

# A HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN DRAUGHTS AND THE HERD LADDIE



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## **WHY PLAY DRAUGHTS?**

Trove certainly is a good history source for the above game if one knows how to use it! There are even reasons for playing draughts and some are given in the Hobart Mercury of 7<sup>th</sup> May, 1938 by the draughts editor “Double Corner”:- *The Late James Hill author of Hill’s Manual - Draughts provides a recreation as boundless as the sea. It is the people’s game, for in its practice, the cobbler and the councillor, the parson and the plumber, all fraternize like so many bees in a hive.*

*P.H. Ketchum, author of Ketchum’s “Hardy Manual”- Draughts is a simple game to learn, yet it is so deep that no-one has yet mastered it to the extent of being invariably able to prevent defeat.*

*Hugh T. Egan (ex-champion of Australia) - This apparently simple game is the oldest and most scientific mental pastime known to man. The truth is, it taxes the intellectual faculties to the utmost; a lifetime is too short to fully master its intricacies, and its variety is practically infinite.*

*The late Alfred Jordan, well-known Scottish-American expert - I know so little about this game that sometimes fool amateurs are hard to beat until they start to beat themselves; they adopt lines in well-known games that sometimes stagger one.*

*Mr. Wm. Morgan-the well known Hobart player - It is a nice indoor game for any young man to learn. It creates a good memory.*

*Mr. Robert McNair (late President of the Australian and Tasmanian Draughts Associations). The game of draughts is worthy of the attention of any young person, and the delight experienced by anyone following up the game will increase as experience grows. Draughts looks simple, but let the novice beware:-There is a profundity beyond that will tax the best intellect and expert.*

If one wants contact with the great races of the past, draughts is one game. It changed from some obscure game played in Egypt and Ur thousands of years BC to “modern” draughts around 1200 AD. I can see why Edward Falkener the author of “Games Oriental and How to Play Them” fell under its spell as well as falling in love with Queen Hatshepsut of Egypt. She was a little old for him but she was a leader in the time of men. If the spiritual Edward ever falls out of love with her, I will keenly take his place! I have no doubt draughts, or perhaps I should say its ancestors are far older than the great rival chess. To be transported back to the Pharaohs all one has to do is play draughts and imagine.



The Draughts Players Replica For Sale ...  
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## 1. HISTORY FROM PRE-DYNASTIC EGYPT

H.J.R. Murray's "History of Board Games other than Chess" 1952 details a gaming board found near Abydos Upper Egypt in a pre-dynastic cemetery at El Mahasna. It must have caused a storm as it is a clay board 7" x 2.75" divided into 3 x 6 squares with 11 conical pieces two of which were 1" high and 9 others 1/3<sup>rd</sup>" high. Murray thought it from 4000-3500 BC and 1000 years older than other boards. He then details the game of Senat in a painting showing two men kneeling at opposite ends of a board touching their cylindrical men some of which have nobbled tops. There appear to be 12 men. (5<sup>th</sup> Dynasty 2500-2400 BC). By 1270 BC there are 3 board games but as early as the 1st Dynasty (3000BC) game boards and pieces were found in tombs. Queen Hatshepsut's board in the Louvre features with its 3 x 10 square shape on one side and a 20 square board on the other with 12 squares one end and 8 squares only 1 wide leading to the other a little like a square tennis racquet.

The Ur game boards are 3x8 squares with one truly lovely board of 20 squares covered in rare stones and rosettes which Hacker Art Books have used as a cover piece in their 1978 reprint of Murray's 1952 work. He links the games to older Egypt, Palestine, Greece and Rome and the lovely board to Senat. He omitted China and claimed that *Chinese historians have always tended to exaggerate the age of their inventions, and in particular the age of their games*. This sentence was missed by David Li in his "The Genealogy of Chess" 1998 where a caustic critique of Murray (pages 79-87) neglects the above and seems to indicate Murray's "Other Than.." book was not read as it is not in the Bibliography.

It has always been thought that chess was older but when one looks at the two games it is logical that the simpler game of draughts or its ancestors should be older. An examination of Trove reveals some startling claims for the age of draughts. The Pharaoh Queen Hatshepsut of Egypt being one (ca 1473BC) But then if Duncan Forbes lovely 1860 book on Chess History is to be believed chess is 5000 years BC (Indian birth). Forbes was dismissed by Murray as far too early. The claim of the great Queen/Pharaoh is worthy of investigation. It is around the right age as the Chinese game Wei Chi is older (2000BC ca) and one might expect a simplification, 500 years later. But when did "draughts" become draughts and "chess" become chess?

On p.73 Murray states on draughts -

1) *There is no evidence that draughts was played outside of France, England and the Spanish Marches before 1500; the first mention of the game, as played in Italy, dated from 1527 and elsewhere in Europe is later than 1550 and implies a spread eastwards from France.*(2) *The name of the draughtsman was borrowed from the name of the 'queen' in chess, at first 'fers', and when 'dame' took its place in chess, draughts followed suit, and the draughtsman changed to 'dame' also.*

Further on p.75 he writes *"undoubtedly one parent was chess which provided the board and the name of the draughts men.....the other parent seems to have been alquerque which provided the number of men and the method of capture."* And so, draughts is a creation of chess and alquerque and spread from France to Italy, England and Europe.

In the final chapter 9 he concludes that in sharing leisure hours and playing with friends, most board games originated. I was hoping for a leap of logic from Egypt to Europe to everywhere just as Edward Falkener suggested as below.

Edward Falkener in his fine book **'Games Ancient and Oriental...'** 1892 writes lovingly about the Queen who is Hatasu in his book. And he takes the Egyptian games much further back than the Queen to 3 or 4 thousand years BC. Could chess and draughts have the same parentage? Good value is the Dover reprint at \$3.50 in 1961. Its paper is still crisp. We won't see chess moves in the Egyptian Chapter but the serious research by an eminent Egyptologist, Dr.S. Birch of the British Museum is great to read and discloses Falkener as a true student of the ancient games. There is a sketch of Rameses III at game which is worth seeing. It looks a forerunner to the real draughts with 12 men on the board. Earlier a letter from Birch to Falkener is given with the first sentence:- *Herewith I send you the representations of the games of draughts on the monuments, which I have long promised you.....*Falkener was critical of Birch in many parts of that elegant first chapter on the ancient Egyptians and he was definitely in love with Hatshepsut despite the age gap. He thought Birch wrong for his view that chess was invented in those ancient times but that a form of draughts was played then.

Falkener was born in 1814 and died in 1896. The above was his last book. He married in 1866 and had 3 daughters and a son and a very interesting life with a 5 year tour of Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine and Egypt from 1842-1847 with some excavation in Pompei. Here he dug at the house of Marcus Lucretius (Aurelius?) with the results published in his 'Museum of Classical Antiquities' 1851/5. He started serious research in 1866 when he retired to Wales with his wife Blanche Golding.

Wikipedia has more as it does on his successor Robert Charles Bell 1917-2002. He was a far more prolific author and being a plastic surgeon was wealthy. His book, **'Board and Table Games from Many Civilisations'** was published by Oxford University Press in 2 volumes in the early 1960s. The Dover reprint in 1979 was in one volume (383 pages). A useful book as it



includes 1 page biographies of As-Suli, Charles Cotton, Thomas Hyde, Edmond Hoyle, Joseph Strutt, Duncan Forbes, Edward Falkener, Stewart Culin, Willard Fiske, & H.J.R. Murray. There are 91 games described and a lot more plates and photos of games. He used the word 'unreliable' about Falkener's book which was disappointing. There were 42 games in Falkener. (366 pages)

On page 71 of Bell is the following:- *"3.DRAUGHTS - About A.D. 1100 someone unknown, probably living in the south of France, invented a new game using tablemen on a chequered chess board with the moves of Alquerque. Each player has twelve pieces called FERSES, the name of the queens in medieval chess, and the ferses in the new game moved in the same way as in the old, one square diagonally in any direction. A piece in FIERGES, however, made a capture by jumping diagonally over the enemy piece to land on an empty square immediately beyond..."*

Bell considers draughts a war game. Murray was certain chess was a war game.

Daniel Willard Fiske wrote **"Chess in Iceland"** in 1904 the year of his death. The Preface of this 400 page book was completed by his literary executor Horatio White who later completed many other books on Fiske. After Iceland which takes almost 100 pages he discusses many other board games including draughts:- p. 97 – *"Now the game of draughts has no checking, no mating, no castling, no variety of movements among its men; hence it is possible to consider it as a simple collection of moves, or as a collection of simple moves – a game of moves and nothing else. This suggestion as to the immediate origin of its English appellation may be a far-fetched one, but no more acceptable explanation can be found in the dictionaries, though the idea is perhaps best of all expressed by Skeat in his well-known "Etymological Dictionary" in which he styles draughts "a game of alternate moves."* On page 358 he defines *"Draughts as a greatly simplified chess, and is hence to be considered as having its direct and sole origin in that game. It was apparently devised in Spain during or before the XIIIth century. It has already reached England in the XIVth century and could not well have been known in Iceland much before the XVth, probably somewhat later. It came to the Island – to judge by the name given it – possibly from Scotland, but more likely from Norway or Denmark, although it might likewise have made its way thither from Germany during the time of the trade carried on, especially after the beginning of the XVth century, between Iceland and the Hanseatic cities. Icelandic writers have, as yet, given very little attention to the story of draughts."*

I have always had an affection for games historians and the biography of Duncan Forbes (1798-1868) was great to read. Many years ago a copy of his **'History of Chess' 1860** came here from one of Dr. Niemeijer's auctions. It had been in the Melbourne Chess Club and went back to Europe to Dr. N in Holland and then back to Australia where it still is today. A very travelled copy. It has been reprinted by Moravian Chess in recent years. Forbes was from a poor family and his parents and family went to America and left him in Scotland with his grandfather where his schooling was slow and he learned English at 13 but study took him to the University of St. Andrews obtaining an MA in 1823. He went to India for 3 years but ill-health brought him back where he learned Hindustani and in 1837 was appointed Professor of Oriental Languages at

King's College London. He loved chess and this led to the above book which I am proud to own. He mentions Egypt and the invention of chess there by some historians but concludes that the Egyptians never *did possess or prefer any claim whatever to the invention*. He believed India was its birthplace.

And now Richard Torning gives detail of the Spanish claim to the invention of draughts via Ricardo Calvo and Govert Westerveld. More to read here but one of the beauties of chess research is that many times its sister game of draughts features in the research.

One of the modern books (2017) is **"A World of Chess"** by Jean-Louis Cazeaux and Rick Knowlton (McFarland) which stays closely to roots starting with the Arabian Nights, Indian Monsoons, Chinese Gunpowder, Japan's Rising Sun and Evolution and Revolution in Europe finishing with Variants and the Origins of Chess. The chapter titles are eye-catching and the final chapter 7 on the Origins of Chess start well with 'Looking for a Common Ancestor' and considers Persian, Arabic, European and Chinese Legends but is only 5 pages. It gets going with the 'Modern Search'. Sadly Egypt is omitted from the text and even the extensive indexes and notes are silent though Falkener is named. The Chess Timeline starts at 569 in China so proto chess and draughts are not considered. The index does give 3 references to checkers (draughts) on p.223, 349 & 372:-

p.223-deals with King Alfonso's Games (1251-1284) and the book "Libro de lasJuegos" which is 98 pages split into 7 books. One of those books "Libro de Alquerque" deals with merels, morris and alquerque, an ancestor of checkers. The full text of this beautiful book is on the Internet according to the authors but in ancient Castilian.

p.349 - considers the shape of the pieces and the Chinese flat discs so like draughts men. The authors hypothetically suggest that if the discs came first rather than the sculpted or carved standing figures of Persia and India then the implication was the game of chess started in China and it does not discuss the game of draughts with its discs and early Chinese chess having the pieces in common. One aside are the draughtsmen found with the Lewis chess pieces which rarely get publicity. If the Lewis chessmen are 1160AD then draughts is a similar age or older.

p.372 is a note referring to 'huffing' in draughts (checkers) which was no longer in force after 1910 in international draughts.

p.360 - has a note (12) on the Madagascan game 'fanorona' which was probably derived from the Arab game 'al-qirq' (alquerque) which was an ancestor of merels and checkers (draughts) in 15<sup>th</sup> century Valencia Spain.

Another book No.8 in the series by Dr. Hans Ellinger, **'The Anatomy of Chess'** by Jean Louis Cazeaux, Gerhard Josten and Myron Samsin 2003, has an excellent introduction which writes of the meeting at Fribourg in 2001 which discussed 'Board Games in Academia' and the Initiative gruppe Konigstein. The GM Yuri Averbakh is a member and he thought that the process of origins began with the evolution of an Indian race game into a chess game, that it was centuries

long in development and that the Greek game 'petteia' & c are important in chess evolution. No Egypt but modern research concentrates on when 'chess' seriously began

Some of the 10 lectures are in German with English summaries. It is a very fine 100+ page book. In "On the Origin of Chess" Averbakh mentions the Indus Valley but not Egypt. He is chess oriented in this truly scholarly article of 9 pages.

Jean Louis Cazeaux 10 page article 'Is Chess a Hybrid game?' and it suggests Egypt got some of its games from the Sumerian Royal game of Ur in ca 1800BC which precedes Queen Hatsephshup though Falkener takes the Egyptian games way back further. JLC likes a meeting of the Chinese Xiangqi and the Indian Persian Chatrang for chess but there is no evidence of a 'seminal game' before Chatrang and Xiangqi. He moves onto Magic Squares, the Chinese game of Liubo and Alexanders' invasion expeditions in this article and concludes that "his opinion has evolved and changed direction several times in the past years, fluctuating with the rich and numerous contacts made and may reverse in the future". A good open mind that was used again in his book with Rick Knowlton in 2017.

The article 'Pawns and Pieces - Towards a Prehistory of Chess' by Myron Samson features a beautiful game board found in the Royal Graves at Ur in 1934 and is so like the Egyptian 'Senat' board on page 15 of Falkener's book.

Gerhard Josten in 'Chess-A Living Fossil' goes into theories, legends and speculations about the beginnings of chess and includes much from David Li's book 'The Genealogy of Chess' 1998, and that makes one wonder about contact between Ancient Egypt and China but back to Josten who discusses a large sandstone block in the National Museum of Afghanistan called the Rabatak that refers to Buddhist, Hindu and Zoroastrian gods as well as those in the local Kushan Empire (now lost) but showing the linkages. The fall of Kushan may have destroyed the genesis of chess which Josten places here. A truly clever article.



Historians place the invention of "modern" Draughts in the 12th century CE, when someone, somewhere (probably in the south of France) combined the rules and pieces of Alquerque with the 8×8 grid of a common chessboard. They called the game Fierges, and the pieces "ferses," the same name given to the queen in Chess; at that time the queen moved like a Fierges piece, one space at a time. Later, Ferses also became a name for the game, and by the 15th century both Fierges and Ferses had been replaced by the name Jeu De Dames, or simply Dames.

Many famous men were fond of Draughts. Its antiquity is attested by Homer in the *Odyssey*, where reference is made to games in the palace of Ulysses in Ithica; and by Plato who in his dialogues makes frequent mention of it by way of illustration.

The oldest known works on Draughts was published at Valencia, Spain in 1547 by Antonio Torquemada. Famous Draughts players have been Cicero and many Roman emperors; Napoleon; the Duke of Wellington; Frederick the Great; Pierre Mallet, engineer ordinary to Louis XIV; Edgar Allan Poe; J.P. Dodd L.L.D; General U.S. Grant who ascribed much of his military success to the mental sharpening derived from Draughts; Garibaldi, the savior of Italy; John Paterson the great mathematician; Andrew Carnegie and hundreds of doctors, lawyers, and members of the learned professions.

From International Draughts Federation Website: Glorious Egyptian game setting

**The Chess Amateur** was a fabulously varied chess magazine from 1906-1930 and one section in the early years was “Questions and Answers” conducted by H. Brockett-Pugh M.A. of Monckton House Perrymead Bath England. Question 40 was in the **March, 1908 issue p.167:-**

*“40. Which is the oldest game-Chess or Draughts. How come it that though the men and rules for these games are so dissimilar, the boards are identically the same for both?”*

The answer was on p.230 May issue and was answered by Mr. W. S. Branch, whose deeply interesting discoveries and theories we so often refer to, tells us *“that Draughts is undoubtedly an older game than Chess (there are actually draughts-board and pieces in existence of earlier date than any Chess materials yet found), and that Chess was gradually developed from Draughts, though the exact stages and processes of the growth are largely concealed by the lapse of many centuries.”*

Mr. Branch finds evidence *“that the game of Draughts was played nearly 2,000 years B.C., and it may have been an old game then.*

*The draughts-board-like nearly all things that are really ancient-has gone through many modifications affecting its shape, number of squares, etc.*

*Chess and Draughts are like the Great Twin Brethren who fought on the side of Rome at the battle of Lake Regillus, and as immortal:-*

*By many names men call us;  
In many lands we dwell.”*

W.S. Branch gave a very long addendum starting p.262:- *The following additional reply from our valued contributor, shows that in our last number we hardly did full justice to his views.*

*“Games of a Draughts-like nature, and properly described as Draughts in a broad sense, existed before Chess was invented-long before-yet it would be wrong to conclude that Draughts as known in Europe and America is an older game than Chess. It is younger by eight centuries, though older (by two or three centuries) than the modern moves and powers of the chess Queen and the chess Bishop and the chess operation known as “Castling.” It may be said that modern Draughts is older than modern Chess, and certain ancient forms of Draughts were older than ancient Chess. But these ancient forms of Draughts were so different from Draughts as played now as to be practically quite different games. The general principle was the same-to win by capturing all the men of the other side, or by preventing the other side from making any move. All the men were of the same value at the commencement of a game. We could quote descriptions of the moves and some of the rules of several such games-Egyptian, ancient Roman, and others but space forbids. Suffice it to say that the games were not played on boards of sixty-four squares, and were otherwise very different from modern Draughts- which game, there is good reason to believe, was developed from an ancient Arabic form of Draughts, called al-kirk, played*

*on a board of lines, not squares, with twelve men a side, but not quite with the present “moves” of Draughts. The game was made to fit the chess-board, in Spain, about 1200-1300 A.D. and so came Draughts as now known. The “double corner” which chiefly makes modern scientific Draughts what it is, was provided by the chess-board. It did not exist on the board of lines. Besides which change there was on that board no promotion of “men” to “Kings,” as well as forward at any time after once moving. A capture was made just as it is now by a Draughts King.”*

*Mr. Branch did not say that Chess was gradually developed from Draughts. Some of the “moves” and also the board of an older game were utilized, but Chess, very much as described in the oldest existing account of its “moves,” was no doubt invented by one man-somewhere in India, some time between the beginning of our Christian Era and 450 A.D. It was a new game, intended, as Mr. Murray conjectured, to be a “war game,” the pieces representing several kinds of troops used in the Indian warfare of the time. Each side with, in addition, a Rajah and his Prime Minister (our “Queens.”)*

*The sixty-four square board AD but not in connection with Chess-probably then unknown. It was used for a dice-game, a kind of backgammon, and may also have been used for some kind of Draughts. If so, it was not known in Europe or Egypt.*

*The origin and early history of Chess is not such a matter of mere theory and conjecture as many suppose. The researches of modern students of ancient Hindu, Persian, Arabic and Chinese literature have brought to light a quantity of evidence on the subject – especially since 1860.*

*The old idea, ‘made to much of by Dr. Forbes and repeated in the curious and amusing “Chess History” by the late H.E. Bird, that the four-armed form of Chess was the original and much more ancient than the two--armed is exploded. The so-called “Chaturanga,” for four players with a King, Rook, Knight, Elephant or Ship, and four pawns each, and complicated or simplified by the use of dice, was invented later than the two-armed game. It s still played in India, though not to a great extent. But the word “Chaturanga” really includes any form of Chess. It does not mean “four armies,” but the four chief portions of an army – the elephant, the horsemen, the war-chariots with their warriors and the foot soldiers- an army of ancient India.”*

*It is, of course, difficult in tracing the history of Chess and Draughts to decide exactly what we mean by Chess and Draughts, many evolutions, possibly many more than we have as yet any idea of.*

*Both the Greeks and Romans of classical literature were familiar with games which, even if not falling under a wider definition of Chess or Draughts, were in many respects akin to them. Among Greek authors who refer to such games (which may or may not have been always played with dice) are Homer, Herodotus, Sophocles, Euripedes, Pindar, Plato, and others. Sophocles refers to a board of 5 lines (pentagramma), which some critics take to mean 36 squares. Several Greek proverbs are also extant containing the technical terms of these games.*

*Latin authors also make many references to games played on a board, though we do not even know whether the words tabella, mandra and even abacus refer to the same or different boards. Among the references we find Ovid, Martial, Seneca, Cicero, Pliny and Quintilian, and earlier still Plantius and Lucilius.” (Now to page 294 in the July, 1908 Chess Amateur-)*

*“Cicero referred to duodecimscripta, probably a board of 12 lines, and one of the passages in Ovid tells us that the men on each side were in three rows, resembling the modern draughts.*

*The material of which the men were made seems to have varied, the earliest work in Greek means a pebble or small stone, but Roman men were made of glass, ivory, etc.*

*Scanty as these references are they cover a period of many hundred years and probably refer to several games widely differing in many respects, but for the most part regarded as games of skill.*

*All that we can conclude is that in the earliest days of Greek and Roman Literature games, not unlike modern draughts and chess, were in vogue and apparently well-known and not regarded as innovations.*

*A friend residing in Algeria sent us recently a picture post card depicting Arabs playing draughts on the sand, the men apparently being formed from the sand, and it is by no means impossible that the children of the desert played a similar game thousands of years ago in very simple form.*

*Something not unlike the elementary game of “noughts and crosses” may have been progenitor of the modern scientific games just as the floating tree was doubtless the parent of the boat and so by degrees of the modern ocean liner.”*

**Chess Amateur June, 1919 p.261:-** *Chess and Draughts” by E.B. Osborn*

*“The war has greatly increased the number of players of chess and draughts, who would like to know something about the science of these alluring diversions- each of them is rather a minor art than a mere game or harmless means of killing time. The old controversy as to which is the finer test of intelligence and will-power has been lately revived. It can never be settled because the preference for one or the other is purely personal, depending, in fact, upon the trend of the player’s mentality. Edgar Allen Poe thought draughts subtler and more profound than chess, and many mathematicians- especially those who love “neat solutions” and would cheerfully drink the old Cambridge toast of “Pure mathematics, and may they never be the slightest use to anybody”- have endorsed his commendation. In draughts it is often possible for the expert to see a great numbers of moves ahead, just as one sees so often the result of a mathematical exercise as inevitable, whereas in chess the unexpected is always evolving, and even the fairest prospect is so clouded with picturesque uncertainties that there is a saying among chess players that “there is nothing as hard as winning a won game.” In draughts analysis is predominant; in chess intuition has greater scope, especially in the complex positions of contests over the board with a time limit. Lovers of precision naturally prefer draughts; as Poe did when his mind was intrigued*

by the making of the detective stories, which are such brilliant essays in the logic of circumstance, and have inspired the creators of Sherlock Holmes, Sexton Blake and Arsene Lupin. The other Poe – the maker of “To Helen” and other lyrics that grow by moonlight – would probably have preferred the inexhaustible vicissitudes of chess, which vouchsafe to the votary so many fair, fleeting glimpses of absolute beauty and –Beauty in itself, which is beyond space and time and above all other servitudes of the human mind. Inexhaustibility is not among the merits of draughts. Thus the variations resulting from the 11-15 opening have now been so thoroughly analysed that it is practically impossible to defeat a player who chooses it and knows the combinations by heart. It has, therefore, been found necessary to restrict the choice of openings – in matches and tournaments, in order to avoid too many draws. But there is no sound opening in chess in which the issue is inevitable, so that in one all-important respect draughts is at a serious disadvantage in the comparison.

For all those who wish to pass out of the wood-shifting stage and acquire a knowledge of the scientific principles of either game I can heartily recommend as a guide “Chess and Checkers” (D. Appleton and Co., \$1.25) by Edward Lasker, a former champion of the City of London Chess Club, and an excellent player of draughts. The strategic ideas, which constitute the “science” of either game, are admirably expounded, and the novice (who is apt to waste his time in learning the array of variations by rote, without any inkling of the why and wherefore of them) will find his little book a most profitable investment. Later on he can acquire the more detailed text-books- to be used as works of reference- in which the leading lines of initial development are catalogued and the mysteries of end-game elucidated. Time was when I myself preferred draughts to chess, but the former game had to be abandoned as a mental relaxation because I was haunted at night by wild and monstrous memories of the lost parti—in quasi-mathematical nightmares I found myself wandering over boards of infinite extent, watching whole coveys of men flying over far horizons and capturing men as they passed. Moreover, on a visit to Charenton I was introduced to a person who had gone mad through playing Polish draughts to excess, and this dismal object-lesson was reinforced by the lines from a lunatic’s poem of right living:

*Chacon a son gout.  
Il faut toujours avoir soin  
De ne pas danser devant le buffet.*

(The lunatics were forbidden at their occasional balls to dance into the refreshment room in order to protect the crockery.) So I now give some of my scant leisure to the mild lunacy of chess, which never causes me a moment’s loss of sleep, for I am not such a lunatic after all as to worry over the loss of a match game, however sternly contested.

There are some interesting notes in “Chess and Checkers” on the history of draughts. The history of chess is, of course, finally settled in a stately monograph by Mr. H.J.R. Murray, the son of the late Sir James A.H. Murray, the greatest lexicographer who ever lived, not excluding



Dr. Johnson himself.” *A History of Chess* (Oxford: the Clarendon Press) is a book into which one may dip at any odd moment, with the certainty that some new and curious fact will be revealed. The other day, for example, I was meditating on the curious subject of chess-chaff-the quaint badinage, meaningless to the uninitiated and even a little irritating, which forms a sort of spoken obligato to most skittle games. It seems it is a very old habit of chess-players. For dipping into my Murray (after a few minutes research in my Griffith-and-White), I discovered that this habit of jesting was universal among players in the time of the Abbasid Caliphs. “Chess players,” wrote an authority of that far age, “employ different kinds of pleasantries and jests designed to astound. Many maintain that these incite people to play, and add to the flow of resource. They have been compared with the short, improvised verses which warriors employ when encountering the enemy. Many verses describing this fashion have been composed: e.g. the following by a player:

*“Hotter than the glow of charcoal glows the player’s timely jest’  
Think how many a weaker player it has helped against the best!”*

Let chess players go on chaff-chaffing, then, for in so doing they are keeping up a fine old tradition, which, to take another historic fact, was one of the secrets of the amazing popularity of chess in the mediaeval castles, old and young, played it as part of the routine of chevalerie.

The history of draughts is far less spacious and distinguished than that of chess. It has always been, and still is, a diversion of the commonality. But its origin is an unsolved problem. There is no historical evidence for the theory that it is a deliberately simplified form of chess. A better explanation attributes its appearance to the transference of the Spanish game of Alquerque (the most complicated of the games known as merels, which includes Noughts-and- Crosses and Three-in-a-row, and are the most ancient of board games), to the chess-board. The method of capture at draughts, the multiple capture, and the huff, clearly point to a connection with Alquerque, there is an inscribed board for this game in the cloisters of Norwich Cathedral). And now there is a third theory, my very own. I believe draughts is the result of a social revolution in the chess-board, whereby all ranks and orders were abolished- except that any “man” could become a king by going to the limit of the board, which strongly reminds one of the ambitious outrecuidance of the Snowden’s and Lansbury’s and other autocrats of the Labour that labours not at all, but sees red and talks red. What a theory! “Morning Post”.

(I don’t know E.B. Osborn but see Wikipedia. It is probably Edward Bolland Osborn (1868-1967) journalist and author and that’s a good tip about Edward Lasker’s book “Chess and Checkers” If it is he had an article “Humours and Chess” in Chess Pie 1936.)

### **ANTIQUITY OF CHESS - Chess Amateur June, 1919 - page 289**

“Subscribers to the “Chess Amateur” may be interested in an extract from an old Scandinavian Mythology which I have lately unearthed, and which points to the existence of Chess in Northern

*Europe long before its introduction into England by the Danes of Canute's day. Those rowdy and restless folks who were yet apparently able to appreciate an hour of scientific recreation in the intervals between drinking and fighting, believed and asserted the game to have originated in the Far-East.*

*The story is long, and for obvious reasons I give it in my own words. A certain prehistoric king (with an utterly unpronounceable name) had reason to suspect his wife of infidelity during his absence on a fighting raid. Accordingly, on his return, he set out with a few faithful retainers for the purpose of wreaking vengeance on the destroyer of his peace, who had meantime made himself scarce and was naturally nowhere to be found. Long and wearily, we learn, did the fruitless search continue, until the king sank utterly exhausted, for a rest in the forest in the shade of a giant oak. Then it was, so doth the Chronicler affirm, that one of the company produced a Chess-board and men, and challenged him to contest, in order to distract him from his troubles.*

*The game proceeded, and soon became of thrilling interest to the spectators. It was a critical moment; the monarch's hand was out stretched to give the move which he believed would bring matters to a victorious climax when a piercing shriek rang out from the branches above their heads of : "Don't touch that pawn for your life!" (or words to that effect)- an event that brought the whole party to their feet, completely upsetting the board and, incidentally, the chances of escape of the enthusiast who was hidden in the tree above, and was instantly recognized as the "party" who was "wanted". As to who had the best of the "next move" is by no means left to conjecture by the scribe. The story is interesting, and though to my mind it has a comic element, is given in all seriousness. I cannot, however, refrain from appending the obvious moral:- Never trust yourself to look on a chess-match unless you are ready to boast, like the accomplished linguist of old, that you are capable of holding your tongue in seven languages." E. Baumer Williams."*

(It will interest readers of the "C.A." to know that the writer of the foregoing entertaining contribution is the mother of our Problem Editor. She is who introduced P.H.W. (then nine years old) to the game of chess. Who shall measure our indebtedness to her for doing so?)

Her son was Philip H. Williams. I guess the tree dweller paid a severe price for his outburst. The interesting item was the Danes certainty that chess was invented in the Far East. And what indeed was the book of Scandinavian Mythology she refers to? BobM

#### **CHESS AND DRAUGHTS - Chess Amateur August, 1919 - p. 309**

*"A comparison of the two games has been referred to in June and July of this magazine. I think the typical chess enthusiast knows little of draughts, and not a few may think it an inferior game. I know little of it myself, but I think I am right that it is not a question of inferiority so much as being, today, more sterile: analysis of its possibilities has been pushed almost to finality.*

*Theoretically the first player at chess, draughts- or even billiards should win, being one stage better developed than the second. The perfect billiard player should run out in his first break. Now at draughts, I believe the advantage of first move is easier of demonstration than with chess. There is a grand mathematical simplicity about draughts, though nobody could possibly hold the opinion that it is in the same street regarding variety. I believe that it is impossible to prove which is the more ancient of the two.*

*I see nothing offensive in the remark of Mr. Osborn (quoted from the "Morning Post") that "...it has always been, and still is a diversion of the commonality." To-day it is unquestionably so. Since the war, chess columns have revived, but I rarely see draughts columns. It is my view that chess is a far higher flight of intelligence – unquestionably the finest indoor game of skill where physical power is not part of the argument. There are chess games, chess endings, chess problems and chess puzzles. There are not surely such marked classifications with draughts? It would seem that in the latter game, the cause of defeat in a given game is more specific. In many chess games this cause is a matter of conflicting opinion because the possibilities are so vast.*

*From a mathematical point of view' "Reversi," which I have once before mentioned, presents the most intricate problems; it is a game shamefully neglected. It is a deep study, all the more impressive to me as I remember playing a series of games at Reversi with a fine chess player of the old school, in which I never had the smallest chance. I never grasped how it came about that in the end I was swept off the board time after time. The intricacy lies partly in the fact that throughout the game the actual forces are continually changing colour. It is said that the familiar "Noughts and Crosses," though played by the little ones, is in reality a flight of mathematical problems.*

*There is a Japanese game called "Go," which is claimed to be the most difficult board-game in existence; experts at this science hold positions more like cabinet ministers, and spend their lives at the study of "Go." But the charms of chess are so obvious-its variety, and the different planes of excellency amongst its devotees. I sometimes see games being played at restaurants- the two opponents apparently not having the smallest idea of how to play; yet how they enjoy it! "Surely, sir," said I on one occasion, "you ought to get out of check before you do that?" "Oh, ah, to be sure! Thank you." "Fancy us not seeing that, Albert!" said his opponent. I replied, tactfully, that it is well-known that onlookers sometimes see more than the players. On this case it would have been rather difficult to see less!*

*But I do not hold Mr. Osborne's view as to the origin of draughts being based on some political and quasi-socialistic upheaval- a theory which he advances with some diffidence. The ultimate appearance of "Kings" at draughts would seem to be the very last procedure that socialistic innovators would tolerate. Surely the aspiration of an assiduous draughts-piece to wear a crown should be (in the view of the socialist) rewarded with the gallows!"*

*("Go" is a Chinese game and this is possibly a Typo. BM)*

## **CHESS AND DRAUGHTS - Chess Amateur September, 1919, page 314,**

Mr. P.H. Williams (page 309) writes interestingly but not quite correctly on this old topic. "I was a newspaper Draughts-editor for four years, have been a Chess-ditto for twenty-eight, and a student of the history of both games all the time-though that of Draughts is scanty-so I will add a few remarks.

Mr. Williams says: "I believe it is impossible to prove which is the more ancient of the two games." It depends on what is meant by "Draughts." There were games of a draughts-like nature before Chess. But none of them would be recognized as Draughts by draughts players- they would seem nearly as distinct as chess is. As to the word "Draughts" that has only come into use as the name of the game in English-speaking countries (only) since 1300. The word is old English for "moves" and chess-players formerly spoke of their "draughts" –checkmate in four draughts, and so on.

It is certain that the game of Draughts (French, "Dames") was very young, if living at all, as late as 1200A.D. It is almost certain that it was invented in France about that date, but did not become widely popular till long after.

Chess was invented in N. or Central India, about 450-90. It is not known how far, if at all, the first Chess was different from that brought to Persia about 550 and to Arabia a century later- concerning which game everything is known. Almost exactly the same game was English chess from 1090 or so (Norman earlier) until about 1200, when the pawns were given the optional double steps as now. With that change the old game continued here till after 1500, when the Queens and Bishops became as now; though castling in one move was not the rule till later.

Chess is therefore about seven centuries older than Draughts. Unless some more ancient games, played on boards of squares or lines with pieces of uniform value, but with quite different moves and captures on boards of squares and considerably different on the board of lines (Alquerque de doze) – are to be considered, or one of them, the parents of the game of "Draughts." In the same way you might say that the ancient Greeks played cricket, because they knocked balls about with sticks.

Alquerque was the nearest game to Draughts, of these ancient games, but it was a different game, less scientific, played on a board of lines, not squares, and with the pieces all of the same value throughout the game. These pieces moved and captured as draughts Kings do now-from points at the intersections of lines. There was no double-corner.

I hold that the game of Draughts is less than eight centuries old, and in agreement are Mr. H.J.R. Murray, Mr. J.G. White, of Cleveland, U.S.A. – who has the largest chess library in the world and a very large draughts collection; the late v.d. Linde, the late Prof. Fiske, and Mr. J. Alexander, of Birmingham, ex-draughts champion of England and now a student of the history of board games in general and draughts in particular."

In his History of Chess Mr. Murray writes: “There are two theories as to the origin of draughts. The one, proposed by v.d. Linde and supported by Fiske, is that the game is a simplified chess (a battle between two sets of our old and weak chess queens). The other, suggested by Brunet y Bellet and developed by Mr. W.S. Branch in a series of articles in the “Pittsburgh Leader”, 1911-12, is that the game is a result of the transference of alquerque to the chessboard. It may be that the truth lies in a combination of the two theories. The board and the idea of promotion seem due to chess, the method of capture, the multiple capture, and the huff, to alquerque.

That draughts is and has been “a diversion of the commonality” is substantially true. But among the exceptions were Queen Elizabeth, Mary, Queen of Scots, Queen Victoria, Dr. Johnson, and the Duke of Wellington. The ladies mentioned played chess too, but not the Doctor and the Duke.

The game of Go or Igo is a highly scientific game played on a board of many squares without moving pieces about at all. It is played all over China as well as Japan, under another name. And it is the favourite indoor game of the upper circles. In China chess is the game of the commonality-and gambling another.

I played three games of Go with a Japanese – in Sussex! And I felt like a lamb being crushed by a boa-constrictor. Much the same with Japanese chess- two games. Then I licked him at our chess.

I doubt if there is a man living who can play Japanese chess and European chess equally well.

There are not so many kinds of problems and puzzles in draughts as in chess. The problems composed are much fewer with a large proportion of unconscious duplicates.

That draughts originated in some political or social upheaval is all nonsense. W.S.BRANCH.”

There is more chess than draughts research in the above but it all depends on when the modern games of chess and draughts started. Chess is older; say 600AD to draughts 1100AD but what about the ancestors? In reading the International Draughts Federation (Bulgaria) website I noted the following:- ***Though most people do not know it, the game we know today as Draughts probably began as a game called Alquerque in Ancient Egypt 1400 BCE with “modern” draughts invented 12<sup>th</sup> Century CE.*** The game is thriving in 2021 judging by the above website and the World Draughts Federation with its headquarters in Holland, and the International Draughts Federation (IDF) in Bulgaria. The old and the new draughts are well catered for in the IDF’s definition.

Three books on Draughts history recently bought are:-

1. **“The History of Checkers” by William Shelley Branch Specially written for the Pittsburgh Leader October 8, 1911-April 14 1912 No.30 of 40. May 2003.**

38 pages. The rules of ancient draughts are lost and different to our “checkers” but the same objects are there-capture and prevention. The Roman and Egyptian games are “aunts & uncles”

of games of draughts-like nature. He thought Falkener's draughts "imaginative" and was convinced that draughts came from alquerque as given in Alfonso X's work though that game was on lines not squares. The draughts game in principle being older than chess. He was sure draughts suited the Scots character. He finishes with a description of 25 draught game openings, some mention of very early British players and a very funny Wyllie story from his "Herd Laddie" days. It's a lovely booklet that WSB put a lot of work into. In the Sun (Sydney) 3 June 1934, Branch stated *scientific research of the last half century has fixed the period of the invention of draughts as the 13<sup>th</sup> century and almost certainly the last 20 years of it.*

**2. "The Ancient History of Draughts A search amongst Egyptian and other monuments in the British Museum and elsewhere" nd but 1913. By Geo. Henry Limbrey Reprint 1980.** Missing pages 17-32. It has a New Zealand story that the savage interior tribes played draughts and called it E'mu. A different take on the whalers who played draughts with coins against the Maori. There are many descriptions of objects discovered by the Egyptian Exploration Fund including the El Mahasna cemetery find of a clay gaming board and 11 pieces mentioned by Murray in "...Other than...". The Egyptian tomb drawings by the author are to urge interest in the ancient history of draughts which is centred there as evidenced in the British Museum and praise for the Egyptian economy and its clever people from the lower classes all of whom played draughts to the rich who played after death in the Egyptian Elysium. I am trying to get scans of the missing 16 pages. Limbrey (1873-1953) writes well and it is an enjoyable read. He married Frances in 1891 when he was 18 and they had 6 children He was a printers traveler in Middlesex 1901. He toured in 1911 (where?) lecturing on draughts with his view that Egypt was its birthplace.

**3. "A History of Alquerque and Draughts from their Origins to 1800 36 pages by Richard Miller 2015**

The author insists on sound evidence and dismisses Ancient Egypt as an ancestor of modern draughts. Alquerque he states *came into existence sometime before the ninth century* and with that date modern draughts has an old lineage. But there are dangers if alquerque's history relies on the graffiti on castles, churches and civic buildings in Europe. There are few literary references but those are useful especially Alfonso X's work in 1283.

If alquerque also derives from three or nine mensmorris it is a pity to note the author's comment on p.5 that *few inferences can be made about the origin of the game of alquerque*. And if this is one of the parents of modern draughts what was the other parent? Perhaps chess as Murray suggests. Modern draughts begins in the late 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> in Spain, possibly Valencia to become one of Europe's favourite board games. The author examines the variants such as Polish, Frisian and Long and Short move varieties. It is a nice book with lovely sketches.

## 2. A BRIEF HISTORY OF DRAUGHTS IN GREAT BRITAIN

D.W.Fiske in “Chess in Iceland” 1905 p.95 wrote:- *“But the game and its name had become very familiar early in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when William Perkins, in his work “A Case of conscience” (1619), speaks of “the games of chesse and draughts.”*

In ‘Twiss on Chess’, the author takes the game back in Europe to at least 1750 when Philidor was in Holland trying to make ends meet after the collapse of his music tour. How did he do that? Playing draughts for money. He was a good player. Naturally he took that skill to Britain from 1749 onwards. In his Miscellanies Twiss stated that Dr. Johnson wrote the Preface and Dedication in Payne’s 1756 book and to prove it he includes both from page 140-143. Twiss then gives a big wrap to Joshua Sturges 1800 book above. Draughts continues on for 40+ more pages.

Joseph Strutt in his book “The Sports and Pastimes of the People of England” 1801 states draughts was well known at this time. It had become popular when Payne brought out his 1756 book. Joshua Sturges followed in 1800 and built on Payne’s book to make his a best seller today.

Britain was the leading draughts country in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with Scottish world champions flourishing over the decades. It started with **Andrew Anderson** (1799-1861) the first champion who clashed and defeated “The Herd Laddie” James Wyllie in the early years, winning 4/1 (1830/1840/1847 and losing 1847) . His book “The Game of Draughts Simplified” included game rules and was very successful.

**James Wyllie** (1818-1899) has an excellent biography by Chris Reekie in the website “Wyllie checkers” and he was a great active champion promoting the game in America and Australia/New Zealand by his lengthy tours of 4 years+ in the 1870s/80s. He was afraid of no-one and played **Robert Marten, W. Barker, Robert Yates, Charles Barker, Willie Bryden, Richard Jordan, James Ferrie and Robert Mar.**

It was the ‘golden age’ for the game and the world loved him win or lose. Just before WW1 Ferrie lost to **Alfred Jordan** an Englishman breaking the hold the Scots had on the title. AJ lost in 1917 to the American **Newell Banks** 1917-22, then **Robert Stewart** of Scotland won it back and held it until 1933 when Banks was again Champion. This saw the title stay with the USA until 1991 with **Asa Long, Walter Hellman** and the great **Marion Tinsley** holding the title until it was won back by the Englishman Derek Oldbury. There was another championship that rivaled the World checkers Draughts title and it was called the International Draughts Championship with the French holding it from 1885 to 1947 with the Netherlands 1948-1954 and then Russia from 1948 with some gaps. Alexander Georgiev was the Russian 2019 champion.

The English Draughts Association started in 1898 and has for over 120 years organized great tournaments. There are many clubs today (25+) affiliated with the Association which has great

links with America. Selecting the greatest club is controversial but Glasgow must be up there with Edinburgh. The British draughts columns, like those of chess sing the virtues of this game.

If one goes to Trove on the National Library website in Australia one soon becomes submerged in draughts columns. What must it be like in Britain? Draughts came to Australia from Great Britain.



### 3. EARLY DRAUGHTS IN AUSTRALIA

Peter Wagg discovered a very early chess challenge in Tasmania between Captain Matthew Foster (1796-1846) of the 63rd and Director of the Convict Probation System and Dr. Thomas Braidwood Wilson (1792-1843), ship's surgeon and one of the first bee keepers. Wherever chess is so also is draughts and this match in the 1830's went with the short-lived 1835 Launceston Chess Club. The Hobart Town Chess Club in 1854 specifically named draughts as the only game with chess to be played at the Club.

The 1840 Australian Chess Club in Sydney does not specify draughts in its 12 rules nor does it ban draughts. It is likely draughts was played in this club which last till late 1845.

Many great chess players of the 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> century such as Harry Pillsbury and Frank Marshall were very strong draughts players in the USA as well as chess grandmasters. Also the World chess Champion Emanuel Lasker who played with Alfred Jordan at draughts and lost.

It is likely gold prospecting in Victoria brought draughts players with sets to cope with the boring times. The Secretary of the Melbourne Chess Club and Licensee of the Argus Hotel William Lancelot Kelly was a strong 'hybrid' also in 1857 and he became Proprietor of the Melbourne Punch in 1864. There were a lot of early Victorian chess clubs such as Corio at Geelong, Ballarat, Beechworth, Ararat and St Kilda. That meant draughts too.

Yanggendiynanyuk was an Aboriginal who played draughts and cricket in the 1868 touring team to England. A very interesting early fact. (See Indigenous Australia website on him)

Organised chess is one thing; Social chess another. We know chess was on the 'Endeavour' with astronomer Green, that Joseph Banks played and his sister Sarah Sophia actually collected chess books. Matthew Flinders and his wife Ann were keen players and he played for many years when a captive on Mauritius. Many emigrant families brought sets with them on the ships. Cumes in his delightful book "Their Chastity was not too rigid-Leisure times in early Australia" 1979 wrote of 'draft' boards for sale in December, 1820 by a Sydney trader. It was a 'silent exercise of intellectual talents' he wrote on p.85. The favourite games in WA were draughts, cribbage, chess, picquet, and vingt et un in the 1830's and 1840's in SA. Cumes in his Preface wrote *Perhaps a society reveals itself as much by the way it plays as by the way it works*. He was the author of "A Bunch of Amateurs" in 1988 and criticized the Politicians Malcolm Fraser and Bill Haydon such that the latter attacked him in Parliament. It made the front page of the Herald (24<sup>th</sup> March, 1988) and it surely sold a lot more of the book which he was touring the country to sell.

John Lhotsky in his 1835 book "Illustrations of the Present State and Future Prospects of the Colony of NSW" was not so sure..."*in the long neglected and mis-ruled Colony. Amongst us no public libraries, reading rooms, museums or even chess or other clubs exist, because Government itself is neglecting, or, as it were, despising everything connected with natural*

*comfort and education. After the work of the day is done, the only thought of most of our young men is brutal voluptuousness and seduction, and every means, are resorted to, to accomplish the destruction of poor and innocent emigrants.”* And, he may have been right but only just as clubs were starting. Perhaps his book helped.

One long-lived Club was the Sydney Mechanic's School of Arts started in mid 1861 the Chess and Draughts Club and it was still going strong well into the next century. The Town and Country Journal of May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1887 p.1084 has a good early history of draughts in NSW and the entire article is at the back in Trove. The interesting detail in the column by an older editor who is unknown states the School of Arts Chess and Draughts Club was inaugurated in 1857. John van Manen found a magazine stating the Club started in June, 1861. On the draughts side it was nice to have the names of deceased members Charles and James MacKay, Messrs Reid, Drury, Morrison, the latter a very old members. Seeing as the Club started in say early 60's this information is 27 years old and Morrison could well be an older man. Others named are Stormont who was another old member, Ewing, Parton, Buckle and Illingworth. And a Mr. Miller "of the Railway" who was a very strong Sydney player. These are all at the end of the article. The description of the Club rooms is excellent and the draughts column itself started in April of this year. The Club continues strongly in 2021. No chess and draughts I fear.

A second meeting of the Melbourne Draught Club was held Tuesday night 6<sup>th</sup> June, 1876 at Miss Oliver's Café:-President R. Baird; C.S. Paterson vice-President; Jas Paterson Treasurer; and W.R. Osmond Secretary. A large attendance and a match 8 players aside resulted in the V.P.'s team defeating the P's team 6/2. J. Paterson was the Australian Champion some years later. (The Age 8<sup>th</sup> June, 1876) (See also The Age 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 1876. First meeting was held 2<sup>nd</sup> June at Miss Oliver's.)

Another wonderful chess book that may be on the web is "Australian Chess Annual" 1896 by Hugh Bignold. I have a bound photocopy bought from the State Library of Victoria in the 70s. Bignold died in the early 30's so it is out of copyright and any content can be used. He was optimistic calling it an "annual" but it is an invaluable 19<sup>th</sup> century primary source. He was a Sydney barrister and writer and used the simple process of writing letters to knowledgeable people who could answer his questions and he put it all in the "Annual's" 169 pages. He was a fair player and problemist and in a simul at the St. George's Chess Club at Kogarah scored +9=3. He may have been lucky Dr. J. J. O'Keefe did not play but scored +8 =4-2 in another (23<sup>rd</sup> January, 1896). It was a great period and a team match on 4<sup>th</sup> April saw 80 players all named. One comment made by Bignold on. p.23 was *"The history of the School of Arts Chess Club is the history of chess in Sydney"*.

Draughts was played here. It should be noted that J.H. Carruthers, President of the Suburban Chess Association was a State Premier of NSW later.

It is pleasing that 'draughts' does feature in the "Annual" as it is my favourite Australian chess book. It was fortunate though that Bignold, a legal and literary man, was author and here is the 5<sup>th</sup> and last verse of his 'L'Envoi' poem on the last page of the "Annual":-

*Master, the sands are running dry,  
That mark life's all-absorbing game;  
Soon must we put the chessmen by,  
And shadows go as shades we came.  
The wave of Lethe runs in spate;  
Yet man is master of his fate!*

Bignold's book gives details on some of the draughts clubs around in 1896. For example the NSW Draughts Ch'ship started 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1897 with players, Warnoch, J. Drury, J. Boyce, J.R. St. Ormont, Gallagher, Griffin, Trumper all of Sydney, plus J. Illingworth of Richmond (lately Katoomba) and Lachlan Shaw late NZ now the Pymont Club. There was a NSW Draughts Club Association in 1896 and 6 clubs were playing a tourney:- South Sydney, East Sydney, Balmain, Alexandria, Police and the Sydney School of Arts. The NSW champion in 1890 was John Boyce and in a Teams Match in 1897 there were 72 players and a tied result! 52 wins and 22 draws. It was played at the Lecture Hall of the School of Arts. In 1890 John Boyce played "The Herd Laddie" at the SOA with a +1-1 result. There were 10 entries in the NSW Ch'ship of 1903:- E.W. Smith of Bowral, Drury, Stormont, Dwyer and M'Beath still in it at 17<sup>th</sup> April. Trove is the go to site for ease of research but it is not chronological. Or is it?

Some Chess and Draughts clubs in Bignold have lists of Club Executives for 1896.

Draughts was linked to chess in the Balmain Workingmen's Institute Chess and Draughts Club, Burwood School of Arts (SOA) Chess and Draughts Club, Chatswood Chess & Draughts Club, Marrickville SOA Chess & Draughts Club, Parramatta SOA & Granville Chess & Draughts Club.

Country Clubs:- Bathurst, Bombala, Broken Hill, Queanbeyan, Wentworth Falls all Chess & Draughts Club.

There was a fine Melbourne Chess & Draughts Club called the Victorian. After a time the draughts players seceded leaving behind them an organization that did yeoman service of several years in the encouragement of chess among younger generation of players.

Many of the other States chess clubs did not have 'draughts' in their title and were chess clubs. There were draughts clubs with no chess. Some held the line such as the Townsville School of Arts Chess & Draughts Club, the Railway Library Chess & Draughts Club (Qld), South Brisbane School of Arts Chess & Draughts Club.

In New Zealand, the Linwood Chess & Draughts Club, Sydenham Chess & Draughts Club, Wanganui Chess & Draughts Club and the Woodville Chess & Draughts Club.

Just back on the Grenfell Chess and Draughts Club:- It met in the Reading Room of the School of Arts. There was a membership of 20 and the President was W. Maitland, Hon. Sec and Treasurer was Wm Sippel with a Committee of Rev. J. Milne, Dr. Rygate, Messrs Maitland, Watts and W. Sippel. The subscription was Membership School of Arts. I wrote to the Secretary of the Grenfell Historical Society Hon. Research Sec. Lloyd Mitton who replied on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1977. Just prior to that I played in the Grenfell Open, the only chess tournament I have ever played in and scored +2-2. I didn't realise how hard it was to play and decided then never to do it again. I met Lloyd on a visit around the town with my wife Norma and here is Lloyd's letter which gives a small picture of some of the members:-

*"Dear Bob,*

*In reply to your letter of the 22<sup>nd</sup> June re chess in Grenfell. The local paper of that period makes no mention of a chess club that I can find, but I can help with some of the people mentioned, and building's used.*

*The first School of Arts that would have been used by the club was a timber building in George Street this building was behind the present Library in Main Street. With the erection of the present School of Arts now our Museum all activities were transferred to it, that was in 1896.*

*The executive and some of the members mentioned I have a little information that may be of interest to you. The President - W.Maitland was a partner in the general store in Grenfell they traded as Purdy and Maitland. We have nothing on him of any consequence.*

*Hon. Sec. & Treas.:- Wm. Sippel, this is an interesting one. Son of John and Mary Sippel, Jewellers of Grenfell. William enlisted and went to the Boer war in 1899, on the conclusion of hostilities he elected to remain in South Africa. He was not only a chess player but a very fine rifle shot, in 1898 he won the G.H. Greene M.L.C. Shield for marksman of the year. This shield he took to South Africa with him. In 1953 he returned it to the Grenfell Rifle Club for Annual Competition. The Rifle Club has now passed it on to the Historical Society.*

*The Rev. J. Milne was the Presbyterian Minister in Grenfell from 1892 to 1895.*

*Mr. Watts no record at all, very difficult without initials. There were Watts on the land but miles from town.*

*Dr. R.E. Rygate, a much loved doctor in Grenfell from 1882 until his death in 1915. He was born at Hartley N.S.W. In 1859 son of Dr. Robert Rygate. He was educated in Sydney until he was sixteen years of age and then sent to London where he graduated in Medicine. On his return to Australia he was appointed surgeon at Wellington Hospital N.S.W. He married Miss Josaphene Blake of Yass and at the age of twenty three came to Grenfell and set up practice. Dr. Rygate took a lively interest in many of the towns activities, Race Club, Show Society, Progress Association and was Master of the Masonic Lodge on two occasions.*

*Sometime in the 1960's another chess club was formed here and you may get some more information from them, I would suggest you contact Mr. Kevin Lohanson, "Arabadoo" Grenfell 2810, phone 43 5117. Hoping this information will be of help to you in the History of Chess in Australia.*

*Yours sincerely Lloyd Mitton, Hon. Research Sec."*

The Town & Country Journal of 19<sup>th</sup> June, 1897 had an historical article called "A Sixty Year Retrospect" by "Coulter Fell" & covers draughts from 1837-1897 in Australia from a Brisbane and Sydney viewpoint. Well worth reading in a scan at the rear. The rarest part is the description of draughts generally in rural Australia and one wishes it was longer. Whoever "Coulter Fell" was, he was clearly elderly, a strong player probably from Sydney with a good grasp of draught's history and an admirer of "The Herd Laddie". "Culter Fell" is a hill in Scotland from which one can see the Cumbrian Lake District to the Scottish Highlands. Perhaps the author was a Scot. In the 1896 Christmas issue of the Journal he wrote "Christmas Jottings" which are notes from his diary. I don't have it all but he was a learned person and examined draughts 'early days'. He was sure the early whalers at New Zealand played draughts with sovereigns for the Black men and other coins for the White...."*when gold was valueless to Maoris in either the North or Middle Island. These coins have been found in wrecked vessels and came in handily as ready-made draughtsman."*

The game was extremely popular at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and there were draughts columns in most city newspapers and large rural centre newspapers. Even WW1 didn't stop them completely but there was a turndown from August, 1914 until the end of the war. It returned to full strength post WW1 and the 20's and 30's were rich decades for draughts clubs and columns.

Draughts in later decades post WW2 does seem to have declined. It is perhaps true that as the Scottish people in Australia aged, that draughts lost its popularity. They carried it in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and most have been proud that one of their own was world champion even in his 70s. The Scots produced many world draughts champions. Here are some scan excerpts from the 40's.

Warwick, Qld formed a Chess & Draught's Club in 1940. Players included P.J.G. Williams, Jim McClusky, Jack Orange, Bert Madren, Bill Matthews and J. Fox (champion) (Warwick Daily News, 20<sup>th</sup> August, 1940.)

Wagga had a chess and draughts Club in 1946 with Secretary W. McSpadden (later J. Thompson). The club met regularly every week in Coleman Street Hall.

Cootamundra moved its chess & draughts Club to the School of Arts in August, 1946

Morwell (Vic) had reformed its chess & draughts club in 1948 with President & Secretary J. Schumann, Vice Presidents J. Cook & R. McKenzie, with delegates N.Walsh, J.Cook and W.Brown (Morwell Advertiser 26<sup>th</sup> February, 1948). The club met at Hazelwood Recreation Ground Pavilion. There was an earlier Club in 1944 with players A. McCallum, J. Simos, W, McCrory & A. Burns

The Courier Mail (Brisbane) of 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 1947 was concerned at the popular conception of draughts being a game “played by some old chap in a park, with a bottle of metho beside him”. The NSW Draughts Association’s vice-president spoke strongly against that view and said that in some American States the game was taught to develop clear thing and concentration. The State was aiming to get it taught at schools. And, no doubt, like chess it was dependent on the teacher. It never reached the status of a subject though many schools have chess teams today. Just after the war it was very likely the game was played in parks. I certainly played chess in the late 50’s in Hyde Park Sydney. These games have solace for men especially who have had a hard life and get comfort from them. You can see the enjoyment in their faces. I played chess against many “old-timers” in Hyde Park and enjoyed it. I can also see how a Draughts Association was worried about their game being tainted as that meant parents would not encourage their children to play and thus the game declines.

That said, in 1947 a “goofy” draughts game from Hungary became popular and the enthusiasts met at Belmore Park Central Sydney to play. It was called ‘Kamorika’ and men could be moved anywhere. Amusing that the article appeared on 15<sup>th</sup> July, in the Melbourne Herald as both cities were rivals.

As late as 1984 draughts was used by robotic engineers to design robots that could work at sites unsafe for humans. Maintenance work at such places such as Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania could be carried out that way in the future. The accident in 1979 there probably spurred on the design.

The Age 29<sup>th</sup> September, 1951 gave the results of the annual draughts tournament between the country and the city held at Hardware House Melbourne-a win for country 41/38 with Mr. J. Cross (Apollo Bay) winning a trophy for best score by a country player.

## **Draughts**

Sir,—Draughts! The game of the mystic squares. What a shame that Launceston is probably the only city offering no facilities for competitive games. Surely somewhere there is a space which could be converted to this need.

I have it on good authority that the next Australian championship tourney may be held in Hobart. What has Hobart got that we have not? — A draughts club. A place where any “wood-pusher” can drop in at night and find a kindred soul — status or nationality no bar. We have a public reading-room where tired tourists go

to rest their feet and free books for people who can afford to pay. Why not a cosy corner for draughts and chess?

From any angle, would it not be an asset? The quiet dignity and gentlemanly conduct of a draughts gathering need not be stressed. “An old-man’s game!” says the uninitiated; but to attain champion class a player must have a keen, analytical mind, great visualising power and ability to concentrate, plus a memory out of the ordinary. And just as athletic sports create and develop muscles so does the study of draughts create and develop all these desirable mental qualities.

For this reason alone draughts should be encouraged among young people—should be an essential part of mind training. Let us create facilities for the game. And a draughts board in every home. All in favour? Any suggestions? — H. T. FREEMAN, Harts Ave., Launceston.

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Launceston Examiner, 5<sup>th</sup> September, 1952    Mr Freeman is pushing the envelope and I hope he succeeded. Draughts & Chess were very popular in Tassie in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **WHAT ABOUT THE PERIOD 1960-2020?**

As the Clubs settled in post war Australia, the chess and draughts magazines grew. There are some very good publications from this period which took games news out of newspaper columns and into such publications. The Sargison Draughts Collection once in the Hobart Library appears to have been split with some in the National Library and some in the Monash University Library. Unlike chess which does have a published Bibliography (2011) kindly funded by the Ken Whyld Association (now Chess History & Literature Society 2017), Draughts in Australia does not have a Bibliography. There is the book “Draughts Books of the Twentieth century” by Kenneth Lovell 1990. It’s for sale for \$325 from Amazon but there is free shipping! What a deal. Its listed price in 1990 was \$22.81 It seems to be a print run of 100 copies only. So a rare book today. Libraries have been contacted re a loan or e-book. It will be difficult to obtain draughts publication information.

In 1972 Perth had a Draughts and Chess Club (Dutch Australian Weekly 14<sup>th</sup> July, 1972). And at the YMCA in South Canberra there was a chess and draughts club at Woden & Yarralumla.

On 26<sup>th</sup> February, 1985 the Canberra Times published details on the WA Committee into gambling that suggested 'Gaming permits' for card games but not for chess and draughts. The Chair Dan Mossenson, a Perth Lawyer produced many commonsense ideas but that gambling was here to stay.

In June, 1982 the Hillel Ajax Maccabi Chess Club held regular tournaments including draughts.

In April, 1997 the New Backgammon Club at Caulfield will have other games such as chess & draughts at the club. The Goolwa, S.A. RSL club had chess & draughts available.

Trove had little access to Facebook and other digital sites dealing with draughts.

In 2013 on Trove when "Chess & Draughts Clubs" is typed in, it referred to the Imparja TV Channel's 'Big School' - *"Miss Postern is landed with running the draughts club and suggests merging with Mr. Church's chess club, creating the schools first 'chaughts' club. She goes to his place to discuss a merger."*

In 2021 the digital world has taken over. Draughts Clubs are very thin on the ground, and much more than they were in those heady days of the 1920's to 50's.

**The next chapter** shows all the States or Colonies before 1901. Games were popular pre WW1 and up to the end of WW2. Inevitably Club life declined with bowls clubs probably worst affected. The columns in the prime of chess and draughts are simply amazing and one could spend a lifetime examining them. The great columns in the Australasian of Melbourne, The Melbourne Leader, The Weekly Times of Melbourne show that Victoria was the leading State with Queensland (Brisbane Courier) and New South Wales (Town & Country Journal, Sydney Mail) next and South Australia with the Adelaide Observer following. Western Australia and Tasmania were also well served and Canberra though not featured here was definitely a well covered chess and draughts area.

The two World Wars finished off the great columns as did the death of a great editor such as Henry Charlick. But times were changing and the two games of chess and draughts were served by specialist magazines. Some editors branched into the history of the game regularly as shown, others featured games of chess and draughts predominantly but most got to know the readers well. I certainly enjoyed solving in the newspapers such as the Sun-Herald which started in 1949. John Kellner in the Sunday Mirror and Cecil Purdy in the Sunday Telegraph were two of the best. John invited friends and I to play him in simulms which we did. Cecil Purdy did the same and probably Garry Koshnitsky also.

Some of those columns live again in the next chapter.



## Māori playing draughts, 1840s



A game of draughts is under way in the lower left corner of this peaceful scene of Māori village life in the late 1840s. The artist, John Gilfillan, arrived in New Zealand with his family in 1841, and settled near Pūtiki, Whanganui, which is shown in this lithograph. Gilfillan made many drawings of his Māori neighbours, and this work was said to have been exhibited at the New Zealand Court in the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London.

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**Photo from Encyclopedia of New Zealand**

## 4. STATE GROWTH OF DRAUGHTS

**VICTORIA** - The Prahran Telegraph started a draughts column in its 9<sup>th</sup> February, 1907 issue. There was a Club that met every Tuesday night with Secretary G.A. Kerr. It was active and here is a list of members G. Cottrell; M. Corless; G. A. Kerr; K. J. Richardson (Captain); Robert Davis; D. Ross; Hugh Egan; M. O'Loughlin; A. Birt; E.F.Sowden; J. O'Donnell; E. Grogan; A. McPhee; C. Kyme; J.S. Yorston; D.Kelly; F.Grant; H. Wenden; J. Whyte; D. Campbell.

An "Answers to Correspondents" was a feature of the column with people such as H. J. Richardson (Hawksburn); Joseph Duggan (Charlton); James Grey (Birchip); B. Shuttleworth (Stawell); G.A. Kerr (Prahran) and R. de Beauregard of South Yarra all sent in questions. And there was a Games and problems section. Prahran defeated Melbourne +7-5=6. Other matches at the time in June, 1907 were Fitzroy v Combined Trams (+7-6=3); Brunswick/Coburg v Richmond (+6-3=7) and Flemington & Kensington had byes. That month the Draughts Club Ch'ship was underway. Also the editor liked Jokes such as the below.

"I am now prepared," announced the professional draughts statistician with empressement, "to inform any gentlemen present the number of variations to any position he may choose to submit." "Really," exclaimed a sceptic, "then I should like to know how many variations there are in a game after 11-15 is first played." "Certainly, sir certainly: there is exactly 17,700,707 and if you can prove that I am wrong I will pay you five pounds." —"Peewit."

### A GOOD MOVE.

A foreman came up to where two of his labourers were at work, and finally sat down beside them and watched them as if he thought they would cease working so hard if he were to leave them alone. This evidently was apparent to both men, and plainly annoyed them, but for a time neither of them spoke. At length one of them, unable to restrain himself any longer, turned round and exclaimed, "Hey, mister, do you know how to play draughts?"

"Yes," replied the foreman, "I do."

"Well then," said the man, "you must know that unless you make a move soon you'll lose two men."

**Prahran Telegraph 13<sup>th</sup> July, 1907**

**Prahran Telegraph 10<sup>th</sup> August, 1907**

There were good draughts columns in Victoria including the Weekly Times which was one of the best. News articles featured regularly such as the two following from The Argus and The Age.

Victoria was well served by its chess and draughts columns in the 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Melbourne Leader also had very good draughts and chess columns as did The Australasian. Draughts columns are rare in today's digital world and the Australian Draughts Federation in Melbourne is the ruling body. Draughts and chess are perfect games for the internet; lidraughts.org has free online draughts and the game is played in licensed clubs as is chess and

the clubs promote all activities that help their club. For example the Dubbo Chess Club started at the Dubbo (NSW) Services Club in 2000, and continues today with lessons for beginners and juniors of a Tuesday evening. Many Australians have joined the American checkers Association which holds online checkers (draughts) tourneys. Draughts clubs in Australia are very rare today. Plenty on Carlton Draught, Draughts horses and House Draughts sadly.

**The Argus (Melb) Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> May, 1887, p.11**

**“DRAUGHTS**

*Last night the Mayor of Richmond, Mr J. H. Bennett, issued invitations to a number of his friends to meet him at the local town hall to witness an exhibition of draughts playing. Mr J. Wyllie (the Herd Laddie), the champion of the world was present. The lovers of the game mustered in strong force. The opening game was played by Mr Wyllie and Mr James Paterson, the champion of Australia. From the beginning the game was an interesting one, and when the onlookers saw that the Colonial champion could hold his own, enthusiasm ran high. Mr Wyllie, in trying to force his opponent, left an opportunity, which Mr Paterson at once availed himself, and, amidst enthusiastic applause, won the game. This is the 258<sup>th</sup> game which the Herd Laddie has played in the colonies. A number of other games were played during the evening.”*

James Wyllie the world draughts champion had just arrived for what turned out to be a 4 year tour which included New Zealand (1887-1891.) The loss to James Paterson the Australian Draughts Champion did no harm to Wyllie and helped him in his cause of draughts promotion in the state and later other states and New Zealand. He was human and went out of his way to play thousands of games of draughts in cities and rural by-ways against all and sundry. Some of the roads he travelled on must have been a nightmare. He charged 1/- (10 cents) per game and probably waved that against the ladies and young ones. He was the ultimate astute professional. And what monies draughts attracted. When Paterson won the Centenary Draughts Title the next year the first prize was £50 and a 100 guinea gold cup. It would be nice to know where the latter is today. Far more than chess first prize was played for then.

The World Champion James Wyllie's 4 year visit to Australia and New Zealand in the 1887/91 years did wonders for the game. It was not long before all the States newspapers had draughts columns giving local and overseas news, a game and sometimes a draughts problem. His main base was Melbourne and he went to rural Victoria from there.

**The Age - 24<sup>th</sup> March, 1924**

**“DRAUGHTS**

*There was a large muster of draught players at the Central Club on Saturday night, when several men from the fleet were welcomed by Mr. J. Piper, vice-president of the Victorian Draughts Association. Owing to the small attendance of sailors it was arranged that Mr. H. Egan, champion of Australia, should give an exhibition of simultaneous play against the combined visitors and local players. The fleet men included Chief Blacksmith G.H. Benoy, champion draughts player of the navy; Mr. G.A. Hugh, who is also champion club swinger of*



*the fleet, and Mr G. Bell. The navy representatives performed well against the Australian and Mr. Bency securing two nice draws and Mr. Bell one draw. After the play the visitors were entertained at supper. The "single corner" game played by Mr. Bency is to appear in "The Leader" next week."*

A Victorian Draughts Champion is featured on the next page:- Hugh Egan. In the Herald of the 18<sup>th</sup> April 1928 he gave a draughts simul against 14 players at the Mechanics Institute in Williamstown. He played 29 games in 2 hours for a score of +24 = 5 no losses. The draws were gained by J. Armstrong (2), J. Cochrane, M. Jordan and H. Lawley. A presentation was made to Hugh after the entertainment. There are further photos at the rear and one from his youth. It is from the Weekly Times, 24<sup>th</sup> April, 1909. One other photo from 1927 contains 3 of his major draughts opponents over this period. They are J. Boyes, C.H. Ewatts and T. Devlin.



**One of Victoria's best draughts players.**

### **Weekly Times 12<sup>th</sup> April, 1913**

A good photo of the up and coming Victorian draughts player Hugh Egan. His very early history features in the young photo of him at the rear from 1909 when he became Victorian Champion. There is also a nice snap of his son Jack with the veteran W. Houston in 1929 at the rear also. And another of Hugh Egan taken in 1929. His 1938 views on draughts are given on the first page. He was editing a draughts column under the pseudonym of "Whilter" in 1941.

He was born in Drouin, Gippsland Victoria 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1888. His full name was Hugh Thomas Egan. He married Ellen Margaret Stuart in 1914 at the time his occupation was printers operator. They had one son John Stuart born 5<sup>th</sup> June, 1916, and he was a teacher.

Hugh's wife Ellen died 11<sup>th</sup> September, 1955 at Gardenvale ,Victoria. Hugh died on 28<sup>th</sup> July, 1964 at Mentone. He was a printer all his working life and was probably Australia's greatest champion. The promotion of draughts was one of his goals and he gave many radio talks over the years. It would be great to hear one of those.

Egan was very ill when young and he convalesced for 12 months at age 16. He watched play at the Prahran Free Library at this time and was asked to play, and from then on he improved. See the article by 'F' in "the Age" at the rear (p.269) called "The Story of Draughts."

Some of the genealogy details are from Ancestry.com and it appears that the contributors know little about his draughts skills as there is no mention.

## AUSTRALASIAN CHAMPIONSHIP.

### WON BY MR. HUGH EGAN.

In our **Draughts** Column this week appear the particulars of the tournament played last week in Sydney for the **championship** of Australasia. It was won by Mr **Hugh Egan**, **Draughts** Editor of "The Weekly Times."

Mr **Egan** was born at Drouin, Gippsland, Victoria, on May 6, 1888, so he is not yet 25 years of age. He first started **draughts** in 1906, when he joined the Prahran **Draughts** Club. Shortly afterwards he played in Association matches. In 1907 he played in the Prahran **Championship** Tourney, and in the Victorian **Championship**, but failed to reach the prize list. **Egan** first came into prominence as a player in 1908, when he defeated James Hilliard in a match of 12 games by 6 wins to 3 and 2 drawn.

In 1909 he won the **Championship** of Victoria, with a score of 5 wins 5 draws and no losses. In August, 1909, he represented Victoria at the Australasian **Championship** at Brisbane, and was defeated in the second round by the winner, J. A. Boreham, of Dunedin (N.Z.). He, however, divided first and second prizes in the losers' consolation with J. Armstrong the Ballarat expert.

**Egan** secured third prize in the Victorian **championship** in 1910, being defeated by the winner, George Cottrill, in the semi-final. In April, 1911, he represented Victoria at the Australasian **Championship** at Dunedin, in which he secured fifth place, being defeated by the second and third prize winners, Messrs Hilliker and Brodie. In that tourney he played 24 games, of which he won 4, lost 4, and drew 16.

In September, 1911, he again won the Victorian **championship**. Since then, till the present tourney, **Egan** had not played in any tourneys, with the exception of a handicap at the Brunswick Club, in which he ran fourth, playing from scratch. He has had several successes as a problemist and analyst. His score in the **championship** was 17 games played, 9 wins, 1 lost, 7 drawn.

Mr E. W. Smith, the runner-up, is also a young man, being in his 22nd year. He is mainly indebted for his knowledge of the game to the practice obtained in Sydney **draughts** playing circles. He played well throughout the tourney, his final score reading 35 games played, 10 won, 19 drawn, 6 lost.

Mr Brennan, the third prize winner, played 26 games, won 8, lost 6, 12 drawn. Messrs. Ware and Droury, the other prize winners, are veterans of the game in Sydney.

Weekly Times, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 1913

Sportsman - 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1889

### "DRAUGHTS"

*The Carlton Draughts Club is becoming very popular with draughts players, as evinced by the attendance there on each Wednesday and Saturday evenings. The tourney now in progress affords good practice to the members, who look forward to testing their skill with the Collingwood Club has generously given a silver cup for competition between these two clubs, and the contest promises to be a very keen one. The secretary also announces that the world's champion, Mr James Wyllie, will visit the Carlton Club on this evening when both visitors and members will have an opportunity of playing with the Herd Laddie."*



Mr. Richard Jordan (the champion), Mr. John Best, and Mr. W. Redgrave went to Flemington on November 1 to see the race for the Melbourne Cup. The champion, on looking over his programme, said he intended backing No. 4 on the list, as that was his lucky number, as he had won matches with 4 games, and had often won the fourth game in matches. He asked his friends what kind of a horse was "The Graftor," and when told it was only beaten by a head in the same race last year, that clinched the matter. His friends joined in with him, and they had the satisfaction of seeing "The Graftor" winning a magnificent race by half-a-head. — *Weekly Times*.

Western Mail (W.A.) 6<sup>th</sup> January, 1899



1884 Sold by Christopher Clarke Antiques. The ivory draughts have a pin in them which fitted into a pin hole in the centre of the square to resist travel.



In Central Park New York in 1952 as a gift from Bernard Baruch. From NY Tourist brochure.

## NEW SOUTH WALES

The Sydney School of Arts Chess and Draughts Club carried the banner for games from its formation in the early 1860's. And then in the 1880's the visit of the world champion gave draughts a boost all over Australasia. It was amazing to read of farmers who couldn't come to their town to play Wyllie because of farming work and who sent money to him as a gesture. Here is a short scan on one rural visit Wyllie made:-

**Daily Telegraph 14<sup>th</sup> June, 1889**

**DRAUGHTS.**  
Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draughts player, has returned to Sydney after a tour through the northern district. In Tamworth he played 193 games, winning 182 and one drawn. At Chermarthen he played 168 games, of which he won 166 and two were drawn. At Newcastle 179 games were played, 175 were won and 4 drawn. Mr. Wyllie intends to remain in Sydney until Tuesday week. He then proceeds to Melbourne, and anticipates arranging a match with Mr. Barker, champion of England and America, for a sum of £200 a side and £5 a game and the championship of the world.



### "DOUBLE OR QUITS."

A good story is told by Mr. Jack Best about a barber, who was also a good draughts player. This barber, says the *Melbourne Leader*, was in the habit of inviting customers to a game for the expense of a shave or hair cut. Either the customer paid nothing or paid double; generally he paid double. The board they played on was an old fashioned one that fitted into the wall when not in use, but when required it stood out from the wall on legs. A wag one day tied a string to one of the legs, and awaited results. Soon an old draughts player dropped in to have a shave. The barber, as usual, asked if he would have a game for double or quits. The veteran, of course, decided to play, thinking he had a good thing on for a cheap shave. The table was then setup, and the game contested. But just about the middle of a very tricky and critical position, when both players were highly excited over the game, the wag quietly walked to the door, pulling the string. Suddenly the table fell into its usual position on the wall, and the men were scattered. The old man jumped up in a passion, took off his coat, and wanted to fight the barber, for he believed that he had a safe win, and that the barber had upset the men on purpose to prevent giving him a free shave. But the barber was equally excited, for he also believed he had a win. And, said Mr. Best, I have often wondered whether the veteran ever got his shave, for they retired, scuffling, to the back to have it out, while the wag had made good his retreat.

### DRAUGHTS.

Draught matches are becoming all the rage at late. Bowral, Robertson, Burrawang, in fact the majority of the surrounding townships are all desirous of topping the ladder of fame in that particular direction. The adjoining towns each have a duly appointed club, but although we have have the players in Bowral, they are not bound by any rules or regulations, for they do not represent a recognised and properly formed club. Years ago a club used to exist and was in flourishing circumstances, but interest died out, and the club was no more. But now, seeing that the desire for play has resuscitated, and fresh enthusiasm kindled, would it not be opportune to re-inaugurate the club? Surely no difficulty would be experienced in carrying out this suggestion, and we feel sure the good people of Bowral would again stand by the club, and offer encouragement to members by the presentation of trophies.

The Maitland Weekly Mercury, Saturday  
21<sup>st</sup> October, 1899, page 6

Bowral & Robertson Free Press  
10<sup>th</sup> July, 1901

An amusing draughts story above by Jack Best.

Excerpts from columns with NSW news:- Sunday Times Sydney 19<sup>th</sup> January, 1902:- NSW Draughts Association meets at School of Arts Pitt Street President Mr. Mills' The Referee Sydney 18<sup>th</sup> June, 1930:- The NSW Ch'ship will be played in Room 15 Royal Arcade Pitt Street players are Mr. Lee (Champion); V. Rickard (ex Champion); J. McMillan; J. Drury; W. Robinson; T. Meaney & F. Millford; Daily Telegraph 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1936:- NSW Ch'ship at the Club, 325 Pitt Street; Hobart Mercury 24<sup>th</sup> May, 1952:- R. Chamberlain 1<sup>st</sup>; J. Ferguson (2<sup>nd</sup>) both NSW in the Australian Draughts Ch'ship played in Melbourne; 30<sup>th</sup> September, 1908:- Barrier Miner (Broken Hill). West and Alma Clubs to play a match. The Wests team is Kemp, Yeo, Hoare, R. Rowe, J. Shelley, Lowrie, A.J. Shelley, H. Shelley, W.N. Gillespie, J. Shaddock, J. Rae, Hogg and Hayes. Sydney Morning Herald 16<sup>th</sup> September, 1899:- A very fine Draughts column with lots of correspondents.

Coming forward to the 1920's Mr J.B. Prowse started a chess and draughts magazine in Sydney that ran from 1922-29 and draughts featured prominently in it. Unfortunately he made a large monetary loss as editor and closed the magazine after 7 years. Cecil Purdy started Australasian Chess Review in 1929 and it lasted with different names until 1967. It did not have a draughts column but had occasional draughts news.

## Draughts.

It will be interesting to many lovers of the game to scan the performances from 1847 to 1886 of the champion draught player of the world (Mr. James Wyllie) who will be in Bathurst for a week or more after the 16th instant.

Date	Opponent.	Stakes.	Where played.	Won by
1847	Anderson	£20	Edinburgh	Anderson
1867	Martins	£200	Glasgow	Drawn
1872	Martins	£5 a Game	Leeds	Wyllie
1873	W. R. Barker	400 dollars	Boston, U.S.	Wyllie
1874	W. R. Barker	100 dollars	Boston, U.S.	Wyllie
1876	R. D. Yates	Champions'p	New York	Yates
1880	Martins	Subscription	Glasgow	Wyllie
1881	Brickenshaw	Subscription	Oldham, E.	Wyllie
1882	C. F. Barker	200 dollars	Boston, U.S.	Drawn
1884	Freeman	Friendly	Providence, U.S.	Freeman
1886	Bryden	Subscription	Glasgow	Wyllie

Wyllie thus won 6, drew 2, and lost 3 games.

## Chess and Draughts Club.

The postponed annual meeting of the above club was held in the Club Room on Wednesday evening.

### SECOND ANNUAL REPORT.

The following report was read and adopted :—

Gentlemen,—This being the second year of the existence of the club, your committee, at the expiration of their term of office, wish to say that the club on the whole is progressing, in so far as the requirements with regard to furniture are kept fully up to the demand of players and the funds in hand are of a satisfactory nature; but they regret that the general attendance, both at meetings and on ordinary occasions is not what it should be. The tournament which commenced with such promise has failed to maintain that interest in the game which might have been expected; the failure is due to causes over which your committee have no control; we would here desire to express our congratulations to Rev. F. Tracey in being the successful competitor in the first division of the Chess Tournament, and also to record the thanks of the club for the liberal donation of Dr. Spencer towards the prize fund. The attempt to arrange a correspondent match with Sydney did not bring forth fruit, but we think the Secretary might negotiate with better success on some future occasion. We would draw attention to the fact that the club is well supplied with the latest foreign literature in the two departments of the game, and this alone should be the means of advancing the novice and attracting the expert. We would also, *en passant*, mention the desirability, which your committee has already expressed in the minutes, of having a Whist Club on a basis marked out by your worthy President in connection with this association, believing it would tend to the best interests of all concerned. There are several beneficial changes during the coming year we would like to see introduced, principally the reduction of the subscription and entrance fees; also, it has been considered expedient and more advantageous if the players were to meet, say, three stated nights in the week; we hope the incoming committee will see their way to consider and pass these proposals. The draughts-players have shewn that there is life in them when required; we refer to their action in being the first of all the country



their action in being the first of all the country towns in New South Wales to invite the **Champion Draughts-player of the World** to visit our fair city for eight days ; the result of their play being, as Mr. **James Wyllie** afterwards remarked, more favorable and, in comparison with the metropolis, of a far higher standard than he expected, proving that a team might be selected who could hold their own against any other ; in this regard Messrs. J. Gressier's and Jas. Illingworth's (of Springwood) names are deserving of prominent mention. Appended hereto is a statement of the year's receipts and expenditure which has been duly audited in accordance with the rules and in which will be found a credit balance, whereas last year the outlay had exceeded the income ; this prosperous state of affairs is largely attributable to the success of Messrs. A. Page and Chas. Joseph's management, and their untiring energy in undertaking the responsibility of Mr. **Wyllie's** coming to Bathurst, aided as they were by those of the public amongst whom they canvassed for contributions, and who responded with a hearty good will creditable to all

Lastly, we have to be thankful to the local and outside press for the notices we have received at their hands.

W. F. BASSETT,  
Chairman.

**Above** - Sydney School of Arts Chess and Draughts Club:- The report of the committee was brought up for adoption at the annual meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1889, shows that the club consists of over 100 members, and has the most spacious room, the most complete appointments, and the largest chess library of any club in the Australian colonies. One of the members (Mr.W. Crane, Jnr) still holds the championship of Australia. During the year the club has played a telegraphic match with Melbourne, and matches with Ashfield, Burwood, Petersham, & c.; and numbers of matches and tournaments have taken place between members of the club itself. The draughts players have had a lengthy visit from Mr. J. Wyllie, the "Herd Laddie" champion player of the world, from which they derived great benefit.....The Governor has consented to become patron. (Extract from Report)

## QUEENSLAND

This Trove research is the 1920/30 period.

Brisbane Courier 27/9/1924 by "Oblique" Problem No.187. The Brisbane Draughts Ch'ship entrants were G. Horsfall (champion); J. Evans; J. Ryan; J. Bingham; P. Hickey; D. McArthur.

Brisbane Courier 19/11 1932 by "Oblique" The Greater Brisbane Ch'ship. Entrants T.G. Richards; A. Cummings; T. Crowley; H. Smith; F. Chalk; J. McKay; J. McNeilly; J. Warren, J. Morrison & D. Fairon.

Toowoomba Chronicle 1/9/1931 by "The Nailor" featured a 33 move game (Next page)

Daily Standard (Brisbane) 30/7/1937 by "Switcher" the Country Week Carnival (next page)

**THE OLD DRAUGHTS BOARD.**  
I care not for Rothschild's wealth,  
Nor for Nelson's fame,  
A Lord Mayor's robes of office,  
With a handle to my name.  
Give me a jovial checker man,  
And what cheer I can afford.  
I'll give him a hearty welcome,  
Across the old draughts board.

Let the king enjoy his splendor,  
The statesman his debate,  
The miser his oft counted gold,  
The lordling his estate.  
Give me a humble cottage,  
Inside, a cosy fire,  
The draughts board and a friend to  
play,  
I'll envy not the squire.

The curler may enjoy his rink,  
The royal prince his gun,  
The bishop have his game of chess,  
The cricketer his run;  
Give me a staunch old draughtsman,  
When the hour of toil is o'er,  
The old draughts board between us,  
And I ask for nothing more.  
—G. TAYLOR.

## GREATER BRISBANE DRAUGHTS CHAMPIONSHIP.

At a meeting of the Brisbane Draughts Club held last Saturday evening at the School of Arts, Ann-street, city, it was decided to start the 1935 Greater Brisbane championship on Saturday, December 14, at 7.30 p.m., in the Brisbane Draughts Club room. The entrance fee will be 2s, with the usual double knockout system—three prizes. The hon. secretary of the Brisbane Draughts Club (Mr. J. J. Fitzgerald) will be pleased to meet any draughts player in the Greater Brisbane area wishing to play in the above tournament.

Daily Standard 28/5/1927 Poem in  
"The Old Draughts Board"

4<sup>th</sup> December, 1935 The Daily Standard

**HIGHEST FORM OF DRAUGHTS.**  
There are among the votaries of our game many who believe that problems contain the very highest form of draughts, and look upon them as works of art, as much a creation as a painting, poem, or musical composition. The mere player who has never experienced the magnetic attraction of problems cannot fully realise the feeling of joy and satisfaction from solving some masterpiece, the work of a famous composer. There can be no doubt that solving problems, especially from diagrams, is an intellectual amusement, and that the study of problems tends to accuracy of analysis, quickens the perception, and strengthens the faculties generally, and may occasionally impart some of those sparkling ideas which are so sadly lacking in ordinary play.

Daily Standard (Brisbane, Qld.  
1912 - 1936), Saturday 7 July  
1923, page 8

The same has been said about chess problems. Take this 3-er:-32/2N1N3/3B4/3p4/3k2K1 (4x2) featured in Peter Wong's column and in "The Australian" I couldn't solve it. The key is 1.Kh2

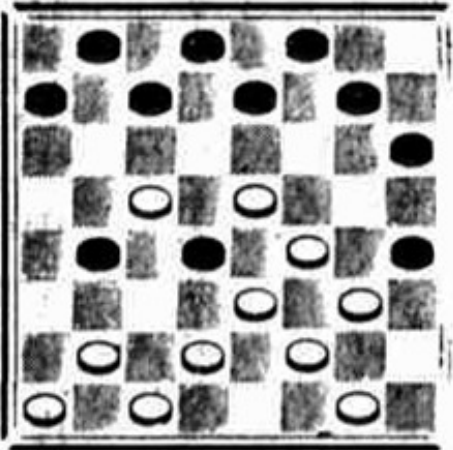
### DRAUGHTS AUTOMATON.

When the British team visited the United States in 1905 they were told of the wonderful doings of a draughts automaton—a figure in the likeness and dress of a human being—it was said to be capable of mechanically making moves to meet any combination that could be set before it. The breast of the figure was occasionally opened to demonstrate to the curious that it was impossible for an individual to be concealed within. This was an optical delusion, however, as you surely saw one of a set of mirrors, so arranged so as to create an impression that you were looking right through to the back. Robert Stewart, champion of the world, in the presence of several other British players, astonished the automaton by winning an old but ever new stroke-game, known as the Steel Shot. The following game shows how it was done:

**GAME No. 201.—("LAIRD AND LADY.")**  
 Black, R. Stewart; White, Automaton.

11—15	9—13	15—18	18—17
23—19	17—14	19—15	2—28—24
8—11	10—17	4—8	11—16
22—17	21—14	24—19	26—23

Then 16—20, 31—26, forms the position on the diagram:



Black to move and win.

15—22	19—12	3—28	3—10
25—28	7—10	12—3	6—31
12—16	14—7	2—7	

Black wins.

(a) 26—23 prevents 11—16, and avoids the shot.

(b) Here the "figure" lapsed into hesitancy so long that the attendant had to wind up the main spring before the Steel Stroke could be completed!

James Steel, of Kilburnie, originally made the shot from the "Laird and Lady" opening

### Daily Standard - 10<sup>th</sup> November, 1928 Automaton

It was good to know that Robert Stewart the reclusive champion from Blairadam, Scotland travelled to the United States in 1905 and defeated the Automaton with a game called "The Steel Shot". It is clear that there was a human draughts player involved and no doubt they all had a good time after the game.

Automatons are famous in chess- 'delusions' as stated in the article on the left. The most famous being 'The Turk' which played all around Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with some good players inside it operating the arms. There have been some wonderful books written on the subject and that by Bradley Ewart takes some beating. The novel by Robert Lohr "the secrets of the CHESS MACHINE" 2007 is a super read. Originally in German it was translated by Anthea Bell. My copy came from the Chelsea Bookshop London in June, 2015.

### NEWS AND NOTES.

Intending competitors in the Greater Brisbane championship are reminded that the tournament will commence to-night in the School of Arts, Ann-street, at 7.30 o'clock. The holder is Mr. J. Evans, and it is understood he will defend his title.

A giant public draughts board is to be constructed in the Central Gardens, Ipswich. It will be 12 feet square, and the pieces 12 inches in diameter. The City Council is also erecting a pavilion for the use of players and spectators.

It has been decided to discontinue the night sessions on the big board in Musgrave Park during the cool weather, but the popular Saturday afternoon sessions will be continued as usual.

Mr. Hugh Egan, the Australian champion, is giving a series of lectures on the wireless from Station 3LO, Melbourne. Draughts enthusiasts in the country should not miss these lectures, which will be found instructive and interesting. The series will be as follow:—(1) Early history and literature; (2) experts—past and present; (3) chance aids but little; (4) notable matches and tourneys; (5) public draughts boards; (6) six lessons for beginners.

**Daily Standard - 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1926** is the source for this article about Hugh Egan's talks. How wonderful it would be to have them for research in draughts history. I once asked the ABC if they had any of Purdy or Kosh's radio chess talks pre WW2, but NO they are lost to us.

8<sup>th</sup> May, 1926 - Hugh Egan's Wireless lectures. Trying to work out how long one could maintain listener interest seems to be 15 minutes making it 90 minutes for 6 lectures. It would have been great to hear. We saw the big draught board in Musgrave Park in 1984 when we stayed at Highgate Hill for a holiday.



## **HUMANS AS DRAUGHTS PIECES**



**One of the permanent entertainments now under construction t Los Angeles is a human size draught board on which men and women represent the pieces, and are directed by players on the sidelines. When a king is made of the pieces mounts the shoulder of another. The board id 50 ft square.**

**From Daily Standard (Brisbane) 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 1929, page 11.** I wonder if the board is still there in LA?

Probably the Draughts highlight events in Australia were the series of games between James Wyllie and Robert Mar. in 1890 in Queensland. It is sad Mar's grave in Toowong cemetery Brisbane is unmarked. I am not sure if this was a world's championship match. Also the visit by the World champion Richard Jordan some 10 years later. Draughts has such great history in those years. The article by Coulter Fell in the Town & Country Journal 19 June 1897 "Draughts a Sixty Year Retrospect" is wonderful and in the last chapter.

Queensland and Victoria vied for the position of top draughts colony in these early years, followed closely by New South Wales and South Australia.



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SA Advertiser – 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1888, p.4

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mr. Wyllie resumed his draughts matches on Tuesday at the Caledonian Hall, playing altogether 19 games, all of which he won with the exception of two which were draws, being "single corner" games, played by Mr. P. E. Lester and Mr. J. Hogg. These players have been more successful than any other opponents of Mr. Wyllie in South Australia, having achieved six draws each, and both have been personally congratulated by Mr. Wyllie on the style of their play. Indeed, to the champion it is a matter of great surprise that South Australia is not to be represented at the Centennial Tourney, which opens at the end of the present month in Melbourne, as the average play, tested by the proportions of draws to games, exhibited by this colony is far superior to that of other colonies which Mr. Wyllie has visited. At the close of the proceedings on Tuesday the "Herd Laddie" went through a number of problems for the benefit of the spectators, and solved others submitted by local players. It is rather remarkable that, unlike the great Martin, whose defeat by Barker was attributed to too heavy a strain on his physical powers, Mr. Wyllie, in spite of his advanced years, is as fresh after eight hours' play as when he commences. To-morrow night will witness the close of his season in Adelaide, but Mr. Wyllie entertains the hope of some day revisiting South Australia.

The champion draughts player of the world, Mr. Jas. Wyllie, will begin his exhibition matches in Adelaide this evening, when the mayor (Sir E. T. Smith) will attend at the Caledonian Hall and make the first move. Mr. Wyllie will be pitted against 12 local players at once, and will pass from board to board, moving at each one in succession. He was introduced to the mayor at the Town Hall on Tuesday morning and enjoyed the hospitality of his worship. The champion has now been about 18 months in the colonies, and has spent most of that time in Victoria and New Zealand. After his visit to South Australia he proposes to proceed to Queensland and New South Wales; and his stay in Australasia will probably extend over another 12 months. As there has been a great revival of the game of draughts in Adelaide during the last year or so, no doubt great interest will be taken in the matches, and the wonderful power possessed by the "Herd Laddie" will provide more than amusement for those who contest with him as well as those who are looking on.

SA Advertiser – 3rd October, 1888 - p.4

SA Advertiser, 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1888, pg. 4

### CHESS AND DRAUGHTS

#### CHESS

*"Adelaide – Prince Alfred Hotel, Mondays  
Metropolitan – Y.M.C.A., Gawler Place – Saturdays  
Norwood – Institute, Wednesdays  
Gawler Institute – Thursdays  
Smithfield – Institute – Saturdays  
Port Pirie Institute – Tuesdays  
Virginia Schoolroom – Saturdays  
Walleroo Institute – Wednesdays and Saturdays  
Yorktown Institute – Mondays  
Mount Gambier Institute – Tuesdays and Thursdays*

*Blyth Institute – Wednesdays*

*Broken Hill A.N.A. Rooms – Wednesday & Saturdays*

*South Broken Hill – Alma Hotel, Wednesdays and Fridays.”*

If one wanted to play chess or draughts in South Australia in 1912 the choices were plentiful. Imagine even two clubs at Broken Hill and we know who was there in these years. The famous John Angus Erskine who was a mining engineer and a New Zealand Chess Champion in 1936. They were strong too with matches against other centres. Eleven Clubs was an attraction for any rambling player. The papers also had fine draughts and chess columns. The Adelaide Observer chess column conducted by Henry Charlick being possibly the best in Australia. He was also a former Australian champion. It is annoying to see the two words chess and draughts together as we are unsure which word presides. It is chess and sometimes the two games did not get on as chess and draughts clubs split up over differences between the players. Was James Wyllie responsible for all this activity? Well, certainly in the draughts area.

### CHess AND DRAUGHTS.

For some time past the above mentioned games have been somewhat neglected in Burra, but an effort is being made this year to revive the interest in these popular pastimes, and thus provide residents with a pleasurable and profitable method for disposing of some of their leisure moments and dispersing their surplus energy during the winter months. A preliminary meeting to consider the desirability of forming a club was held on Friday evening, 1st, beyond electing officers, nothing was finally decided. It was resolved that “a ‘Chess and Draughts Club’ be formed in Burra. Institute committee be asked for use of room, provided members are subscribers to the institute. Meetings take place on Thursday evening of each week, play to last from 7.30 to 10 (if possible). President interview Institute Committee with regard to provision of chess men and other necessary requisites. First meeting of the club be held in the Council Chamber, Burra Institute, on Friday, May 8, at 7.30 p.m.” The following officers were elected:—President, Mr. H. Roach; vice-president, Rev. T. B. Angwin, M.A.; hon. sec. and treasurer, Mr. P. A. Roach; committee—Messrs G. Scott, W. Hague, J. Drew and R. Giles; handicapper, Mr. G. Scott.

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Burra Record – 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1903

## Chess and Draughts

For the winter months the Victor Harbor Chess and Draughts Club conduct a special tournament. Officers of the club are Messrs. A. T. Grosvenor (president), J. P. Colebatch (vice-president), and G. A. Gilbert (secretary). Meetings will be held on alternate Thursdays and Wednesdays.

Adelaide News – 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 1926

Ah, how times changed from when chess columns were long and full of names 25 years earlier. Yes, they are very good columns for the historian wanting to find out who was a player, strong or weak. Poor M. Laffin Class 6 at chess and C. Jensen Class 5 at Draughts. What hills they had to climb? Mr. Laffin got a Rook, Pawn and move start if facing a Class 1 like Mr Odgers or Loveridge. Mr. Jensen got 1 piece start against a Class 1 like Mr. Bowering or Deer. And the copper miners at Burra must have wanted some “leisure moments” away from the mines, so they formed a club. Wallaroo Chess and Draughts Club had a tremendous Secretary in Mr A. Hocking judged by the column. One of the best. And Victor Harbour had a winter chess and draughts club. In summer the climate was too good for chess and draughts.

## CHESS AND DRAUGHTS.

As many of the members of the Norwood club were taking part\* in a draughts match only four adjourned games were resumed on Wednesday, and but two of those finished, Lathlean winning from Ashton, and Armitage and Eimer making theirs a draw. Great interest was centred in the other contest, as it is many years since the Norwoods, Southwarks, Adelaides, Goodwoods, &c., used to battle for the premiership in draughts. With the disbandment of the association the game received a shock, from which—as far as clubs are concerned—it has never really recovered. The Norwood Chess Club, having at its disposal every Wednesday evening an exceedingly large room in the Norwood Institute, decided to admit draught players as associate members of the club, and with the idea of inaugurating the innovation an interesting match was played between the Norwoods and a scratch team brought together by Mr. A. Walkley (an ex-champion of South Australia). A runaway victory for the former was the result, and as some of the opposing players subsequently threw in their lot with the victors a strong team is ready to do battle for the Norwoods, should the gauntlet be thrown down. The close relationship of draughts and chess is amply borne out by the fact that of the 16 players 12 are well-known chessists. Appended are the scores (four games each side):—

Norwoods.		Stragglers.	
Clarke .. .. .	1½	Walkley .. .. .	2½
Gaskell .. .. .	1½	Hilliard .. .. .	2½
Robinson .. .. .	3	McDonnell .. .. .	1
Murray .. .. .	4	Higginbotham .. ..	*0
Bockelberg .. .. .	2½	Pyle .. .. .	1½
Newing .. .. .	3	Esau .. .. .	1
Harrison .. .. .	4	Steele .. .. .	0
Wright, jun. .. ..	1½	Garner .. .. .	2½
Wright, sen. .. ..	4	Colliver .. .. .	0
	25		11

\*Forfeited through absence.

The Express and Daily Telegraph

12<sup>th</sup> August, 1899



## CHESS AND DRAUGHTS.

At the annual meeting of the Wallaroo Chess and Draughts Club the following officers were elected for the ensuing year:—Patron, Dr. Fulton; President, Mr J. Odgers; Vice-presidents, Messrs W. Bowering, E. Deer and T. Fulton; Secretary and Treasurer, A. Hocking; Committee (General), Mr W. H. Loveridge and officers; Auditor, J. Odgers; Handicappers (for Chess), J. Odgers, E. Deer and A. Hocking; (for Draughts), W. Bowering, A. Hocking and T. Fulton.

The joining fee was fixed at 2s per member, and a call of 3d per member per month to be made for rent of room.

Resolved that the proposer of any new member pay the joining fee on the night of proposition.

Resolved that the result of all tourney games be handed in to the Secretary within two weeks of pairing, in default, the games to be forfeited.

Meeting nights: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday of each week, from 7 to 9.30 p.m.

The following are the classes:—

Chess.—Class 1, J. Odgers, W. H. Loveridge; class 2, A. Hocking, E. Deer; class 3, A. Deer, J. Edwards, C. Jensen, E. Rossiwall; class 4, T. Fulton, W. Bowering; class 5, ————class 6, M. Laffin.

Odd.—Class 1 gives class 2 pawn, class 1 gives class 3 knight, class 1 gives class 4 knight, pawn, and move, class 1 gives class 5 rook and move, class 1 gives class 6 rook, pawn, and move.

Draughts.—Class 1 W. Bowering, E. Deer; class 2 A. Hocking, T. Fulton, R. Phillias; class 3 G. Farrow, S. Richardson, J. Odgers, M. Laffin, A. Clarke; class 4 W. Loveridge, A. Deer; class 5 C. Jensen.

Odd.—Class 1 gives class 2 draws as wins in first 2 games, class 1 gives class 3 draws as wins in all games, class 1 gives class 4 one man in first two games, draws as wins in last two, class 1 gives class 5 one man in each game, class 1 gives class 6 one man in each game and draws as wins.

Each to play four games.

First pairing ending June 13, 1899.

Chess.—E. Rossiwall v. W. Bowering, J. Odgers v. T. Fulton, J. Edwards v. A. Hocking, A. Deer v. E. Deer, W. H. Loveridge v. M. Laffin.

Draughts.—A. C. Clarke v. G. Farrow, A. Deer v. S. Richardson, A. Hocking v. T. Fulton, R. Phillias v. W. Bowering, M. Laffin v. E. Deer, W. H. Loveridge v. J. Odgers.

**SA Weekly Chronicle – 31<sup>st</sup> January, 1885**

**DRAUGHT NOTES**

*“We leave our correspondents to find out the answer to this ingenious puzzle from the Sun. It was composed by Mr. O.H. Richmond.*

*A man named Thomas Jinks, with one names William West,  
Had a little game of draughts one day to see which was the best,  
Jinks got a man ahead when the game was nearly done,  
But West would not give up, for he had two kings to one.  
West moved his man to ten, and made a great mistake,  
For if he could not move from twelve he could from twenty eight;  
And force the man from twenty-four by going twenty seven,  
In case Jinks moved his single man from sixteen to eleven.  
Now checker friends, West lost the game, and the problem can be seen,  
When I tell you that a king stood clear way over on thirteen.”*

A further sample of the many SA columns.

**The Register (SA) 9<sup>th</sup> January, 1920**

**Chess, draughts, and sick folk**

*“From JOHN ARTHUR, Home for Incurables, Fullerton: We have several chess and draught players out here just longing to have a friendly game with outsiders who have time to spare, either day or evening. We also desire the presence of two good bridge players to pit their skill against me and my friend, Amos. Do you think you could help us in the matter? We, of course, are disabled and useless from a physical point of view; but, owing to our delightful surroundings, and the great interest taken in our welfare, we are as happy as sandboys.”*

## CHESS AND DRAUGHTS.

The presentation of the prizes won in connection with the Wallaroo Chess and Draughts Club took place at Mr. J. S. Croft's office, Wallaroo, on Thursday evening. There was a full attendance of members, and the following ladies and gentlemen were also present:—Mesdames Fulton, Darwin, and Ireland, and Dr. Fulton and Mr. J. Malcolm, J.P.

Mr. H. DARWIN, President of the Club, presided, and in a taking manner explained the working of the Club. He thanked Dr. and Mrs. Fulton for the interest they had taken in its success, and for the valuable prizes they had so generously given.

The SECRETARY (Mr. W. T. Ireland) also thanked the donors, and then read the results of the tournaments.

Mrs. Fulton presented to Mr. H. Darwin a silver butter dish, he being the winner of the chess tournament, and to Mr. E. Deer a handsome writing desk for winning the draughts tournament.

Mrs. H. Darwin presented Mr. John Odgers, sen. with the second prize in the chess tournament—a set of chessmen and board.

A special prize (a set of chessmen) for the highest scorer in chess in the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th classes was presented to Master E. Deer.

Dr. FULTON thanked the Club on behalf of himself and his wife for the very kind remarks, and sincerely hoped that the Club would succeed.

Votes of thanks were passed to the visitors for their attendance and to the Secretary for the able manner in which he carried out his duties.

Dr. FULTON and Mr. MALCOLM responded.

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Kadina & Wallaroo Times - 6<sup>th</sup> October, 1894



## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**Western Mail (WA) August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1904**

*"The Subiaco Draughts Club meets every Monday and Friday evening at 7.30 a.m., Municipal Chambers, Rokeby Road, Subiaco.*

*The Freemantle Draughts Club meets daily at the Literary Institute, South Terrace, Freemantle".*

The Draughts Column of the Western Mail had little local material and cited other columns. It still had good news if not from WA. The game was alive and well in that colony in the late 1890's.

### ITEMS.

A young man of the name of John Ferris, of Mount Pleasant, Ballarat, a cabinet maker, has employed his leisure time in making a most beautiful draughts table. It is made of over 2,000 pieces of the finest sorts of wood. It can also be used as a lady's work table. The pedestal is formed as a work-box, padded inside and lined with satin. The table is 2ft. 2 inches in diameter, octagon in shape, with a rim underneath, fitted with a drawer fastened on the top of the work-case, with hinges placed on octagon pillars, mounted on four claws of a neat design. The top is beautifully inlaid with ten varieties of wood, huonpine, kauri, stained wood, rosewood, silky oak, American oak, and mahogany. It is most artistically finished, a masterpiece of workmanship, and highly creditable to the skill, patience and ability of the young Australian.

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**Western Mail (WA) 7<sup>th</sup> July, 1900**

## JORDAN AND STEWART.

### AN ACROSTIC.

J ordan, "champion of the world,"  
O n every lip the word is spoken;  
R aise your bonnets high, my lads, to  
D ama's chief, with shield unbroken;  
A uld Reekie, glad enough she is in  
N ourishing a son so splendid.  
  
A nd laurel leaves she'll wave for thee,  
N ow the might tourney's ended;  
D en't, forget, though, in life's battles  
  
S ome, of course, must lose the fight—  
T ake this "brainy" match, for instance,  
E very "round" was close and tight.  
W hy not also cheer the loser,  
A nd his brows with laurels bind?  
R obert Stewart is a "champion,"  
T hough Dame Fortune was unkind.

—W. G. W. LEGGETT, in *Aberdeen Free Press*.

Western Mail (WA) 9<sup>th</sup> September, 1898

Roland B. Molineux, the New York club man found guilty of murder, when in Sing Sing Prison surprised his keepers one day by his latest scheme for whiling away the time. Molineux proposed that the condemned prisoners play checkers. This would seem absurd, as the doomed men are not allowed to visit one another in cells. At Molineux's suggestion, however, Warder Johnson has furnished all the men in the death house with checker boards and men. Molineux and Dr. Kennedy, who is awaiting death for the murder of Dolly Reynolds, began the game, making the play by numerals to correspond with the squares on the boards. The other prisoners move their pieces according to the numbers called out by Molineux and Kennedy, and all are thus enabled to follow the games to a conclusion. Molineux is a good player, and is easily the draughts champion of Sing Sing Prison.

Western Mail (W.A.) 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 1900



Western Mail (WA) 26<sup>th</sup> July, 1902

"From the Ancients."—Two hundred and fifty years ago—the date of the work is 1650—Juan Garcia Canalejas published certain leading games as fundamental principles of play,—two hundred years after other players publish the same games, identical in their movements, as new discoveries; we ask ourselves were they new when Juan Garcia Canalejas printed his book, or have they really come down from the ancients, the Arabians who are said to have invented the game? Should not the "Old Fourteenth" really in the "Nomenclature" be called the "Old Arabian?"—As we conjure up in our mind's eye many a group of grave Bedouins with their subtle brain pouring over the board the live long day at their tent door, struggling for victory, whilst their flocks and herds "did feed on green declivities," we can easily imagine how they would exhaust move and combination, till in unrestricted match they'd fight many a "bloodless battle" and fire "blank cartridge." Having this in our eye we cannot force ourselves to believe even this illustrious Spanish player, Juan Garcia Canalejas, to be the discoverer of the fundamental games; we would only be willing to bestow that honour upon the unknown old Shiek who invented the game itself—what a pity his name is lost. But Spain must have derived its knowledge direct from Arabia through the Moors, so that of Draughts it may be said as of all other knowledge, "light came from the East." One thing, however, is certain, that in the days of Canalejas the use and practice of the game of Draughts must have been widely spread in Spain; the publication of the work speaks to that.—"Draughts Board" (old series).

Western Mail (WA) 25<sup>th</sup> October, 1902

#### MR. R. JORDAN IN SYDNEY.

To the *Sydney Morning Herald*, we are indebted for the following account of the first few days play of the champion's visit to N.S.W. :—On the afternoon of Saturday, the 18th of February, Mr. Jordan played in the School of Arts clubroom Messrs. Forrest, Meaney, Bremner, H. Smith, and Griffin—Griffin having the honour of drawing his first game against the champion. During the evening of Saturday, the 18th, he gave an exhibition of simultaneous play in the lecture-hall before an immense audience. The following were the players who faced the champion:—Messrs. Manly, H. Smith, J. Brennan, Burns, Ware, Mills, Sam Brown, J. Lee, jun., N. M'Gregor, Wilkie, N. Donoghue (Parramatta). Brennan, Brown, and M'Gregor were the only players who secured draws. This position cropped up in the game played between Jordan and M'Gregor :—Black men, 1, 4, 19, 20; white men, 17, 22, 27, 32. Jordan played the white, and drew. The ending of the game played between Jordan and Brennan stood thus :—Black men on 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, 15; white men on 12, 21, 22, 25, 27, 32. Black to play Jordan, which was drawn. On Monday afternoon Jordan played Messrs. Bremner, Griffin, Lee, jun., and P. Hayes, two games with Griffin, who drew one, and two games with Lee, who drew one. In the evening he played 14 simultaneous. Gallagher played two and drew one, Griffin played two and drew one. On Tuesday he played 20 games, of which 15 were simultaneous. The following drew their games :—S. Brown, W. Warnock, J. Drury, E. Griffin, and Mr. Wilkie. Out of five games played with the champion, Mr. Griffin has drawn four, and Mr. S. Brown has played two games, both of which he has drawn.

Western Mail (WA) 24<sup>th</sup> March, 1899

News of the Tour by Richard Jordan first appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald and was pleasingly picked up by the Western Mail showing the interest in draughts in Western Australia. The Herd Laddie had 3 sons in America 29/7/1898. He was quite sick and died in the next year.  
WM

Western Mail (WA) 28<sup>th</sup> November, 1929

## NEWS AND NOTES

*"In the State Championship tourney W.L. Crowe defeated J. Gardiner by two wins to one with one drawn. A.F. Marsh is the victor of the winners' section."*

Western Mail (WA) 27<sup>th</sup> January, 1899

*"Up to the middle of last month Mr Jordan had played 1,051 games since his arrival in Australia, of these he won 901, lost 10, and drew 140."*

Draughts seems to be making rapid strides in Victoria, judging from the following note from the *Weekly Times* (V.): —Draughts is going ahead in the country districts this year. A club has been formed at Nullan South, and one at Mitchell's Hill. A match is being arranged between the Minyip and Mitchell's Hill clubs, to be played at Banyena, a distance of 18 miles from Minyip. A match has also been arranged between the clubs of Drunmuukle and Nullan South. The game is booming in the Wimmera district. The Korum-burra Draughts Club, which was started barely two months ago, has now a membership of over 130.

Western Mail 18<sup>th</sup> November, 1899

## TASMANIA

What chess or draught player has not met that irritating person known as "The man with the swelled head!" Here is a story of his encounter at draughts with the Old Buffer:—

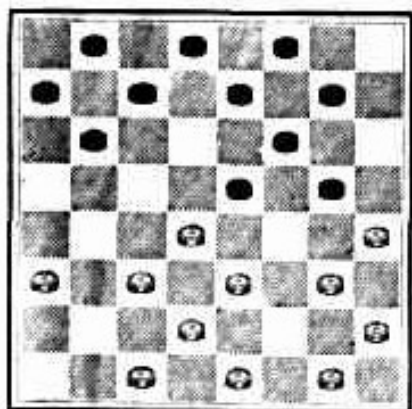
"YE GOOSEWALK."

And it came to pass that a certain individual, who was known as "The Man with the Swelled Head," did approach unto the Old Buffer, and did say unto him, "Can'st thou play the game of ye draughts?" And the Old Buffer looked modest, and said, "Yes, verily! I can play somewhat, but as I am only a humble student of game my knowledge thereof is but rudimentary, and fain would I acquire greater skill than that which I already possess." And "The Man with the Swelled Head" took pity on the Old Buffer, and did pat him gently on the back, and did say condescendingly unto him, "Then, Old Buffer, I will teach thee a wrinkle or two about the game, which will increase thy knowledge thereof amazingly." And they then adjourned unto the place where draughts players do congregate, yea, even unto the local pub. And when they were ready to play the Old Buffer took the Black side, and he of the swelled head took the White, and the play was as follows:—

11 15	25 18	10 15	24 20
22 18	8 11	25 22	12 16
16 22	29 25	4 8	27 24

Which eventuated in the position known as "The Goosewalk":—

BLACK.



WHITE.

And when the game had reached this stage the Old Buffer did casually remark, "I perceive, friend thou art about to enter into the poultry business." But The Man with the Swelled Head did not understand, as book knowledge was as the Urim and Thummin unto him, and the play proceeded:—

16 19	9 14	5 14	14 17	11 16
23 16	18 9	28 24	21 14	20 11
15 19	11 25	1 5	8 11	7 39
24 15	16 12	24 19	30 21	

And when the Old Buffer played this shot The Man with the Swelled Head did suddenly recollect that he had to catch the train, and he said, "We will finish this game on some future occasion, when I will teach thee a few more wrinkles." And he rose up and put on his hat, and, lo and behold! it was too large for him, and it came down even unto his ears. And he straightway departed. And the Old Buffer hath not seen him from that day even unto this.

One of the most brilliant careers in the annals of chess has terminated (writes the London "Daily Telegraph" of August 15) in sad eclipse at New York. William Steinitz, who from the time he was 26 won every match he played for 30 years, and was champion for a longer time than any other man, expired on Sunday in a lunatic asylum. It is a terrible tribute to the fascinating and exacting nature of this ancient game that many of its keenest votaries in the same way have fallen its victims. It would seem as though the reason, spurred by the interest of the play, unwittingly overtakes itself until at last one day the over-stimulated brain fails to respond. Then, as in Steinitz's case, comes the gradual decline, and finally the crash. There is no doubt that the great chess-player's is an abnormally-developed intellect. His one great faculty overshadows and stunts the growth of other mental powers to an extent rarely met with in geniuses of other type. Successful generalship of the little ivory army requires the highest degree of patience, long-headed foresight, Argus-eyed caution, indomitable determination. What qualities, one may ask, are better calculated to ensure success in life? Yet how many who have excelled at the pastime, and who, therefore, may be supposed to have possessed these characteristics in generous measure, have attained to anything like corresponding

attained to anything like corresponding eminence in other directions? Steinitz, for example, lived in penury in England for many years, until in 1883 the kindness of friends enabled him to settle in America: and now we learn that, after many vicissitudes, he has died forsaken and destitute. Great men there are, of course, who are also good players, although Steinitz, or any one of the masters who came next to him, could have met Von Moltke blindfold and crushed him as utterly as, on the greater chess-board, he defeated the armies of France. The average amateur, therefore, need have no fear that indulgence in hours of peaceful conflict will have an deleterious effect on his business capacity. He may even console himself for repeated drubbings by the reflection that his brain will be fresher than if by excessive effort he had won. Excellence of any kind has to be bought at a price. It remains for the individual to decide whether he is prepared to pay it.

**The Mount Lyell Standard October, 16<sup>th</sup> 1900. Chess & Draughts Column by “En Passant”**

An amusing story and a history lesson all in one. I recall some of those old men at the Hyde Park Sydney chess and draughts tables near the Museum had some good moves. I think as a teenager I could see how they loved games and I copied them!

**Launceston Examiner 7<sup>th</sup> November, 1924**

*“We have an enquiry as to whether a draughts club for ladies cannot be formed in Launceston. Will other ladies favouring the idea send in their names and addresses to the draughts editor, who will put them in communication with the lady who makes the enquiry.”*

I wonder was a ladies draughts club formed?



## CHES AND DRAUGHTS

### KINGSTON CLUB.

The annual meeting of the Kingston Chess and Draughts Club was held on Wednesday. The president (Mr. W. J. Hazell) was in the chair. The report and balance sheet, which were adopted, showed that the club had had a very successful year. Including the balance brought forward from the previous year, the income was £14 4s. 4d., and expenditure £5 17s. 10d., leaving a balance in hand of £8 6s. 6d.

The election of officers resulted:—Patron, Mr. Chas. Mitchell; president, Mr. A. Ray; match captain, Mr. R. Pearsall; hon. secretary, Mr. W. J. Hazell; treasurer, Mr. A. Ray; committee, the officers and Mr. W. Dixon.

It was resolved that the club's meeting night should be every Wednesday, and the annual subscription the same as formerly, namely, 3s., also that six prizes be offered for competition.

Votes of thanks were passed to the retiring president and hon. secretary, to those who lent cars and to the women who assisted at the social evenings.

The Mercury (Hobart) 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1931

### Draughts Items.

A match was played at the Commercial Hotel on Monday, the 11th inst., between Messrs. Lockie and Hindes for £1 a-side, the former winning. Mr J. Tait acted as referee. Mr Hindes lost the toss for the first move. Mr Lockie commenced by playing 11—15, Mr Hindes replying with 23...18, making the "Cross" game, and after about three-quarters of an hour's play the result was a win for Lockie. The second game, "The Old Fourteenth," Lockie also won, and in the third game Mr Hindes made "The Single Corner," which he also lost. The fourth game, "The Glasgow," Mr Hindes ought to have won, but Lockie forced Hindes to exchange a man and made a draw, thereby winning the match, which was the best out of six games, Lockie having won three to Hindes a draw.

The Colonist (Launceston) 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 1889

Interesting to see this local contest at the Hotel in Launceston. The Draughts editor in 1925 was "International".



Tasmanian News 21<sup>st</sup> December, 1904

### **"HOW THE BLIND PLAY DRAUGHTS AND CHESS**

*It is an interesting sight (says the "Braille Review") to see the blind play draughts and watch the changed expression which overspread their countenances when they feel they have a win or when they contemplate a serious problem. The board on which blind persons play is about the standard size, the black squares being sunk and the white squares raised. Of course, colour is of no value to the blind, but they speak of the sunken and raised squares as black and white, as though they were capable of distinguishing colours. The pieces used are round and square. The round pieces are called black, and the square pieces white, and the round pieces always move first. They are turned on the one side and plain on the other, so that when a man is crowned it is played with the turned side up, instead of putting another man on the top of it as in the ordinary game. When the men are placed on the board the player having the round makes his move, the other player places his hand on the board, feels the move that has been made, then makes his reply. So the game goes on, move for move, until the finish. The players can move as quickly as players with sight, and make no mistakes. The affliction from which they suffer would seem to have sharpened their other senses, and to have made them more acute. Many an hour is passed pleasantly over the board, and the games played are, as a rule, of good class. Matches are sometimes played between one blind institute and another, and the practice thus gained has produced some very good draught players."*

Examiner (Launceston) 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 1925

### **"BOTH WONDERFUL GAMES."**

The draughts editor on being introduced to a chess player the other day was informed by the latter that in his younger days he used to play draughts. "But," he added, "I suppose you have played bagatelle? And billiards? Well, comparing bagatelle with billiards would be like making a comparison of draughts with chess!" (What would our chess celebrities who entertained such a profound respect for the sister game have thought of this?) On the infinite depth of our game being impressed on our friend he departed with the remark, "Well, they are both wonderful games!" And in this he was right. Many who are famous at the one are no mean exponents of the other pastime, but the late H. N. Pillsbury alone was fitted to play in both international chess and draughts contests.

**The Hobart Mercury 11<sup>th</sup> February, 1939**

**“DRAUGHTS**

**NORTH VS SOUTH – MATCH AT HOBART IN JUNE**

*At a meeting of the Launceston Draughts Club it was decided to send a Northern Team to Hobart in June to meet a Southern team in a challenge match for the Uncle Tom trophy. 25 or more players will make the trip, and the match will be played in the Hobart Central Draught's Club room, at the City Hall. On the last occasion these teams met the match was played in Launceston, and resulted in a draw, each side scoring 18 wins and 14 games were drawn.*

**Tasmanian Championship**

*The second play off for the Tasmanian Championship title will begin at the Hobart Centre Draughts Club next Saturday morning. The contestants are A. A. Moore (North West Coast Champion), and O. Vince (Southern Champion). The winner of the tie will play G. Moodie for the title. Great interest is being taken in the meeting of these two players, and it will be the first time that they have played against each other. Moore, who has held the North Coast Championship for a number of years, has a fine record. He has seldom been defeated. Vince, who is also the Tasmanian Chess Champion, is playing strongly and should worthily uphold prestige of Southern Tasmanian Draughts. The tie will begin at 10 a.m. sharp, when the President of the Tasmanian Draughts Association (Mr L. C. Johnson) will welcome the players, and then make the first move.”*

# DRAUGHTS

## AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIP.

### WON BY BOYLES (VICTORIA).

LAUNCESTON, April 26.

The hard-fought tournament for the championship of Australia was brought to a close to-day, when Boyles the champion of Victoria beat Earle, the South Australian champion, two games to none and one draw, thus annexing the title.

Boyles came from Scotland many years ago, and although he played draughts at that time, his knowledge of the game was not extensive. All his experience has been obtained since he has resided in Melbourne. This is the first occasion on which he has won the championship of Australia, but he has been third twice. He has also been champion of Victoria on three occasions and runner-up several times. In Melbourne he is captain and coach of the Railways' Draughts Club. Besides winning the title he has won a handsome gold medal, presented by the Launceston Fifty Thousand League, and £40 presented by the Tasmanian Draughts Association.

Earle has been champion since 1914, when the title was first inaugurated. He has won each of the four tourneys which have been held since. He wins the second prize of £20. The third, of £10, goes to J. Armstrong (Victoria), who years ago was champion of Ballarat. He is also a strong chess, quoits, and cricket player, and is captain and coach of the Footscray Draughts Club.

J. Harris, the aboriginal expert from South Australia, was fourth, and Horsfall fifth.

Duric (N.S.W.) won the first consolation prize.

After the tourney had concluded, Boyles, the new champion, gave an exhibition of simultaneous draughts. He scored eight wins and four draws, and was undefeated.

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Hobart Mercury 27<sup>th</sup> April, 1927

The champion draughts player, James Wyllie, returned to Sydney from Brisbane, and on March 30 met several of his old opponents of the Sydney School of Arts Chess and Draughts Club. He played a total of fifty games against all comers up to Tuesday night, and of these he won forty-three, drew six, and lost one. The winner in this case was Mr James Drury, whose score in the four games played was one won, two lost, and one drawn. The Herd Laddie visited Bathurst on April 4, in response to an invitation. On his return he will probably stay a fortnight in Sydney, unless he receives any invitations from other country districts, with a guarantee of his travelling expenses.

The Colonist (Launceston) 13<sup>th</sup> April, 1889

#### DELORAINE.

On Wednesday a number of the members of the Young Men's Club of Hagley journeyed up to play a number of our local boys at chess, draughts, and ping-pong. Mr. H. V. Cato, as acting secretary, had every arrangement complete, with the result that a very pleasant evening was spent. During the evening refreshments were handed round, which were very much appreciated. The following is the list of teams and results:—  
**Chess** competition:—Hagley team—Messrs. J. Breaden, Hodges, and Woolnough. Deloraine team—Messrs. H. Best, Owens, and Trail. Resulting in a win for Deloraine by nine points.  
**Draughts** competition:—Hagley team—Messrs. Boucher, R. Ralph, W. Woolnough, W. Dadson, Eastoe, Heazlewood, and Rev. Hardie. Deloraine team:—Messrs. E. Beam, P. King, W. Best, E. Mitchell, A. Mitchell, Alf. Radford, Arthur Radford. Resulting in a win for Hagley by three points. **Ping-pong** competition:—Hagley team—Messrs. W. Wright, Dadson, Staggard, Murfet, Ralph, and Beveridge. Deloraine team—Messrs. W. Webb, Cronin, Lake, A. Wyatt, F. Wyatt, and L. Wyatt. Resulting in a win for Deloraine by three points.

Launceston Examiner 21<sup>st</sup> September, 1903



### HUXLEY AND "THE GAME OF LIFE"

We do not know if the late Professor Huxley, the great scientist, was ~~and~~draughts player, but he wrote of the science of our game, and our distinguished next-door neighbour chess, thus—"The life, the fortune, ~~and~~ the happiness of every one of us, ~~and~~ more or less, of those who are connected with us, depend upon our knowing something of the rules of a game infinitely more difficult ~~and~~ complicated than draughts or chess. They are games which have been played for untold ages, every man ~~and~~ woman of us being one of the two players in a game of his or her own. The draughts or chess board is the world, the pieces are the phenomena of the universe, the rules of the game are what we call the laws of Nature. The player on the other side is hidden from us. We know that his play is always fair, just, ~~and~~ patient. But also we know, to our cost, that he never overlooks a mistake, or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance. To the man who plays well the highest stakes are paid, with that sort of overflowing generosity with which the strong shows delight in strength."

Launceston Examiner 20<sup>th</sup> March, 1929

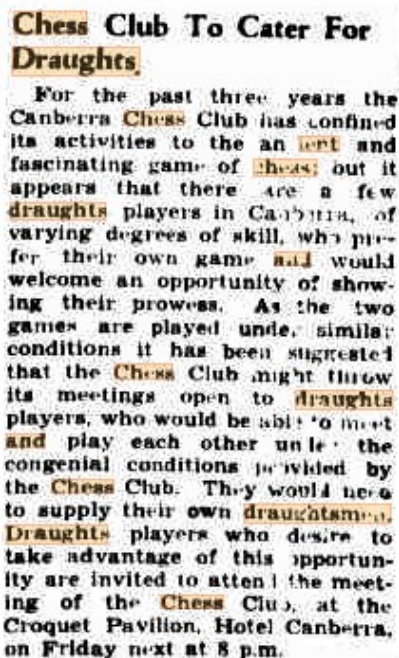
## THE TERRITORIES- AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY (ACT)

A Chess and Draughts Club was formed this week as reported in the Canberra Times 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1933 with a large attendance present at the Kingston meeting. Mr. W. Miller was elected President, Mr. G. Butcher as Secretary, Mr. Price Assistant Secretary and Mr. H. Notarus. Treasurer. Meetings would be every Monday night at Manuka Arcade with a match against Goulburn a priority.



Canberra Times 18<sup>th</sup> December, 1944

Lloyd Fell was a chess identity in Sydney from my early days in the 1950's. This article dates his first major chess victory. He died in 2010 aged 91, and was an active player in his 65 years of chess ca 1944 and prior to that a strong draughts player. He was a working class man, a railway boiler maker who always wore bib and braces and I recall him in them. Sadly I never spoke to him.



Canberra Times 28<sup>th</sup> February, 1945

Canberra Times 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947

*"Canberra Chess Club*

*Members meet tonight and every Friday*

*8 p.m. at 2CA Theatrette.*

*All chess players welcome"*

The Territory of the ACT with the city of Canberra became Capital of Australia ca 1929. It is inside the State of New South Wales. The city became a very strong chess centre with the advent of the Doeberl Cup in 1963. The book by Bill Egan on the Cup has a photo and tribute to Lloyd Fell who competed many times. The ACT is a strong chess and draughts centre today.

## NORTHERN TERRITORY

On July 25th, under the auspices of W. J. de Muller, Esq., F.R.G.S., the employee of the Northern Territory Goldfields of Australia, Ltd., inaugurated the Brock's Creek Goldfields Social and Mutual Improvement Society, for the benefit of themselves and friends. So far it has been carried out very successfully, and the entertainment provided has been excellently rendered. The members meet on Sunday and Wednesday evenings, the Company kindly allowing the use of the office for that purpose. Alternate evenings are devoted to concerts, and readings, chess, draughts, etc., respectively. The sixth entertainment was given on the 2nd ult., to an appreciative audience, and it was the universal verdict that it was the best of the series. It will, no doubt, stimulate the members' efforts to excel at future meetings in this record-breaking age.

Northern Territory Times and Gazette 10<sup>th</sup> September, 1897

Brock's Creek Mine is 140km south East of Darwin off the Stuart Highway. It is a hot climate with periodic monsoonal rains between November and May. And so chess and draughts were



played in the Company Office. By 30 April 1935 the Northern Standard (Darwin) was receiving letters from the “Ex-occupant of Cell No.16 Fanny Bay Jail” for the provision of chess and draughts there. By 12 June 1941 an Interchurch Chess and Draughts Club was to be formed. And it was:-

**Northern Standard 9<sup>th</sup> January, 1948. The Club met at the Uniting Church.**

**DARWIN CHESS CLUB**

*“Meets Wednesday evenings at 7.30 p.m. at United Church Club. Players and those wishing to learn are cordially invited. All enquiries to Hon. Sec., P.O. Box 131, Darwin.”*

One war statistic worth keeping were the products made at the Changi POW Camp at Singapore. The prisoners made 86 chess sets from hardwood and 118 sets of draughts from tea chests.(Army News 26 September 1945)

Darwin Chess is alive and well today and has a Facebook site. Darwin was originally named Palmerston. In 1912 (Darwin then) the International Order of Good Templars was attempting to raise money for chess and draughts to keep young people out of hotels.(Northern Territory Times 19 January 1912)

## 5. FOUR YEARS IN AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND BY THE WORLD CHAMPION!

The following Story is the bibliography of James Wyllie copied with permission from the Wyllie Checkers Page. For more information on the other players mentioned or to see the Computer Checkers/Draughts Game based on his moves use either our links page or directly link using <http://www.wylliecheckers.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk> We thank the company for their kind permission to reprint the story here.



**James Wyllie**

**The Herd Laddie by Chris Reekie  
Presented courtesy of the Glasgow Draughts Club, Scotland**

Draughts players around the globe owe a tremendous debt to James Wyllie, the "Herd Laddie", who died in Glasgow one hundred years ago on April 5th 1899. Wyllie occupies a unique place in the history of draughts. He devoted his life to the game and dominated it for over 50 years. He was an outstanding personality whose activities popularised the game and encouraged its study. Wyllie's funeral took place on April 8th 1899. His remains were taken by train from Glasgow to Leven, Fife, and interred in his family plot in Scoonie Cemetery. Visitors today will see that his headstone states that he was world draughts champion for 40 years. This was not an exaggerated claim.

He was champion over that span of time, interrupted only by two brief spells when other contenders overcame him. His name occurs constantly in draughts books because he contributed so much to the development of the game. His influence is evident to this day. He is remembered as a player of originality and innovation. He was very very successful with the "Ayrshire Lassie" opening and introduced the "Fife". Particularly associated with him is the "Switcher" opening, which he himself said he had used to "perplex many an eminent player".

Wyllie was the son of a trooper in the Scots Greys and was born at Piershill Cavalry Barracks, Edinburgh, in the part of the capital known as Jock's lodge, now occupied by a council housing scheme. His father had fought at Waterloo. The exact date of Wyllie's birth is uncertain. The day is given as July 6th, but opinion is divided on the year. Some sources say 1818 and others 1820.

Whatever the actual date, Wyllie was about 80 when he died. At that advanced age his mind was still sharp, and he had not lost his skill or enthusiasm. He remained a formidable competitor. He had played draughts all through his life, making an important and indelible contribution to the progress of the game.

The above is only a part of the great story of James Wyllie written by Chris Reekie from the Wyllie Checkers website. He had a wonderful tour of Australia arriving in Melbourne 15<sup>th</sup> April, 1887 and leaving 6 May 1891 from Adelaide. Over 4 years! No world chess champion could match that tour time. Nor could they match his age-he was over 69 when he left. He played 16,000 games in Australia and lost only 30. He had two earlier visits to America one over 4 years.! There is much more on "The Herd Laddie" in the newspaper clippings throughout this History. Draughts columns were lush and full of rich biography, games and problems. The "Reminiscences" in the Leader 15<sup>th</sup> April, 1899 page 31 are terrific.

We owe him a debt for Australasian draughts as we do Richard Jordan the world champion who toured in 1898 and also Alfred Jordan who was here in 1910.

### **WYLLIE IN THE AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPERS**

**Leader (Melbourne, Vic. : 1862 - 1918, 1935), Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> September, 1885, page 8**  
**“JAMES WYLLIE, CHAMPION DRAUGHTS PLAYER**

*Our readers many of whom are friends of Mr. Wyllie will be pleased to peruse the appended items of interest which have been extracted from a letter by last mail from the champion to the editor of this column who enjoyed his friendship many years ago Inter Alia, Mr. Wyllie remarks-“ While in America I played close on 20,000 games, and won about 18,000, losing 109, the rest being drawn. With Mr. Heffner, the present champion of America, I played 10 games, and out of that number I won 4, the other 6 being drawn. It is but fair to mention that I refused to play any other player during the time I was playing with Mr. Heffner, which accounts for my beating that gentleman so easily. Had Heffner played me on the same terms as Freeman did, but that he would have beat me. You will be aware that on the 14<sup>th</sup> January, 1885, I challenged any player in the world for from 500 to 1000 dollars at the game of draughts, the challenge to remain open for six months. A few weeks ago I also issued a challenge at the Herald and Weekly Free Press, Aberdeen, that I would play an unrestricted match consisting of 100 games, with anyone in Great Britain or Ireland, and would undertake to prevent any opponent from winning 4 games for a stake of from £40 to £200, or I would undertake to win 4 games in a 100 for a like stake. Some time ago Mr. Jackson of Manchester, challenged Mr. Reid of Kilmarnock, late of Mauchline, for £100 a side. Mr. Reid has an important situation on the railway, and can only get opportunity for match play at a certain time of year. When the time comes none of his opponents will back up their challenges, their excuse being that he did not accept in time. Such is Mr. Jackson’s excuse. In justice to Mr. Reid these matters should be known. Give my kind regards to Australian players and tell them I will not be surprised if one of them should snatch the laurels from my brow some of these days. Australia has done so with Mr. Hanlan, who was considered invincible, and had to lie at the feet of an Australian rower who was scarcely known. It is admitted that Hanlan never rowed better in his lifetime. I saw Hanlan row Elliott at Newcastle on Tyne for £400. Elliott had not the ghost of a chance. Now, I say, Australia ought to be immensely proud of her champion, Mr. Beach. In conclusion, I hope the day is not far distant when I shall visit Victoria, and should I have to succumb, my opponent, whoever he may be, will have to fight inch by inch, when he does defeat me.- Yours, & JAMES WYLLIE, Champion draughts player of the world.”*

When I was a very young lad I got my hair cut by an old man and his son at President Avenue, Brighton, Sydney. They were the son and grandson of the great Bill Beach Champion Rower and the press of that time had fine engravings of the match on Sydney Harbour. There was a huge mass of people watching the races in small boats and from the shore. The barbers had lots of photos of their ancestor around the shop. This would be the late 40’s early 50’s. Here is another article from the Melbourne Leader 9 January 1886 that helped bring about James Wyllie’s tour:-

“The visit of this renowned player is in a fair way to become an accomplished fact. What his presence would do for the game here anyone can calculate by reference to his American tours. We publish the following letter without comment in the meantime, except to remark that the modest terms offer to us in Australia a great opportunity of obtaining a great gratification:- (Letter from J. Hedley, Late of the Leeds Mercury, England):-

**(Melbourne Leader Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> January, 1886)**

*“I avail myself of an opportunity to thank you for The Leader and to assure you that I highly appreciate the excellent draughts department, and as evidence that I do not appropriate the good things it contains exclusively for my own use. I may state that immediately after its arrival, and glancing over its contents, I laid it on the table of the ‘Leeds Draughts and Chess Club’ where members cordially welcomed and displayed great interest in it, I need hardly add that the appearance of the column weekly, instead of fortnightly enhances its values to votaries of the game. My chief object in writing you at present, is by request of Mr. Wyllie, to broach a subject he entertains to engage in an Australian and New Zealand professional tour, and to solicit your aid in realizing it. It may seem a visionary projection on the part of the veteran, and somewhat presumptuous on my part to give effect to it; but as I arranged, his first English tour, his first American tour, and am busily engaged in arranging his present tour through Great Britain, you will acknowledge that I know something of the difficulties which crop up in relation to it. I give you a resume of the essentials, which are as follows:- First: Subscriptions from Australian and New Zealand players towards a fund to guarantee the cost of the Champion’s voyage to Australia and return to England. Second:- Mr. Wyllie to visit and play in Australia on customary terms viz. travelling expenses defrayed by clubs or players who engage him, bed and board, and the privilege of playing with opponents provided with tickets, 6d each, which admit of one game being played. I may add that Mr. Wyllie will be quite content with second class accommodation in his voyage to and fro. By Mr. Wyllie’s request I enclose contributions, and if they meet with your approval will be glad to see them in The Leader column. The veteran is at present my guest, is in high health and spirits, in capital playing trim, and he desires me to express a hope that he may resume acquaintanceship at no distant date, and express personally the high esteem, he entertains for you.- I am & c., J. Hedley.”*

A very reasonable proposal by James Wyllie which ensured serious consideration was given to the proposed tour by the Australian Draughts Fraternity and resulted in his coming. His tour around Australia and New Zealand must have increased affection for the game here and a large boost to draughts lovers. The “Herd Laddie” would enjoy our climate and his wish to come again is clear in the above letter. I note the charge per game was 1/- when the above quotes 6d. That to be checked. I found the below in the Town & Country Journal 27 August 1887 but NOT the engraving on page 444. I will check this out. Photos and sketches of the Herd Laddie are thin in the ground. I have always liked him going way back to the 1970’s but chess gathered me under its wing.

# The Champion Draughts-player.

JAMES WYLLIE, "THE HERD LADDIE."

(See portrait on page 444.)

To possess the draughts-playing championship of the world is no mean distinction, as it necessarily implies the possession of an unusually large amount of intellectual power, combined with a tenacious memory; for, to hold one's own, even against a moderately good player, a thorough knowledge of all possible combinations arising from each move is requisite. Hence the interest with which the career of Mr. Wyllie has been regarded, not only in draughts-playing circles, but also in the world beyond. He is, indeed, a most remarkable man and it is a fine study to watch him beginning a game (apparently in a listless manner, well calculated to throw an inexperienced opponent off his guard), and then suddenly but very quietly making a move which instantaneously upsets all the calculations of his opponent, leaving him (Mr. Wyllie) master of the field.

He has been a player from his very childhood. Born in 1821, he is now in his 67th year; and it is said of him that while still a mere boy he learned to play draughts among the soldiers of his father's regiment, soon acquiring such skill as to be able to beat all the regimental "cracks." Although generally known as "the herd laddie," he never followed that occupation, the *soubriquet* having been earned by him in a somewhat amusing manner. It seems that there was a certain Scottish drover who was in the habit, whenever he was in Glasgow, of playing draughts with considerable success. One particular player, however, was too strong for him, and beat him over and over again. This caused him much annoyance, and he "cast about for a means" of revenge. Accident threw him into contact with Mr. Wyllie, who was then only in his teens; and to his surprise the drover found that he had literally no chance against the precocious boy. This discovery suggested to him a way of paying off scores with his old rival. Accordingly, the next time that he was beaten, he said to his successful antagonist—"Draughts, man! Why ye canna play ain! There's a wee bit herd laddie of mine could beat a dizen such as ye!" This was too much for the Glasgow player to bear with equanimity. Consequently, a match was speedily arranged. It came off a few days afterward, with the result that the "wee bit herd laddie" won every game. From that moment Wyllie acquired the name of "the herd laddie," and by that name he is known over the whole of the civilised globe. Eventually he became a professional player, and, having succeeded, some thirty years ago, in defeating the late Andrew Anderson, the great authority on draughts playing, he has since then proudly retained the position of champion against all comers. He went to America some fourteen years ago, and remained there about eighteen months. During that time he played an enormous number of games, making draughts very popular throughout the United States. He visited America a second time about seven



making draughts very popular throughout the United States. He visited America a second time about seven years ago; and he was engaged shortly before he left for Australia in making a professional tour through part of Scotland, in the course of which he played 200 games in Glasgow, of which he won 186, lost four and drew ten. Among his antagonists on that occasion was Mr. James Reed, the champion blindfold player of America, who recently went to England for the purpose of playing a match with Mr. W. Strickland, of Leeds, for the blindfold championship of the world. Mr. Reed met Mr. Wyllie without revealing his identity; and they had a sitting of four games, which resulted in a score of one win each and two draws. Mr. Wyllie left London for Australia on March 3 last; and, although Australian draughts players are admittedly among the best outside Scotland, he has hitherto proved more than a match for all who have tested his powers. At the same time the unusually large number of drawn games played by him in Victoria proves the toughness of the contests in which he has been engaged. One feature of his play deserves emulation. He never allows himself to become betrayed into rash moves, trusting to the inexperience of his opponent for a win. Again, he never insists on playing out a position which ought to end in a draw, and in which a win could only be secured by some blunder on the part of his opponent for the time being. His future movements have not yet been finally decided upon, but it is probable that at the end of his Victorian tour he will visit New Zealand, coming thence to Sydney, where we trust he will receive the cordial welcome he deserves.

27<sup>th</sup> August, 1887 - Town & Country Journal, Page 456

The following itinerary has been satisfying to assemble from newspaper reports. There may well be many mistakes due to his movements between cities. And so I call it an interim itinerary. He was very popular and over 100 references appeared in the press during 14<sup>th</sup> April, 1887 to 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1891. I apologise for any errors.





Owned by Dru Leoidsson who bought it in Edinburgh unnamed. It took 25 years to identify Wyllie. The painting hung in his home in Edinburgh, then Orkney and now The Isle of Wight.

He looks about 60 and the Tam O'Shanter head ware helps as he wore one in Australia with his plaid at the Caledonian Sports in Melbourne. The badge on his vest would also be a tell-tale "Wyllie" item as would his silver watch which was stolen in Australia and retrieved. It would be on the chain. Good of DL to allow the portrait to be enjoyed by all lovers of "The Herd Laddie". (Wyllie Checkers Website) It is a beauty.

**14<sup>th</sup> April, 1887 to 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1891**

#### **"JAMES WYLLIE'S AUSTRALIAN & NEW ZEALAND TOUR"**

*There was a good Australian draughts network with Britain and the tour was arranged. As it lasted for over 4 years it must have had a great impact on the game in Australia and New Zealand. If any Great World Champion visits, the sport or game benefits. Trove has a very good newspaper section that brings up all the references to the visit and there are 100 tour references in the first 18 pages. Some are brief, others are very long and whilst it would be nice to include the important ones the best that can be done is a summary. The tour will be covered with shorter descriptions but enthusiasts are encouraged to examine the sources.*

*Draughts was big in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Australia as was James Wyllie (JW) the World Champion when he came here in 1887 for a leisurely tour. That was the right thing for him as he neared 70. His wife had passed as had 3 of his 9 children back in Scotland and put up with his absences as an earlier USA tour (of many) was 4 years long. After all he was a professional and must earn a living.”*

### **VICTORIAN BASE - April, 1887**

He was very popular and there was a crowd to meet him on his arrival on the s.s. Orient line ship ‘Orizaba’ at the Melbourne wharf and the reason for his popularity was his fear of no rival. The best player to defeat him was the Champion Andrew Anderson but JW was young. He was born in Edinburgh 8 July 1818 and was a total professional when playing. The prize money was negotiated and if a match was not played it was rarely his fault. There were 50 players to meet him at Mather’s café Bourke Street that evening after he had arrived. The Toast by Mr. Gibson to welcome the Champion was well drunk and a purse of 60 sovereigns was given to him by Melbourne Draughts Club President Mr. Marshall and a £5 prize was to be played for now. The firm of Kerr & Halstead had given the money to Chairman C.S. Paterson for the play. Of all the games played JW lost none! His opponents on Saturday night were James Paterson, Hutcheson, Fred Brown, Mr. Osmond and Mr H. Gibson. Score +15=5. On the Monday Mr. Tydeman and Mr Scott +6=2; on Tuesday A. Ferguson, T. Easton, J. Tydeman, Mr. Stewart and J. Williamson +20. Further matches were planned with a minimum of 100 games. He was staying at Mayger’s Imperial Hotel top of Bourke Street for a few weeks.

The invitation came from the Melbourne Draughts Club and his fee was 1/- a game. At the Caledonian Society’s Sports Day at the MCG he dressed in his Tam O’Shanter with shepherd’s plaid and met all comers. In New Zealand he played 5013 games and lost only 7 and claimed the wonderful long walks in the mountains (6 miles out, 6 miles back) helped him play better.

He was still in Melbourne by mid May from a base at Mather’s Cafe Bourke Street and had hundreds of games after a month. His intention was to *extend to at least a year*. The photo by Vandyck of Bourke Street turned into a portrait was on the front page of the Australian Sketcher 17 May 1887. In late May he was at the Caledonian Sports settled in the Pavilion playing against James Munro, Miss Munro, Messrs J. Patterson, J. Brown, F. Brown, A. Ferguson and T. Easton. The best player won the St. Louis Lager Beer Trophy and it was probably Patterson who won it with 1 draw. JW won the rest. In June he was at the Geelong Mechanics Institute and won +17 in the morning and +12 in the evening. He played at Bacchus Marsh in the large room at the Border Inn and Colac in late July.

His first Victorian Country game was at Kilmore and Barry’s Reef Blackmore (+37=1). Another was at Sandhurst (Bendigo) where he defeated Alex Graham at the Mechanics Institute. Other players met were Messrs Casey, Fegan, Wood, Storey, Miller, Markham and Jones. At Bacchus Marsh in June he played at the Border Inn. He had also played an “exhibition” at Richmond Town Hall in May against James Paterson the Australian Champion. He won but lost a very fine

game to JP. James Paterson, the next year, won the Centennial Draughts Tourney at Mather's Café 21 Nov 1888. A £50 first prize and a 100 Guinea gold cup. He was an artist by profession Wyllie was at the Award ceremony. He was at Echuca and Sandhurst in August with scores of +102 & +123,=5. He would have enjoyed Echuca.

Excellent description of Mather's Café in the rear article "Random Papers" by Quivis.

### **NEW ZEALAND - September, 1887**

His sea trip to New Zealand on 6<sup>th</sup> September was a very rough one and he wasn't feeling well on arrival at Invercargill and had to play immediately. Later he defeated William McIlwrick +3-1=5 one of the country's best players. There was a simul at Port Chalmers at which he scored +65=7. He was in Dunedin later and surprisingly had been invited to NSW and Qld in May! One must conclude the NZ offer was better than NSW & Qld! By 29<sup>th</sup> October, he had played 347 games in Dunedin losing 2 and his NZ score then was +983=55-3. (**See the Dunedin Testimonial at the rear**). His final NZ score was 5,013 games, 209 draws & 7 losses. Some players he met there were J.P. Bell of Dunedin, R. Boswell of Christchurch as well as McIlwrick. His score at Oamaru was 201 (+196,=5) and Sawers Bay 33 (+31=2) He was also at Timaru and Palmerston. He had a 20 game match with Boswell at Christchurch and was paid £10 for the week there + expenses. He was in the Province of Canterbury in June playing at country districts. He played T. Rededale and Mr Hood of Mount Somers scoring +12-1=2. As a guest of the Christchurch Caledonian Society on 9 May 1888 he received a sum of 15 sovereigns which included contributions from shepherds who were unable to get in to play him. He did not think that 40 years ago he would play draughts in New Zealand and there were some splendid players one of whom from Canterbury could possibly win his title. One young lad of 12 Master Tommy Quill whose father ran the White Hart Hotel gave him a tough game. His simul in Christchurch showed his memory was good as the old trick of replacing lost men on the board was tried on him but failed. Another chap almost defeated with only 1 move left wouldn't make that move because he knew he had lost. JW just laughed. One simul played 15 Feb 1888 gave him a score of +8=4 and a total played of 2183 (2046+,-5,=132) On this day Sir Robert Stout was watching. I do not know him. James Wyllie was a widower with 6 of his 9 children still alive and a teetotaler. Most of his Southern Island games were played in the Otago district. He gave a simul at Mosegiel (near Dunedin) 27 Feb. against 12 players:- Andrew Bringins, John Dryden, Samuel McKay and James Steel who drew and William Burns, William Carswell, David & Thomas Mackie, Thomas Neill, William Nicol, David Scott and Thomas Stoddard who lost. Another simul played on 27<sup>th</sup> resulted in a score of +10=2 One astounding story was the 400 games ca he played with a draughts fanatic who had paid him £20 for a match. The Herd Laddie won a vast majority of the games. He also went to Lumsden, Southland,(1 hours drive from Invercargill)on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March for a special engagement and a country tour of 6 weeks at which his total score in NZ was 2,332 played 2186 won, lost 5 and drew 141. At Akaroa on 27<sup>th</sup> July his total was 4,847 games (4637+,-7,=243) He returned to Australia on 23 August 1888 on the Wairarapa after a 12 month stay. The trip home gave him a bad attack of gout which he blamed to lack of walking on

the boat. He was to go to the North Island of New Zealand in September “Where” as he said “he had not played”. Did he get there? No. He sent games to The Leader in July & August, 1888 from Leeston & Amberley in New Zealand and this makes one wonder about his correspondence. It looks regular and he liked writing. His travel in 19<sup>th</sup> century New Zealand’s South Island is mainly on the East Coast. Did he go by boat from Invercargill to Dunedin to Christchurch? What were the roads like back then? An undated article at the rear named “The Herd Laddie-An Exciting Contest” described JW’s visit to Christchurch.

He was back in Australia (probably Melbourne) 23 August and was then off to Adelaide.

**D R A U G H T 'S.**  
**MR. JAMES WYLLIE** (the “Herd Laddie”),  
 Champion Draught Player of the World,  
**PLAYS 12 SIMULTANEOUS GAMES TO-NIGHT**  
 at 6 o'clock sharp, and afterwards  
**MEETS ALL COMERS DAILY**  
 between 12 and 3 o'clock and 3 and 5 o'clock,  
**CALEDONIAN HALL, VICTORIA-SQUARE.**  
 Admission, 6d.  
 278,80,3 **JAMES HALES, Hon. Secretary.**

**D R A U G H T S T O - N I G H T.**  
 Mr. **WYLLIE**, the Herd Laddie, Champion  
 Draughtsplayer of the world, plays all comers at the  
**CALEDONIAN HALL, Victoria-square, from 12 to 2,**  
 3 to 5, 6 to 10. Second Series Tickets, 2s 6d.; Games,  
 6d. Admission, 6d.; Games, 1s. — **E. Drummond, Hon. Sec.**  
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Ad in the Evening Journal (SA) 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1888      Ad in Express (SA) 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1888

### ADELAIDE SOUTH AUSTRALIA – October, 1888

His fees at Adelaide were determined by a 20 guinea offer by a group of players at Martin’s Coffee Rooms in King William Street. They met 12 September and with J. Hanton in the chair, the group Macdonald, Hogg Sandford, Lester, Taylor and Hales soon settled. Wyllie stayed at his Melbourne base in September and in early October he travelled to Adelaide for a series of matches at the Caledonian Societies Hall in Victoria Square. His score at one event was +9=1, 3 unfinished. Players met were W. Smith, J.W. McArthur of the Glanville Club, J. Hogg of Norwood, P.E. Lester, J. Gardiner, R. Taylor and J. Broad He was to be there a week playing 8 hours per day. Peter Edward Lester was the strongest of the Adelaide draughts players against Wyllie getting the lost draws. There was a brief stint at Mount Barker 19<sup>th</sup> October where expenses were only half the money put up which was £5. The Herd Laddie won all the games.

On October, 17<sup>th</sup> he resumed matches at the Caledonian Hall in Adelaide. His score was +18=2 & 2 unf. Both Lester & Hogg got the draws and worked hard to get them. They played “The Single Corner” and “The Paisley”. Messrs Mackintosh & Walker’s unfinished games were “The Old Fourteenth”. All told 311 games were played with 26 draws. His time ended on 18<sup>th</sup> October. The Adelaide players wanted him back and he came back in 1891 as he left for England from there. He sent a letter to P.E. Lester in November 1888:- *During my stay in Adelaide I was handsomely treated by the draughts players of Adelaide and surrounding country. Please tell Mr. Hogg that the game he won off me was very well played. You yourself played very well. I have no doubt that the Adelaide Draughts players will win more than one game off me the next time I visit their city. Yours truly James Wyllie, World Draughts Champion.* But that is the future. On 18<sup>th</sup> October he played at the Hindmarsh Institute in the Lodgeroom. 20 games and the

score was +19=1. The draw was got by J. Broad who now had 3 draws in all events against the Herd Laddie. The 12 year old made a good stand but lost.

### **BACK IN MELBOURNE – November, 1888**

He was back in Melbourne as a visitor for the Presentation of Prizes at the Centennial Draughts Tourney held in November 1888 won by James Paterson Champion of Australasia and the £50 prize plus a Gold Cup worth 100 guineas. (See *The Australasian* 24 Nov. 1888 p.36-great write-up) Mr Brown was 2<sup>nd</sup> Mr Gallacher 3<sup>rd</sup>. (Paterson or Patterson or two players?)

On the 1<sup>st</sup> February, 1889 he played 15 at the Brunswick Mechanics Institute for 15 wins.

### **NEW SOUTH WALES - 1889**

JW went to Sydney and met the Sydney School of Arts players 23/3 scoring +43=6-1 The loss was to James Drury but JW beat him +2-1-1 (T&CJ 30/3/89)

In Bathurst on April 4<sup>th</sup> he met the local players and they were pygmies before Hercules wrote the reporter. He also wondered why James Wyllie kept his nickname of “The Herd Laddie” which the reporter considered “childishly absurd”. (Seymour Express 10<sup>th</sup> May, 1889). He was there 8 days and Wyllie said they played well. Messrs Joseph and Gressier got draws. The Highland Society of Bathurst were giving JW a testimonial.

In June, 1889 James Wyllie returned from Tamworth +103+ =1; Caermarthen +166 =2; Newcastle +175 = 4 .He was returning to Sydney and then Melbourne late June.

One interesting side issue was the theft of the “Herd Laddie’s” silver watch from Mrs Steel’s home at 68 MacArthur Street Ultimo. The thief, a young man and a horse trainer named Alexander Drew Ford was arrested by Senior Constable West on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 1889 and had previous form. He was committed for trial on various thefts (mostly watches) and had been ‘doing over’ boarding houses. Six pawn tickets were on Ford when arrested. Trial date was December 5<sup>th</sup> and poor Ford had a lot of thefts to answer for. The press article was :- “A further committal resulted from a desire for cleanliness expressed at the house of Mrs Steel of MacArthur Street Ultimo. On that occasion he washed a watch and 5s belonging to James Wyllie out of the house and into a pawnshop. On another little matter he was remanded to the Water, which seems very natural for such a soapy individual as the prisoner”. (*Australian Star*- 13<sup>th</sup> November, 1889.) ( I guess that meant the Water Police) (I feel this is our JW but he was in Melbourne by then.)

He returned to Melbourne in August, 1889

### **BACK TO MELBOURNE**

The Australian 2<sup>nd</sup> November, says he played at Fitzroy on 31<sup>st</sup> July. (This is too early as he returned in August) but whenever it was D. Glashan got a draw. The ‘Express’ of 7<sup>th</sup> August has JW playing J. Pirie ‘recently.’ The Australian 17/8 has him returning to Melbourne ‘last week’.

There was a simul with him scoring +89,=7,-2. The Express of 10/8 has 'Jamie' (aboriginal) of Woodlands playing Board 1 for Clare but losing 3+1- to J. Hunter.

The Express 2/9 has JW at Collingwood Draughts Club and 11/9 at Golden Square where JW lost to George Loudon at Eaglehawk. He also played a 'local' who lost. At Melbourne Draughts Club Aug. 24 he played F. Brown & A. Stewart (draws) but defeated another 8 for a score of +8=2. On 4/9 he was at Carlton Draughts Club scoring +10=2. One of the draws went to Mr. Gallacher.

Australasian 26/10 has him at Dr. le Fevres house at Studley Park against a lady visitor –a draw. The game was played 8/10/89. Did the "Herd Laddie" let the ladies draw as Paul Morphy the chess champion?

On 9/11 he was at the Melbourne Draughts Club where F. Brown got a draw and Carey defeated him!

Another Dunedin game against Mr. Hay was given - a draw.

On the 13/11 he played A. Ferguson at Carlton. He was VP of the Carlton Club. It was a 6 game simul with JW scoring +5=1. Earlier on 9/11 he played at the Melbourne Draughts Club for a +5=2 score. Some opponents were F. Brown, Fairbridge, James Paterson and S. Gray got draws. He was also at Eaglehawk playing James Smith (Leader 23/11) later 4/12 Smith got a draw off him.

There was another NZ game in the Mercury of 5/12/89 a Dunedin game against George Foreman (draw).

He was at the Carlton Club 18<sup>th</sup> December for a score of +4=4. The draws went to F. Brown, S. Grey, J. Gallacher, and in the 'Colonist' 28 /12 he lost to James Paterson



## QUEENSLAND - 1890

James Wyllie arrived in July, 1890

6<sup>th</sup> July, 1890 JW arrived on the Bulimba. Match to be played at the Metropolitan Hotel in Edward Street

19<sup>th</sup> July, 1890 JW playing Robert Mar (a photo was taken of them by A. Lomar & Co of Queen Street). The match started 8<sup>th</sup> July at the Metropolitan Hotel in Edward Street with 30 spectators and started 8 p.m. 3 games were played, Mar winning +1=2

27<sup>th</sup> July, 1890 - JW at Ipswich Draughts Club. Opponents were W. Bell, F. Boyle, The Brown brothers, M.J. Deane, W. Gordon, W. Lewis, F.H. Mead, W. Oldhan & R.H. Shirrus. His score was +9=2, the latter with Bell & Boyle. On the second day the players were stronger by JW still won:- G.Allen +2, W.Bell +3=1, F.Boyle +1=1, W.Lewis +4, Brown Brothers +2 each, Wm Oldham +2 & F.H. Mead +2.

9/8/1890 The Queenslander JW played a 43 game simul at Ipswich Draughts Club "Last week" +41=2. He did intend departing for America "shortly."

9/8/1890 - Second Match started JW & Mar at A. McNish Fraser's Auction Mart -Mar +2, JW +1, drawn 6; 19 to play.

23<sup>rd</sup> August, 1890 - JW defeated Mar +5,-2, 21=

Exhibition Games in July resulted in Mar winning +5, -3,=12

28<sup>th</sup> August - JW in Toowoomba at the SOA He played some country men first at 1/- a game and won them all. On the first day his simul opponents were Boyce, Kinealy, Provan and Stumm. The latter game should have been won by Stumm but no. He played 5 in a simul James Stirling, Sinclair Grant, Blaney & Trevathen on 29/8, the next night. On 30/8 Two other players were Casper (the strongest) and Erbacher. He visited Gympie in early September coming on the Burwah and played games at the School of Arts. There was a report of a proposed visit to Nerang in the South Queensland Bulletin of 27/9 to play "the local champion" which would cause a stir.

4<sup>th</sup> October, 1890 - JW played a 10 game simul at the Brisbane Draughts Club 27<sup>th</sup> September. He won 9 and lost 1 to F. Passey late of Charters Towers. He and JW played 4 games in all. Results not known.

**BACK TO SYDNEY** - JW played John Boyce Champion of NSW on 6<sup>th</sup> December, 1890. Two sessions with final score +4-1=1 to JW. He was returning to Melbourne later that month but was playing all comers at the SOA until then.

## BACK IN MELBOURNE

On the 12<sup>th</sup> March, 1891 he played at the Hindmarsh Institute Free Chess & Draughts Room at Fitzroy Public Library Town Hall, Napier Street and it was a 5 game simul against 5 opponents. He won +4=1 with the draw gained by Mr. Pond. It was JW's first visit.

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA (2<sup>nd</sup> Visit) – April, 1891:-** On 4<sup>th</sup> April he started his campaign at Martins Rooms King William Street Adelaide facing 18 opponents and 30 games in all. Two draws to J. Todd Read and T. Symonds.

On 6<sup>th</sup> April - 32 games, 6 draws .. The draws went to W.J. McArthur (2), P. Gemmell, W. Smith, A. Barr and P.E. Lester. McArthur was a very strong chess player and problemist as well. On 7<sup>th</sup> April - 37 games with draws to C. Cordt, C.W. F. Maschmedt, and Molloy. 8<sup>th</sup> April 29 games with 3 draws to W. Kerr, O. Higginbotham and C.W.F. Maschmedt. All other games he won. No losses.

In the SA Advertiser of 18<sup>th</sup> April is an excellent talk with JW. There is a good sketch of him in the SA Chronicle on 25<sup>th</sup> April, 1891. See scans at rear. His final games in Adelaide +36=3 draws to J. Hanton, J. Hogg and T.A. Cook who would remember forever their final games against the World Champion. He then went to Clare after his final Martin's Rooms in King William Street Adelaide which was +35=5. Draws went to F.H. Stevens, W. Maschmedt, R. Taylor, J. Clark and John Hogg. The Herd Laddie pulled off a "particularly brilliant" combination in his win over Mr. Hanton. Another session at Martins resulted in draws to T. Cooke and Mr. Hanton & 35+ to JW.

He visited Clare on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April, 1891, met 18, including Jimmy the Black Tracker. Score +19=1. The draw was by Mr. Odgers the National Bank Manager. He enjoyed the trip in lovely weather and several farmers drove 20 miles to play but had to go home afterwards for seeding. On Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May he was at Norwood Club with a score of +15=3. Draws to R. Taylor, A. Walkely & P. Lester. He thought Mr. Kerr should have won. On Saturday at Port Adelaide his score was +14=3 with draws to D. Smith, J. Hanton and T.L. Sykes. His SA score was +647-5=91 and he thought the average ability of the local players was greater than any others south of the line.

The Hamilton Spectator of 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1891 gave his total scores for Australia and New Zealand of 16,000 games+, 14,464 wins, 1,506 draws and 30 losses. This is debatable judging by other scans. The article below from the Evening Journal 6<sup>th</sup> May 1891 is excellent and tells all readers of the benefits of walking when old. In my opinion he was one of the greatest world champions in any sport. Perhaps family have his diaries of his trips? Money wise at 1/- a game that's 16,000 shillings or £800 for 4 years work.

## THE HERD LADDIE LEAVES FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA

### THE DRAUGHTS CHAMPION.

#### MR. JAMES WYLLIE.

By the steamer Austral, which leaves Largs Bay to-day for London, Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draughts-player of the world, is a passenger to the old country. The "Herd Laddie," as Mr. Wyllie is generally known, has been during the past few months touring through the Australian Colonies playing at some of the principal cities and recruiting his health. He was born in Edinburgh in 1822, and is at present sixty-nine years and four months old. He has played draughts from an early age, and when about fifteen years old he engaged in his first match. Since then he has played, with one or two exceptions, all his life. During his time Mr. Wyllie has introduced numbers of openings, among them being the Black and White Doctor, the Ayrshire Lassie, Black and White Fife, and the Black and White Switcher. The Black Switcher is generally known as the Dundee. He played the White Fife with Smith in their match, and won from him.

Referring to the coming match with W. P. Reed in America, Mr. Wyllie remarked that he was going straight to London from Adelaide, and from there he would go to Scotland, and after resting for a time he would proceed to America. "It is all Mr. Reed's fault," said Mr. Wyllie, "that the match has been postponed till July. Originally it was intended that the match should be played in April. I forwarded \$100 to Mr. Dunlop, the Editor of the *Turf, Field, and Farm* in New York, and made arrangements to reach America on March 14, as one stipulation is that the match must be begun within sixty days of my arrival. To my great surprise Reed intimated that he could not play before July, and the match had to be postponed until then. When I am done with Mr. Reed, and unless another match is fixed, I will go back to Scotland and rest, and then come out to Australia. In the case of a match being fixed up I shall not trouble about going back to Scotland but come to Australia via

being fixed up I shall not trouble about going back to Scotland, but come to Australia via San Francisco and the Pacific route. I am very sorry to leave Australia at all. I have been very well treated, and the climate of Australia agrees with me entirely." Every morning Mr. Wyllie goes out for a long walk, and thinks nothing of covering fourteen miles between breakfast and dinner. After dinner he generally has a sleep, and in the evening gets up refreshed and ready to play. Asked what was his opinion of the players in South Australia, Mr. Wyllie wished it to be distinctly understood that he would not select any individual as the best player. He would say, however, that the South Australians as a body could not be beaten in Australia. During his fifty years of play Mr. Wyllie reckons that he has played over 500,000 games, and "of course," he added, "I have won the greater number of them."

On the question of temperance as connected with playing draughts, Mr. Wyllie states that he is a temperance man on principle. He never drinks anything stronger than tea, and in his opinion a drinker could not be a good draughts-player. No matter how long he plays he never feels tired, and could go on playing.

Referring to his trip in the North, Mr. Wyllie said that while he was at Clare he met a gentleman who had come over twenty miles to have "a crack wi' him." In the course of conversation it came out that the champion had visited the father of the gentleman in Stirlingshire some forty years ago. While walking through Clare a companion pointing to the hills asked Mr. Wyllie how he would like to live up there. The answer was, "Oh, very much; I should have the birds for my companions, and for amusement I would read and play draughts, and try to beat myself." "But how would you get up and down," queried his companion. "Eh, mon," was the reply; "in New Zealand I climbed up hills five times as high and thocht naethin' o't."

Referring to incidents in his career, the



Referring to incidents in his career, the "Herd Laddie" said, "I remember when I was going from America to England on one occasion there was a Frenchman on board who said he would play any one on board the ship at draughts, he did not care who he was. I asked him if he would play me, and he agreed to a match for £10 aside, the money to go to the one who got the first three wins. Of course I won the money, and with a hearty little laugh as the circumstance came before his mind, the Frenchman was very quiet for the rest of the journey. On another occasion I remember I was travelling from Glasgow to Liverpool in a steamer, and there was one man playing draughts at a shilling a game, and winning all round. I was unknown on board, and even when I mentioned my name and offered to play the man for nothing, no one knew who I was. The passengers would not allow him to play for love, and as I was by no means loth the stake was made £1 a game. After losing the first ten games the man cried enough, and I was quite contented."

Mr. Wyllie again expressed his sorrow at having to leave "Australia's sunny clime," and said it would not be very long before he would be back again. Financially the Australian trip has been a great success, and the champion leaves Adelaide strengthened alike in mind and body for his great battle with the champion of America.

**UNFORTUNATELY HE DID NOT COME BACK.** I think it was his form of flattery to praise opponents more than for their ability. Clearly his top opponents were in Europe and America. "Reminiscences" of him by 'J.P.' follow. It has been retyped from the scan. Whilst this is a professional tour by JW it has real benefits for public draughts and also for his opponents who were able to have a lifetime memory in playing the world champion. And so the great man passed on.

Compare this 4 year tour to the very memorable Melbourne City vs Country annual draughts matches which started in 1892. The wonderful photo included shows the jam-packed room in the Melbourne Town Hall and is a photo from 1895. The match played 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1895 has been found and scanned from the "Weekly Times" It was a quieter age but the social events afterwards with all the players singing contrasts with current social events which may not have the talent of yesteryear. Some of the comments made by those present and the players names are given to complete a picture of a superb annual draughts event which was cited as the best in the world. It could even be that.

**From Melbourne Leader – 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1899 - p.31**

## **REMINISCENCES OF JAMES WYLLIE BY J.P.**

*"In the death of James Wyllie, the famous "Herd Laddie," the greatest exponent probably of the scientific game of draughts that has ever lived, Scotland, or rather, I should say, the world, has lost a veritable hero. For, according to Carlyle, all heroes are made of the same stuff, the accidental difference between them lying in their different spheres of action. Then, if Carlyle is right, Mirabeau could have become a poet, and Burns a leader; so James Wyllie, in other circumstances, and in his degree, might have become a Gladstone, a Carlyle or a Darwin. For Wyllie was more than a great draughts player. He was an original thinker; the missionary of the most delightful pastime; the hero of a hundred fights; and beyond compare, the most prominent and popular personality in the draughts world for the last half century. The renown of the champion extended beyond the circle of draughts experts, and even of those interested in draughts, and the name of the "Herd Laddie" was familiar to all as that of a celebrity.*

*To estimate even inadequately the extent and importance of his many triumphs, or his exact position in the history of the game, would be a momentous task, and one which I assuredly would not attempt. But rather, I should like to dwell a little on some sides of his character, and endeavour to show the man as I personally knew him, in however fragmentary a manner.*

*At the invitation of the Melbourne Draughts Club, in 1887, Mr. Wyllie visited these shores, and arrived in Melbourne on the 15<sup>th</sup> April. I well remember how some of us met the renowned "Herd Laddie" in the early morning at Hobson's Bay. My first vivid impression of the veteran was one of deep respect as I felt sure that he was a man with no deception or trickery about him, yet giving perfect confidence that he, was the "champion." He received a most hearty welcome, and was well feted in the evening at Mather's café, where he received a purse of sixty sovereigns. Mr. Wyllie thoroughly enjoyed his stay in Victoria, being more fortunate to secure a comfortable and happy home with Mr. and Mrs. Houston. In our early bouts with the champion, most of our players were vanquished before and by the power of his personality, but after some little time we made creditable progress. His scores in Victoria were –Games played 1850, of which he won 1760, lost 2 while 88 games were drawn. A wonderful record. It was, however, quite a treat to meet the veteran, for his play was always fresh and sparkling, full of happy surprised and brilliant finishes. He had the power of making games "hard" and of enticing even cautious players from safe and simple lines, into "doubt, hesitation and pain," and then generally, disaster. Everyone soon wanted to meet the veteran, so we had tickets printed at 1/- for each game, which were handed to him before play began. In connection with the tickets I remember an amusing incident that occurred at the Richmond town hall, before a large and fashionable audience of well-known members of Parliament, merchants, artists & c., when Wyllie was giving an exhibition of his play. A rather pompous gentleman, a member of the Legislative Council, I believe, took his seat opposite the champion, and made his first move. Whyllie remained quite still. The gentleman looked at Wyllie, who calmly returned the gaze. The councillor then drew back a black man, "Who moves first?" Wyllie's reply in the broadest Scotch, though brief, was characteristic, "Whar's your ticket?" Wyllie did not believe in playing for fun, and in*



Melbourne, in the outer draughts circles, “Whar’s your ticket?” became an almosy synonymous term with draughts. Wyllie’s deafness has been held by some to have been an advantage to him, as he was then unable to be distracted by any noise, and could give undivided attention to the game, yet it had also its drawbacks. As a joke, one night, as Wyllie had been demolishing his opponents with special expediency, hardly a draw having been secured against him, we brought the landlord’s daughter, who, we said, was an exzcellent draughts player. I stood behind Wyllie and directed the lady’s moves, and the game was ultimately drawn. The veteran kept looking round the room, suspecting something, but we were not discovered. When we told Wyllie afterwards, he remarked, “I thocht she was a gae sticker for a woman.” In reference to Wyllie’s deafness, and as an example of his caution I may say that he was once advised by a friend at a busy intersection of streets, to look both ways before crossing. “I always look four ways,” replied the veteran.

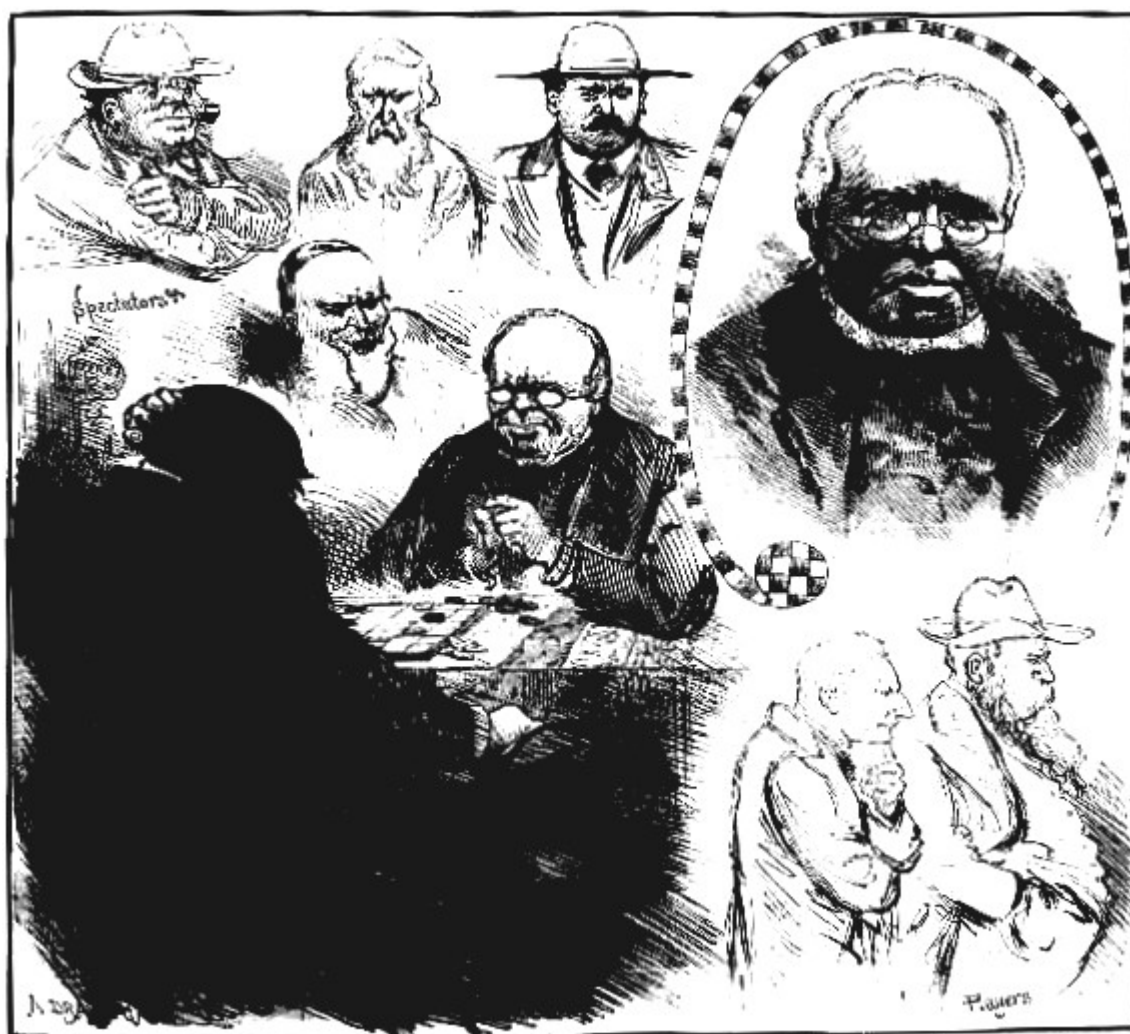
The Herd Laddie” dressed in a Tam O’Shanter and in a shepherd’s tartan plaid was a sight that, once seen, is not easily forgotten. At the Caledonian Society’s sports, in the Melbourne Cricket Ground, the “Herd Laddie” in such a costume met all comers, looking the “champion” to perfection; and in an attendance of 10,000 or 15,000 spectators the chief attraction was, I believe, the “Herd Laddie” in his shepherd’s plaid and at the draughts board.

As an example of Wyllie’s shrewdness and humour I cannot do better than quote some characteristic passages from a letter I received from him when he was in New Zealand:- “Before leaving Great Britain I issued a challenge to the world at draughts for £100 a side, but, having waited 15 months without a reply, I thought I would not delay my tour to Australia any longer; and therefore, should anyone in Great Britain and Ireland or America challenge me, they must wait until I complete my tour, as it cannot be thought that I can go from one part of the world to another to suit any draughts player; but I shall only be too glad when I return, if challenged, to accept. I am playing better since I came to New Zealand. I take long walks in every place I go – six miles there and six miles back every day. My score in New Zealand is -3040 games; out of that number I have won 2874, lost 5 and 161 were drawn. I have played more than 1000 games since I lost one. The Barker-Martins match was very poor, not quite up to third class play. Had I been in Martin’s position when he was a game ahead, not all the players in the world combined could have got the game back, for I would have brought forth a line of defence that would have defied them. You must bear in mind that this would only be done in a championship match at a large stake. If my opponent was no better than Martin or Barker I would be able to go to sleep and not prepare. However, I will only play for £200 a side.”

Wyllie had little respect for blindfold play, and when someone was enlarging on the wonderful feats of a certain blindfold celebrity, Wyllie quietly remarked, “He canna play with his eyes open”. As a coach Wyllie, I think, was without a rival, though he was severe, and would take no excuses. He coached both Fred. Brown and myself for the Australasian championship, and we secured first and second places. Brown, I remember, was a game down against a strong opponent, and there was only one game left to play. Wyllie’s advice, in reply to Fred’s query of

*“What can I do?” was simply “You maun just win” so what could Brown do but win. Equalizing his scores and then beating his opponent in the play-off.”*

Having retyped this article and reading it, the author seems likely to be James Paterson the Australian champion on occasions. It would be lovely to put some names alongside the identities in “The Sketcher” drawing next but they are elusive.



**From The Australasian Sketcher 17<sup>th</sup> May, 1887**

James Wyllie facing. Taken from a scan of the newspaper on TROVE - the wonderful National Library of Australia tool that allows free reading and scanning.

## DRAUGHTS.

### DEATH OF JAMES WYLLIE.

#### CHAMPION DRAUGHTS PLAYER OF THE WORLD.

James Wyllie, the "Herd Laddie," whose death was announced the other day, was perhaps the best player that the history of draughts has chronicled. The championship was practically his for over fifty years. Truly he can be called the hero of a "hundred battles."

James Wyllie was born at Piershill Cavalry Barracks, Edinburgh, on the 6th July, 1818. His father was a trooper, who afterwards rose to the rank of sergeant-major in the famous Scots Greys, and took part in the engagement against Napoleon at Waterloo. He began to play draughts at the age of 14 because he considered it a "nice intellectual game." He developed extraordinary powers at the game, and while at Biggar, in Lanarkshire, he formed the acquaintance of a Mr. Porteous, a cattle farmer, who was an ardent and enthusiastic draughts player. This gentleman was delighted with the youth's ability at draughts, and conceived the idea of taking him to Edinburgh to give the players of that city a pleasant surprise. So it was arranged that Wyllie should help Porteous into the Edinburgh market with his cattle, and that he should be the "Herd Laddie." While in Edinburgh there took place an encounter between Porteous and a Mr. Bertram (who generally got the best of him) for a shilling a game. After a few games Porteous, on the plea of business, arranged that his "Herd laddie" should continue the play until his return. Bertram, thinking he would have a "soft thing," readily consented, and the stakes were doubled. Over sixty games were played, of which Wyllie scored fifty-nine wins, his opponent only occasionally getting a draw. This is how Wyllie gained the sobriquet of the "Herd Laddie." His first great match was with Andrew Anderson, of Scotland, in 1846. Since then he has played over 600 matches in Scotland, England, United States, Canada, and Australia, and he has only suffered really decisive defeat at the hands of four men—namely, Anderson, of Scotland; Martins, of London; Yates, of Brooklyn; and James Ferrie, of Scotland. The last match was perhaps the greatest match he ever played. It was the best of ninety-four games, and the fact of the opening being confined to all the first possible moves for black, and all the possible replies for white, made

Brisbane Courier – 15<sup>th</sup> April, 1899 - p.3

the first possible moves for black, and all the possible replies for white, made it peculiarly interesting and unique. The original play which it evoked was the best test of draughts skill that could be imagined. Though Ferris gained a decided victory it was by no means a disgraceful defeat for the "Herd Laddie," who was in his 76th year. He went to America in 1873, and stayed there till 1876. During this visit he played a number of matches for stakes, and won them all. He also played 10,000 exhibition games, of which he won 895 and lost 102, the rest being draws. He again visited America from 1881 to 1885, and won 9280 games and lost 109, 650 being drawn. He visited Australia in 1887, and during his stay in the colonies he played 16,000 games, of which he won 14,644, lost 30, and the rest were drawn. During his Australian trip it is gratifying to note that the present champion of Australasia, Mr. Robert Mar, was the only player in the colonies who showed any sign of being able to compete with Mr. Wyllie on equal terms. Comparing the results it was shown that Queensland won one out of every 150 games played, New South Wales a little more than one win out of 300 games, South Australia one out of 500, and Victoria and New Zealand one in every 1000 games played. At the beginning of this year he competed in the tourney for Scottish

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championship, and was knocked out by the winner of the championship in the first round. This was really his last appearance at the draughts board in public, and he was presented with a new umbrella for his pluck in entering the arena at such an advanced age.

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the veteran scored a win in 11 minutes. He likewise won the second in 11 minutes, but only when reduced to his last man. The three other players now played their third games, with the usual result, and then it looked as if Toowoomba was about to score one win against the **champion** of the world. Mr. Stumm opened with a Glasgow Whilter and soon had the old gentleman in difficulties. For three or four moves Mr. Wyllie deliberated long and anxiously, giving vent to the suppressed whistling sound which with him is the indication of hard thought. For a time it looked as if he would not possibly avert defeat, but at length he found a way of escape, and by-and-by an insufficiently considered move on the part of Mr. Stumm gave the advantage to the veteran, and the end came in 25 minutes. A few outside players tackled the **champion** more for the honour of the thing than any chance of success, and the sitting came to an end shortly after 10. Last night Mr. Wyllie's opponents were Messrs. James Stirling, Sinclair, Grant, Blaney and Trevethan, but none of the games call for special remark. To-night it will be the turn of Mr. Casper, who is accounted our smartest player, and Mr. Erbacher, to give an account of themselves, and no doubt all the guarantors will have a final slap at the **champion**.

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## **Draughts in Toowoomba.**

On Thursday last the long awaited visit from the "Herd Laddie" became an accomplished fact. In the afternoon several draughts players, some from the country, tackled the old gentleman at a shilling a game, but he put them all through without much trouble. In the evening at 7.25 the true programme began, Mr. Boyce opening the ball. A number, though not a large number, of gentlemen interested in draughts attended, and some when tired of looking on went playing at other tables. The exhibition took place in the hall of the school of Arts, which was conveniently arranged for the purpose.

Mr. Boyce succumbed in 7 minutes, and the very first game displayed some of the wiles of the Wyllie one, notably the inviting way in which he entices his opponent into the single corner and there forms a blockade. In the second game Mr. Boyce cleared after two minutes' experience, and Mr. Kinealy succeeded, his record being 7 and 5 minutes respectively, and then he sought respite. Mr. Provan fought more carefully, if not more skilfully, the contests being prolonged to 15 and 20 minutes, and then Mr. Stumm stepped into the breach and the spectators were treated to the first scientific play of the evening—that is, scientific on both sides. At Mr. Stumm's request, the Laddie, who had the black, opened with the Glasgow Whilter, and a rapidly played succession of "book moves" soon brought affairs to a crisis, and the veteran scored a win in 7 minutes.

Darling Downs Gazette 30<sup>th</sup> August, 1890



For the gratification of draught players, and they are many, we subjoin the score of the games played:—

#### GAME No. 1.

"Edinburgh" Opening.

Black, Mr. Wyllie.	White, Mr. Mar.
9-13	6-15
22-19	21-17
12-16	3-7
24-20	22-27
8-12	16-19
27-24	23-16
10-15	12-19
24-19	30-23
15-22	7-10
25-18	17-14
7-10	10-17
26-22	25-21
5-9	1-6
20-25	21-14
10-15	19-23
19-10	28-10
	10-6
	Mar won.

#### GAME No. 2.

"Edinburgh" Opening.

Black, Mr. Mar.	White, Mr. Wyllie.
9-13	28-24
22-18	6-10
12-16	22-18
24-20	1-6
8-12	24-19
27-24	10-14
10-15	18-9
32-27	5-14
15-22	27-24
25-18	14-18
7-10	23-14
18-15	16-23
10-19	24-19
24-18	23-27
4-11	31-24
26-22	11-16
3-7	20-11
	27-23
	18-14
	19-24
	14-10
	23-19
	29-23
	24-28
	25-21
	28-32
	21-17
	32-28
	17-13
	28-24
	5-9
	19-15
	9-6
	2-9
	13-6
	Drawn.

#### GAME No. 3.

"Defiance" Opening.

Black, Mr. Wyllie.	White, Mr. Mar.
11-15	25-22
23-19	7-11
9-14	22-18
27-23	15-22
8-11	25-17
22-18	11-15
15-22	24-20
25-9	15-24
5-14	28-19
20-25	4-8
11-15	30-26
	8-11
	19-18
	12-19
	23-7
	2-11
	31-27
	14-18
	20-16
	11-20
	27-24
	20-27
	32-7
	3-10
	17-14
	10-17
	21-14
	1-6
	26-22
	6-9
	22-18
	9-13
	14-10
	Drawn.

#### GAME No. 4.

### Battle of the Champions.

#### Wyllie v. Mar.

At the Metropolitan Hotel on Tuesday, a series of 20 games of draughts was begun between the venerable Mr. James Wyllie, better known as the "Hard Laddie," champion of the world, and Mr. Robert Mar, champion of Queensland. Mr. Wyllie has come to Brisbane at the expense of the Draughts Club. Proceedings were commenced shortly after 8 o'clock, Mr. Fraser being chosen referee, but his services in that capacity were not necessary. It may be stated that each player has had a voice in the selection of the openings, and the opening in the first game was the "Edinburgh." This game, with Mr. Wyllie as black and Mr. Mar white, lasted some time, but finally Mr. Wyllie gave in, remarking that there was no need to prolong it, as he had lost. This intimation was received with applause. The second game, also an "Edinburgh" opening, was played in faster style than the first, Mr. Mar this time being black and Mr. Wyllie white; but neither of the players could gain an advantage over the other, and it ended in a draw. The third game, with the "Defiance" opening, Mr. Wyllie black and Mr. Mar white, was played in quicker time than either of the two preceding games, and it also resulted in a draw. There were not more than a score of persons present when play commenced, but a few more put in an appearance later on.

The second evening's play of the draughts championship matches between Mr. Wyllie, the champion of the world, and Mr. Mar, the champion of Queensland, took place on Wednesday at the Metropolitan Hotel. Mr. Hardy acted as referee. The large dining-room was crowded with deeply interested spectators, and as the play proceeded, low-whispered critical comments were exchanged as to the probabilities of either of the redoubtable draughtsmen scoring a win or making a draw. The first game played—the fourth of the series—was quickly finished, resulting, as shown below, in a draw; but the second game occupied about two hours, and when the champion abruptly decided it by exclaiming, "White wins, and he has played well for it!" a round of applause greeted Mr. Mar. The score now stands: Mr. Mar, two wins; Mr. Wyllie, nil; drawn three games.

See also The Queenslander 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1890 at the rear for much more on the championship venue. There are two more games (4 & 5) also at the rear. As given in **The Argus 17<sup>th</sup> July, 1890** (2 pages in advance). Robert Mar won the event and James Wyllie challenged him for a rematch which was to take place in early August. Research still ongoing here. It does seem JW reversed the result. (See SA Advertiser 18.4.1891 at rear)

## 6. PERSONALITIES, SCANS, PHOTOS

### Andrew Anderson (1799-1861)

Not easy to copy Wyllie Checkers on Anderson as it is too wide on the website. He was a great player and defeated Wyllie 4 matches out of 5. The match he lost was played just after his wife had died. He produced a book in 1848 and after retirement became an analyst and coach. He was a friend of John Drummond another draughts pioneer.

### ANDERSON: The First world champion by Norrie Reid

*One morning an acquaintance met Anderson dressed in his Sunday garb. “Hellen Andra! Where awa’ this morning?”*

*“Man,” said Andrew, “I hae been hearing o’ a chiel in Baillieston who proudly say he was never beat at draughts, and I want to see what he’s like and try if I canno’ reduce him to the proportions o’ an ordinary mortal...”*

*Andrew, in the course of time, reached his destination, found the unconquered Bailliestonian, and introduced himself, saying that he had heard he was a grand player at the “brod” (draughts board) and that he had come all the way frae Braidwood to have the honour of a game or twa.*

*“Ye’ll ken Andrew Anderson do ye?”*

*“I’m Anderson.”*

*“Oh! Weel I have never been beat an’ ye canna beat me, because I’ll no play wi” ye.”*

*No amount of persuasive argument could induce the invincible one to produce the board. Anderson then proceeded to Coatbridge to holiday with his friend Mr Thomas Mochrie, another excellent player.”*

### Above article from “Wyllie’s checkers website”

An old story used in the chess field I think by Blackburne who was asked to play an arrogant club player who never lost a game of chess. Blackburne asked him to play and the player surprisingly said yes. Blackburne had the White pieces and made his move. He waited for a time and as Black hadn’t moved went elsewhere. He came back after a much longer time and Black still hadn’t moved. Blackburne said “I see why you don’t lose many games” to which Black replied “Well, I am playing you and I doubt if you will win.” Blackburne agreed. The draughts story probably has precedence.

## **Biography of Robert Stewart (1873-1941) by Norrie Reid** **(From Wyllie's Checkers website)**

*“Robert Stewart was born in Kelty, Fife, Scotland, on the 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1873, a mere two hundred yards from the Bridge House, Blairadam, where he was to live most of his life. His father was an enthusiastic lover of draughts and introduced his son to the game. Robert joined the Kelty Draughts Club in 1886, quickly becoming an extremely strong player. By the early 1890's he had reached a level of excellence which allowed him to defeat Richard Jordan in 1893.*

*Stewart won the Scottish Ch'ship in 1894, 1895, 1900, 1901 and 1902 – a remarkable achievement considering the quality of the opposition at the time. Facing such formidable opponents was Richard Jordan, James Ferrie, Henderson, Buchanan, Searight, Freedman and others, He achieved the outstanding score of 35-8-129. Moreover, in the three England v Scotland matches his figures were 5-0-26, and in the Britain v USA match of 1905 he recorded a fine 7-0-32. From 1901 Stewart went 21 years without the loss of one game in public. That lost game came in the 1922 victory over the American Champion Newell Banks (2-1-37) which secured him the World Ch'ship in a match played in the City Halls, Glasgow for £500 in prize money. Given that he had effectively retired from match play in 1905 and would consequently be short of practice (unlike Banks!) this result was truly an outstanding one. On his return to Kelty he was to be feted with bands playing and crowds cheering. However Robert was a very reserved man and left the train at the station before Kelty and then walked home to avoid the crowds.*

*Other local accounts of the man confirm him as slightly eccentric (normal for a genius?) He could, for example, pass a close member of his family in the middle of a country lane without a word, he would spend much time wandering through Blairadam estate with his pocket draughts set (now in my possession) thinking, maybe, of his latest “cook” an expression used for a previously unknown “killer” move.*

*As well as his championship successes, Stewart established a prodigious record in exhibitions and demonstrations. For example as a “blindfold” player (i.e. without sight of the board) he was outstanding as the figures for his last three displays indicate:- Cowden Beith in 1904 (14-0-0-), Peebles in 1905 (12-0-3) and Carlisle in 1905 (19-0-6).*

*This man was capable of much more! Similarly as a simultaneous performer, his record defies comment:-1101-0-182. After the 1922 match he played no other (shades of Bobby Fischer). The Americans attempted to arrange another World Title Match and claimed that Stewart would not play. Stewart always totally denies this; in fact he claimed that he had “On four occasions....accepted proposals to cross the Atlantic. On each occasion, the matter fizzled out because America could not raise the money....” Where the truth lay is now hard to pinpoint- the unhappy effect was that Stewart really retired in 1922. He was scheduled to play Sam Levy of England in 1937 but resigned it due to ill health.*

*Robert Stewart died in 1941 and is buried in Kirk O'Beith cemetery close to his home in Fife."*

### **Addendum by Norrie Stewart**

*"So keen were the American challengers to recover the World's Title that in 1934 the Scottish giant was offered a match in America for stakes comprising £300 for a win, lose or draw and £200 expenses. Though a flue victim at the time and unable to accept the invitation, Mr. Stewart had his own opinions about a challenge match on the other side of the Atlantic. Eventually in 1937 he decided to retire from the arena in which he had thrilled thousands of admirers and announced "I am now the retired, undefeated, world's draughts champion". It was with obvious grief that Mr. Stewart made the decision for he had held the title for 15 and a half years. To the Keltic genius who had never known defeat his exit was particularly unfortunate as the step had to be taken practically on the eve of a World's Ch'ship match for £200 a side with Samuel Levy, Manchester."*

(Sad that Stewart by passed the victory cemetery. Refusing a match after age 49 is hardly a crime. Reid's reference to Bobby Fischer at age 32 in 1975 refusing to play Anatoly Karpov doesn't really compare to Stewart. He was getting on. Draughts is as lively as chess off the board! I don't think he came to Australia. BM)

This led to finding the Wyllie Checkers fantastic historical website featuring all the great players back to the first champion Anderson. It sometimes doesn't come up and the word **'insecure'** comes up. These biographies are not able to be copied and I rather liked Stewart's, so hand wrote it out and then typed it into these files. It could be said that this affection for the long dead checkers/draughts players is on a par with the deceased chess players who usually end up with a book or two as well. But from my research so far these champions are much loved, especially James Wyllie and there is far more detail about him than anyone else.

The following is from Chess Book Chats website by Michael Clapham and in the issue 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2016. It reads and looks well and Branch would appreciate it if he was still around. I bought many volumes of The Chess Amateur in 1967 from Baruch Wood's rare book auctions and soon fell in love with Branch in the various contribution to CA columns. The Cheltenham columns would be great to see published one day. Must try and get "The History of Checkers" as reprinted by the late Ken Whyld. Would be nice to have one of his photographs too. A clever man.



## William Shelley Branch and Pruen's chess book

W. S. Branch (1854 - 1933) was the evergreen chess columnist in Cheltenham newspapers for over 40 years from 1890 to 1933. He conducted the chess column in *The Cheltenham Examiner* from 1890 to 1913 and then in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* from 1914 up to his death in January 1933. Branch's chess columns reflected his special interest in the history and literature of the game and, having recently leafed through some of these newspapers, I can report on some matters of interest to chess bibliophiles.



**Chess Book Chats website by Michael Clapham**



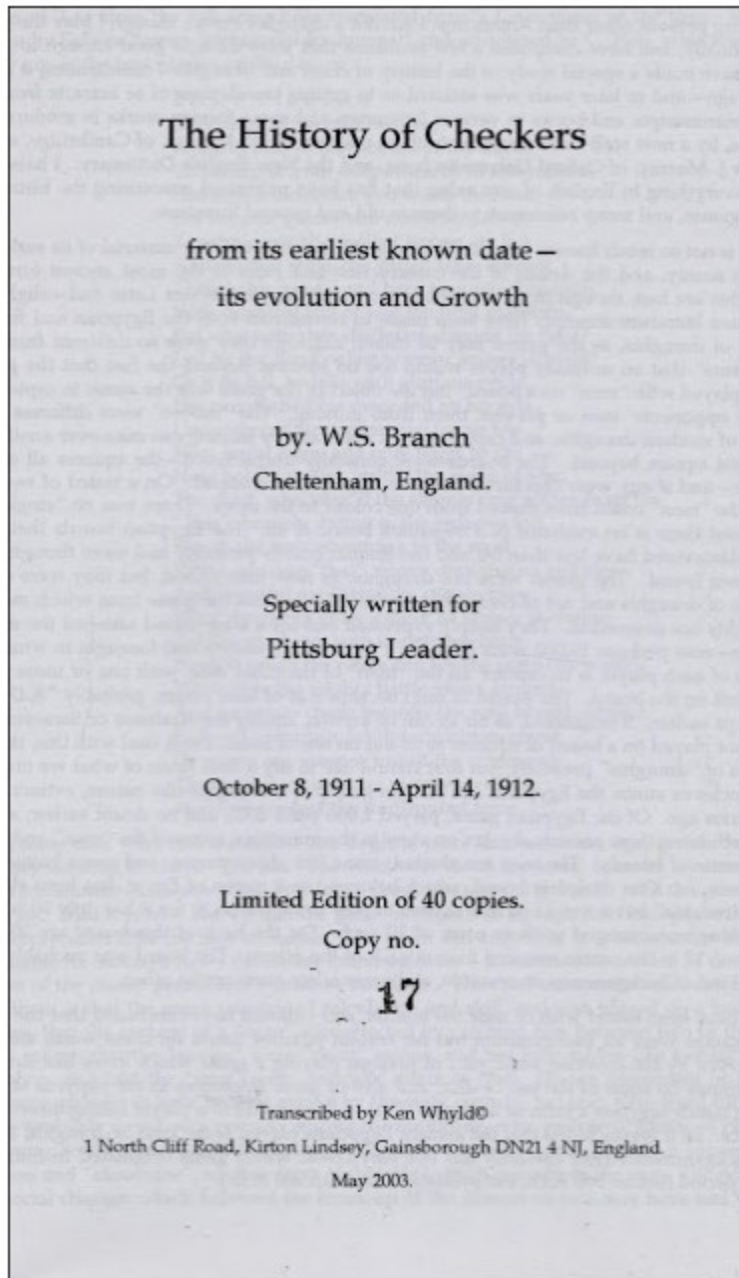
William Shelley Branch was born in Hastings in 1854 (Shelley was his mother's maiden name). He was a professional photographer in the 1870's and 1880's in Lewes, Sussex and continued this profession when he moved with his family to Cheltenham in 1888, although he appears to have given up photography for journalism in the mid 1890's. Branch was one of those indispensable, but often under appreciated, chess organisers. He helped to form chess clubs in Brighton and Lewes and re-established the Cheltenham chess club soon after his arrival in the town.

W. S. Branch took over the reins of the chess column in *The Cheltenham Examiner* in November 1890 when Isidor Gunsberg, the previous incumbent, sailed to New York for his World Championship match with Steinitz. The columns initially consisted of local reports, a game and a problem, but these eventually expanded to include anecdotes and biographical information about chess personalities.

Later articles would often cover two or three full columns of the broadsheet newspaper and commenced with a chess related poem followed by a problem or two, (occasionally one of Branch's own creations), local news and results, answers to correspondents and a game. Chess intelligence from other papers and periodicals, including American publications, also frequently appeared. Branch was in his element in answering questions from correspondents of a historical nature, and would often reply at great length to get to the root of the matter.

W. S. Branch was a highly respected historian at the time; John Keeble declared that he had a greater knowledge of chess history than any other man, with the exception of H. J. R. Murray, in his obituary in *The British Chess Magazine* in March 1933. Branch contributed a detailed history of chess in a series of eighteen articles to *The British Chess Magazine* in 1899 and 1900 entitled *A sketch of chess history before the second revolution*. This covered the history of chess from its origins in the sixth century up to around 1475.

Branch was also a draughts expert and wrote a series of articles entitled *The History of Checkers* for the *Pittsburg Leader* in 1911 and 1912. These were reprinted in pamphlet form in a limited edition of 40 copies by Ken Whyld in 2003.



The *Cheltenham Examiner* column for 29th August 1906 included a note to correspondent J. Keeble regarding *An Introduction to the History and Study of Chess*, by an Amateur, published in Cheltenham in 1804.

**Chess Book Chats website by Michael Clapham**

I bought No.30 in August, 2021. Ken was a good chess friend and we called and stayed a night with him in Caistor in 1990. Norma cooked tea, I washed up, and Ken talked. Great night.

### **MORE ON WILLIAM SHELLEY BRANCH**

Michael Clapham put a fine biography of the above in his website Chess Chats which has been copied above. Here is the remainder from BCM p.188, 1899:-

*“Mr. Wm. Shelley Branch, the secretary of the Cheltenham C.C. from its formation in 1889, was born at Hastings in 1854. Leaving that famous chess centre at an early age, and long before it was famous, he resided for ten years at Brighton. In those days there was no regular chess club in that large town, though there was something in the way of a remnant of one that had formerly met at one of the best hotels on the sea-front, and of which Captain Kennedy-author of ‘Waifs and Strays of the Chess Board’- ha been a member. Also, Mr. W.S. Branch attempted to start a little club at a coffee tavern, and remembers now with amusement the account which appeared of this organization in the ‘City of London Chess Magazine’. But in 1873 interest in chess in Brighton was increased by a rumour that at the newly-opened Free Library one could play for nothing all day and every day (except Sundays). This proved correct. One of the town council – Mr. Booth- had given some large sets of men and boards, and had obtained permission for the establishment of a permanent and free chess room, intended chiefly for the use of visitors. There are very few chess resorts in this country. Thousands of players much have passed through that “corporation chess room,” and Mr. Branch there met in the seventies, some of the players who have made Sussex a strong chess county since, and occasionally some well known Metropolitan players.*

*How far a free and public chess room benefits the cause of club chess, or the reverse, is a moot point. But about the time Mr. Branch ceased to reside in Brighton, a good club was established there – chiefly, he believes, by Mr. H.W. Butler. At the smaller, but anciently more important, neighbouring town of Lewes, Mr. Branch and others shortly afterwards established a good club, which in time won the “McArthur Cup” of the Sussex C.A., and which once beat Hastings! The Lewes Cup continues, but Mr. Branch had to leave it at the close of 1888 for Cheltenham, in which town he took with him a club testimonial from Lewes.*

*Finding Cheltenham to be clubless, he set to work, and getting hold of the borough member, mayor, & c., and pointing out what a discreditable position the town was in, and urging the same in the local press, he had the satisfaction of seeing a chess club established, with eighty-nine members, before the end of 1889. In 1890, Mr. Branch found to his surprise that he had won the Cheltenham Cup, and again in 1896. From the autumn of 1890 he has been the chess editor of the ‘Cheltenham Examiner’, and his name has been seen occasionally in other columns as that of a problemist. He has given considerable study to the historical side of chess, and of some other things. But he has now arrived at an age when he knows that he will never conspicuously shine outside his own little Baliewick as a player, problemist, or historian. He simply looks upon himself as one of a large number whom circumstances have permitted to be of use in spreading a*

knowledge of the king of games – his own favourite recreation since the age of 12, with the doubtful exception, for a period, of the work and play involved in artillery volunteering. Of this he had seven years, becoming a corporal. Mr. Branch, for many years in business as a photographer and picture dealer, and unmarried, contents himself now with literary and chess work.

On Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, the members of the Cheltenham Chess Club gave expression to their high appreciation of the services which Mr. Branch has rendered to the club during his ten years' secretariat, by presenting him with a testimonial consisting of a beautifully illuminated address, a fine set of chessmen and board, two books, a crystal inkstand, and a purse of gold. In making this presentation, Mr. T. Whittard, vice-president of the Cheltenham Club, remarked that the members were indebted to Mr. Branch for his literary and editorial labours in connection with chess. We endorse Mr. Whittard's remarks, and have much pleasure in publishing in the present issue the first article of a series which Mr. Branch will contribute to the B.C.M. at our special request."

The articles continued until October, 1900 having started in May, 1899 and are usually 3 or 4 pages in length. They required much research and assistance from other chess devotees such as H.J.R. Murray and are written in a clear language without complication. He later wrote a series in the Pittsburgh Gazette which were republished by Ken Whyld in 2003 in his Christmas Series issues. I don't have that but will try and get it as the series is about draughts history. This is a very rich period for enthusiasts interested in the history of chess, draughts and chess problems and other authors produced articles for BCM. This series was called "A Sketch of Chess History before the Second Revolution'. It may be worthwhile scanning these for posterity. It would also be nice to have a professional photograph by Branch.

**SUBSEX. [POST OFFICE**  
**PHOTOGRAPHERS.**  
**Baker Edwin Isaac, Hailsham**  
**Balbirnie Saml. K. 33 Western rd. Brighton**  
**Bayfield Thos. Chas. North st. Horsham**  
**Bertin Louis, 88 King's road, Brighton**  
**Blagrove Daniel, 73 High street, Lewes**  
**Blomfield John, 44 Robertson st. Hastings**  
**Boning & Small, 10 Verulam pl. St. Lrd's**  
**Boucher Albert, 15 King's rd. Brighton**  
**Branch Wm. Shelley, 48 High st. Lewes**  
**Bucknell Aldred H. North st. Midhurst**  
**Cassinello George, 44 Ship st. Brighton**

**Above - From Kelly's 1878 Post Office Directory of Sussex (Google) W.S.Branch 3<sup>rd</sup> from bottom.**

Phone calls come from everywhere. Some get help like Robyn Sanderson asking about her grand-father William Sanderson (1852-1941). A blacksmith at Gympie. Robyn thought him a strong chess player with a chess friendship to the future Prime Minister Andrew Fisher. That was 2001 and I discovered more on Fisher including his railway chess with the Postmaster General, Josiah Thomas, on the way to and from Parliament in Melbourne. Fisher was also a member of the Gympie Chess Club ca 1895. I had seen the Sanderson name but where?? Robyn liked what had been found but it was small beer as there was no link to Fisher and no chess playing by her gf. Fisher was 10 years younger (1862-1928) and could they really be friends or even acquaintances? In late 2006 doing research for Greg Wilson on Newcastle chess in The Austral, there he was- Sanderson! Not a chess player but a very very strong draughts player. Here is his Austral letter in the 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1928 issue:-

**Austral - 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1928**

**"A WORD TO THE WISE IN CHESS AND DRAUGHTS**

*To the Editor)*

*Sir,*

*I see the proprietors of our bright little 'Austral' are contemplating a change. Well, I don't wonder at it. I have always thought it far too cheap. I would not grudge paying twice as much. The Australian people don't know what they are missing if they let this paper fail.*

*I am an old man now, 75 last 8<sup>th</sup> June, and I have been a student of the Draughts' game for some forty years. It has been, and still is, my principal solace and amusement after a hard day's work. I am a smith, and if I have till the 8<sup>th</sup> of next June I will have been at the anvil 62 years, and am still going strong.*

*I played with the Herd Laddie in Gympie in '93, and the late R.Mar, Champion of Australia was a personal friend. For years we did not miss many nights without having a battle across the dambrod (draughtsboard)*

*I'm not a Scotsman, but very near it. I was born within sight of the bonny hills of Scotland. I left there and came to Queensland in '77. I was then 25, and if I live another three years from today I have been in Australia 50 years; and between you and me, it's the best country in the world.*

*I was home for a trip two years ago and my old friends could not believe it was me. I could walk rings around far younger men. They couldn't understand it. So I told them to drink and gamble less and study Draughts.*

*Kind Regards-*

*Yours Faithfully*

*W.Sanderson."*

A great letter and the end of the story. I wasn't up to speed with draughts history. Robyn's uncles said WS wrote under the pseudonym of 'Saxon' in the Brisbane Courier draughts column. There were some by 'Saxon' in The Austral, No.111 for example (1928) The 'Herd Laddie ' was James

Wyllie the World Champion many times. I recall battles royal between him and Mar. Quite a coup for Sanderson to play one of the strongest players in the world and no shame to lose (See next page)

Maitland Weekly Mercury (NSW : 1894 - 1931), Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1897, page 6

#### THE AGE OF DRAUGHTS.

Mr. Addams-Williams traces the history of draughts back to the days—1,600 B.C.—of Queen Hatshep or Hat-Shepsu, daughter of Thothmes I., and herself ruler of Egypt for a long time. Some of her draughtsmen and part of her draughts-board were discovered about nine years ago, and were described in *This Times*. From Egypt the game was taken to Asia Minor, and from thence to Greece eventually reaching Italy, where, as in Egypt, it was probably played on a board of 144 squares. Mr. Addams-Williams speaks of chess as having been

introduced into Europe in the 8th century; and he surmises that the game of draughts was subsequently played on a chess-board with a smaller number of squares and of men. He gives 1647 as the date of the earliest-known work on modern draughts, and names Spain as the country in which it was published. The earliest French work is assigned to 1668; and the coming into vogue of the Polish game to 1727—some 60 years later. Mr. Addams-Williams also mentions that it was not till 1820 that games began to have names—adding that the use of these names appears to have been chiefly confined to Scotland and the North of England. He also gives the list of the principal treatises on draughts that have been published in Great Britain since 1756—the date of Payne's first edition; and he thus brings to a conclusion a brief historical sketch the compilation and arrangement of which must have occupied a good deal of time and involved a considerable amount of labour.

#### GAME.

##### "THE DOCTOR REVERSED."

Black, Mr. R. Mar; White, Mr. W. Sanderson.

10—14	9—14	12—19	13—17
22...18	29...25	32...27	24...19
12—16	5—9	11—18	1—6
24...20	31...26	22...15	20...16
16—19	6—10	7—11	2—7
23...16	19...15	27...24	16...12
14—23a	10—10	11—18	7—11
26...19	27...24	24...15	
8—12	4—8	9—13	
25...22	24...15	28...24	

And Mr. Mar won.

NOTE.—(a) The name "The Doctor Reversed" is better both than the "White Doctor," given to the opening by some players, and the "Black Doctor," by which it is known to others.

The part of Hat-Shepsut's draughts board was fairly minor, and Falkener (p.30) wrote on that in his book.



Now we have to find articles by Mr. Addams-Williams. The game by Robert Mar and William Sanderson is a find, as some years ago I did some research for a descendant of William Sanderson who wrote a letter to 'The Austral'. (See prior page) I think the game was played in Brisbane or Gympie as Sanderson was a Queenslander.



**Weekly Times 13<sup>th</sup> May, 1953**

Here is a list of the champions of yesteryear. Even to a draughts history tyro like myself the name Hugh Egan stands out. And then amazingly there is the 1952 winner Lloyd Fell whom I saw many times in the chess scene. He became a champion in that field too. One has regrets and I really should have talked with him about early chess and draughts. He is gone now. Hugh Egan has a great Australian draughts history. And his advice to Beginners is below and came from the Melbourne Weekly Times. It is interesting to read of the "restricted" opening play. Not so in chess.

**The Argus 26<sup>th</sup> April, 1922**

**Mr Egan's – Draught's Champion**

*"Sydney – Tuesday – The first prize and championship of Australia has been won for the third time by Hugh T. Egan of Melbourne. Ernest D. Smith, Sydney won the second prize of £10, and N. Rickard (Sydney) third prize of £5. In the loser's, final round Smith defeated Rickard by two wins and 4 drawn games. This entitles Smith to play Egan in the final round. In the first series of 4 games, Smith scored with the white side of a 9 – 13, 23-12 opening. The other three games being drawn put each player on an equality. In the second series two draws resulted from a 12-16, 22-18 opening, but with the white side of a 10-14, 22-18 opening Egan won somewhat easily, and the 4<sup>th</sup> game being drawn he was declared the winner of the first prize of £20 and Championship of Australia. Mr McLachlan M. Shaw, (President of the Australian Draughts Association) presented the prizes."*

**Warrnambool Standard – 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 1917**

**"A DRAUGHTS CHAMPION**

*Mr Hugh Egan, who has held the position of draughts champion of Australasia and Victoria, intended visiting Warrnambool next Saturday, to play a simultaneous draughts match against all the district players, but owing to the death of his mother on Tuesday last, he has had to postpone his visit until Saturday week, 1<sup>st</sup> December."*

**"ADVICE FOR BEGINNERS BY HUGH EGAN**

*(In Melbourne Weekly Times)*

*"At the beginning of a game, it is better to play your pieces towards the centre of the board in the form of a pyramid, than to play into the side square, because a piece at the side can move only in one direction, and consequently loses half its power. This seems logical, and the "pyramid idea" is regarded as gospel by the compilers of some handbooks on indoor games in which draughts receives somewhat indifferent-in fact, harmful treatment. Architecture in draughts, however, fails to stimulate the practical player's imagination. Certainly he finds some strength and beauty in exposed rows, and more particularly in diagonal lines, but he has no taste for "pyramid building". When confronted with play of this kind, he at once sets to work to lay his hidden "mine" in an effort to shatter the structure to his own advantage. It is with the "pyramid builder" that the expert player has vast opportunities for those "pyrotechnical displays," those shots and strokes, which so astonish the newcomer. "Don't play to the side" has no force with the expert exponent of the game. The power of the point that "A piece at the side can move only in one direction," is not felt by him simply because he is unable to ignore that other more vital fact, that the piece at the side is not exposed, and consequently loses all danger of capture whilst "marking time" as a side issue.*

*No, present-day experts (nor past never had for that matter) have no faith in this ancient axiom. They play what they think is the best move under the circumstances, whether it be to the side, to*

*the middle, or even the sacrifice of a piece or two – at which the latter phase of the game they are, of course, quite adept – and the newcomer would do well to follow their example. The novice should, however, examine each position carefully, and move always with an object in view, even if it is only an immediate threat, of giving “1 for 2,” or “2 for 3”. 11--15, regarded by players as the best starting point of a game, received the most attention from 19<sup>th</sup> century authors. Many players developed into “two game” players, playing 11-15 with Black, and always adhering to one particular opening with White – such as the “Single Corner” 22-18 in reply to 11-15, or “Ayrshire Lassie,” 24-20 in reply to 11-15. This naturally led to some method for broadening the scope of play, and the “two-move restriction” was brought into force in 1901. “Broadenedby restriction” is not a contradiction, as each player is forced to choose a starting move by ballot. There are seven first moves for the Black pieces, with seven replies for White – making 49 openings in all with the opening moves decided by the two-move ballot. Actually, 43 openings, were used, however, because 9-14, 21-17 and 10-14, 21-17 were rejected entirely, while 9-14, 23-18 and 10-14, 23-18 became known as “barred” openings, and were not in general use. This made the two-move restriction as used for 35 years in British and American tournaments. The two-move restriction is likely to be supplanted for modern play by the United States three-move restriction, which makes 137 openings, bringing 9-14, 23-18, and 10-14, 23-18, again into active use.”*

## A HISTORY OF DRAUGHTS

**Checkers** or **draughts** is the name of several different board games. All of these games are similar. In every kind of checkers, the other player's pieces can be taken by being "jumped" over. "**Checkers**" is the American name. In British English, and in various other English-speaking nations, these games are called "**Draughts**".

Though most people do not know it, the game we know today as Draughts has a long and storied history. From ancient Egypt to your own living room, Draughts has remained a popular pastime for most of recorded history.

Draughts, as we know it, probably began as a game called Alquerque, or Quirkat. Alquerque boards and pieces have been found in archeological digs dating as far back as 600 BCE, and images of Alquerque have been found carved into temple walls dating as far back as 1400 BCE. It was played throughout the Middle East and the Mediterranean basin. It was enjoyed by the Ancient Egyptians, mentioned by both Plato and Homer, and even made its way into India.

While we do not know exactly how the ancients played Alquerque, what we do know about the game strongly resembles modern Draughts. Like Draughts, Alquerque features round, flat pieces divided into light and dark colors, the capture of opponent pieces, and a grid-based board. Unlike Draughts, an Alquerque board is only a 5x5 grid and sports intersecting diagonal lines; and in Alquerque, there are only 10 pieces per side, moving along the intersections of lines instead of within squares.

### **Social decline: late 19th c.**

Civilisations rise, shine and sink away. In ancient Greece poets dedicated lines to draughts, in ancient Rome it was played by one of the most reputable citizens, only two centuries ago it was a gentlemen's pastime. About 1900 chess outstripped draughts, so much so that draughts socially slid down. In Germany and Belgium draughts lost its status of gentlemen's game and was grouped as a children's amusement; in Spain and England it almost vanished. In France and the Netherlands it lost ground but survived, though it is now considered as rather simple, a game college people should better not play; chess, a game of unfathomable depth, is more appropriate for them.

The books tell us that draughts is a young game, owes its promotion to chess and was always played in the shadow of chess. Contemporary inquiries lead to an entirely other view. In the social climate of today, however, it is psychologically difficult, if not impossible, to accept this as historical truth.

Not sure who this is written by. Did draughts really slide down socially post 1900?

**Cairns Post (Qld. : 1909 - 1954), Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 1934, page 5**

## ***"The Literature of Draughts.***

*When Mr. A. E. Sargison, of Hobart, a leading player in Tasmania, a few weeks ago purchased the draughts' library of more than 300 books of the late W. M. Mills (Dulwich Hill, New South Wales), few people realised that there were so many books published about the game, writes "F" in "The Age." Even fewer know that the draughts has a literature dating back to the 16th century. The first books on draughts were published in 1547, 1590, 1591, 1597 and 1610. The first outstanding work was published by Canalejas in 1650, and was followed by Pierre Mallet (France) in 1668, Garces (Madrid) 1684, Carina Rica 1700-59-98 and 1819, with Reverá 1819. The earliest work "still in existence, however, is Montero's "Libro dei Juego de. Las Damas."*

*Although adaptable, these are real anterior foreign, examples; but closely conform to the English game; while the old French game (the ancient game), represented by -Mallet and Quercetano, is; true draughts. .In London, 1694Dr: Thomas Hyde, Professor of Arabic in the Oxford University, published a draughts' treatise in Latin, which was translated by Dr. T. J. Brown in the "English Draught Player" in the eighties. The literature of English draughts, however, actually begins with Payne, 1756, the dedication notice and preface to which were written by Dr. Samuel Johnson, the lexicographer. Payne, who was a teacher of mathematics, had several reprints, and his little work supplied all needs until the famous Sturges Guides. 1800,1808. "Payne," said Call, "laid the foundation on which Sturges built so admirable a structure, that Sturges has. been called the father of English draughts."*

*Sturges was standard for more than 30 years, giving place to "the Scottish school from 1832, and then Walker's Sturges was published in 1835: There is one copy of Walker's Sturges in Melbourne, and in 1930 a copy of the original Sturges was sold at Chris-ties, in London, for £6. "They are pocket size, and were first published at 4/6."*

*From Sinclair (1832), Drummond and Hay (1838) and Anderson (1852) until the present day, the publication of draughts books has continued with unfailing regularity-text books, individual match and tournament games books, magazines, periodicals, and works on ' problems,. etc.*

*Although Pearce (1815) had published "an improved system for playing the polite and scientific game of draughts or checkers," the Americans entered the field in 1863 with the A.D.P., by Spayth, of Buffalo; and in 1881 Henry D. Lyman, former second assistant Postmaster-General of the United States,' and later president of» the American Surety Co., Broad-way, published his wonderful problem book, "Lyman's Problems" is a massive work\ with 1022 problems in 420 pages, 'and measures 10 inches by 8 inches. . There is one copy in Melbourne,, and perhaps four copies in Australia.- It is- now valued at £4/10/-; but-it was: exceeded. in length by Stearns's Draughts Marvel, Manchester,; U.SA- 1909, and Horsfalls Problems, 'England; 1909. Mr. Lyman died on. February 27, 192???*

*So numerous are the published works on the game of draughts that it would be very difficult to estimate anything like the exact number. William Timothy Call (New York) attempted it in his "Literature of Checkers," 1908: but that was 25 years ago. When Call quoted 250 authors, and there has been a host of works published since then, with many reprints and later editions. Lees Guide London, 1892, has, for instance, had 16 editions. This little "evergreen" is to-day. A standard text book "for beginners, Rear's "Encyclopaedia," in seven volumes, three editions and two supplements, and Tescheleit's "Master Play, of the Draught Board," six volumes*

*(incomplete), are the leading British works to-day. Outstanding in a wealth of modern literature are the various American tournament books, handsome volumes-published at from 15/- to 12/6 each.?? Also the American editions of all the games played in the two Great Britainv. American team matches-Boston, 1905, and New York, 1927.*

*There is no perfect library of books on the game. The Sargison library, of 380 volumes, from an original Sturges (1800) to the present day, is now the finest in Australia, with a number of other good collections in other States. The Mills library originally contained more than 300 books. Probably, prior to sale, the largest in Australia, but small in comparison to the famous collections, to mention only one-of the late Henry Hutzler, Ohio, U.S.A., and still retained by his son, Julius E. Hutzler. A Tasmanian paper last year stated that 440 volumes are in the Hutzler permanent collection. If that is correct then it has been greatly reduced, because in the "Draughts World" for July, 1904, the late Mr. Hutzler stated he then had 750 volumes in his collection, in nine languages, including a collection of all the rare Spanish works; while Call states that, minus only one book (Pearce), the Hutzler library contained a copy of every book published on the game. The Hutzler collection was the result of the search and sifting of a genuine bibliophile for nearly 40 years. It was the finest collection in the world. Many draughts books were published after Mr. Hutzler's article appeared, and he collected until he died a few years ago. The library is still retained by his family, quite distinct from the stock in the Hutzler bookselling business. .*

*Draughts as a feature has also had an extensive press, beginning with the Liverpool "Kaleidoscope," 1821, and New York "Clipper," 1855; but prior to the advent of any literature on the game, draughts was mentioned by a Moorish writer (1200), a French poet (1240) and Chaucer in 1369."*

*(The above great article appeared in The Age Melbourne and is the "corrected text" on the LHS of the Trove paper Cairns Times 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 1934. Many further corrections have been made and the following is helpful. Thank you Anthony.)*



**Our response to your Question [RT55397](#) is:**

Dear Bob,

Thank you for your enquiry.

Unfortunately we no longer hold this collection.

I have done some extensive searching of Trove, and I believe that the majority of it now seems to be held at the State Library of Victoria.

To see what they hold, go to the [State Library of Victoria here](#). Next type *Sargison Draughts Collection* in the search box at the top of the page.

As to any background on AE Sargison that is not as easy to find. His full name was Albert Edward Sargison, and it is likely that this is his birth registration:

<https://stors.tas.gov.au/NI/987810>

It is impossible to confirm this absolutely without other corroborating evidence, but it is the only Albert Edward Sargison that I have found in this time period. Similarly I have found a death notice in the Tasmanian Mercury on March 16th 1970 which matches up with the date of birth above. I had hoped for an obituary or similar that mentions draughts, but unfortunately this was not the case. The article reads:

**Sargison, Albert Edward.** - *On March 14, 1970. beloved husband of the late Jean Kiritea Sargison loved father of Garth and Ross, loved brother of Harold, and loving grandfather of all his grandchildren, aged 77 years. Funeral private. No condolences please.*

According to the Millington's Cemetery Record Search [here](#) he was cremated at New Town on the 17th of March 1970.

For more background I would search for information on the [Newspapers section of Trove here](#). The search terms that I found gave good overall results were:

Sargison draughts

and if you want it specifically about the book collection just add the word library.

I wish you success with your ebook,

Kind regards

**Anthony Black | Librarian**

State Library and Archive Service | Libraries Tasmania

91 Murray Street, Hobart, Tasmania |

(03) 6165 5538 | [www.libraries.tas.gov.au](http://www.libraries.tas.gov.au)

The following article is from **Wikipedia**

*“Robert Martins (from Wikipedia the free encyclopedia*

*Robert Martins (born in Penryn, Cornwall on 26 February, 1822, died 1904, was a British draughts player who was World Checkers Champion from 1859 to 1864. Although of English Cornish origin he spent much of his later life in Scotland. He was a noted rival of James Wyllie. “Chamber’s Journal” physically described him as tall, pale-faced and long beard. While in personality they considered him courteous and cautious in expressing opinions on points of the game.”*



### **Draughts Championship.**

**Week (Brisbane, Qld. - 1876 - 1934), Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1897, page 18**

*“After one of the stiffest contests known in the history of the game, Mr. Richard Jordan, of Edinburgh, this week (says the Glasgow Weekly Herald of October 23) vindicated his claim to the title of the draughts champion of the world by defeating his challenger, Mr. Robert Stewart, of Blairadam. Both are brilliant exponents of checkers, the only difference between them being that Jordan is the stronger player of the two. Conditions better adapted to test the contestants' knowledge of draughts could hardly have been devised. Much of the play was now and of an intricate character. No doubt when critics get the complete games in their possession they will be able to show draws on the won games. It is one thing to analyse a game in the comfort and privacy of one's home—it is an entirely different matter to play a hard game across the board with scores of eyes watching every move intently. All draughts players make mistakes; the best player is he who perpetrates the fewest blunders. Jordan has undoubtedly a perfect genius for the game. He has played a good many set matches, and he has not yet suffered a reverse. In defeating Wyllie, Ferrie, Stewart (twice), and J. O. Brown, he has established a record which will not easily be eclipsed. It is understood that the champion contemplates a tour in Australia. Where there are so many Scots, he may be sure of getting an enthusiastic welcome.*

*This led to finding the Wyllie Checkers fantastic historical website featuring all the great players back to the first champion Anderson. It sometimes doesn't come up and the word 'insecure' comes up. These biographies are not able to be copied and I rather liked Stewart's so hand wrote it out and then typed it into these file. It could be said that this affection for the long dead checkers/draughts players is on a par with the deceased chess players who usually end up with a book or two as well."*

Edward Winter of "Chess Notes" fame has a fine article on his website "Are Chess & Checkers Sister Games? This started with Irving Chernev in Chess Review April, 1937 p.89. And he features the World Chess Champion Emanuel Lasker playing Alfred Jordan, a mighty draughts player who won the game. Frank Marshall was also a very good checkers/draughts player and he was a Chess Grandmaster. Harry Pillsbury the great chess master was a master at checkers/draughts also. There is a well known photo of him and in 1905 he had a "Chess & Checkers" newspaper column. That reminded me of the many editioned book by Albert Belasco "Chess and Draughts" of which I have a few editions.

Following is a wonderful article by "N.F.S." from the Age a Melbourne paper –

***The Age (Melbourne) Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 1930 - p.8***

***"THE GAME OF DRAUGHTS BY N.F.S.***

*I heard a cynical chess player: say, "The main difference between, chess and draughts is this. For draughts - you require a board and men. For chess you need brains." His definition is erroneous. In the simplicity of draughts lies its difficulty.*

*A zed class chess player sometimes flukes a checkmate from a champion, but the odds against a weak player winning a game from a draughts expert is about a million to a brick. Chess is an aristocratic game. The pieces begin life born in the purple— kings, queens, knights, bishops and rooks (another name for financiers), and each one has his body servant to attend on him.*

*Draughtsmen are all born equal, and every man has a king's crown in his knapsack. He may fall in the struggle, he may be jammed in a corner, he may be sacrificed as a bait to trap the foe. But he may escape all perils and reach the back row, to sally forth, crown on head in pursuit of the fleeing foe. Chess is a game of poesy, romance and delicate nuances. Draughts is a grim battle, calling forth all ones faculties of patience, wariness and concentration.*

*When I finish a serious game of chess my brains are all tingling with excitement, but after a solid bout at draughts my brain is fagged and weary. All the time I have had to concentrate and watch for murderous long shots and sneaking traps, besides trying my hardest to inveigle my foe to walk into my little parlor .I assure you there's a lot of dirty work done in a good game of draughts. And when upon my couch I lie, sleep is banished by my brooding over why I did not play 17-22 instead of 17—21.*

*A few words about the game, it is as old as who knows? Draught boards and men, have been found in Egyptian sarcophagi of a period 1800 B.C. Plato mentions the game. The ancient Greeks played with a 25square board and five men apiece. The Romans gambled a lot at*

*Latrunculi* a game very similar to the Greek style. Draughts was brought to England in the eleventh century, probably by William the Conqueror.

The oldest existing book on the game was printed in Valencia, Spain, in 1547. Chess is the same game all over the world, but each nation has its own variety of draughts. In Polish draughts the board has 100 squares, and the men can take backwards as well as forward. In the German game a King moves like a chess bishop, and can capture a man anywhere on the diagonal. In the Italian game a man cannot capture a king. The Turks play on a 64 square board, but the men make some wonderful hops. There are also the Spanish and French games, each with its own funny little ways.

The English game known as checkers in the U.S.A. should really be called the Scotch game, for in that country the game first became scientific. Drummond and Wyllie, the famous Herd Laddie are famous names in draughts history. The names of the openings Glasgow, Dundee, Edinburgh, Ayrshire, Lassie, Kelso, Souter, Laird and Lady, Dyke, Denny, all show the influence that Scotland had on the game, and even to-day, when you meet, a Mac you usually meet a good draughts player.

The Implements are a 64 square board and 32 men. 16 whites, 16 black. It is possible to do without these. Some years ago I took my fishing kit and went off on a long lonely tramp. Hardly had I made my camp near a trout stream when I was joined by a swagman. I could have put up with his garrulity, his naughty language and his unclean habits, but his braggadocio was too much for me. He had been the champion draughts player of Tallidoo. I marked out a draughts board on the ground, collected some white flat stones and cut of unessential buttons on my clothes. After I had won about 200 games, he folded up his tent like the Arab and silently stole away. He also stole my only spare pair of boots.

That reminds me of one of our club members. As he ponders over his move he keeps up a nerve-racking tap, tap, tap on the table with one of the captured men. This goes on till his infuriated foe roars stop that row. The tapping ceases—till the next game. Another member hums scraps of tunes as he thinks. It would be bad enough if he kept in tune but he manages to get three false notes out of each four. Some day I'll jab one of my men into his mouth, and the coroners verdict will be "Death caused by a severe draught."

Some years ago we had a tiny, blue-eyed old gentleman, a childless widower, who believed he was a draughts champion. He was such a dear that everybody let him win. This perked him up so that he gradually reduced the number of his men to at least three men against twelve. It required some skill to let him win. The easiest method was to engineer the men until a way was made for the crown head for his three men. When four men were crowned, and the eight others banked up behind them "You can't move," squeaked the old gentleman. "My game! My game!" It may have been a wicked deception to fool the old chap, but for years it sent him home to his lonely, bed a very happy man. I went to see him when he was dying. His tiny body hardly raised his bed clothes. His eyes were closed, and he lay very still. But now and then he murmured a few words. "Your move, got you—got you—take that man—my game. And he died babbling draughts."

I like this article because N.F.S. doesn't worry about the niceties of draughts not having the modern style when he writes about Queen Hatsupshet in Egypt. Don't quite get the 16 men as all the sets my son has bought are 12 men. Perhaps 4 men are used for Kings?



## 7. DRAUGHTS IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

The game is alive and well all over the world. The Internet has taken draughts as one of its own:-

1. lidraughts.org. Free Online Draughts-anyone can play.
2. 247 Draughts USA version anyone can play the computer.
3. FMJD Tourney-World Draughts Federation-Astonishing to see all the tourneys-16 in July 2012. In June such events were 38<sup>th</sup> Polish Youth Ch'ship; Lithuanian Youth Ch'ship Israel Ch'ship just a few of the 30.
4. The Canadian Computer Scientists led by Jonathon Schaefer proved draughts was a draw if the best moves were played.
5. Wikipedia-A wonderful website dealing with rules, naming, history, variants, computer draughts, Championships, Federations:- Worlds Draughts Federation (FJJD) founded in 1947 by France, Holland, Belgium and Switzerland and the International Draughts Federation (IDF) established in 2012 in Bulgaria. The FMJD & the IDF seem to be at loggerheads. Two games 10x10 & 8x8
8. There are 10 more Google pages on 'modern draughts'
9. Current World IDF Champions:-Men Alexander Schwartzman; Women Matrena Nogovitsyna Russia The prize was 20,000 Euros. AS won the title in June/July 2021 at Tallinn Estonia. Score +3=8-0

Alexander  
Schwarzman  
Draughts player



Alexander Mikhailovich Schwarzman is an international grandmaster in international draughts, Russian draughts and Brazilian draughts from Russia. He is known for his creative playing style, especially his positional sacrifices and his high number of elegant games involving encirclements. [Wikipedia](#)

**Born:** 18 September 1967 (age 53 years), [Moscow](#), [Russia](#)

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## Matrena Nogovitsyna

Russian player



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Matrena Stepanovna Nogovitsyna is a Russian player in the International draughts. She has been a champion player of Russia since 2004. Matrena Nogovitsyna is an Women's International grandmaster. She is trained by Alexander Georgiev. Matrena Nogovitsyna started to play draughts from eight years old. [Wikipedia](#)

**Born:** 6 November 1991 (age 29 years), [Maralayy, Russia](#)

**Both articles from the IDF website.**

## 8. FAMOUS GAMES & PROBLEMS

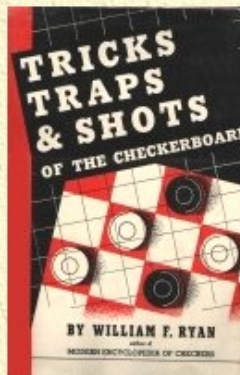
The following article above from Bob Newell's website

### The Checker Maven

#### Wyllie's Switcher Swindle



Once again it's time for an installment from one of the greatest checker books of all time, Willie Ryan's *Tricks Traps & Shots of the Checkerboard*. This month Willie takes us back in checker history, to a stratagem employed by Scotland's legendary James Wyllie. Willie tells us all about it in his own well-chosen words.

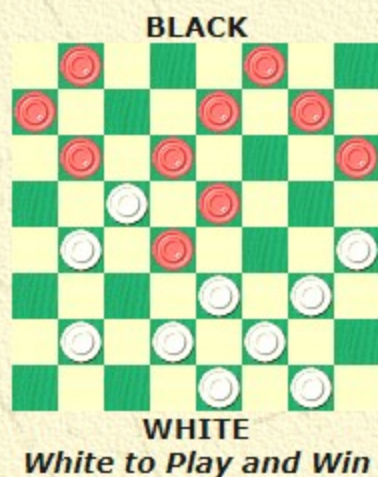


"It is impossible to record the historic stratagems of the world's great draughts players without including the hallowed name of James Wyllie of Scotland, father of modern checkers and the game's first full-time professional. Here we review one of the wily Scot's best-known thunderbolts:



11-15	6-10	4-8
21-17--- <b>A</b>	22-17	29-25
9-13	13-22	11-15
25-21	26-17	30-26
8-11	15-18	6-9--- <b>B</b>
17-14	24-20	
10-17	2-6	
21-14	28-24	

forming the diagram.



**A**---The Switcher opening; weak for white. Champion Wyllie was first to use and develop the gambit, and despite its inherent weakness, he doomed many a master with the white pieces.

**B**---Caught! White now ends all organized resistance with a neat double-action bust-up. The correct play at **B** is: 15-19, 24-15, 10-19, 23-16, 12-19, 27-23, 18-27, 32-16, 6-9, 26-22, 9-18, 22-15, 8-12, 16-11, 7-16, 20-11, 3-7, 11-2, 1-6, 2-9, 5-30, ending in a draw."

Will you too be swindled, or can you find your way to the solution? Try it out, but be sure to count your change before clicking on *Read More* to see how it's done. ●●

### Solution

*Continue:* 24-19, 15-24, 20-16, 12-19, 27-20, 18-27, 31-6, 1-10, 26-22, 9-18, 22-6, and white wins.

The three following games are typical examples of the play arising from three of the most frequently played openings:—

Game No. 1.—"Ayrshire Lassie" Opening.

a 11-15	25-18	10-15	22-17	b 15-18	24-6
a 24-20	3-8	23-19	13-22	24-20	2-9
8-11	26-22	6-10	26-17	18-27	17-10
28-24	5-9	{c & d} 27-23	11-16	31-24	8-11
9-13	30-26	9-14	20-11	16-23	Drawn.
22-18	1-5	18-9	7-16	20-16	R. Jordan.
15-22	32-28	5-14	29-25	12-19	

a. 11-15, 24-20 forms the "Ayrshire Lassie" opening, so named by Wyllie. It is generally held to admit of unusual scope for the display of critical and brilliant combinations.

b. 16-20, 25-22, 20-27, 31-24, 8-11, 17-13, 2-6, 21-17, 14-21, 22-17, 21-25, 17-14, 10-17, 19-1. Drawn. R. Jordan.

### Interesting Games

The following game was played in England some years ago.

Opening, "Bristol Cross"

11—16	9—13	9—14	23—30
23—18	26—22	24—20	27—23
10—14	19—23	2—6 (c)	18—27
18—15 (a)	24—19	10—7	25—2
14—18	7—11 (b)	3—10	11—18
22—17	28—24	22—17	32—7
16—19	6—9	13—22	White
17—14	14—10	30—26	wins.

(a) 26—23 is quite safe. (b) 6—10 seems to draw. (c) Into the trap. A very nice stroke.

Here is a game played in an American club.

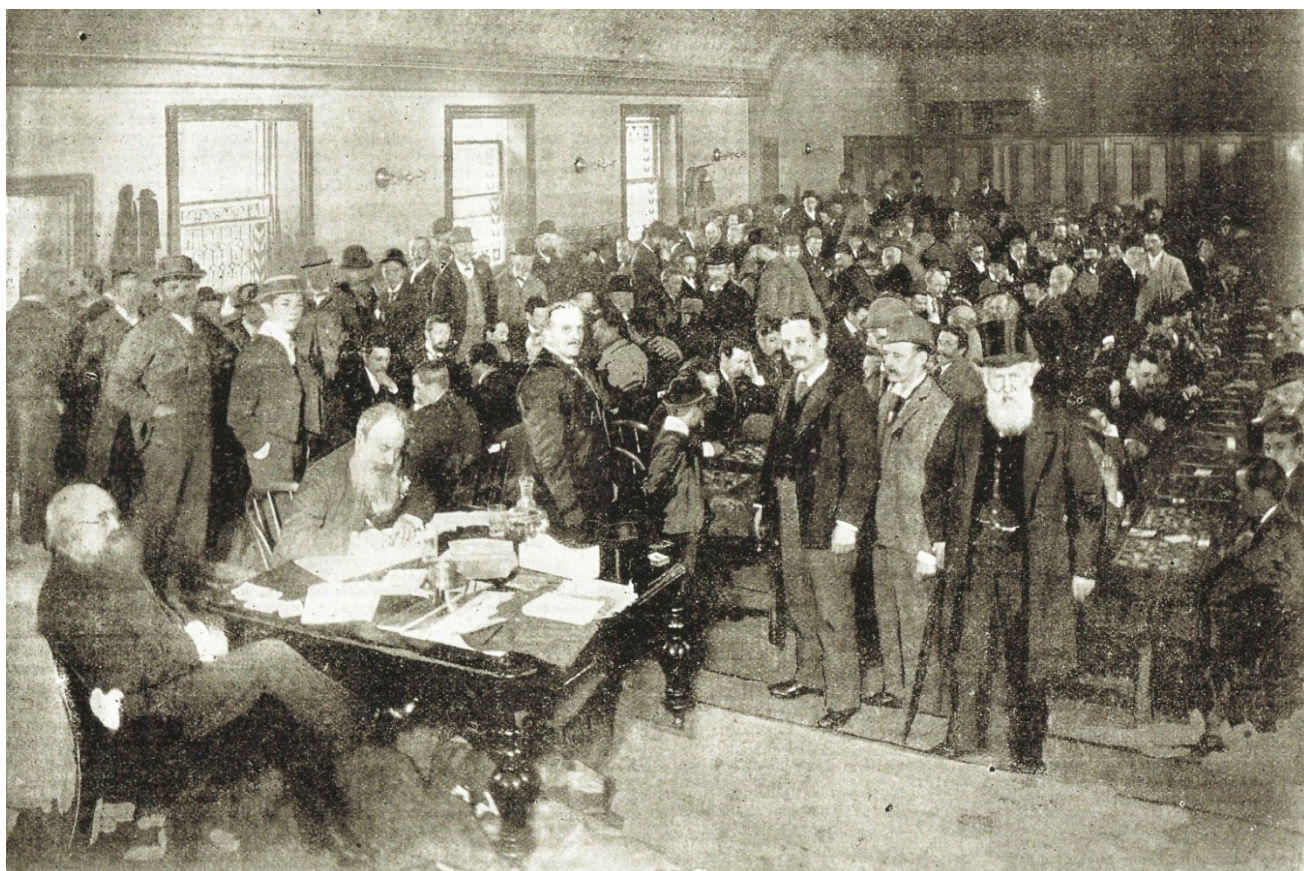
Opening, "Double Corner"

9—14	12—19 (a)	7—10	6—15
22—18	22—18	32—27 (b)	31—26
11—16	8—12	10—15 (c)	27—31
18—9	27—24	17—10	30—25
5—14	4—8	19—24	31—22
24—20	24—15	28—19	25—4
16—19	10—19	15—24	White
23—16	22—17	26—23	wins.

(a) Into the "Bristol." (b) Setting a trap. (c) Caught napping.

Hobart Mercury page 6 – 12<sup>th</sup> February, 1938





### **October 1<sup>st</sup> , 1895 Illustrated Australian News Melbourne City vs Country**

This was held in the Upper Room of the Melbourne Town Hall. Photo from the State Library of Victoria Pictures File. Thank you slv. It was called "A notable draughts tournament." Would that we could name a few of those faces. The Illustrated Australian News Melbourne existed from 1867-1875 so the 1895 date could be a typo. A marvellous photo but the date needs sorting. I found in The Sportsman 15<sup>th</sup> September, 1896 p.4 a description of the Fifth City v Country Tournament won by City 233/168 and that there was a match in 1895. City had won all 5 annual matches. The 1895 match was played 31/8/1895 and City won 239/168. It was played in the Town Hall so this looks like the link with the photo. 1895 not 1875. I have now found the 1905 Match write up in The Weekly Times 16<sup>th</sup> September, 1905 and it is such a good one that I have scanned it as it gives a massive number of names and probably includes most of the draughts players in Victoria. It also gives the results going back to 1894. But based on the above the first match was held in 1891 but may not have been reported well enough. It seems many players backed up year after year so their names are included in the 1905 match and some clearly played in 1895! As for the 1905 match referee Thomas Harlin, he was a very prominent chess and draughts official in Melbourne. I enclose an article with a letter by him critical of his fellow immigrants. He is only 34 in the photo (born 1832) so would be 63 in 1895 if there and 73 in 1905. Is he in the above photo? It looks like that is him sitting, legs crossed facing the players on the LHS.



## VICTORIAN DRAUGHTS ASSOCIATION.

### TOWN AND COUNTRY MATCH.

#### WIN FOR TOWN PLAYERS.

The twelfth annual contest between the town and country draughts players of Victoria was held in the Lecture Hall of the Baptist Church, Collins street, on the 8th inst. Players met in the hall about 7 p.m., and were all shown to their respective seats by the stewards by 7.30 p.m. About 130 players engaged in the contest. There would have been a far greater number of competitors had not the weather been so exceptionally cold and wet during the week, which prevented a good many of the usual contestants coming to town for the Agricultural Show. Although the number of players was hardly so many as last year, the enthusiasm was as keen as ever. There are quite a number of hardy old veterans from all corners of the State, who have never missed a match, and who seem to thoroughly enjoy themselves at the opportunity of meeting old friends and relating incidents in connection with the grand old game. Hitherto, the town players were drawn from a radius within five miles of the General Post Office, but this year the radius was reduced to four miles by the Victorian Draughts Association, in order to give the country team more scope to draw from. Practically, the benefit was not so much as was anticipated, but it may bring forth better fruit next year. Bendigo and Ballarat were not strongly represented, but the South-Western, Geelong, and Leongatha districts were well represented, although it is impossible for a good many of the strongest players to get away from business to undertake such a long journey. This is always against a visiting team, so the country players deserve the highest praise for their plucky efforts to secure a victory.

#### THE OPENING CEREMONY.

Sir Samuel Gillott, M.L.A. (President of the Victorian Draughts Association), who was greeted with great cheering, said that he was very pleased to welcome the country players to town, and hoped they would have a very pleasant time. (Cheers.) He was pleased to learn from the secretary that several new draughts clubs had been formed throughout the State, and also the Geelong District Draughts Association, which had been the means of producing some keen competitions during the past year. (Cheers.) The players in the south-western district had also had keen competition as members of the various clubs. So he hoped they would all be in good form for the contest which was about to commence. The game was of an ennobling character, and well calculated to train the intellect, and he was pleased to

to train the intellect, and he was pleased to know that it was becoming so popular throughout the State. (Cheers.) He wished them a very pleasant contest, and hoped they would all thoroughly enjoy themselves. (Cheers.)

Mr Donald Mackinnon, M.L.A. (hon. vice-president of the association), then rose amidst great cheering, and said he was pleased to welcome the country players to town, as he was born in the Western District. He had just been speaking to an old school-fellow, Mr J. B. Smith, of Noorat, who was to play at the top board, and he could assure them that if he was as good a draughts player as he was a cricketer, he would be a hard nut to crack, for he could remember when he was a youngster he could always take any number of hard knocks, and come up smiling. (Cheers.) He was glad to learn that the game was now so popular, for it was a fine pastime for the country settlers, who could while away the winter evenings in pleasant fashion at their own fireside. It was also free from the baneful influence of gambling, which was so much associated with the racecourse. He hoped his friend, Sir Samuel Gillott, in his capacity of Chief Secretary, would be successful in his present efforts to reduce the vice of gambling within proper limits. (Cheers.) As he knew they were all anxious to begin to play he would not detain them any longer, except to express the hope that they would all have a pleasant game and a jolly good time. (Cheers.) On the motion of Mr J. C. Carter, Mr F. Salmon, draughts champion of Victoria, was elected captain of the town team, and Mr Thomas Harlin was elected director of play, on the motion of Mr Robert Davis, vice-president of the association.

Mr Joseph Irvine, of Drysdale, the venerable ex-captain of the country team, was appointed referee amidst tumultuous cheering.

#### THE PLAY AND PLAYERS.

Play was commenced at 8 o'clock, and Mr Harlin announced that no fresh game was to be started after 10.15 p.m. Each pair was to play six games, as far as practicable.

The following are the scores:—

TOWN.		COUNTRY.	
Wins.	Draws.	Wins.	Draws.
2 F. Salmon	1 J. B. Smith	1	
1 G. Richards	4 W. Houston	1	
2 E. H. Clark	3 S. Vaughan	0	
0 J. C. Carter	1 S. J. Black	3	
0 W. Acott	3 H. M'Lennan	1	
5 J. Hilliard	0 J. O'Bryan	1	
2 H. J. Richardson	2 W. J. Pyle	2	
1 M. O'Loughlin	3 R. E. M'Indoe	2	
0 D. Ross	6 C. B. Hamann	0	
1 R. Jones	2 J. Sexton	2	
3 F. W. Biggs	2 J. Fisher	1	
3 W. Evans	2 E. H. Kershaw	1	

Weekly Times – 16<sup>th</sup> September, 1905 and continued following on.

3	W. Evans	2	E. H. Kershaw	1
1	John Best	4	R. L. Clements	1
5	W. C. Acott	1	A. Macafee	0
3	N. Sluys	1	H. W. Chaffell	0
1	J. Farrell	1	G. Dunse	0
5	L. Rees	1	T. E. Peart	0
5	E. Walsh	0	J. Aikman	1
5	A. W. Bargery	1	G. Tudball	0
4	D. W. Cummings	1	T. Henderson	1
4	F. M'Liney	1	G. P. Kelly	1
2	R. M'Nair	2	R. de Beauregard	2
4	F. G. Rose	1	B. Millgate	0
2	W. Stewart	0	C. E. Mannel	3
4	M. Benjamin	2	C. Procter	0
2	G. H. Clark	1	R. Clements	3
2	G. D. Smith	1	R. F. O'Neill	3
3	J. M'Innes	2	A. Ferguson	1
4	A. E. Ward	1	J. Stevens	1
1	A. Morrison	3	W. H. Tew	2
3	G. W. Trevaskis	2	F. Blyth	1
5	F. O. Neal	1	J. M'Cann	0
6	D. M'Kindlay	0	D. Morris	0
2	E. A. Webb	1	M. J. O'Loughlin	0
3	J. B. Chalmers	0	Charles Steele	1
2	T. Train	1	W. J. Cross	3
5	R. Martin	0	J. M'Kim	1
6	W. Whitfield	0	R. H. Holland	0
5	F. Tudball	1	C. Clay	0
5	L. H. Wells	0	J. Clements	1
4	F. L. Holland	2	R. Chisholm	0
2	R. Crosling	1	J. J. Smith	2
4	F. Thomas	1	J. C. Curnow	1
5	J. M'Swiney	1	D. Midgley	0
3	L. Ross	2	F. Maggs	1
2	T. O'Loughlin	0	W. M'Gregor	4
4	E. F. Sowdon	0	J. Patchett	2
4	C. Junner	1	W. Nool	1
5	E. Garside	0	W. Filmer	1
3	J. Green	0	A. B. Mason	2
1	W. I. Stephens	1	W. Ferguson	4
2	D. Desmond	0	W. H. Grey	4
1	H. Sluys	1	G. Burt	4
1	H. Drew	1	W. L. Berryman	4
4	J. Love	0	A. Millar	2
3	H. L. Lieber	0	D. Rankin	3
5	E. Roche	1	E. Hawkins	0
0	C. J. Sarovich	4	E. G. Bleckly	2
0	W. H. Thompson	1	W. Anderson	3
3	O. Haworth	1	J. F. Irvine	3
0	F. J. Barker	0	A. Smith	3
1	George Pearson	2	D. M. Macintosh	3
1	W. I. Arnold	2	D. Brown	2
3	Robert Davis	2	J. H. Lovett	2

79 83 103

#### AFTER THE MATCH.

Captain Salmon congratulated his team on their victory, but he hoped the country players would come down in larger numbers next year and score a win, which they richly deserve for their indomitable pluck. (Cheers.) He then called for three cheers for the country players, which were lustily given.

Captain R. L. Clements said that, under sk

circumstances, the country team had done wonderfully well. On account of the wet weather many of his strongest players were unable to come to town. He hoped to bring down such a strong team next year that the town players would get such a drubbing that they would not forget it in a hurry. (Cheers.) The country team must be at least a hundred strong before they could hope to secure a win, but we'll never be satisfied till we score another victory. He then asked the country players to give three cheers for the town team, and the response was most hearty.

Three cheers were also given for Mr Joseph Irvine, the referee.

Mr W. M'Gregor proposed, and Mr John Smith seconded, that Mr R. L. Clements be re-elected captain of the country team for the ensuing year, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Captain Clements, after returning thanks for his re-election, proposed that Mr J. B. Smith, of Noorat, and Mr R. E. M'Indoe, of Leongatha, be elected vice-captains to assist him in organising the forces for next contest. Carried.

A short, friendly discussion then took place as to whether another time of the year would be more convenient for the country players and it was ultimately left to the captains to make enquiries on the subject. Three hearty cheers were given to Mr Harlin for his admirable services as director.

#### NOTES ABOUT THE MATCH.

All the country players were pleased to see their old captain, Mr Joseph Irvine, of Drysdale, amongst them again. Although in his 75th year, he still takes a keen interest in his favorite game. He is staying in town so that he may watch the progress of the Victorian Draughts Championship Tourney, and meet a number of his town friends, for his kind and genial disposition has endeared him to the draughts players in the metropolitan district.

Mr John Fisher, of Ascot, has been at all the 12 matches. His farm is about 120 miles from Melbourne. He likes nothing better than a tough fight over the board.

Mr H. M'Lennan, of Leongatha, is another of the old warriors, who enjoys a quiet game, and can hold his end of the stick up very well.

After Captain Clements' speech a number of the country players met in coterie and had a crack about the reason why they could not manage to score a second win. They ultimately agreed that the captain was right when he said they could not expect to win with a team of less than 100 players.

Mr A. Ferguson, of Yarrowonga, has never missed a match, and has travelled over 4000 miles in attending the series. He is a

Mr A. Ferguson, of Yarrawonga, has never missed a match, and has travelled over 4000 miles in attending the series. He is a veteran soldier, and has been playing a match of six games by correspondence for over a year with a sergeant-major stationed at Woolwich. The match is drawing to a close, and we are promised some of the games for publication soon.

Had it not been for the exceptionally wet weather for about a week before the match, it is generally thought that the country players would have numbered at least 160, and the result might have been different.

The secretary of the V.D.A. was ably assisted by Mr H. O. Townsend, and the arrangements for the match were well carried out by the steward, Mr A. W. Quarry, and his assistants, Messrs J. C. Carter, E. H. Clark, F. Salmon, L. H. Wells, F. G. Ross, and W. H. Tew.

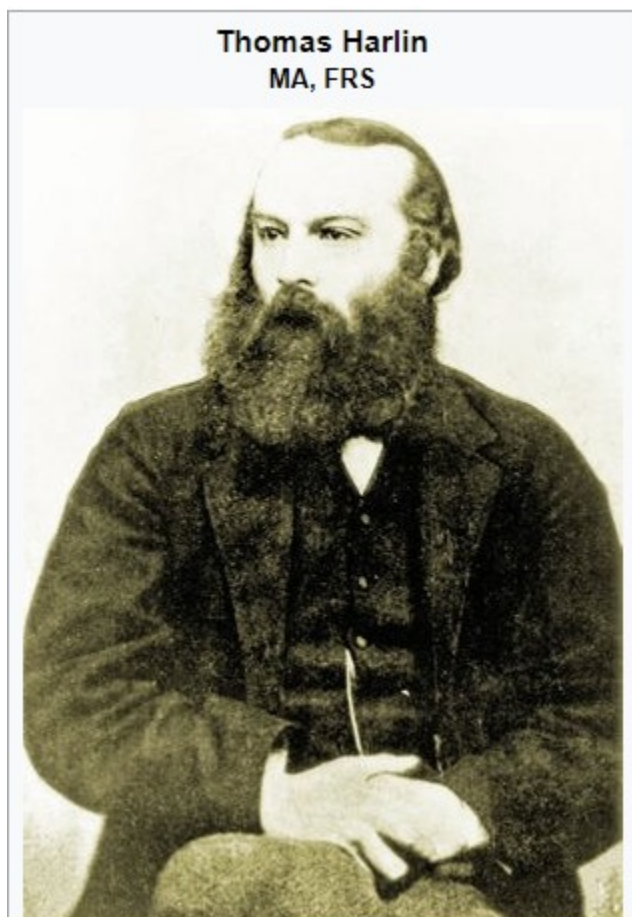
Mr Thomas Harlin, director of play, deserves special credit for his promptitude and accuracy in announcing the final scores, as they were declared in about a minute after the last score had been handed in.

As the players were paired against one another individually, their position on the list is not to be taken as the order of merit.

We give the following scores of previous matches for the sake of comparison:—

1894	105	604	280	121	111
1895	84	484	233	118	83
1896	81	474	234	140	91
1897	63	364	172	119	70
1898	94	529	232	205	92
1899	83	483	194	187	702
1900	118	697	266	286	140
1901	82	481	216	170	59
1902	80	463	209	145	189
1903	70	402	176	143	83
1904	70	411	206	113	60
1905	64	364	179	103	80

From History Wiki. Harlin was featured in the BCM August, 1910 with a full page portrait and biographical sketch. Some of this was included in his obituary in BCM 1914, p.43/4 which is one of the very best and concludes *His capacity for work, even during the last few years, would have done credit to a man half his age.* He was Chess Editor of the Australasian from 1884 until 1909, 25 years and clearly much loved by the draughts community as well as in the above. My 1910 BCM set is missing the portrait and so the one given here is a pleasure to have. He was born in Belfast on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1832. A member of the Melbourne Chess Club. When he was Headmaster of Brisbane Church of England Grammar School he had a difference of opinion with the Trustees, and resigned and was appointed to the staff of Melbourne Church of England Grammar School.



<b>Born</b>	1832
<b>Died</b>	1913
<b>Residence</b>	Brook Street, Kingston on Thames
<b>Society Membership</b>	
<b>membership</b>	ASL ordinary fellow ASL Foundation Fellow
<b>left</b>	1867.07.15 last listed
<b>elected_AS</b>	1864.04.19
<b>societies</b>	Royal Society Royal Institution Royal Meteorological Society Geological Society

### **THOMAS HARLIN, M.A., F.G.S.[1], & c., Fellow of St. Peter's College, Cambridge.[2]**

In 1866 a recently arrived Englishman felt impelled to write a long letter to the Brisbane Courier questioning the quality of immigrants being recruited in Britain to sail to Queensland.

Thomas Harlin had sailed on the ship Southern Ocean for Moreton Bay. On board were a large number of assisted and free passage emigrants intended for public works in the Colony, chiefly to work on the railway being constructed from Ipswich to the Darling Downs.

Harlin and many other paying passengers soon noticed that, among the labourers, a group of men that seemed grossly unqualified for the jobs for which they were recruited. Harlin described them thus:

*"It was quite unnecessary for me to look twice at the men, two hundred and fifty or thereabouts in number, consigned to Queensland as "railway artisans," in order to feel satisfied that a considerable proportion of them had been drawn from the loafing, and not from the working, population of Great Britain. ..."*

In 1869, Thomas Harlin was appointed as the first headmaster at the Brisbane Grammar School. In the 1870s he moved on to Melbourne Grammar School & died in Melbourne in 1913.

MELBOURNE, 28<sup>th</sup> November, 1869.

**"FIRST HEAD MASTER OF THE BRISBANE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.**

*Mr. Thomas Harlin, M.A., died at his residence, Windsor, this evening. The late Mr. Harlin, who was born in Ireland in 1832, graduated at St. Peter's College, Cambridge. In 1869 he was appointed first head master of the Brisbane Grammar School, and he held that position until he resigned at the end of 1875. He was doing mathematical lecturing at the Sydney University in 1876, and then joined the staff of Melbourne Grammar School until 1884, when he retired. It will be remembered that a birthday presentation was recently made to the late Mr. Harlin by old boys of the Brisbane Grammar School.*

*From Ancestry.com Thomas Harlin arrived 31 May 1866 in Brisbane with his mother and sisters.*

*His parents were William Harlin (1800-1850) and Sarah Kennedy (1802-1892).*

*In 1867 he married Eliza Martin whose parents were George Martin and Eliza Perry. There were 3 children Eva Winifred (1868-1945); Francis Wilfred (1870-1945) and Mabel Gertrude (1872-1948).*

*His parents property in Antrim was called Rosedale. Thomas' sisters were Elizabeth (1835-1914), Anna (1838-1925) and Sarah (1842-1926)."*

**DEATH OF MR. T. HARLIN.**

Many friends of Mr. Thomas Harlin, M.A., in Victoria and elsewhere, will learn with much regret of his death, which took place at his residence, Lewisham road, Windsor, on Wednesday morning, the 26th November. He had reached the age of 81, but was still vigorous and alert both mentally and physically until a few days before the end. Mr. Harlin was a contributor to "The Australasian" of very long standing, and as late as Saturday last was engaged in some mathematical calculations for the use of this journal. His friends noticed on that day that he showed marked symptoms of feebleness, and a few hours later he suffered a paralytic stroke. He never entirely recovered consciousness, and passed away very quietly on Wednesday morning.

For many years past Mr. Harlin had been chiefly known as an authority on chess (he was for about a quarter of a century chess

editor of "The Australasian"), an expert in the higher mathematics, and a very sound judge and player of cards, on which subject he also wrote for "The Australasian." He was also, however, a man who kept in close touch with educational matters, and had numerous friends in University and scholastic circles. Teaching was the profession he first followed in Australia. On arrival from England he settled first in Queensland, where he was head master of the Brisbane Grammar School. Later he became mathematical master at the Melbourne Church of England Grammar School, the head master of which was then Mr. E. E. Morris, afterwards professor of English at the University. Mr. Harlin on relinquishing scholastic work became a contributor on general subjects to "The Argus" leader columns before specialising in those branches of journalism for which his training peculiarly fitted him. He was remarkably thorough in his methods, thinking no trouble too great in solving any question submitted to him, and his personal qualities won him a wide circle of friends. Among his other activities was a keen interest in charitable work, and he acted for many years as treasurer of the Austin Hospital, an institution which owed much to his ungrudging service. The deceased gentleman leaves a widow and a grown-up family—two daughters and one son. The funeral took place on Thursday, 27th November, at the Brighton Cemetery.

From the Australasian 29<sup>th</sup> November, 1913 p.30





THE LATE MR. THOMAS HARLIN.

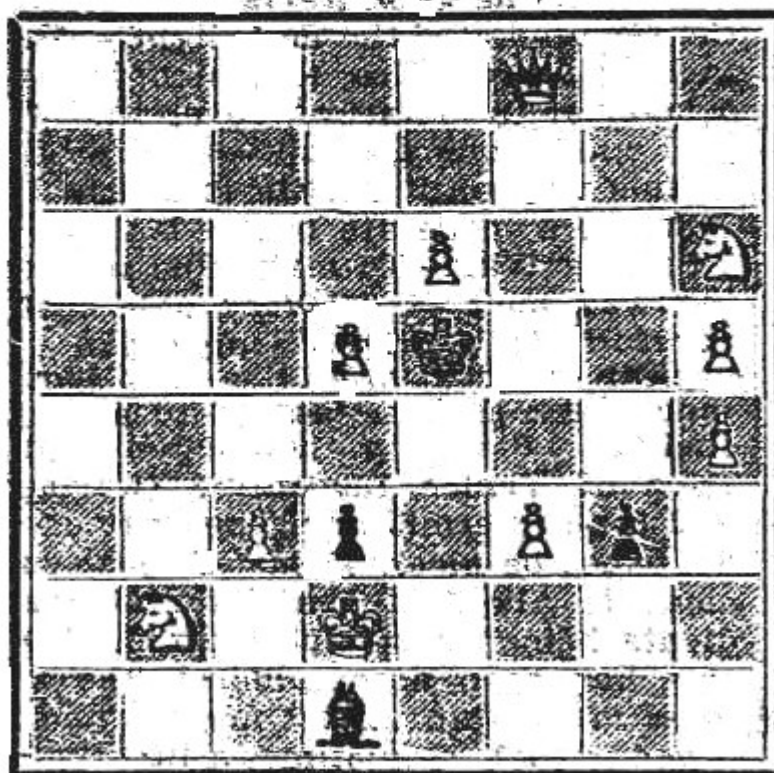
Weekly Times – 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1895

THE 1895 MELBOURNE CITY VS COUNTRY DRAUGHTS TOURNEY 31/8/1895

## CHESS.

MELBOURNE, 7TH SEPTEMBER, 1895.

PROBLEM No. 306.  
By Mrs BAIRD, Brighton  
(First prize).  
Black (4 pieces.)



White (10 pieces.)  
White to play, and mate in three moves.

Solution Qa8

"The general opinion is that this is a very fine problem, some of the mates being magnificent."

### **SOLUTION OF PROBLEM No. 303.**

**By P. F. BLAKE, Manchester.**

**Key move.—P to Q 3.**

Solutions received from "Nemo," Ballarat; G. Hawkes, Caulfield, R. Jenkins, Geelong; W. R. Morton, Prahran; and W. Wills and E. Ellis, Melbourne.

### **Melbourne Chess Club.**

The annual meeting of this club was held in the club room on Monday evening last, Mr F. K. Esling, vice-president, in the chair. There was a large attendance present.

The Chairman had much pleasure in stating that the membership had increased during the past year. There were now seventy members on the roll. The finances were also in a satisfactory condition, so there is every prospect of the coming year being a very successful one. The election of office-bearers resulted as follows:—President, Sir Hartley Williams; vice-president and treasurer, Mr F. K. Esling; Secretary, Mr F. G. Dunn; Committee:—Messrs Burns, Collis, English, Harlin, Hedgway, Hodgson, Loughran, Wilson. After the business was over an adjournment was made to the Vienna Cafe where a social evening was spent. The usual toasts were proposed and duly responded to.

Special reference was made to the late championship match between Messrs Wallace and Esling and also to the recent intercolonial match between Victoria and New South Wales. A number of those present enlivened the proceeding with songs and recitations, so that altogether the evening was thoroughly enjoyable. Chess is now more popular than it has been for many years past.

## MELBOURNE CHESS CLUB HANDICAP TOURNEY.

Class I.	Hodgson.—Wilson.
Class II.	Arnold, Cleary, Dunn, Hall, Landells, Noall.
Class IIIA.	Collin, English, Hemmy, Jones, Rowe, Stabback, Thompson, Wallace.
Class IIIB.	Exon, Hutchinson, Roth, Vere Hodge, Dr Wollaston.
Class IV.	Bunn, Kelly, Niquet, Patrick, Began, Salter, Wadsworth.

### HANDICAP.

Class I gives to	Class 2	Pawn and move.
Do	do 3A	} Exchange and move.
Do	do 3B	
Do	do 4	Knight and move.
Do	do 5	Rook and move.
Class II gives to	Class 3A	} Pawn and move.
Do	do 3B	
Do	do 4	Exchange and 2 moves.
Do	do 5	Knight and move.
Class IIIA gives to	Class 3B	Two moves.
Do	do 4	Exchange and move.
Do	do 5	Exchange and 2 moves.
Class IIIB gives to	Class 4	Pawn and move.
Do	do 5	Exchange and move.
Class IV gives to	Class 5	Pawn and move.

The handicap of any player, who has not previously contested match games at the Melbourne Chess Club, may be reviewed after the third round. Play in the tourney commences this week.

The International Chess Congress is still proceeding at Hastings. H. N. Pillsbury, of New York, is now leading with 15½ points; Tschigorin, of St. Petersburg, being second with 15; and E. Lasker, London, third with 14½ points.

The Final Scores:—1st prize, Pillsbury, 16½ games; 2nd prize, Lasker, 15½ games; 3rd prize, Tschigorin, 15 games.

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## DRAUGHTS.

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### The Town and Country Match.

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#### VICTORY FOR THE TOWN.

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#### THE COUNTRY MAKE A GOOD FIGHT.

The fourth great draughts carnival between the Town and Country players took place in the supper-room of the Melbourne Town-hall on Saturday, the 31st ult., under the most favorable auspices. Since last year's match the game has made wonderful strides throughout the colony, and though the match was hardly equal in point of numbers to the previous one, it was superior in so far as more districts of the colony were represented, thus proving that the popularity of the game is more wide-spread than ever, and that in future years we may confidently hope that it will become the national indoor pastime of the people. Draughts players are too intelligent to ignore the fact that physical amusements in moderation are highly desirable, and much more attractive to the general public than intellectual pastimes, as the element of chance comes into play with greater force, and unfortunately in too many cases generates the spirit of gambling which is one of the chiefest blots in the latest phases of the nineteenth century. The best proof of the popularity of these gatherings is the fact that so many make a point of attending every year, and we have been repeatedly told on the present occasion that they think nothing of coming such long distances, as their chiefest pleasure is having the opportunity of meeting with old friends whom they have met in previous matches. This is the true spirit of Freemasonry, and we beg to assure all



players that no matter wherever they may travel they can always rely on receiving a hearty welcome from "lovers of the broil," for in the words of Shakespeare, "A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind."

The match was between players living within a distance of five miles of Melbourne and the rest of the colony. There were eighty-four players aside, and nearly every district in the colony was represented. A number of the players came about 200 miles to take part in the contest, and the same players in many cases have attended all the previous matches. As there were no prizes to be competed for, that fact alone speaks volumes for the enthusiasm of the players, as each had to bear his own travelling expenses. Mr F. Brown was unanimously elected captain of the Town team, and Mr John Ramsay of the Country players. Mr Thomas Harlin was appointed umpire, and he also gave valuable assistance in the taking down of the scores, which were announced promptly when the last game was finished.

### THE OPENING CEREMONY.

The Mayor (Cr. Sir Arthur Snowden), who was received with applause said that it gave him great pleasure to preside at the opening of such an important draughts tournament as that which was about to be commenced between Town and Country players. There could be no doubt but that the game was one which should be fostered. Undoubtedly, the best club a man could have was his own home, and there was no better fireside game than draughts, which was not only entertaining, but of such a character as to develop the reasoning faculties of young people. He did not wish for a moment to speak disparagingly of outdoor physical exercises, but he did not think that too much importance could be attached to the development of the intellect and home games such as draughts tended in that direction. The contest which had been arranged between the

contest which had been arranged between the Town and Country, and was about being commenced was a most interesting one, and he hoped it would be played out, not exactly in a spirit of rivalry, but in the friendliest and kindest manner, and that throughout good temper would prevail. He hoped that the matches would be conducted with the good temper which seemed to be a characteristic of the draughts player, and that the best man would win, and being a townsman, he could not be blamed for expressing the wish that the successful player should be a resident of the City, or a neighbor. (Laughter and applause.) He had great pleasure in welcoming them to the Town-hall. (Applause.)

Mr H. R. Reid remarked that if he were a Highlander instead of a Lowlander, he would say heartily welcome to all. He was truly glad to see the assemblage, and particularly to see so many people from the country present. He had been informed that gentlemen from all parts of the country were in attendance and their assemblage was most gratifying. It was the country that had been the saving of Melbourne. It was the country that had placed

Australia in the proud position it held so far as the London money market was concerned, and, for that matter, in the money markets of the world. At the present time Australia was borrowing money at a cheaper rate than was any other country in the world and her being able to do so was due to the country districts. An American citizen who visited Melbourne during the boom had expressed to the speaker his admiration of the city. He said however, that he could not help being impressed with the idea that Melbourne was a "brass plate" city. (Laughter.) There is no doubt that Melbourne was by far too large for the country, and was, so to speak, a wen—an excrescence—far out of proportion to the colony and its requirements.

He had great pleasure in welcoming the country draughts players. Every eminent public lecturer who had visited us, from Max O'Rell to the Rev. Joseph Cook, the latest arrival had said that, as a people we were too much given to sport. No possible objection could, however be taken to the game of draughts. It was eminently one fitted for the fireside and one that we might with much profit cultivate. It was a very ancient game and one the principal moves in which, he believed, had been originated by a rather celebrated Egyptian philosopher. He wished they might all spend a pleasant time during the progress of the contest (Applause).

Sir Frederick Sargood, M.L.C., remarked that he had attended many meetings but never before one such as this. He had been astonished a few weeks previously at receiving from Mr Hay, the energetic secretary, an invitation to become one of the patrons of the tournament between players representative of Town and Country, particularly as in no way could he be considered a player of draughts. He had certainly played the game as a boy, but somehow he had come to associate it with grey heads, and therefore he was somewhat astonished to find so many young players present. He understood that it was only four years since the Draughts Association was established, and he was pleased to learn that in the interval it had made great strides, and was now on a very sound basis indeed.

There could not be a better nor a more desirable means of bringing town and country folk together than by asking them to meet in friendly rivalry as they had. Football and other such pastimes were very well in their way, and it was as well that such games should be encouraged with a view to physical development. At the same time, such intellectual games as draughts were as necessary for the development of the mental faculties. He had been asked to propose a vote of thanks to his Worship the Mayor for his kindness in granting the use of the supper room for the tournament, and he did so with very great pleasure. His Worship was always

great pleasure. His Worship was always prominent in any movement which had for its object the advancement of the interests of his fellow citizens. (Applause.) Before resuming his seat he (Sir Frederick Sargood) would like to say that when he received the circular from Mr Hay inviting his co-operation, he noticed the announcement that trophies were given to successful contestants in matches, and that the word "trophies" was underlined. (Laughter and applause.) He would be very glad indeed to offer either then or at some future time a trophy for competition. (Renewed applause.)

Mr John Ramsay, president of the Victorian Draughts Association, remarked that he was indeed delighted to see so many players assembled to play and encourage the intellectual game of draughts. It was certainly one which tended to develop the mental faculties.

The motion was carried by acclamation.

Sir Arthur Snowden briefly returned thanks, and the tournament then proceeded.

### THE PLAY AND PLAYERS.

Play was commenced about half-past 2 o'clock, and the match was finished at 6 o'clock. The list below shows how the players were paired, and their respective scores. We may mention that the match committee arranged the pairs, not altogether in the order of supposed merit, but chiefly with a view to match the players as evenly as possible.

TOWN PLAYERS.			COUNTRY PLAYERS.		
Wins.		Draws.		Wins.	
6	J. Moore	0	S. Spielvogel	0	
6	F. Brown (capt.)	0	P. Murphy	0	
6	F. T. Best	0	G. Hood	0	
8	W. Houston	2	L. O'Bryan	1	

Weekly Times – 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1895

2	A. Salton	4	A. Knight	0
3	James Paterson	1	T. Heith	0
3	J. Hillard	1	A. Galloway	2
4	T. Patterson	1	W. Galloway	1
4	E. Salmon	1	P. Murray	1
4	M. M. Collins	2	G. E. Kelly	0
4	Edwin Pond	2	A. Baird	1
1	J. Minetti	3	J. R. McDonald	2
5	G. Richards	1	T. Henderson	0
3	John Best	2	F. H. Faulkner	1
3	Thos Greenaway	3	J. P. Mulheron	0
1	A. Tucker	3	J. Fisher	1
0	J. C. Carter	1	A. Marsh	1
4	John Pimley	1	D. H. Gilmour	1
4	Eb. Pond	2	G. Puttick	0
3	G. N. Bunn	3	G. F. Morwick	0
4	T. R. Collins	0	H. Fisher	0
4	J. Berry	1	C. McIntyre	0
5	J. B. Bourke	0	W. H. Barnett	1
4	A. McIntyre	1	T. Castles	1
4	W. Morton	1	W. Barclay	1
0	E. Steed	0	G. Loudon	6
5	J. B. Chalmers	0	E. Hughes	1
4	R. Dewar	1	J. Mahoney	1
1	J. T. Smith	3	R. J. Quates	2
3	W. P. Smithett	2	J. Stevens	1
1	T. Riley	2	A. Ferguson	3

3	O. Junner	0	Joseph Irvine	3
5	H. Bailey	0	T. Mills	1
0	A. Westbrook	1	S. Vaughan	5
1	F. Fulton	0	J. Deans	4
1	A. W. Fyfe	4	A. Hewit	1
4	James Ballantyne	1	W. Murray	1
4	A. N. Halifax	1	J. Ramsay Capt.	1
2	W. Cla. field	1	A. Tuffey	3
3	W. Heckle	1	G. Ward	2
3	L. H. Wells	1	George Davie	2
2	H. A. Little	3	B. Loudon	1
3	James Bennie	2	F. O. Neal	1
4	D. Hutcheson	1	E. M. Leod	1
4	T. Condron	1	R. M. Queen	1
3	R. H. Gray	2	D. Foster	1
1	A. J. Mill	1	E. M. Swain	4
2	A. J. Collie	0	F. Hillmann	4



4	F. W. Biggs	0	J. Jenkins	2
4	H. Townsend	1	W. Cornish	1
0	H. Badman	0	T. J. Train	6
2	W. H. Brunton	2	Wm. Middlemiss	2
5	F. G. Rose	0	H. M'Lennan, jun.	1
3	J. M'Donald	1	E. W. Holmes	2
0	G. Martin	1	H. Dougall	5
0	F. Smith	0	Charles Gordon	6
0	A. Richmond	0	W. Burns	6
3	C. E. Shields	1	W. Farquhar	2
2	M. Corlett	1	James Farquhar	3
1	M. F. Jay	0	R. Jane	5
2	H. Montague	1	L. M'Leod	3
1	E. D. Cooke	0	R. Clements	5
4	W. M'Nab	1	G. Stayner	1
5	A. E. Grundy	0	James Martin	1
4	J. Dowie	0	F. J. Atherton	2
0	J. Turner	2	F. Evers	4
4	F. G. Gunther	0	A. J. Saunders	2
0	H. J. Gunner	1	H. M'Lennan	5
2	P. Garland	2	William Henderson	2
3	George Long	0	W. M'Gregor	3
2	F. Lockie	0	W. Castro	4
6	E. Williams	0	Neil M'Millan	0
1	W. Marsh	0	D. M'Kindlay	5
4	W. J. Treasew	0	E. B. Thomas	2
5	H. Glazebrook	0	James Watson	1
2	Charles Kyme	2	A. Smith	2
2	W. Henderson	2	W. J. Wicken	2
0	William Hall	1	T. M. Falconer	5
2	N. Cooke	2	P. Grace	2
3	D. L. Moffat	2	E. Bowman	1
1	J. Cuming	1	E. G. Bleckly	4
2	W. Evans	3	J. Richards	1
2	James Tydeman	2	T. O'Connor	1
2	J. M. Ewan	0	A. Nettleton	4
233		93	168	

### THE RESULT OF THE TOURNAMENT.

The town team thus won by 65 games. The country team made a highly creditable stand, as there were a greater number of strong players in the Town team this year than on any previous occasion.

Town wins, 233; Country wins 168; drawn, 93.

We give below an analysis of the scores which clearly shows that the match was won by the first thirty boards.

Boards	Town Wins	Draws.	Country Wins.
1 to 10	43	12	5
11 „ 20	27	21	7
21 „ 32	38	11	20
33 „ 40	30	9	18
41 „ 50	30	12	18
51 „ 64	23	8	48
65 „ 74	26	5	29
75 „ 84	31	15	23
	233	93	168

The following are the scores of the previous matches:—

1892. (98 players) Town wins 181 to 66 or approximately 3 to 1.  
1893. (156 players) Town wins 219 to 157 or approximately 3 to 2.  
1894. (210 players) Town wins 289 to 212 or approximately 4 to 3.  
1895. (168 players) Town wins 233 to 168 or approximately 7 to 5.

#### AFTER THE TOURNEY.

Mr Harlin, amidst intense excitement, announced the results of the match to an eager and excited crowd, as the large room was filled with the players and visitors from all quarters. Mr F. Lockie, of Launceston, Tasmania, came over specially to see the match.

Captain Brown, in a few graceful and appropriate remarks, expressed his thanks to his team for doing so well. Though victorious, he considered the country players had made a good fight, and he could sincerely assure them that even the Town team would not grudge a victory to their friends, and it required only a little more perseverance on their part to secure it.

Captain Ramsay, in his usual felicitous manner, expressed his gratification at the good stand his team had made against such a formidable array of talent. Were it not for the first thirty boards they might have won. They must, however, reach a higher average standard of play before they would be able to counteract the overwhelming influence of the first twenty or thirty boards. That could only be attained by the country players keeping up to date in practice throughout the coming year, and following the example of their town brethren in studying the latest literature of the game.

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## The Social.

The players after the match was finished adjourned to the Milk Palace Cafe, Bourke street, where the visiting team were entertained at tea by the Town players.

Mr John Ramsay, president of the Victorian Draughts Association, occupied the chair.

After a substantial knife-and-fork tea, which was duly appreciated after the eventful proceedings of the day, the entertainment programme was duly commenced.

The chairman in a few pithy and appropriate remarks expressed his gratification at presiding over such an intelligent gathering of draughts players. He hoped they would all thoroughly enjoy themselves. He would now call upon Mr Carriden to favor them with a pianoforte solo, and the excellent style of the accompanist made him a favorite at once. Mr T. Henderson of Berwick followed with "Simon the Cellarman" which he sang with much spirit. Mr D. Kelly gave a concertina solo in most artistic style. Mr Tom Rooke sang "On Duty" with much feeling and pathos. Mr W. Heckle rendered "Susan's Sunday Out" with characteristic spirit. Mr John Morrison sang "The Macgregor's Gathering" with much force and feeling. Mr J. A. Ward sang "That's the way to the Zoo." with much approbation. Mr George Martin gave a good rendering of "Sleeping Camp," and his second song was equally appreciated. Mr J. A. Ward sang for

his second song "My Son in good Taste  
 "Dad" Williams fairly brought down the  
 house with the comic songs "Littling Man"  
 and "Too La Ra, and for his encores gave  
 equally amusing ones. Mr Tom Boone sang  
 "Say, Au Revoir" in good style. Mr R.  
 Paton did full justice to "Thy Sentinel Am I"  
 and "In Cellar Deep." Mr John Morrison  
 sang "The Last Watch" in fine style. Mr  
 Will Stuart sang inimitably "They Went To  
 The Usual Place" and "Simple Pimple." Mr  
 George Wilson, who possesses a cultivated  
 voice, sang with great taste and feeling "The  
 Little Hero" and "The Powder Monkey." Mr  
 Wilkins gave the amusing recitation "Old  
 Mother Hubbard" with characteristic humor,  
 and Mr J. Jenkins recited "The Old Clock"  
 very well indeed.

During the course of the evening the Chair-  
 man presented the trophies (of which he was  
 the donor), won in connection with the Vic-  
 torian Draughts Association.

The Chairman said that it gave him great  
 pleasure to present the trophies he had pro-  
 mised, and he was highly gratified to know that  
 the various matches had been keenly contested.  
 He had no doubt that in future more valuable  
 prizes would be given by our leading citizens as  
 the game was now taking a prominent position  
 among the amusements of the people. The  
 winning clubs were:—Collingwood, 1; Mel-  
 bourne, 2; Yarraville, 3.

Mr J. C. Carter, in returning thanks on  
 behalf of the Collingwood club for the valuable  
 field glass as the prize for the premiership, ex-  
 pressed his pride that the senior club was also  
 the premier club of the colony this year. He  
 had no wish that his club should hold the pre-  
 miership in perpetuity, but they could depend  
 on them fighting hard to hold the coveted title  
 as long as they could.



Mr David R. Hay, as president of the Melbourne Draughts Club, was gratified at receiving the very handsome cruet stand on behalf of his club for second prize. His club had the honor of being the premier club last year, and he congratulated the Collingwood Club on their well-deserved victory. He thought that Mr Ramsay had exercised great judgment in the selection of the trophies. He had given the field glass to the premier club as a compliment to their seeing so far ahead, and the cruet stand he looked upon as a happy augury for his club's future success, for when their opponents were well mustered they could then give them a good peppering; and the sterling chain to the Yarraville Club was, no doubt, meant to enchain them to the love of the game, so that by careful study they might some day become the premier club of the colony.

Mr James Cuming, as president of the Yarraville Draughts Club returned thanks for the handsome Albert Chain as third prize. He thought at one time that his club was going to gain the premiership, but many of the best players had left for Western Australia, so that spoiled their chance for the first prize, but they would strive hard to win it next time.

Mr Thomas Harlin proposed the sentiment of "Our Guests." He expressed his admiration for the pluck of the country players coming such great distances to get beaten every year. It showed that they were fond of the game, and he believed were they to send down their best players they would secure victory, as the average strength of country players was greatly improved within the last few years. He had much pleasure in coupling the sentiment of "Our Guests" with the names of Mr Thomas Henderson, of Berwick, and Mr J. Jenkins of Scoresby.

Mr Henderson in a humorous speech said that the country players were deeply indebted to the town team for entertaining them so handsomely. The country players, though repeatedly beaten, always came up smiling, and he had no doubt they would win some day.

Mr Jenkins was highly pleased with the gathering, but he thought the country players would do well in order to secure a win to appoint a captain new to represent their interests during the year. The country players could then communicate with him, and no doubt valuable suggestions would be received for next year's match. He would propose that Mr John Ramsay be elected captain for the 1896 match. This suggestion was seconded by Mr A. Marsh, of Walhalla, and carried unanimously.

The Chairman returned thanks for the honor, and said he would do his best to look after the interests of the country players.

Mr J. C. Carter proposed the sentiment of "Kindred Associations" in a very appropriate speech, and it was suitably responded to by Mr J. Jenkins, as representing the Victorian Rechabite Draughts Association, and Mr Thomas Henderson, the Melbourne Chess Club.

Mr Joseph Irvine, of Drysdale, in an able and humorous speech, proposed "The Press."

Mr David B. Hay, Chess and Draughts editor of "The Weekly Times," returned thanks.

Mr G. Martin, in a witty speech, proposed "The Ladies," and Mr Will Stuart returned thanks on their behalf in appropriate terms.

Mr F. Brown proposed three hearty cheers to Mr Ramsay for the able manner in which he had occupied the chair. This was received with great applause.

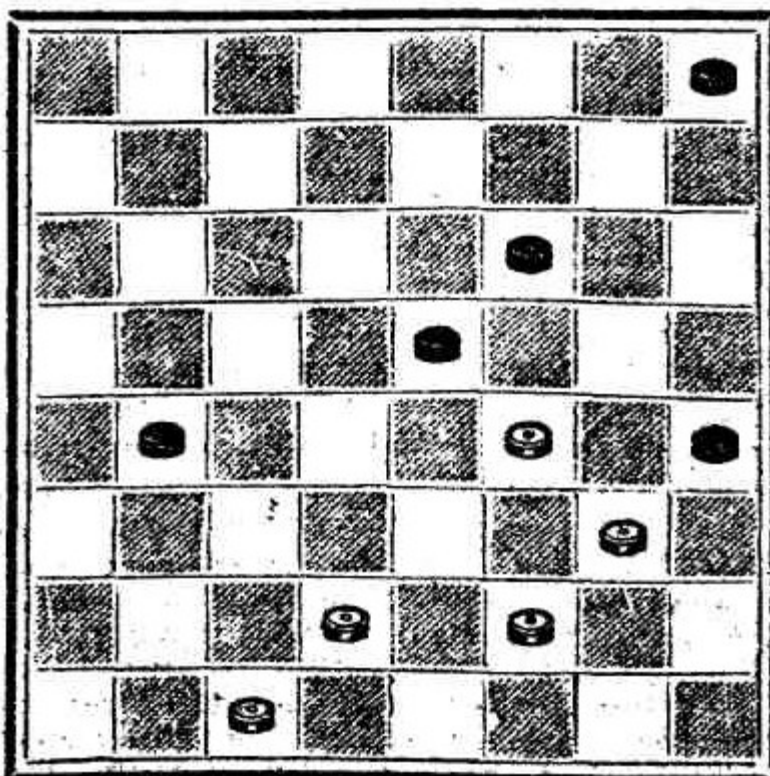
The Chairman briefly returned thanks. He was pleased to see the game making such rapid strides throughout the colony, for it could not but have an ennobling tendency.

The meeting was wound up at eleven o'clock by all the company singing "Auld Lang Syne."

This year's gathering was allowed on all hands to be the most successful of any that has taken place, the arrangements were altogether more satisfactory, as the committee have gained experience from the previous contests, and no doubt next year's match will be still more successful.

We know of no draughts gathering in the world to equal our annual Town and Country matches.

**PROBLEM No. 447.**  
**By J. H. BOARDMAN, Melbourne.**  
**Black—4, 11, 15, 17, 20.**



**White—19, 24, 26, 27, 30.**  
**Black to play and draw.**

The original heading of the article below was very hard to read, but it says .

**“The three following games were played between  
 Mr F. Brown and Mr P. Murphy of Bacchus Marsh.”**

**Game 1015. — Kelso.**  
**Murphy's move.**

10—15	18—11	6—10	27—23	2—6	31—27
27—18	8—15	24—20	8—12	27—23	2—11
76—22	29—25	15—10	25—16	2—12	27—23
25—18	4—8	23—16	12—19	25—16	11—15
11—15	25—22	12—19	32—27	12—19	23—16

**White wins.**  
**(A) The losing move.**

Game 1,016.—"Defiance."

Brown's move.

11-15	29-25	8-11	31-26	c-1-5	22-17
23-19	11-15	22-17	6-10	17-10	31-26
9-14	19-16	11-15	13-9	5-14	17-13
27-28	12-19	A-16-11	B-18-24	30-26	15-18
6-11	28-16	7-16	28-19	24-27	10-6
22-18	4-8	20-11	15-24	32-23	2-9
15-22	24-20	15-18	26-22	18-27	13-6
25-9	15-19	17-13	10-15	26-22	26-22
5-14	26-22	10-15	22-17	27-31	B. wins.

(A) This weakens White's position.

(B) This improves Black's position.

(C) Black has now an easy win.

Game 1,017.—"Double Corner."

Murphy's move.

9-14	29-25	8-11	22-17	5-14	D-9-6
22-18	6-10	25-22	B-7-11	18-2	1-10
14-17-A	18-14	4-8	18-14	23-26	2-7
21-14	10-17	22-18	C-2-6	31-22	White
10-17	2-13	16-20	23-18	11-16	wins.
25-22	11-16	26-22	16-23	13-9	
17-21	24-19	11-16	14-9	16-19	

(A) We do not approve of this move.

(B) Black's men are too much to the side, whereas white's men command the centre of the board.

(C) A fatal slip, which is promptly taken advantage of.

(D) Bringing matters to a crisis.

Played between Mr William Houston and Mr John O'Bryan of Fairbank.

Game 1018.—"Old Fourteenth."

Houston's move.

11-15	28-24	15-22	32-28	21-25	10-14
23-19	8-11	30-25	1-5	6-2	26-23
8-11	26-23	6-9	A-23-18	7-11	24-19
22-17	A-3-8	B-25-19	15-22	2-6	23-16
4-8	23-14	9-14	19-16	25-20	14-18
17-13	9-18	18-9	12-19	6-10	22-26
15-18	21-17	5-21	24-6	30-26	31-22
24-20	18-22	27-23	2-9	28-24	Drawn.
11-15	25-18	11-15	13-6	8-12	

(A) This leads frequently to some critical play.

(B) We much prefer 13-6 etc.

(C) An excellent move.

The following 6 biographies are of players in the 1895 Town v Country match. Would that the entire 168 biographies were here for posterity.

Weekly Times – 14<sup>th</sup> September, 1895 - page 13

**MR. JOSEPH IRVINE.**

Joseph Irvine, of Drysdale, near Geelong, was born in the County of Tyrone, Ireland, in 1831. He arrived in the colony in 1855, and spent some years on the diggings. Not succeeding as well as he had expected, he gave up mining and joined the Education department as teacher, and after 22 years' service retired on pension. He picked up his knowledge of draughts principally on board ship on the voyage out, but paid little attention to it afterwards until about four or five years ago. Since then he has followed the game enthusiastically, and is now one of the most expert problem solvers. He has attended all the town and country draughts matches, and his genial and kindly manner has made him a favorite with all the players.

**MR. JOHN FISHER.**

John Fisher was born at Carron Shore, Stirlingshire, on 29th December, 1847, and arrived in the colony in 1854, along with the other members of his family. His father took to farming on arrival, and the son has been identified with agricultural pursuits all his days. Mr. Fisher is a keen draughts player. He was one of the founders of the Miners' Rest Draughts Club, and is now its president, and captain of the match team. He was also one of the chief promoters of the recently-formed Ballarat District Draughts Association. He is a great draughts enthusiast, and a very strong player.

**“Mr Robert Craig**

*Robert Craig, the popular schoolmaster of Miners' Rest. He is in the prime of life, and his chief amusement is the game of draughts. He took an active part in forming the Miners' Rest Draughts Club, and he has proved himself an energetic secretary since its formation. He also gave valuable assistance at the formation of the Ballarat District Draughts Association. He dearly loves the game, and nothing pleases him better than giving a helping hand to advance its interests. The Miners' Rest Club is now one of the strongest clubs in the colony, and a number of its members have attended the last two town and country matches, and made very creditable scores.”*



#### MR JOHN RAMSAY.

Mr John Ramsay was born near Glasgow, and is a typical Scotchman. Whatever he undertakes he puts his whole heart and soul into it. He arrived in Victoria in 1878, and entered into business in Melbourne. He takes an active part in all movements for the social advancement of the people. He is a fluent speaker, and one of the leading workers in the temperance movement. He takes a lively interest in the management of the Young Men's Christian Association, and frequently lectures on theological subjects. He is extremely fond of the game of draughts and takes a delight in doing all in his power to further its interests. He has acted as captain of the Country team ever since the Town and Country draught matches were started, and so is well-known to draughts players generally.

#### MR FREDERICK BROWN.

Mr Frederick Brown was born on Emerald Hill on 26th December, 1858. He is so identified with the game of draughts throughout the colony that a very short sketch of his career is all that is necessary. He commenced to study the game in 1885, and joined the Melbourne Draughts Club in the following year. He soon attained a leading position, as he studied the literature of the game most thoroughly. He won the second prize in the Centennial Championship Tournament in 1888, and the championship of Victoria in the same year. He resigned the championship fully two years ago, but there will probably be another tournament before long to ascertain who is now the champion of the colony. He took an active part in the formation of the new Melbourne Draughts Club between three and four years ago, and has been its vice-president ever since. He has been captain of the Town team in all the Town and Country draughts matches, and is a thorough draughts enthusiast.

#### Mr Arthur Knight

Mr Arthur Knight was born at St. Austell, Cornwall on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1849. He arrived in Victoria in the latter end of 1867. As a Cornishman, he naturally turned his attention to gold mining on arrival and has followed it up with varying success ever since. He has been settled in the Eaglehawk district for many years and was taught the game of draughts about 1874 by Mr George Loudon, the well-known enthusiast. When Mr. Wyllie, the famous "Herd Laddie," visited Eaglehawk, he played with him frequently and managed to get a good few draws against the champion. At a recent tournament in Eaglehawk he won the first prize. He has come down to the last two Town v Country draught matches, is very fond of the game, and is of a quiet, retiring disposition.

The portraits are too dark and not good. The 6 biographies are good (one typed) and have been scanned and fitted on these pages. They are from the Weekly Times – 14<sup>th</sup> September, 1895 - page 13

Played between Mr F. Salmon and Mr P. Murray, of Bacchus Marsh:—

Game 1,019. — "Single Corner."

Salmon's move.

11-15	24-19	9-18	1-6	19-24	9-27
22-18	4-8	22-8	24-20	4-8	26-23
15-22	19-15	8-12	7-10-B	10-14	27-31
25-18	10-19	27-24	15-11	8-12-D	23-19
8-11	23-16	20-27	12-16-C	24-27	31-27
29-25	8-12	31-15	11-8	32-23	19-16
13-16	30-25-A	8-9	16-19	14-17	27-23
25-22	12-19	26-24	8-4	21-14	16-11
16-20	18-14				Drawn.

(A) Well played.

(B) To prevent White manning.

(C) Perfectly sound.

(D) 20-16 seems preferable.

Played between Mr John Best and Mr F. H. Faulkner, of Warrnambool.

Game 1,020 — "Souter."

Best's move.

11-15	22-17	11-15	29-22	25-30	17-14
23-19	14-18	32-23	11-15	26-22	D-6-10
9-14	26-23	15-24	19-16	15-19	14-7
22-17	9-14	28-19	12-19	16-11-C	3-10
6-9	30-25	4-8	23-16	7-16	11-7
17-13	5-9	31-26	14-18	20-11	10-15
2-6	24-20-A	8-11	17-14	10-15	K-7-2
25-22	15-24	25-22-B	18-25	22-17	Drawn.
8-11	28-19	18-25	14-5	15-18	

(A) Played well.

(B) Obviously 19-16 would lose by 18-22, etc.

(C) To prevent the man on 19 getting into the crown-head.

(D) We much prefer 30-26 at this stage, as this gives White more scope.

(E) The game was continued for a good many more moves with a drawn result.

One of the games played between Mr C. Junner, and Mr Joseph Irvine, Drysdale:—

Game "Laird and Lady."

Irvine's move.

11-15	26-23	3-8	29-22	17-22	10-7
23-19	13-17	20-11	2-7-B	14-10	29-25
8-11	19-15	7-16	15-10	22-25	31-26
22-17	11-16	32-23	5-9-C	19-15	25-22
9-13	24-19-A	9-13	14-5	25-29	26-17
17-14	17-21	28-24	7-14	23-19-D	13-22
10-17	28-24	16-20	22-18	8-11	7-2
21-14	6-9	25-22	14-17	15-8	11-16
15-18	24-20	18-25	18-14	4-11	B. wins.

- (A) This is certainly out of the beaten track.
- (B) White is playing this game very well.
- (C) Black's only way to get out of his cramped position.
- (D) With the best of play this position is only a draw, but after playing a number of moves White made a slip and lost.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. Armfield, Wodonga.—The rule could not be altered by any association, but a special agreement could be made between clubs agreeable to the change. R. Blackburn, Benalla.—Shall reply by post. Allan Macpherson, Gladbrook.—Have forwarded the books as desired. S. B. Mudge, Myrtle Creek.—Thanks for report. J. C. Costigan, Northcote, and W. Hall, Coburg.—Letters with enclosures duly received. R. J. Coates, Brighton.—Solutions of problems 446 and 447 correct; thanks for game, but it is too late for this issue. J. Forrest, Scotsburn.—Your games under examination. Thanks.

#### PRESENTATION.

Mr John Forrest, president of the Miners' Rest Draughts Club gave a very pleasant surprise to Mr Hay, the draughts editor, on the Friday previous to the T. and C. match, by presenting him with a very handsome board, made by himself in his leisure hours, and also a set of ivory men. The board is rather a novelty in its way, as the squares are made of Ballarat white and scarlet flannel, bound with a narrow strip of blue flannel, the whole being covered with plate glass, and framed with native Australian wood. Mr Fisher possesses artistic skill.

#### PORTRAITS OF PLAYERS.

Portraits of the captains and other prominent players will be given next week.

## 9. MISCELLANEOUS RESEARCH ON DRAUGHTS AND CHESS

The Chess Amateur (CA) of 1928/9 p.159 Fred Hawes said chess was dead in NSW but alive in Vic & Qld. In the July, 1920 CA p.287 the "Australian" said "Mr H.A. Giles M.A. L.L.D in a recent work on "Chinese Literature" has a translation of a poem by Tu Fu who lived 712 to 770AD and who ranked the game of chess high among the aids to earthly happiness. In the poem occurs the line "The good wife rules a paper board for Chess" which is rather more than most chess players' wives would do nowadays".

Giles is referenced twice in "The Genealogy of Chess" 1998 by David Li who refers to the Giles book "A Chinese Biographical Dictionary" 1898 of 1022 pages but not the above tale by Tu Fu. Li makes a case for the Chinese General Han Xsin (277-196 BCE) as the inventor of Chinese chess. Falkener too gave this General and date as the Chinese games invention.

According to A History of Draughts' by Arie van der Stoep 1984 the oldest draughts manual was published in 1549. The introduction yields Jean Jacques Rousseau as a keen player. The book is a historiography of draughts and he disagrees with H.J.R. Murray. The book took him 10 years and he thanked many especially G. Bakker who gave him much board game literature. France, Spain, Italy, Holland, Scandinavia, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Poland and Russia all get chapters and Chapter 11 deals with draughts history taking the game back to 1283 AD (Alfonso Codex Spain). It has a good index and a subjects and persons index in its 180 pages. There is an International Draughts Federation in Rotterdam with 40 affiliated countries. A scholars book with many references even to art and sculpture. The 10 page chapter on Great Britain gives the earliest reference to the 15<sup>th</sup> century and has a game between Wyllie and Robertson from the 19<sup>th</sup>. There is a fine engraving of a numbered board from 1684 on p.75.

There is a good write-up of the Australian Draughts Ch'ship on pages 8-10 in The Austral 25<sup>th</sup> May, 1927. A.E. Sargison's first attempt was =6<sup>th</sup> with a +7-6=11 score in 24 games. Played in the Hotel Metropole in Launceston from Good Friday for 10 days. Organised by the Tasmanian Draughts Association. There was an American Checker Ch'ship in 1924.

"History of Boards Games" by Murray 1953; 3000 copies of "Among These Mates"; CA Vol 13 p.344 Chess & Draughts by W.S. Branch; Vol.2 p.294 Chess & Draughts; BCM 1899 p.443-8 Chinese Chess by Branch; BCM 1908 p.329-31. William Shelley Branch was a historian around Murray's time. Not one mention of draughts in 'Rousseau & Chess' by HJRM .

The obvious start into Australian draughts history is 'The Austral'. I have been through it twice but not really taking an interest in the draughts sections. And now I found the reference to the May 1927 Austral, it may be there is other historical material. For example the letter from Sanderson writes of his draughts interest and the fact that he was a draughts editor. It is a very good letter.

And though I may be getting ahead of myself, a history of draughts is appealing from what you have already written. Is it a dying game? Perhaps your changes may stop that. It does seem a good subject for a thesis. I remember some Queensland chap borrowed stacks of books from the State Library of Victoria for his. I never saw it - but it was about chess play and in my opinion insignificant compared to a draughts history of Australia. But finding sources for such a history will not be so easy as the game does not appear to be well represented in the slv. BUT am I right? How would I know? Perhaps there is a book or MS that covers the subject in the slv? Wouldn't that be good! They must be asked. They have and their first reply indicates No.

And a lot of Australian and State draughts championships would be written up in newspapers and perhaps even draughts journals.

James Wyllie's visit(s) captured my imagination and would give good structure to a thesis for there are no world chess champions who have visited here when they were still champion. In 1988, though he was deposed we went to see Anatoly Karpov at Expo in Brisbane. His plane was late and we missed him! What a blow but later he went to see Ken Fraser at the slv and I published a lovely newspaper photo in my tribute to Ken Fraser that showed Karpov with Gary Wastell and Ken. If you want to see it, go to [ozproblems.com](http://ozproblems.com). Whilst everyone is excited about David de Lucia's recent video of his chess collection which is excellent, it is so personal. A truly wealthy man who spent thousands and thousands of dollars building this collection which has 4500 books mostly rarities and ephemera of all the great players (mostly Fischer). It is really something set out in rooms in their home with exquisite shelving and joinery including air conditioning. What one can do with money! Serious money! The history of chess is all there except perhaps the truly early days. A history of draughts could start with the Lewis chess men of 1160 (allegedly) as there were draughts men as well as chessmen. And whilst some of the draughts books I have browsed like to take 'proto-draughts' back to the cavemen it is a blessing Australian draughts starts very much later.

Who else could help? I was very impressed to see that draughts championship in the Hotel Metropole in Launceston 1927. Chess could not match that though Melbourne 1922 rivaled it. Just thinking of Tony Wright. Do you know him and could he help? I met him once in 2003 at Panthers. He wrote all those chess games history books that I could never buy. He printed them in small runs as is the clever way of the big chess writers of today and what we want is a draughts history lover.

And, is it D. Verbuk of 3/40 Alexandra Street East St Kildare 3183 Victoria? His email is [dverbuk@hotmail.com](mailto:dverbuk@hotmail.com) and I have emailed DV who is linked to the Australian Draughts Federation. I hope a reply comes. It hasn't 1/9/21

Some of my photocopies include:-

- 1.Rules of Tasmanian Chess Club 1854
- 2.Melbourne's Adelaide by telegraph 1868
- 3.Adelaide Jubilee Chess Congress 1887
- 4.Australian Chess Annual 1896
- 5.Adelaide Chess Club 1864-1914
- 6.The Dux 1914
- 7.History of Queensland Chess 1918
- 8.70 Years of Victorian Chess 1926
- 9.NSW Chess Ch'ship 1934

Most of the above was sent to Rick Torning.

Apart from No.1 & No. 4 the others do not mention draughts. My personal index of ACR & CW has no mention of draughts. This is quite rough but drawn up over a serious read of the 1929-67 volumes. There does not appear to be any 'decent' article on draughts BUT my index does not refer to draughts in the magazines and it is necessary to check Purdy's indexes which are helpful but not as helpful as looking at every page! (10,000+ pages ca @ 300/year for 38 years)

Of the big collectors Ian Rogers and Robert Jamieson may know of Australian draughts material if only for their discussions with Lloyd Fell who was Australian draughts champion before changing to chess. What a pity Fell was not interviewed and I remember him well on my rare visits to Sydney Chess. A kind looking man but I was too shy to talk to him. He always wore bib and braces on his trousers.

It got me thinking about chess and draughts bibliographies and I must look at Betts and Lusi for draughts. Memories sometimes change and I was certain that Peter Wagg (the Tasmanian) wrote me of a volume about draughts back in the 70's. To show how wrong my memory was, here is what he part wrote in his letter of 27<sup>th</sup> February, 1979:-....

*"However as luck would have it whilst waiting in the Archives for a newspaper to be transported from a lower level, I glanced through some filing cards and came across an entry headed "chess". This index, I was informed, was part of the WAYN index compiled from Tasmanian newspapers (c. 1810-c. 1855) by a rather eccentric librarian in the 1950s! From this I obtained the reference to the Launceston Chess Club (1835) (which I was able to trace) and another to a match between Launceston and Green Ponds 1847 which I have as yet been unable to uncover (Green Ponds was a municipality adjoining Launceston). It also mentioned 1832 and the 1844 match between Sydney and Hobart Town. From the relatively comprehensive nature of this index I would almost categorically say that 1832 would be the earliest reference in Tasmania but perhaps some obscure diary or document mentions chess..."*



Now I thought the WAYN index was about draughts which shows something about the way my brain thinks now. Auto suggestion? BUT that said it would be useful to look at the WAYN index for draughts! As a change I am sifting through the first volumes of letters from John van Manen 1975-79. This gives me two reasons-one, to look for draughts and two to keep the chess brain ticking over. I have now completed that with no draughts luck.

Other sources would be the Melbourne Chess Club Minute Books (hard going - I have read them) and the Australian Chess Club Minute Book which I have. There are excellent articles on Chess and Draughts in the Melbourne Argus from late 1855 to mid 1856. Also the Leader, Australasian and Weekly Times have been pasted into books at the slv for reuse. Sydney has a full set of the Australasian.

*The Rev. J. Milne was the Presbyterian Minister in Grenfell from 1892 to 1895.*

*Mr. Watts no record at all, very difficult without initials. There were Watts on the land but miles from town.*

John and I made some inroads on the history of chess but this letter never appeared anywhere. It may be an extract can go in the draughts history. Of course we do not know who were draughts or chess players but generally a member could play both games. I should tell you that the history of Australian chess has not been written. Many years ago (the 70's) we hoped Cecil Purdy would write it and John van Manen pressed him about it. One day he, Cecil and Garry Koshnitsky were talking and Kosh said to Cecil if you don't write it then I will. Nice words but not good from old men. It was to be called 'The Saga of Australian Chess' by Cecil. He started it but that was all. I wrote 'The History of Australian Chess Problems' some years ago and you can see it on the ozproblems website. It is fairly ordinary. The history of Australian Chess should be written by a player. You could say Cathy Chua covered the years in her book 'Australian Chess at the Top' 1998 but it isn't a history. What we must try and dig out is an old Ms on Draughts. There could just be one somewhere.

I was disappointed not to find a draughts reference in John van Manen's first letters and will return to the Chess World indexes by Cecil. Have just done that-not promising.



**WAREO, PAPUA-NEW GUINEA**, 1944-03-219 Members from the 37/52<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion play a game of Draughts under the Light of a Tilley Lamp at B Company, 4<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance Rest Camp

From Trove a sample -

Arie van der Stoep wrote an article in 2007 on Chess and Alquerque and the relationship with draughts. He also wrote :-...*chess historians have unfortunately neglected comparative research* We will look at his website. In his 1984 book Arie mildly criticizes Murray's conclusions about draughts.

**THE GAME OF DRAUGHTS.**  
**By O. R. BERTRAM (Brisbane).**

**INTRODUCTION.**

The origin of this recreation is lost in the "infinite azure of the past," but far back in the world's history antiquarians find traces of its existence. On the walls of his palace King Rameses is represented playing at draughts with the ladies of his court, and many other monumental inscriptions show that the game must have been familiar to the Egyptians as early as the year 2000 B.C.

From Egypt the pastime was brought into ancient Greece, and there apparently became popular, since mention is made of it both by poet and philosopher. Homer, in his description of Minerva's arrival at the palace of Ulysses, in Ithaca, says:—"There she found haughty suitors, some of them amusing themselves before the gates with draughts." And Plato thus refers to it:—

Socrates: "I cannot say that I have a high opinion of your teachers."

Alcibiades: "Why, are they not able to teach?"

Socrates: "They could not teach you how to play at draughts."

The oldest known draughts treatise is one by Anton Torquemada, who published a quarto volume on the subject at Valencia, Spain, in 1547. Since that date many other works have appeared in Spain, France, Holland, Germany, Italy, Britain, and America. At the present time there are several periodicals devoted to the elucidation of the game, and numerous newspapers set apart a column for illustrations of games, problems, &c.

Devotees of Dameh can therefore claim that their worship has the sanction of antiquity, the support of a not inconsiderable literature, the countenance of an extensive practice; and, without rating it higher than a mere amusement, one may say that the playing of draughts fosters no evil, destroys no good, but affords to many an innocent and a pleasurable pastime for a leisure hour.

Queenslander (Brisbane, Qld. : 1866 - 1939), Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February, 1890, page 311

I won't debate all the historical claims in Mr. Bertram's article but I like the Egyptian start.

#### DRAUGHTS HISTORY OF QUEENSLAND.

"Oblique" recently had cause to inquire for certain details respecting the history of the Brisbane Draughts Club, but found that there are absolutely no records beyond those of comparatively recent date. It appears that the present hon. secretary of the club (Mr. E. H. Ridings) who is anxious that the history and records of the club, and of the game in Queensland should be duly preserved, has for some time past endeavoured to trace their whereabouts—if they ever did exist in proper official form—but so far success has not rewarded his efforts. That draughts has been played in Brisbane since the days when it was an infant settlement seems to be undoubted, but when the Brisbane Draughts Club, or the club from which it sprang, had its genesis, and where the father pioneers of the now great State, who brought with them from overseas their love of the ancient game, were wont to meet, and again happily wage their battles on the checkered field of the dambrod, and what were their names and what the quality of their play, have seemingly not yet been recorded. There are, no doubt, many players and other readers of this column who could throw some light on these matters. Their information would be appreciated by the draughts club officials,

**Brisbane Courier 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 1921**

A sad read above. The problem then was information gathered was given to one individual who intended to do "something" with it and then he died. (It wouldn't be a 'she' as she would have done something useful with it). Anyway the dead man's family took one look at it and saw it had no monetary value and consigned it to fire or the rubbish bin. Trove looks like the closest historical draughts history we will get and thus it has to be sifted out. Chess was fortunate to have the late John van Manen collecting tournament records and passing them onto the late Ken Fraser where they remain in the State Library of Victoria today. It is amazing that "Oblique" the Brisbane Courier draughts editor then 3 December 1921 could not do better. He was a clever editor.

## THE OLDEST GAME.

The general belief is held that chess is the oldest game in the world, and it is asserted that its origin is lost in the mist of antiquity. As a matter of fact, draughts, as a game, is immeasurably older, and even the quite modern, to us, game of halma may be older still.

Chess in British history can only be traced back to our own sixth century, although it is claimed that China played it centuries before our era. There have lately been added to the Egyptian rooms in the British Museum draught-boards and draughtsmen which are proved to be of a period as far back as 1050 B.C., or over 3,900 years old.

These have been taken from tombs, as it was customary to bury a multitude of articles, food, vessels, furniture, gems, and games with the dead for their advantage in a future state.

Many of the draughtsmen are well-carved heads of animals, but several sets are exactly the same shape as the halma man used to-day, a sort of square pyramid and there seems reason to believe that these may have been used for another game than draughts.

In an extremely wonderful papyrus which was presented to the nation by King Edward VII., and is now at Bloomsbury, where the new galleries bearing his name are open, an Egyptian queen of the period of 1050 B.C. is seen playing a solitary game of what looks like draughts, so that "solitaire," or "patience," must have been new under the sun.

North West Post (Tas.) 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 1915 p.3

Not completely convincing but the papyrus given by Edward 7<sup>th</sup> was a wonderful gift to Britain



## CHess AND DRAUGHTS

(By 'CHECKMATE')

### Origin of the Game.

The game of chess appears to have been played some 1400 years ago, some having been traced back to the 6th century (being mentioned in Persian and Indian literature of this period). A much longer period has been assigned to it, but extensions of its history as far back as the siege of Troy or ancient Egypt are now considered fanciful. Since the earliest known times of chess the board has not altered, and very little alteration has been made in the men although their power movements have been modified. Starting in India, as far as records prove, chess went early to Persia. The Mohammedan Arabs, invading Persia in the 7th century, found the game well established and made it their own. It spread independently to the Far East, and possibly over the border regions to Russia. At the period mentioned the Arabs took the game to Italy and Spain, and then the game advanced to northern Europe, reaching Britain at the time of the Norman Conquest. By the 13th century chess seems to have been played all over western Europe in a form little different from that originally played in Persia. Two centuries later the pieces—queen and bishops—gained greater powers, and in the 16th century the manoeuvre "castling" came into existence, also the pawns received the privileges of a double march on their first move, and so the game then is the same as played at the present time. The Arabs reached a comparatively high pitch of skill at chess in the 9th and 10th centuries. But the great progress in the 15th and 16th centuries was due to European, mainly Italian, brains. The next big advance was in the 18th century, Italy gradually yielding the lead to France, England's contribution to the game began early in the 19th century, and Howard Staunton was supreme until, in 1851, Adolf Anderssen came to London and won the first great international tournament. Since the sensational ad-

Warwick Daily News 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1940

Warwick Daily News 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1940



tournament. Since the sensational advent of Paul Morphy from America in 1858, the making of chess history has been due to masters of many nationalities. The title of world's champion was successfully held by two players of Jewish extraction, William Steinitz and Emanuel Lasker, the latter of whom was champion from 1894 until 1921. Capablanca, a Cuban, then held it until 1927, when Dr. Alekhine, the Russian, defeated him. There are national and international control boards for chess tournaments, the game in England being under the auspices of the British Chess Federation.

#### **Draughts.**

Draughts is an extremely ancient game. Although no records are available, it is considered to be the possible forerunner of chess. Forms of the game were known in ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, while it is definitely proved that the game was played in the mid-17th century similar to the game as

are finding experienced players who are willing to set the ball rolling and also teach those willing to learn. Experienced players of repute who are temporarily stationed in Warwick and are sure to be of valuable assistance to the club are Messrs. Freeman and Mortley. Should an exhibition match be arranged by these two it is certain than many of the finer points of the game will be shown and will be an educational lesson to all.

played to-day. The game is known in practically every country as draughts, except in American, where it goes under the name of "checkers."

#### **Local Doings.**

Quite a large number of experienced players have signified their intention of supporting the club and promised their support at the forthcoming meeting. This being the case, Warwick has passed over its biggest obstacle, as the initial stages of a club

## Chess and Draughts.

"The play is the thing."  
—SHAKESPEARE.

### A BIT OF HISTORY.

There can be no doubt that the scientific games of chess and draughts were introduced into the colony at a very early date. Then, as now, perhaps, chess was played in many private houses, in clubs, and in the better class of hotels, while draughts was not only played in these places, but in workshops in meal hours, or after work, and even under the gum trees in the bush. In many places the checker board has been marked out on the ground, and shepherds and other workmen have manufactured draughtsmen out of pieces of cork, leather, or wood, or have even used shells or pebbles for the purpose. When the Sydney School of Arts was opened a table in the reading-room was set apart for chess or draughts players, and one or two boards with a set of chess and draughtsmen. By degrees the votaries of these games became numerous; and, several superior players having been added to the lists, a small room was set apart for these games. Early in the fifties a movement was made toward forming a club for the purpose of purchasing a sufficient number of boards and men and other conveniences. In 1857 the School of Arts Chess and Draughts Club was formally inaugurated; and the members immediately began agitating for a larger room. This agitation was kept up so persistently that notice was taken of it in the annual report of the School of Arts in 1859. But it was some time before it had any practical effect. At last, however, the committee set apart a room on the ground floor, which was more conveniently situated than the old room, but was still too small; and the same complaint attaches to the room in which the club at present holds its meetings, and into which it was shifted to make way for the Technical School. The chess room is little better than a passage, being about 10ft wide, 36ft long, and 11ft high. Two tables run down the centre of this confined space, affording room for about twenty boards, while the members of the club average about eighty or ninety. It will be seen from this that at times the room is inconveniently and unhealthily crowded by players alone; and there is no room whatever for spectators when any interesting events are to come off. In spite, however,

events are to come off. In spite, however, of the treatment which the Chess and Draughts Club has received from the School of Arts committee, every player in or near Sydney, with scarcely an exception, either is, or has been, a member of this club.

When the first intercolonial chess match with Victoria was spoken of, Mr. R. Smith, with a view to obtain the strongest possible team, formed the New South Wales Chess Association; and many persons hitherto unattached joined. In spite of this the players selected to compete in the match, viz., Messrs. Ryan, Smith, Heydon, MacRae, Hollander, Mark Russell, and the Rev. Mr. Pendrill, with Messrs. Lea and Brown emergency men, were all members of the School of Arts club; so that the match was practically between that club and the entire strength of Victoria. Among the chief chess players who have belonged to the club may be mentioned Mr. Hollander, who 30 years ago had no rival. He used to play simultaneous games, giving his opponents a rook, and was rarely beaten. By the time that the first intercolonial was played, he had fallen off considerably, having been out of play for 8 or 10 years. Mark Russell, too, in his prime was perhaps the equal of any man now in New South Wales. He was a great favorite, and cheerfully instructed young members. He died a few years ago. Mr. Vincent Brown, now at Bourke, was for many years an energetic secretary of the club, and a good player. Messrs. Wallach, Crane (Stipendiary Magistrate), Ryan (still a member), Field, Slade, Adams (one of the founders), P. B. Walker, Myers, Thomas, Lea (now said to be the oldest member), Tallidge, and later on Messrs. D. Heiman, G. H. D. Gossip, W. Crane, jun., T. Piper, and others, from whom a very strong team could be picked, may also be mentioned. Mr. Robert Smith has been, perhaps, the most liberal patron of chess, not only in New South Wales, but in Australia; and when the old Sydney Chess Club was first formed, he purchased the boards, men, and other requisites. But, in spite of his efforts, the club collapsed, and the School of Arts once more became the only club in Sydney. On the draughts side, among the strong players may be mentioned Charles and James Mackay (who have passed away), Messrs. Reid, Drury, Morrison (a very old member), Stormont (another old member), Ewing, Parton, Buckle, and Illingworth. Outside the club, Mr. Miller, of the Railway, is perhaps one

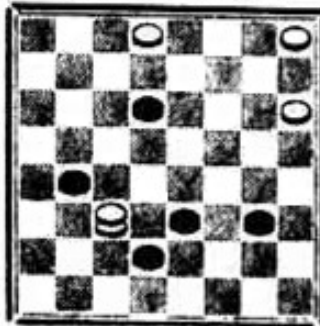
# Draughts.

By "DELIQUE."

ANY contribution by Newell W. Banks to the long list of modern problems merits the closest consideration, for Banks is not merely the match champion of the United States of America, and that country's nomination as contender for the world's title, but a master player with a remarkably long record of successes, and but one reverse—that which he received at the hands of Stewart, of Scotland, the world's champion, a few months ago. The Banksian position published to-day is an exceedingly useful study.

## PROBLEM NO. 194.

By Newell W. Banks, America.  
White, 21, 29, 31; king 11.



Black, 7, 9, 10, 16, 22.  
Black to move and draw.

## SOLUTION OF NO. 194.

By H. C. Harteborn (U.S.A.)

Black men on 2, 13; king 24.

White men on 12, 20; king 21.

White to move and draw.

31	29*	24	19	30	20*	18	20	11	2
13	18	20	16*	13	10	10	11	13	11
25	30*	19	15	26	30	19	13	Drawn.	

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

C.L.B. (Beaudesert).—Play received. See to-night's "Sports Referee" column.

"Baxon" (Cooran).—Solutions of Nos. 194 and 193 correct.

## EDITOR TETZEL WINS.

At Cedar Point (U.S.A.) recently, Editor M. D. Tetzel, of the "American Chess Monthly" won the following ending from Lieber:—

Black (Tetzel), 1, 2, 7, 11; king 20.

White, 22, 29, 30; king 2.

Black moved and won as follows:—  
20-22, 22-18 (22-18 drawn), 14, 24, 24, 12-3, 20-22, 3-10, 25-13, Tetzel won.

## JUAN GARCIA CANALEJAS.

In the course of an interesting and instructive article in the September issue

of the "American Chess Monthly" on one of the personalities of the game—the ancient expert and author Juan Garcia Canalejas—that eminent author and player-problemist-historian—J. Alexander, of Birmingham—writes:—

"For us the outstanding name in foreign checkers is that of Canalejas, and probably with justice. No doubt this fame hinges on the erroneous credit for the stroke on the 'Bristol Cross' (also known as the 'Spanish' opening), which really should go to his ancestor Montero. But apart from this he was probably the culminating point of Spanish checkers, the form which, for historical reasons, is nearest akin to our own. He is the great figure of Continental play."

"The great poverty of checker literature in a country whose civil life was so well developed as XVI-XVII. century Spain was perhaps due to the strong background of professionalism in the game. To-day playing for money is wisely out of fashion. Indeed, some countries (France and Spain) prohibit this, but at that time it was even the rule. There was then no competition play; dog had to eat dog to get along at all. On the other hand, only the professional could know much about the game, and only the natural professional was likely to tell one all he knew. Thus authorship was an accident. Montero rushed out his book to make some money or to catch a patron, while Valle was apparently an amateur, but a genius, with an eye to confirming some glory earned. As I conceive it, Canalejas was that unfortunate being, a professional at the top of the tree, the Checker Dempsey of the time. No rival was in sight; the smelter does not curl in their tails; he saw his way to a bit of bookmaking, trying to capture 'eagles' by selling all he knew. I am not sure that his bookmaking was on the whole successful (financially)."

## GREATER BRISBANE CHAMPION.

In the report of the Brisbane Draughts Club final round last week, the runner-up, Mr. J. G. Harefall (State champion), was referred to as being also champion of "South Brisbane." He is, of course, champion of Greater Brisbane, as well as Queensland champion. There is no "South Brisbane" championship at present but the new South Side Club can be expected soon to do something in that direction.

Sir Hilar Haggard is still to the fore as a novelist. His "Queen of the Dawn," a love story of Ancient Egypt, will be published shortly.

Mr. F. Brett Young, who is a prominent member of the English colony at Capri, has a ghost story, "Cold Harbour," coming from Collins.

Brisbane Courier 29<sup>th</sup> November, 1924 Great article on Spain in the 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

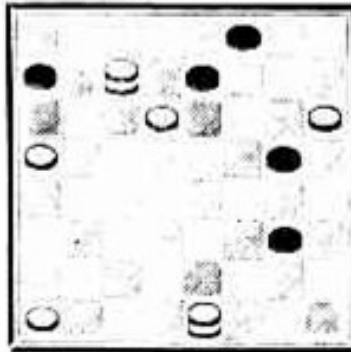
# DRAUGHTS.

By "OBLIQUE."

**T**ODAY'S problem setting is by J. V. Kari, the South Australian master, who has several times been champion of his State, and has more than once made determined bids for the Australian title. Mr Kari is the outstanding personality in South Australian draughts, and in that State his influence on the game has been of inestimable value.

## PROBLEM No. 301.

By J. V. Kari (Port Adelaide).  
Black—Men, 3, 5, 7, 16, 24.



White—Men, 10, 12, 13, 22; kings, 6, 31.  
White to move and win.

## SOLUTION OF No. 301.

By J. A. Borcham (New Zealand).  
Black—Men, 11, 12, 13, 14, 22; King, 27.  
White—Men, 19, 20, 21, 30; kings, 2, 3.  
White to move and win.  
1. 8 30 23 8 9 22 26 18 15  
13 17 27 11 14 17 9 13 11 9  
8 15 2 6 21 14 26 21 13 6  
22 26 17 22  
And White wins by First Position.

## A CORRESPONDENCE PARTIE.

In this finely-played "Edinburgh" (23-19) game, fought in Bryant's correspondence tournament, the opponents were J. Thurlow (London) and J. Jamie (Kirkcaldie). Thurlow had the Black pieces. The score, with notes by F. W. Blad, appeared in the August issue of the "Draughts Review."

8 12 14 14 31 15 20 16 15 18  
23 14 8 11 25 19d) 11 30 22 15  
5 9 29 25h) 7 10 31 27 31 27  
26 23 4 8 14 7 32 18 23 19  
19 14 14 9 7 10 19 12 27 23  
30 26 16 16c) 25 22e) 10 15 7 5  
11 16 24 15 5 14 27 23 21 26  
22 17 11 18 34 20 30 24 15 11  
13 22 23 14 19 24 12 8 16 7  
26 10 1 5 32 28 24 27 3 17  
6 22a) 27 23 2 7 8 3 13 32  
25 18 7 11 36 19 27 31 21 17  
9 13 26 24 7 11 3 7 22 26  
And draw.

(a) 7-14 is considered the best take.  
(b) This position can come up from an Glasgow opening colour reversed.  
(c) 16-20 is a little stronger. O. Jeart won a game with it in the 1926 English tourney. R. D. Yates also played it against J. Wylie to draw.  
(d) 24-19, 15-24, 32-28, &c., is also a good line.  
(e) In a correspondence game between T. Dryburgh and R. G. McMillan the play went 8-4, 2-9, 23-29, 16-14, 14-17, 34-11, &c. to a draw.

## A TUREVITY

The following "Arrshire (400)" game was played by D. Calderwood (Glasgow) and W. O'Malley in the International tournament for the championship of New Zealand last Easter. It serves to show how an early-on weak move may lead to the winning of a good game. The move was by Mr Calderwood in the "Pictorial Times":—  
11 15 9 13a) 3 8 8 22 5 9  
24 20 22 19c) 23 19c) 24 17 24 17  
6 13 15 22 11 16d) 13 27 8 12  
24 28 25 18 20 11 26 29 11 14  
Then 15-17, 21-14, 6-15, 14-6, 15-34, 2-4, and Black won.  
(a) As this move scored for Mr Calderwood in the final of the Tourney tourney, I decided to try again.  
(b) This reply is as good as any.  
(c) Surely my opponent here made an oversight, judging by his time play. All the good score he subsequently made throughout the tourney.  
(d) After these exchanges there is a fight left for White.

## STATE TOURNEY.

The meeting of R. R. Clifford and T. G. Richards in the Queensland championship tourney resulted in a win for the first named by 2-0 and 4 games drawn. The tourney final is now being played by A. Mullin (Bolder) and Mr Clifford. So far three drawn games have resulted. In the minor tourney J. McQuinn and R. Montgomery have each won 4 games. R. Hughes has the bye. J. P. Burns is awaiting the winner of the above section.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS

O.W.E. (Kelvin Grove).—You made a good attempt at No. 301. For instance, you will find by analysis that a move of 7-2 is the only move that leads to "Bill's Manual" is a useful little work. If you were to write to the Editor of the Queensland Draughts Association (Mr. R. Montgomery, Alsatia, Fitzroy-road, Annerley) he would no doubt be able to supply you with the address of some one from whom you could hire it or some other suitable book on the game.  
"Saxon" (Cowan).—No. 301 O.K. In No. 302 have a look at 7-3 instead of 7-2, and then proceed 3-8 and 8-12. Thanks for the play.  
H.M. (South Brisbane).—Many thanks.  
J.M. (Ipswich).—Thank you for the page and comments.  
T.O.R. (Ipswich).—Duly received and, of course, will be used as far as possible. Thank you.

Brisbane Courier 20<sup>th</sup> September, 1930 "Oblique" is one of the best editors.



#### THE ANTIQUITY OF DRAUGHTS.

Mr. W. S. Branch, of Cheltenham, whose remarks on the antiquity of chess were quoted some time ago, is an authority also on the history of the sister game. "The draughts," he says, "of ancient times was a very different game from ours. There were different forms of draughts in different countries, and the moves and mode of capturing were more or less different from our game. Modern draughts began about 1300 A.D.—that makes it an old game, but it is modern by comparison. The ancient Egyptians used dice with their draughtsmen, so the game was more like backgammon; and they used boards with less than sixty-four squares. At a later time the Arabs and Moors had a game which, though played on a board of lines instead of squares, was more like our draughts; and I feel sure myself that it was this game, altered to suit chess-boards—which gave it the 'double-corner'—that grew into modern draughts. And modern draughts is as old as modern chess; for chess was revolutionised (not the board at all, but some of the moves and powers of the pieces) in the fifteenth century. Ordinary chess-players of to-day know nothing of the old form of the game, and if it was put before them they would say it was 'quite a different game'—they could play it without fresh instructions and practice. So with ancient and modern draughts."

Maitland Weekly Mercury 8<sup>th</sup> April, 1905

#### THE AGE OF DRAUGHTS.

About the latest theory as to the age of draughts is that of Mr. Addams-Williams, who traces the history of the game back to the days of 1600 B.C.—of a far back Queen of Egypt, daughter of Thothmea I. Some of her draughtsmen and part of her draughts board were discovered about nine years ago, and were described in *The Times*. The same writer gives 1647 as the date of the earliest known work on modern draughts, and names Spain as the country in which it was published. The different openings began to have names about 1820, chiefly in Scotland and the North of England.

Maitland Weekly Mercury 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1896

# DRAUGHTS :

By  
"Double  
Corner"

**I**f you wish to excel at the game, you must take up the study of problems. A well-known authority says: "Without a systematic study of practical problems, no one is likely to become an expert at the game of draughts." The beginner should play over the author's solution, analyse, and beat it if he can. The same process should be followed with analyses and games. A little perseverance in this direction will surprise him by the improvement he makes, and he will find his interest in the games quite as keen as that of the crossboard player. Remember, Staunton's chess aphorism—which equally applies to draughts—"Think what a lot of games Philidor must have lost before he became champion!" Therefore, if you lose a few games to-day, it is quite possible you will win a few to-morrow, so keep on trying. Players are somewhat inclined to underestimate the value of problem work. The study of this is extremely useful for the purpose of developing and increasing strength in practical play; and it requires the greatest exactitude of calculation to make sure of a plan to be adopted in actual play. The study of compositions when the utmost power of the forces has to be employed in the fewest number of moves, is therefore a splendid training.

Beginners' Problem, No. 11 ("The Compound Exchange"): Black: Men, 10, 11, 14; King, 7.

White: Men, 16, 20. Kings: 21, 23.

Black to play and win.

Solution to "The Double Exchange."  
Black Men: 16, 20; Kings: 9, 11.  
White Men: 18, 23, 28, 32. White to play and draw. Black's last move was a plausible, but weak one, viz.: 8—11 (8—12 would have won by 18—15, 16—19, etc.). Now White draws by 28—24, 20—27, 18—15, 11—18, 23—5. Draw.

## CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNEY.

Plans for the holding of the Australian championship tourney in Hobart.

## PROBLEM SOLUTION.

No. 9 (Elliott).—Black: Men, 6, 14; Kings, 12, 27. White: Men, 19; Kings, 4, 13, 22.

Black to play and win.

27—24. 19—15. 34—19. 15—11. 19—16. 11—7. 14—18. 22—15. 6—9. 13—6. 16—11. 15—8. 12—1. Black wins.

Solutions received from M. M. Benjamin (Hobart), "Two for One" (Sandy Bay), "D.K." (Launceston), H. Kaden (Adventure Bay), "Way-back" (Mt. Seymour), W. H. Robertson (Geeveston).

## CRITICISM.

Mr. W. Thurlow, of Launceston, writes as follows re problem No. 153: "This problem has been well dealt with, but there is no draw for White on any of the play. The position at the sixth move of trunk line of Mr. Moore's play is:—Black: Men, 12, 13, 20; King, 31. White: Men, 22; Kings, 11, 23. Black to play. Instead of 20—24 as given by Mr. Moore, I submit that 12—16 will win as follows: 12—16. 11—15 (a). 20—24. 23—27 (b). 16—20. 27—32. 31—26. 22—18. 26—23. 18—14. 24—27, etc. Black wins.

(a) If 11—8. 20—24. 5—12. 16—20. 12—16. 24—28. 16—19. 28—32, etc. Black wins.

(b) 15—19. 31—27. Black wins, or 15—11. 16—20, etc., black wins.

"H.K." (of Launceston) comments as follows on the same problem: "I cannot agree with Mr. Benjamin that white can draw, on the 26—22 line of problem No. 153. I think that 12—16 at sixth move (instead of 20—24 as played by Mr. Moore) will win for black by 12—16. 11—15. 20—24. 23—27. 16—20. 27—32. 31—26, etc. This is given just as trunk line which, of course, admits of variations, but 12—16, and later 16—20 secures the safe passage of black, and he must then win."

Hobart Mercury 21/12/1935 Draughts problems clearly helped one be a better player.

## DRAUGHTS.

Another fine roll up of members last Friday night resulted in some very good draughts, with quite a few surprising results. The detailed scores are not yet to hand but will be published at a later date. Surprisingly good form has been shown by some of our new members.

On Saturday afternoon at the giant draughts board, Mr. A. Cathro created quite a surprise when he won brilliantly from Mr. A. Perry, but lost to that grand old player, Mr. A. Rowbotham. Mr. G. Kirkup and Mr. A. Turner cut even, winning one game each. Mr. Kirkup's play showed that he has quite regained his old form. Mr. J. Haugh, Helidon, was a most interested spectator and on Sunday in a few games he clearly demonstrated that he is still a wonderfully good player.

Matters in connection with the town v. country match are progressing very favourably and all members are requested to be in attendance at the hall on Friday night.

The draw for next Saturday is: Mr. F. Knight v. Mr. S. Gordon; A. H. Bainbridge v. J. Williams.

### DRAUGHTS NEWS.

Recently, at the opening of an Aberdeenshire city and county gathering, Councillor Maitland said he had lately been looking into the history of the game of draughts, and he had found that the game was probably the most ancient of all the games which were known amongst them. In fact, it was so ancient that if we were to state that Adam and Eve had played the game in the Garden of Eden, he would defy anyone to prove differently. (Laughter.) All, at any rate, would admit that it would have been a most suitable game for the size of the company. (Renewed laughter.)

Their native dourness is what makes Scotchmen good checker players; what a Yankee would call stick-to-it-iveness, the faculty of remaining by a task until it is accomplished, without a thought of surrendering to its difficulties. The Scotch, as a people, love organisation, for its own sake. They form athletic clubs, checker, and chess clubs, and play games as they work, with dourness. The cities of Scotland each have a number of checker clubs, the members playing scheduled games for trophies, etc.

The longest time on record taken to play one game in a match for a title was a "Maid of the Mill," played between Wyllie and Martins, at Glasgow, for the world's championship and a heavy stake, in 1867, the game being won by Martins—seven hours and a half being the time. In the 1896 tourney, Willie Campbell and champion Jordan devoted six hours and three-quarters to a hard-played game.

Toowoomba Chronicle 21<sup>st</sup> March, 1930

Australian Town & Country Journal 26<sup>th</sup> May, 1900 - Councillor Maitland was a funny guy. The late John van Manen always accused me of wanting a chess tournament when Captain Cook entered Botany Bay in 1770.





**Painting by Louis Leopold Boilly (1761-1845) French painter**

*The English Game*.—Draughts as played now in English-speaking countries is a game for two persons with a board and twenty-four men—twelve white and twelve black—which at starting are placed as follows: the black men on the squares numbered 1 to 12, and the white men on the squares numbered 21 to 32 on the diagram below. In printed diagrams the men are usually shown on the white squares for the sake of clearness, but in actual play the black squares are generally used now. In playing on the black squares the board must be placed with a black square in the left-hand corner. The game is played by moving a man forward, one square at a time except when making a capture, along the diagonals to the right or left. Thus a white man placed on square 18 in the diagram can move to 15 or 14. Each player moves alternately, black always moving first. If a player touch a piece he must move that piece and no other. If the piece cannot be moved, or if it is not the player's turn to move, he forfeits the game. As soon as a man reaches one of the squares farthest from his side of the board, he is "crowned" by having one of the unused or captured men of his own colour placed on him, and becomes a "king." A king has the power of moving and taking backwards as well as forwards.

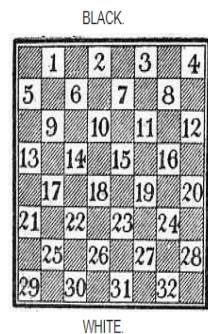
If a man is on the square adjacent to an opponent's man, and there is an unoccupied square beyond, the unprotected man must be captured and removed from the board. Thus, if there is a white man on square 18, and a black man on square 14, square 9 being vacant, and white having to move, he jumps over 14 and remains on square 9, and the man on 14 is taken up.

If two or more men are so placed that one square intervenes between each they may all be taken at one move. Thus if white having to move has a man on 28, and black men on 24, 16 and 8, the intermediate squares and square 3 being vacant, white could move from 28 to 3, touching 19 and 12 en route, and take the men on 24, 16, and 8; but if there is a piece on 7 and square 10 is vacant, the piece on 7 cannot be captured, for becoming a king ends the move.

It is compulsory to take if possible. If a player can take a man (or a series of men) but makes a move that does not capture (or does not capture all that is possible), his adversary may allow the move to stand, or he may have the move retracted and compel the player to take, or he may allow the move to stand and remove the piece, that neglected to capture from the board (called "huffing"). "Huff and move" go together, *i.e.* the player who huffs then makes his move. When one player has lost all his pieces, or has all those left on the board blocked, he loses the game.

The game is drawn when neither of the players has sufficient advantage in force or position to enable him to win.

The losing game, or "first off the board," is a form of draughts not much practised now by expert draught players. The player wins who gets all his pieces taken first. There is no "huffing"; a player who can take must do so.



The three following games are typical examples of the play arising from three of the most frequently played openings:—

Game No. 1.—“Ayrshire Lassie” Opening.

a 11-15	25-18	10-15	22-17	b 15-18	24-6
a 24-20	3-8	23-19	13-22	24-20	2-9
8-11	26-22	6-10	26-17	18-27	17-10
28-24	5-9	{c & d} 27-23	11-16	31-24	8-11
9-13	30-26	9-14	20-11	16-23	Drawn.
22-18	1-5	18-9	7-16	20-16	R. Jordan.
15-22	32-28	5-14	29-25	12-19	

a. 11-15, 24-20 forms the “Ayrshire Lassie” opening, so named by Wyllie. It is generally held to admit of unusual scope for the display of critical and brilliant combinations.

b. 16-20, 25-22, 20-27, 31-24, 8-11, 17-13, 2-6, 21-17, 14-21, 22-17, 21-25, 17-14, 10-17, 19-1. Drawn. R. Jordan.



By [Eric Wilson](#) Contributed By [National Gallery of Australia](#) [Accession No: NGA 63.116]  
 (oil on canvas  
 98 x 112 cm  
 Gift of the Memorial School of Arts, Liverpool NSW 1963)

**A wonderful painting of two older men of different size at the great game, ca. 1933.**



# DRAUGHTS -- By "Double Corner"

THE "two move restriction" style of play which is used in all important matches and tournaments in Australia was first introduced in an important match in England in 1891, by the late Messrs. Scarrington and McKeivie. The restriction consists of balloting the opening move for Black, and the opening reply for White. At first the innovation met with considerable opposition, the late James Wyllie (world's champion), stating that there were "plenty of undiscovered lines in the standard openings without forcing players to adopt weak games and absurd replies." Although Mr. Wyllie was right in the main, the standard openings had long been useless for match play, as experts clung to hackneyed lines for safety. It was also felt among players that 11-15 had received far too much attention in the books, to the neglect of the other opening moves for Black. The new style steadily gained in popularity until it was regularly used in all club matches and tournament play in England, the Dominions and in America. It was found that it opened up lines of play undreamt of by players and demonstrated clearly that before its introduction only the outside edge of the game's possibilities was being touched. With the mastering of the "two move restriction" openings, however, further restrictions are considered necessary. This has resulted in the introduction of the "three move restriction," which consists of balloting the opening, and second moves for Black, and the opening reply

for White. This style of play is used extensively in America, and is gradually spreading to England and the Dominions. At the meeting of the Australian Draughts Association held in Hobart last year, the introduction of the "three move restriction" was suggested, instead of the "barred" or weak openings. In order to separate two players when 10 games had resulted in an equal score. The "barred" openings give one of the players a "distinct advantage which it was considered would not occur with the new style of restriction." The matter was deferred until the next meeting of the Association which is to be held in Sydney prior to the opening of the Australian championship congress at Easter.

## Notes

The annual general meeting of the Hobart Central Draughts Club is to be held at the club room, City Hall, on Thursday evening. Important business is to be discussed.

The proposed visit of a team of players from the North-West Coast to Hobart during the Centenary Regatta week is causing considerable interest in the South. A fine match should result.

Tasmania's representation in the Australian Championship Congress (to be held in Sydney at Easter), is expected to be finalised shortly. Mr. Geo. Moodie (Tasmanian champion) has been invited by the Tasmanian Draughts Association

to officially represent the State. Several other players are also likely to make the trip.

A draughts club is being formed at Bagdad and gives promise of being most successful.

A reply has not yet been received from Newell W. Banks (the American match champion) as to whether or not he will accept the proposals cubed by the Tasmanian Draughts Association for his suggested tour of Australia and Tasmania.

The only players who play "originally"

## Problem Solution

No. 66 (Harland). Black—Men: 3, 11, 14, 21, 22, 23. King: 18. White—Men: 19, 29, 32. Kings: 4, 8, 10, 12. Black to play and win.

22—26, 10—17, 18—15, 19—10, 11—16, 12—19, 3—8, 4—11, 26—31, 10—26, 31—8. Black wins.

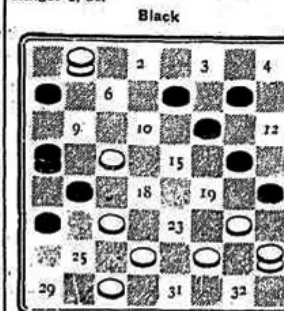
Solutions received from: M. M. Benjamin (Hobart), "H.K." (Launceston), J. Hancock (Hobart).

are the novices who are ignorant of the rules and customs of the game. The moment they are taught by a superior player how to move their pieces with some degree of precision, they lose their character for "originality." Knowledge, in the opinion of some, is a crime that ought to be stamped out, and the player who boasts of his ignorance and can prove that he is more ignorant of the game than anyone else, should be acclaimed the world's champion! These

topsy-turvy ideas evidently originate in the desire to achieve greatness without the labour of study. A statement that "every possible opening with its variations has been exhaustively analysed" calls for Dominie Sampson's exclamation, "Prodigious!"

## "Mercury" Problem No. 68

(By W. Veal, England)  
Black—Men: 5, 7, 8, 11, 16, 17, 20, 21. King: 13.  
White—Men: 14, 23, 24, 26, 27, 30. Kings: 1, 28.



White  
White to play and win.  
The author of this very fine stroke problem has composed many interesting studies. Players should enjoy solving this one.

Hobart Mercury 12<sup>th</sup> February, 1938 page 6

## Marion Tinsley

EDIT

**Marion Tinsley** (February 3, 1927–April 3, 1995) is considered the greatest **checkers** player who ever lived. He was world champion from 1955–1958 and 1975–1991. Tinsley never lost a World Championship match, and lost only seven games (two of them to the **Chinook computer program**) in his entire 45 year career. He withdrew from championship play during the years 1958–1975, relinquishing the title during that time.

### Contents

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- Vs. Chinook
- Education
- Television appearances
- World Championship titles
- See also
- References
- Copyright

Several enquiries having been received as to the formation and play of "second position" we give below a form of "second position" with solution.

Black: Men 3, 6, King 1.  
White: Men 12, 15, King 8.

Black to move and win.

1-5	23-27	6-10	28-32	28-19
8-11	15-19	19-23	19-15	16-23
5-9	27-32	10-15	32-28	12-8
11-15	19-24	23-27	15-10	23-18
9-14	32-28	15-19	28-24	8-4
15-11	24-27	27-32	10-6	16-14
14-18	28-32	19-24	24-19	4-8
11-16	27-31	32-28	14-10	6-1
18-15	32-28	24-27	19-24	8-11
16-20	31-27	28-24	10-15	14-9
15-11	28-32	27-32	24-28	13-6
20-24	27-23	24-28	15-19	1-10
3-7	32-28	32-27	28-22	11-16
24-19	23-18	28-32	19-24	10-15
7-10	28-24	27-24	32-28	16-20
19-23	18-14	32-28	11-16	15-19
10-15	24-19	24-19	---	B. wins

Beginners will perhaps be a little dismayed at the number of moves required to win this position; but if they put it on the board and try it over, they will be agreeably surprised at the complete helplessness of white, and of the manner in which black jockeys the white king about the board and finally holds it in position for the double man off that finishes the game. This is a position that should be closely studied by all beginners and young players, as it gives an excellent illustration of what is known as "the power of the move." Beginners who have learned to count up for the move will note that in the position given, black has the move, the most natural thing to do in a position such as this would be to man off 6-8, 13-6, 1-10, in an endeavour to pin white into the single corner; but, if you have the move and man off, you lose the move, and white would escape. By the same reasoning, if you have the move and can man off twice, you retain the move, and that is the whole secret of winning by second position. You hold the opposing king in play until such time as you have your own men in a position that enables you to man off twice and pin the remaining man against the side of the board. Second position like first position comes up in many different forms, and the student should make himself well acquainted with it so that he may readily recognise it, or the possibility of getting it, in cross-board play.

Next week we will give two or three different settings of second position for the student to try over for himself.

### COUNTRY WEEK CARNIVAL.

The players of the metropolis will this year be aware of what the country week draughts carnival really means, and the good derivable therefrom. Each carnival marks an advancement beyond its immediate predecessor, either in improved organisation, strength of entry, general attractiveness, or some other quality. Our local committee profit by experience, and go one better every year. It is the duty of every lover of the game to come into the open and work for the results we all desire. The social side will be well served, and the material happiness of all concerned will be considered. The committee requests all metropolitan players to assist the Queensland Draughts Association by their presence at the various functions that have been arranged for the benefit of the country visitors. Our hospitable country friends deserve all we can do for them.

The first fixture is the North v South of the River match, which will be played in the School of Arts, Ann-street, next Saturday night, August 6. This is regarded more in the light of a social function than an actual test of strength, the object being to bring together in friendly rivalry and intercourse the players of the metropolis, and the area has been extended this year to include Ipswich. Any other country players present will also be included in the match if they so wish. Following the usual practice, the regular club players will be paired against each other, and (thus the unattached players, who, in all probability, would not be in such good match-playing form, will have a sporting chance of winning. Every effort will be made to bring together players of equal strength. Players who have boards and men are requested to bring them along, and to be in attendance by 7.30, when the teams will be arranged, and play will commence at 8 o'clock. Players of all grades in the metropolitan area are requested to make a special effort to attend and make the tournament as representative as possible.

On Tuesday, August 9, the annual meeting of the Queensland Draughts Association will be held in the Alexandra Cafe, Ann-street, near George-street, commencing at 6.30 p.m., when the annual report will be submitted, and officers elected for the ensuing 12 months. The business meeting will be followed, about 7.30, by the great annual town v country match, and here, again, every player will be paired against an opponent of about his own strength. The town players will be captained by Messrs J. G. Horsfall and R. Hickey and the country players will be led by Mr. W. E. Browne of Glatton, South Coast Line. After the match the country players will be the guests of the town players at supper.

The annual tournament to decide the championship of Queensland will start in the Alexandra Cafe on Wednesday, August 10, at 7 p.m. Entries accompanied by fee of 5s, will be received up to that time by the hon. secretary of the Queensland Draughts Association. Any player who has been resident in Queensland for six months prior to the start of the tournament may take part in the contest. Prizes to the value of seven guineas will be awarded to the three leading players, and other prizes may be added if the entry is sufficiently large.

## **“James Ferrie (1857-1929)**

### **By Norrie Reid**

James Ferrie was born in Greenock on December, 1857 to parents of Irish extractions. In his early years he was apprenticed as a joiner with Messrs Caird & Co., then a long known firm of ship builders on the lower Clyde. His earliest acquaintance with draughts (so James said) was roughly in his 18<sup>th</sup> year. Anyway, by 1875 he was champion of the Greenock Draughts Club. He then won the Glasgow Central Draughts Club Handicap tournament, defeating many top players in the process.

In 1883 he had a minor set back in a match with W. Cambell of Glasgow. Ferrie lost this match 0-1-7. In 1884 he met and defeated Beattie of Liverpool, the then brilliant editor of the Liverpool Mercury, with a score of 2-1-3. James then spent some time in London where he defeated all comers and in fact won the London Championship. He held this for 18 months, beating all who played him. During this time he played and defeated G. Smith for £40. The well known American champion J.P. Reed was trounced by Ferrie in a short match: Ferrie 4-1-1. After his return to Greenock he won the Renfreeshire Cup, and again met Cambell, being this time more successful (3-0-1). In the first international Scotland/England match in 1884 he performed very well indeed (3-1-13).

In May 1891 James met William Bryden of Glasgow for the championship of Scotland. Ferrie won the match 6-2-19 collecting £100 in the process! At the time he was also Lanarkshire Champion an extremely strongly contested tournament. James very generously resigned his rights to the Scottish title for the purpose of promoting the first Scottish Draughts Championship

tournament of 1893. However, he suffered defeat in this at the hands of Robert Stewart and after the tournament he seemed to have second thoughts! He issued a challenge to anyone in Scotland for the title and £50 in a 30 game match; there were no takers! He was without doubt a player of phenomenal ability and continued to play at the very highest standards until his death in 1929. James was a very retiring and unassuming man, reserved in manners, but was a pleasant conversationalist when he was introduced. In play he appeared nervous making his moves rapidly and seldom being in time trouble. His great achievement was in 1894 when he took the world championship (and £200) by defeating James Wyllie in a gigantic match of 90 games by 13-6-69. This match took place during April and May of 1894 in Glasgow. He lost the title two years later, again in Glasgow, to the great Richard Jordan (no disgrace to this!) in a close match 3-4-33. The photograph displayed taken at this match shows Ferrie seated on the right. After Greenoch, Ferrie lived a short time in Coatdyke near Coatbridge, then for most of his life in Glasgow, where he was a business man. He lived a long life, and was still playing top class draughts at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International match against the USA in 1927, at the ripe old age of 70. Ferrie played top board for the Govanhill Liberals Draughts Club, which also included stars like r. Searight, W. Bryden, J. Moir, and T. Ballentyne. His last years were spent at 203 Onslow Drive, Dennistoun, Glasgow where he died on 17<sup>th</sup> December, 1929 aged 72. He is buried, without tombstone, in St. Peter's cemetery, Dalbeth, Glasgow overlooking the River Clyde beside which he was born."



Photograph shows James Ferrie seated on the right playing Richard Jordan in Glasgow in 1894.

From the web site Wyllie Checkers



#### THE AGE OF DRAUGHTS.

Mr. Addams-Williams traces the history of draughts back to the days—1,600 B.C.—of Queen Hatshepso or Hat-Shepsu, daughter of Thothmes I., and herself ruler of Egypt for a long time. Some of her draughtsmen and part of her draughts-board were discovered about nine years ago, and were described in *The Times*. From Egypt the game was taken to Asia Minor, and from thence to Greece eventually reaching Italy, where, as in Egypt, it was probably played on a board of 144 squares. Mr. Addams-Williams speaks of chess as having been

introduced into Europe in the 8th century; and he surmises that the game of draughts was subsequently played on a chess-board with a smaller number of squares and of men. He gives 1647 as the date of the earliest-known work on modern draughts, and names Spain as the country in which it was published. The earliest French work is assigned to 1668; and the coming into vogue of the Polish game to 1727—some 60 years later. Mr. Addams-Williams also mentions that it was not till 1820 that games began to have names—adding that the use of these names appears to have been chiefly confined to Scotland and the North of England. He also gives the list of the principal treatises on draughts that have been published in Great Britain since 1756—the date of Payne's first edition; and he thus brings to a conclusion a brief historical sketch the compilation and arrangement of which must have occupied a good deal of time and involved a considerable amount of labour.

#### GAME.

##### "THE DOCTOR REVERSED."

Black, Mr. R. Mar; White, Mr. W. Sanderson.

10—14	9—14	12—19	13—17
22...18	29...25	32...27	24...19
12—16	5—9	11—18	1—6
24...20	31...26	22...15	20...16
16—19	6—10	7—11	2—7
23...16	19...15	27...24	16...12
14—23a	10—19	11—18	7—11
26...19	27...24	24...15	
8—12	4—8	9—13	
25...22	24...15	28...24	

And Mr. Mar won.

NOTE.—(a) The name "The Doctor Reversed" is better both than the "White Doctor," given to the opening by some players, and the "Black Doctor," by which it is known to others.

Maitland Mercury 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1897



10. SCANS FROM MANY PAPERS FROM WHICH BRIEF  
EXTRACTS HAVE BEEN TAKEN OF JAMES WILLIE'S 4  
YEARS TOUR OF 1887-1891 PLUS OTHER MATERIAL.

**THE HERD LADDIE.**

BY JAMES OGG, IN THE "ABERDEEN FREE  
PRESS."

I sing o' a hero whose glory an' fame  
Are based on a hamely an' peace-lovin' game.  
His wreath is unstained wi' the blood o' his kind  
His victories are purely the triumphs o' mind.  
His country, Auld Scotland, is proud o' her son,  
An' prizes the globe-girdin' fame he has won—  
Adjustin' her plaid, wi' a smile an' a nod,  
She welcomes wi' fervour her "Chief o' the Brod."

We hail him as chief o' the draughts-playin' clan ;  
A wyller player ne'er shifted a "man."  
His name has for lang, an' mayhap ever will,  
Be a dambrod synonym for far-seein' skill.  
Chaotic positions, "cribbed, cabined, confined,"  
To order resolve at the touch o' his mind.  
A pathway he finds where we see nae a road,  
The vet'ran "Herd Laddie," the "Chief o' the Brod."

The vet'ran "Herd Laddie," abroad and at hame,  
Has lang ta'en the lead in this time-honoured game ;  
The champion's wreath still encircles his brow,  
Though age wi' its hoar-frosts has silver'd his pow ;  
An' still he's as wylie, as vig'rous, an' keen,  
As e'en in the days when his manhood was green.  
And lang may his mind, in its mortal abode,  
Be spared to preside o'er a game at the brod.

An' then, when the great game o' life has been  
played,  
An' things that look dark noo, in light are arrayed,  
May he find that in spite o' doubt, darkness, and sin,  
The last move o' a' was a glorious "win."  
The "end-game," the blackness and darkness o'  
death,  
Can only be read by the bright e'e o' faith.  
By faith we can rob the black king o' his prod [sting],  
An' solve the waure problems on life's checkered  
brod.

Australasian 8<sup>th</sup> September, 1888

## DRAUGHTS ITEMS.

On the 24th ult. Mr. Wyllie gave an exhibition of simultaneous play at Mosgel, meeting twelve players. Mr. Andrew Bringins, Mr. John Dryden, Mr. Samuel M'Kay, and Mr. James Steel secured drawn games; and Mr. William Burns, Mr. William Carswell, Mr. David Mackie, Mr. Thomas Mackie, Mr. Thomas Neill, Mr. William Nicol, Mr. David Scott, and Mr. Thomas Stoddard were beaten by the Herd Laddie. Mr. Wyllie thus won 8 games, and 4 were drawn. He gave another simultaneous exhibition at the same place on the 27th ult., on which occasion his score was 10 wins and 2 draws.

It is reported that a player in New Zealand, who is very fond of the game of draughts, has already paid Mr. Wyllie close on £20. At the Herd Laddie's usual tariff of 1s. per game, this represents a total of close on 400 encounters between him and the player in question, the great majority of which have been wins for Mr. Wyllie.

Mr. Wyllie went to Dunedin, Southland, on the 2nd inst. to fulfil a special engagement, after which he will enter on a country tour which is to extend over some six weeks. Up to the date named the total number of games played by him in New Zealand was 2,332, of which he won 2,186, lost 5, and 141 were drawn.

Australasian 8<sup>th</sup> September, 1888

## MR JAMES WYLLIE; THE "HERD LADDIE."

To be the most considerable draughts player of the world is surely a title of distinction,

of the world is surely a title of distinction, whatever value one may be inclined to set on excellence in any pastime of the "laboriously

## THE "HERD LADDIE" IN ADELAIDE.

Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draughts player of the world, arrived in Adelaide on Tuesday by express from Melbourne under an engagement to play a series of matches in the Caledonian Society's Hall, Victoria-square. It was felt that some discredit would attach to players in Adelaide if Mr. Wyllie were permitted to close his tour through the colonies, where he has played in nearly every capital, without an invitation to visit this city, and as the result of a meeting on the subject subscriptions were raised to meet the cost of a visit from the "Herd Laddie." The champion, we understand, has engaged to play eight hours daily for one week, and no doubt the matches arranged will be watched with the keenest interest by votaries of the game. Mr. Wyllie,



who is now in advanced years, has played draughts continuously since his childhood, and has done more than any other player on record to exhaust the possibilities of the game. Still, he asserts, the game admits of much that is new to learn, and while in New Zealand he wrote—"Old as I am I improved in Dunedin." The New Zealand players include some of the best in the whole of Australasia, among them being Mr. J. P. Bell, of Dunedin, Mr. Boswell, of Christchurch, and Mr. McIlwrick, of Invercargill. Notwithstanding the skill of his opponents, however, Mr. Wyllie achieved a truly extraordinary record in New Zealand. Of 5,013 games, which was the total number played, he lost only 7, and drew 269. South Australia may also boast of very skilful players, and it will be interesting to note what amount of success they may achieve against the world's champion. Much interest has lately been taken among South Australian players in the game, and a proposal is being discussed to have this colony represented in the centennial tourney which opens in Melbourne at the end of the present month, in favor of this course being the fact that players will attend from every other capital in the group.

Over a hundred gentlemen interested in the game of draughts assembled in the Caledonian Hall, Victoria square, on Wednesday evening, to witness a contest between Mr. Wyllie and twelve exponents of the game, whom he had engaged to play simultaneously. The play generally was good, though except for one draw the gentlemen matched against the "Herd Laddie" were all beaten. The proceedings were opened by his Worship the Mayor (Sir E. T. Smith), at 6 p.m., and were protracted until nearly 11 o'clock. At the commencement Mr. L. Cohen, M.P., was also present, but both gentlemen retired at an early part of the evening. Sir E. T. Smith, who is president of the Norwood Draughts Club, said in past years he had been much interested in the game, but had given little time to it latterly. He thought it no mean employment for the intellectual faculties, and that there was something in the game beyond what some people chose to concede to it was evidenced by the extraordinarily successful career of Mr. Wyllie. His worship made the first move on Mr. T. Hanton's board, which was placed at the head of the table in deference to its owner's position as vice-president of the Norwood Club. The other boards were ranged in a line down the whole length of the table, and Mr. Wyllie walked from one to another consecutively, making one move at a time on each. The players were Messrs. T. Hanton, J. Hogg, J. Broad, T. W. Rolfe, O. Higgin-

J. Hogg, J. Broad, T. W. Rolfe, O. Higginbottom, J. Taylor, W. J. Warn, P. E. Lester, R. D. Lawrie, W. Witherrick, A. H. Sansom, and J. Hales. These gentlemen include some of the best players in the colony, but certainly not all who might be so designated, and we have players in country districts whose presence would have been gratifying. In the course of the first two or three hours the number of players had been reduced by the resignation of about half a dozen. By that time also Mr. Hanton had contrived the first and only draw, the game he played being the "double corner." The game itself is an old one, but Mr. Wyllie for some time past has used a variation which generally if his opponent is ignorant of the reply achieves a brilliant win. The reply, however, being once discovered a draw is the certain result, and this was perceived to be the case at an early stage of Mr. Hanton's game, and though several more moves were made Mr. Hanton's success, such as it was, had been anticipated. The game followed, move for move, precisely on the lines of one played with the same result in Melbourne a week or two ago between the "Herd Laddie" and Mr. W. E. Attenborough, of the Collingwood Draughts Club. The same game was played by Mr. Lester, but in this case Mr. Wyllie omitted the move which, played against Mr. Hanton, made the game a draw. For this Mr. Lester probably was unprepared, and he was beaten after a hard struggle. Attention, however, was principally concentrated on the games played by Messrs. Higginbottom, Taylor, and Warn, and the latter, though not ranking in the first class, played excellently. Higher praise still must be given to Mr. Taylor, who, though beaten, cannot be said in regard to his style of play to have disappointed expectations. The longest to withstand the attacks of Mr. Wyllie was Mr. Higginbottom, who with about four pieces held a very strong position which most players indeed thought was impregnable. A win was finally forced by Mr. Wyllie, but evidently as the result of a severe tax on his ingenuity. The position was as follows:—Black Kings on 18 and 24, and men on 21 and 28; White King on 31, and men on 30 and 32. Mr. Higginbottom played the White pieces, and after moving his King from 27 to 24 and sometimes on to 20, was driven after nearly an hour's trial of these moves to shift to 26 owing to Black's occupying the 24th check. The game was then finished in three moves, Black moving from 18

ing the 24th check. The game was then finished in three moves, Black moving from 18 to 23, White from 26 to 19, and Black 24 to 15. Only in about three cases was the play of those opposed to Mr. Wyllie palpably weak. The proceedings were watched throughout the five hours of their duration with the closest interest by the spectators. The following are the scores in the drawn game played by Mr. Hanton, whose moves (Black) are indicated by dashes, Mr. Wyllie's being shown by dots, between the numbers :—

9—14	6—15	25...21	18—27	20...16
22...17	21...17	4—8	22...18	19—24
11—16	5—9	32...27	15—22	28...19
25...22	17...13	9—14	24...8	10—14
16—19	2—6	22...17	12—16	17...10
23...16	29...25	8—11	31...24	6—24
12—19	7—10	26...22	3—12	15...11
24...15	27...24	14—18	24...30	12—16
10—19	8—12	27...24	16—19	11...8
17...10				

Draw.



MR JAMES WYLLIE;  
THE "HERD LADDIE."

South Australian Chronicle 25<sup>th</sup> April, 1891



## DRAUGHTS ITEMS.

A MATCH has been arranged between Mr. Fife, of the Melbourne Draughts Club, and Mr. Lindsay, of the Collingwood Draughts Club. It will probably be played on the 7th proximo., and it is anticipated that the contest will be a very stubborn one.

MR. WYLLIE recently returned to Dunedin after a successful tour in Southland, in the course of which he spent four days at Lumatien, where he played 88 games, of which he won 87, the other being drawn. Up to the date of the latest advice his total score in New Zealand was as follows:—Games played, 2,829; games won, 2,671; games lost, 5; games drawn, 150. He is expected to arrive in Christchurch to-day, in time to witness the play in the Interprovincial match between the draughts players of Canterbury and Otago; and the members of the committee appointed to make arrangements for this match have also been charged with the duty of seeing that the Herd Laddie shall have a fitting reception.

MR. D. G. M'KELVIN and Mr. William Campbell recently came to terms in regard to a contest for the blindfold championship. It was to be begun about four weeks ago, and was to consist of 28 restricted games, each of the players being bound to open twice with the black pieces in all the seven possible ways, wins and draws to count. They were to play one game at a time sans voir; the hours fixed for play being from 2 p.m. till 6 p.m. on Saturday afternoons, and from 7 p.m. till 10 p.m. on the other days of the week.

Australasian 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1888 p.51

## FREEMAN AGAIN TO THE FRONT.

The New York *Turf, Field, and Farm* of April 28, says: "We have been authorised by the friends of Mr. J. H. Freeman, of Providence, R.I., to state that he will play any player in the world a match of 30 games, either restricted or unrestricted, for a purse of 500 dollars to 1,000 dollars; that is, they will place any amount of money against the same amount that may be raised, up to 1,000 dollars. The place of contest must be Providence, and at no other point, and to be commenced within 60 days of signing of the articles of agreement. The title of champion of the world or the champion of America is not questioned, and must be eliminated from contest, as Freeman has no desire to play for it, and cares nothing for that honour. No better chance can be presented to Wyllie, Reed, or Barker than to step forward now and take up the gauntlet thrown to them to contest for so large a purse; and if Wyllie is not just now in a position to enter, we hope that either Reed or Barker would be willing to accept it at once.



In reference to the above Mr. Wyllie has forwarded the following letter for publication in the Melbourne Leader:—

"447, Brunswick street, Fitzroy,

"Melbourne, March 22, 1890.

"To the Draughts Editor *The Leader*, Melbourne.

"Sir,—The following is a copy of a letter sent by me to the *Turf, Field, and Farm*, New York, in answer to Mr. Freeman's challenge of the 28th January last, in which he offers to play any draughts player in the world 30 games at the game of draughts, restricted or unrestricted, for a stake of 500 to 1,000 dollars a-side, the match to be played in Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A. As I propose leaving Australia about the end of August next, I will now accept Mr. Freeman's challenge for a stake of 1,000 dollars a-side, and either to take or give 100 dollars for travelling expenses. I will contest with him in the said match 64 restricted games, to be played the same as in some of my matches with Mr. Martins; or I will allow Mr. Freeman to name 16 different games or openings, and myself to name 16 games or openings. I stipulate for two sittings during every day's play, say from 2 p.m. till 5 p.m. and from 7 p.m. till 10 p.m. Should Mr. Freeman decide to play in Providence, he will please to send my expenses, 100 dollars, to Mr. Dunlop, draughts editor of the *Turf, Field, and Farm*, and all other arrangements can be made afterwards.—I am, &c.,

"JAMES WYLLIE.

"Champion Draughts Player of the World."

The Week Brisbane 10<sup>th</sup> May, 1890

South Australian Chronicle 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1891      The Week Brisbane 10<sup>th</sup> June, 1892

## THE "HERD LADDIE" IN ADELAIDE.

Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draughts player of the world, has returned to Adelaide after a prolonged tour through the other colonies. Two years ago he played a series of matches in Adelaide against all comers, and though some hundreds of games were played he was beaten only once, his opponent on that occasion being Mr. John Hogg, secretary of the Adelaide Draughts Club. Mr. Wyllie, however, bore testimony to the excellence of many of the Adelaide players, who in comparison with those of other colonial capitals visited by the champion were able to show in draws a very fair average. Since his arrival in Australia over four years ago Mr. Wyllie has played over 12,000 games. His visit has been peculiarly successful, and he states that his practice has enabled him to play better now, notwithstanding his advanced years, than he ever did before. Mr. Wyllie opened his campaign in Adelaide last Saturday, at Martine's rooms, King William street, when he met 16 players of the city and suburbs, including some of the best in the colony. About 30 games were played, of which all but two were won by the "Herd Laddie," the exceptions being draws made by Mr. J. Todd Read (who should have won his game) and Mr. T. Symonds. Mr. Wyllie played 32 games against all comers on Monday in the presence of a large number of onlookers. Mr. W. J. McArthur secured two draws, and Messrs. R. Gemmell, W. Smith, A. Barr, and P. E. Lester one each. On Tuesday the champion played 27 games in the presence of an increased attendance. Single draws were secured by Messrs. O. Cordt, O. W. F. Maschmedt, and W. Molloy. Mr. Wyllie resumed his games against all comers on Wednesday, when there was again a large attendance of interested spectators. He won 29 games and drew three with Messrs. W. W. Kerr, O. Higginbottom, and O. W. E. Maschmedt. A few of the games were unfinished, including one with Mr. W. Smith, which Mr. Wyllie already pronounces a win. Mr. Wyllie's skill in continuously playing a dozen or more simultaneous games frequently with the best players in the colony can only be appreciated by those who know what an amount of concentration the moves on a single board between good players represent.

Evening Journal Adelaide 21<sup>st</sup> June, 1889

## The Herd Laddie Again.

THE HERD LADDIE CHAIRMAN AT A CONCERT.

The members of Motherwell Draughts Club (says the *Glasgow Weekly Mail* of April 16) held a concert under the auspices of the Lanarkshire Draughts Association on Saturday last, in Motherwell Town Hall. Mr. James Wyllie, champion of the world, occupied the chair. His position on that occasion was a peculiar one, being the first time during his life he had acted in that capacity. When the old man was told he would have to make a speech he said, "I am not good at speech-making, but I will do my best." Mr. Deans briefly introduced the old veteran to the audience, who received the old champion with loud applause. Mr. Wyllie referred to the great progress made in the game of draughts within the last number of years, and after giving the younger portion of the audience instruction and advice as how to become good draughts players, made reference to the American players. He said that the best of them were only second-class players, as he could find 20 better players in Scotland, and mentioned the names of three Scotchmen in Australia—namely, Mr. Mar (late of Glasgow), Mr. Reid (late of Broxburn), and Mr. Paterson, who were equal to any of the Americans; and he could also find a few players in England who could hold their own with any in America. Mr. Wyllie has now made up his mind. If Barker should agree to play him, he must submit to Mr. Wyllie's conditions, namely—that the match consist of 100 games, and a stake not less than £100 aside. The old man is in the best of health, and says he never was in better playing form.

A match of 100 games would mean the death of one of the players—but the victim would not be Wyllie. It is as a long stayer that Wyllie is most famous. No matter how great a player his opponent may be, the longer the number of games, the more certain is Wyllie's success. Work it out, allowing three games for a night. There are not many players who could stand 33 nights' consecutive play.

SA Advertiser 18<sup>th</sup> April, 1891 p.6



**DRAUGHTS.** — The South Australian Draughts Championship was decided on Thursday night at Martin's Exchange Coffee rooms in the presence of a large and enthusiastic number of spectators. With one game to the good Mr. Lester managed, after a desperate struggle, to draw the two remaining games, a "Switcher" and a "Bristol." In the final play off sixteen games have been played, Lester winning four and Gardiner four, with eight draws each. The prizes fall thus:—First, Mr. P. E. Lester; second, Mr. J. Gardiner; and third, Mr. J. Hogg. "J. R. M." sends us the following particulars, which will be found interesting, respecting the new South Australian champion:—"Mr. Peter Edward Lester is an Australian by birth and rather over fifty years of age. Although always a good sound natural player it is only during the last few years that he has devoted his time to a thorough study of the intricacies of the game. Very few of the ordinary public know what an immense amount of time and patience is required before one can become a real good draught-player, the common idea being that it is rather a simple game, whereas the fact is the more we enquire into its combinations the more we find our inability during an ordinary lifetime to thoroughly master the game. During the visit to Adelaide of the 'Herd Laddie' (the champion of the world. Mr. Lester succeeded in making the best average record of draws amongst Mr. Wyllie's opponents, and therefore it is no surprise to draught-players that he should have distinguished himself when competing against the best players of South Australia. Mr. Lester up to a few years ago was an enthusiastic veteran cricketer, and for many years a hard-working playing member of the old East Adelaide Cricket Club, and was not unknown on the football field. He will be also known amongst athletes as the winner

## A TALK WITH THE "HERD LADDIE."

To be the most considerable draughts player of the world is surely a title of distinction, whatever value one may be inclined to set on excellence in any pastime of the "laboriously useless" sort. Draughts, like chess, has been reduced to a science, demanding as much application and experimental research as an effort to discover the bacillar origin of tuberculosis, though, as at the Greek contests in athletics, the crown is insubstantial, and the honor everything. The game has indeed a certain disciplinary value, and General Grant ascribes much of his military success to the training of the sixty four squares, showing that while chess has been mentioned as the favorite game of great generals the simpler game of checkers has its claims on that score too. Edgar A. Poe thought draughts implied a greater drain on the intellectual powers than chess, because the latter did permit the retracing of a false step. In draughts a slip places the rash experimentalist hopelessly at the mercy of his opponent; it is because the "game hangs so much together" that the casual player when pitted against an average proficient soon finds the joy taken out of it. And as against chess the game of checkers has this to be said in its favor, that it boasts of a more venerable antiquity, as in the order of nature the simple must always precede the complex. Plato resorted to it for philosophical explanation, Cicero turned to it for mental diversion, and among the moderns Frederick the Great, Lincoln, and Garibaldi prized it highly. Nor can it be said that draughts has had its day. Capable of affording ever fresh delights to its true lovers it has on land and sea countless votaries, and to most of them it matters very little who may have secured the highest honors in any particular tournament. Art is long, time is fleeting. The players come and go and the game endures. Now and again a master genius arises to bewilder puny mortals and reveal paths in the mazes of the game previously undiscoverable. He has at once all draughts-playing notions at his feet,

once all draughts-playing notions at his feet, from the quick and cute Americans to the deeply philosophic Teutons, and wherever he may go his advent is acclaimed with enthusiasm.

So it has been with Mr. James Wyllie, the veteran champion of 50 years, who has been playing daily in this city for the past fortnight for the delight and instruction of a crowd of interested spectators. The "Herd Laddie" for two generations has been a name to conjure with. His brow is decked with the laurels of a thousand battles. "I suppose I have played in my life 500,000 games," was his remark to a reporter a few days ago, and this we might well believe, since he has devoted more than 50 years to the intricacies of draughts.

"My parents were from Lanarkshire," said Mr. Wyllie, "but I was born in Edinburgh in July, 1822."

"You took to draughts when very young?" was the natural rejoinder.

"Yes, I was about 14 or 15 when I played my first match."

"The game was not then so well known as at present?"

"No, but there were some fine players both in Lanarkshire and Ayrshire."

"Is it true that you studied the game when minding sheep on the hillsides, and from that became known as the 'Herd Laddie'?"

"Not quite, for really I was minding sheep for only about six months for a farmer who was a very good draughts player. There were no railways in those days, and we had to drive our flocks by the road. Well, it just happened at that time I helped the farmer with some sheep he was taking to Edinburgh. We put up at an hotel, and the farmer met some of the leading Edinburgh players there. They were playing for money. After a time the farmer had to leave to attend to some business, and said he would leave his boy—meaning me—to play for him till he came back. He left money for me to play with, so much a game, and before he had come back I had won £10 for him. I afterwards played three of the best Edinburgh

didn't, for I won the whole lot. The players were Macfarlane, Smith, and Battren."

"Had you studied from books?"

"Not at all. I was entirely self-taught. In fact there were not many books about at that time, those of Hayes, Drummond, Sinclair, and Payne being about all. The celebrated Andrew Anderson had not brought his book out then."

"Oh, yes, Anderson was a Scotchman. He was born at Braidwood, and was a hosier by trade. It is now about 30 years since he died."

"Did you play very much at that time?"

"I had had no practice at all from the time I first played in Edinburgh until I met Anderson. He was then about 40, and I was 16. We played for £5 a side and the championship. Anderson won, but it was a very tight match."

"I have played enough small matches to fill *The Advertiser*. But it is when a man plays for a big stake that he feels his responsibility."

"Have you played for very high sums?"

"When I was about 18 I played Price of Manchester, the champion of England, for £100 a side. There were 12 games played, and I won 11. I afterwards played Anderson on my return to Scotland for £50 a side and lost. Then I played Lindrop, of Sheffield, for £100 and won. There were no restrictions on the openings, and draws counted as wins, and in another match with the same man for £30, Lindrop won. I played him again for £65 a side, and won 13 to his one and nine draws."

"Yes; they were all played before big crowds in Liverpool. I went down to Manchester after that and played Muirhead for £10 a side and won by one game."

"I played a lot about that time. Matheson, of Newcastle on the Tyne, for £10, draws counting as wins, and won the whole 11 games. The biggest stake I ever played for was £130, with Anderson, in Carlisle, on even terms. I won the first nine games, Anderson winning



won the first nine games, Anderson winning four. It was then I was first proclaimed **champion** of the **world**, at the age of 22, on Anderson resigning, as he declined my challenge."

"You have played continuously all your life?"

"Well, no. There have been long intervals when I have not played at all. For instance, after winning the **championship** I went into business, and never played for ten years. Nobody challenged me, and I held the **championship** the whole time."

"Of course I got considerably out of practice, but soon picked it up again when I once began to play."

"But the first match after that long spell I played with Martins, of London, for £100 a side, and lost the most of 50 games. Then again I drew a match with him for £100, and in the next one for £100 and £5 a game I won the most of 62 games. Later on still I won three-fourths of 72 games from him."

The veteran player then referred to his first visit to America in 1873. "I met Barker then," he said, "at his native place, Boston. He was the American **champion** then, and we played 50 games for 400 dollars, and I beat him by 10 games to 1. I afterwards played him 30 games for 100 dollars, this time winning by 3 to 1. I played in New York with Yates at that time, too."

"Yes, by the way there was some doubt about the result of that match?"

"Oh, a lot. But they were only exhibition games, and one doesn't feel the same responsibility when playing those as when one has a stake on a match. I really won the most of the games though, and it was only in the last series that he beat me. He then became **champion** of the **world**, but declined my challenge later on for 1,000 dollars. Yates was a young American doctor, and died on his first voyage as medical attendant on one of the Rotterdam line of steamers a few years ago."

"Can you play without looking at the board?"



"I first played the 'Ayrshire Lassie' opening, he went on, "in the house of a Scotch couple, whose daughter took a great interest in the games and the openings, and it was out of compliment to her that I gave the opening its title. For a long time that opening was considered weak for white; and though I had played it successfully against some of the best English and American players,

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it was never fully acknowledged as sound until I played it with Anderson in Lanark."

"Oh, yes," was the answer to another question; "my trip to Australia has been very successful. My strongest opponent here was Mar, **champion** of Queensland. But there again the matches were simply exhibition ones. He is a fine player, but out of the 24 games I won 16. They were 8 to 1, 3 to 5, and 5 to 2 in each of the series respectively."

"In the second series Mar was in the majority?"

"Yes, but they were the exhibition games principally," said Mr. **Wyllie**, who seemed very anxious to convince his interviewer on this point.

GAME No. 4.			
"Defiance" Opening.			
Black, Mr. Mar.	White, Mr. Wyllie.		
11-15	9-13	14-17	2-9
23-19	24-20	21-14	19-15
9-14	11-15	10-26	13-17
27-23	32-27	31-22	25-21
8-11	19-24	8-11	17-22
22-18	28-19	30-25	15-11
15-22	4-8	7-10	7-16
25-9	21-18	23-18	20-11
5-11	1-5	3-7	22-26
29-25	18-9	18-15	21-17
6-9	5-14	11-18	12-16
25-22	26-22	22-6	27-24
Drawn.		9-13	

GAME No. 5.			
"Bristol" Opening.			
Black, Mr. Wyllie.	White, Mr. Mar.		
11-16	18-23	18-14	5-9
24-19	15-10	1-6	2-7
8-11	6-15	14-10	9-5
22-18	25-21	6-1	10-6
10-14	19-28	3-8	5-9
25-22	28-10	21-17	6-2
6-10	9-13	5-9	9-5
29-25	21-17	20-21	7-10
1-6	28-32	9-14	5-9
27-24	17-14	1-6	2-7
15-20	32-27	10-1	9-5
31-27	25-21	17-10	10-14
11-16	27-24	15-19	5-9
19-15	16-11	10-7	14-8
10-19	24-27	19-23	22-1
24-15	11-7	7-3	7-10
16-19	4-11	8-12	1-5
23-16	10-6	8-7	15-9
12-19	27-23	21-26	5-9
27-23	6-2	7-10	19-1
7-10	11-15	26-20	9-5
23-10	14-10	10-15	23-4
10-19	23-18	30-25	5-9
18-15	30-25	21-18	26-2
14-18	18-23	25-22	23-29
52-27	10-6	18-14	10-15
20-24	23-18	1-5	9-5
27-20	6-1	14-10	15-1
White wins.			

## Amusements.

**DRAUGHT TOURNAMENT.**—Draughts, though perhaps not so fascinating or intricate a game as chess, furnishes scope for no little skill, and numbers amongst its votaries as long a list of prominent men as its rival. It is not often that Adelaide is honoured with a visit from any very celebrated draughtsman, and it was with pleasure that the news was received that the champion player of the world, Mr. James Wyllie, or the "Herd Laddie," was about to pay a visit to the colony. Every preparation was made for his reception, and on Wednesday evening, October 3, he began a series of exhibition matches at the Caledonian Hall, playing twelve simultaneous games against local men. There was an exceedingly large and representative attendance. His Worship the Mayor initiated the tournament by making the first move, and this, the first game, was by a singular coincidence the only one out of the twelve that was drawn, all the others being won easily by the "Herd Laddie," who just "walked round" his opponents to the astonishment of the spectators. Play was begun at 4.45 and ended at 10.15 p.m. Throughout the evening great interest was manifested, and surprised expressed at the wonderful ability of the champion. To-night at the same hall he will be pitted against some first-class local draughtsmen.

## FREEMAN AGAIN TO THE FRONT.

The New York *Turf, Field, and Farm* of the 25th ult. says:—"We have been authorised by the friends of Mr. C. H. Freeman, of Providence, R. I., to state that he will play any player in the world a match of 30 games, either restricted or unrestricted, for a purse of 500 dollars to 1,000 dollars; that is, they will place any amount of money against the same amount that may be raised, up to 1,000 dollars. The place of contest must be Providence, and at no other point, and to be commenced within 60 days after signing of the articles of agreement. The title of 'Champion of the World' or the 'Champion of America' is not questioned, and must be eliminated from contest, as Freeman has no desire to play for it and cares nothing for that honor. No better chance can be presented to Wyllie, Reed, or Barker than to step forward now and to take up the gauntlet thrown to them to contest for so large a purse; and if Wyllie is not just now in a position to enter, we hope that either Reed or Barker would be willing to accept it at once."

There is some talk of Wyllie coming home from Victoria via San Francisco, thence across the American continent to New York. Should this intention be carried out, and neither Reed nor Barker take up Freeman's challenge, there can be little doubt that the "Herd Laddie" will eagerly embrace the opportunity of meeting Freeman, who, it will be remembered, defeated Wyllie in an exhibition match during the champion's last tour through the United States, and also won the American Champion-



States, and also won the American **Championship** from Barker.

In reference to the above Mr. **Wyllie** has forwarded to us the following letter for publication in *The Leader*:—"447, Brunswick street, Fitzroy, Melbourne, 22nd March, 1890. To the **Draughts** Editor, *The Leader*, Melbourne. Sir—The following is a copy of a letter sent by me to the *Turf, Field, and Farm*, New York, in answer to Mr. Freeman's challenge of the 28th January last, in which he offers to play any **draughts** player in the **world** 30 games at the game of **draughts**, restricted or unrestricted, for a stake of from 500 to 1,000 dollars a side, the match to be played in Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A. As I purpose leaving Australia about the end of August next I will now accept Mr. Freeman's challenge for a stake of 1,000 dollars a side, and either to take or give 100 dollars for travelling expenses. I will contest with him in the said match 62 restricted games, to be played the same as in some of my matches with Mr. Martins; or I will allow Mr. Freeman to name 16 different games or openings, and myself to name 15 games or openings. I stipulate for two sittings during every day's play, say from 2 p.m. till 5 p.m., and from 7 p.m. till 10 p.m. Should Mr. Freeman decide to play in Providence he will please to send my expenses, 100 dollars, to Mr. Dunlop, **draughts** editor of the *Turf, Field, and Farm*, and all other arrangements can be made afterwards.—I am, &c., **JAMES WYLLIE**, **Champion Draughts** Player of the **World**."

The Queenslander 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1890

On February 1 Mr Wyllie, the "Herd Laddie," gave an exhibition of play at the Brunswick (Vic.) Mechanics' Institute. He met all-comers, playing 15 games, all of which he won. Since his return to Melbourne from New Zealand the champion has played about 600 games, of which he has lost 1, and 49 have been drawn, leaving about 550 to be added to the large score of wins which he has piled up since his arrival in Victoria in the early part of 1887.

The Colonist Launceston 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1889

**The Week Brisbane 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 1890**

*"Mr James Wyllie, the champion draughts player of the world, commenced a series of games in Ipswich on Monday, under the auspices of the Ipswich Draughts Club. During his stay he engaged with Messrs. G. Allen, W. Bell, F. Boyle, M. J. Deane, W. Gordon, W. Lewis, F.H. Mead, E. Oldham, R.W. Shirras, and Brown Brothers, winning all his games except two, one each being drawn with Bell and Boyle. Mr. Wyllie has issued a challenge to play Read of America for the championship of the world and a large stake, and should it be accepted he will start in about three months; if not it is probable he will take up his residence in Queensland. He left Ipswich on Wednesday morning."*



## Draughts Tournament.

A draughts tournament was commenced on Tuesday evening at the Metropolitan Hotel, Edward-street, between James Wyllie (champion player of the world) and Mr. R. Mar (the Queensland champion). About thirty gentlemen were present to witness the contest, and a keen interest was taken in the games. Three matches were played during the evening, the first being won by Mr. Mar and the others ending in a draw. Shortly after 8 o'clock the players took up their position at a table in the centre of the room. Mr. Mar beginning the "Edinburgh" opening, both men played with extreme care for a time, Mr. Wyllie especially moving with great deliberation. As the game proceeded the players moved with greater freedom, the Queensland champion holding his own. After about half-an-hour's play it became apparent that Mr. Mar had a decided advantage over his opponent, and as the contest went on it was evident that Mr. Wyllie was playing an uphill game. At the thirtieth move "The Herd Laddie" said, "It's all up, you have won the game." The result was greeted with applause. After a few minutes' rest the draughtsmen commenced the second match, which was another "Edinburgh" opening. Both players moved rapidly at the outset, Mr. Mar moving with greater freedom than his opponent. Mr. Wyllie was evidently on his mettle, and determined to retrieve his lost position. Neither player, however, seemed able to gain an advantage over the other, and after the fifty-sixth move the game ended in a draw, the time occupied being about fifty minutes. The players then entered upon a third game, which began with the "defiance" opening. Both draughtsmen played with freedom, move following move in rapid succession, but again the players proved to be well matched, and after the twenty-ninth move the game resulted in a draw, the time occupied in the contest being only about a quarter-of-an-hour. At the conclusion the Queensland champion was congratulated on his success both by his opponent and by the spectators.

We are authorised to state that Mr. Wyllie accepts the above challenge of Mr. Reed for a restricted match of thirty games, but on this condition, that only the games to be played are to be put in the bag for drawing. Mr. Wyllie will allow Mr. Reed to select eight openings, and he will choose the other seven. As there is so little difference in the stipulations of the players, we hope the match will be arranged without any hitch, and we have no doubt it will prove one of the most interesting on record.

Mr. M. F. Clouser, draughts editor of the *World*, has given Mr. Reed 100dol. to be placed in the purse, should a match be arranged with Mr. Wyllie.—*Pittsburg Chronicle Telegraph*.

Mr. Wyllie left on Tuesday last for his Queensland tour, and he expects to return to Melbourne about the beginning of August.

Mr. Robert Fraser is now the champion of Dundee, and is only nineteen years of age. He has only studied the game for about three years, and during Mr. Martins' (the *ex-champion*) recent visit to Dundee he made the creditable score of eight lost, seven drawn, and one win. From such a promising beginning, we shall no doubt hear of our youthful genius in important matches before very long.

Weekly Times 5<sup>th</sup> July, 1890

## Brisbane Draughts Club.

The third annual general meeting of the Brisbane Draughts Club was held at the Club-room, Kent's Buildings, on Saturday last, when the annual report and balance-sheet were presented, and the election of officers took place. Mr. Robert Mar occupied the chair. From the report it appeared that during the past year 14 new members joined the club, making the total number 51. Mr. G. S. Foord played Mr. Mar for the championship of Queensland and cup, when Mr. Mar won. The club received a visit from Mr. James Wyllie, the champion of the world, who played Mr. Mar two exhibition matches, the result being: In the first match of 20 games (restricted openings), Mr. Mar won five games, Wyllie three, 12 being drawn, and in the second match of 28 games (restricted openings), Mr. Wyllie won five games, Mr. Mar two, and 13 were drawn. The thanks of the club were tendered to Mr. M'Nish Fraser for the free use of his rooms in the Wyllie-Mar matches. No club match had been played during the year, the one with Ipswich having fallen through. The balance-sheet showed a small amount in hand, the receipts for the year having come to £49 13s. The following is the list of officers elected for the ensuing year: Patrons, Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith, K.C.M.G., and Alderman J. A. Clark, Mayor of Brisbane; president, Mr. Robert Mar; vice-presidents, Messrs. A. M'Nish Fraser and P. Hardie; captain, Mr. F. Passey; hon. secretary and treasurer, Mr. Charles Abraham; auditors, Messrs. J. Munro and J. Trundle; committee—Messrs. J. J. Lovekin, R. Fraser, J. S. White, J. G. Horsfall, G. S. Foord, R. Broadbent, and J. M'Ewen. Mr. Mar is the Queensland champion, and holder of the cup for 1891. The club has started the year vigorously. The members meet every Saturday evening. A match is expected to take place shortly with the Ipswich team, and an all-round tournament is in course of preparation.

The Week 20<sup>th</sup> February, 1891



London. Mr. Freeman is to be complimented on the stand he made against the veteran.

**Game 258.—“Laird and Lady.”**

**Wyllie's Move.**

11-25	30-14	12-16	11-16	23-18
23-19	2-6	19-12	18-23	16-19
8-11	29-25	10-15	16-11	23-24
22-17	11-16	17-13	23-27	13-17
9-13	26-23	15-22	14-10	24-20
17-14	13-17	18-9	27-31	17-22
10-17	25-22	22-26	11-15	20-16
21-14	17-26	9-6	19-16	22-26
15-18	31-22	26-31	10-6	16-11
19-15 (1)	6-10	6-2	31-27	19-24
4-8	22-17	31-27	6-2	18-15
24-19	8-11	23-19	5-9	11-8
6-10	27-24	27-23	15-11	15-11
15-6	16-20	19-15	16-7	8-4
1-17	23-18	11-18	2-11	Drawn.
25-22	20-27	2-11	27-23	
17-26	32-23	23-19	11-16	

(1)

Mr. Freeman moved first in the next game, when Mr. **Wyllie** varied here as follows :—

26-23	15-6	20-4	10-15	9-5
13-17	1-17	12-16	17-22	25-20
19-15	23-14	5-1	15-19	5-1
4-8	11-15	16-19	22-25	29-25
24-19	19-10	1-6	19-23	15-11
17-21	17-22	19-23	27-31	25-22
28-24	25-18	6-10	18-14	1-6
6-9	5-9	23-27	31-26	22-17
24-20	14-5	29-25	23-18	6-2
2-6	7-32	27-31	26-22	14-18
32-28	31-27	25-22	18-15	11-16
9-13	32-23	31-27	22-17	17-14
28-24	24-19	22-18	14-9	Drawn.
6-10	23-16	13-17	17-14	

Weekly Times 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 1891

# Game 259.—“Switcher.”

Freeman's Move:—

11—15	13—22	15—18	7—21	13—17
21—17	26—17	31—26	22—18	16—7
9—13	4—8	18—27	12—16	3—10
25—21	29—25	32—23	24—20	18—14
8—11	2—6(1)	8—11	6—9	10—15
17—14	24—19	25—22	23—19(°)	14—10
10—17	15—24	5—9	16—23	15—19
21—14	28—19	14—5	28—19	Drawn.
6—10	11—15	10—16	9—13	
22—17	27—24	12—10	19—16	

(1)

In the next game Wyllie played the Blacks, and varied thus:—

1—6	27—24	8—11	26—23	7—10
24—19(2)	15—18	31—26	13—22	Black
15—24	25—21	6—9	24—20	wins.
23—19	18—27	23—18	10—17	
11—15	32—23	9—13	21—14	

(2)

In another game between Mr. Wyllie and a member of the London United D.C., the London player tried 31—26 here, with the following result:—

31—26	11—10	29—24	16—23	17—13
15—19	23—19(A)	11—16	26—19	10—17
24—15	8—11	24—20	6—9	13—6
				Black wins.

(A) 23—24 looks strong here.

—Aberdeen Free Press.

Weekly Times 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 1891

Game 260.—“Flora Temple.”

Played in London on 23rd June, 1891, between Mr. James Wyllie (Black), the champion of the world, and Mr. J. H. Strudwick (White), a player of considerable experience and well-known throughout the checker-world.

Mr. Wyllie's move.

11—15	21—14	10—15	6—9	16—11
22—18	1—6	16—7	14—17	25—30
15—22	26—23	15—22	9—14	11—7
25—18	6—9	7—2	25—29	30—26
12—16	24—19	13—17	27—23	23—19
29—25	2—6	2—6	29—25	26—23
9—13	23—24(Δ)	9—13	23—19	19—16
18—14	8—11	6—10	17—22	22—18
10—17	19—15	5—9	19—16	16—11
21—14	7—10	10—6	22—26	23—19
16—20	14—7(B)	17—21	30—23	7—3
23—18	8—28	6—1	25—22	19—24
6—10	23—19	9—14	14—10	3—7
25—21	6—10	1—6	21—25	18—23
10—17	19—16	22—25		

And Black (Mr. Wyllie) after some 20 or 30 moves won the game.

(Δ) 18—15 looks best here.

(B) Mr. Wyllie said if White had taken 15—8, it would have given Mr. Strudwick a good game although a piece down.—(J.H.S.)

Weekly Times 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 1891



Game 261.

During the last two weeks the "Herd Laddie" has been busily engaged at the rooms of the London United D.C., 9 Euston road, King's Cross, and at Mr. Austin's Restaurant, 31 Catherine street, Strand. Mr. James Wyllie (Black), champion of the world, and Mr. A. Jordan (White), winner of the third prize in the recent tourney for the English championship, contested the following interesting game, which the Londoner was fortunate enough to win.

Mr. J. Wyllie's move.

11-15	6-13	16-19	2-7	16-20
23-19	29-25	22-18	9-5	11-15
9-14	8-11	8-12	12-16	23-26
22-17	25-22	30-26	15-11	15-18
5-9*	4-8	3-7	7-10	26-30
26-23	23-18	14-9 (B)	11-7	18-25
9-13	10-15	19-23 (C)	10-14	13-17
24-20	19-10	26-19	7-3	21-14
15-24	7-23	11-16	14-18	30-21
28-19	27-18	20-11	3-7	14-10
13-22	12-16	7-23	13-22	White
25-9	18-14 (A)	18-15	7-11	wins.

\* The "Fife."

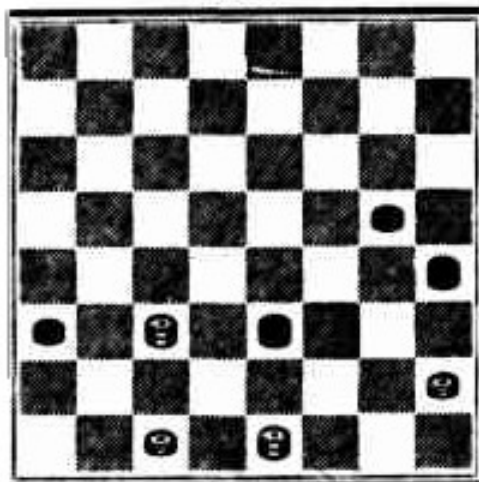
(A) 22-17, 13-22, 18-15, 11-18, 20-4, etc., draws.

(B) This move is original with Mr. F. Tescheleit, the London champion.

(C) Mr. Jordan played 11-16, 20-11, 7-16, and drew with Mr. Tescheleit in the English tourney 1891.—*London Standard, and Evening News.*

Weekly Times 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 1891

PROBLEM No. 40.  
 By JAMES WYLLIE  
 (Champion of the World).  
 BLACK.



WHITE.  
 White to play and win

DRAUGHT MATCHES.

WYLLIE v. MAR.

The return match between R. Mar, champion of Queensland, and J. Wyllie, "the Herd Laddie," was commenced on Saturday night last at Mr. A. M'Nish Fraser's auction mart, Queen-street, in the presence of a large number of spectators, who watched with much interest the progress of the games. The first game played was an "Ayrshire Lassie" opening, in which Wyllie had the black men. After the opening was formed, both players moved with extreme caution, seeming to be thoroughly on their mettle. Neither player, however, got a hold upon the other, and after seventy-five minutes' play the game resulted in a draw, amid the applause of the spectators. In the second game, also an "Ayrshire Lassie," Mar

ago it became necessary to requisition the large concert hall of the same building for the accommodation of players and spectators. "The old order changeth," and the quiet indolent-like habits of Sparrow's, Pentonville, have been superseded by enthusiastic experts, whose contributions to current checker literature circulate over Europe, America, and Australasia.

Mr. A. Belasco, writing in the *London Evening News and Post*, in reply to a disparaging leader on draughts which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, quotes in support of his arguments the following extract from an article by the late R. E. Bowen, of Millbury, Mass.:—"To know how many possible lines of play we may have, we have only to decide how many moves there shall be in a game. The match played between Messrs. Wyllie and Martins in 1864 seems to be about an average. There were 62 games averaging over 64 moves to a game—suppose we take it at 60? I find we shall have the following surprising number of variations:—

1,152,921,514,606,846,976.

If 40,000,000 people could play together at the same time, each couple playing 1 game every 10 minutes for 10 hours a day and 300 days a year, it would take them 1,000,279 years to play the above number of games." Now that is a tangible calculation, neatly expressed by 34 figures, which convey a clear idea; but then Bowen was a bit of an astronomer as well as an accomplished checker player, and naturally stated his results with mathematical precision. On the other hand, the checker column of an American exchange just received contains an article by another London correspondent, who employs 1450 figures—we have counted them—to express the result of his calculations. We are, on one hand, not quite sure that we have grasped the idea intended to be conveyed; but, on the other, we are certain the compositor must wish there was no checker column in that paper.—*Liverpool Weekly Mercury*.

Mr. Wyllie's decision as to leaving Australia for England and abandoning for the present the match games for the draughts or checker championship of the world seems to be giving

somewhat unreasonable umbrage to Mr. J. P. Reed and his backers; they now demand the forfeit money (\$200), which is at present in the hands of Mr. A. J. Dunlap, of New York, and Mr. Reed claims in addition the title of "World's Champion." The *New York Tribune* states that Mr. Dunlap, who is the checker editor of *Turf, Field, and Farm*, has informed Mr. Reed that he is entitled to both money and championship unless Mr. Wyllie is ready to play on or before 1st April. It may be as well to give here a copy of Mr. Wyllie's letter to Mr. Dunlap of 17th January last.

*Draughts Editor Turf, Field, and Farm, New York*.—In answer to Mr. Hefter's letter, I deny that I have been the means of delaying the match between Mr. Reed and myself, and I am at a loss to understand how he is so particular now about the time, which is not mentioned in the articles. All that is mentioned in regard to the time is that the match shall commence within sixty days after my arrival in the States. I had fully made up my mind to leave here for San Francisco 18th February next; the steamer would arrive about 14th March, which would give plenty of time for the match to commence by the middle of May. In regard to it I am quite satisfied that I have acted in an upright and honourable manner, which I always intend to do. As Mr. Hefter is now very doubtful of the match taking place, I cannot afford to go to San Francisco on a "wild-geese chase," so will shortly leave here for England. My deposit of £20 18s. 8d. (\$100) can remain in your hands for the next six months, and should Mr. Reed be inclined to go on with the match, by giving me notice I can leave Scotland within a week's time for New York, and call on you to make my final deposit of £83 6s. 8d. If he declines to go on with it, I will then play Mr. Freeman, of Providence, an unrestricted match of 32 games, each one of us to choose 8 different openings, for \$500 a side, and \$100 to be allowed me for expenses should he wish the match played at Providence; or I will play him a match of 64 games for \$1000 a side, each one to choose 16 different openings. All letters to be directed to me, care of Mr. Robert McCall,



having the black men, both players moved with much greater rapidity; and neither player being able to secure any advantage was also drawn after thirty minutes' play. The third game was a "Denny" opening, **Wyllie** having the black men, and was most stubbornly contested. About midgame Mr. Mar got an advantage, which he gradually improved, and gave **Wyllie** such cause for deliberation that the game had to be adjourned after ninety minutes' play in a position where the players have four pieces aside, Mar having a decided advantage, though, perhaps, not sufficient to secure a win. The match will be continued this evening at the same place.

On Monday the adjourned game was resumed, and after fifty-five minutes' careful play Mr. Mar succeeded in defeating his opponent amid great applause. This game occupied in all 2 hours 25min. The next game played was also a "Denny" opening, in which Mr. Mar had the black men. Both the competitors moved with greater freedom, and after thirty minutes' play Mr. Mar scored another win to the great satisfaction of those present. The third game was a "Double corner" opening, Mr. **Wyllie** having the black men. This game was played with remarkable rapidity, resulting in a draw after four minutes' play. The fourth game was also a "Double corner" opening, Mr. Mar having the black men. Both players began very cautiously, but as the game advanced the "Herd Laddie" gained an advantage over his rival, and after forty minutes' play Mr. **Wyllie** secured his first win amid applause.

On Tuesday the games were:—"Switcher," with **Wyllie** taking the black men, drawn in fifty minutes; "Switober," Mar taking the blacks, drawn in forty-nine minutes; "Single Corner," **Wyllie** taking the black men, drawn in forty-four minutes. The play was characterised by great steadiness and caution on the part of both players. The whole of the games were drawn, as appears from the above, and the score now stand—Mar, 3 wins; **Wyllie**, 1 win; draws, 6. Nineteen games remain to be played.

Queenslander 16<sup>th</sup> August, 1890

Mr. **Wyllie** is still in Melbourne where, up to time of writing, he tells us he has played altogether since his return from New Zealand 106 games. Out of this number he has won 92, drawn 14, and lost none. In one game, however, he should have lost to Mr. Hosken. This was an "Ayr-hire Lasse," which we will publish next week. It is very probable that he will shortly visit Adelaide; after that the Queensland players may have an opportunity of testing their skill.

Leader 29<sup>th</sup> September, 1888

# THE HERD LADDIE.

## AN EXCITING CONTEST.

The arrival in Christchurch of Mr James Wyllie, the Champion Draughts-player of the World, has been looked forward to with feelings of pleasure by the draughts-players of the district. Thanks to the efforts of Mr Dan. Reese and others, the Champion was induced to visit the City of the Plains at the close of a very successful season in Otago. The "Herd Laddie," as the possessor of the most phenomenal abilities in this game is called, arrived in Christchurch on Saturday afternoon, and was met by Messrs Reese, Boswell, Kay, and Archibald, of Christchurch, all well-known names in the draughts-playing world. There was also present to receive the veteran, Mr Harry Henderson, of Auckland, a gentleman who has contributed many very interesting games to the draughts columns of our Auckland, Dunedin, Australian, and British contemporaries, not a few of his best having appeared in the *Canterbury Times*. As Mr Wyllie is the guest of Mr Thomas Quill, of the White Hart Hotel, he was at once escorted there, and after a spell to recover and refresh from the weariness of travel, Mr Wyllie expressed his willingness to begin play. About the commencement of the play a little story has to be told. The "Herd Laddie" is sixty-seven years of age. Mr John Kay, of Victoria street, Christchurch, is seventy-four, and it was considered that the Christchurch veteran was entitled to the honour



church veteran was entitled to the honour of being the first to break a lance with the champion. He certainly deserves it, after having waited forty-six years for a game with him. This is the story. In 1842 the "Herd Laddie" came to Newcastle-on-Tyne, and Mr John Kay belongs to North Shields. He was rather a noted player there. Having heard that the "Herd Laddie" was in Newcastle, he made a journey to the great coal centre, in the hope of having a game with him. The "Herd Laddie" had been in Newcastle for several days, and after having shorn all the local draughts notabilities of their laurels, had sought other fields and fresh laurels to win. Mr Kay was therefore just too late. He was directed to an eminent doctor in the town—the principal player in Newcastle. In reply to Mr Kay's inquiries for the whereabouts of the "Herd Laddie," the doctor asked if Mr Kay was a player. "Try me," said Mr Kay. Three or four games resulted, and the doctor seized his hat, after being badly beaten, and went off with Mr Kay to hunt for the "Herd Laddie." The search was fruitless, as Mr Wyllie had left the town. Since then, of course, Mr Kay emigrated, and after all these years he has now his desire gratified of playing the champion and being—as tens of thousands of good players have been by the "Herd Laddie"—beaten.

After Mr Kay had been disposed of, Mr J. O. Josling, of Rangiora, essayed play. He opened a "Defiance" game very well indeed, and played in such good form that the old champion congratulated him upon it. It was the opinion of some of the high class players present that had Mr Josling played as well in the latter part of the game as he did in the first, the game would have ended in a draw.

Mr Harry Henderson, Auckland, who is making a visit to Melbourne, was allowed the stranger's preference, the local players giving way to let him have the board. Mr Henderson's game with the Champion was a most interesting one, and lasted a long time. It was very evident that the old man recognised in Harry Henderson a foeman worthy of his steel, for the readiness of move he displays when playing an ordinary player was absent, and the game protracted. The crowd of anxious, interested, but sternly silent men in the large commercial room of the White Hart would have been a good study for a physiognomist.

On Saturday Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draughts player of the world, played 31 games against all comers, losing one to Mr. A. W. Walkley and drawing three with Mr. W. J. McArthur and one each with Messrs. T. Dunn, F. H. Stephens, T. L. Sykes, A. Barr, and W. Smith. By the exercise of a trifling amount of discretion Mr. Dunn would have won the game he drew, having with three kings of his own reduced the champion to two. Mr. Wyllie has played 611 games since his appearance in Adelaide, drawing 78 and losing 5. This it will be seen does not average for the local players a single win to a 100, though it is a superior result to that obtained by the Melbourne players, whose record it will be remembered was only two wins out of 1,900 games. On Friday Mr. Wyllie played 26 games winning all except two draws with Messrs. A. Barr and C. Cordt. Mr. Wyllie plays on Wednesday at Clare, on Friday at Norwood, and Saturday at the Fort, and leaves for London on May 6 unless another engagement detains him.

The Express (SA) 27<sup>th</sup> April, 1891

#### GENERAL ADVICE.

1. If your opponent play his men towards the sides of the board at the beginning of a game move your greatest force towards the centre, and *vice versa*.

2. Do not be in a hurry to get a king; at first rather play for position.

3. Having got a piece ahead exchange whenever you can do so without damaging your position.

4. When one of your men is "doomed" do not waste moves trying to save it, but use the time your adversary is capturing plays take in trying to get a position which may indemnify you for its loss.

5. Towards the close of a game, when all the pieces are crowned, if you have an inferior number of kings and your adversary's are not in confined positions, resign; it is wasting time to continue the struggle.

6. Endeavour always to get the move in an end game, for, having that, you will, in most cases, at least be able to draw.

7. Look well over the board every time before moving—never treat your opponent's game with contempt.

8. Take every opportunity of playing with better players than yourself, and of looking on when good players are engaged.

9. Be modest when you win and good-humoured when you lose.

Queenslander 24<sup>th</sup> May, 1890

**DRAUGHTS ITEM.**

**James Wyllie** (the "Herd Laddie"), champion draughts player of the world, will visit Brisbane early next month, and has arranged to then play a match of twenty games with R. Mar, the present Queensland champion. To insure variety in the games (that they may be the more interesting) each player is "restricted" to take alternately the Black and White sides of ten different "openings"—five of which have been chosen by Wyllie and five by Mar. Wyllie has selected the "Centre" "Glasgow Whilter," "Bristol," "Double Corner," and "Edinburgh;" Mar the "Doctor," "Defiance," "Cross," "Ayrshire Lassie," and "Denny."

The Queenslander 28<sup>th</sup> June, 1890

Mr. James Wyllie, the world's champion, as many players are aware, is noted for the lightning-like rapidity with which he can adjust his pieces for a fresh game. "What a wonderfully quick method Mr. Wyllie has of placing his pieces on the board," remarked a player present at the Melbourne Club the other week. "And what a remarkably quick style he has of taking his opponent's off!" replied a gentleman who evidently was speaking from experience.

15<sup>th</sup> March, 1890

Maitland Mercury 19<sup>th</sup> May, 1891

"Mr James Wyllie (the "Herd Laddie") the Champion draughts player of the world, has returned to the old country."



By F. G. HODGKINSON, BOSTON, U.S.A.

(From the *New York Clipper*, 1855.)

The game of draughts, to one who can comprehend its deeper mysteries, is one of the highest intellectual amusements. In my own estimation it occupies the first place, and chess owes its superior reputation to the complexity of its manœuvres rather than its opportunities for scientific play. But my intention is not to write a panegyric on my favourite game, but to narrate a most singular event, which made an impression upon my mind which many years have failed to efface.

At the time of this occurrence I was about 20, and enthusiastically fond of draughts, in which I had attained such proficiency as to conquer all players in my own New England village. A signal victory over an old sea captain, who alone disputed my supremacy, determined me to make a journey to England, and cultivate my talents under the instructions of the London masters. That I did not carry out this design is owing to the following remarkable adventure:—

A short time before my intended departure I was seated in an old country inn on one of the dullest and rainiest days it was ever my fortune to see. I had been playing draughts with mine host, but found him such a mere tyro that there was no sport in beating him. I therefore dismissed him with a request "to seek the lower regions, and let me have some refreshment." I was gratified by a bottle of very tolerable port and some excellent fruit, and on the departure of Mr. Snow proceeded to solve a problem of Sturges's. But the old master of draughts had constructed so difficult a position that I could see no solution to it, although sharpening my faculties by repeated draughts (pun unintentional) of wine; and I scorned to refer to the book for assistance. Suddenly, happening to look up, I perceived a tall old man gazing upon me with an air of triumph.

Not the least obeisance made he,  
Not an instant stopped or stayed he,  
But—

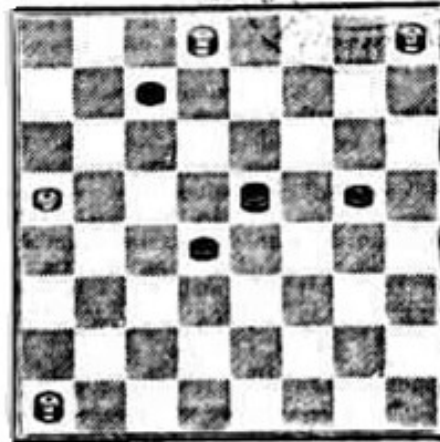
seated himself opposite me, and solved the problem with a few simple moves, offering me

A MIDNIGHT ENCOUNTER 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1890 The Queenslander



the choice of the men and the move. I looked at him in some surprise, and beheld a really handsome man, although much past the prime of life, with a grave, studious sweetness of look. He touched the pieces repeatedly, as if the contact gave him pleasure. I moved 23 18, and the struggle commenced. The first game occupied nearly an hour, for I was determined to do my best against this strange antagonist, and played with great deliberation. He moved apparently without a moment's thought, but so skillfully that in several instances only the greatest concentration of my powers enabled me to save my game. At length the following position was brought about:

WHITE.  
Myself.



BLACK.  
The Stranger.

SOLUTION.

17	22	24	15	11	20	8	13	23	29
31	24	18	11	4	8	16	11	13	8
15	19	20	16	20	16	29	25	11	4

Here, it being my antagonist's turn, he uttered a low, musical laugh and said:

"Mr. Ward, you have played this game very prettily; but you will lose every one of your pieces in just eight moves;" and so saying he made his first move.

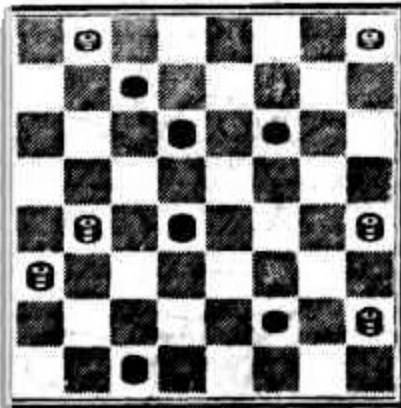
Of course he was right, and I was beaten. I offered my conqueror some refreshment, but he declined; and we fell to conversation upon the game, when my guest related anecdotes and displayed problems that filled me with amazement. The colloquy was so interesting that I should never have desired it to cease, had not my interlocutor broken off, exclaiming:

"Favour me, Master Ward, with one more game, for my time is short, and I have not played for many years."

Again we engaged. The game was most absorbing, and I had strong hopes of victory. I was surprised at myself, and my adversary no longer played with the careless rapidity of the former game. With beating heart I sternly determined I would win, if any skill would enable me to do so. At length this was the

the position:—

WHITE.  
Mr. Ward.



BLACK.  
The Stranger.

SOLUTION.

23	25	26	17	15	11	19	16	11	2
20	22	18	22	16	7	8	3		
23	26	6	9	3	19	16	11		
32	23	5	14	12	8	3	7		

Here, considering my superiority in kings, I thought myself sure of victory; but my rival, as soon as I moved, said mildly:

"You lose, sir, in nine moves."

And the nine moves followed, and again I yielded to superior skill. I asked the name of the stranger.

"Joshua Sturges, friend, and farewell."

Mr. J. Wyllie, champion draughts player, met all comers in the Brisbane Draughts Club Rooms on Saturday evening. He played ten games, winning nine and losing one with F. Passey, late of Charters Towers, who played four games in all with Mr. Wyllie.

It will be interesting to lovers of draughts to learn that Mr. Wyllie has received from Chicago the articles for a match to be played by him against Mr. James P. Reed, of Chicago, for the championship of the world. The match is to consist of thirty games, the wins and draws to count, for a stake of \$500 a side, \$100 to be deposited by each party at the time of signing articles. The matches will be played according to standard rules, as laid down in Janviers Anderson. Mr. Wyllie is allowed \$100 for expenses. He will select seven openings, and Mr. Reed eight, to be forwarded to the stakeholder, Mr. A. J. Dunlap, draughts editor of the *Turf, Field, and Farm*, New York, at least forty days before the commencement of the match. Mr. Dunlap will post to each player a list of the openings selected thirty-five days before the commencement of the contest. The match is to be commenced within sixty days after Mr. Wyllie's arrival in America, and continued every day, except Sunday, until it is

continued every day, except Sunday, until it is finished. The admission money is to be divided equally between the players, after paying expenses. The games played are to be the exclusive property of the winner of the match. The time rule is to be changed to so many moves per hour. It is understood that Mr. Wyllie has accepted the articles, and will forward his deposit at once.

1890 – date not recorded

**DRAUGHTS CHAMPIONSHIP.**—The series of draught contests between Mr. J. Wyllie, "the Herd Laddie," and Mr. R. Mar, champion of Queensland, were brought to a close at Mr. A. M'Nish Fraser's auction rooms, on Saturday night (says Monday's *Courier*) before a large number of spectators. When play was left off on Thursday night, three games remained to be competed. The first game, "Alma" opening, in which Mr. Mar took the black men, was drawn after twenty-five minutes' play, and the second, "Dundee," Mr. Wyllie having the black, in forty-five minutes. The players were thus on an equal footing, and the concluding game, which was to decide the match, was watched with great interest. The opening was again "Dundee," Mr. Mar having the Black men. The game lasted seventy-five minutes, and was won by the veteran, who accordingly has secured a victory, though not a great one, over the Queensland champion. Two matches have been played during Mr. Wyllie's present visit to Brisbane. The first consisted of twenty games—Mar winning 5, Wyllie, 3, and 12 being drawn. Of the twenty eight games in the second match Wyllie won 5, Mar 2, and 21 were drawn; so that the "Herd Laddie," has secured a victory by one game only—Wyllie winning eight games and Mar seven, all the others—thirty-three in number—being draws. This is very satisfactory from a local point of view, as when these two players previously met, out of a match of eighteen games, Wyllie gained eight wins and Mar only one, nine being draws. "The Herd Laddie" has asked Mr. Mar to play another match with him before the former goes to America to play Red, the champion of America, for the championship of the world. Mr. Wyllie, we are informed, is highly pleased at the treatment he has received in Brisbane, and also at the fairness and result of the matches. Mr. Wyllie has invitations to visit Toowoomba and Gympie. When he returns to Brisbane he will play all comers for a few evenings.

No date - 1890

Mr. James Wyllie, the world's champion, as many players are aware, is noted for the lightning-like rapidity with which he can adjust his pieces for a fresh game. "What a wonderfully quick method Mr. Wyllie has of placing his pieces on the board," remarked a player present at the Melbourne Club the other week. "And what a remarkably quick style he has of taking his opponent's off!" replied a gentleman who evidently was speaking from experience

The Queenslander 15<sup>th</sup> March, 1890



## IN MEMORIAM.

### "THE HERD LADDIE."

(From the Aberdeen "Weekly Free Press.")

Draughts players a' owre earth's big ba'  
Will hear wi' herts o' leid  
That Death hath ca'd oor chief awa'—  
That aul' Jeems Wyllie's deid.

Nae mair we'll see his pawky smile,  
Nae mair oor plots he'll prod—  
The master he o' ilka wile  
O' Dameh's checkered brod.

His genius for the canny game  
Was brecht beyond compare;  
A household word has been his name  
For fifty years and mair.

Positions cabined, cribbed, involved  
His genius soon saw throu',  
And now the last dark problem's solved:  
He's reached the crown-line now.

A few anecdotes of the late **ex-champion** of the world, "The Herd Laddie," **James Wyllie**:—Being very deaf **Wyllie** was often taken advantage of. Indeed, he confessed that when playing his matches with Baker and Yates he was sensible he had often to play the whole crowd, but could not protest because he could not hear what was going on. Many years ago, while on a playing tour at Wishaw, this trick was tried by some of the local cracks. The game was started, and was conducted on the lines of "Anderson's Second Edition." The book was brought into requisition, but kept out of view of the "Herd Laddie." The game arrived at the stage where Anderson left it off as a draw, and, of course the player at this point claimed a draw. **Wyllie** replied, "Na, na; we'll just play on a move or twa," and, to the discomfiture of the player and those who had been prompting him, **Wyllie** scored a win. At the close it was explained that Anderson had given the play as a draw, to which **Wyllie** answered—"Anderson is wrang. There's nae draw in my book."

**Wyllie** lived well and dressed respectably, but was very "near" in everything relating to money or money's worth. I remember (says a writer in the "Fraserburgh Herald") on one occasion living under the same roof with him. Before going down to the hall where he was to give an exhibition of his powers the good lady of the house took the cloth brush and gave his coat a rub down. He suffered it like a martyr, and remarked, when she was done—"A brush is a rare sair thing on claes."

On the occasion of his first visit to the



The Queenslander 1<sup>st</sup> July 1899

Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draughts player of the world, commenced a series of games in Ipswich on Monday, under the auspices of the Ipswich Draughts Club. During his stay he engaged with Messrs. G. Allen, W. Bell, F. Boyle, M. J. Deane, W. Gordon, W. Lewis, F. H. Mead, W. Oldham, R. W. Shirras, and Brown Brothers, winning all his games except two, one each being drawn with Bell and Boyle. Mr. Wyllie has issued a challenge to play Read of America for the championship of the world and a large stake, and should it be accepted he will start in about three months; if not it is probable he will take up his residence in Queensland. He left Ipswich on Wednesday morning.

The Week (Brisbane) 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 1890

THE "West Lothian Courier" remarks that among the very oldest games played at the present day are draughts, chess, and backgammon, the antiquities of which are in this order—draughts being of the greatest age. The game "was evidently well known to the most ancient race of civilised Egyptians, for we find on a papyrus taken from one of the oldest tombs, and now preserved in the museum at Leyden, a pictorial representation of the game; and a wall painting in the palace of the Pharaohs at Thebes depicts Rameses—him, probably, of the Israelite oppression—deeply engaged in the study of that absorbing pastime. The word draught was used in old English to signify a move, hence the game of draughts is the game of simple moves. Chess is at least as old as Homer, and some authorities believe that it was played long before the day of the blind king of poetry, and that it was, in fact, invented by Ulyses, the god-like hero of the Odyssey. It is allowed by all to be the most scientific game we possess, and age after age it has engaged the attention and given enjoyment to the greatest personages of the world. William the Conqueror was exceedingly fond of it, and so in later times were King James and Charles I. Backgammon, the youngest of the trio, was played by the Saxons when the Danes were in possession of England. It is of Welsh origin, and received its name from two words in that language meaning a little battle."

Australasian 7<sup>th</sup> November, 1891

A great article by a Scot above. I wonder who? Nice to see chess back with Homer and H.J.R. Murray would not be in favour of that. Ulysses? My heavens. And then William the Conqueror. And Backgammon invented by the Welsh. The lovers of games were passionate.

# DRAUGHTS IN VICTORIA.

The two following games were played against the champion the Melbourne club:—

GAME NO. 252.—Between Messrs. Wyllie (Black) and Mr. Hosken.

(Double Corner.)

9—14	25...22	10—15	11... 8	6—15
22...18	8—11	18...11	27—32	26...23
5— 9	22...18	7—16	8... 4	19—26
24...19	11—16	21...20	32—27	30...23
11—15	27...24	1— 5	4... 8	12—16
18...11	16—20	20...11	27—24	8...12
8—24	32...28	14—17	19...15	15—19
28...19	20—27	21...14	24—19	23...13
4— 8	31...24	9—27	15...10	16—20

Black wins.

GAME 253.—Between Mr. Wyllie and Mr. J. Hosken.

Wyllie's move (The Switcher).

11—15	22...17	15—22	32...27	22—25
21...17	13—22	23...18	22—25	24...19
9—13	26...17	2— 6	30...21	25—24
25...21	15—18	28...24	13—22	19...15
8—11	29...25	6— 9	14... 9	29—25
17...14	18—22	27...23	5—14	31...26
10—17	25...18	9—13	18... 9	25—30
21...14	10—15	19...15	11—18	27...23
6—10	24...19	4— 8	23...14	7—11

White resigns.

The Express (SA) 8<sup>th</sup> January, 1890

**DRAUGHTS**,—Mr. Wyllie, the herd laddie, has been beaten in a game of draughts by Mr. Patterson, the champion of Victoria. The extraordinary man, who is now visiting Australia, has travelled nearly all over the world, played tens of thousands of games with the best players in the universe, has made a few draws, but has scarcely ever been beaten. Therefore Mr. Patterson has reason to be proud of his victory. Mr. Wyllie, they say, is "as deaf as a post." Perhaps this affliction is of great assistance to him when studying the chequered board, as not being distracted by any conversation that may be going on, he can concentrate the whole of his attention on the mimic fight. He is open to play all comers, his charge being, in Melbourne, a shilling a game, and the way in which he has smashed up the defenses of many who, before he appeared on the scene, thought they knew more than a little about the science of draughts is marvellous. Some of the best players in Victoria have paid him scores of shillings, hoping against hope to catch him napping, but Mr. Patterson is the only one who has yet been able to more than hold his own, and that in only one game. Surely our local lovers of the game are not going to allow Mr. Wyllie to return to Bonnie Scotland without giving an exhibition of his marvellous skill in Hamilton.

Hamilton Spectator – 10<sup>th</sup> May, 1887

Sydney Morning Herald – 6<sup>th</sup> December, 1902

**The Antiquity of the game** - Mr John G. White of Cleveland, Ohio, USA, has proved to his own satisfaction that draughts was not played before the 16<sup>th</sup> century, because no works on the game earlier than those of the old Spanish masters can be found. On the other hand, Dr. W. Flinders Petrie, in a review of the recently published Egyptian, "Book of the Dead" describes the vignette heading one of the chapters as – "Hunifer going to and fro in the future world, and playing draughts". This vignette is a facsimile of the Papyrus of Hunifer. Elsewhere, Dr. Petrie refers to Hunifer "in the early X1X dynasty, thirteen hundred BC" will this new evidence of the antiquity of draughts prove as unsatisfactory to Mr White as did the previous evidence of Egyptologists?

## DRAUGHTS ITEMS.

### THE TWENTY BEST LIVING PROBLEMISTS.

(Extract from the International Draughts Magazine.)

(1.) Dr. T. J. Brown, Ireland ; (2.) J. Wyllie, Scotland ; (3.) Fred Allen, England ; (4.) J. D. Janvier, America ; (5.) J. Robertson, Scotland ; (6.) F. Duane, England ; (7.) M. H. C. Wardell, America ; (8.) H. D. Lyman, America ; (9.) W. W. Avery, America ; (10.) J. Tonar, England ; (11.) G. D. Bugbee, America ; (12.) J. A. Kear, England ; (13.) F. Drinkwater, Wales ; (14.) C. Hefter, America ; (15.) H. Gibson, Victoria ; (16.) D. Gourlay, Scotland ; (17.) C. F. Barker, America ; (18.) O. H. Richmond, America ; (19.) W. Leggett, England ; (20.) J. H. Yeoman, England.

**BARKER v. Reed.**—There is now a prospect that the match between Reed and Barker will be consummated before the Reed-Wyllie match. Mr. Charles Hefter writes to the *Woonsocket Reporter*:—"I will try to get on a match with Reed and Barker before the one with Wyllie." Reed is expected in Chicago shortly. He left Minneapolis, Minn., on Dec. 15 for a week's engagement at Kansas City.

**THE HERD LADDIE.**—This famous player, now in Australia, has reached his 72nd year, and is still hale and hearty, and he is preparing to do battle with America's champion in defence of his title, "The Champion of the world." The above speaks volumes for the veteran's indomitable pluck, and it is the sincere wish of all his old friends and admirers that he may come out of the encounter victorious, and return to our shores in triumph to rest upon his well earned laurels. The *Liverpool Mercury* has broached the idea of getting up a testimonial for the benefit of Mr. Wyllie and his illustrious opponent, Mr. Robert Martins, and fixes upon the return of the Champion as a fitting opportunity. The suggestion is a good one, and we hope to see it carried out. A match between the two veterans for a subscription purse to be divided in the proportion of two-thirds to the winner and one-third to the loser is the idea mooted. Now is the time to prepare for it.—*Leeds Mercury*.

Hamilton Spectator - 10<sup>th</sup> May, 1887



## RANDOM PAPERS.

By "QUIVIS"

### AMONG THE DRAUGHT PLAYERS.

With the game of draughts are associated some of the pleasantest memories of my boyhood; and at the sight of a board with two players clatching their brows on the opposite sides of it there come from their hiding places in the dusky past pictures of things and scenes and faces long forgotten. From them I select this one. A bright hearth, with the coal fire sending fantastic lights and shadows on roof and wall, and a group of children crowding round the old Scotch maidservant as she sits knitting by the blaze. A fearful joy is their's as she freezes their blood with tales of wraiths and warlocks, or sings to them some old-world ballad like "Barbara Allen" or "Lady Ogilvie." Two boys by the light of a candle are playing draughts, and though they affect to despise the fears of the children, they barken at the most gruesome passages, and make mistakes in moves, and do not play up to usual "form." Or this other. The storm without goes howling up the street and cutting the wayfarers it passes, and filling the corners with fleecy snow-drifts, but it only enhances the comfort and the light of the cheery parlour. Here the younger branches of the family are watching around the table where the house father and the eldest brother are waging mimic war at the homely "dambrod," as the board was then called. The elder finds the odds of two men too severe a handicap, and after a long and gallant struggle his last piece is driven out of the double corner and blocked. Much natural elation in the youthful conqueror's breast, and a mingled feeling of admiration and resentment throughout the rest of the family at his having been able to beat "father" at any odds. As I look on these pictures, I say to the showman, Memory, put them away into the dark again, for out of nearly all the faces the light of life has gone, and most of the voices are silent for ever. Yes, put them away till the next time, when the brooding fit comes, and I

"——— retire apart  
With hushed memories of the heart,  
And gather all the very least  
On fragments of life's earlier feast  
Let fall, through eagerness to find  
The crowning dainties yet behind."

Draughts, as a game, is not, of course, the equal of chess, but is a humble handmaiden, content with her circle of lowly admirers. Princes and peers, and the lofty ones of the earth, have made chess their pastime from time immemorial. She is a haughty dame, and with her retinue of kings and queens, and bishops, and knights, and castles, she makes the other seem a very Cinderella sitting among the ashes. You can spend a king's ransom in jewelled chess pieces for the fingers of beauty to toy with, and the cunning hand and brain of the artist can be taxed to carve and adorn them fittingly. The "men" of the draught-board are never other than plain unpretending citizens, without title, and sternly Puritan in their hatred of all adornment. The board can be formed, if you will, with chalk on a beer barrel, and the men with slices of cork or coat buttons; and the game can be played in the open air as well as in-doors. Such being the case,

and the game can be played in the open air as well as in-doors. Such being the case, draughts is, in the nature of things, a game favoured by unpretending people, and ignored by the "votaries of fashion." Doubtless it is owing to its grim simplicity and homeliness that it is more popular in Scotland than anywhere else. For though Scotland is a most picturesque place, and pre-eminently a

"Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,  
Land of the mountain and the flood,"

you cannot say the same of its people. In politics they are all matter-of-fact radicals; in religion, hard-headed Partisans; and in their sports you would naturally expect to find such a plain "douce" game as draughts naturally occupying a high place. If you had such an expectation, and had the other evening accompanied me to an upper chamber in Mather's Cafe, you would have found that your surmise was a just one. Up the centre of the room runs a long table, and around it are grouped—some sitting and others standing—about 20 persons, and most of them appear from their speech to be Scotch. This is the chosen haunt of the Melbourne Draughts Club, and here you will meet, united by a common love of the old game, as queer and quaint a lot of good fellows as ever delighted the heart of Charles Lamb in his most jovial and clubbable of moods. In one of his drollest essays, Elia includes Scotchmen among his "imperfect sympathies;" but he never could have done so had he enjoyed the inestimable privilege of "a crack wi' a drouthy croney" like Soutar Johnnie or Tam o' Shanter, not to speak of the great Burns himself. There are old men present, and one or two young ones, but the majority are middle-aged. Some dress and speak like gentlemen, and others have the garb and mien of rustics or *ouvriers*. The latter are not coarse or rude of speech, however, and as the smoke from their black clay pipes mingles with the more fragrant wreaths ascending from a Manila cheroot or full flavoured Havannah, so do they harmoniously fraternise with their richer and more prosperous club mates. So true it is that while the business of this life tends to divide us and make us selfish, isolated units, each of its games makes all who love that game brothers. There are, as I said, about twenty members present, but only one board is engaged, and around it the common interest is centred. One of the players is a well-dressed young man with a blonde moustache which he pulls and twirls between the moves. The other is an old man, who looks more like a peasant than anybody else in the room. A dark-striped tweed coat of no particular cut or fashion covers all of him that appears above the table, and you notice that he disdains such concessions to conventionality as a shirt-collar or cuffs. He has the finest head in the room, however, and in a few rapid moves he puts his youthful antagonist completely *hors de combat*. He is an old man, but in the ruddy countenance and big square head and quiet grey eyes there are extant signs of health and strength which are very impressive. The young man is succeeded by other players, and they all suffer the same fate, some getting the finishing stroke in a couple of minutes, and others maintaining the unequal fight for a quarter of an hour. They come and go, but the old gentleman sits serene,

fight for a quarter of an hour. They come and go, but the old gentleman sits serene, and motionless, and almost soundless, and every eye is bent on him with increasing respect and admiration, as he phlegmatically "polishes off" each fresh antagonist. As you look on him you cease to regard him as a shabbily-dressed man, nay, his garments have become for you spiritualised into symbols and types to you for evermore of genius and mastery in this particular game of draughts. If you know nothing of the game you listen calmly when a leading member of the club tells you that the old gentleman is Mr. James Wyllie, the Herd Laddie. But if you have ever enjoyed the triumph of "getting a man crowned," you will recognise in him the redoubtable draughts champion of the world, who, in a professional career of over 50 years, has never lost a single match, or met an opponent who came within even measurable distance of him.

My acquaintance with the game was only that of the boy who plays without book and trusts very much to luck, and while I am watching Mr. Wyllie, the leading member who has kindly placed himself at my service opens up for me a new draughts world, if the expression be permissible. I learn for the first time that there are text-books on the game, and that the great authority is Andrew Anderson, who reigned supreme till the Herd Laddie overthrew him. There are openings in it just as in chess, and they are known by such names as the "Ayrshire Lassie," the "Dundee," the "Kelso," the "Fife," the "Edinburgh," the "Defiance," and the "Switcher." As chess has its gambits, so in draughts there are snares and pitfalls called by such queer titles as the "Black Doctor" and the "White Doctor." The club meets between 7 and 10 o'clock on three nights every week, and my informant tells me that in numbers and in enthusiasm it is growing steadily. He confesses that the happiest moments of his life are spent over the draughts board, and he speaks with enthusiasm of a member who "lost 60 games to the

champion last week." My brain reels as I strive to realise the mental condition of the man who, in six days, had played and lost 60 games, and total mental eclipse prevails for a time when my Mentor proceeds to tell me that Mr. Wyllie played 20,000 games in America, during which there were only 109 defeats and about 1,000 draws. I know from bitter experience that a game of chess can last half a day, and I emerged out of the gloom with the benumbing calculation that to play that number of games at least 30 years would be required. On communicating this conclusion to my companion he smiled, and said, "Not quite so long. Some games take an hour, but the majority are decided within the quarter."

At this stage one of the victims ruefully surveys his last four men pinned inextricably by two of the champion's, and says, with a sigh, "Aye, they're dead—dead as a door-nail. Come on, Scott, and let's see hoo ye can tackle him." Mr. Scott is a tall, grave man, who, after modestly demurring for a minute, takes the victim's chair, and hands over to the champion a smiling. This is the only toll which the king of the game takes from his subjects, and as he is not a rich man, no one can surely grudge it. The simple way in

one can surely grudge it. The simple way in which the money is received and pocketed is in keeping with the homely character of the game and its unpretending surroundings. Any other champion would have disguised the transaction, or had it carried on by deputy; but here the unsophistication was charming, because natural. "It's a braw new one, fresh frae the mint," says someone, but the old man hears not, for he is almost totally deaf. Deafness is a misfortune to most men, but to Mr. Wyllie it is a blessing in disguise. To it he owes powers of concentration which he might not otherwise possess, and to it may be ascribed likewise the far-away, abstracted look of his meditative face. Mr. Scott plays a good game, but, of course, is defeated, and another shilling is passed across the table. "Another new one," bawls the previous speaker, and the words this time are apparently understood, for the champion's far-away eyes gleam keenly out upon us, and he gives utterance to a low chuckle. After Mr. Scott has been again beaten, a member of the club begins a game with an opening called the "Second Double Corner." He was playing carefully and well, and had apparently as strong a position as his opponent, when all at once his game collapsed and he retired, saying, "That last move was an oversight. I didn't mean it." Some of those around believe that up to this fatal move he had as good a game as the champion, and one daring young man succeeds in making the champion understand that he is ready to take up the game as it stood before the blunder was made. The men had been placed in their regular files in unbroken array before the proposition could be grasped, and it was marvellous to see with what rapidity he arranged them in the complicated position they had assumed at the end of the last game. "He's gaun to beat me noo," said the old man, with a good-humoured smile, as the play commenced; but this game collapsed very much in the same fashion, and in about the same number of moves, as the previous one. The last player explained his defeat thus:—"I was frightened to go into six for fear he would get into fifteen;" and though his words were a dark saying and a hopeless riddle for me, they were doubtless full of meaning to the players around him. The best game of the night was played by a tall young gentleman, with a head almost as square and as powerful as his opponent's. The champion having begun with the opening known as the "Ayrshire Lass," someone said, "Eh, yer an awfu' man for the lasses, Mr. Wyllie," and there was general laughter. The play lasts for about 20 minutes, and nothing is heard but the click of the men as they are swept from the board or moved from square to square. My friend whispers to me, "I played the champion the same game the other afternoon, and the moves on both sides are identical. He ought to make a draw." There is a consensus of opinion that it should be a draw, and all are a little excited except the champion. He is deaf as ever, and his eyes are further away, so that he is the only one who knows not that while the game is proceeding a young artist member is making a highly finished portrait-sketch of his features. After about a quarter of an hour's play, however, the

quarter of an hour's play, however, the silence is broken and criticism commences. The "knowing ones" perceive that the game is already lost, and such pieces of advice as this are given—"Ye should na' have played 12 to 16." "Aye, that 12 to 16 was bad. Fifteen tae 18 wud have been better." "Aye, but a' wud have been of nae use. He's gist owre guid for us a'."

I left the room shortly before 10, the last victim being a nervous youth who pulled his fingers till the joints cracked, and tossed his hair till it became quite snaky around his troubled brow. The champion was sitting as serene and self-contained as ever, and the impression he left upon me was distinctly a favourable one. He is silent; but has not silence been praised by moralists and poets as "golden"? He is not a dandy, but neither were such great men as Villemain and Guizot dandies. The latter loved to dress "like a small shopkeeper," and the former, having accepted a Royal invitation to stay at the Chateau d'Eu, arrived at his destination with "a razor, a 'dicky,' and the grand cordon of the Legion of Honour wrapped up in a newspaper." In any case he is a hero—homely it is true but still a hero—to his fervent admirers of the Melbourne Draughts Club. Their admiration is as genuine as Boswell's was for his hero, and proves as forcibly, to quote Carlyle's words, "that loyalty, discipleship, all that men ever meant by hero-worship, lives perennial in the human bosom, and waits even in these dead days only for occasion to unfold it and inspire all men with it, and again make the world alive."

Argus (Melbourne, Vic. : 1848 - 1957), Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April, 1887, page 13

### The Champion Draughts Player.

On Friday night, at the Draughts Club Rooms, Mathers's Café, Bourke-street, Mr. Wyllie (the "Herd Laddie"), the champion draughts player of the world, was welcomed to Australia, he having arrived that morning by the *Orizaba*. About fifty guests, comprising members of the Draughts Club and others, sat down, with Mr. C. Paterson as chairman. The toast of the evening, "Welcome to the Champion," was proposed by Mr. Gibson, and heartily drunk. Immediately following, a purse of sovereigns was presented to Mr. Wyllie by Mr. Marshall, the president of the club. In doing so, he spoke of the recipient as a man "honest and true, one against whom there had never been breathed the faintest breath of trickery and fraud." Mr. Wyllie replied in a few brief, feeling sentences. Altogether the reunion was very successful. Mr. Kerr (of Holstead and Kerr) has, through Mr. C. S. Paterson, presented the club with £5, to be played for. Mr. Wyllie has played the following games:—Saturday—Mr. James Paterson, four games, winning them all; Mr. Hutchison, four games, winning two, drawing two; Mr. Fred Brown, four games, winning three, drawing one; Mr. Omond, four games, winning all; Mr. H. Gibson, four games, winning two, two being drawn. Monday—Mr. Tydeman, four games, winning three, drawing one; Mr. C. Scott, four games, winning three, drawing one. Tuesday—Mr. A. Ferguson, four games, winning all; Mr. T. Easton, four games, winning all; Mr. J. Tydeman, four games, winning all; Mr. Stewart, four games, winning all; Mr. J. Williamson, four games, winning all. Several important matches will be played to-night and Thursday afternoon.

While the sports were proceeding a draught competition was being watched with interest in the pavilion, Mr. J. Wyllie, "The Herd Laddie," and champion draughts player of the world, was pitted against all comers on condition that the one who made the best score against the champion should receive the St. Louis Lager Beer Trophy, presented by Mr. James Macdougall and Co., of Queen-street. Two games each were played by Mr. James Munro, M.L.A., Miss Munro, and Messrs. J. Patterson, J. Brown, F. Brown, A. Ferguson, and T. Easton, all of which, with the exception of one game drawn with Mr. Patterson, were won by Mr. Wyllie. The next best game to Mr. Patterson's draw on the part of the amateurs was one played by Mr. F. Brown, who for a long time was almost on even terms with the champion, but Mr. Wyllie then deserted book rules of the game and easily disposed of his opponent.

The Argus 25<sup>th</sup> May, 1887

Sportsman (Melbourne) 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1887



Mr. James Wyllie, (Herd Laddie) champion draught player of the world, again visited the Free Chess and Draught room in connection with the Fitzroy Public Library on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, March 24th, 25th and 26th, so that we have had quite a draught revival amongst us. On Tuesday evening the room was crowded to suffocation, and the champion played twelve games simultaneously, of which he won eleven, the twelfth ending in a draw for Mr. James Sharpe, of North Fitzroy. On Wednesday there was a good attendance, and Mr. Wyllie again played twelve games, in every one of which he was the winner. On Thursday evening, there was a fair attendance, when the champion played five more games winning them all. This makes a total of twenty-nine games for the three evenings, out of which Mr. Wyllie won twenty-eight, one being a drawn game. Mr. Wyllie is a living wonder, he is 70 years of age and has been before the world as a draught player for fifty years, out of which time he has been champion of the world for full thirty years. He has now left Victoria on a visit to America to play an important match with Mr. J. P. Read, of Chicago, the champion of America, who wishes to defeat Mr. Wyllie and gain the championship. Should Mr. Wyllie prove victorious in this match, he will not only continue to be champion draught player of the world, but will also gain 1000 dollars (fully £200) besides, which sum goes to the winner. Mr. Wyllie has held the championship so long, and is so proud of the title, that he would be sorry to lose it while he lives, and wishes to continue in full possession of it till he dies. If possible, Mr. Wyllie intends visiting Victoria again after being in America, and if spared to do so.

Mercury & Weekly Courier (Vic) 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 1891



Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draughts player, visited Clare on Wednesday, and in the evening met 18 local enthusiasts, including a black tracker named Jimmy, in the Institute. Twenty games were contested, 18 being simultaneous, of which Mr. Wyllie won all but one, which was drawn with Mr. Odgers, manager of the National Bank. The champion greatly enjoyed his trip, the weather being beautiful. Several farmers drove 20 miles to sit opposite to him over a draught-board and had to go back to their homes immediately after the games were over so as to start seeding operations again in the morning. Had not the agriculturists been so busy two or three days might profitably have been spent in Clare, as many persons were anxious to try conclusions with the famous Herd Laddie. On Friday Mr. Wyllie met the Norwood Club and tackled 18 experienced men simultaneously. Some stubbornly contested games were played, draws being scored by Messrs. R. Taylor, A. Walkley, and P. Lester. Mr. Wyllie remarked that Mr. Kerr's game should have been a win for that gentleman, but an unfortunate blunder turned it into a defeat. On Saturday at Port Adelaide 17 players were present, draws being obtained by Messrs. W. Smith and A. W. Walkley, while three games unfinished would probably also have ended in draws. The players were Messrs. D. Smith, J. Hanton, and T. L. Sykes, and there was no time to complete in either case. Altogether Mr. Wyllie has played this season in South Australia 743 games, of which he has lost five, drawn 91, and won 647. The champion has thoroughly enjoyed his visit to this colony, and is of opinion that the average ability of the local players is greater than in any other country south of the line. Being asked whether he was likely to come to Australia again, Mr. Wyllie said he hopes to do so in about two years' time if continued health is granted him. In the meantime he will fight for the championship of the world with Mr. Reed, of America.

Express SA 4<sup>th</sup> May, 1891

There was a large attendance in the lodge-room of the Hindmarsh Institute on Monday evening, when the "Herd Laddie" played 20 games of draughts against local players and all-comers, winning all but one, which was a draw. Great interest was centred in the play with Mr. J. Broad, who effected the draw, and has thus brought his score with the champion to three draws out of six games played. Messrs. J. Hogg, T. Hanton, and J. Gardner each suffered defeat. A youngster, 12 years old, named J. Thomson, made a good stand against the champion, Mr. Wyllie, who will play in the same place to-morrow (Wednesday) evening.

SA Advertiser 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1888

THE CHAMPION DRAUGHT PLAYER.—Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draught player of the world, since his arrival in Melbourne has played a large number of games. On Saturday afternoon, at the rooms of the Melbourne Draughts Club, he played 20 games, most of his opponents being considered the strongest players in Melbourne, including Mr. James Paterson, the champion of Australia. The "Herd Laddie" sustained his reputation, winning 15 games, the remaining five being drawn. Mr. Wyllie commenced his career as a public draughts player when he was 15 years of age by making a tour through his native country (Scotland), when he defeated all his opponents with the exception of Andrew Anderson, who was the champion at that time. After several efforts he succeeded in wresting the championship from Anderson 30 years ago, and has retained it ever since, although he has played over 40 champion matches since that time. He considers that Anderson was the strongest opponent he ever met. After defeating all his adversaries in Great Britain he paid a visit to the United States about 14 years ago, and his presence there gave a great stimulus to the game. Seven years ago he again visited America, and vanquished all the principal players who were brought against him. Mr. Wyllie during his stay in Melbourne will play 100 games against the members of the club, and will also give public exhibitions of his skill. He intends making a tour round the colonies before returning to England.

Launceston Examiner 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1887

On Thursday evening, 12th March, Mr. James Wyllie, (The Herd Laddie) champion draught player of the world, visited the Free Chess and Draught Room at the Fitzroy Public Library, Town Hall, Napier-street. There was a large gathering of gentlemen interested, and Mr. Wyllie gave a specimen of his wonderful abilities by playing five games with as many persons simultaneously, the result being that the champion won four games, while the fifth, after some brilliant play, ended in a draw for Mr. Pond, who is a regular visitor. There was some excitement when Mr. Wyllie stopped, and said, "it's a draw, well played, a good game," at which all present clapped their hands. This was quite a red letter day in our history, being the first time Mr. Wyllie has visited the Free Chess and Draught Room, and we hope that some of our leading players will imitate his example, by also coming when convenient, and thus encourage the young men to acquire proficiency in the game of draughts.

Mercury 19<sup>th</sup> March, 1891

ARRANGEMENTS having been made by a number of gentlemen on Gympie for a series of matches with Mr. Wyllie, the Herd Laddie, champion draught player of the world, communication was opened up by our Gympie friends with the Mayor to ascertain whether matches could not also be arranged between players in Maryborough and Mr. Wyllie while that veteran was passing through. Mr. Stupart has handed the letter to the secretary of the School of Arts, and we have no doubt the committee of that institution will arrange for a number of games to be played. At present Mr. Wyllie is engaged in a contest with Mr. Mar, of Brisbane, and the games are being watched with great eagerness, the Herd Laddie so far having out little the advantage of his opponent.

Maryborough Chronicle 1<sup>st</sup> September, 1890



Mr. James Wyllie resumed on Wednesday at the Caledonian Hall his draughts matches with local players, who were specially well represented in the evening. Out of 22 games the champion won 18 and drew two. The other two were adjourned, and promise also to be draws. There were several noteworthy features in the play on Wednesday evening. Mr. Wyllie as usual divided his attention among several opponents at once, and one effect of this was rather curious. It is not unusual to see identical moves carried on simultaneously to an advanced stage upon different boards, but on Wednesday two players, Messrs. Mackintosh and Walker, whose games were opened on the basis of the "Old Fourteenth," adopted precisely the same moves till their pieces were reduced to four each, and occupied a position which is given by Anderson as a draw. These are the games which have been adjourned, Mr. Wyllie having taken his opponents past the book in the expectation that, thrown upon their own resources, they will be defeated. Mr. Lester contributed one of the draws achieved, and Mr. Hogg the other, the games being respectively the "Single Corner" and the "Paisley." Mr. Lester fought hard to avert defeat, as did Mr. Hogg, who missed a win under curious circumstances. He possessed a man more than Mr. Wyllie in the critical stage of the game, which really was a reproduction of the position in the game which Mr. Higginbottom lost on the opening night of the matches. Mr. Hogg, though knowing the position by heart, made a slip, of which the champion took advantage, and instead of the expected win a draw was the result. Altogether 311 games have been played, with 26 draws. The "Herd Laddie's" season in Adelaide will close to-night.

Express (SA) 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1888

Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draughts player of the world, has returned to Adelaide after a prolonged tour through the other colonies. Two years ago he played a series of matches in Adelaide against all comers, and though some hundreds of games were played he was beaten only once, his opponent on that occasion being Mr. John Hogg, secretary of the Adelaide Draughts Club. Mr. Wyllie, however, bore testimony to the excellence of many of the Adelaide players, who in comparison with those of other colonial capitals visited by the champion were able to show in draws a very fair average. Since his arrival in Australia over four years ago Mr. Wyllie has played over 12,000 games. His visit has been pecuniarily successful, and he states that his practice has enabled him to play better now, notwithstanding his advanced years, than he ever did before. It has given him confidence in meeting Reid, of America, as he proposes doing in July for the championship of the world and a stake of 500 dollars. He will play in Adelaide for a fortnight or more, and will then leave for England. He announces his intention to meet all players at Martin's coffee-rooms, King William-street.

Southern Queensland Bulletin 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1890

*"It is reported that Wyllie is coming to play the Champion draught player of Nerang. This would cause some stir."*

Camperdown Chronicle (Vic) 20<sup>th</sup> July, 1887

*"Mr James Wyllie (the Herd Laddie) the champion draughts player of the world is to give an exhibition of his skill at Colac to-morrow. Several lovers of the game from Camperdown district intend to be present to witness the games in which Wyllie may take part."*



**DRAUGHTS.**—On Friday evening last Mr. **Wyllie**—famous under the name of the “Herd Laddie”—visited Mount Barker at the invitation of local enthusiasts in order to show his skill as a draught player. He was accompanied by Mr. Hanton, President of the Norwood draught club, who during the course of the evening contested several games with him. The great hall of the institute was the scene of the tournament, play beginning at 7 o'clock and ending at 11. Fifty or sixty persons paid for admission, and during the evening thirty games were got through, all of them resulting in wins for the champion, who lays it down as a principle to act with as much caution against a new beginner as with a known crack. Seven or eight games were in progress together, Mr. Wyllie passing up and down on the opposite side of the table to the players and moving on each board in succession, and therefore the opening of the battle was rather slow. When, however, matters had sufficiently progressed and the Herd Laddie said “Play this yane oot,” some brilliant moves were seen. One player, who had six pieces to Mr. Wyllie's four was surprised at finding three of them blocked by one man, while each of the others was so placed that it could not move without being taken. Another player making some remark about “manning” when his opponent had one the best of him, Mr. Wyllie said “I'll give you two men for nothing and then beat you.” Sure enough he did so, and the disaffected one, who had played a very good game, found a king and a man blocked in the double corner by one king. Although no draw was credited to Mount Barker the visit of Mr. Wyllie will do much to stimulate draught playing, and should lead to the formation of a strong club. The gentlemen who brought him up were put to about £5 expense, and their receipts amounted to a little over half that sum.

Mount Barker Courier 26<sup>th</sup> October, 1888

By our business columns it will be noticed that Mr. **James Wyllie** (the "Herd Laddie," the acknowledged **champion draughts** player of the **world**, will play a series of exhibition matches at the School of Arts, the first taking place to-morrow evening against three of the strongest players that Gympie can produce, each contesting three games with the **champion**. Arrangements are also being made, in fact may be said to be completed, for Mr. **Wyllie's** appearance each afternoon to meet all comers who may desire to test his skill and acquire a few wrinkles in the game of which he is such a masterly exponent; but definite particulars on this head cannot be announced until Saturday. Local "dambrodists," we understand, have been looking forward with keen expectation to this visit, and no doubt it will result in giving a decided impetus to the practice of the game. A very moderate admission charge—one shilling each evening, or 2s. 6d. for the whole series of matches—will be made to defray the expenses of getting the **champion** to come to Gympie.

Gympie Times 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1890

**MR. JAMES WYLLIE**, the "Herd Laddie" **champion draughts** player of the **world**, arrived by the Barwah yesterday. He visits this district at the invitation of the **Gympie Draughts Club** and plays a series of matches in that town. The Maryborough School of Arts' committee are also arranging for Mr. **Wyllie** to give a display of his skill in this town.

Maryborough Chronicle 5<sup>th</sup> September, 1890

**THE GAME OF DRAUGHTS.**—Over sixty years ago a "Herd Laddie," James **Wyllie** by name, became famous in Scotland as a player at draughts, a game which is a favorite amongst the Scotch. He beat all opponents, and so marvellous was his skill in this particular game that he was simply unapproachable. It certainly is wonderful that a man for so many years should have held a premier position as a draught player in a country where there are so many skilled in the game, and that he is fully entitled to "**champion draught player of the world**" is undeniable. The lovers of the game on Sandhurst are deserving of the greatest credit for giving the public an opportunity of witnessing skill so rare. Yesterday afternoon he gave an opportunity to the Sandhurst public of witnessing his play and comparing it with that of the local celebrities at the Mechanics' Institute, and will continue to do so during the remainder of the week. He commenced his first match on Sandhurst yesterday at 3 o'clock against the best player in the district, Mr. Alex. Graham, in the presence of a large attendance, and beat him, but the second game between the same parties was a draw. The third game was won by **Wyllie** and the fourth was a draw. So far the local **champion** has acquitted himself most creditably. These games filled up the time till near six o'clock, when a player from the out gullies essayed his skill against **Wyllie's** and was beat in ten minutes. An adjournment for an hour then took place. At night there was a fair attendance, and the **champion** played Messrs. Casey, Fegan, Wood, Storey, Miller, Morkham and Jones, and easily defeated all his opponents. He will play again this afternoon and evening as advertised.

Bendigo Advertiser 4<sup>th</sup> August, 1887



A meeting was held at the Royal Derby Hotel on Friday evening last for the purpose of forming a Draughts and Chess Club in Fitzroy. About 30 gentlemen were present, including the well-known champions, Messrs Patterson and Browne. A set of rules were drawn up and adopted, and the following gentlemen were elected office bearers for the ensuing year:—Cr Holden, J.P., president; Mr Houston, vice-president; Mr Joseph Cody, treasurer; Mr Corrigan, secretary; and Messrs Beard, Smith and Browne, members of committee. It was decided that the club hold its meetings every Monday and Thursday at the Royal Derby Hotel. Next Thursday is the first night appointed for practice, when it will be given a good start by Mr James Wyllie, the champion draught player of the world, who will be in attendance to meet all comers.

The Herald 26<sup>th</sup> June, 1889

July 30.  
Mr. Wyllie, the champion draughts player, has been paying a visit to Ipswich during the past couple of days at the invitation of the local draughts club. Several players tried their skill with him, but none of them were able to win a game. The following are the results of the matches:—G. Allen, played 6, lost 6; W. Bell, played 6, lost 5, drew 1; F. Boyle, played 6, lost 5, drew 1; M. J. Deane, played 2, lost 2; W. Gordon, played 2, lost 2; W. Lewis, played 6, lost 6; F. H. Mead, played 4, lost 4; W. Oldham, played 6, lost 6; R. W. Shirras, played 2, lost 2; and Brown, played 6, lost 6. Mr. Wyllie, I understand, is awaiting a reply to a challenge he has sent to the American champion to play for a large stake and the championship of the world. Should his challenge not be accepted, it is Mr. Wyllie's intention to take up his abode permanently in Queensland.

Queenslander 2 August 1890

**DRAUGHTS.**—On Wednesday last Mr. Wyllie, the Champion Draught Player of the World, accompanied by Mr Hanton, visited Clare. In the evening he played several of the local players simultaneously in the Institute Hall, there being a good concourse of people present to witness the play. The champion was introduced to the spectators

and players by Dr. Bain, who in a few introductory remarks expressed the pleasure he had in seeing Mr. Wyllie that evening. Play then commenced, and the tide of defeat set in for all the players except Mr. Hodge, who succeeded in getting a creditable draw, and who was loudly applauded by the assembly on the result of his game. One or two of the other players made some good attempts, but one after another had to succumb in the end to Mr. Wyllie. The total number of games played during the evening was 22, Mr. Wyllie winning 21 and drawing one. Mr. Wyllie's visit should have the effect of awakening the energies of the draught players of the neighborhood, and induce them to resuscitate the old club, as draughts is a very pleasant game for the long winter evenings.

Northern Argus 1<sup>st</sup> May, 1891

Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draughts player of the world, will arrive in Adelaide this morning by express from Melbourne under an engagement to play a series of matches in the Caledonian Society's Hall, Victoria-square. It was felt that some discredit would attach to players in Adelaide if Mr. Wyllie were permitted to close his tour through the colonies, where he has played in nearly every capital, without an invitation to visit this city, and as the result of a meeting on the subject subscriptions were raised to meet the cost of a visit from the "Herd Laddie." The champion, we understand, has engaged to play eight hours daily for one week, and no doubt the matches arranged will be watched with the keenest interest by votaries of the game. Mr. Wyllie, who is now in advanced years, has played draughts continuously since his childhood, and has done more than any other player on record to exhaust the possibilities of the game. Still, he asserts, the game admits of much that is new to learn, and while in New Zealand he wrote—"Old as I am I improved in Dunedin." The New Zealand players include some of the best in the whole of Australasia, among them being Mr. J. P. Bell, of Dunedin, Mr. B. J. Bell, of Christchurch, and Mr. McIlwrick, of Invercargill. Notwithstanding the skill of his opponents, however, Mr. Wyllie achieved a truly extraordinary record in New Zealand. Of 5,013 games, which was the total number played, he lost only 7, and drew 209. South Australia may also boast of very skilful players, and it will be interesting to note what amount of success they may achieve against the world's champion. Much interest has lately been taken among South Australian players in the same, and a proposal is being discussed to have this colony represented in the centennial tourney which opens in Melbourne at the end of the present month, in favor of this course being the fact that players will attend from every other capital in the group.



SA Advertiser 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 1888

**Draughts.**—By reference to our advertising columns it will be seen that the champion draught-player of the world (Mr. James Wyllie) will give his first exhibition of draughts in the chess-room at the Sandhurst Mechanics' Institute, at three o'clock this afternoon. In his first game he will be opposed by Mr. Graham, of this city, one of the best players in Victoria, and who has contested games with Professor Anderson, the "Wizard of the North," in Scotland. A splendid game is anticipated, and it is expected there will be a large attendance throughout the afternoon and evening.

Bendigo Advertiser 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 1887

**CHAMPION DRAUGHTS.**—The local knights of the "dambrod" have been expressing a desire to see "the Herd Laddie," the champion draughts player of the world, give an exhibition of his skill in Toowomba. At the instance of the Chess Club of the School of Arts, the secretary has written to the secretary of the Brisbane Draughts Club as to terms &c. The answer, which was received yesterday, states that Mr. Wyllie is willing to come after playing his return match with Mr. Mar, and the terms are so reasonable that no difficulty should be found about them. A meeting will therefore be convened for Tuesday evening at the School of Arts to arrange matters. Mr. Wyllie comes this way, at all events, after the return match, on his way south. He is engaged to play the champion of America in New York for a £100 a side. Mr. Mar is the only man who has ever succeeded in lowering the Herd Laddie's colours in a regular match, and the latter doesn't believe in going away without retrieving his laurels.

Darling Downs Gazette 26<sup>th</sup> July, 1890

"The Herd Laddie," as Mr. James Wyllie, the celebrated draughts player is called, will visit Bacchus Marsh on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday next, and will hold receptions in the large room at the Border Inn. No doubt his countrymen and other admirers of the game of which he is the champion player, will be glad to have the opportunity of meeting him.

Bacchus Marsh Express 4<sup>th</sup> June, 1887

We have received a copy of the Draught Players' Manual, a new work, the first of its kind published in these colonies. The work has been supervised by Mr Wyllie, champion of the world, and for admirers of the game of draughts, a cheaper and better book is not available.

The Herald (Vic) 6<sup>th</sup> January, 1891

At the Caledonian Hall on Monday Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draughts player, continued his matches against local players, no fewer than 27 games having been contested, with the result of 21 victories to the credit of the "Herd Laddie," the remainder being draws. The local players have evidently profited by their practice against the champion, and during the past two or three days have raised their average of draws very considerably. The average certainly compares favorably with that of New Zealand, and should Mr. Wyllie's stay be sufficiently prolonged it ought to be no difficult matter to beat the Victorian record. Though Mr. Wyllie was twice beaten in New Zealand and only once in Victoria the proportion of draws to losses was greater in the latter than in the former colony. Perhaps the nearest approach to a win achieved by a local player was accomplished by Mr. J. Broad, of Southwark, in his game on Monday night. By careful play he got his pieces into a very strong position, and the champion's comparative weakness was evident to even ordinary players. Mr. Broad thought discretion the better part of valor, and in fear of the disclosure of some possible strategy on the part of his opponent he "manned down" in a very comprehensive fashion and secured an easy draw. Mr. Wyllie afterwards took Mr. Broad's pieces at the critical stage, and showed the latter how he might have won. Another player from Southwark who as regards draws has been successful is Mr. J. Gardiner, who drew one game on Saturday and another on Monday. Mr. W. Smith, of Glanville, must be credited with a precisely similar record. The other draws on Monday were achieved by Messrs. J. Hogg, P. E. Lester, and C. Cordt. The arrangements in regard to the conduct of the games have been greatly improved, the champion now being able to traverse the whole length of the table without the inconvenience from which he formerly suffered through the crowding of the onlookers, who appear to grow more numerous daily.

SA Advertiser 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1888

THE draughts play against Mr. Wyllie, the "Herd Laddie," was far more interesting on Tuesday last than on the previous day, and about forty persons visited Haigh's rooms, taking great interest in the proceedings. The champion of the world played two games against Mr. G. Allen, and won both; four against Mr. W. Bell, winning three and making a draw; two with Mr. F. Boyle, drawing one and winning one; four with Mr. W. Lewis, winning the four of them; two games each with the Brown brothers (of Farnham), winning all of them; two games with Mr. Wm. Oldham, securing both of them; and two wins against Mr. F. H. Mead. The play of most of the local men showed a considerable improvement on that of Monday, for they had become acquainted with many of the champion's moves. Messrs. Allen, Bell, Mead, Boyle, and Lewis made an excellent stand against their renowned rival, and the two draws with Messrs. Boyle and Bell were very close contests. Mr. Lewis, too, had a capital chance, in one instance, for making a draw with Mr. Wyllie, but he was a little too anxious, and unluckily failed to take advantage of the opening. In another game, called the "single corner," he should have defeated the Herd Laddie, but, as was very natural, he was a trifle nervous, and gave his wily antagonist an opening for escape, which he was not slow in availing himself of. Mr. Wyllie was highly delighted with his visit to this town, and bears out the statement that the local players have improved considerably since his previous visit to Ipswich. Mr. G. Allen (in the unavoidable absence of the secretary) took notes of the proceedings, and, by his energy and courtesy, contributed much to the success of the affair. Mr. Wyllie has, we understand, sent a challenge to Mr. Reed (the champion of America), for a large stake and the championship of the world; and, should this be accepted, he will leave for that country in about three months' time. If matters cannot be arranged for a match with the American, Mr. Wyllie is so pleased with the climate of Queensland that he has some idea of remaining in the colony.



Queensland Times 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1890

**DRAUGHTS.**—Mr. Wyllie, the champion draught player, continued his exhibition yesterday at the Mechanics' Institute. There was a very good attendance. He met several of the best players from Golden-square, but as usual they were all defeated. To-night Messrs. Fegan and Milroy play the champion, and as this is the last night there should be a large attendance. We omitted to mention that on Wednesday Mr. Fegan made a draw of one of the games with him.

Bendigo Advertiser 6<sup>th</sup> August, 1887

Mr. Wyllie, the champion draughts player, recently visited Mount Barker. The local paper says:—Seven or eight games were in progress together, Mr. Wyllie passing up and down on the opposite side of the table to the players and moving on each board in succession, and therefore the opening of the battle was rather slow. When, however, matters had sufficiently progressed and the Herd Laddie said "Play this yane oot," some brilliant moves were seen. One player, who had six pieces to Mr. Wyllie's four was surprised at finding three of them blocked by one man, while each of the others was so placed that it could not move without being taken. Another player making some remark about "manning" when his opponent had one the best of him, Mr. Wyllie said "I'll give you two men for nothing and then beat you." Sure enough he did so, and the disaffected one, who had played a very good game, found a king and a man blocked in the double corner by one king.

Northern Argus 30<sup>th</sup> October, 1888

The committee appointed by the meeting of draught players held recently to discuss a proposal to invite Mr. Wyllie, the champion draught player of the world, to visit Adelaide for a short season, have received a telegram from Mr. Wyllie announcing his acceptance of the terms offered. He will leave Melbourne next Monday afternoon, and will, on his arrival, have an informal reception by the Mayor of Adelaide.

SA Weekly Chronicle 29<sup>th</sup> September, 1888

Mr. Wyllie resumed his draughts matches on Tuesday at the Caledonian Hall, playing altogether 19 games, all of which he won with the exception of two which were draws, being "single corner" games, played by Mr. P. E. Lester and Mr. J. Hogg. These players have been more successful than any other opponents of Mr. Wyllie in South Australia, having achieved six draws each, and both have been personally congratulated by Mr. Wyllie on the style of their play. Indeed, to the champion it is a matter of great surprise that South Australia is not to be represented at the Centennial Tourney, which opens at the end of the present month in Melbourne, as the average play, tested by the proportions of draws to games, exhibited by this colony is far superior to that of other colonies which Mr. Wyllie has visited. At the close of the proceedings on Tuesday the "Herd Laddie" went through a number of problems for the benefit of the spectators, and solved others submitted by local players. It is rather remarkable that, unlike the great Martin, whose defeat by Barker was attributed to too heavy a strain on his physical powers, Mr. Wyllie, in spite of his advanced years, is as fresh after eight hours' play as when he commences. To-morrow night will witness the close of his season in Adelaide, but Mr. Wyllie entertains the hope of some day revisiting South Australia.

SA Advertiser 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1888



The champion draughts player of the world, Mr. Jas. Wyllie, will begin his exhibition matches in Adelaide this evening, when the mayor (Sir E. T. Smith) will attend at the Caledonian Hall and make the first move. Mr. Wyllie will be pitted against 12 local players at once, and will pass from board to board, moving at each one in succession. He was introduced to the mayor at the Town Hall on Tuesday morning and enjoyed the hospitality of his worabip. The champion has now been about 18 months in the colonies, and has spent most of that time in Victoria and New Zealand. After his visit to South Australia he proposes to proceed to Queensland and New South Wales; and his stay in Australasia will probably extend over another 12 months. As there has been a great revival of the game of draughts in Adelaide during the last year or so, no doubt great interest will be taken in the matches, and the wonderful power possessed by the "Herd Laddie" will provide more than amusement for those who contest with him as well as those who are looking on.

The advertisements with reference to amusements appear on the second page.

Alexander Blondin will perform in the Parade, Norwood, this evening.

SA Advertiser 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 1888

On Saturday afternoon and evening Mr. Wyllie, the champion draught player, got his final exhibitions of skill in the Mechanic Institute classroom, the local lovers of the game being present in large numbers—some to compete with the veteran and others to watch the progress of the matches. Some of the best Geelong players were present but though Mr Wyllie took part in seventeen games in the afternoon, and twelve in the evening, he was throughout successful, no even making a single draw. One of the most exciting contests in the evening was that in which he was pitted against Mr J. Swan. The game lasted twenty five minutes, and the champion was placed into very close quarters upon one or two occasions.

Geelong Advertiser 27<sup>th</sup> June, 1887

Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draught player of the world, returned to Melbourne from New Zealand by the Wairarapa, after a most successful tour of twelve months. He has played 5026 games, winning 4818, losing seven, and making 209 draws. He intends remaining in Victoria until after the Centennial Draughts Tournament, which will take place on 19th October.

Albury Banner 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1888

Mr. Wyllie, the champion draughts player, closed his season in Adelaide on Thursday evening, having played since his arrival no fewer than 347 games, all of which he won with the exception of 30, which were drawn. The most successful of his opponents were Messrs. P. E. Lester, of the Norwood draughts club, who drew eight games out of 16, J. Hogg, of the same club, seven games out of about 25, J. Gardiner, of Southwark, three out of seven, and W. Smith two out of eight games. On Thursday evening Mr. Lester drew one game, and two unfinished games from Wednesday were drawn, as expected, by Messrs. H.

Walker and D. Mackintosh, and one draw was also achieved by Mr. C. Oordt, who played an excellent game. The matches may be described as a great success, intense interest having been manifested by local players, who have more or less profited by the exhibition of skill they have witnessed on the part of the champion. Mr. Wyllie will play at Mount Barker to-day, to-morrow at Southwark, Monday at Hindmarsh, and Tuesday at Port Adelaide, and will leave for Melbourne on Wednesday.

SA Advertiser 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1888

## DRAUGHT NOTES.

The adjourned meeting of draughts players to consider the question of the formation of a strong city club was held at Martin's Coffee Rooms, King William-street, on Wednesday evening. There was a good attendance, which was presided over by Mr. Higginbottom. The resolution to form the club was confirmed, and about 25 members were enrolled, and at least 40 additional names of probable members given in. The following officers were elected:—Patrons, Sir E. T. Smith, the Hon. J. C. Bray, and Mr. L. Cohen, M.P.; president, Mr. N. W. Trudgeon; vice president, Mr. J. C. Newman; secretary and treasurer, Mr. J. Hogg. It was proposed to hold meetings every Thursday night at the same place. The formation of this club is the outcome of the recent visit of the champion draughts player, Mr. Wyllie, which has given a strong impetus to the study of the game, and the club promises to be not less successful than similar organisations in the capitals of the other colonies.

The play in the Centennial Tourney for the championship of Australia still continues, Mr. James Paterson, who has not been beaten, having the best show. He will have to play the vanquisher of those who have been beaten once, and unless he gets beaten twice in succession will be champion of Australasia. An interesting feature in the tourney is the play for youths under 15, which was won by Abrahams, of Queensland.

There was not much play at the Norwood Club last week. The only tourney games were between P. E. Lester 2 wins v. T. Copp 0. It is the intention of the members to finish at once. The leaders are:—W. J. Warn, 44½ wins, 37½ losses; O. Higginbottom, 28½ wins, 11½ losses; P. E. Lester, 35 wins, 18 losses; J. E. Dick, 30 wins, 21½ losses.

A letter from Mr. J. Illingworth, of Springwood, N.S.W., one of the leading players in that colony, has been received, in which he expresses a hope that the Adelaide players will challenge the Sydney ones either by telegraph or across the board. He entertains a probability that the former would not come off second best. Mr. Illingworth, under his nom de plume of "Suter's Friend," has lately published a valuable analysis of the "Double Corner."

Mr. P. E. Lester has received the following letter from Mr. Wyllie, the champion, now in Melbourne:—"Sir—During my stay in Adelaide I was always handsomely treated by the draughts-players of Adelaide and surrounding country. Please tell Mr. Hogg that the game he won of me was very well played. You yourself also played very well. I have no doubt that the Adelaide draughts-players will win more than one game from me the next time I visit their city.—Yours truly, JAMES WYLLIE, Champion Draughts-player of the World."

SA Weekly Chronicle 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1888



#### MR. WYLLIE'S AUSTRALIAN RECORD.

Mr. James Wyllie, who is the champion draughts player of the world, but is better known as the "Herd Laddie," was born in Edinburgh (Scotland) in July, 1822, and began to play draughts at the age of 14 years, because he considered it "a nice intellectual game." His first great match was with the late Andrew Anderson, of Braidwood, Lanarkshire (Scotland), in 1840. Since then he has played 596 matches in Great Britain. About 200 of these were for stakes. Of these Mr. Wyllie lost 10, drew four, and won the remainder. In one of the matches he allowed his opponent to count draws as wins. He first went to America in October, 1873, and he stayed there till October, 1876. During his visit he played six matches for stakes, and won them all. He also played about 10,000 exhibition games, of which he won 9,395, and lost 102, between 500 or 600 being drawn. In October, 1881, he again visited America, and he left the United States in January, 1885. During his visit he won 9,230 games and lost 109, while 650 were drawn. He landed in Melbourne in April, 1887, and during his stay in Victoria he played upwards of 5,000 games, of which he won, 4,642 and lost 5, the remainder being drawn. In New Zealand he played upwards of 7,000 games, winning 6,540, losing 7, and drawing the remainder. In South Australia he played 491 games, of which he won 440, lost 1, and drew 50. In New South Wales he played upwards of 2,000 games, of which he won 1,612, lost 7, and drew the remainder. In Queensland he played upwards of 1,500 games, of which he won 1,410, lost 10, and drew the balance. The total number of games played by him in Australia has been about 16,000, and of these Mr. Wyllie has lost only 30, and he has won 14,644, and drawn 1,326. This is a tremendous record. Comparing the result, we find that Queensland won one out of every 150 games, New South Wales was second with rather more than one out of 300 games, South Australia won one game out of 500, and Victoria and New Zealand tied, with one game out of every 1,000 played.

The American draughts players appear to have taken advantage of Mr. Wyllie's absence from Northern hemisphere to indulge in some "blow," so that Mr. Wyllie felt it necessary to assert himself once more. He accepted a challenge thrown out by Mr. J. P. Reed to play a match for 500 dols. a side, or 1,000 dols. in all, with, of course the championship added. Mr. Wyllie duly forwarded a deposit of a 100 dols. to the draughts editor of the *Turf, Field, and Farm*, New York, and intended to leave Sydney

*Farm*, New York, and intended to leave Sydney for San Francisco, so as to reach Chicago about the middle of April. From what has transpired recently, however, it appears that Mr. Hefter, who is Reed's backer, is trying to "hedge" out of it. Mr. Wyllie fails to see how this can be done without forfeiting the deposit, but he has decided to postpone his departure from Australia for a time, to allow of some arrangements being made. Mr. Wyllie left Sydney for Melbourne on Saturday last, and intends to remain there for a week or so, and then go on to Adelaide. There has been some talk of arranging a match between Mr. Wyllie and Mr. Marr, of Brisbane, for £200 and the championship, the winner to receive three-fourths of the money, and the loser one-fourth. But nothing definite has been arranged, although, from what has been said, there does not appear to be any doubt about the supporters of the two men being able to raise the money. Mr. Marr is the only player in Australia who has shown any signs of being able to compete with Mr. Wyllie on equal terms. Whether he would be able to win in a set match it is impossible to say without more of a trial, but the "Herd Laddie" appears to be a strong favourite. If this match should take place it will delay Mr. Wyllie's departure from the Southern Hemisphere for a few weeks. If it does not, he will proceed to "Auld Reekie" once more to see his family—that is to say, unless something decisive is heard from Reed in the meantime.

In reference to a suggested challenge from Freeman, Mr. Wyllie has written to the *New York Turf, Field, and Farm*, and to the *Glasgow Herald*, to the effect that he is willing to play a match on the unrestricted principle, each player choosing eight openings out of 32 games for £100, or each choosing 16 openings out of 64 games for £200. Of the value of Mr. Wyllie's visit there can scarcely be two opinions. Before he came to Australia there was perhaps half-a-dozen who might be called good draughts players in the colonies, and about 50 players who might be considered very fair; while there were a vast number who played the game without science or skill. There can be no doubt that the best players have been greatly improved by the lessons they have taken from the champion, and it is not too much to estimate

About the damage below on the final page, this is the ONLY resume of JW's tour in the Australian papers I can find. A pity.

Hamilton Spectator 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1891

ON SPECTATOR

...ent until some  
...ve begun to study  
...that the average plantine manner than was  
...at least 50 years grow up  
...married in December, 1831,  
...visit will children, who will, no doubt, wel-  
...of it after his long journey. He is greatly  
...sed with his visit to Australia, and, in  
...taking leave of those who were in the room of  
...the Sydney School of Arts, Chess and Draughts  
...Club, he expressed his determination to come  
...to the colonies again as soon as his engagements  
...would permit. The "Herd Laddie" is a stout-  
...built, sturdy-looking man, with an open and  
...pleasing countenance; and he is the picture of  
...health. He has never taken a glass of intoxicat-  
...ing liquor or smoked a pipe of tobacco in his  
...life. He is very quiet and observant, and  
...rarely speaks unless he is spoken to first. Dur-  
...ing the last few years he has become rather  
...deaf. He is very particular in telling those  
...who play with him that his charge is "a shullen  
...a game, ye kin," and the quiet manner in which  
...he reminds those who forget to pay before the  
...game begins causes much amusement. Al-  
...though he does not smoke himself, he does not  
...appear to object to others doing so. "Do you  
...mind me smoking?" asked a player in Sydney  
...recently. "Na, na; it disna hurt me as lang  
...as ye dinna spit on my claes," was his character-  
...istic reply.

Hamilton Spectator 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1891

The crinkled part of the article at the top is general in tone and suggests improvement in Australian players as a result of JW's visit. He was pleased with his 4 years here as he made good money and was treated well by all. His wife had passed many years before his tour down under. NSW news on his visit there is not so easy to find and so this 'crinkly' bit is given.

He was close with his money as are most people who carry out a profession like this where they have to ask players for the "shullen" and it is hard to do. True one would get better at it but if he got money for the 16,000 games played that is 16,000 shillings or 800 pounds for 4 years touring. This does not include club money given willingly. It is impressive to read how players flocked to him all over the two countries. He left for England in May 1891.

Mr. James Wyllie, champion draught player, continued playing his exhibition games on Monday evening. He played seven games with members of the Melbourne Draughts Club, winning five while the rest were drawn.

The Argus 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1887



The draughts competition held at the Caledonian games last Tuesday for the St. Louis Lager Beer trophy, presented by Mr. James McDougall, was brought to a conclusion last night at the Melbourne Draughts Club rooms, Mather's Cafe. After some hard contested games, Mr. James Paterson, the champion of Australia, was declared the winner and great excitement, none of the other competitors being able to even make a draw with Mr. J. Wyllie, "the Herd Laddie."

The Argus 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1887

There was a large attendance in the lodge-room of the Hindmarsh Institute on Monday evening, when the "Herd Laddie" played 20 games of draughts against local players and all-comers, winning all but one, which was a draw. Great interest was centred in the play with Mr. J. Broad, who effected the draw, and has thus brought his score with the champion to three draws out of six games played. Messrs. J. Hogg, T. Hanton, and J. Gardner each suffered defeat. A youngster, 12 years old, named J. Thomson, made a good stand against the champion, Mr. Wyllie, who will play in the same place to-morrow (Wednesday) evening.

SA Advertiser 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1888

Mr James Wyllie, the draughts champion of The world, played 36 games at Martin's rooms On Wednesday, winning 34 and drawing 2 with Messrs C. Cordt & T. Hewitson.

SA Chronicle 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1891

**Mr. Wyllie, the draughts champion, made his penultimate appearance in Adelaide on Monday, when he played 39 games against all comers, winning all but three draws to Messrs. J. Hanton, J. Hogg, and T. A. Cook. To-night he plays in Martin's rooms, and to morrow at Clare, and after fulfilling other engagements outside the city takes ship for London on the 6th.**

The Advertiser 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1891

**DRAUGHT TOURNAMENT.**—Draughts, though perhaps not so fascinating or intricate a game as chess, furnishes scope for no little skill, and numbers amongst its votaries as long a list of prominent men as its rival. It is not often that Adelaide is honoured with a visit from any very celebrated draughtsman, and it was with pleasure that the news was received that the champion player of the world, Mr. James Wyllie, or the "Herd Laddie," was about to pay a visit to the colony. Every preparation was made for his reception, and on Wednesday evening, October 3, he began a series of exhibition matches at the Caledonian Hall, playing twelve simultaneous games against local men. There was an exceedingly large and representative attendance. His Worship the Mayor initiated the tournament by making the first move, and this, the first game, was by a singular coincidence the only one out of the twelve that was drawn, all the others being won easily by the "Herd Laddie," who just "walked round" his opponents to the astonishment of the spectators. Play was begun at 4.45 and ended at 10.15 p.m. Throughout the evening great interest was manifested, and surprised expressed at the wonderful ability of the champion. To-night at the same hall he will be pitted against some first-class local draughtsmen.

SA Register 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1888

**DRAGHTS.** — The South Australian Draughts Championship was decided on June 20 at Martin's Exchange Coffee rooms in the presence of a large and enthusiastic number of spectators. With one game to the good Mr. Lester managed, after a desperate struggle, to draw the two remaining games, a "Switober" and a "Bristol." In the final play off sixteen games have been played, Lester winning four and Gardiner four, with eight draws each. The prizes fall thus:— First, Mr. P. E. Lester; second, Mr. J. Gardiner; and third, Mr. J. Hogg. "J. R. M." sends us the following particulars, which will be found interesting, respecting the new South Australian champion:—"Mr. Peter Edward Lester is an Australian by birth and rather over fifty years of age. Although always a good sound natural player it is only during the last few years that he has devoted his time to a thorough study of the intricacies of the game. Very few of the ordinary public know what an immense amount of time and patience is required before one can become a real good draught-player, the common idea being that it is rather a simple game, whereas the fact is the more we enquire into its combinations the more we find our inability during an ordinary lifetime to thoroughly master the game. During the visit to Adelaide of the 'Herd Laddie' (the champion of the world) Mr. Lester succeeded in making the best average record of draws amongst Mr. Wyllie's opponents, and therefore it is no surprise to draught-players that he should have distinguished himself when competing against the best players of South Australia. Mr. Lester up to a few years ago was an enthusiastic veteran cricketer, and for many years a hard-working playing member of the old East Adelaide Cricket Club, and was not unknown on the football field. He will be also known amongst athletes as the winner for a great number of consecutive years of nearly all foot races for men over forty years of age, when he was invariably started from scratch. Mr. Lester, who is a mechanic in the employ of Messrs. James Marshall and Co., of Adelaide, is the founder of the Norwood Draught Club, of which town he is an old resident. He is very popular amongst his many friends, and the news of his success will be hailed with the greatest satisfaction by all those who know him. Mr. J. Gardiner, who takes second prize, and who gave the champion so much trouble before the final defeat, is a much younger man than Mr. Lester, and is also a native-born Australian. In fact the superiority of the natives over their English, Scotch, and other opponents was quite a feature in the contest, and shows that they are quite able to hold their own in intellectual as well as physical games of skill."

Adelaide Observer 29<sup>th</sup> June, 1889

## **PORTRAITS OF MESSRS. WYLLIE AND MAR, the **Champion Draughts** Players.**

Brisbane Courier 16<sup>th</sup> July, 1890

**Mr. James Wyllie, the draughts champion,  
 played 27 games at Martin's Rooms on Thurs-  
 day, winning all except two drawn with Mr.  
 T. Cooke and one with Mr. Hanton.**

Advertiser SA 24<sup>th</sup> April, 1891

**THE **CHAMPION DRAUGHTS** PLAYER  
 OF THE WORLD.**

**MR. **JAMES WYLLIE****  
 ("The Hard Laddie")

Will Commence a series of Twenty Exhibition  
 Games at the Metropolitan Hotel, Edward  
 street, on **TUESDAY**, commencing at 8 p.m.,  
 against **THE CHAMPION OF QUEENS-**  
**LAND.**

The Telegraph (Brisbane) 7<sup>th</sup> July, 1890

The second series of draughts matches  
 between Mr. J. Wyllie, champion of the world,  
 and Mr. R. Mar, champion of Queensland, was  
 resumed last evening, in Mr. A. McNish Fraser's  
 auction room, in the presence of a number of  
 interested spectators. The games were:—  
 "Switcher," with Wyllie taking the black men,  
 drawn in fifty minutes; "Switcher," Mar  
 taking the blacks, drawn in forty-nine minutes;  
 "Single Corner," Wyllie taking the black men,  
 drawn in forty-four minutes. The play was  
 characterised by great steadiness and caution  
 on the part of both players. The whole of the  
 games last evening were drawn, as appears  
 from the above, and the score now stands—  
 Mar, 2 wins; Wyllie, 1 win; draws, 6. Nine-  
 teen games remain to be played.

Brisbane Courier 13<sup>th</sup> August, 1890



The third annual general meeting of the Brisbane Draughts Club took place at the club-room, Kent's Buildings, on Saturday last, when the yearly report and balance-sheet were presented, and the election of officers took place. Mr. Robert Mar occupied the chair. From the report it appeared that during the past year fourteen new members joined the club, making the total number fifty-one. Mr. G. S. Foorde played Mr. Mar for the championship of Queensland and cup, when Mr. Mar won. The club received a visit from Mr. James Wyllie, the champion of the world, who played Mr. Mar two exhibition matches, the result being: In the first match of twenty games (restricted openings), Mr. Mar won five games to three, the others drawn; and in the second match of twenty-eight games (restricted openings), Mr. Wyllie won five games to two, the others being drawn. The thanks of the club were tendered to Mr. M'Nish Fraser for the free use of his rooms in the Wyllie-Mar matches. No club matches had been played during the year, the one with Ipswich having fallen through. The balance-sheet showed a small amount in hand, the receipts for the year having come to £49 16s. The following is the list of officers elected for the ensuing year:—Patrons, Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith, K.C.M.G., and the Mayor of Brisbane; president, Mr. Robert Mar; vice-presidents, Messrs. A. M'Nish Fraser and P. Hardie; captain, Mr. F. Passey; hon. secretary and treasurer, Mr. Charles Abraham; auditors, Messrs. J. Munro and J. Trundle; committee—Messrs. J. J. Lovekin, R. Fraser, J. S. White, J. G. Horstall, G. S. Foorde, R. Broadbent, and J. M'Ewen. Mr. Mar is the Queensland champion, and holder of the cup for 1891. The club has started the year vigorously. The members meet every Saturday evening. A match is expected to take place shortly with the Ipswich team, and an all-round tournament is in course of preparation.

Brisbane Courier 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1891

Mr. James Wyllie, the draughts champion, played 40 games at Martin's rooms on Monday evening, winning 35, and drawing five with Messrs. F. H. Stevens, W. Maschmedt, R. Taylor, J. Clark, and John Hogg. A game with Mr. Hanton closed with a particularly brilliant win for the "Hard Laddie," which extorted the admiration of all present, including several experienced players. The game will be continued to day.

The Advertiser SA April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1891

## Draughts.

### A SIXTY YEARS' RETROSPECT.

(By "Coulter Fell.")

The history of serious draughts from the accession of Queen Victoria is almost co-incidental with the public life of James Wyllie, the "Herd Laddie." He was born in 1818, and began to play professionally when 14 years of age, or five years before her Majesty's accession. Wyllie was champion not only of Scotland but of the world for many years—longer, indeed, than the life of most players. Once or twice the title was wrested from him—in 1859, at Edinburgh, by Robert Martins, and in 1876 by Yates, in America—but it did not long remain out of his possession; and until three years ago, when he lost to Ferrie, no other player made a permanent right to the title. Wyllie twice paid lengthened visits to the United States and Canada. He also had a long stay in Australia, playing two matches with Robert Mar, the Australian champion. One was won by Wyllie, and the other by Mar. Martins is an Englishman by birth, though since 1864 his home has been at Douglas Lanarkshire. He is a few years the junior of Wyllie, and like his companion-in-arms has travelled widely in pursuit of draughts-playing. They were matched against each other for the championship half a dozen times, and out of 341 games Wyllie has a majority of only three wins—22 to 19—the remainder of the total having been drawn. Their names were so long associated as the leading lights of the checker world that one can hardly think of them apart from the pastime which their life-long labors have done so much to popularise. To have been the world's adepts at the scientific game of draughts for more than half a century proves them to be individuals of no ordinary stamina

Mr. W. M'Ilwrick, of Invercargill, New Zealand. Selections of the parties played on the Blue Mountains by this trio of first-rates have appeared in the draughts columns of the "Town and Country Journal." Mr. J. Drury's strength is a household word in Sydney, and he has to be reckoned with in any championship match for Australia, now that Mar has left Gympie for Scotland, via the United States.

The game is not only popular in the draughts clubs in the various Australasian colonies, but in the shearers' huts, on the gold fields, and at the collieries of Newcastle, Lambton, Wallsend, Greta, Lithgow, Joadja Creek, and other centres where North countrymen and Scotchmen congregate and especially among the miners at Broken Hill. Draughts is freely played in hundreds of schools of arts and mechanics' institutes. Some admirable games have lately been played at the Eumore reading-rooms, and readers are aware of my indebtedness to Mr. J. Underwood, of Newtown, for his sound annotations on the scores. For years the Sydney cabmen have resorted to checkers to while away the lonely hours of waiting for fares on the ranks, and one cabby enjoys a wide reputation as a player among his brethren of the whip at Redfern Railway Station and Macquarie Place. Many of the engineers on board the intercolonial teamers are adepts at the game. The Sydney Newsboys' Brigade numbers many votaries, and so does the training ship Sobraon, although the lads probably little reck that they are playing a game in vogue 4500 years ago in Egypt. The first syllable in dambred is akin to dameh, the name of the modern Egyptian game.

A marked feature of the strides made by draughts during the last sixty years is shown by the fact that many of the leading chessplayers of the world have paid considerable attention to draughts. Notable modern examples are Emanuel Lasker, champion chessplayer of the world; H. N. Pillsbury, winner of the Hastings chess tournament; and J. H. Blackburne, champion blindfold chessplayer of England. The Sydney chessplayers comprise several strong draughtsplayers, including the Rev. A. Miller, and Messrs. G. B. Hall

them to be individuals of no ordinary stamina and mental skill. Recent mail advices state that these two veterans decided to commemorate the year of the Diamond Jubilee by a final cross-board battle, twenty-six games in Glasgow and twenty-six in Manchester, to be contested for a purse subscribed by a few lovers of the game.

For many years Brisbane has been an active centre of draughts. Fred Passey, who hails from Widnes, Lancashire, arrived in Brisbane in 1891, challenged Mar for the championship, and received a decisive defeat. Passey defeated Foord, Gledhill, and Abraham in 1892; and scored one win and four draws from Wyllie, but sustained ten losses. Passey twice played Lane for £5 a side, conceding the drawn games and double wins. Passey lost the first time, and won the second. Upon Mar winning the title of champion of Australasia, the championship of Queensland was played for in 1892, and was won by Passey. He lost it to young Abraham in 1893, but recovered it in 1894.

In New South Wales no single draughts-player has done better service for the interests of the game than Mr. J. R. Stormont, of Sydney, himself a redoubtable opponent. Memorable contests took place between Champion Thomas Reid of Sydney (who has since left for Johannesburg), "Souter's Friend" (Mr. J. Illingworth), lately of Katoomba, and now of Richmond, and

cluding the Rev. A. Miller, and Messrs. G. B. Hall and W. Ridley. Draughtsplayers throughout these colonies now look forward to the time when a grand tournament shall be fixed to test the many conflicting claims to championship honors beneath the Southern Cross.

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Town & Country Journal 19<sup>th</sup> June, 1897



# Draughts game tests future's 'workers'

A game of draughts and dangerous work on a nuclear power plant may not seem to have much in common, but both are testing grounds for the workers of the future robots.

Engineers attending the Australian Institution of Engineers' national conference and exhibition on robotics in Melbourne last week saw a robot playing draughts and heard from an American expert about future use of robots on dangerous work.

The Professor of Robotics at Purdue University, Indiana, Professor Richard Paul, said the major Western countries were co-operating on an international project to use robots to do hazardous work — in deep space, mining, rescue, undersea work or work in nuclear plants, for instance.

He said the nuclear power industry was a failure because it had commercialised rapidly without working out how to safely operate and maintain its equipment.

Robots could do maintenance work such as that needed at the Three Mile Island plant in Pennsylvania in the US which was too dangerous for men.

Professor Paul said this was a new area for robots which had been mainly used in clean manufacturing environments because the basic driving force in developing robots was to save money.

Professor Paul — born in Australia but living overseas since 1949 — said robots had been used mainly in mass production. Now researchers were developing robots which could make small quantities of an item.

There were robots at the exhibition in Melbourne's Hilton Hotel which could do repetitive tasks such as automatically screwing and fastening nuts and bolts, packing or installing parts, loading and unloading and assembly line work.

The salesman for a \$20,000 to \$30,000 robot designed like an arm said it did repetitive work which placed great strain on arm and elbow joints. The machines were geared to eliminating repetition injuries such as tenosynovitis.

He said several large Sydney companies, including Sunbeam, Hoover and STC, were spending hundreds of thousands of dollars installing

robotic screwdrivers which eliminated the need for hand-turning to install a screw.

The companies were doing this as much for the operators' sake as for their own — the staff working conditions were improved and a happier staff meant fewer industrial disputes, the salesman said.

Professor Paul said there was no doubt robots created redundancy, not jobs.

"Much is low-level repetitive work and I don't think it is good to have someone doing some stupid thing all day long," he said.

He said creative solutions to the reduction in jobs were needed — a 20-hour week or years off for re-retraining, for instance — instead of the traditional emphasis on creating jobs.

Professor Paul said that although there was no longer such a need for everyone to work, the emphasis was still on full employment.

"Nowadays we are continually trying to keep people working by making irrelevant products which, hopefully, will fall to bits so we can make more," he said.

Canberra Times 27<sup>th</sup> August, 1984



Cootamundra Herald 22 August 1946

### CHES AND DRAUGHTS

The attention of chess and draught enthusiasts is drawn to the notice appearing in today's issue advising that as from next Saturday, August 24, the School of Arts will be the venue of the Cootamundra Chess and Draughts Club.

All interested in this class of recreation are invited to attend, and thus relax from the worries and troubles of our busy world.

The game of chess has been for years the favorite recreation of the greatest minds, and it is known to have been the study of the European masters for more than 500 years. It has of late years become very popular among all classes of the community. Doctors have recommended it to those suffering from nervous disability, as it was found to have a soothing effect and assisted in their eventual recovery. Indeed, any statement of its attraction is almost superfluous.

With these preliminary remarks you are again reminded that, with improved facilities available, members of the club will be able to have a game any week-night. Our main night of games is at the moment on a Saturday night.

The membership fee is only 5 per annum for adults, and 2 6 for juniors. Intending members are assured of a hearty welcome, and beginners will be fully instructed and assisted in the tuition of either chess or draughts.

It is proposed to submit for study and practice some of the most outstanding games of chess played by the masters; and in another column will be seen the first of these series. In this instance it is considered to be the most outstanding game that has been played, and is known as "The Immortal Game."

Don't forget, next Saturday night at the School of Arts.

Express 7<sup>th</sup> August, 1889

TO JAMES WYLLIE.

Now here's success to Wyllie when  
He crosses o'er the seas  
And meets amongst the checker men  
In the Antipodes,  
He'll show them something, there's no doubt,  
They never knew before ;  
He is a foeman strong and stout,  
And Scottish to the core.  
He'll tell to them in black and white  
The things he's got to say.  
Not e'en a king with all his might  
He will let stop his way.  
They needn't be afraid, his foes,  
I'm sure, in getting fair,  
For everything that Wyllie does  
He does *upon the square*.

He makes no odds 'twixt rich and poor,  
He hates so mean a thing ;  
And he is not, I'm very sure,  
Afraid to huff a king.  
Our friends across the water may  
Be holding Wyllie cheap,  
But they will find, I dare to say,  
They've ta'en a fatal leap.  
And what about the lads at home ?  
They'll be as crouse as fleas ;  
Where puss is not the mice will roam  
And nibble up the cheese.  
When he comes back it will be nice  
To see these happy souls  
Flee from the cat, like little mice,  
And creep into their holes.

MATTHEW TATE.—*Blythe News*.

Mercury & Weekly Courier 12<sup>th</sup> September, 1889

THE "Fifeeshire Journal" publishes the following reminiscence of Mr. James Wyllie:—"A Cuparian who met the 'Herd Laddie' 30 years ago says that Mr. Blank was the player here at that time, no one daring to dispute his authority. When this veteran heard that the 'Herd Laddie' had arrived, he flew to meet him. I was busy at work when Mr. Blank entered, and touching me on the arm, said, 'Here's Mr. Wyllie, James.' I turned round and was never more astonished in my life. There stood a little round-faced man, wearing a cut-away green coat, ornamented with big brass buttons, a worn-out horse-shoe bonnet (a Glengarry) and carrying a pedlar's pack. Almost before I had recovered from my surprise, Wyllie deliberately unlung and opened his pack, and in his low, measured voice offered to sell me a watch. I asked if he would guarantee the watch to go. 'Aye,' said he, 'and if she disna' go, you'll easily find me out, for my name is often in the papers.' He was a curious fellow, but just as good at driving a bargain as at playing a game. That same evening Blank and he met in the Burnside Tavern, and the 'Herd Laddie' won so many games that the hitherto invincible Blank lost his sense of honour, and tried to shove a man on the board with his sleeve. Wyllie detected him instantly, and his 'canny' request, 'Will you be guid enough to put back that man, Mr. Blank?' immediately put an end to that sort of play. Wyllie wasn't the man to be humbugged."

2<sup>nd</sup> November, 1889 - Australasian -

Photo below PAGE 244

**THE HERD LADDIE AT STUDLEY-PARK.**

The following is the score of the drawn game which was played on the 8th inst. at Dr. Le Fevre's house in Studley-park, between a lady visitor and Mr. James Wyllie.

"THE AVERHUE LASSIE."

Black, the lady visitor; white, Mr. Wyllie.

11-15	9-14	5-9	13-17
24..20	26..23	24..19	22..13
8-11	10-15	15-24	14-13
28..24	19..10	28..19	23..14
4-8	6-15	9-13	11-16
23..19	30..26	22..18	20..11
15-18	8-11	1-6	7-32
22..15	25..22	18..9	14..9
11-18	18-25	8-14	12-16
32..28	29..22	26..22	9..5

And the game was drawn.

Australasian 26<sup>th</sup> October, 1889



**James Wyllie 1838-1899**

Photo from web site - [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)





### *Photo information*

Office bearers of the Wick and Pulteneytown Chess and Draughts Club, circa 1889.

Back Row (L to r)-J. Mackintosh (vice

President); J. Davidson, A. Larnach (secretary; W. Miller.

Front Row- J. Brodie, W. Shepherd, Sir Alexander Rae (president), James Wyllie (the "Herd Laddie"), R. Tait.

[Information from "Times Gone By" Vol 2, Dec 25 1929, pg14.]

James Wyllie (b.1820 Edinburgh, d. 15 Apr 1899 Glasgow) was champion draughts player of the world for over thirty years.

The following piece appeared in the John o' Groat Journal dated Wednesday 09 February 1887.....

"Portrait of the Champion Draught Played of the World.—We have before us a cabinet portrait of James Wyllie, the renowned "Herd Laddie," photographed by Mr A. Johnston, Wick. As becomes the master of the game, Wyllie is taken seated with his right arm resting easily on a draughts board, looking upwards just as he does when finishing an evening's play. The artist has been very happy catching his expression, all the characteristic features of his fine Scottish type of face and high forehead being well and clearly brought out; while the attitude in sitting and the natural position of the arms all go to show that have Mr Wyllie here as he exists and has his being—not a Mr Wyllie got up to photographed. It is a portrait true to life, highly finished in enamel, and credit not only to Mr Johnston, but to photography. We would strongly advise all admirers of Mr Wyllie, indeed of a piece of art, to send at once to A. Johnstone, photographer, Wick, for this portrait, which he supplies at the very moderate sum of 1s each, post free. — Free Press.

Article and photo from - [www.johnstoncollection.net](http://www.johnstoncollection.net)

**THE HERD LADDIE**  
(MR. WYLLIE),  
The **Champion Draughts-Player** of the World,  
Will play against all-comers, single or  
simultaneous games, by appoint-  
ment, during the week from  
**THIS DAY, TUESDAY, TO TUESDAY, 23rd INSTANT,**  
AT THE  
SCHOOL OF ARTS CHESS & **DRAUGHTS**  
CLUB ROOM.  
NON-SUBSCRIBERS, 1s. EACH GAME.  
Apply to C. JOSEPH, Hon. Sec., Howick-street.

Bathurst Free Press 18<sup>th</sup> April, 1889

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## **BANQUET TO MR JAMES WYLLIE.**

OTAGO WITNESS, ISSUE 1874, 21 OCTOBER 1887,  
PAGE 10

The article under the above heading follows -

## BANQUET TO MR JAMES WYLLIE.

The draughts players of Dunedin and surrounding districts entertained the veteran "Herd Laddie" at dinner in the Dunedin Chess and Draughts Club room, Baldwin Hotel, on Saturday night. There was a very large gathering of gentlemen present, including representatives from the Taieri, Sawyers' Bay, Portobello, Highcliff, North-East Harbour, Kaikora, &c., &c. Mr William Houston (president of the club), occupied the chair, and Mr W. O. Duthie, of Highcliff, was vice-chairman. The tables were beautifully decorated and abundantly supplied with good things, which seemed to be fully appreciated.

The CHAIRMAN in a few appropriate words proposed the toast of "The Queen and Royal Family," and expressed the hope that her Majesty would be long spared to adorn her position, and show a bright example to her subjects by the faithful discharge of her duties as Queen and mother. The sentiments were heartily reciprocated.

The CHAIRMAN then said that he had another very pleasing toast to propose, and that was "The Game of Draughts." He felt sure that all present were delighted at having as their guest the renowned Mr Wyllie, the draughts champion of the world—a gentleman who had crossed swords with all the experts of Britain and America, and come off with flying colours. Mr Wyllie was now doing an Australasian tour, and his record so far was something marvellous. The

game itself was of very ancient origin, and was so exhaustless in its resources that it was impossible for any intellect to grasp all its beauties or solve all its mysteries. It had votaries in all countries, but it might be said to be the national game of Scotland.

Mr DAVID R. HAY proposed the toast of "Kindred Games," and in doing so said that it would be well for the colony were the games of chess and draughts more studied and played in the family circle than they were at present; as they afforded the highest intellectual enjoyment in the way of innocent amusement that the human mind was capable of. They would also prove a healthy corrective to the fervish excitement which usually permeated colonial life. Were the youth of the colony to study these games in a scientific manner they would be rewarded by the keenest enjoyment, and have the satisfaction of knowing that their time was not being frittered away, as was too often the case in other amusements; for they would be improving their minds almost unconsciously in the struggle for supremacy over the board.

Mr JOHN P. BELL then said that he had the honour to propose the toast of the evening--viz., "Our Guest, Mr Wyllie." He need hardly say how pleased all were in having the opportunity of welcoming to our shores so distinguished a player as the "Herd Laddie." All had heard of him ever since they had taken an interest in the game, and many of those present were acquainted with him in the old country, and had been beaten by him too, were they candid enough to admit it. At all events, the pleasure of having



to admit it. At all events, the pleasure of having him in their midst was great indeed; and he felt sure that this visit of the "Herd Laddie" would arouse a livelier interest in the game than ever. He felt confident that as the beauties of the game became more generally known many would avail themselves of the opportunity of joining the club, so as to improve their skill in playing. He might mention that during his Australian tour Mr Wyllie had played about 1860 games and lost only two or them, 90 being drawn, and the remainder wins for the champion. He sincerely hoped that New Zealand would make a better record. As travelling in the colonies was very expensive, the players here thought that it would be a graceful thing on their part to present Mr Wyllie with a purse of sovereigns as a tangible mark of their esteem and an appropriate acknowledgment of his kindness in visiting the colony. He now had great pleasure in presenting the "Herd Laddie," in the name of the subscribers, with a purse of sovereigns.

Mr WYLLIE, in reply, stated that he felt deeply indebted to the draughts players of New Zealand for the great kindness he had received at their hands since coming among them. He had no idea that he would meet with such crowds of draughts players in New Zealand. The purse he would never part with as long as he lived, but would keep it as a memento of their great kindness. He hoped that some day New Zealand would produce a "Herd Laddie" of her own even better than himself; and that might be in his own lifetime. However, he was not dead

yet, and would do his best to uphold his reputation as long as he could. He sincerely thanked them for their present.

Mr HAY proposed "Our Visitors," coupled with the name of Mr J. Shore, of Riccarton. He was glad to see so many districts represented; and Mr Shore's enthusiasm for the game might be imagined when he rode over 40 miles one day to see the interprovincial draughts match with Canterbury.

Mr J. SHORE responded in an appropriate manner.

The VICE-CHAIRMAN said that he was proud to be present on such an eventful occasion. He had heard of the "Herd Laddie" ever since he was a boy, and it afforded him the highest gratification to have the pleasure of meeting him. He had no doubt that this visit of the champion would do more to stimulate an interest in the game than anything else could; and he heartily wished that the players of New Zealand would be able to score a few wins from so redoubtable an antagonist. He hoped Mr Wyllie's visit would prove a success financially, and that he would enjoy his tour throughout the colony. He had very great pleasure in proposing "The Press," coupled with the name of their esteemed friend Mr David R. Hay, chess and draughts editor of the Otago Witness. They all knew how much they were indebted to Mr Hay for his exertions in promoting the interests of these two scientific games throughout the colony.

Mr HAY, in reply, said that it was chiefly to his valued contributors and correspondents that the

chess and draughts columns were so interesting. He could assure them that he would do his best to keep up the reputation of the Witness, and he had no doubt that he would be heartily assisted in his efforts by the chess and draughts players of the colony.

During the evening the proceedings were enlivened by some capital songs by several of the company present. Mr H. Howes gave "The squatter's daughter" and "Beautiful Nell"; Mr James Sim, "My Highland home"; Mr Thomas Dickson, "Robin Adair" and "The bonnie hills o' Airlie"; Mr John Christie, "Scotland yet"; Mr C. Hellyer, "The Con-naught boy"; Mr James Dickson, "My native land"; Mr R. Telfer, a medley; and Mr J. P. Bell gave the humorous recitation "The Hielaudman's prayer," which fairly convulsed the meeting with laughter.

After passing a hearty vote of thanks to Host Reade for his excellent catering and singing "Auld Lang Syne," one of the pleasantest meetings of draughts players that has ever taken place in the colony came to an end just in time for the country representatives to catch the late trains.

**From "Papers Past-Otago Witness October 21<sup>st</sup>, 1887 p.10.**

The New Zealand draughts brotherhood loved the Herd Laddie. Why wouldn't they? He had come thousands of miles at a great age to prove how good he was and if they were better he would go down fighting. They weren't and he loved them back with one of his better speeches. No wonder he stayed 12 months on the South Island of New Zealand and he was sad he never got to the North Island. It was interesting to read that travel in the colonies was so expensive and so the purse was given him. It would be good to know how far he travelled in Australia and New Zealand but just as far as in America I would think.



JAMES WYLIE, THE CELEBRATED DRAUGHT PLAYER.

As we have the pleasure of including among our patrons a great number of Chess Players, we are persuaded the annexed sketch will be read by them with especial interest—akin to that which they take in “the noble game.”

James Wylie was born in Edinburgh, on the 8th of July, 1822, and brought up in Kilmarnock. When a boy he was principally employed in herding cows. At the age of 15 he began to play at draughts: during the winter season, he played two hours every night, and soon became a good player. During the spring following, he went to Edinburgh, played with all the best players in the city, and beat them with the greatest ease, during his stay with them, which was upwards of a month. His first match was with Mr. Steel, of Kirkcconnel, for £40, in Jan., 1839, in which Steel was defeated. Steel challenged him again for £40, in April, 1839, and was defeated a second time. His next match was with Mr. Anderson, of Carlisle, near Glasgow, July, 1839, for £5, when Anderson won with a trifling advantage; he played with Anderson a second time, and was again defeated. The next match was with Mr. Price, of Manchester, August, 1840, for £100, in which Price was defeated. In May, 1841, he gave Mr. Price 7 games in 13 for £25, and Price was defeated a second time. The next match was with Mr. Muirhead, of Macklesfield, for £10, when he undertook to win 12 games before Mr. Muirhead would gain 6 draws—Muirhead was defeated! Wylie was then matched with Mr. Lindop, of Sheffield, in May, 1841, for £100, for the first 13 games—he giving Lindop the draws to count in his favour, when Lindop was defeated! In June, 1841, Lindop again challenged Wylie for £60, at the same odds, when Wylie was defeated. Two months after, he challenged Lindop, or any other person in England, the first 13 games, giving 9 games to start with, from £50 to any sum:—Lindop accepted the challenge for £65, and was defeated! only winning 1 game. About a month after, Wylie challenged any man in the world for from £100 to £500, and was taken by Anderson, of Carlisle, for £200, to be played in May, 1842; but, in consequence of some affliction in Anderson's family, the match was put off, and has not yet been played. Wylie's next match was with Mr. Mattison, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, in December, 1842, for £10; the first 13 games, draws to count in Mattison's favour; when Mattison was defeated—without drawing a game! Wylie is now matched to play Anderson, of Carlisle, for any sum not below £50, Anderson having his choice; and this match is expected to come off in about two months.—(From a Correspondent.)

From the Illustrated London News p.256 – October 14<sup>th</sup>, 1843. Doubtless it is in an earlier Scots paper but I have had this photocopy for many decades. I noted Pal Bucker put it on his website on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2021. Knowing his actual birth year of 1818 he has to be 25 or less in this engraving. The surname spelling with only one ‘L’ must have settled in later life at 2 ‘L’s’.



# DRAUGHTS CHAMPION OF VICTORIA.



Mr. H. T. EGAN.

Hugh Thomas Egan, who won the draughts championship at the Easter Tournament, was born at Drouin, Gippsland, Victoria, on May 6, 1888, so he has nearly attained his majority. He has made rapid strides in the game, as he only commenced to play in 1906, when he joined the Prahran Draughts Club. Shortly afterwards he played in Association matches, and was a competitor in the club championship tourney of 1907, when G. A. Kerr came out on top. In the same year he was a competitor in the Victorian Championship Tourney, but failed to reach the prize list. In 1908 Egan played a match of 12 games unrestricted, against James Hilliard, of Clifton Hill, for a trophy of the value of £2, and won by 6 games to 3, with 2 draws.

For the last year or so Egan has been studying the "books" very assiduously, and keeping up his practice with strong players most regularly, so his present victory was not altogether unexpected. Should he continue to take the same lively interest in the game, he will be able before long to gain still further laurels. Our columns have been enriched within the last year or two with numerous specimens of his skill as an analyst and problemist. Mr Egan's success should encourage young players to heartily go in for the study of our scientific game.

Weekly Times (Vic) 24<sup>th</sup> April, 1909

**The Herald 18<sup>th</sup> March, 1929**

***“National Title Tourney***

*The Victorian Draughts Council has appointed H. Egan (“Whilter”) of the Weekly Times. State Title Holder as Victoria’s representative in the National Tourney which will open in Brisbane on Easter Saturday.*

*Mr Egan has competed in every tourney since 1909. He won his first title when the games were played in Sydney in 1913, but was defeated when the contest was last decided in Launceston two years ago. He will leave for Brisbane on March 25. The present holder of the National Title is J. Boyles, but it has not yet been decided whether he will take part in the contests.*

*South Australia has appointed J.VG. Earle, Tasmania, A.E. Sargison and New Zealand W. Penman.*

*The winner of the National title besides receiving the Championship medal will also receive a cash prize of £50.”*



MR H. EGAN

# BOY MEETS VETERAN IN KEEN GAME



In the annual town and country match of the Melbourne Central Draughts Club, in which more than 150 players competed, the veteran, W. Houston, met the youngest player, Jack Egan. This clever young player is son of Mr Hugh Egan, a champion player, who conducts the draughts section in each issue of The Weekly Times.

Weekly Times 5<sup>th</sup> October, 1929





*Stephen Batham plans his next move as Lee Gillies moves his draught into an attacking position.*

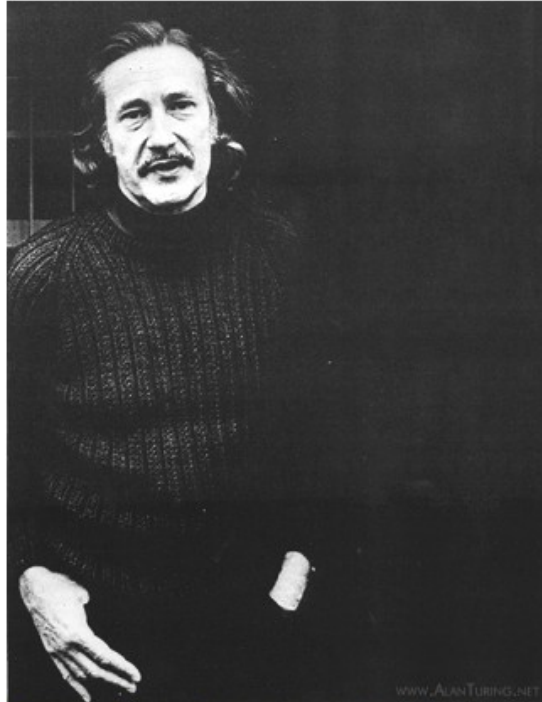
*Stephen and Lee were enjoying a game of draughts in the Chess/Draughts Club as part of the Tom Price Primary Schools' interest clubs.*

*These clubs cater for a wide range of activities for the children at the school and are proving popular. (See Page 4 for details.)*

### **Hamersley News (WA) 10<sup>th</sup> October, 1974**

One of the activities for adults and youngsters living in the new mining town in Western Australia





Christopher Strachey. Strachey's draughts (checkers) player was the first computer program to incorporate heuristics.<sup>31</sup>



Arthur Samuel, creator of the first AI program to run in the United States<sup>29</sup>

These photos are in a tremendous e-book by Jack Copeland & Diane Proudfoot, 2014 . There are many excellent photos of the pioneers of computers and chess programming in “Alan Turing Father of the Modern Computer’ 106 pages.

## The Late James Wyllie, Ex-Draughts Champion.

Mr. James Wyllie, or, as he was familiarly known to lovers of the chequered board, the "Herd Laddie," was a native of Scotland, and at the time of his death was 81 years of age. For over 30 years Mr. Wyllie was the acknowledged champion draughts-player of the world, having defeated in cross-board play all the acknowledged exponents of the game in England, Scotland, and the United States of America. In 1888 and 1889 Mr. Wyllie made a tour of the Australasian colonies, and his record of games played during that tour was phenomenal, and showed colonial lovers of the game the immense disparity between a champion of the world and the foremost players of Australasia. Out of 8000 games played in the colonies Mr. Wyllie drew 100 and lost only 25. Mr. Wyllie was a typical



**The late James Wyllie** (The "Herd Laddie")  
Scotsman, genial and affable in manner, deaf as the proverbial post,  
and possessed with a powerful voice.

## DEATH OF JAMES WYLLIE, THE FAMOUS "HERD LADDIE."

Intelligence has just arrived that James Wyllie, the famous draughts expert, died suddenly, in his 81st year. James Wyllie



MR. WYLLIE (THE HERD LADDIE.)  
(PHOTO. BY VANDYCK.)

was born in Edinburgh in 1818, and at an early age became partial to the game, though not "learning by the book," he said. At the age of 14 he became famous as the

"Herd Laddie," defeating everyone he met by his great skill. At 16 he was second only to the great Andrew Anderson. He has carried draughts into nearly every corner of Scotland, and over most of England. He paid two visits to the States and Canada in 1873 and 1883, carrying all before him until defeated by R. D. Yates. He also, in 1887, visited Australia and New Zealand, with conspicuous success, giving a great impetus to the game. On his return to Scotland he was defeated in a subscription match by H. Jordan, and for the championship by J. Ferrie, of Glasgow. Wyllie has contested over 70 matches, winning the great majority. The famous contest in 1864 with Robert Martin, the first restricted match, is probably the most important engagement in the history of the game. Wyllie retained his faculties to the end, and the gap left by his death will be difficult to fill. Some personal reminiscences of Wyllie, by Mr. James Paterson, will appear in another column.

Melbourne Leader 14<sup>th</sup> April, 1899



## **The Champion Draughts Player:**

**JAMES WYLLIE, "THE HERD LADDIE."**



## DRAUGHTS ITEMS.

The following letters, addressed to Mr. R. McCall, draughts editor of the *Glasgow Herald*, will be of interest to our readers:—

### WYLLIE CHALLENGES JORDAN.

Edinburgh, 14th May.

Sir,—With regard to my match with Mr. Jordan, the number of games was too little. Twenty games may do in a subscription match, but they won't do in a regular match for a stake. There is talk of Mr. Jordan wanting to play on the Searight and M'Kelvie principle. He can do that with his own position of the games, but I shall take good care that he does not interfere with the games that I select. Both players should name 50 different openings each; 13 openings will be chosen by each player out of the 100 openings. In order to accommodate Mr. Jordan, I will consent to play him for £25 a side, or more if it suits him; the match to take place, or arranged, as soon as my tour is finished; and should he refuse to play me, I shall claim a victory over him. I will have nothing to do with the five moves principle, as a great many fine games are prevented from being played. I intend to count from where the "Old Fourteenth" game commences at, and that is a very good standard. I hope, if the match does take place, that it will be done in a friendly manner, and that the rules will be properly drawn out. I was just coming into my play when the match was concluded. I may play a thousand matches before I play as bad as I did on the Monday and Tuesday. Notwithstanding, if the match had been of 30 games instead of 20, I would have had no difficulty in winning.—I am, &c.,

JAMES WYLLIE,

Champion Draughts Player of the World.

### WYLLIE'S REPLY TO BARKER.

Broxburn, 23rd May.

Sir,—With reference to Mr. Barker's challenge to me at the game of draughts, I beg leave to state that I will accept his challenge for £200 a side, and allow £20 for expenses. The match to consist of 100 games, and each player to name 25 different openings; to be played in Glasgow; Mr. Robert McCall to be stakeholder. The match to be arranged after my tour in Scotland is finished, and after my match with Mr. Jordan, should he accept my challenge.

I would fain ask what business I have with Mr. Barker playing two matches in this country, and have to tell him that I am quite satisfied with my victories in America, having played seven matches in that country for stakes, out of which I won six; the other was drawn by himself. Notwithstanding, I would always have been very happy to have played matches in America for any amount of stakes, but I am now compelled to decline playing any more matches in America for my own protection; for, if I were to beat Mr. Barker in a match, he might be for

claiming the stakes upon the same principle that he claims the championship of the world.—I am, &c.,

JAMES WYLLIE,

Champion Draughts Player of the World.

### JORDAN'S REPLY TO WYLLIE.

Edinburgh, 23rd May.

Sir,—With reference to Mr. Wyllie's challenge in last week's *Herald*, I think that his conditions are no test as to who is the best cross board player. His idea of beginning to count from where the "Old Fourteenth" commences is rather lazy, but I will not have anything to do with it in any case. As for the threat of claiming a victory if I do not agree to play under his conditions, it can go for what it is worth. He says he will have nothing to do with the five moves principle. Neither will I, as two moves restriction, as in the recent M'Kelvie-Searight match, is quite enough for a stake. About Mr. Wyllie's disinterested offer of accommodation, I beg to inform him that I would never consent to play 50 games for £25 a side, £50 a side being the least I would play a match of that number of games for. Mr. Wyllie's inability to play successfully on Tuesday, the first day of the match (he must have been playing with somebody else on the Monday he mentions), I think, was due to his being put on his own resources when he had the white side of the "Denny." His boast of being able to win if the match had consisted of 30 games is empty and misleading.—I am, &c.,

RICHARD JORDAN.

Leader 16<sup>th</sup> July, 1892

## PERSONAL.

The death of Mr James Wyllie, "the Herd Laddie" draughts champion, occurred at Glasgow on April 4. Mr Wyllie visited Australia on several occasions, and defeated all the local champions, though several were able to score drawn games against him. Apart from test matches Mr Wyllie spent his spare time meeting all comers, charging 1s per game for the privilege of playing against him. Mr Wyllie died intestate, and his property passes to a brother and sister, who reside respectively in Scotland and San Francisco. His estate in Scotland was valued at £854 and in Victoria at £447.

Bunbury Herald WA 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 1902.



Robert Mar and James Wyllie.

PLAYING DRAUGHTS IN BRISBANE.

(From photo. by A. Lomer and Company, Brisbane.)

(See letterpress in "Draughts" column.)

Australian Town & Country Journal 15<sup>th</sup> April, 1899

**TWO BRISBANE DRAUGHTS PLAYERS.**

ALDERMAN FRASER.

MR. C. ABRAHAM.



(From a photo. by E. T. B. Hutchison, Brisbane.)

This week's portraits represent two Brisbane players engaged in a game at draughts. In the gentleman with the calumet of peace a great number of my Queensland readers will recognise Alderman R. Fraser, Mayor of Brisbane, and President of the Brisbane Draughts Club. His opponent is Mr. Chas. Abraham, sen., hon. secretary to the club.

**Adelaide Observer 28<sup>th</sup> August, 1886**

**Silver Age of August, 14<sup>th</sup>.**

Silverton. A meeting of chess players was held at Duchatel's Hotel on Saturday, August 7, when the formation of a club was finally agreed upon. Ten players enrolled themselves, rules were adopted, and officers elected. It was decided that the club should meet every Saturday at the Exchange Hotel, Mr. Duchatel having very kindly placed a room at their disposal.

Conversation recently turned upon the New Zealand toon of the late James Wyllie, and a desire was expressed to see his scores published. We append the figures, for which, we believe, Mr. D. R. Hay is responsible, so that there is not likely to be any mistake:—

	Games Played.	Games Won.	Games Lost.	Games Drawn.
Victoria .. ..	5000	4642	5	353
New Zealand ..	7000	6540	7	453
South Australia..	491	440	1	50
New South Wales	3000	1612	7	381
Queensland ..	1500	1410	10	80
	15,991	14,644	30	1317

Comparing results, we find Queensland won one out of every 150 games; New South Wales rather more than one out of 300 games; South Australia one game out of 500; Victoria and New Zealand tied with one game out of every 1000 played. Truly a marvellous record for the champion. The chief reason that Queensland holds the pride of place arises from the fact that Wyllie played three matches with Mr. R. Mar, draughts champion of Australasia, who was living at the time in Brisbane. Mr. Mar was a well-known player in Glasgow before coming to the colonies, and succeeded in winning one of his matches against Wyllie.—"Otago Witness."

The Queenslander 6<sup>th</sup> February, 1904

#### DEATH OF DRAUGHTS CHAMPION.

The death has been announced of Mr. Richard Jordan, the world's draught champion, as the result of a street accident in Edinburgh. When only 19 years of age, in 1892, Mr. Jordan beat James Wyllie, the "Herd Laddie," who was 73 years old. Later he defeated Fraser (Dundee), Stewart (Kelty), Brown (Gala-shiels), and in 1896 James Ferrie in a match for the world's championship, which Ferrie had won from Wyllie in 1894. Jordan gained 4 wins to Ferrie's 3, 33 games being drawn. Jordan was several times challenged, but retained the title after matches at home and in America.

Daily Herald (SA) 14<sup>th</sup> November, 1911



**WYLLIE'S TOUR.**

It is interesting to recall that the late James Wyllie (Herd Laddie), one time draughts champion of the world, during the New Zealand section of a tour of the world, contested 5033 games, of which he won 4810, lost 7, and drew 216. His average was one game lost in every 719 played. Alfred Jordan, the English expert, in his last tour of America, contested 6328 games, scoring 4425 wins, lost 42, and drew 1861. In his visit to the Australasian countries Jordan's scores were: 3338 games played, won 2624, lost 17, drawn 717.

Queenslander 13<sup>th</sup> September, 1919

**The Queenslander 10<sup>th</sup> January, 1920**

**"THE EASTER CONGRESS**

**Mr Egan's suggestions**

"In an interesting letter to "Oblique," Mr Hugh Egan, of Melbourne, the Australasian ex champion and ex champion of Victoria, makes some practical suggestions with respect to the conduct of the Australasian Draughts Championship Congress to be held in Brisbane, commencing on Good Friday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> next. Mr Egan asks that the suggestions be submitted to the Congress Committee, and that is being done. In the meantime they are published here for the consideration of players in general. The ex-champion says:-

"I suggest that three instead of two sittings be held each day, i.e. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., 2.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m., and 7.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m., or 10.30 a.m. to 1 p.m., 3 p.m. to 5.30 p.m., and 8 p.m. to 10.30 p.m., or 7.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. I think it could easily be managed. I have some experience of these tourneys, and I don't think three sittings would be any great hardship. Also I suggest that in the first round the ballot be arranged so that two players of one State shall not be pitted against one another. I think it would lend greater interest to the contest. In the 1909 tournament at Brisbane, Armstrong and I had to play, whilst Boreham of N.Z. had a bye. Therefore, although Victoria sent two players and N.Z. only one, the Dominion's representation was practically the same as that of Victoria. By the way, if two sittings only are agreed upon why not stretch them out as they do in N.Z., viz, 1 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. or 5 p.m., and 6.30 p.m. to 7 p.m. to 10.30 p.m."

(1)  
**DRAUGHTS NEWS.**

Within the last decade a "country" player of trifling strength could reckon on holding his own against all London; and only a few years back the draughts club of the great metropolis occupied a very unpretentious corner in the big building known as the "Polytechnic," Regent-street. So great has been the impetus recently given to the game, however, that on the occasion of a team match contested a few weeks

ago it became necessary to requisition the large concert hall of the same building for the accommodation of players and spectators. "The old order changeth," and the quiet indolent-like habitués of Sparrow's, Pentonville, have been superseded by enthusiastic experts, whose contributions to current checker literature circulate over Europe, America, and Australasia.

Mr. A. Belasco, writing in the *London Evening News and Post*, in reply to a disparaging leader on draughts which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, quotes in support of his arguments the following extract from an article by the late R. E. Bowen, of Millbury, Mass.:—"To know how many possible lines of play we may have, we have only to decide how many moves there shall be in a game. The match played between Messrs. Wyllie and Martins in 1864 seems to be about an average. There were 62 games averaging over 64 moves to a game—suppose we take it at 60? I find we shall have the following surprising number of variations:—

1,152,921,504,606,846,976.

If 40,000,000 people could play together at the same time, each couple playing 1 game every 10 minutes for 10 hours a day and 300 days a year, it would take them 1,600,279 years to play the above number of games." Now that is a tangible calculation, neatly expressed by 34 figures, which convey a clear idea; but then Bowen was a bit of an astronomer as well as an accomplished checker player, and naturally stated his results with mathematical precision. On the other hand, the checker column of an American exchange just received contains an article by another London correspondent, who employs 1450 figures—we have counted them—to express the result of his calculations. We are, on one hand, not quite sure that we have grasped the idea intended to be conveyed; but, on the other, we are certain the compositor must wish there was no checker column in that paper.—*Liverpool Weekly Mercury*.

Mr. Wyllie's decision as to leaving Australia for England and abandoning for the present the match games for the draughts or checker championship of the world seems to be giving

Queenslander 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1891

somewhat unreasonable umbrage to Mr. J. P. Reed and his backers; they now demand the forfeit money (\$200), which is at present in the hands of Mr. A. J. Dunlap, of New York, and Mr. Reed claims in addition the title of "World's Champion." The New York Tribune states that Mr. Dunlap, who is the checker editor of *Turf, Field, and Farm*, has informed Mr. Reed that he is entitled to both money and championship unless Mr. Wyllie is ready to play on or before 1st April. It may be as well to give here a copy of Mr. Wyllie's letter to Mr. Dunlap of 17th January last.

Draughts Editor *Turf, Field, and Farm*, New York,—In answer to Mr. Hefter's letter, I deny that I have been the means of delaying the match between Mr. Reed and myself, and I am at a loss to understand how he is so particular now about the time, which is not mentioned in the articles. All that is mentioned in regard to the time is that the match shall commence within sixty days after my arrival in the States. I had fully made up my mind to leave here for San Francisco 18th February next; the steamer would arrive about 14th March, which would give plenty of time for the match to commence by the middle of May. In regard to it I am quite satisfied that I have acted in an upright and honourable manner, which I always intend to do. As Mr. Hefter is now very doubtful of the match taking place, I cannot afford to go to San Francisco on a "wild-goose chase," so will shortly leave here for England. My deposit of £20 16s. 8d. (\$100) can remain in your hands for the next six months, and should Mr. Reed be inclined to go on with the match, by giving me notice I can leave Scotland within a week's time for New York, and call on you to make my final deposit of £83 6s. 8d. If he declines to go on with it, I will then play Mr. Freeman, of Providence, an unrestricted match of 32 games, each one of us to choose 8 different openings, for \$500 a side, and \$100 to be allowed me for expenses should he wish the match played at Providence; or I will play him a match of 64 games for \$1000 a side, each one to choose 16 different openings. All letters to be directed to me, care of Mr. Robert M'Call,

Queenslander 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1891

Draughts Editor of the *Weekly Herald*,  
Glasgow, Scotland.—Yours truly, **JAMES**  
**WYLLIE**, Draughts Champion of the World.

The Liverpool *Weekly Mercury* of 14th March remarks anent this :—"Evidently the 'Herd Laddie' is piqued at the letter emanating from the Chicago partisans of Reed. As was pointed out here at the time, Mr. Hefter's communication appeared to have been almost equivalent to a direct negative in respect of the conditions imposed by **Wyllie**. That, however, has been denied, with an emphatic declaration of America's willingness to proceed, and its deep anxiety for a match, even at the cost of a little inconvenience to the United States champion. Be that as it may, **Wyllie** has been impressed with an opinion quite the opposite, and, in con-

sequence, has regulated his movements in a manner which may, after all, be more in harmony with his real wishes. For a man of 72, a big contest under the summer sun of Illinois, to be followed by a still tougher encounter at Rhode Island, are rather large orders ; and the numerous admirers of the 'Herd Laddie' could wish to see him permanently settled in the land of his fathers, avoiding, as far as possible, conflicts entailing so much anxiety to his friends. If need be let Reed then be invited to meet him at Glasgow, or, what would be still more popular, an arrangement might be concluded with Freeman whereby the amateurs of this country could be gratified by an exhibition of his skill. In any circumstances it seems hardly probable that **Wyllie** will again cross the Atlantic."

Queenslander 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1891



## THE STORY OF DRAUGHTS.

(By F. in the "Age," Melbourne.

When we hear draughts mentioned we imagine a father amusing his children—if in these days they can be amused in light manner—or two men of three or four score years interested opponents over the chequer board at the club, and even under either condition the interest is seemingly lost within a half hour of play. But according to historical records, the game itself was first played—under, of course, entirely different conditions to those in force at the present time—about 1200 A.D., and then by the peasants of Southern France. It has been definitely established that the chequer board was first used in 1200, when a Moorish penman described a game called "Ferses"—in which the players use undifferentiated pieces, twelve a side, employing a king and having the moves of the Ferz (our king).

The game was mentioned in 1369 by Chaucer, and also by a French poet. In various forms then it was played until the Spanish method—giving the king long moves—was accepted in 1500, but a few years later the Italians made an obscure change, the king being immune from capture.

In England the history of the game dates back to 1685, when a game was described by a mathematician named Holme. Draughts was then played on and off until a great revival was staged in 1838, when Wyllie, a Scot, battled for supremacy with Anderson (1847)

in 1838, when Wyllie, a Scot, battled for supremacy with Anderson (1847) and Martin (1850), both representing England. After many contests Wyllie was acknowledged champion in 1872.

A year later Wyllie journeyed to America to test its cracks, and at first met with very easy victories. During that period (1875) Yates was recognised by many to be the coming champion, and the following year Wyllie suffered his first defeat, Defeated the following year by Martins, also an American, Wyllie returned to England.

### The Game in Australia.

The game was first developed in Australia in about 1870, and little interest was taken until tournaments were arranged in 1888, and again in 1890. The winner of the first Australian title was Patterson, but he lost the crown to Warnock two years later. That year also Wyllie visited the Commonwealth, his tour giving great impetus to the progress of the game. In 1892 the popular Town v Country games were staged in Melbourne. Every year since, draughts enthusiasts look forward to these contests, usually played towards the end of September, that many new faces are seen at each in the country is proved by the fact that many new faces are seen at each tourney. The metropolitan members also look forward to the contest.

The first championship staged in

The first championship staged in New Zealand was won by Boreham in 1896, who, still playing at his top, won his first Australian title in 1909. A year later A. Jordan, the title holder in Scotland, toured the Commonwealth, and, owing to his ability both as a player and a showman, the tour was a wonderful success. He suffered his first defeat at the hands of H. Egan, holder of the present State championship, and in accordance with a promise made before the tour was opened presented Egan with an autographed copy of his works. He competed in three States, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, and was present in the latter State when the Australian title was being competed for. According to his own calculations he took part in 1063 games, 12 of which he lost and 316 drawn. He then journeyed to New Zealand, and, playing 1561 games, of which he lost only 5, brought the grand total to 2624. The late Andrew Fisher, then Prime Minister, was a keen follower of the chequer board, and entered into a lengthy discussions with Jordan during the play in Brisbane.

Jordan was also an excellent billiardist, and owned a collapsible cue which, when folded, measured only 18 inches in length. When ready for use it contained perfect balance, and then he attached a solid ivory tip. One of his greatest surprises was to walk into a billiard salon and ask the marker if he could arrange for a game. On being asked what his game was rated at, he replied, "Oh, just fair!" When the game was arranged the marker stepped

game was arranged the marker stepped forward with a cue from the rack, but Jordan pulled his cue to full length, and could generally rattle up a 60 or 70 break at his first visit to the table. He returned to Scotland late in 1910, and Egan became the prominent figure in Australian company.

### Victorian Draughts Centres.

The manner in which Egan took to the game is rather remarkable. Convalescing from a long illness at the age of 16, he used to make daily trips to the Prahran Free Library. Every Wednesday afternoon the Prahran Draughts Club, one of the oldest formed in Victoria, met in the reading room. For many months Egan stood by and watched the games in progress, until one day he was asked to play a game. The contest reached such an interesting stage that members left their boards to watch the progress, and when finally Egan had gained the win a man stepped forward who proved to be G. A. Keer, State champion, and congratulated Egan on his fine performance. Every week from then on he took part in the club's events, and won his first State title in 1909, three years later. Later the same year Egan, representing Victoria in the Australian championship at Brisbane, was defeated in the second round by the ultimate winner, J. A. Boreham, of



ultimate winner, J. A. Boreham, of New Zealand. He won his first national title at Sydney in 1915. His ability as a player is shown by the fact that since 1912 he has won the Australian title five times, and the Victorian title ten times. Many people consider that the playing of chess by telegraph is remarkable, but draughts by this method was played since the opening contests between England and Scotland, according to history about 1878. Taking the game a step further, representative English teams visit America every couple of years to take part in international contests. In Victoria the only draughts game played by telegraph is that between Victoria and New South Wales, which is usually contested at the Athenaeum Club on King's Birthday.

Though confined to a small percentage of each country's population, the number of books written on the game is remarkable. The first book was published by William Payne, a teacher of mathematics, in England in 1756. A book published by William Call, "The Literature of Checkers," in 1908, showed that to that date 227 books had been published. Since that date, however, the number of publications has been doubled. The latest works are the many variations of each opening, and to date only four have been issued.

The only rule of the game that calls for comment is "the huff," for by the

failure to take pieces and the enforcing of the "huff" championships have been decided. Competing in the final of the Australian championship in Victoria, 1915, Cotterill (Victoria) was opposed to Holmes (W.A.). Holmes was in a good position and needed the win to draw level with his opponent when, thinking he was moving his pieces into a good playing position, Cotterill "huffed" him, and weakening his opponent's attack, easily won the contest and the final. Onlookers at that game were amazed at Holmes's move, for he had the option of shifting two pieces, one for a two-piece win and the other for a one-piece win.

### Cairns Post January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1929

An excellent 3 page article by "F" of Melbourne in "The Age". That's the trouble with all these authors. We never find out their names. 'F' gave some very good detail on Hugh Egan's start. That is also a good stat that 227 draughts books had been published as given in William Call's "The Literature of Checkers" 1908.

## DRAUGHTS.

Mr. A. H. Mercer, of U.S.A., gives the following brief history of the game:—Checkers was introduced into Europe from Egypt about the beginning of the 16th century; and from the monumental inscriptions it appears that the game was familiar to the Egyptians as early as the year 2000 B.C. Its antiquity is further attested by Homer in the *Odyssey*, where reference is made to games in the palace of Ulysses at Ithaca, and by Plato, who, in his dialogues, makes frequent mention of it by way of illustration. The oldest known work on draughts was published at Valencia, Spain, in 1574, by Antonio Torquemado. As to distinguished players, there were Cicero, and many Roman Emperors, Frederick the Great of Prussia, Pierre Malet, engineer ordinary to Louis XIV; Edgar Allan Poe, P. P. Dodd, L.L.D., General Grant, who ascribes much of his military success to this sort of training, and whose ability to clean out the boys at West Point is well remembered; Garibaldi, the saviour of Italy; John Paterson, the great mathematician; President Lincoln, and a host of doctors, instructors, and members of the learned professions.

Weekly Times 15<sup>th</sup> March, 1890



## THE GAME OF DRAUGHTS.

The Editor takes his Brethren of the Board  
into his Confidence.

I address all lovers of the checkered board fraternally, and I speak more especially to those of the Western District, for whom the liberal proprietors of this journal purpose devoting a weekly column in the supplement which is issued every Saturday. In introducing this column to the players of the West it was my intention primarily to write a short history of the game, tracing its gradual emergence from the simplest elements to the highly scientific and elaborate system of complicated play which the literature of this admirable pastime presents in numerous treatises to its faithful votaries. But players of the present day have access to so many sources of information on all points connected with the history of the game, that I thought it best to relinquish my first intention, and to plunge in *medias res* at the very outset. Before commencing the work proper of the column, however, I must impress upon all of my brother players the absolute necessity of a thorough enthusiasm if we wish our new venture to achieve the success which its promoters and well wishers desire. To this end, and to do credit to ourselves and the district, each and all must take the liveliest interest in the affair, and do their utmost, by contributing games and positions, to make the column an acceptable and a reliable exponent of the game to the numerous readers of the *Hamilton Spectator*. I will do my best to lay before the players the finest specimens of play which come under my notice, and I will reckon no pains too great to elucidate or obtain information or illustration of any intricacy which may crop up in the experience of practised students or unpractised tyros. I have selected for the first problem a position by the late Mr. C. M. Wilder, of Chelsea, Massachusetts, United States. It first appeared in the *Glasgow Weekly Herald* about 18 years ago. At that period I happened to be in Glasgow, and being one evening at the home of Mr. Robert M'Coll, the editor of the draughts column of that paper, perhaps the finest in the world, he showed me the position which he had a short time previously received from its author in America. A day or two before he had communicated it to most of the leading players of the city, including Mr. James Wyllie, the champion draughts player of the world, who was sojourning there for a period, and challenged any one of them to show the win on the first trial. All failed to do so except Mr. Wyllie, who, after consideration of the position for a considerable time, rapidly manipulated the pieces into the desired solution.

Hamilton Spectator 10<sup>th</sup> January, 1891 the first Draughts Column

**Sunday Times (WA) 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 1916**

***“THE DRAUGHTS CHAMPIONSHIP***

*An event of importance to all lovers of the noble and ancient game of draughts will take place next Easter, when, for the first time in the history of W.A. draughts, the Australasian Draughts championship will be held in Perth. This will mean special preparation to be made by the local association for the reception of the visiting players and provision of prizes for the tournament, and to meet this expense the association has launched an appeal to draughts lovers throughout the State for assistance. The smallest contributions are welcome, and it is felt that there will be not difficulty in securing the required support for the game so much loved not only by those at home but by our soldiers and sailors abroad. We have been asked by the association to give the widest publicity to this appeal, and Mr. S.W. Mynard, the hon. Secretary, will be pleased to receive donations in response. Any surplus will go to the Y.M.C.A.”*

(Sometimes the scans are so bad they have been retyped.BM)

**Weekly Times (Melbourne, Vic. : 1869 - 1954), Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December, 1927, page 79**  
**"OUR FOREMOST DRAUGHTS PLAYERS"**

Egan, of "Weekly Times," Again Champion

The four photographs here given represent the contingent which won the four prizes in the major section of the recent Victorian draughts championship tourneys. H. Egan ("Whilter" of The Weekly Times); has now won the Victorian championship nine times. He has been five times champion of Australia — a title he held from 1920 to 1927— and is recognised as one of the most prominent players in the game. Egan is an accomplished exponent of draughts playing in all its phases, and began to play the game in 1906, when a youth of 18. Three years later, at Easter, 1909, Egan won his first Victorian championship, and he has been a consistent tourney prize winner ever -since, J. Boyles, runner-up, is the present Champion of Australia. He won the honor at Launceston last Easter without losing a game. Boyles received his first training in the game , in his home town in Scotland. He arrived in Australia about 17 years ago, and reached expert status at draughts with amazing rapidity. In fact Boyles has been so long a leader of the game in Australia that we are proud to claim him as an Australian expert. He has been three times champion of Victoria, and a frequent prize-winner, in other events. Like all other experts, Boyles is, of course, well versed in orthodox play; but he has a rare natural ability, while he is a brilliant and keen-sighted cross-board player.

C. H. Edwards, third, is another of our overseas acquisitions. He has an excellent record in the game in England, and he was formerly champion of Birmingham. Edwards arrived in Melbourne in 1910, and always has taken a keen personal interest in our game here. Harry Freedman won the championship of Scotland, and toured England, Edwards defeated him in a sitting, and shortly afterwards a challenge issued to all England on his behalf, by an admirer of Edwards, was not accepted.

T. Devlin, fourth, is a new and a young player, who has made history by himself in his first tourney. He out guessed the critics by the earnestness of his play, and there are great hopes of him taking a leading part in the game in the future.

Minor tourney prize-winners were: C. V. Trevaskis (whose photograph has already appeared in The Weekly Times), first; R. J. Gilbertson, second, A. W. Roberts, third; and I. ?? fourth.

**Draughts the Universal Game**

"Everybody plays draughts, but not everyone are draughts players." This is a hackneyed quotation, and that great Scotsman, the late W. E. Gladstone, said the same thing, clothed in a little more stilted English. Its apparent contradiction is explained by the fact that the rudiments of the game are so simple that they can be acquired in a few moments. There is probably no game of which a superficial knowledge is more easily obtained, yet it is capable of profundity truly amazing - a profundity of which the untutored player has very little idea.

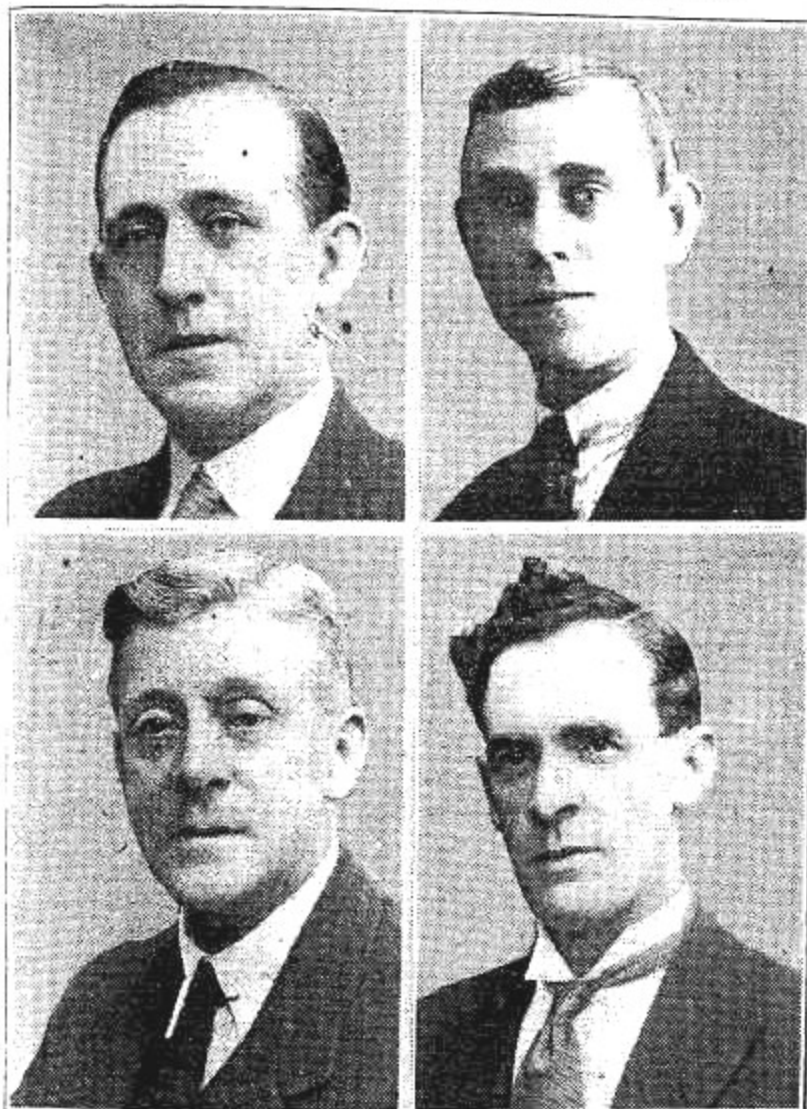
Draughts is a game which is taxed the keenest intellects of all times, and no player can every hope to say "I have nothing more to learn." Diverse types of the kind of intellect that had the power to comprehend its strategy are, among many others in similar walks of life, Dr. Samuel Johnson, the great Lexicographer, Edgar Allan Poe, General Ulysses, Simpson Grant, Benjamin Franklin, Andrew Carnegie, and it is on authentic record that the "Iron Duke" could play. These are no random jottings, but historic facts. It is, perhaps, not generally known that Andrew Fisher, formerly Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, has a keen natural aptitude for the game. Despite his political activities at the time, Mr Fisher was a frequent spectator at the Australian tourney in 1909, at Brisbane, and expertly criticised the games in progress. Many who play draughts do not even reach the A.B.C. of the game, yet they get the impression they can....."

play draughts. They play year in and year out in aimless fashion, passing by unheeded the many fine points of the game because they have not taken an opportunity of getting acquainted with them. A little study of the strategy of the game, from published examples, such as appear in the draughts columns of The Weekly Times each week, will greatly enlighten them as to the manifold attractions which the game possesses. In order to play published games and problem solutions with facility, it is necessary to learn the notation of the board, which is by no means difficult. The standardised numbered board is numbered on its playing squares from 1 to 32. Black always occupying the lowest numbered squares—1 to 12—with the double corners—squares 1 to 12 and 28 to 32—on the right hand of the players. A numbered board is all that is required to read the published figures. After a very little while the numbers are memorised, and the numbered board is not required. At frequent intervals an illustration of the numbered boards is given in the draughts column, and any advice men the practice and playing of the game can always be had by writing to the Draughts Editor of The Weekly Times. Beginners' first books are Hill's Manual and Lee's Guide. These are both on sale.

Photos below from the article above.



# A QUARTETTE OF DRAUGHTS EXPERTS



Top left: H. Egan (present champion). Top right: J. Boyles, runner-up. Bottom left: C. H. Ewatts, third. Bottom right: T. Devlin, fourth.

## Draughts

The history of draughts does not go back further than the invention of printing, and is first described in Spanish authors of the sixteenth century. Board games were played in ancient Greece, Rome and Egypt. The form of English draughts was fixed in 1800 by Joshua Sturges. The name is taken from the play in chess, which moves were called "draughts." In Scotland the game of draughts is called "dambrod."

Sunday Times WA 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1941

It is only at chess and draughts that one starts level, and only here is it worth while to bring the brain to bear on the struggle ; unfortunately, however, chess is so intricate as to be only fit for people who have nothing else to study if it is to be really played ; and the games which amateurs contest in their recreation hours in the intervals of business are only chess strongly diluted, a mere parody on the real scientific game. Draughts is more to the purpose. Both these intellectual games originated in the strong brains of the eastern races, who first gave us arithmetic and algebra, only draughts is about 1,500 years the older of the two. And it has other advantages over chess. At the latter game, if you make a silly move, you can recall it next time, and so not *waste two moves* in place of *making one*. All this is impossible at draughts ; you must bravely move on

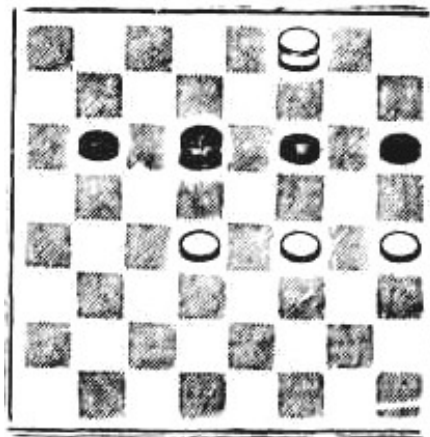
this is impossible at . . . : you must bravely move on and on only, and take the consequences of all folly. "*Vestigia nulla retrorsum*" is the motto; move on and no liberty to retreat till you have "won your spurs" by piercing through to the enemy's back squares. Again at chess capture of a piece *en prise* is not compulsory, but it is so at . . . , and this opens the way to some of the subtlest strategy and brilliantly ingenious combinations of which the human intellect is capable. A skilful player can sacrifice his men and thereby "spread eagle" his adversary's more numerous ones into a helpless and losing position, past all power of retrieval. The startling development of a skilfully constructed combination in a . . . problem is one of the most engrossing and pleasurable fillips to a keen intellect that can be given to it.

**Australian Pioneers & Reminiscences by Nehemiah Bartley 1896 Edited by J.J. Knight**

**A**LTHOUGH in the history of English draughts there have been many ladies expert at crossboard play and adept at the composition of problems, the game, as a science, is not very largely practised by them. There seems, however, to be little, if any, reason why women should not take a prominent place in the game, for some of those who have studied it have attained much proficiency as players and analysts, and as authors of problems. The author of the problem published to-day is a case in point.

PROBLEM No. 206.

By Mrs. F. Nunn (Cardiff).  
Black, 9, 11, 12; King, 10.



White, 18, 19, 20; King on 3.  
Black to move and draw.

Brisbane Courier 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1926

The "Ancient History of the Game of Draughts" is a booklet that should be in the hands of students of the game. The author is Mr G. H. Limbrey, London. His researches at the British Museum and elsewhere prove that a form of the game was played in Egypt as far back as 3600 B.C. There are several reproductions of sculpture showing some of the Egyptian Kings engaged at play. One of the best is that of Rameses III. contesting a game with the ladies of his harem in the year 1200 B.C. The pastime gradually spread throughout Europe, undergoing changes in the process. Evidently draughts is as much entitled as chess to be regarded as a royal game. The little work is very neatly printed.

Weekly Times (Vic) 22 November 1913



# DRAUGHTS.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We shall be pleased to receive games, problems, and news items, also criticisms and matches. (To be addressed to "Draughts," Rosalie House, Perry-street, Brisbane.)

The history of the distinctly British game can be traced with certitude from 1756, when Wm. Payne published an "Introduction to the Game of Draughts," containing a dedication by the famous Dr. Johnson. An examination of the book

**BRITAIN.** reveals that the game was played precisely as it is now, and also that **Payne, 1756.** there were some acute players in those days and that the game must have been fairly popular. The perpetual fixtures, known as 1st and 4th positions, are his, and he gives a phase of the 2nd position. His games formed the basis for Sturges' collection, and includes the "Goosewalk." With regard to its history previous to 1756, the French assert that it is now played in Britain as it was formerly played in France, but when and how it became transplanted is indefinite. In Payne's book, in many cases, white is the first player.

The dedication by Dr. Johnson and preface form interesting reading:  
DEDICATION—

To the Right Honourable William Henry, Earl of Rochford, &c.,

My Lord,—When I take the liberty of addressing to Your Lordship "A Treatise on the Game of Draughts," I easily foresee that I shall be in danger of suffering ridicule on one part, while I am gaining honour on the other, and that many who may envy me the distinction of approaching you, will deride the present, I presume to offer. Had I considered this little volume as having no purpose beyond that of teaching a game, I should indeed have left it to take its fate without a patron. Triflers may find or make anything a trifle; but since it is the great characteristic of a wise man to see events in their causes, to obviate consequences and ascertain contingencies, your Lordship will think nothing a trifle by which the mind is inured to caution, foresight and circumspection. The same skill, and often the same degree of skill, is exerted in great and little things, and your Lordship may sometimes exercise, at a harmless game, those abilities which have been so happily employed in the service of your country.

I am, My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged, most obedient and most humble servant,

WILLIAM PAYNE.

PREFACE.—It is natural for a man to think well of the art which he professes to teach, and I may therefore be expected to have some esteem for the play of Draughts. I would not, however, be thought to over-rate it. Every art is valued in a joint proportion to its difficulty and usefulness. The use of Draughts is the same with that of any other game of skill, that it may amuse those hours for which more laudable employment is not at hand, and happy is the man whose equability of temper and constancy of perseverance in better things, exempt him from the need of such reliefs. Whatever may be determined concerning its use, its difficulty is incontestable; for among the multitudes that practice it, very few understand it. There are indeed not many who by any frequency of playing can attain a moderate degree of skill without examples and instructions. I have therefore here given a collection of the most artful games, the most critical situations, and the most striking revolutions, that have fallen within my notice; which are such as may, in some respects, set this game even equal with that of Chess. There is, indeed, one secret boasted in the world which I cannot teach. Some men pretend to an infallible method, by which he that moves first shall win the game; but no such hero has it ever been my fortune to encounter, and no such do I expect to find. Nor can it be proved that the first mover has any considerable advantage over a person equally skilful with himself. In this opinion I have the concurrence of those excellent players Mr. James Randell, Captain John Godfrey, and Mr. William Wolly, my intimate and worthy friends, whose examples have greatly contributed to my skill in the game; but in particular those of the great Randell, of whom it may with probability be asserted, that what he could not attain will never be discovered.

# THE ANCIENT GAME OF CHESS.

The dove which places its ramshackle nest on the top bar of a much-used garden gate, and the chess club which springs up amid din and bustle of a Central Queensland railway system appear at first glance to be doomed to early extinction. But there is in fact an element of simple trust in the one, and evidence of a yearning for mental tranquillity in the other. Only a barbarian would destroy the nest, and many scores of the greatest of philosophers have, in the words of Mr Boffin, "bathed their apacuous minds" in chess. In these heroic—if often blatant—days, when the once-free air is littered with the clash of arms and the brisk spatter of racing commentators, the chess-board becomes a very haven of calm, a back-water of introspective peace.

In a comment upon the revival in Rockhampton of this ancient game, it is stated that chess has "a voluminous literature." That is quite true, though some notable writers deigned not to notice its name. Shakespeare found no place for chess in the whole of his works, nor did Burns. In fact, the Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language has no reference whatever to chess, though it gives austere mention to the more plebeian draughts. Yet John Ray's "Complent Collection of English Proverbs" (1670), contained also the Scottish proverb "When a man's house burns, it's not good playing at chess." This appears to be admonitory rather than friendly, and to suggest that the men north of the border devoted their leisure to more robust forms of recreation.

H. J. Byron said in his comedy "Our Boys" that life was too short for chess, and he then hurled the assassin's gibe: "He's up to these grand games, but one of these days I'll loore him on to skittles, and astonish him." But Thomas Huxley made amends when he took with him the chessboard to demonstrate his rich truths.

"The chessboard is the world: the pieces are the phenomena of the universe; the rules of the game are what we call the laws of nature."

As might have been expected, the satirical G. B. Shaw was more glib than kind in "The Irrational Knot" when he wrote that chess: "... is a foolish expedient for making idle people believe that they are doing something very clever, when they are only wasting their time." Shaw wrote that in 1880, since when he may have repented with age, or have acquired a

more mellowed tolerance.

Chess is no upstart game. Its roots are spread geographically across Asia and the Middle East and thence to Europe and, as to time, they extend to "the greatest antiquity." China, Egypt, India and Persia—learned lands

on its way to Venice towards the end of the century. Little chess progress was made in the 17th century, but in the 18th—about the time of Cook's voyages—Francois Andre Philidor made history in France in both chess and music.

The chess star in part of the 19th century firmament was Howard Staunton, who affected so rich intellectual fare as a mixture of chess and Shakespeare, then the palm crossed the Atlantic about the middle of the century, when there arose in the United States of America a doughty addict named Paul Charles Morphy who, at 22, became virtually world champion. He died insane at the age of 47, and his biographer's: "His devotion to chess had already begun to affect his health" suggests it to be possible to love chess "not wisely, but too well."

Although it has a most vigorous early Australian history chess has fared ill at the hands of the historian, for it has no collected Australian literature. The Australian Encyclopaedia is silent on it as also is Miller's, that treasury of sporting lore, although, by including billiards, the latter does relax somewhat the former's spartan rule to record only those recreations which develop muscle, and to ignore those which exercise the intellect or refresh the mind. But for Heaton, we would know little of the Australian reaction to chess.

Australia's first chess club was established in association with the School of Arts, Sydney, in 1860, and the game soon spread to the other States. With the advent of the telegraph came also matches over the wire between the several States as wonderful, in their time, as wireless contests would have appeared twenty years ago. As a matter of local interest, Queensland lost to New South Wales both in 1872 and in 1873. The game attracted a lively following of problem writers, "many of whom have established good reputations." The "Leader" (Melbourne), "Town and Country Journal" and "Sydney Mail" (Sydney), and "South Australian Chronicle" (Adelaide)

"South Australian Chronicle" (Adelaide) created healthy competition among interstate players, and "produced some of the most beautiful strategems extant."

Now as ever chess calls for high moral qualities that are no less important now than ever. To "move your king's pawn to the king's fourth square, get your king's knight and bishop and



all—have each striven to establish its claim to the honour of cradling chess; but after centuries of contention the weight of evidence seems to favour India. The Arabs carried the game with them when they conquered Spain in the 8th century, and there is warrant for believing it to have been among the culture which was carried from the Middle East to Europe by upwards of two centuries of crusaders (1095-1298), during which "a step was taken towards the enfranchisement of the human mind."

It is appropriate that Caxton, father of English printing, should have brought out in 1475 "The Game and Playes of Chess," the first chess book to be printed in England. The centre of chess interest shifted in the 16th century to Portugal and Spain; but only

your king's knight and bishop and advance your queen's knight . . . " appears very simple; but the fall of your castle brings despair and panic to all but courageous souls. So it is that chess develops self-control and thrives on patience, the value of which has been demonstrated to as remote antiquity even as the birth of the game itself.

Central Queensland Herald 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1941  
(RockhamptonQld)

A lively readable article by the unknown author. The game does have early literature such as the 'Rules of the Tasmanian Chess Club' 1854. (The first) And historians such as Nehemiah Bartley have written about chess & draughts in his 1896 work 'Australian Pioneers & Reminiscences' It was good to find a full source for Henry Byron's witty "Life was too short for chess" It was from "Our Boys" a play by Henry B.

#### **DRAUGHTS NEWS.**

A tournament was to commence on January 1 in the City Hall Saloon, Glasgow, for the championship of Scotland. The entries, 20 in number, are as follow:—Thos. Ballantyne, Glasgow; G. M. Bonnar, Rutherglen; F. Brown, Rutherglen; R. Brown, Glasgow; Geo. Buchanan, Glasgow; Wm. Campbell, Glasgow; W. K. Campbell, Glasgow; J. G. Carruthers, Lockerbie; D. Dundas, Brechin; James Ferrie, Coatbridge; H. Freedman, Glasgow; H. Henderson, Muirkirk; R. Holmes, Bonnybridge; W. Millar, Glasgow; J. C. M'George, Dumfries; H. M'Kean, Greenock; R. G. M'Millan, Glasgow; J. A. Robertson, Govan; A. B. Scott, Govan; and James Wyllie, Glasgow.

Professor Petrie, the eminent Egyptologist, makes a statement of great interest to students of the history of draughts. While excavating, "they got down to the Temple of Seneferu, first king of the fourth dynasty, 3766 B.C., the earliest date ever reached. They found beautiful architecture, bronze chisels, stone axes, and—a draughts-board!" This would indicate that our game was known and practised by the Egyptians five thousand years ago.

Australian Town & Country Journal 14<sup>th</sup> May, 1898

#### **DRAUGHTS ITEMS.**

At latest A. Jordan and R. Atwell have contested 6 games for the London championship, all with drawn results. The last two were "Switchers." The E.D.A. new time rule of 15 moves per half hour was introduced.

Historians refuse to agree as to how many thousand years the twin games of draughts and chess have been played. Greeks and Romans spent some of that luxurious ease for which they were noted at the draughts board; Egyptians got beneath the shade of their pyramids studying

their next "move" in sphinxy silence; and so through the history of nations draughts have whiled away the time of the idle and given the thoughtful intellectual recreation. The Scotch have led modern peoples in their superiority in the game. Only twice during the century has the world's championship been held by other than a Scotchman. James Wyllie held the championship of the world almost continuously for 50 years. Not only do Scotchmen play the game at home, but when they go abroad they carry their love of the game with them and teach it to the natives of their adopted jungle with the spirit of a true missionary.

Leader (Vic) 29<sup>th</sup> December, 1906



**Daily Mail (Qld) 28<sup>th</sup> May, 1925**

**“DRAUGHTS – CEMENT BOARD**

*Perhaps the most interesting event in the history of draughts in this State took place on Saturday afternoon at Musgrave Park, South Brisbane, when the giant cement board was declared open for public play. The actual playing squares cover 16 square feet.*

*Alderman J. Keogh (Mayor of South Brisbane) stated that the letters from the South Brisbane Club had led the council to unanimously decide on the construction. He hoped that players would recognise it was for general use.*

*Alderman A. Laurie (member for Buranda on the Greater Brisbane Council remarked that possibly it would not be long before a similar board would be available in the city.*

*Mr D. MacIntosh, (President of the South Brisbane Draughts Club) presented the Mayor with a gold locket as a memento of the occasion.*

**QUEENSLAND CHAMPIONSHIP**

*The tourney was continued on Saturday night at the school of Arts. The unfinished games between J.T. Gray and J. Heffernan was played to a draw. The next two games were also drawn. They will now play two more games until one is declared a winner. Play will be resumed next Saturday afternoon.”*

ANTIQUITY OF THE GAME: A GLIMPSE AT THE PAST. —The antiquity of draughts is pretty generally admitted. An interesting fact in this connection is mentioned in a paper on "Tent Life in Palestine," contributed by J. E. Backhouse to the *Auckland Chronicle*. Mr. Backhouse states that deep in the ground under an arch of the Sisters of Zion Convent are the remains of the original pavement of Pilate's Palace Court, over which Jesus of Nazareth was led to the people; and on this pavement are clearly visible marks evidently made for the purpose of playing some Roman game at draughts. The scene the imagination may call up is not without a touch of tragic interest; the stolid Roman soldiers sitting engrossed at the game while, a short distance from them is being enacted the greatest life drama in this world's history. — *West Lothian Courier*.

CHES AND DRAUGHTS IN FITZROY. —One of the rooms in the handsome Town-hall buildings is set apart for the use of chess and draughts players, and we are glad to say that the boon is highly appreciated by the citizens. Quite a large number of boards are constantly engaged every night, but several of the best players make a point of attending on Tuesday and Thursday nights. The privilege has converted a number of citizens into a friendly club with the advantage of having a handsome room and good boards and men provided gratuitously. We should like to see the other Town-hall buildings of the suburbs put to such good use, and we think the players in the various districts have only to suggest to the proper authorities the advantages of providing an agreeable pastime to the community in order to have their wishes gratified. The mayor and councillors are only too pleased to encourage anything which brings the citizens together in a friendly and social manner. If the players referred to will only take the hint, we have no doubt of their success.

Weekly Times 25<sup>th</sup> April, 1891

### DRAUGHTS ITEMS.

The Town and Country match at Geelong has every prospect of being a great success. From private information we learn that the Country will muster a particularly powerful team; but the metropolitans should consider this a further inducement to take the trip. A keen encounter at Geelong will add great interest to the larger match in Melbourne. Intending players should send in their names as soon as possible to the secretary Melbourne Draughts Club, Tillotson's cafe, Bourke-street.

Mr. F. T. Best, accompanied by Mr. H. J. Richardson, paid a visit last week to the Immigrants' Home, Royal Park. An interesting exhibition of simultaneous play was given, the champion demonstrating his skill by keeping twelve boards busy, and coming out with the following score:— Wins 19, losses 1, drawn games 3. The visitors were most kindly treated, and the champion's kindness was much appreciated.

Now that the winter is here the attendance at the clubs is much brisker than before. Many of the leading experts are rapidly regaining their best form, so a series of interesting matches should shortly ensue.

We note the rival editors are still at war over the engagement to tour in America, alleged to have been promised Mr. Jordan on completion of his match with Mr. Barker. Apparently no one in America took the initiative to arrange the matter. Mr. Jordan having no engagements to retain him at once returned. There is a parallel case in the Smith-Barker match. A number of minor matches were mooted for Mr. Barker to engage in on concluding with Smith. The would-be gladiators, however, spent too much time "considering." Mr. Barker was disinclined to hang around doing nothing, so returned home. History repeats itself.

Leader 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 1902

### DRAUGHTS ITEMS.

Payne, the father of English draughts, in the preface to the first book on the game ever published in the English language (1756), remarks:—"Whatever may be determined concerning its Use, its Difficulty is incontestable; for among the Multitudes that practise it, very few understand it. There are indeed not many who by any frequency of Playing can obtain a moderate Degree of Skill without examples and instructions." This, comments Mr. Frank Dunne, is a fair estimate of the qualities of the game, which stands as good to-day as on the day it was written.

A Scotch teacher was engaged in giving explanations of historical terms to the class, and at the close of the lesson, wishing to test the pupils' knowledge, asked among other questions:—"What is a King?" "Please, miss," came the startling reply, "he's a crowned man that can move both backwards and forwards." Evidently the youngster knew more about draughts than history.

Leader 17<sup>th</sup> December, 1910



### DRAUGHTS ITEMS.

Mr. HENDERSON and Mr. Houston, who bring with them the reputation of having been two of the best draughts-players in New Zealand, are now in Melbourne, and have been welcome visitors at some of the recent meetings of the Melbourne Draughts Club. Mr. Houston is an ex-president of the Dunedin Chess and Draughts Club, and just before leaving for Melbourne he was the recipient of a handsome volume of "Universal History," in recognition of the friendly feelings entertained towards him by the members of that club.

THE latest news from the Herd Laddie gives the statistics of his play in New Zealand up to April 13. He was then at Christchurch, and had been recently visiting Ashburton and Timaru. At Ashburton he played 29 games, all of which he won; and at Timaru he played 98 games, of which he won 97, the remaining game being drawn. His total score up to date was as follows:—Games played, 3,469; games won, 3,302; games lost, 5; and games drawn, 162.

In the English draughts columns which have recently come to hand a good deal of sly fun has been poked at Mr. C. F. Barker's assumption of the title of "Draughts Champion of Great Britain and America." People want to know on what grounds he calls himself the champion of Great Britain. True, he beat Mr. Martins; but Mr. Martins is only an ex-champion. Hence, all the right that that victory confers on Mr. Barker is to use the prefix double ex to his newly assumed title.

The Australasian 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1888

### DRAUGHTS NEWS.

Mr. Seth Turner, a member of the Chicago Chess and Checkers Club, died recently. Mr. Turner played checkers for the highest wager on record. In the early seventies he and another miner on the frontier staked a thousand dollars a side on the result of a single game, and Mr. Turner won.

Mr. R. Jordan, champion of the world, arrived in London on Saturday, January 20, and left for Edinburgh that night, much to the disappointment of the members of the Wanderers' Club. He promised to return to London after fulfilling an engagement in the south of Scotland. He has agreed to the conditions mentioned by Mr. C. F. Barker, the American champion, as to restriction and stakes, and the match will probably come off in the autumn of this year. Mr. Jordan meanwhile takes a trip through the south of Scotland and England.

The "Draughts World" says that Mr. Stewart's victory in the Scottish tournament was a very popular one, and the championship will lose none of its lustre whilst in his possession. The Kelty and Blairadam Brass Band played "Bob" up from the station, and he was carried shoulder-high by some of his club mates.

Australian Town & County Journal 24<sup>th</sup> March, 1900



## DRAUGHTS CHAMPION.



Mr. Richard Jordan.

Mr. Richard Jordan, draughts champion of the world, was born in Edinburgh in 1872. When about 15 years of age he commenced to take great interest in the game, and in 1890 was successful in carrying off the gold medal of the Edinburgh Club and becoming champion of that year. In the Wyllie Handicap Medal Competition, which was open to all players who had played a game with Mr. Wyllie during the last week of his stay in Edinburgh, he met Mr. W. Porto, and, both playing from scratch, the result was—Jordan, 2; Porto, 0; drawn, 4. This was towards the close of 1891. When the "Herd Laddie" visited Edinburgh after his Australian tour Jordan on that occasion

#### **DRAUGHTS ITEMS.**

**THE "HERD LADDIE" AT ARMADALE.**—Mr. Wyllie concluded a two days' visit at Armadale recently. The total number of games played was 53, and of these the champion won 49, the remaining 4 being drawn by Messrs. R. Hunter, J. Forsyth, J. Russell and J. Prentice.

**DRAUGHTS IN KELTY.**—Mr. James Wyllie was at Kelty on 12th and 13th January, and played all comers in the Co-operative Hall. He played in all 29 games, winning 19, losing 1 and drawing 9. Mr. R. Birrell won the "Cross." The following secured the draws :—R. Stewart, jun., and R. Holmes, 2 each; and W. Stewart, A. Arnott, W. Penman, T. Cook and J. Bell, 1 each. Of four games R. Stewart, jun., has played with Mr. Wyllie, the result has been one each and two draws.

**THE "HERD LADDIE" AT BROXBURN.**—Mr. James Wyllie paid a visit to Broxburn on Thursday night, 21st January, and stayed till Saturday night. He played in all 47 games, of which he won 39 and drew 8. Mr. W. Forsyth out of three games drew 2, while the following drew one game each :—P. Marr, J. Stark, J. M'Kay, J. Waters, J. Burt and Neil M'Kenzie. Mr. Wyllie remarked that the small number of games played indicated that the play in Broxburn was of a strong character.

**MESSRS. Drury and Reid** commenced to play the first game in their match of 10 games (draws and wins to count) at about 20 minutes past 7 p.m. on Saturday, 27th February, and they were fully two hours playing ere Mr. Reid completed his win. Several onlookers remarked that the game was the most interesting one they had seen played for some time. See Game No. 1302 above. Students will see a few critical and problematical positions worth studying.

**CHAMPION C. F. Barker** paid a visit to Providence, United States, 2nd January, and played all comers. His score was :—Won, 41; lost, 1; drawn, 3. He lost to Mr. W. Lewis while playing simultaneously against 10, in which the total was :—Won, 7; lost, 1; drawn, 2. Across board his score was :—Won, 34; drawn, 1.

Leader 12<sup>th</sup> March, 1892 Wyllie in Scotland

#### DRAUGHTS ITEMS.

Mr. Jordan has been particularly successful in his simultaneous play since his return from America.

It is said Heffner brought into the American house a bundle of books too big for an ordinary man to carry, and when asked what they were, replied that they contained injections for Barker. It is related as a matter of checker history that Barker rushed into Heffner's coaching room in the hotel one forenoon and breathlessly demanded, "Supposing he goes 30..25 instead of 30..26, what am I to do?" As Heffner did the sweating of the match, he was in no humor for fault finding, and report has it that he replied as follows:—"You ought to know just what to do. Why didn't you make some preparation for the affair? The truth of the matter is, Charley, you are rusty."—"Schaefer's Checkerist."

No date

#### DRAUGHTS ITEMS.

From the "Pittsburgh Despatch" we learn that a ten-game subscription match between Julius D'Orio and Harry Lieberman resulted in a tie of one win each, the rest drawn. Lieberman won with the second side of the "Dundee," while D'Orio scored with the first side of the "Switchee." The latter is taking a tour West on account of his health, and is mingling checkers with a needed vacation. He intends to stop off at Denver, Salt Lake City and San Francisco.

Mr. G. H. Limbrey has just issued in pamphlet form his interesting "Ancient History of the Game of Draughts," the subject matter of which he delivered as a lecture during his tour a couple of years ago. Egypt, in his opinion, is the birthplace of the game, and he gives some remarkable illustrations, from his own drawings, of ancient boards and men dug up by eminent archaeologists and transplanted to the British Museum. An excellent preface to the work has been written by Mr. F. W. Lewis.

Mr. F. Dunne, in the "Yorkshire Observer," has the following note on the "Draughts World," which has recently ceased publication:—"The 'Draughts World,' that par excellent magazine, is, we regret to say, defunct. The editor and proprietor, Mr. A. Bryson, has labored long and arduously to make it a business success, but at last is reluctantly compelled to abandon the struggle. A thousand pities! Although the magazine had obtained a world-wide circulation during the twenty years of its existence, it was never remunerative; but its many interesting volumes will always be treasured by draughts players as a monument of the author's love for the game, which kept the magazine alive for so many years."

The visit of a team of metropolitan players to Warrimbool to meet their country friends in a match promises to be a successful event. Many leading experts have signified their intention of spending the Christmas holidays on the trip.

Leader 6<sup>th</sup> December, 1913 Limbrey Review

### THE DRAUGHTS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP.

After a fortnight's contest at Glasgow for the draughts championship of the world, between Mr. Robert Stewart, the British representative, and Mr. Newel W. Banks, the American representative, the concluding stage was reached last month. The match was for forty games, and the final score was Stewart two wins and Banks one win, with 37 games drawn, Stewart gaining the title of draughts champion of the world, and also a cheque for three hundred pounds. Banks, the loser, received a cheque for two hundred pounds. This is probably the most important match ever played in the history of draughts, certainly the most important within recent years. The number of games drawn constitutes a record, the nearest approach being 36 in the Jordan-Barker match at Boston, U.S.A., when, with two wins each to Jordan and Barker, that match resulted in a draw, and ever since then the Americans have been eager to gain the title. Stewart acknowledged Banks to be one of the best players he had ever met.

Hobart Mercury 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1922



## LECTURE ON DRAUGHTS.

The English ex-champion, Mr. Allan Hynd, has no small reputation as a student of the history and literature of the game. The substance of a recent lecture of his to a large audience was as follows:—

Competent authorities, said Mr. Hynd, assert that the pastime was practised over 3000 years ago, and traces of the game have been found on Egyptian monuments of even an earlier date. Professor Petrie, the eminent Egyptologist, relates that whilst excavating the Temple of Seneferu, the first king of the fourth dynasty, 3766 B.C., that amongst other discoveries they found a draughts board. From Egypt the game migrated to Greece, and from thence to Rome. Although there can be no doubt that these old races—Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans—played a game which in appearance at least was similar to that which we play to-day, it must be admitted that their methods of play are pure conjectures on our part, since no explanatory work exists. The first work on the game is an old manuscript written about the year 1500, and which is to be found in the Perugian Library. The first printed work is that of Antou Torquemada, published in Valencia, in 1547. Then followed treatises by other Spanish writers, notably Juan Garcia Casueyayas and Joseph Carlos Garcin, whose works were published in 1650 and 1685 respectively. Sandwiched between these last two works is one by Pierre Mallet, mathematician to the King of France, and published in Paris in 1668. Mallet in his work stated that the game was so popular in France in his day "that there was scarcely a house in which a draughts-board could not be found." The first British writer on the game is William Payne, like Mallet, also a professor of mathematics, whose work was published in London in 1756. The work was dedicated to the Earl of Rochefort, who, despite his many frailties, was a good patron of the arts and sciences. The dedication was written by Dr. Samuel Johnson, who, as readers of Boswell's great biography will have noted, was an enthusiastic player. Subsequently there appeared in 1800 Joshua Sturges' celebrated "Guide to the Game of Draughts." This work still remains a recognised authority. The list of subscribers which is published in this work is remarkable testimony to the fact that the game was very popular amongst the educated and cultured classes. The work was dedicated to Prince George of Wales, afterwards George IV., who took a number of copies, and amongst the subscribers were such well-known names to fame as Charles James Fox, the Whig leader, Lord Melbourne, the Right Hon. Henry Dundas, and the "Great Commoner," William Pitt, then Prime Minister. Mr. Hynd then proceeded to give useful hints on the practice of the game, but first of all warned the players present that there is no royal road to the acquirement of the science. Success will be commensurate with the amount of industry and perseverance you bring to accomplish that object.

Mr George W. Dearborn, of Lowell, gave a most interesting and entertaining talk at the Boston Y.M.C.U. In his illustrations of notable games and shots he displayed a remarkable memory. Without the use of either book or note he, for most three hours, displayed quite a number of them, giving their histories and dates most accurately. His masterly way of presenting his matter was repeatedly applauded throughout.

Allegheny City has an aspirant and youthful champion, aged 11 years or thereabouts. He drifted into G. A. R. Hall just as one or two of the laggards in the team match were winding up their games and wanted to be paired against someone, and was greatly disappointed when informed that he could not get a place in the city team until next Decoration Day. Mr Crookston sought to quiz him, and asked the little fellow to pronounce judgment on the outcome of the game pending between Maize and Konold. "I think that one (indicating Konold) ought to win." "Why do you think so?" was the next question. "Because he has six men to five," was the reply, "and ought to win by trading off." "Why, child, that other man is the champion and beats us all," snorted Crookston. And the youngster, with a comical smirk, retorted—"He may be a champion, but he don't look like it just now."—"Pittsburg Despatch."

Messrs Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge on June 18 commenced at their house, Wellington street, Strand, the sale of a selection of books and manuscripts from the Fountaine Library of Narford Hall, Norfolk, collected in the reigns of Queen Anne and the first two Georges. High prices prevailed, a fourteenth century manuscript in Old Norman rENCH on vellum relating to chess and other games, with problems, realising £800, the purchaser being Mr Quaritch. This manuscript consisted of 182 leaves, quarto size, on which are drawings of chess boards in black and white, with figures in gold and red and manuscript problems and solutions. We hope that full particulars of the MSS. will be published, as it is said to relate to "chess and other games," and we are imbued with the idea that it may contain some interesting reference to our own ancient pastime of draughts.

Maitland Mercury 21<sup>st</sup> June, 1902  
only

Weekly Times 11<sup>th</sup> October, 1902 part

**The Argus 18<sup>th</sup> November, 1911**

***“Draughts champion dead***

*Mr Richard Jordan, who recently died in Edinburgh Infirmary, as the result of an accident, was the world’s draughts champion. He was a born player, and took to the game at the age of 13. In 1891 he beat the “Herd Laddie,” James Wylie, and in the following year, in a match of 30 games, Jordan won by two games to one, the others being drawn. In 1896 Jordan won the championship of Scotland, by beating James Ferrie, and later in the same year, he again beat Ferrie for the world’s championship, and a stake of £100. Subsequently Jordan won several matches for the championship and money stakes in Great Britain and America. He held the title continuously from 1893? To the interested onlooker the feature mostly remarked upon in his style when contesting individual games was the complete absorption which the great expert bestowed upon the board.”*

## DRAUGHTS GAMES

### Opening in Hobart Record Features

HOBART, Sunday.

For the first occasion in the history of draughts in Tasmania an Australian championship is being held at Hobart. The tournament begun in the Town Hall yesterday morning, and play continued throughout the day. In the evening the council met.

A civic reception was tendered the visitors by the Lord Mayor (Mr. J. J. Wignall), who expressed pleasure at the large representation from mainland states. It was a fine tribute to the standard of the game of Tasmania.

Altogether 32 players are taking part, making a record entry for any championship tourney ever to have been held. Eleven have come from Victoria, three from New South Wales, one from Queensland, and four from South Australia. Tasmania's entry of 14 is also a record for any individual state. A total of £100 will be given in prize money as well as a number of trophies. The sum easily exceeds any previous prize list of the past. Among those taking part are J. Boyles (Australian champion) and the following state champions:—H. Egan (Victoria), V. Rickards (New South Wales), J. V. Earle (South Australia), G. Moodie (Tasmania). It is expected that play will continue for about 10 days.

After the civic reception players were given their opening moves in the tournament room. Yesterday the competition was confined to a preliminary round in which the players were graded into winners and losers' classes. The contestants will remain in these divisions throughout the tournament. As those in the winners' class are defeated, they will automatically be drafted to the losers' class. Results yesterday are:—

Preliminary Round.—Boyles (Victoria), 3 wins, d. Booth (Tasmania), nil; Rickard (New South Wales), 2 wins, c. Egan (Victoria), 1 win; and one game drawn; Earle (South Australia), 3 wins, d. Way (South Australia), nil, one game drawn; Alcock (Tasmania), 2 wins, d. O'Neill (Victoria), nil; and one game drawn; Treaskis (Victoria), 2 wins, defeated Michael (Tasmania), nil, one game

### Aboriginal Draughts Player

Comparison of the skill or ability of the Australian aboriginal to compete evenly with Europeans in other than athletic sports has often been challenged. It took a lot of persuasion from the Adelaide Draughts Club to get Jacob Harris (a full-blooded native from Port Macleay Mission station) to try his skill in the Adelaide draught championship in Adelaide. Gathered at this tournament were the champions representing six Commonwealth States, and against three Harris measured his skill. Before the performance Harris had never seen any books on the game, and his knowledge rested slowly on his natural game, gained through playing fellow men on the mission station. He had never previously played in a tournament and naturally was extremely nervous on first meeting these giants of the game, as they must have appeared to him. Throughout the tournament the presence and doings of Jacob Harris were an outstanding feature and the utmost respect was shown him through the true sporting spirit he displayed. An appreciation of these courtesies were nicely emphasised at an evening session by an impromptu speech made by him. Harris, in his ties, de-

Examiner (Tas) 29<sup>th</sup> March, 1937

See next section over



by him. Harris, in his ties, defeated N. McGregor from New South Wales, and defeated R. Holmes, from West Australia. In the winners' class in defeating Holmes, Harris made **history** for his race, for he achieved a wonderful performance. Holmes was the 1917 Australian **draughts** champion, and a recognised master **of** the game, as evidenced by the authorities quoting him in all publications on the game **of draughts**. Harris was defeated in the second round **of** the winners' class by J. Boyles (Victorian champion). The analysis **of** the game played by Harris read: Played 23, won 8, drawn 7, and lost 8—a truly wonderful performance and unheard **of** in the long **history of** the game. The remarkable nature **of** this feat is shown by the fact that H. Egan winner **of** the championship (only won 10 games, and Richards (the runner up) in 26 games played only recorded 8 wins, thus Harris won as many games as any competitor, excluding the actual final.

Manilla Express 4<sup>th</sup> June, 1926

## The **Draughts** Champion.



JAMES FERRIE,

The **draughts** champion **of** the world, although born in Scotland, is **of** Irish descent, both his parents belonging to the Emerald Isle. He was born at Greenock in December 1857, and is thus in his 37th year. He has played **draughts** for about 20 years, and has defeated in match play W. Campbell **of** Glasgow; W. Beattie, **of** Liverpool; and G. Smith **of** London. He won the championship **of** Lanarkshire in 1890. While on a visit to Britain, J. P. Reed, the Champion **of** America, suffered defeat at his hands in a subscription match **of** six games, the scores being:—Ferrie 4, Reed 1, drawn 1. In May 1891, he defeated William Bryden, **of** Glasgow, for a stake **of** £100 and the championship **of** Scotland. It is a strange coincidence that he was defeated in the two last Scottish tournaments by young Stewart, **of** Blairadam, Fifeshire; the present champion **of** Scotland. His victory over Wyllie for a stake **of** £100 and the championship **of** the world in a protracted match **of** 94 games is unparalleled in the **history of** the game. He is extremely modest and esteemed by all who know him.

Weekly Times 16<sup>th</sup> June, 1894



## DRAUGHTS

### THE CHAMPIONSHIPS.

The second stage in the draughts tournament for the championship of Australia may be said to have commenced yesterday at the Metropole. Those still in the competition are Messrs Boylen and Horsfall in the winners' class; Messrs Earle, Rickard, Sargison, Harris, Armstrong, Moodie and Egan in the losers' class, and Messrs Durie and Windsor in the consolation class. It will be seen that two Tasmanians, four Victorians, two South Australians, one Queensland and two Sydney players still survive.

The long and strenuous tie between Rickard and Horsfall ended at the morning session, Mr Horsfall proving the victor with two games to one and 13 draws. This is the longest tie in the history of the Australian championship tournaments. The last six games were played under the barred openings ballot. The three games won or lost were all played under these conditions, showing the wisdom of barring these openings until they are better understood. Horsfall is now playing Boyles for first place in the winners' section, in the losers' section Armstrong plays Moodie, Harris plays Sargison, and Egan plays the winner of the Earle-Rickard tie, which is now in progress.

At the end of the afternoon session Boyles had gained a win and a draw against Horsfall, Armstrong and Moodie had won two each, Sargison and Harris played two draws, and Earle and Rickard won one each. In the consolation class Windsor beat Towns and will meet Durie to-morrow in the consolation final.

Last night the players and visitors were the guests of the association at the National Theatre.

Winners' Third Round.		
Wins.	Draws.	Wins.
1 Boyles	2 Sargison	0
Horsfall a bye.		

Losers' Third Round.		
1 Caulfield	2 Harris	2
2 Moodie	0 Richards	1
3 Armstrong	0 O'Toole	0
Earle* Rickard		

\*Undecided.

Consolation Third Round.		
1 Towns	1 Windsor	
Durie a bye.		

## Chess and Draughts.

The first annual meeting of the above club was held on Thursday evening at the Bowral School of Arts. The Mayor (Mr. R. S. Mackenzie) occupied the chair. There were also present the Secretary (Mr. W. Bourke), Treasurer (Mr. H. B. Linthorn), and Messrs. Thistle, Hopman, Hodgson, Ford, and Frost. Apology for non-attendance was received from Mr. Gavin George.

The report showed that the club was formed on the first of April, 1897. Since then matches had been played against Moss Vale, Mittagong, Bowral Fire Brigade Draught Club, Glenquarry, and Robertson Park Clubs. Honors were about equally divided. Two tournaments had been successfully carried on. The one just completed proved very interesting, and was the means of keeping members together at a very critical stage in the history of the club. First place was secured by Mr. Fraser and second by Mr. Hopman. Several very interesting simultaneous games had taken place with Mr. Mackenzie, of the Sydney Chess Club. Regret was expressed at the departure of so many interesting chess players from the district. This list included Messrs. Oxley, Grovenor, Linthorn, Mitchell, Litchfield, Mackenzie, and Hall. The invitation to take part in the Warrnambool proceedings had to be declined. The expense in forming the club and purchasing of men and necessary board was wiped off and a surplus of 10s left. The report was adopted.

Some discussion then followed as to whether the club should be continued owing to so many members going away. On the opinion of the chairman it was decided to continue as no further expense was necessary, and there was every possibility of the membership increasing.

Arrangements for another tournament and return matches were left in the hands of the secretary to finally arrange.

**Weekly Times 17<sup>th</sup> August, 1907**

**“MELBOURNE DRAUGHTS CLUB**

*The annual meeting was held in the club room, Temperance Hall, Russell Street on 10<sup>th</sup> August. The president (Mr David R. Hay) occupied the chair. The chairman gave a brief history of the club and strongly urged members to induce their friends to join its ranks. The election of office bearers for the ensuing year resulted as follows:- President Mr David R. Hay; vice president Mr L.H. Wells; hon. Secretary Mr James McInnes; hon. Treasurer Mr L. Rees; committee:- Messrs. W. Houston, F. Salman, A. Watson, J. Green, and P.C. delegates to the V.D.A. Messrs David Hay and James McInness, sub-delegate Mr Houston. The prizes won in the handicap tourney were handed over to winners. 1<sup>st</sup> prize L. Rees, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize James McInnes; 3<sup>rd</sup> A. Tucker. A vote of thanks unanimously passed to Messrs. L. Rees and F. Salmon for their donations to the club funds. It was also resolved that another handicap tourney should be started shortly after the town and country match. Visitors using the club in the meantime will be eligible to take part in this tourney. The annual subscription is very moderate and within the reach of all classes of players.”*

## **DRAUGHTS**

# **EGAN AND EARLE UNSEPARATED**

## **Final of Losers' Class in Australian Championship Tourney**

**THE** Australian draughts championship is nearing the end. When the 11th day of play was entered upon at the Hobart Town Hall yesterday Egan (V.) and Rickard (N.S.W.) continued the 11th game of their unfinished tie in the semi-final of the losers' class. The "barred," or weak openings, were brought into requisition to break the tie. Egan had the weak side in the first game. His superior knowledge of these weak openings stood him in good stead, and he gradually forced a win. With the strong side in the second game he made the draw safe, and thus won the tie. Rickard put up a plucky fight against big odds, and will divide the fourth and fifth prizes with Armstrong, of Victoria.

The final of ties in losers' class was entered upon during the afternoon session when Egan (V.) and Earle (S.A.) faced each other. Egan had the black side in the first game, and working up a strong position had the South Australian champion in difficulties. Earle made a great fight, but the odds were too great, and Egan scored a win. The second game was hard fought, but Egan kept the draw in sight, and finished the afternoon with a win up.

### **Evening Session**

**THE** tie between Earle and Egan was continued during the evening session, and some good draughts was witnessed by a large crowd of onlookers. The ballotted opening was 11-15, 23-19, and Egan with the black side "Whilter" opening. He seemed to have the stronger game for a time, but the South Australian champion, by accurate play, broke through and more than evened the position. A "two-for-two" by the Victorian, however, cleared the position, and another draw was the result. Entering upon the fourth game some early exchanges followed, with little advantage to either side. Play proceeded, with Egan obtaining rather a strong centre and gradually forcing Earle to the side of the board. The South Australian fought back, and a "four-for-four" break seemed to give him an advantage. Playing confidently, Egan came out to cover his pieces, but Earle, exchanging in the double corner, made the Victorian's position untenable, and

Victorian's position untenable, and Egan resigned.

A further two games will be played this morning.

Boyles (winner of the winners' class), awaits the winner, who will meet him in the grand final of the tourney.

### **Results of Play**

**RESULTS** of play in the morning and afternoon sessions were: Egan (V.) three wins, defeated Rickard (N.S.W.) two wins, and seven games drawn.

Losers' class final: Egan, one win, and Earle one draw (unfinished).

Play last night resulted: Egan (V.) one win and Earle (S.A.) one win, and two draws (unfinished).

## **HISTORY OF THE TOURNEYS**

### **Began In Melbourne 22 Years Ago**

The history of the Australian draughts championship congress from 1915 is interesting. The competition for the national title is really biennial, but for various reasons this has not been strictly adhered to.

Held in Melbourne in 1915, with a field of 20 competitors, the prize winners at the tourney were: G. Cottrell (V.), 1; R. Holmes (W.A.), 2; H. T. Egan (V.), 3. West Australia conducted the next tourney in 1917, and Perth was the venue. None of the other States were able to send representatives because of the rather short notice given of the proposal to hold the tourney. The competition attracted an entry of seven competitors, all West Australians, and the prize winners were: R. Holmes, 1; H. Boardman, 2; F. Patrick, 3.

As a result of the influenza epidemic, the 1919 congress was postponed for 12 months, and 1920 saw it take place in Brisbane, with a total of 13 competitors. H. T. Egan (V.) won first prize, with J. Evans (Q.) runner-up, and J. Boyles (V.) third.

Sydney had the conduct of the next tourney, and 24 players took part. H. T. Egan (V.) again won first prize, with E. W. Smith (N.S.W.) second, and

*“B. Rickard (NSW) third. In 1924 Melbourne no fewer than 30 entries being received, and cash prizes were presented totalling £95. The prize winners were:- H.T. Egan, (Vic.), 1; R. Holmes (WA) 2; J. Lane (NSW) 3.*

### **ADELAIDE’S TURN**

*Adelaide’s turn came in 1926, and an entry of 15 players was secured (including George Moodie Tasmania). Egan won his 5<sup>th</sup> title V. Rickard (NSW) being 2<sup>nd</sup>, and J. Boyles (Vic.) 3<sup>rd</sup>. Then came Tasmania’s first congress and this took place in Launceston in 1927. The field of 22 competitors included representatives from all state excepting W.A. J. Boyles (Vic.) won his first championship at this tourney, J. Earle (SA) being the runner up and J. Armstrong (Vic.) 3<sup>rd</sup>.*

*Brisbane staged a successful tourney in 1929 and the 20 entries received included all the leading experts with the exception of J. Boyles of Victoria, who was unable to participate because of illness. A. E. Sargison of Hobart represented Tasmania. W. Penman (NZ) won 1<sup>st</sup> prize. J. Evans (Qld) 2<sup>nd</sup> and J. Armstrong (Vic.) third. By the rules of the Australian Draughts Association, New Zealand residents are now not eligible to compete for the Australian title.*

*Draughts was at a low ebb in NSW when it became the State’s turn to hold the 1931 championship, and the few enthusiasts who were keeping the game alive in Sydney had reluctantly to relinquish their turn to hold a National Congress.*

*Melbourne next made a brave effort to hold an Australian tourney, and this took place in 1932. Conditions in Australia were unfavourable at the time, and the fixture received little support from the remaining states. Of the 20 entries received 11 were Victorians and G. Moodie (Tas. Champion) represented his state. J. Boyles (Vic.) again won the title with J. Armstrong (Vic.) 2<sup>nd</sup> and H.T. Egan (Vic.) 3<sup>rd</sup>. Victoria was again successful in holding a tourney in Melbourne in 1934 and 20 competitors took part. The tourney was held in conjunction with the Centenary celebrations. J. Boyles won his third title, with V. Rickard (NSW) 2<sup>nd</sup>, and W.W. McLaughlin (NSW) 3<sup>rd</sup>.*

### **TASMANIAN CONGRESS**

*Tasmania’s request to hold the next national congress in Hobart was granted and the Tasmanian Draughts Association for the tourney to be held at Easter of that year. At the request of mainland competitors the Easter date was postponed until Christmas, and then postponed until Easter of this year. The postponements resulted in a large mainland entry, and the record number of 33 competitors began in the competition. Every effort has been made by officers and committee to ensure a successful congress, and judging by the favourable comment made by present mainland visitors, they have succeeded. The tourney in drawing to a close and the finals are in progress. All connected with the Hobart National Congress for 1937 will retain pleasant memories of a happy and enjoyable fixture.”*

**Hobart Mercury 9<sup>th</sup> April, 1937**



ENTOMBED MINERS PLAY DRAUGHTS.  
"READS LIKE A ROMANCE."

One of the most touching incidents in the history of the game of draughts was witnessed at the recent entombment of nineteen miners in a pit in Ayrshire. The pit known as Auldhouseburn, at the mining village of Muirkirk, was flooded with water from a disused mine while forty-four men were at work. Some of them escaped with considerable risk and difficulty, but nineteen men were imprisoned in the mine. Some of the men in their race to the shaft were waist deep in the water—three lives being drowned by the rush of water. The rescue of sixteen others through the bravery and presence of mind of one of their number—Robert Blyth (29), fireman—is a thrilling and entrancing story. With a heroism which deserves to be remembered wherever deeds of valor are to be recounted, he remained behind in the flooded pit, and virtually saved the lives of his comrades, for when the water broke in upon him, instead of availing himself of the opportunity offered of those near the shaft, he said to his brother, "Good-bye, I am not married; I'll tell the others." The story of Blyth's exertions reads like a romance. He explored the whole of the pit, gathered the men together, and constituted himself their leader. They had plenty of light, each miner having with him his lamp and a supply of oil. By and by when the men became cold, he warmed tea which some of them had with them in their flasks and gave each a sip. After many hours of pumping the flood was reduced, and Blyth, after two unsuccessful attempts bravely stepped into the water for the third time, and wading though it, neck high, reached the bottom of the shaft, where he rang the bell, thus giving the watchers at the pit head the first indication that someone underground was alive. The gallant fireman returned to his comrades, and not long after they were all rescued, much exhausted, after thirty hours' entombment.

One of the youths, Thomson, was questioned by a reporter how they passed the weary hours entombed in the pit. They got the time put in wonderfully well. After a little while fear entirely left the whole party, and they settled down

to games and reading the papers. "What sort of games?" "Draughts, pitch and toss, and other games," was the reply. "Did you keep a draught-board in the pit?" "No, but we made a board on the floor with chalk. It was quite easy making the squares." "And where did you get the men to play with?" "Took the nuts and bolts off the hatches, the one represented the black and the other the white."—"Draughts World."

Sunday Times (Sydney) 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1898



# DRAUGHTS

By J.A.K.

## AUTHOR'S SOLUTION NO. 37

26-23	12-19	3-8	30-27
19-26	21-17	4-11	32-30
7-3	14-21	27-24	

White wins.

## NEWS AND NOTES

Two matches in the premierships competition were played at the Central Club, Melbourne, last week. Brunswick and Melbourne had a hard tussle, each side scoring four wins and nine games were drawn. The final result will depend on one game yet to be played. In the other match Fitzroy A easily beat Moonee Ponds by 9 to 3 and 3 draws. The latter lacked the services of several of their regular players.

At a recent Fairbank social evening a match was played with a team from Korumburra. The visitors won by 15 to 10 and 8 draws. South Gippsland Association activities began recently at Korumburra with the election of officers and the presentation of trophies.

The various clubs in Tasmania are now active and competition and shield matches are being held.

The Easter tourney held at Matura, South Island, New Zealand, to decide the Dominion championship, with the usual handicap attached, attracted 14 entries. Neither D. Calderwood or W. Penman, former champions, were available, but the list included such well-known players as G. A. Brown, J. Lucas (both ex-champions) and a promising young player named Weir. After a keen contest Brown won with 21½ points, Lucas being second with 21 and Weir third with 18. Neither Brown nor Lucas lost a game. The winner also won in 1924, 1926 and 1928. He is a native of Christchurch, while the other two hail from Dunedin.

There is considerable doubt as to the age of draughts. W. S. Branch, one of the authorities on the history of chess and draughts, states that scientific research of the last half-

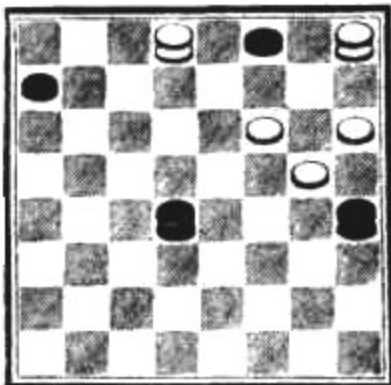
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### Problem No. 39.

By F. TESCHELEIT.

Black : 3, 5; Kings, 18, 20.

The Sun (Sydney) 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 1934



White : 11, 12, 16: Kings : 2, 4.  
White to move and win.

century has fixed the period of the invention of draughts as the 13th century and almost certainly the last 20 years of it.

It was formerly thought that the game was much older, but the belief probably arose owing to the ancient Russian game of *Latruncolorum*, which had some similarity, though it differed considerably from modern draughts and had no historic association. Probably the latter game was played in Britain long before draughts.

#### EDINBURGH

Black	(Reed)	White	(Hopkins)
8 13	23 16	14 18	18 9
22 18	12 19	27 24	6 13
11 16	18 15	10 14	21 14
24 20	8 9	20 16	8 11
16 19	25 22	18 23	15 8
23 16	9 14	22 18	4 27
12 19	29 26	13 17	31 15
23 27	32 23	7 10	b)

Black wins

#### NOTES

A: Black deliberated for some time and then by 13-17 makes a stroke that clears 13 men from the board, and wins in decisive fashion.

B: Played in Chicago some years ago.

#### CORRESPONDENCE

W.L.: No 36 is correct. No draw.  
A.C.H.: Correct. Red: Glad you appreciate problems.

### Draughts in Ancient Rome.

In Melmoth's translation of "Pliny's Letters," published in 1810, the following allusion to the ancient Roman game of "Latruncolorum" is given in a footnote :—

This game among the Romans seems to have been much of the same nature with modern chess. Their men, which they called *Calculli* or *Latrunculi*, were made sometimes of wax and sometimes of glass, and were distinguished by black and white colours. The invention of it has been carried by some so high as the siege of Troy, but Peter Texeira, in his *History of Persia* (as quoted by Pitiscus, in his *Lex. Antiq. Rom.*), imagines it to be of Persian origin, "because," says he, "in all countries where this game is played, the names of the men are either the same with, or plainly a corruption of, those given to them in the Persian language." Allusions to this game are frequent in the classic writers; but the fullest description of it is contained in the following lines, taken from the little poem addressed to Piso, which is to be found at the end of some editions of Lucan, and is generally ascribed to that author :—

"When to relieve the labours of thy mind  
Thou turn'st from deep research in arts  
refin'd,  
Not in soft indolence you waste the  
hour,  
But happier genius still exerts its  
power;  
To mimic war the radiant troops are  
led,  
And martial ranks the varied table  
spread;  
There sable bands, and here a snow-  
white train,  
With doubtful fate of war the fight  
maintain.  
But who with thee shall dare dispute  
the field?  
Led by thy hand, what warrior knows to  
yield?  
Or if he fall, he falls with glorious  
pride,  
His vanquished foe extended by his side.  
Unnumbered stratagems thy forces try;  
Now artful feign, and only feign, to fly;  
Now boldly rushes, 'midst the ranks of  
war,  
The chief, who view'd the slaught'ring  
scene from far,  
'This' bravely daring in the arduous  
toil."

The Sun (Sydney) 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 1934

Clarence River Advocate 9<sup>th</sup> February, 1906



## DRAUGHTS.

### BRISBANE CLUB'S SUCCESS.

It was announced at the annual meeting of the Brisbane Draughts Club on Saturday evening that Mr. T. Richards, of the Ipswich Club, would represent Queensland at the Australian championships in Melbourne during Easter. A credit balance and a membership of 25 were two of the outstanding features in the annual report, which indicated one of the most successful years in the club's history. The president (Mr. S. W. Chalk) occupied the chair.

That the game of draughts continued to make progress, and that the club had every reason to look forward to the coming year with optimism, was the opinion expressed by Mr. S. W. Chalk. The club's members had taken part in several competitions with conspicuous success during the year. Mr. S. W. Chalk had brought a distinct honour to the club by annexing the Queensland draughts championship by means of a brilliant exposition of the game, and Mr. J. Evans also gave a clever display to win the Greater Brisbane championship. The club failed to win the inter-city premiership by only one point, being second to the South Brisbane players. By a strengthening of membership for the coming year the club hoped to regain the premiership. Reference was made to the fact that the club possessed a lady member—Mrs. J. Fitzgerald—who, it was stated, was the only woman player at present competing in any Queensland draughts club. Appreciation was also expressed of the services being rendered to the game by "Oblique," who, in his capacity as draughts writer in "The Brisbane Courier," was doing much for draughts clubs in general. It was announced that the premiership competition would commence next Saturday, when the Brisbane Club would meet the Ipswich players.

The election of officers resulted:—President, Mr. S. H. Chalk; vice-presidents, Messrs. J. Evans and G. Black; hon. secretary and treasurer, Mr. J. Fitzgerald; committee, Messrs. H. Smith, G. Russell, J. Warren, and W. Clare; selection committee, Messrs. G. Black, J. Evans, and I. Russell; captain, Mr. J. Evans; superintendents of draughts boards at New Farm Park and Newstead Park, Messrs. J. Fitzgerald and F. W. Chalk; delegate to the I.D.A., Mr. S. H. Chalk; auditor, Mr. G. Russell.

## CHESS AND DRAUGHTS

(By "CHECKMATE")

### Origin of the Game.

The game of chess appears to have been played some 1400 years ago, some having been traced back to the 6th century (being mentioned in Persian and Indian literature of this period). A much longer period has been assigned to it, but extensions of its history as far back as the siege of Troy or ancient Egypt are now considered fanciful. Since the earliest known times of chess the board has not altered, and very little alteration has been made in the men although their power movements have been modified. Starting in India, as far as records prove, chess went early to Persia. The Mohammedan Arabs, invading Persia in the 7th century, found the game well established and made it their own. It spread independently to the Far East, and possibly over the border regions to Russia. At the period mentioned the Arabs took the game to Italy and Spain, and then the game advanced to northern Europe, reaching Britain at the time of the Norman Conquest. By the 13th century chess seems to have been played all over western Europe in a form little different from that originally played in Persia. Two centuries later the pieces—queen and bishops—gained greater powers, and in the 16th century the manoeuvre "castling" came into existence, also the pawns received the privileges of a double march on their first move, and so the game then is the same as played at the present time. The Arabs reached a comparatively high pitch of skill at chess in the 9th and 10th centuries. But the great progress in the 13th and 16th centuries was due to European, mainly Italian, brains. The next big advance was in the 18th century, Italy gradually yielding the lead to France. England's contribution to the game began early in the 19th century, and Howard Staunton was supreme until, in 1861, Adolf Anderssen came to London and won the first great international tournament. Since the sensational advent of Paul Morphy from America in 1858, the making of chess history has been due to masters of many nationalities. The title of world's champion was successfully held by two players of Jewish extraction, William Steinitz and Emanuel Lasker, the latter of whom was champion from 1894 until 1921. Capablanca, a Cuban, then held it until 1927, when Dr. Alekhine, the Russian, defeated him. There are national and international control boards for chess tournaments, the game in England being under the auspices of the British Chess Federation.

Brisbane Courier 7<sup>th</sup> March, 1932

chess tournaments, the game in England being under the auspices of the British Chess Federation.

#### **Draughts.**

**Draughts** is an extremely ancient game. Although no records are available, it is considered to be the possible forerunner of chess. Forms of the game were known in ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, while it is definitely proved that the game was played in the mid-17th century similar to the game as

played to-day. The game is known in practically every country as **draughts**, except in America, where it goes under the name of "checkers."

#### **Local Doings.**

Quite a large number of experienced players have signified their intention of supporting the club and promised their support at the forthcoming meeting. This being the case, Warwick has passed over its biggest obstacle, as the initial stages of a club

are finding experienced players who are willing to set the ball rolling and also teach those willing to learn. Experienced players of repute who are temporarily stationed in Warwick and are sure to be of valuable assistance to the club are Messrs. Freeman and Mostley. Should an exhibition match be arranged by these two it is certain that many of the finer points of the game will be shown and will be an educational lesson to all.

Warwick Daily News 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1940

### The "Herd Laddie."

Most of our readers are, no doubt, familiar with some of the main events of the life of the late James Wyllie (known the world over as the "Herd Laddie"), who for many years held undisputed sway in the world of draughts. Still, the following extracts from an interesting article originally contributed to the "Blyth Weekly News," by a correspondent writing with the nom-de-plume of "Square Board," are well worth repeating here, especially as many incorrect assertions are effectively dealt with:—

"The Herd Laddie is indeed a famous name—a name to conjure with." Make it known amongst players, or even non-players, that you have played with the Herd Laddie, and your reputation as a draughts player is at once established. In England, in America, in Australia, or wherever the game of draughts is played, that name is familiar, and will be ever remembered with respect and admiration. Mr. Wyllie must have commenced draughts playing at a very early age, for we find him playing for the championship against Andrew Anderson in 1833, he (Wyllie) being then only sixteen years of age, and although he suffered defeat at the hands of the great master, yet so well did he acquit himself that his friends immediately challenged any other man in Scotland to try conclusions with him. Mr. G. Wallace, of Glasgow, responded to the challenge—an able and experienced opponent—but the 'Laddie' proved too subtle for the 'Glasgow don,' and won the match in a masterly manner. Other players of note were defeated in quick succession, proving that at the early age of sixteen the 'Herd Laddie' was second only to the champion Anderson, of Carlisle. But how came he to be known by the sobriquet of the 'Herd Laddie?' According to Mr. Hedley, Mr. Wyllie's friend and biographer, he never was a 'herd' at any period of his life! Mr. Hedley says that Wyllie was apprenticed to a master in Kilmarnock to learn the trade of Brussels weaver, but this business proving too sedentary for his constitution, and seriously inimical to his health, he abandoned it for the nomadic and freer life of a pedlar, and with a stock of handware travelled through the surrounding villages disposing of his goods, and displaying his wonderful knowledge of the draughts board whenever an opportunity was afforded him. At Biggar he formed the acquaintance of Mr. Forrester, a cattle dealer, and an ardent and enthusiastic draughts player, who, delighted with the youth's ability at the game, conceived the idea of taking him to Edinburgh to give the players of



that city a pleasant surprise. Wyllie's consent to this project was readily obtained, and in company with Mr. Porteous, and in the capacity of that gentleman's 'hard laddie,' he paid his first visit to 'Scotia's Capital.' To this little episode in his history may be attributed the wide spread, but erroneous impression that he was at some period of his life a 'shepherd.' (For continuation of this week's article, see next week's column)

## GREAT BRITAIN V. AMERICA.

### Light at Last.

Our readers will remember that the American Draughts Association made an offer some time ago to the English and Scottish Associations, the text of which was that they would pay the expenses of a visiting British team if the return Great Britain v. America match was played in U.S.A. The last and only occasion on which teams from these two countries met was way back in 1905, when the British team too ably skippered by the late Richard Jordan, world's champion) was successful by 73 wins to 34, while 263 games were drawn. As this contest took place at Boston, U.S.A., in the ordinary course of events, the return match should be played some where in Great Britain, and this is the attitude taken up by both English and Scottish Associations. However, if it is found impossible to finance the project during the next six months, it has been unanimously decided that the offer of the American Association be accepted.

### A Good Team.

Some time ago we published an account of the victories of the Ipswich (Queensland) team. Now we learn that not satisfied with their defeat of the Toowoomba and Downs Clubs, they advanced on South Brisbane, added another scalp to their belt, and then, in a spirit of bravado, threw down the gauntlet to the Brisbane Draughts Club, the acknowledged peer of clubs in Queensland! The challenge, needless to say, was quickly taken up, and in the 13 boards' clash that followed, the Ipswich men were once again successful by 23 wins to 18, and 15 draws. Owing to the tragic death on the previous day of D. MacArthur, one of their strongest players, the trip for the Brisbane men was not as happy as it would otherwise have been under the circumstances. The match was played in Ipswich.

### One From Brisbane.

The following ending, by Mr. John I

Gray, ex-champion of Queensland, was first published in 1919. It was a cross-b-and draw, and is neat and practical. We reprint from the Brisbane "Queenslander."

Black men: 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13; king, 16.  
White men: 14, 17, 22, 24, 28, 29, 30.

White to play and draw.

Black certainly looks to have "the best end of the stick," but the Queensland champion quickly shows that appearances are often deceptive, in this great old game of ours. He continues as follows:—24—19, 16—23, 23—18, 13—22, 30—25, 10—17, 28—24, 23—14, 25—2, 7—10(a), 2—6, 10—15, 6—10, 15—18, 10—14, 18—23, 14—21, 4—8 Draw.

(a) If 7—11, 24—19. Draws.

### 'Game.

In last week's column we made mention of the visit of Mr. Geo. Moodie, the Anglo-Tasmanian expert, to Scotland during the Easter holidays. Following is one of the games played with Mr. Moodie by one of the local players, Mr. P. Power, showing that we have some strong players in the country districts of Tasmania. The latter had the white pieces, and we take the game, with notes by Mr. Moodie, from the "Examiner."

### Game No. 46—"Kelso-Exchange."

10—15(a)	1—6	3—8	11—15	26—30
22—18(b)	24—19(c)	26—22	22—17	10—7
15—22	15—24	13—17	6—10	15—19
23—18	28—19	22—13	15—9	9—14
6—10(d)	11—16	7—11	15—19	18—23
29—25(e)	18—15	31—29	9—6	25—22
11—15(f)	16—20	11—18	19—24	30—25
18—11	32—27	19—16(g)	6—2	22—17
8—15	10—14(g)	12—19	24—31	Draw.
25—22	22—15	23—16	2—6	
4—8	9—13	8—11	10—15	
23—18	18—9	16—7	17—10	
8—11	5—14	2—11	31—26	
17—23	30—25(h)	26—22	6—9	

(a) Forms the "Kelso" opening, at one time regarded as weak for the black side but since its exploitation by Heffner, the great American player, this move ranks second only, perhaps, to 11—15 in popularity. It is doubtless as strong as 11—10 or 9—14.

(b) This exchange is one of the best replies.

(c) 11—15 is about as frequently played

(d) 18—14 cut is possibly a shade stronger.

(e) Certainly best. If 10—15 (a trap for 25—22, 15—19, etc., which often succeeds) white gets a powerful attack by 26—22

(f) A good move, and seems preferable to 32—27.

(g) Very interesting play from here onwards, both sides having to go carefully

(h) A few 3 for 2 threats lurking around.

(i) 26—22 loses by 2—7.

The News (Hobart) 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 1925 the Draughts Editor was "Double Corner." Mr Hedley, JW's friend wrote that he was apprenticed to a Brussels weaver, but it was too sedentary and affected his health. He became a nomad and peddler and with a stock of hardware travelled through the surrounding villages disposing of his goods and displaying his wonderful knowledge of the draughts board whenever an opportunity was afforded him. At Biggar he formed the acquaintance of Mr Porteous a cattle dealer and an ardent and enthusiastic draughts player, who.



Delighted with the youth's ability at the game conceived the idea of taking him to Edinburgh to give the players of that city a pleasant surprise.

#### CHess AND DRAUGHTS CLUB.

The first annual meeting of the Government Printing Office Chess and Draughts Club was held on Friday evening, the attendance, with visitors, being fair. The report showed the club to be flourishing. During the past year six matches have been played, three being lost, two drawn, and one won. Since the amalgamation of the chess and draughts clubs, two draughts matches had been played, one won and one lost. The report and balance-sheet were unanimously adopted. Copies of the "Clelland Chess Ladder" were distributed and adopted. A scratch match was then played, with the following result :—

	Wins.		Wins.
E. Gregory (c.)	2	W. H. W. Martin (capt.)	1
J. Wrigley .....	0	E. O. Boden...	3
T. Baumgardt ..	1	J. Mullen .....	2
E. Ward .....	½	J. Marriott .....	½
J. Cooke .....	½	T. Down .....	1½
W. A. Smith....	2	K. Munro .....	0
	<hr/> 6		<hr/> 8

Brisbane Courier 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1896

#### IN MEMORIAM.

##### "THE HERD LADDIE."

(From the *Aberdeen Weekly Free Press*.)

Draughts players a' owre earth's big ba'  
Will hear wi' herts o' leid  
That Death hath ca'd oor chief awa'—  
That aul' Jeems Wylie's deid.

Nae mair we'll see his pawky smile,  
Nae mair oor plots he'll prod—  
The master he o' ilka wile.  
O' Dameh's checkered brod.

His genius for the canny game  
Was bricht beyond compare;  
A hoosehold werd has been his name  
For fifty years and mair.

Positions cabined, cribbed, involved  
His genius soon saw thro',  
And now the last dark problem's solved:  
He's reached the crown-line noo.

## DRAUGHTS CHAMPION PLAYS 14 OPPONENTS

Mr H. L. Jordan, draughts champion of Victoria, gave an exhibition of draughts to a large number of people last night at the Melbourne Institute. With noteworthy ability and precision of the hand, etc.

The solitary player beat 14 opponents, whom he kept busily engaged for more than two hours. In one engaged game that he lost, with a score of 24 wins, two draws, and not a game lost.

Drawn games were secured by the well-known and experienced expert, and were not a failure. Mr Jordan, and H. A. Fowler. Many of the games were played in a most natural and free manner, and the game of draughts was played in a most natural and free manner.

And the game of draughts was played in a most natural and free manner. The game of draughts was played in a most natural and free manner. The game of draughts was played in a most natural and free manner. The game of draughts was played in a most natural and free manner.

Williamstown has entered a team for the Victorian Draughts Association's championship matches, and will play its first match tomorrow night against the Hallwicks at the Hallwicks Institute. The match is expected to be a most interesting one.

## Draughts Championship.

### Brilliant Victory for Jordan.

After one of the stiffest contests known in the history of the game, Mr. Richard Jordan, of Edinburgh, this week (says the Glasgow *Weekly Herald* of October 23) vindicated his claim to the title of the draughts champion of the world by defeating his challenger, Mr. Robert Stewart, of Blairadam. Both are brilliant exponents of checkers, the only difference between them being that Jordan is the stronger player of the two. Conditions better adapted to test the contestants' knowledge of draughts could hardly have been devised. Much of the play was new and of an intricate character. No doubt when critics get the complete games in their possession they will be able to show draws on the won games. It is one thing to analyse a game in the comfort and privacy of one's home—it is an entirely different matter to play a hard game across the board with scores of eyes watching every move intently. All draughts players make mistakes; the best player is he who perpetrates the fewest blunders. Jordan has undoubtedly a perfect genius for the game. He has played a good many set matches, and he has not yet suffered a reverse. In defeating Wyllie, Ferrie, Stewart (twice), and J. C. Brown, he has established a record which will not easily be eclipsed. It is understood that the champion contemplates a tour in Australia. Where there are so many Scots, he may be sure of getting an enthusiastic welcome.

The Herald (Melb) 18<sup>th</sup> April, 1928  
December, 1897

The Telegraph (Brisbane) 3<sup>rd</sup>



## DRAUGHTS CHAMPIONSHIP.

James Wyllie v. James P. Reed.

### The "Herd Laddie" Confident.

It has already been announced (says the *Echo*) that James Wyllie, the "Herd Laddie," will leave Australia in February next, to contest a match for 500 dollars a-side with the champion draughts player of America, James Patrick Reed, who claims also to be the blindfold champion of the world. Reed was born in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania (U.S.A.), on February 14, 1859. He began to play "checkers," as the game is called in the States, in 1874, and soon was able to vanquish all the Pittsburg players. About 1878 Reed was talked of as a promising player far beyond his native town, and he was the only one west of the Allegheny Mountains who scored a victory against R. Martin, the veteran ex-champion of the world, during his tour in that year. In 1878 Reed challenged M. C. Priest for the championship of Pennsylvania and 200 dollars a side, but Priest took no notice of the challenge. Reed accepted an offer to play C. Hefter, of Chicago (Illinois), for the same stake, and won, the score being Reed 11, Hefter 10, drawn 29. This roused Priest out of his lethargy, and a match was played at Wilmington (Delaware) for 400 dollars, the result being Priest 15, Reed 5, drawn 22. Reed immediately challenged Priest to a return match, and this took place at Pittsburg in 1879, the scores being Reed 12, Priest 6, drawn 27.

Reed has retained the title of champion of the United States almost continuously since he played Charles F. Barker, of Boston, in 1881, for the championship and 400 dollars, when Barker won with four games to Reed's one, 45 being drawn. In December of the same year another match resulted in exactly the same score. In 1885, when the "Herd Laddie" made his second tour of America, a friendly match was arranged between him and Reed, the score being Wyllie 3, Reed 1, drawn 15. A second match resulted in the same score on each side. In 1886 Reed played H. Z. Wright, of Boston, and won 7 to Wright's none, the remainder being "draws." In 1887 he visited Great Britain and played all the leading players. The principal scores were: Reed 2, W. Campbell 2, draws 16; Reed 1, J. Smith 1, draws 14; Reed 3, J. L. Richmond 3, draws 10; Reed 2, J. Moir 2, draws 5; Reed 5, J. G. Lewis 2, draws 4; Reed 0, D. G. McKelvie 0, draws 5; J. Ferrie 4, Reed 1, draw 1. On his return to the States he beat Dr. Schaefer, the champion of New York, winning 3 to Schaefer's 1, with 16 draws. In December, 1887, he again beat Priest, the scores being Reed 7, Priest 1, draws 17. He challenged Barker at Pittsburg, and was again beaten—score, Barker 5, Reed 1, draws 45. He then settled at Chicago and was associated with Messrs. Hefter, Barker, and Roberts in the publication of the *American Checker Review*.



This match did not take place.

**THE RECENT DRAUGHTS TOURNAMENT HELD IN MELBOURNE.—SOME REPRESENTATIVE PLAYERS**



**Nathan Spielvogel,  
Ballarat**



**J.C. Carter  
Collingwood**



**T. R. Collins  
Melbourne**



**H. McLennan  
Fairbank**



**A. J. Fox  
Dowling Forest**



**Jas. Turner  
Bendigo**



**A. F. Marsh**  
**Walhalla**



**J. Best**  
**Collingwood**

**Weekly Times 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1897**

## THE DRAUGHTS TOURNAMENT.

We give this week the pictures of several of the representative players who took part in the recent draughts tournament in Melbourne.

Mr J. C. Carter was born in Launceston on November 27th, 1849. About 27 years ago, he came to Gippsland, Victoria, where his father was one of the pioneers. After remaining there for about a year, he made Collingwood his home. He is one of the oldest members of the Collingwood Draughts Club, and is one of its delegates to the Victorian Draughts Association. He is one of the greatest enthusiasts of the game in the colony, and takes a keen delight in all draughts matches, whether personally interested in them or not. He has attended all the town and country matches.

Mr A. F. Marsh was born in Cobden, on the West Coast of New Zealand, on the 25th October, 1868. He first thought of learning draughts on hearing of Wylie, the famous "Herd Laddie," in 1880. He then became enamored of the game, and has been an assiduous student ever since. Living chiefly in the country he has not had so much practice as he would have liked, but he has made up for this by generally having one or two matches by correspondence on hand. He has already played ten matches by correspondence, of which he has won 6, lost 3, and drawn 1. He is now playing a big match of 100 games by correspondence with Alfred William Lowe, of Roslyn, Dunedin, and he has also another match of 14 games on hand which is nearly finished. He has won several prizes for problem solving, and tied for third place with Mr F. Lockie, of Launceston, in "The Weekly Times" Problem Solution Tourney. He is now playing a chess match by correspondence with Mr E. A. Baker, of Kurking, Victoria. Mr Marsh is a frequent contributor to the draughts column of "The Weekly Times."

Mr A. J. Cox was born at Tavistock Farm, Dowling's Forest, on 16th March, 1878. He commenced to learn the game fully 3 years ago. Shortly afterwards he joined the Miners' Rest Draughts Club, and by study and perseverance soon became one of its strongest players. The Miners' Rest Draughts Club has about 50 members on the roll, and is one of the most flourishing clubs in the colony. He played in two draughts tournaments, in connection with the club, winning the third prize in one and the first prize in the other. It is a hopeful sign when so many young players in the country districts are so well able to hold their own with the veterans, for in a year or two the quality of the play is bound to be improved, and then the town players will have a hard struggle to retain their supremacy.

Mr T. R. Collins was born in Birmingham, England, on 31st May, 1865, and arrived in the colony in 1885. He first learned to play draughts in 1893, while a member of the Star of Kew Rechabite Tent, which was associated with other lodges in connection with the Victorian Rechabite Draughts Association. He won the first prize in 1893 in the draughts handicap tournament of the Star of Kew Tent. He then joined the Melbourne Draughts Club, and was elected secretary in 1894, and still occupies that position. He won 3rd prize in the handicap tourney of this club in the following year. He was M.C. in the last three town and country matches, and did yeoman's service in that capacity. He has made rapid strides in the improvement of his play, and has now a well stocked draughts library. He is one of the delegates of the Melbourne Draughts Club to the Victorian Draughts Association.

Mr S. Spielvogel, was born at Ballarat, on 14th November, 1875. Before learning the game of draughts he was well known as a chess player, having won the gold medal of the Ballarat Chess

Weekly Times 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1897

Club in 1894. When the Ballarat District Draughts Association was formed, about 3 years ago, he commenced the study of the game in earnest. In 1895, while secretary of the Ballarat City Draughts Club in association matches, he made 98 points out of a possible 100, having played 54 games of which he won 52, lost 1 and drew 1. The Ballarat City Draughts Club won the premiership for that year. Mr Spielvogel is a great enthusiast in both chess and draughts, and is the life and soul of these games in the Ballarat district.

Mr J. Turner was born in Dumfriesshire, Scotland, in 1866, and arrived in Victoria in 1882. From his early youth he has been a devoted lover of the game. He has been a competitor in four tournaments, since his arrival here, and of these he has won two. He is one of the strongest players in the country districts of the colony.

Mr J. Best was born at Par, in the county of Cornwall, England, on 17th February, 1875. He arrived in Australia in 1885. He commenced to play the game about three and a half years ago. In playing Association matches he has only been defeated once. Won the 1st prize in the handicap tournament of the Collingwood Draughts Club in 1896, and the 6th prize in the open tournament in connection with the H.A.C.B.S., which was held in January last. Since then he has gained the 2nd prize in the Collingwood Draughts Club Championship Tourney. He is one of the delegates of his club to the Victorian Draughts Association. He is one of our most promising players.

Mr H. McLennan was born at Werribee, on 24th March, 1857. He learned to play the game of draughts when about 12 years old. He became very fond of the game, but had few opportunities of meeting good players until about five years ago at Fairbank, where there were some very strong players. His old enthusiasm was then aroused. In 1894 he won second prize in the tournament of the Nyora Draughts Club, and in July 1896, starting from scratch, gained the second prize in the draughts handicap tournament of the Korumburra Chess and Draughts Club. ●

Weekly Times (VIC) 27<sup>th</sup> July, 1897

These are the 8 biographies of the players in the photos.





Clearly Tim Robbins on the left and Morgan Freeman on the right from the movie “Shawshank Redemption” I don’t remember that scene but will look again at the DVD. Makes me wonder how many DVD’s of this movie were made!

I also seem to recall Tim wanted to teach Morgan chess. Or was it Andy Dufresne teaching Red?

## WITH THE HERD LADDIE.

By "QUIVIS."

Mather's Café is the chosen haunt of the Melbourne Draughts Club, and here you will meet, united by a common love of the old game, as queer and quaint a lot of good fellows as ever delighted the heart of Charles Lamb in his most jovial and clubbable of moods. Up the centre of the room runs a long table, and around it are grouped—some sitting and others standing—about 20 persons, and most of them appear from their speech to be Scotch. There are old men present, and one or two young ones, but the majority are middle-aged. Some dress and speak like gentlemen, and others have the garb and mien of rustics or *overriers*. The latter are not coarse or rude of speech, however, and as the smoke from their black clay pipes mingles with the more fragrant wreaths ascending from a Manila cheroot or full-flavoured Havana, so do they harmoniously fraternise with their richer and more prosperous club mates. So true it is that while the business of this life tends to divide us and make us selfish, isolated units, each of its games makes all who love that game brothers. There are, as I said, about twenty members present, but only one board is engaged, and around it the common interest is centred. One of the players is a well-dressed young man with a blonde moustache which he pulls and twirls between the moves. The other is an old man, who looks more like a peasant than anybody else in the room. A dark-striped tweed coat of no particular cut or fashion covers all of him that appears above the table, and you notice that he disdains such concessions to conventionality as a shirt-collar or cuffs. He has the finest head in the room, however, and in a few rapid moves he puts his youthful antagonist completely *hors de combat*. He is an old man, but in the ruddy countenance and big square head and quiet grey eyes there are extant signs of health and strength which are very impressive. The young man is succeeded by other players, and they all suffer the same fate, some getting the finishing stroke in a couple of minutes, and others maintaining the unequal fight for a quarter of an hour. They come and go, but the old gentleman sits serene, and motionless, and almost soundless, and every eye is bent on him with increasing respect and admiration, as he phlegmatically "polishes off" each fresh antagonist. As you look on him you cease to regard him as a shabbily-dressed man, nay, his garments have become for you spiritualised into symbols and types to you for evermore of genius and mastery in this particular game of draughts. If you know nothing of the game you listen calmly when a leading member of the club tells you that the old gentleman is Mr. James Wyllie, the Herd Laddie. But if you have ever enjoyed the triumph of

JAMES WYLLIE, THE HERD LADDIE, BUT IF you have ever enjoyed the triumph of "getting a man crowned," you will recognise in him the redoubtable draughts champion of the world, who, in a professional career of over 50 years, has never lost a single match, or met an opponent who came within even measurable distance of him.

My acquaintance with the game was only that of the boy who plays without book and trusts very much to luck, and while I am watching Mr. Wyllie, the leading member who has kindly placed himself at my service opens up for me a new draughts world, if the expression be permissible. I learn for the first time that there are text-books on the game, and that the great authority is Andrew Anderson, who reigned supreme till the Herd Laddie overthrew him. There are openings in it just as in chess, and they are known by such names as the "Ayrshire Lassie," the "Dundee," the "Kelso," the "Fife," the "Edinburgh," the "Defiance," and the "Switcher." As chess has its gambits, so in draughts there are snares and pitfalls called by such queer titles as the "Black Doctor" and the "White Doctor." The club meets between 7 and 10 o'clock on three nights every week, and my informant tells me that in numbers and in enthusiasm it is growing steadily. He confesses that the happiest moments of his life are spent over the draughts board; and he speaks with enthusiasm of a member who "lost 60 games to the champion last week." My brain reels as I strive to realise the mental condition of the man who, in six days, had played and lost 60 games, and total mental eclipse prevails for a time when my Mentor proceeds to tell me that Mr. Wyllie played 20,000 games in America, during which there were only 109 defeats and about 1,000 draws. I know from bitter experience that a game of chess can last half a day, and I emerged out of the gloom with the benumbing calculation that to play that number of games at least 30 years would be required. On communicating this conclusion to my companion he smiled, and said, "Not quite so long. Some games take an hour, but the majority are decided within the quarter."

At this stage one of the victims ruefully surveys his last four men pinned inextricably by two of the champions, and says, with a sigh, "Aye, they're dead—dead as a door-nail. Come on, Scott, and let's see hoo ye can tackle him." Mr. Scott is a tall, grave man, who, after modestly demurring for a minute, takes the victim's chair, and hands over to the champion a shilling. This is the only toll which the king of the game takes from his subjects, and as he is not a rich man, no one can surely grudge it. The simple way in which the money is received and pocketed is in keeping with the homely character of the game and its unpretending surroundings. Any other champion would have disguised the transaction, or had it carried on by deputy; but here the unsophistication was charming, because natural. "It's a braw

reputy; but here the unsophistication was charming, because natural. "It's a braw new one, fresh frae the mint," says someone, but the old man hears not, for he is almost totally deaf. Deafness is a misfortune to most men, but to Mr. Wyllie it is a blessing in disguise. To it he owes powers of concentration which he might not otherwise possess, and to it may be ascribed likewise the far-away, abstracted look of his meditative face. Mr. Scott plays a good game, but, of course, is defeated, and another shilling is passed across the table. "Another new one," bawls the previous speaker, and the words this time are apparently understood, for the champion's far-away eyes gleam keenly out upon us, and he gives utterance to a low chuckle. After Mr. Scott has been again beaten, a member of the club begins a game with an opening called the "Second Double Corner." He was playing carefully and well, and had apparently as strong a position as his opponent, when all at once his game collapsed and he retired, saying, "That last move was an oversight. I didn't mean it." Some of those around

that it should be a draw, and all are a little excited except the champion. He is deaf as ever, and his eyes are further away, so that he is the only one who knows not that while the game is proceeding a young artist member is making a highly finished portrait-sketch of his features. After about a quarter of an hour's play, however, the silence is broken and criticism commences. The "knowing ones" perceive that the game is already lost, and such pieces of advice as this are given—"Ye should na' have played 12 to 16." "Aye, that 12 to 16 was bad. Fifteen tae 18 wud have been better." "Aye, but a' wud have been of nae use. He's gist owre guid for us a'."

believe that up to this fatal move he had as good a game as the champion, and one daring young man succeeds in making the champion understand that he is ready to take up the game as it stood before the blunder was made. The men had been placed in their regular files in unbroken array before the proposition could be grasped, and it was marvellous to see with what rapidity he arranged them in the complicated position they had assumed at the end of the last game. "He's gaun to beat me noo," said the old man, with a good-humoured smile, as the play commenced; but this game collapsed very much in the same fashion, and in about the same number of moves, as the previous one. The last player explained his defeat thus:—"I was frightened to go into six for fear he would get into fifteen;" and though his words were a dark saying and a hopeless riddle for me, they were doubtless full of meaning to the players around him. The best game of the night was played by a tall young gentleman, with a head almost as square and as powerful as his opponent's. The champion having begun with the opening known as the "Ayrshire Lass," someone said, "Eb, yer an awfu' man for the lasses, Mr. Wyllie," and there was general laughter. The play lasts for about 20 minutes, and nothing is heard but the click of the men as they are swept from the board or moved from square to square. My friend whispers to me, "I played the champion the same game the other afternoon, and the moves on both sides are identical. He ought to make a draw." There is a consensus of opinion that it should be a draw, and all are a little excited except the champion. He is deaf

Wonderful article above by “Quivis” It would be nice to know who “Q” is. Someone will know. A great description of Mather’s Café with the table down the middle. It could be that the “young artist member” drew the sketch used in “The Sketcher” earlier. He would get a fee for drawing it. This nice item has turned up just as we are getting ready to finalise the e-book for The Checker Maven. So it is clear there is stacks more on Trove if one only knows how to pull it out. It is necessary to look closely as the other article by “Quivis” “Among the Chess Players” is different, and in another newspaper. This one was in The Australasian 7 May 1887 and the other is from The Argus 30 April 1887 . Note the overlap of each when dealing with “Mr. Scott”

How lucky Australia and New Zealand draughts lovers were to get a chance against him for 1 shilling. A memory forever. Bob Meadley, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2021

“Quivis” is a Latin word for ‘anyone’ or ‘anything’



**"THE HERD LADDIE."**

The "Herd Laddie," as he was familiarly known to lovers of draughts, was a Scotchman, and was at the time of his death just 81 years of age. For over 30 years the "Laddie," or to give him his correct name, Mr. James Wyllie, was the acknowledged champion draughts player of the world, he having defeated in cross board play all the representatives of England, Scotland, and U. S. America, and generally with something like ease. In 1888-9 he paid a visit to Australia, when his record rose to the height of the phenomenal. Out of 8000 games played in the colonies Mr. Wyllie drew 100 and lost only 25; and taken on the average, his wins were simply routs, showing a disparity in play between himself and his opponents that was an education, even though sometimes disconcerting to the beaten.



The late Mr. J. WYLLIE

It has been an enjoyable fossick through my books, help from libraries, friends, and Trove the National Library of Australia newspaper archive. I thank my dear wife Norma for her computer help. It is a much neater version than it would have been using my manuscript. Some scans really needed retyping. Chess history and chess problems are my hobbies and having just completed a large book on an American Chess Problemist J.C.J. Wainwright I wanted a change and Richard Torning offered that. He is the editor of the NSW Junior Chess League Journal with an interest in draughts like myself. His book will be very different to mine which is basically historical. He is a player.

It was not hard to fall in love with James Wyllie and to be honest a book on Australian draughts needed an outside input like that provided by him. Four Years here is more than a tour and rather a long extended work commitment carried out with seriousness and humour. The people loved him as they surely did in his 4 Year American 'tour'. He was the old warrior. There are 21,931 references to the "Herd Laddie" on Trove. Anyone writing a biography of him has work to do!

A brief inspection of draughts in the late 19<sup>th</sup> to mid twentieth century revealed draughts clubs galore and wonderful newspaper columns which are better than the chess columns in my opinion. Whenever I was stuck I just typed "Chess and Draughts" into Trove and information flowed. One bonus was the discovery of "Quivis". The two games are related and whether one is in the Egyptian or the Spanish camp regarding the origins of draughts, the game of chess still has controversial origins be its birth in India, China or the Middle East.

Today, it is pretty clear the typewritten word is waning and the game of draughts flourishes in the digital world. And, like chess it has Federation problems. I hope you enjoy a browse, the mistakes are mine and a look at Australian and New Zealand draughts may be clearer. Thanks to Bob Newell of Checker Maven. Bob Meadley 9 September 2021

## Chapter 11 - BITS & PIECES from Trove

### LIVING DRAUGHTS.

The game of "Living Draughts" in connection with the bazaar now being held in aid of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in North Melbourne Town Hall, is proving a great attraction. Every detail has been well worked out, and the tout ensemble is very effective. The "men" are represented by 24 young girls, all dressed in white, with orange blossoms and a wand in hand. Those representing the black men have, in addition, blue sashes. The board is sixteen feet square, and is on the floor immediately under the stage, where the two players and conductor are seated. The conductor calls out the moves, and when a "piece" is to be taken, the player waves a wand, and the challenged

party makes a graceful bow and retires to the side of the board. There are two crown bearers in addition to the players, and when a "piece" is to be crowned, each places a floral crown on their respective colors. There are two games played each evening, each side generally scoring a win. The nuns of the parish designed the beautiful dresses, and deserve the highest credit for the taste displayed. Messrs Brown and Kearns are the players, and have been indefatigable in training the young girls to such a high degree of efficiency. The Rev. Father Aylward, P.P., has taken the liveliest interest in the exhibition, and is highly pleased with its success.



Living draughts at North Melbourne Town Hall - Photo by Messrs R. Sutcliffe & R. Harvie Weekly Times 13<sup>th</sup> April, 1896 page 13

# Draughts.

TO CORRESPONDENTS  
Address all communications for this column  
"Draughts Editor Queensland."

## SOLUTION OF PROBLEM No. 401.

Black men on 12, 16; king on 28.

White man on 6; kings on 15, 31.

White to move and win.

6 2	7 11	18 23	11 15	22 26
(1) 28 24	12 16	19 26	19 24	28 32
2 7	15 18	31 32	15 19	26 23
16 20	24 19	16 19	34 28	W. wins.

Var. 1.

16 19	31 27	12 16	9 14	19 24
15 24	19 15	6 9	16 20	27 23
28 19	2 6	15 19	14 10	W. wins.

## SOLUTION OF PROBLEM No. 402.

Black men on 1, 9, 10, 12, 17, 19, 25.

White men on 6, 15, 30, 26; king on 8.

White to move and win.

26 23	10 19	16 7	14 18	20 16
19 26	11 16	9 14	10 15	12 19
8 11	1 10	7 10	18 23	15 24

White wins.

## SOLUTION OF PROBLEM No. 403.

Black kings on 7, 14.

White men on 15, 19; king on 12.

White to move and win.

12 16	23 18	20 24	3 7	8 3
14 18	16 12	7 3	18 14	7 11
15 11	18 15	24 19	11 15	9 6
7 3	11 8	3 7	4 8	19 15
16 20	15 11	19 23	7 3	3 7
18 23	8 4	7 3	14 9	White
19 16	3 7	23 18	3 7	wins.

A. 19 16 only draws.

## SOLUTION OF PROBLEM No. 404.

Black men on 1, 10, 13; king on 15.

White men on 6, 25; kings on 2, 8.

White to move and draw.

18 3	13 17	25 21	10 15	10 15
15 18	8 11	1 10	6 10	17 22
3 8	10 14	2 6	15 19	Draw.

A. Corrects Problem No. 308 at fourteenth move where 25 21 is played, and Black wins.

B. 10 14, 3 7, 1 10, 2 6, 13 17, 25 21, 17 22, 6 9, 15 18, 21 17, 14 21, 7 23, 21 25, 23 18. White wins.

C. 10 14, 8 11, 1 10, 2 6, 10 15, 25 22. Draw.

## SOLUTION OF PROBLEM No. 405.

Black kings on 7, 10, 11, 17.

White man on 22; kings on 12, 13, 24.

White to move and win.

22 18	22 15	24 19	1 5	5 16
17 22	9 6	2 9	15 24	W. wins.
18 9	7 2			

## SOLUTION OF PROBLEM No. 406.

Black men on 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 18, 22, 23.

White men on 10, 14, 20, 24, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31; king on 3.

Black to move and win.

15 19	30 23	12 16	15 6	9 27
24 15	22 26	3 19	6 31	32 23
23 26	31 22	2 6	22 15	4 27

B. wins.

White to move and win.

A neat and pleasing across board ending by Mr. W. Beattie, of the "Liverpool Mercury."

## PROBLEM No. 409.

Black to move and White to win.

Mr. W. Ward, Goondiwindi, gives the above as a companion position to Problem No. 407.

The following game was played by Mr. R. Martins, ex-champion, during a recent visit to London. The score is from the "Bristol Mercury":—

## GAME No. 531.—"Switcher."

Black, Mr. Lewcock. White, Mr. Martins

11 15	28 19	1 6	27 23	23 27
21 17	11 16	31 26	18 27	1 6
9 13	26 23	6 9	32 23	9 14
25 21	8 11	4 8	24 27	6 9
6 9	22 18	3 12	26 22	14 17
29 25	13 17	15 10	27 31	22 18
8 11	19 15	9 18	23 18	27 22
17 14	17 22	10 3	31 27	9 5
10 17	15 8	12 16	18 15	13 17
21 14	22 29	3 8	27 23	20 16
9 18	8 4	2 6	15 10	27 24
23 14	16 19	8 11	9 18	16 19
4 8	23 18	6 9	10 6	
24 19	12 19	11 20	5 9	
15 24	18 15	19 24	6 1	

And Mr. Martins won.

A. Black might have drawn by 17 21, 16 19, 22 26, 30 23, 29 25.

## NOTES.

Mr. W. J. Wray, of Halifax, England, states that while out on a country ramble in one of the prettiest valleys in Yorkshire (says the "Leeds Mercury Supplement") he took shelter from a storm in a farmhouse, and, noticing a draughts board, he asked the host did he play. "No, but my brother does. He belongs to the club in town." Mr. Wray then introduced himself as the secretary. "Have you seen this?" reaching down a cabinet photograph



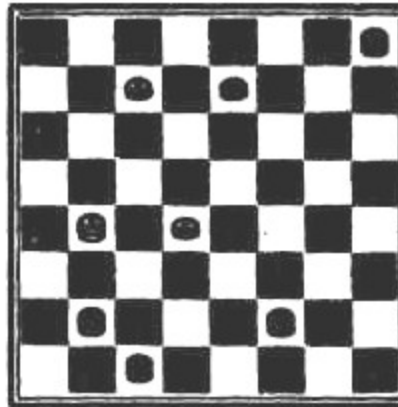
...  
this?" reaching down a cabinet photograph.  
"No, but it is the best draughts photo I have  
seen." It was a picture of the "Hard Laddie,"  
and, noticing Brisbane at the bottom he asked  
who the other player was. "That is my  
nephew, Robert Mar, the champion of Aus-  
tralasia. He beat Wyllie in a match over  
there." Mr. Wray remarked that he never  
thought George Dean was the uncle of the great  
Australasian player. Mr. Dean made the  
Halifax Club a present of the photograph, and  
it is now framed and hanging in the clubroom.  
George Dean is a good player, and was one of  
what is known as the "Halifax six," who  
played matches twenty years ago.

The death is announced of Mr. James  
Labadie, one of the strongest checkerists in  
Canada.

Mr. James P. Reed, the American checker  
expert, arrived in Glasgow early in August.  
He was at once offered engagements to meet  
all comers at some of the Glasgow clubs; and  
it was also considered certain that his desire to  
have some off-hand matches with representative  
Scottish and English players would be gratified.

PROBLEM No. 408.

BLACK.



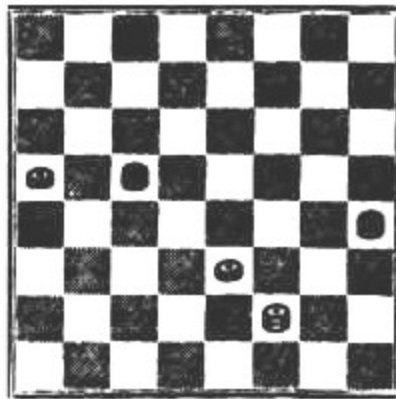
WHITE.

White to move and win.

A neat and pleasing across board ending by Mr. W. Beattie, of the "Liverpool Mercury."

PROBLEM No. 409.

BLACK.



WHITE.

Black to move and White to win.

Mr. W. Ward, Goondiwindi, gives the above as a companion position to Problem No. 407.

The following game was played by Mr. R. Martins, ex-champion, during a recent visit to London. The score is from the "Bristol Mercury";—



## NORTH ADELAIDE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.

ADOPTING the hint thrown out by Mr Peter Cumming in the very liberal offer made by him at a public meeting lately, a meeting of gentlemen interested in the establishment of a Literary Institution at North Adelaide, was held in the Christ Church School-room, on Wednesday evening.

Major Campbell, in the Chair.

The Chairman said he was not in the secrets of the originators, but thought the scheme a most desirable one if carried out, so as to form a Mechanics' Institute, and not in any way to rival that in South Adelaide, for he felt convinced that a precisely similar institution to that one would not meet with sufficient support in North Adelaide to enable it to last. Any institution of the kind should be so framed as to ensure the support of the working classes, for without that support he did not think anything of the kind would succeed.

Mr Pepper stated the nature of the Society, which was intended to include, in addition to the usual attributes of a Mechanics' Institute, a museum and a chess and draught club.

Mr Moorhouse expressed himself quite favourable to the latter addition, though he would perhaps admit chess only.

A good deal of conversation took place, in which Messrs Singleton and Moorhouse gave it as their opinion, that the institute in South Adelaide, was as a Mechanics' Institute, an entire failure, being in fact nothing more than an aristocratic reading-room, and Mr Singleton promised every support in his power both by his subscription and by donations in books.

Mr Moorhouse observed, that there was a rule in the South Adelaide Institute to the effect, that one-half the income should be spent in books, and that rule had always cramped its operations.

Dr Davis strongly advocated that the new institution should be both practically, and in name, a Mechanics' Institute. Even the name was important as by changing it they might endanger their claim to the Government assistance, which was exclusively confined to such societies as were Mechanics' Institutes.

It being proposed to call a public meeting, Mr Moorhouse thought the working classes should be specially invited to attend and take part in it.

Mr Woodcock said it had been in contemplation to establish a society of the kind in connection with his own church, but the idea had been abandoned as not sufficiently embracing the support of all classes. He had some objections to the title of Mechanics' Institute, as by that it might appear that other classes were excluded, whereas it was intended to include all. He wished it particularly understood, that the intended Institute in North Ade-



stood, that the intended Institute in North Adelaide, was not intended in any way to clash with that in South Adelaide, as the operation of it would be widely different.

A gentleman present suggested the title of Polytechnic, on which Mr Maguire remarked, that Mr Cumming, when offering 100*l.* towards the establishment of an institute, intended it as a condition that the title of polytechnic should be attached.

Mr J. T. Bagot thought the title of Mechanics' Institute would not be misunderstood, but Mr Singleton held the opinion that it was open to different constructions.

A series of resolutions were passed and a Provisional Committee appointed, there being a strong desire manifested that the support of Ministers of the Gospel, of all denominations, should be secured on it, but it was thought advisable not to put down the names of any gentlemen who either were not present, or had not previously given their sanction.

Mr Woodcock said he had no doubt he could speak for the Bishop, and Mr Neales, his co-trustees, that they would concur with him in allowing the use of the school-room to the Society till they could obtain a permanent suitable building.

The meeting was a most influential one, and the greatest interest appeared to be felt in the success of the project. The various resolutions passed will be found in our advertising columns.

Adelaide Times SA 16<sup>th</sup> August, 1851 page 6

Adelaide Times (SA : 1848 - 1858), Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> September, 1851, page 3

**"ADELAIDE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.**

**TO THE EDITOR OF THE "ADELAIDE TIMES."**

*Sir—In your remarks of yesterday, on the South Australian Library, and Mechanics' Institute, you seem to be strangely misinformed ; as it cannot be supposed so staunch an advocate of popular rights, can be otherwise than friendly to Institutions for popular improvement. That the Institution is not, "in the estimation of the public, a disreputable lounge," is proved by its generally numbering about 400 subscribers, by no means of the most disreputable characters in Adelaide. Besides, what is there disreputable in a news-room, where one may read the papers, English, and Colonial, including at least one, which you will admit to be of good repute, the "Adelaide limes," and in a library, to whose catalogue enclosed, I beg leave to call your attention, in disproof of the shelves being "loaded with trashy novels"? You would do better, perhaps, in helping us to raise the public taste to the level of other departments of the library, than thus to attempt to depreciate the character of the library itself, by particularising only one class of books, at present unfortunately the most popular.*

*You are mistaken in alleging that "a" Chess and Draught Club is attached "to the Institution, at the tables of which, "numbers of young men may be seen" seated at the busiest hours of the day." There is no such club. Occasionally, when his business is over, our main chess player, an elderly*

gentleman, learned in the law, may be seen solacing himself with a game ; —is he the "rising generation" whom you, in odd phraseology, charge our Institution with "disserving?" I have never seen a young man playing a game at all; but if I had, I beg to remind you, that there are other less innocent relaxations than Chess, from which, perhaps, we maybe helping to "disserve the rising generation." After all, Sir, you should remember, relaxation is absolutely necessary to the generality of men, and that the relaxations we offer, are decidedly of an innocent class. We cannot all bear the continuous strain which some people endure:—preaching on Sunday the principles of Christianity, and practising them on week days—more or less—in the leaders of the Adelaide Times for instance. No wonder that in the turmoil of such a busy life, we seek in vain for the illustration of a stray virtue or two— among the rest, of that Christian charity which thinketh no evil—to say nothing of writing and publishing it.

If you please, Sir, what affair is it of yours, that our Secretary divides his time between our Institution and a Building Society ? We get out of him, certainly, and out of his assistant, whom he pays, a very fair return for his salary. And it is odd, that the "complaints loud and deep," of which you speak, of "want of sufficient attention," do not reach the Committee, who are surely, rather than yourself, the party to attend to them.

Then again, "the lecturing department is a farce." If so, it is undoubtedly a great pity; but how will it be remedied by substituting any other lecturers for the most popular ones we can find? If you will send us any more desirable proposals, we will consider them respectfully and gratefully, but regret that we have not the funds to requite them with anything but our thanks. By the way, will James Allen, Esq., advertised on the same page with your attack on our institution, as about to lecture to our rising sister of Port Adelaide, favour us in a similar manner?

Your repetition, however, of a falsehood!, at the same time that you "do not pretend to determine" its truth; viz., "that the Institute is said to have been converted into a political engine for securing the return of Mr Dutton, its President, bears a blacker complexion. Mr Dutton is not the President, but one of six Vice-Presidents; Judge Cooper is the President. Mr Dutton, however, is, and long has been, an active friend of the Institution. Long before his candidateship for East Adelaide, he announced at one of our quarterly meetings an intended present, to be made as soon as our Institution should obtain a Charter of Incorporation, necessary for the protection of our property. And he has now paid a sum of money to the credit of our intended building fund, although; we have not yet obtained, but are only applying for, our charter. From any gentlemen, of any politics, we shall be glad to, receive similar contributions to this fund. Of Mr Dutton, however, in his political capacity, we know nothing. I declare to you, I have never heard a word of Mr Dutton's candidateship, at any meeting of the Institution; nay, not even a question: as to the reason why a certain editor, so, staunch an advocate of popular rights in general, has been so bitterly opposed to the return of the representative selected for themselves, in the exercise of their undoubted constitutional rights, by one of the metropolitan constituencies. And I beg to tell you, Sir, what you, as a friend of mechanics' institutes ought to know, that the good old English rule exists in our institution—and no one has in my experience attempted to infringe it—expressly excluding for the sake of peace. ("Controversial Divinity and Party Politics.")

I beg to add, for the information of yourself and readers, that in applying for our Charter, we are also endeavouring to relieve ourselves—as we are advised is our: only mode of doing so—from a

*limitation in the use of our funds, which is believed; mainly to have prevented the objects of the "Mechanics' Institute" being more fully carried out.*

*I do not think it necessary to add my name, because I state nothing but what any one of our members can substantiate. And by enquiry of our secretary, you may if you please, be convinced that I am justified in signing myself."* ONE OF THE COMMITTEE. Adelaide, 10<sup>th</sup> September, 1851.

This is extremely early and Henry Charlick the long term chess editor of the Adelaide Observer and writer of the 1887 Congress Book and The Jubilee of the Adelaide Chess Club has nothing to say about the above in either book.

Did the Club come into being? Unlikely. Charlick may not have known, as in 1851 he was only 6 years of age. Chess would have been played socially then but the letter hardly brings the matter to a friendly conclusion. If a Club did exist in 1851 in Adelaide it probably ended as the early versions of the Melbourne Chess Club did. They died because of the gold rushes. That Club started 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1851 at Mr Overton's twin bakery and confectionary shop in Swanston Street Melbourne. The author of the article on "THE FORGOTTEN MELBOURNE CHESS CLUBS" the late Ken Fraser was doubtful it lasted even a couple of months. (See Australian Chess Lore, Vol. 2, p.31). There were in those early days very strong players around one of whom was killed at the Eureka Stockade battle in 1854.

My wife Norma found all these 'Bits & Pieces' on Trove by typing in different chess words to the ones I typed in. The Living Draughts photograph from 1896 of the girls in dresses hopefully of different colour is a beauty. The Uncle of Robert Mar, one George Dean of Halifax (just above Hull) in the Queenslander of 1895 was a nice find.

The article from The Argus of 1857 details a draughts Club at the Argus Hotel and is a great find by Norma. Chess had started but a year earlier in late 1855-January, 1856 when a Mr. Watts defeated Mr McCombe in a knockout event.

The image of an early draughts board and men completes "Bits & Pieces" which could go on forever using Trove. The way rare items are found using it is amazing. Note that the board is painted onto the top of the table. As for the copyright held by "DPSL" I hope we are forgiven for reusing it. BM

MECHANICS' INSTITUTION.—It appears that a number of valuable books are missing from the library of the Mechanics' Institution, notwithstanding the efforts of the librarian to keep his charge intact. The fact is very discreditable to those who have borrowed them, and we would, in the event of any of the defaulters being known, advise the committee to expose them in such a manner as to prevent a repetition of conduct which is little, if anything, short of dishonesty. It is too bad that the advantages of a public library should be contracted through the negligence, or worse, of some of those to whom they are extended, and that the institution should be put to the expense of replacing works of importance in order to keep the library in a state of completeness. Arrangements, we are glad to learn, are being made for the renewal of lectures, and steps are also in progress towards the formation of chess and draught clubs in connection with the institution.

**Argus (Melbourne, Vic.: 1848 - 1957), Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> December, 1855, page 4**

**Argus (Melbourne, Vic. : 1848 - 1957), Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> February, 1856, page 9**

***“The Mechanics Institute***

***To the Editor of the Argus***

*Sir, - It is about four weeks since there was a general meeting of the members, to receive the report of the directors, and the secretary read a fine flaming account of what they were going to do this year. Among other things lectures wee to have a great trial, and the members were promised some fine intellectual treats, but up to this time no lectures have been delivered, nor are there any signs of any about to be. Some times since it was promised by the secretary that a chess and draught club would be formed under the auspices of the Institute, but alas!~ it also died after the meeting had taken place.*

*Please Mr. Editor, do sharpen them up, and keep a poor fellow from the theatre, bagatelle rooms, &c, and you will oblige yours.*

***A MEMBER***

*(On making inquiries at the Institution, we learn that there is every prospect of an interesting and instructive series of lectures being delivered this season, and that the necessary arrangements will be made without delay. The non formation of the contemplated chess and draught clubs must be ascribed, we suppose, to the indifference of the members themselves. Ed. A.”*

**Bell's Life in Victoria and Sporting Chronicle (Melbourne, Vic. : 1857 - 1868), Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> July, 1857, page 3**



**DRAUGHT'S CLUB.**—A club has been formed for the practice of this scientific game, at the Argus Hotel. Friday is the evening for meeting in each week. A Grand Tournament for three classes of players will be arranged as soon as the relative strength of the members can be ascertained.

Jas. McGeech, of Ballarat, says, "I will play anyone in the colony of Victoria the 5, 7, or 9, won games for from £50 to £100. This is a rare chance for some of the Argus Hotel Tournament gentlemen, in Melbourne, who, I believe, stated in a late number of your paper, that I had an offensive boasting manner with me. I can be heard of at the Sportman's Arms. Expenses to be agreed upon provided the game is not played in Ballarat."

**This image is of:**

EARLY CHECKERS (DRAUGHTS) BOARD GAME copyright DWSPL/R.Williams (HR630/RM)

**Reference Number:** 73527

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