went in the good days when the magazine *Chess Notes* was with us: Winter spots in the Yugoslav magazine *Sahovski Glasnik* a story about a match that Capablanca was supposed to have played in 1922 against the German billiards champion Erich Hagenlocher. In chess Capablanca gave odds of a rook, in billiards he got odds of 75 points, out of 100 to make. Result 1-1, both players won their own game. Winter tells the story in his magazine. This was 1983. During the next years several articles are devoted to this subject. Reader's letters are published which make it clear that the whole story is a hoax. We come to know who originated this story, when and where. Who really played the supposed Capablanca game. The details of the career of the German billiards champion, whose name turns out to be Hagenlacher. In 1989, six years after his first report, Winter can write: “Slowly but surely all the key facts about this matter now seem to have come out.” Case closed, or almost.

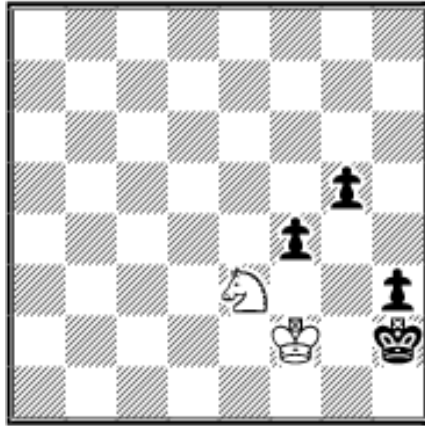
Sometimes, to our surprise, a classical chess anecdote turns out to be true: the match between the University of Cambridge and the madhouse of Bedlam really was won by Bedlam. Winter gives the details and we do not doubt anymore.

No sin is insignificant to Winter, a printing error lets him grip his whip. But often his corrections are important. Reuben Fine has written that Bogolyubov, the Russian that lived in Germany, had some of his colleagues sent to concentration camps when the Nazis came to power. A casual remark, without any corroboration. Winter shows that this terrible accusation is indeed without any foundation. And then the small errors and examples of carelessness of Fine that Winter earlier indicated, are seen in a different light. When Fine is so careless in matters of chess technique, he may have been careless when he defamed Bogolyubov.

Nobody is spared, but one man is singled out for Winter's attacks: English GM Raymond Keene. Keene as an organiser, a chess politician, a journalist, a chess

writer. Found defective in all respects. Careless mistakes, outright lies, by the dozen, by the hundred, according to Winter. Says Keene one year exactly the opposite of what he has said a few years before, blissfully thinking that no reader will remember, Winter proves him wrong. Alas, probably Winter is right. He has been called a pedant, humourless often, but seldom or maybe never has he been proved to be wrong.

And now and then it seems to me that his sense of humour may be healthier than is commonly acknowledged. In his book he gives the following diagram.



Now followed 1 Ng4+ Kh1 2 Kf1 f3 3 Kf2 h2 4 Kf1 f2 5 Nxf2 mate. It is a standard manoeuvre, seen in many endgame books. Why is this diagram with its trivial sequel thought worthy of inclusion in his book? The moves are the final part of a game Janowsky-Keene, New York 1917. Quite another Keene, a certain Lester Keene. But Winter must have relished the opportunity to write: "The consternation of Keene can well be imagined when Janowsky forced a checkmate in five moves."

By far not all Winter's chess notes are meant polemically. He is a true chess lover and much of his material is there only for its beauty. Like the next game. Both players thought this the best game they had ever played. Winter quotes a saying about spectacular moves that look like typographical errors and of course he uses the opportunity to enquire as to who was the originator of this saying. As so often, he had to supply the answer himself, in a later issue of *Chess Notes*: it was Napier, mainly known from Lasker-Napier.

*Purdy-Crowl*, Correspondence 1934/35



19...Nc6-e5 20 d4xe5 f5xe4 21 Bd3xe4 Qh6-g6 22 Rf1-f5 Bb7xe4+ 23 Qc2xe4 e6xf5 24 g4xf5 Nf7-d6 25 Qe4-d5+ Qg6-f7 26 e5xd6 Re8xe2+ 27 Kg2-f3 Re2-e6 28 g3-g4 h7-h5 29 d6xc7 h5xg4+ 30 Kf3xg4 Re6-c6 31 Ra1-g1 Kg8-h7 32 Qd5xf7+ Rf8xf7 33 Rg1-e1 Rc6xc4+ 34 Kg4-g5 Rc4-c5 35 Re1-e5 Rf7-g7+ 36 Kg5-h5 Rc5-c6 37 f5-f6 Rc6xf6 38 Re5-g5 Rf6-h6+ 39 Kh5-g4 Rg7xg5+ 40 Kg4xg5 Rh6-c6 41 Bc3-e5 d7-d5 42 Kg5-f5 b6-b5 43 b2-b4 a7-a6 44 Kf5-f4 Kh7-g6 45 h4-h5+ Kg6xh5 46 Kf4-e3 Black

resigned.

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