

British Endgame Study News

Special number 44

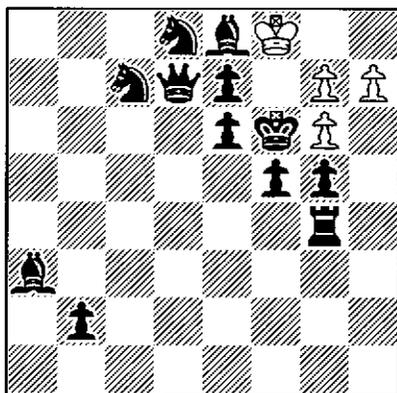
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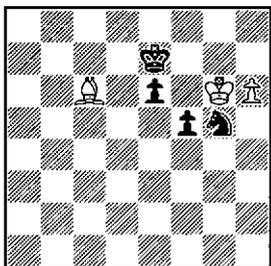
Some British studies from 1900-19



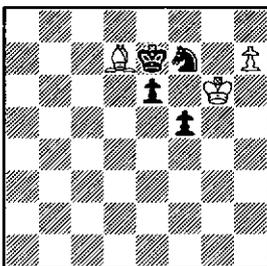
White can draw only by 1 h8B Ke5 2 g8R!

Some British studies from 1900-19

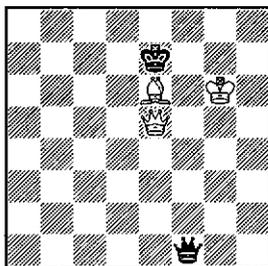
On the evidence of Harold van der Heijden's "Endgame study database III", some three hundred British endgame studies were published during the years from 1900 to 1919, but it has to be said that many were straightforward and even crude affairs with a lot of men on the board and relatively simple play. There were exceptions, however, and two composers in particular deserve more attention than they have received.



1 - win

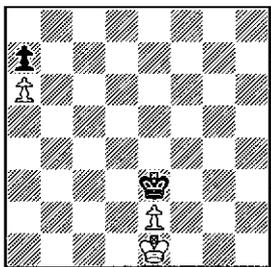


1a - 1...Nf7, after 2 h7

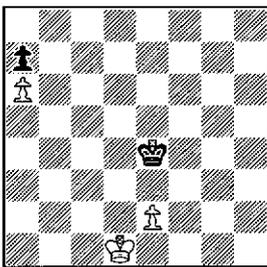


1b - 1...Kf8, after 7 Qe5

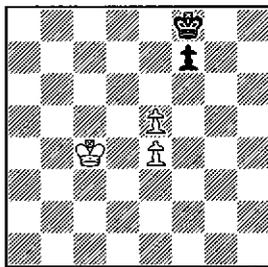
One is John Crum (?1842-1922), who was for some years the chess editor of the *Glasgow Weekly Herald*. Paul Valois sent me **1** as from the *Yorkshire Weekly Post* of 24 August 1907, but the study also appeared in *Deutsche Schachzeitung* and I don't know which came first. If 1 Kxg5 then 1...Kf7 and Black will reach the corner, hence **1 Bd7!** and now 2 Kxg5 is a threat (2...Kf7 3 Bxe6+). If 1...Nf7 then 2 h7 (see **1a**) and Tattersall gives two lines (I don't have convenient access to *DSz*), 2...Nh8+ 3 Kg7 Nf7 4 Bc6 e5 5 Bd5 etc and 2...Kf8 3 Kf6 f4 4 Bxe6 Nh8 5 Bd5 etc; 2...f4 is not given, but I think 3 Bc6 Kf8 4 Kf6 Nh8 5 Be4 Nf7 6 Bg6 Nh8 7 Bh5 e5 8 Bf3 Nf7 9 Be4 Nh8 10 Bd5 is sufficient. If instead 1...Kf8 then 2 Bxe6 f4 3 Kxg5 f3 4 Kg6 f2 5 h7 f1Q 6 h8Q+ Ke7 7 Qe5 gives **1b**, and White will soon win.



2 - win



2a - alternative setting of 2

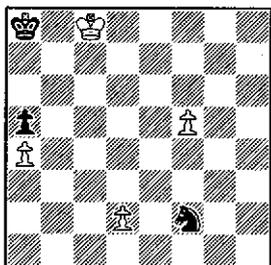


3 - win

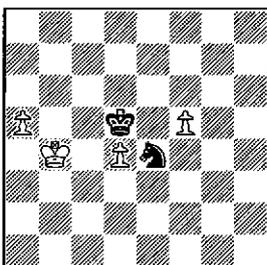
2 and **3** may well have been anticipated even in 1913/14, but I have failed to find predecessors. **2** appeared in the *Glasgow Weekly Citizen* in 1913. Let's try the wrong way first: 1 Kd1 Kd4 2 Kd2 Kc5 3 Kd3 Kb6 and 4...Kxa6, and Black will

draw. So it's **1 Kf1! Kd4 2 Kf2** and now **2...Kc5** can be met by **3 e4** (3...Kb5 4 e5, 3...Kc5 4 Kf3). Setting **2a**, source unknown to me, made the point even more neatly.

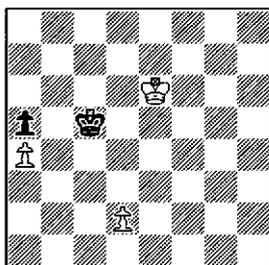
3 appeared in the *BCM* in 1914 with the caption "White to play. What result?" The answer is that White can win, but only by starting with the sacrificial **1 e6!**



4 - win

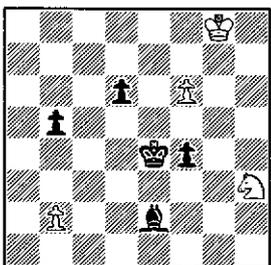


4a - 1 Kc7, after 8...Kd5

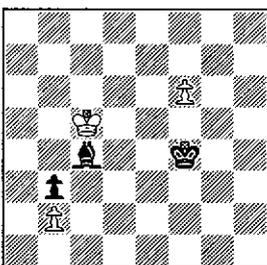


4b - main line, after 8 Ke6

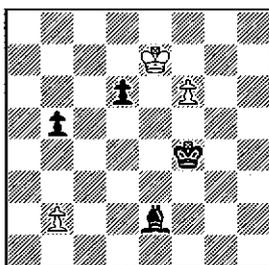
The natural move in **4** (*BCM* 1916) might seem to be **1 Kc7**, going towards the a-pawn and also threatening d4 etc, but it fails: **1...Ng4** (1...Ne4 also works) **2 Kb6 Nf6 3 Kxa5 Kb7 4 Kb5 Ne4 5 Kb4 Kc6 6 d3 Nc5 7 d4 Ne4 8 a5 Kd5** "and will draw" (see **4a**). The *BCM* gave only this one variation, but the computer confirms the result. White must use the f-pawn to win the knight: **1 Kd7 Ne4 2 Ke7 Kb7 3 f6 Ng5** (Black naturally tries to drag White as far away as possible) **4 f7 Nh7 5 f8Q Nxf8 6 Kxf8 Kc6 7 Ke7 Kc5 8 Ke6** (see **4b**). Now **8...Kb4 9 d4** and **8...Kd4 9 Kd6** are easy, and if **8...Kc4** then **9 Kd6 Kb4 10 Kd5 Kxa4 11 Kc4** with an eventual **Q v Qal** win.



5 - draw



5a - 1...Bc4+, after 5 Kc5

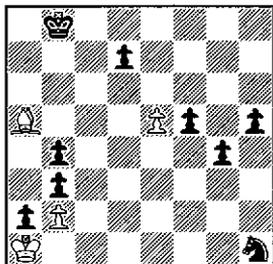


5b - 1...Ke5/Kf5, after 3 Ke7

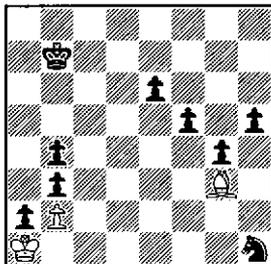
5 appeared in the *BCM* in 1919. The natural move is **1 f7**, but Black will reply **1...Bc4** and after **2 Kg7 Bxf7 3 Kxf7 d5** the defence will be overwhelmed. Instead, the White king must exercise "droit de seigneur" by **1 Kf7!** The *BCM* now gives three lines. If **1...Bc4+** then **2 Ke7 b4** (Black's best hope) **3 Nxf4 Kxf4 4 Kxd6 b3 5 Kc5** (see **5a**), and the attack on the bishop gives White time to get back: **5...Bf7 6 Kd4 Kf3 7 Kd3** and **8-9 Kc1**. Alternatively, **1...Ke5/Kf5 2 Nxf4 Kxf4 3 Ke7** (see **5b**) with **3...Bh5 4 Kxd6** or **3...Bc4 4 b3! Bxb3 5 Kxd6**, or **1...Bh5+ 2 Ke6 d5 3 Nxf4**.

C. E. C. Tattersall wrote of **4** that Crum had "a way of getting novelty out of very simple materials", and this is surely what good study composition is all about.

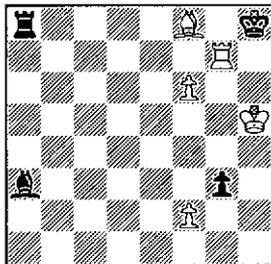
The other composer who has been undeservedly neglected is J. A. J. Drewitt (1872-1931). Drewitt was good enough to take part in the 1922 Hastings Premier, and if he came 9th out of 10 he did beat the tournament winner Akiba Rubinstein. He was not in Crum's class as an analyst and the computer knocked out several of my preliminary choices, but enough remain to illustrate his quality.



6 - draw



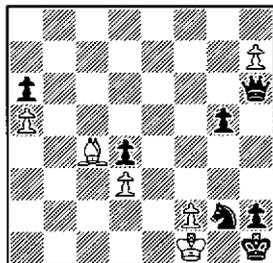
6a - after 3 Bg3



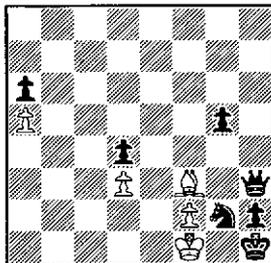
7 - win

6 (source unknown, 1916) gives the flavour. **1 e6** forces **1...dxe6**, and **2 Bc7+** offers White's last piece for stalemate. Black naturally declines, say **2...Kb7**, but White continues **3 Bg3!** (see 6a) and what is Black to do? The White bishop will simply patrol the diagonal e1-h4, and capture any Black man setting foot on it.

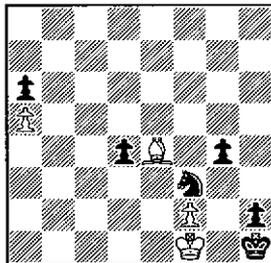
7 (*Chess Amateur* 1919) is a sparkling example of the "useless rook" theme. **1 Kg6** threatens **2 Rh7+ Kg8 3 Bg7** and mate on h8, and if **1...Rxf8** then **2 Rh7+ Kg8 3 f7+ Rxf7 4 Rxf7 g2 5 Rg7+ Kf8/Kh8 6 Kh7/Kf7**. This leaves **1...g2**, and now we see White had a second threat: **2 Rh7+ Kg8 3 Rh8+! Kxh8 4 Bg7+ and 5 f7 mate**.



8 - draw

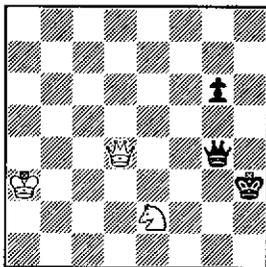


8a - after 3 Bf3

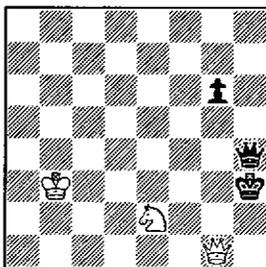


8b - after 6...Nf3

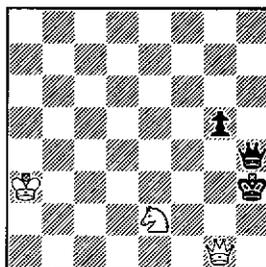
8 won 1st Honourable Mention in what may have been a stalemate tourney in *L'Eco degli Scacchi* in 1917. **1 Bd5** looks strong, but **1...Qh3** stops the mate on g2 and threatens one on d3, and if **2 Be4** then **2...Qg4** wins quickly. The sacrifice **1 h8Q Qxh8** changes things, because now after **2 Bd5 Qh3** White has **3 Bf3** (see 8a) and **3...Qxf3** will be stalemate. But Black can play **3...g4**, and after **4 Be4** he has **4...Qxd3+ 5 Bxd3 Ne1** getting the knight out of jail. Not for long, though; **6 Be4+ Nf3** puts him straight back (see 8b), and White needs only to wait: **7 Ba8** (say) **d3 8 Bb7 d2**, and **9 Bxf3+** forces **9...gxf3 stalemate**. We shall see the 2nd HM later on.



9 - win

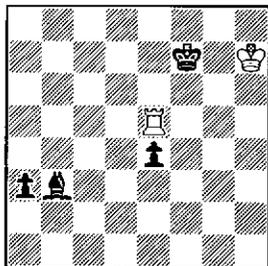


9a - after 4 Kb3

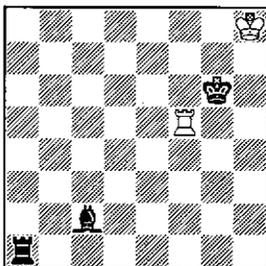


9b - after 5 Ka3

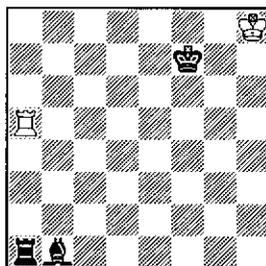
But Drewitt's finest study was surely **9** (*Falkirk Herald* 1917), and though it is in *Endgame Magic* I think I should repeat it here. **1 Qf2** threatens **2 Ng1+** winning the Black queen, forces her to keep an eye on g3, and denies her a check, and if **1...Qg5** then **2 Ng1+** still wins quickly. **1...Qh4**, therefore, after which play continues **2 Qf1+ Kh2** (2...Kh4 **3 Qf4+** with **3...Kh5** **4 Ng3+** and **3...Kh3** **4 Ng1+**) **3 Qg1+ Kh3**. Further checks will serve no useful purpose, but the waiting move **4 Kb3!** deprives Black of checks and leaves his queen with no good move (see **9a**). Black can only play **4...g5**, but this blocks his queen's path to e7; White can therefore wait again with **5 Ka3!!** (see **9b**), and now Black has no good move at all.



10 - draw



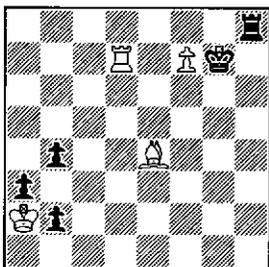
10a - 3 Rc5, after 4...Kg6



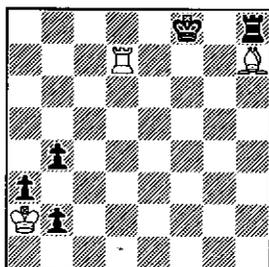
10b - main line, after 5 Ra5

Another first-rate study from the period was A. W. Daniel's **10** (*Chess Amateur* 1908). This was in our special number 17, but my treatment was slightly defective (see "Spotlight" for December 2000) and perhaps a repetition is in order. The study is often quoted with the rook on e1, but this is the original setting.

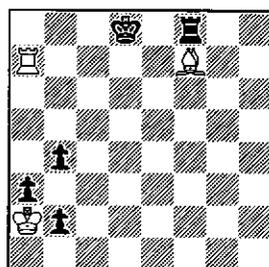
Play starts **1 Rxe4 Bc2** **2 Kh8!** and **2...Bxe4** will be stalemate, but **2...a2** forces the pawn's promotion. White might try **3 Re5**, since **3...a1Q** will be stalemate, but **3...a1R** wins; if **4 Rf5+** hoping for **4...Bxf5** with stalemate then **4...Kg6** threatens mate or capture of the rook (see **10a**), and the parry **5 Rf8** blocks the White king and allows **5...Rh1+** **6 Kg8 Bb3+** etc. However, White can interpolate **3 Re1**, forcing **3...Bb1**, and now **4 Re5!** does draw. **4...a1Q** is again stalemate, and **4...a1R** can be met by **5 Ra5!** (see **10b**); **5...Rxa5** yet again gives stalemate, and if Black tries **5...Ba2** White has **6 Ra7+** etc. The *Chess Amateur* gave **5 Rf5+** **6 Rf8** as an alternative draw, the move **...Rh1+** no longer being available, but the computer finds other ways to win.



11 - win

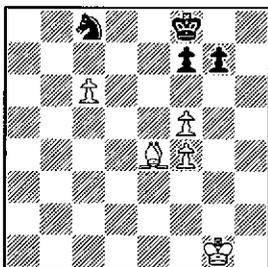


11a - after 2 Bh7

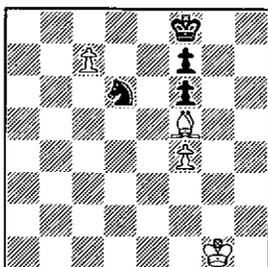


11b - after 5 Bf7

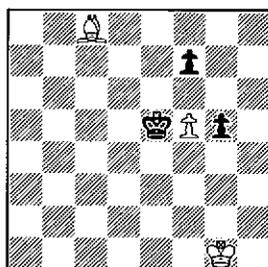
The period featured many studies by Daniel and T. R. Dawson and a few by H. A. Adamson, but Adamson, like Daniel, has been the subject of a special number of his own, and the best of Dawson's studies lay in the future. Let us therefore look at some other composers. W. Finlayson's 11 (*Glasgow Weekly Herald* 1901) doubles an idea shown by Horwitz in 1885. 1 f8Q+ Kxf8 2 Bh7 leaves Black without a rook move (see 11a), but of course he can play 2...Ke8, and after 3 Ra7 he has 3...Rf8. No matter: 4 Bg6+ Kd8 5 Bf7 gives the same pattern again, and this time there is no escape (see 11b). I presume, but do not know, that this is the Walter Finlayson (born 1855) mentioned on page 295 of Weenink's *The Chess Problem*.



12 - win



12a - after 3 c7

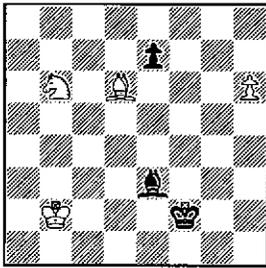


12b - 1 c7, after 6...Ke5

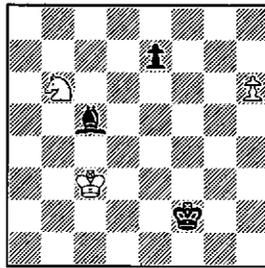
12, by R. A. Hayes, appeared in the *Chess Amateur* in 1914. The solution is 1 f6! gxf6 (1...g6 2 c7 Ke8 3 Bc6+ Kf8 4 Bb7) 2 Bf5 Nd6 3 c7 and the knight will go (see 12a), and of course I wondered why White could not simply play 1 c7 and 2 Bb7. *The Chess Amateur* gave no analysis, but there was a note by Dawson saying that the author had thought the position to have two solutions but that he found the supposed second solution to be "only a very near try considerably improving the little work".

So let's see. 1 c7 Ke7 (to meet 2 Bb7 by 2...Kd7 drawing at once) 2 f6+, and if 2...gxf6 then 3 Bf5 winning as in the main line. 2...Kxf6, then, and after 3 Bb7 Nd6 4 c8Q Nxc8 5 Bxc8 g5 6 f5 Ke5 we have 12b. Now the White bishop is tied to the defence of his pawn, and Black can play his king to f4, push his pawns to g3 and f6, and then mark time with his king on g4 and f4. If White tries Kh3 to interrupt this, Black has ...Kf3; if Ke3 then ...Kh3, ending if necessary with a stalemate on h2.

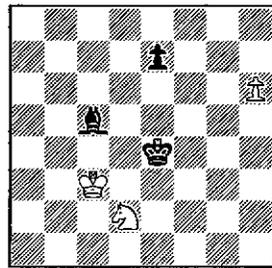
I use a computer. Dawson did it all by hand, on top of a full day's work.



13 - win

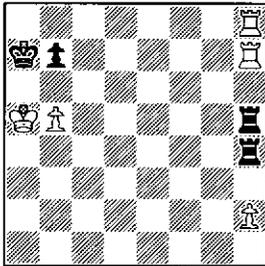


13a - after 2 Kc3

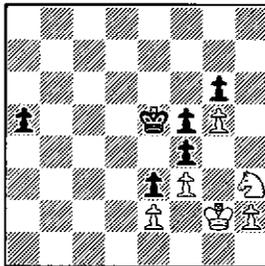


13b - after 4 Nd2+

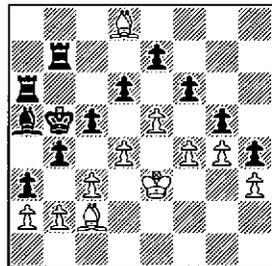
13, by T. King Parks, appeared in the *BCM* in 1907. If 1 h7 then 1...Bd4+ and 2...exd6, hence 1 Bc5 Bxc5 2 Kc3 (see 13a) and now ...Bd4 is prevented. If 2...Bd6 then uniquely 3 Nd7, and the *BCM* points out 3 Nc4 Bf4 4 h7 Bg5 and 3 Kd4 e5+ 4 Kd5 Bf8. The main line is 2...Ke3, with 3 Nc4+ (if 3 Nd5+ Ke4 4 Nf6 then 4...exf6, with ...Bd4+ and ...f5 to follow) Ke4 4 Nd2+ (see 13b). Now the *BCM* gives 4...Ke3 5 Nf3 and explicitly not 5 Nb3 Bd6, but 5 Nf1+ Ke4 6 Ng3+ Ke3/Kd5 7 Nf5(+) offers a valid if more complicated alternative. Substitute 4...Kd5, and 5 Nf3 is forced.



14 - win



15 - draw

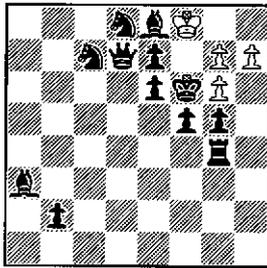


16 - draw

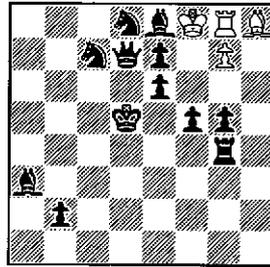
George Carr's "Enchanted Castles" 14 appeared in the *BCM* in 1907 under the heading "A chess oddity". An accompanying note said it had been sent to the chess column of "a celebrated newspaper" about thirteen years before, and in the column's "Answers to Correspondents" (nowadays we write privately) the editor had said that the intended key 1 h3 would let Black win by 1...Rxb7. Carr had duly pointed out 2 b6 mate, and in the next "Answers to Correspondents" the editor had said something about "pressure of work" and "a hurried examination", and had intimated that "the obnoxious thing" was better suited to a chess magazine than to a newspaper. It's actually quite subtle, and I am sure it will be enjoyed.

George Hume's self-incarceration stalemate study 15 (*Pittsburgh Gazette Times* 1917) offers more than many of its kind, since White's Ng1, Kb4, and h3 bottle up his knight as well as his king. Hume (1862-1936) was a well known problemist.

And W. Rudolph's 16 (*Chess Amateur* 1912) is an unashamed grotesque. 1 Ba4+ Kxa4 (if 1...Kc4 then 2 Bb3+ Kb5 3 Ba4+ repeating) 2 b3 Kb5 3 c4+ Kc6 4 d5+ Kd7 5 e6+ Kxd8 (or any other move) 6 f5 and the barrier is complete.



17 - draw



17a - after 2...Kd5 3 g7

We end with a remarkable story. Gerald Anderson (1898-1983) was born in South Africa of British stock, returned to Britain in 1917, and soon became our leading all-around problemist. He published a book *Adventures of my Chessmen* as early as 1924, but he was very definitely a problemist rather than a study composer and its 120 compositions include only two rather static and problem-like endgames. The famous 17 is not one of them. Why not? I quote from a letter he wrote in 1969, a copy of which has found its way into the BCPS Library:

Now I must tell you another curious thing that happened, right out of the blue, almost a year ago today, and over 50 years after the event! When I cleared up "many of the numerous old diagrams and cuttings" (see p. 9 of the *Adventures*), I deliberately threw one diagram in the waste-paper basket, as I didn't think it good enough for inclusion in the book. It was a composed ending I sent to an Italian chess column, "L'Eco degli Scacchi", [...] in 1917. In August last year H. M. Lommer, the endings expert (whom I have met) sent me, to my great surprise, a diagram of the truant problem, with a request that I should autograph it for him! I did so, and told him why I didn't have any record of this problem - because I thought it wasn't any good. In his reply he thanked me for "autographing your world famous ending". "This one" he went on "became known the world over, as it shows for the first time the promotion to Bishop and Rook in 'White to play and draw'".

The mainplay runs **1 h8B** (threat 2 g8Q mate) **Ke5 2 g8R+ K-- 3 g7** and the stalemate cannot be released (see 17a), and if 1...f4 then 2 g8R+ Kf5 3 g7 and the same. Black can also try 1...Rh4, but now we have 2 g8Q+ Rxb8 3 Qxh8+ Kxg6 4 Qh7+ Kxh7 and another stalemate. In tasks of this kind, there is of course rarely any question of elegance of setting or subtlety of play; the composer is glad to settle for anything which will do the job, and if the position has to be artificial and the play crude and forcing then so be it.

My thanks for material to Harold van der Heijden's "Endgame study database III", which is indeed proving invaluable, and to Paul Valois and the BCPS Library. Our next special number of this kind is scheduled for June 2006, and will cover the period 1875-1899. As usual, please will readers draw my attention to studies they would like to see included, and to any from 1900-95 which should have appeared but have been overlooked. - JDB