British Endgame Study News
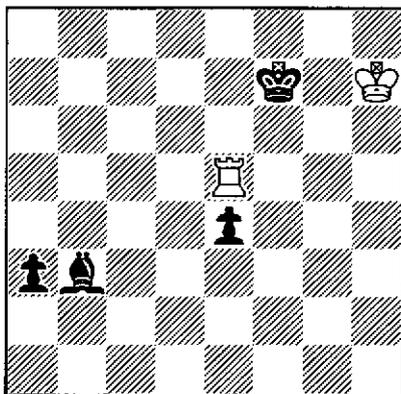
## Some studies by

A. W. Daniel

White to play and draw

Some studies by A. W. Daniel

Our first special number, in June 1996, was devoted to the work of H. A. Adamson, but earlier British composers have subsequently been sadly neglected in these pages. This does not mean they have been ignored altogether, since John Roycroft has produced collections of the work of Richard Guy (available from Chess Direct) and Hugh Blandford and T. R. Dawson (available from John himself), while the 1889 book of Horwitz and Kling was reprinted some years ago by Olms of Zurich. However, giving tribute to the leading figures of our past was a part of my original plan for *BESN*, and I am conscious of not having given it too much attention.

I was therefore very interested, when visiting František Macek in Praha (Prague) in May, to discover that he had over a hundred studies by A. W. Daniel in his collection. The Macek collection is now in the custody of Harold van der Heijden in Deventer, who has been comparing and merging it with his own (and finding a surprisingly high degree of overlap), and Harold has kindly prepared for me a copy of all the Daniel studies in the merged collections. Additionally, Harold recently visited Alain Pallier, who now holds the Lamare collection, and this proved to contain a few more Daniel studies of which he was previously unaware. The list ultimately given to me by Harold therefore contains all the Daniel studies from the Macek and Lamare collections and from his own, and my thanks are due to all these gentlemen.
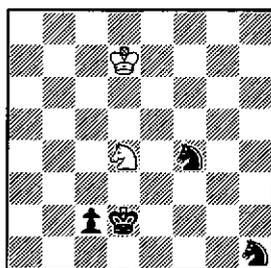
Daniel (1878-1955) was a pharmacist by profession and an Essex county player, though in chess he was best known as a problemist. That said, the study on our front page is now better known than any of his problems. It has to be said that this study, one of his first, remained by some way his best; but he is not the only composer to have started with a near-classic which he was subsequently unable to repeat, and if some of his later work came into the "pot-boiler" category (very possibly published at the behest of editors needing something short and simple to entertain their readers) there is enough of genuine character for him to deserve eight of our pages.
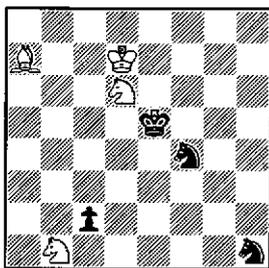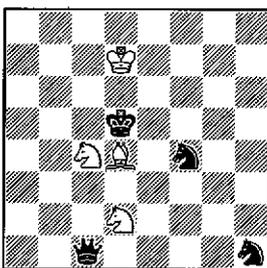

| 1 - draw | 1a - after 3 N6c4 | 1b - 1 Bd4+, after 4 Nd4 |

For example, consider **1** (*Chess Amateur*, 1926). The opening move **1 Nd2** is nothing special, but after the natural reply **1...c1Q** we have **2 Bd4+** and 2...Kxd4 will be met by 3 Nb3+ and 4 Nxc1. So Black temporizes with **2...Kd5**, but **3 N6c4** restricts bQ and threatens 4 Nb6+ Kxd4 5 Nb3+ (see **1a**), and what is Black to do?

The bK's only move will allow an immediate fork, as will most moves of bQ, and if **3...Qe1** we have **4 Nb6+ Kxd4** and a fork on f3 instead.

And there is more. Why not **1 Bd4+** first? If 1...Kd5 then 2 Nd2, and 2...c1Q will transpose into the main line; if **1...Kxd4** then again **2 Nd2**, and 2...c1Q will allow a fork at once. However, Black doesn't play 2...c1Q in this second line, he plays **2...Kc3** attacking wN. The immediate fork has now vanished and White cannot prevent Black's promotion, but he seems to have another resource: **3 Nb5+ Kxd2 4 Nd4** (see **1b**), and 4...c1Q will once more allow a fork. But why take a queen? If **4...c1N**, Black will have three knights against one, and this can be shown to win.

There is a little history behind this. In 1922, Daniel had published a charmingly natural study in which the main line ended in a similar position, the fork after P=Q giving White a draw, and H. A. Adamson had questioned what would happen after P=N. As editor, T. R. Dawson contented himself with the comment that "this amusing result in which 3 Kt's to 1 Kt arises so naturally would certainly take an appalling amount of analysis to say that Black could not in the long run force a checkmate" (*Chess Amateur*, December 1922, p 92), but by 1926 Daniel had obviously satisfied himself that the win was there. However, not everyone was convinced, and as late as 1954 D. J. Morgan could reply in the *BCM* to one A. J. Roycroft that he didn't know "the book win three Knights v one Knight or B" but that "the book (?) in question" might be on the shelves of his colleague Mr Nixon who ran the fairy chess department (*BCM*, March 1954, p 84). In fact 3N v N isn't too hard - White simply collects his force and presses carefully forward, and if Black tries to offer an exchange of knights he finds that his king can be driven away and his knight taken for nothing - and computer analysis by Lewis Stiller has suggested that 3N v B is normally won as well.
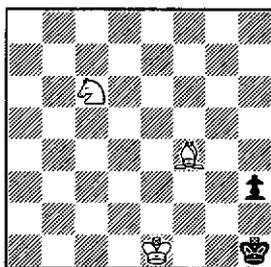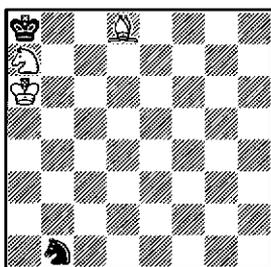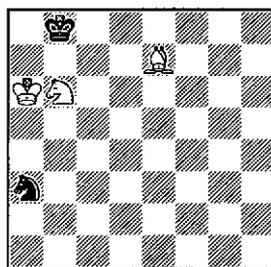

2 - win   **3 - win**   **3a - after 3 Be7**

Back to Daniel. **2** (*BCM* 1937, correcting an unsound study from *Chess Amateur* 1912) is based on an ancient N v P mate: **1 Nd4** (1 Bh2 at once only draws) **Kg2** (else 2 Nf3 etc) **2 Bh2!** (the moment has come) **Kh1** (Black wriggles) **3 Kf1 Kxh2** (no choice now) **4 Kf2 Kh1 5 Nf5 Kh2 6 Ne3 Kh1 7 Nf1 h2 8 Ng3 mate.**
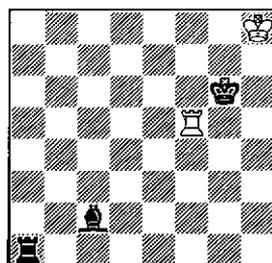
3 (*BCM* 1934) is now known to be technically unsound, since the computer has shown wins after other White moves, but in each case it takes at least 38 moves to capture bN and the crispness of the original solution retains its charm: **1 Nc8! Kb8** (a bN move merely transposes) **2 Nb6 Na3** (now bN is forced to a dark square) **3 Be7** (see **3a**) and mates or wins bN.
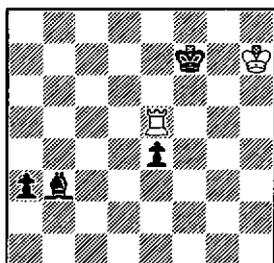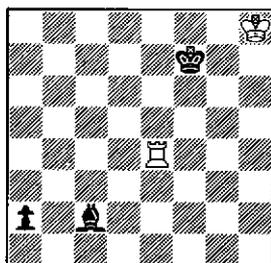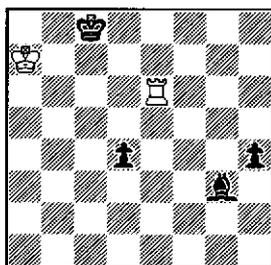
| 4 - draw | 4a - after 2...a2 | 4b - 3 Re5, after 4...Kg6 |

Our front cover study **4** (*Chess Amateur* 1908) is Daniel's most famous creation. The necessary opening capture **1 Rxe4** walks into a pin, **1...Bc2**, but **2 Kh8** defends wR since 2...Bxe4 will now be stalemate. However, Black can play **2...a2** forcing promotion (see **4a**), since 3 Ra4 loses wR and 3 Re1 can be met by 3...Bb1 shielding the promotion square. White might therefore think of 3 Re5, since 3...a1Q will be stalemate, but Black can reply 3...a1R! with a win. Mate is threatened on the h-file, and if White tries 4 Rf5+ hoping for 4...Bxf5 with stalemate then Black has 4...Kg6 with mate or capture of wR (see **4b**).
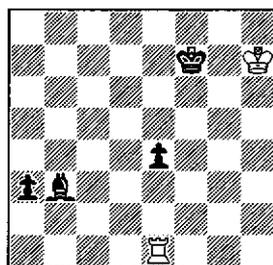
But White can interpolate **3 Re1**, forcing **3...Bb1**, and now **4 Re5!** does give Black a problem. 4...a1Q again gives stalemate, and if **4...a1R** then **5 Ra5!** (see **4c**) and what is Black to do? 5...Rxa5 yet again gives stalemate, so his only hope is **5...Ba2** shielding bR and threatening mate, but **6 Ra7+** starts a barrage of checks and White will draw without difficulty.
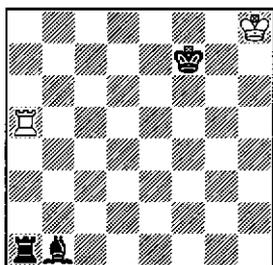


| 4c - main line, after 5 Ra5 | 4d - see text | 4e - see text |

This fine study, with its unexpected manoeuvring by only six men, falls short of perfection only in starting with a capture, and unfortunately this appears to be unavoidable. (Daniel made an attempt in the London *Evening News* in 1934, see **4d**, intending 1 Re4 h3 2 Rxd4 etc, but after 2...Bf2 3 Ka8 h2 White can play 4 Rd5 at once since there will be no win for Black after 4...h1R; and if we put bK back on c7 to restore this win, Black will be able to meet 1 Re4 by 1...Kc6 bringing bK to the defence of bP, since an immediate 2 Rxd4 will be met by 2...Bf2 and there will be no stalemate.) Even so, this is one of the high points of British study composition, and it has been widely quoted. One minor improvement is perhaps possible, in that wRe5
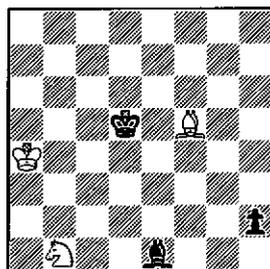
might more naturally start on e1 (see **4e**), and Chéron quotes the study thus, as "Fassung Chéron", in his *Lehr- und Handbuch der Endspiel* (1960 edition, volume 1, page 37). But this is mere detail, and everything that matters is in Daniel's original setting.
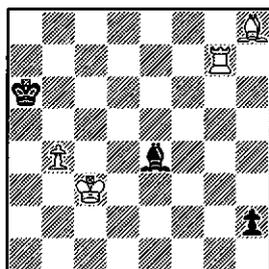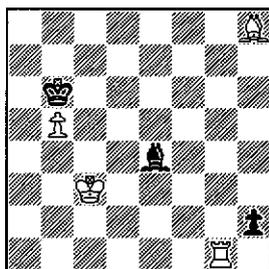

5 - draw   **5a** - after 2 Rg1   **6** - draw

The next few studies also show battles against advanced pawns, and although very much simpler they are not without charm. In **5** (*Deutsches Wochenschach* 1908) the opening move **1 b5+** effectively forces **1...Kb5** since any other move will allow wR to check and then gain control of h1, and White can now continue **2 Rg1!** (see **5a**). The only sensible reply is **2...hxg1Q**, but now bK and bQ are in line and the fork **3 Bd4+** duly draws.

6 (*Chess Amateur* 1912) starts with the sacrificial **1 Nd2**, and if Black promotes at once a fork will follow. **1...Bxd2**, therefore, and now **2 Bc8** threatens 3 Bb7+ and so forces **2...Kc6**. This move has two injurious effects: it takes bK out of reach of f3, and it puts an unwanted guard on b5. White duly continues **3 Bg4** (see **6a**), and we see the point of White's manoeuvring. Black must promote now or never, **3...h1Q**, but White has the sacrificial fork **4 Bf3+** and the capture **4...Qxf3** will give stalemate.
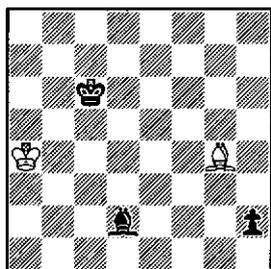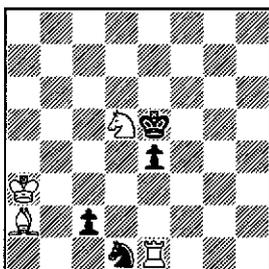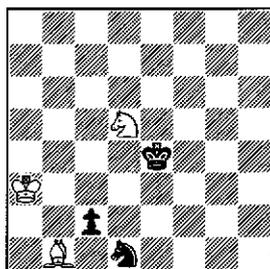

**6a** - after 3 Bg4   **7** - draw   **7a** - after 2 Bb1

7 (*BCM* 1943) has a similar finish. Black's threatened promotion on c1 cannot be tolerated (Q+P v R+B is in general marginal, but here wK is cramped and wR is loose), so drastic measures are called for: **1 Rxe4+ Kxe4 2 Bb1!** (see **7a**). Black must now promote on b1 instead of c1, **2...cxb1Q** (promotion to rook is no better), and after **3 Nc3+ Nxc3** we again have stalemate.
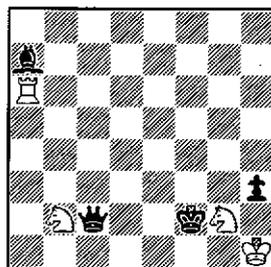
One of Daniel's favourite themes was the hunting down of a Black queen. Many of his studies in this vein are rather simple, a straightforward forcing introduction ending in a sacrificial fork of bK and bQ by a pawn or bishop with a pair of knight forks ready for the captures, but some are more profound.
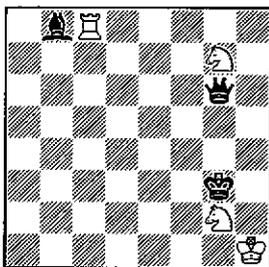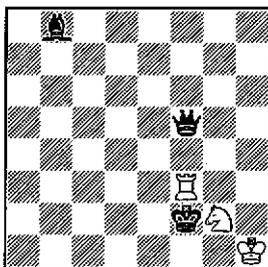

**7** - draw   **7a** - after 3 Rf3+   **7b** - see text

7 (*Falkirk Herald* 1912) has some unexpected points. Play starts **1 Nf5+**, and already forks are in the air; 1...Kf3 2 Nh4+, 1...Kf2 2 Rc2+ Kf3 and the same, 1...Kg4 2 Rg8 Qxg8 3 Nh6+ (the computer also suggests 2 Ne3+ and 3 Rxb8 since there appears to be no win of wR), and 1...Kh3 2 Rh8+ Kg4 3 Rg8. This leaves **1...Qxf5**, to which the reply is **2 Rc3+**. Now 2...Kg4 allows another knight fork, while **2...Kf2** avoids the knight forks only to walk into a rook fork instead: **3 Rf3+!** (see **7a**). If bK captures we have yet another knight fork, while if bQ captures it is stalemate.

Unfortunately White can play 1 Rc3+ at once, and this also looks good enough (the key line is 1...Kf2 2 Rf3+ Ke2 3 Nf5, after which the computer can find·no win). However, I think that at least the main line of this pleasant little study can be rescued by reflecting the position in the diagonal a8-h1 and adding bPh3 (see **7b**), and perhaps it is sufficient to add a bP further back on the h-file instead.
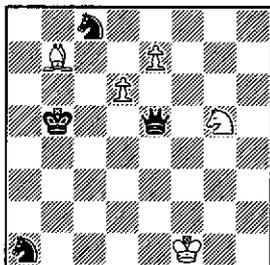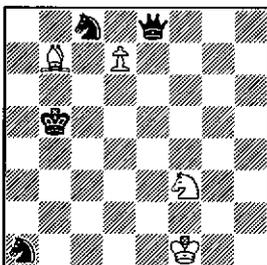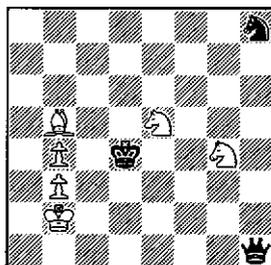
**8** - draw   **8a** - after 3 d7   **9** - win

In **8** (*Chess Amateur* 1921, developing a 1913 study), bQ seems to have plenty of scope, but it must guard e8 and so **1 Nf3** forces say **1...Qe3**. Now **2 e8Q+ Qxe8 3 d7!** gives **8a** and the only reply is **3...Qxd7**, but we have **4 Bc6+** and wN will fork on d4 or e5 as needed. This is the recipe "short forcing introduction, sacrificial fork, alternative knight forks" almost at its simplest, but the shielding of wK from bQ at

moves 1 and 3 adds a touch of character.

9 (*BCM* 1937) also seems to give bQ plenty of scope, but after **1 Bc6** we have 1...Qd1/Qh3 2 Nf3+ Kd3 3 Nf2+, 1...Qf1 2 Nf3+ Kd3 3 Bb5+, and 1...Qh7 2 Nf3+ Kd3 3 Be4+ etc; only **1...Qh5** appears to offer a temporary refuge. And it is indeed temporary; **2 Be4** (see **9a**) threatens 3 Nf3+ Kxe4 4 Nf6+, and after **2...Qe8** we get the same moves even though bQ will be captured on a different square.
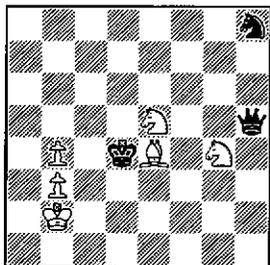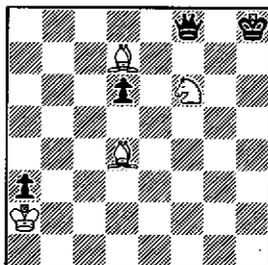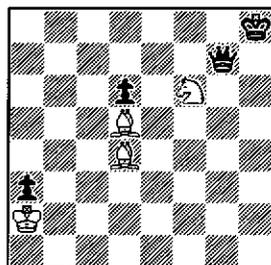
**9a** - after 2 Be4   **10** - win   **10a** - after 3...Qg7
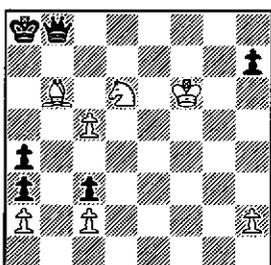
But waiting play is always more subtle than direct attack. An immediate discovered check achieves nothing in **10** (*Chess Amateur*, 1921), but **1 Be8** threatens 2 Nd7+ winning bQ, and **1...Qg7** is Black's only reply. Now bQ will be safe on b7 or g2, hence **2 Bc6**, and after **2...Qf7+ 3 Bd5** Black must again play **3...Qg7** (see **10a**). Now comes the *coup de grâce*: **4 Ka1!** Black can try **4...a2**, but after **5 Kxa2** he has nothing better than **5...Qg6**, and there follows **6 Nd7+ Kh7 7 Nf8+**.
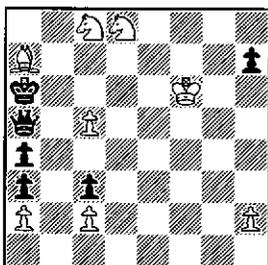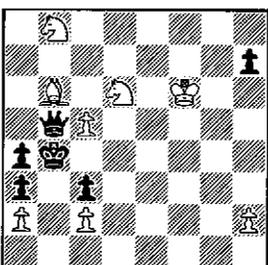

**11** - win   **11a** - 1...Qb5, after 4 Nd6   **11b** - main line, 4...Qxb8

11 (*Chess Amateur* 1918) is perhaps the richest of Daniel's queen hunts. **1 Nc6** gives Black two sensible moves; let's try **1...Qb5** first. There follows **2 Nb8+ Ka5 3 Bb6+ Kb4**, and now **4 Nd6** forces bQ to move (see **11a**). True, Black has a check, **4...Qf1+**, but after **5 Ke7! Qe2+ 6 Kd8!** (or 5...Qe1+ 6 Kd7!) he has no more, and he must sacrifice bQ to avoid immediate mate.
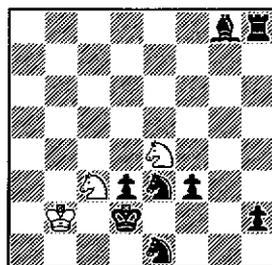
The other move is **1...Qc7**, which is in fact the main line. It leads to **2 Nb8+ Kb7** (2...Kb5 3 Nd6+ and a fork next move) **3 Nd6+ Ka8 4 Bb6**, and Black must play **4...Qxb8** (see **11b**). Now comes the climax: **5 Kg7!** Black can only move bPh7, and although he can temporize with **5...h6** so can White: **6 h3 h5 7 h4** and bQ is lost.
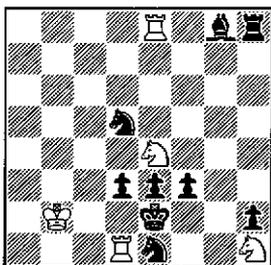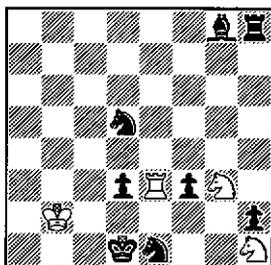
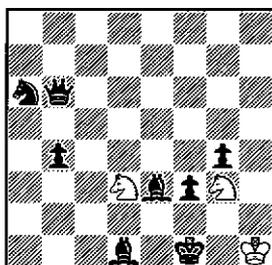**12 - win**   **12a - after 2 Rxe3**   **12b - 6 Nge4 mate**

Let's finish with some good old-fashioned blood and thunder. **12** (*Chess Amateur* 1926) was published with the rider "There is a speedy mate", but even with this clue only 12 solvers out of 28 found the answer. Play starts **1 Neg3+ Kxd1**, and now I suspect that the non-checking **2 Rxe3** was the move that proved hard to find (see **12a**). But even though this move does not give check, it threatens mate in two (Nf2+ and Nf1), so **2...Nxe3** is effectively forced, and now it's easy: **3 Nf2+ Kd2 4 Nfe4+ Kd1 5 Nc3+ Kd2 6 Nge4 mate** (see **12b**).
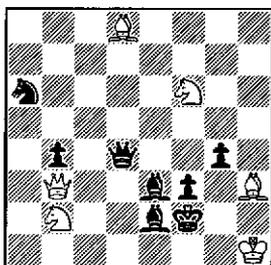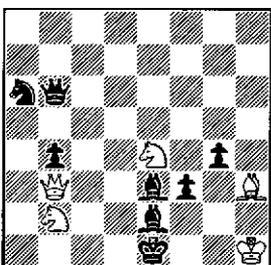
13 - win   **13a - after 2...Kd1**   **13b - 6 Ng3 mate**

A compositional theorist might object that the mate in **12b** is not pure (a "pure" mate is one in which each square is denied to bK in only one way, and here c3 is guarded both by wK and by wNe4), but the main line of **13** (*Chess Amateur* 1912) is open to no such objection. **1 Bb6** effectively forces **1...Qxb6** (the alternative is death by slow torture), and there follows **2 Ne4+ Ke1** (see **13a**) **3 Qd1+** (a solver claimed that 3 Qc2 also won and Daniel conceded this as correct when giving the solution, but the computer thinks that 3...Qh6 is a sufficient reply) **Bxd1 4 Nd3+ Ke2 5 Bf1+! Kxf1 6 Ng3 mate** (see **13b**).

Who said that a mate with two knights was impossible?