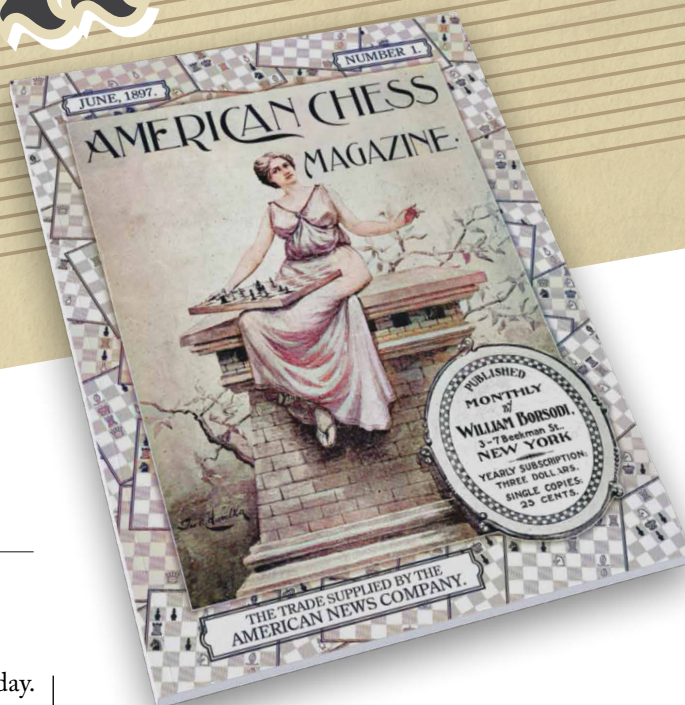




THE RISE AND FALL OF THE 1897-1899 AMERICAN CHESS MAGAZINE

NOT WITHOUT HOPE



By John S. Hilbert

Beginnings offer promise. A new day. A new year. And in this case, a new chess magazine. Smartly produced beginnings prepare their own way. The *American Chess Magazine* (ACM) promised chess editors around the country that its premier issue would be available by May 15, 1897. James Seguin, respected chess editor of the

influential *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, reported receiving specimen pages as well as a cover from the publisher in time for his May 2 column. He was reminded of the previous decade's short-lived *Brentano's Chess Monthly* (1881-1882), a beautifully formatted, slick-paged magazine that, like so many before it, had failed due to lack of financial support from the American chess public. Would this nineteenth-century ACM do better?

No American chess magazine had yet arrived to take the place of Steinitz's *International Chess Magazine* (1885-1891), and while none could compete with the analytical genius the first world champion brought to his publication, certainly there was demand for a more congenial chess magazine, one with lots of illustrations, photographs, and chess news, besides games and problems. One designed with club players in mind.

The year 2022 marks the 125th anniversary of one of the most influential chess publications in American history, *The American Chess Magazine*.

Timing, of course, is everything – and often difficult to nail down. And the ACM soon changed its expected appearance from May 15 to May 26, to include last minute news of the highly publicized, impending international match between Britain's House of Commons and the American House of Representatives, scheduled for May 24-25. And soon the magazine appeared, with a cover date of June 1897.

Exceptional as the first issue was, the publisher promised a vast improvement in future issues. Hermann Helms, chess editor for the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (BDE), anticipated a great future for the magazine, if the early promise was realized. Chess editors throughout the land agreed and welcomed this sparkling new addition to America's chess literature. The *Montreal Gazette*, not only approving of coverage of Canadian chess in the



new ACM's pages, added that it was beautifully printed and full of portraits and illustrations, and covered the lighter side of chess as well, with fiction, poetry and even humor. Amidst the general huzzah with which the ACM was greeted, came word of the prosaic details: twenty-five cents a copy, three dollars for an annual subscription, and a promised 64 pages each month of superb chess coverage appealing to every taste.

The *Evening Star*, then Washington, D.C.'s newspaper of record, reported in detail the contents of the premier issue:

The first number of the American Chess Magazine has been received. It is an interesting number, containing sixty-four pages, and promises to excel any chess magazine ever published in this country. A prominent feature is its chess news, which is from all over the globe. The cable match of last week, and the telegraph match between the Franklin Club of Philadelphia and the Manhattan Club of New York City are graphically described. Then there are articles on endgame play and on the recent Pillsbury-Showalter match. The women come in for a share of attention. The scores of fourteen games, well annotated, are given, and in the problem department are twenty-two problems by well-known problemists, with prizes for solvers. The magazine is illustrated, and one of the features is the portraits of people well known in chess circles.

Washington Evening Star,
June 12, 1897



DRIVING FORCE

Who were the chess lovers responsible for this new magazine? The man bringing money to the game was New York's William Borsodi, then of Bath Beach, Brooklyn, the publisher who promised yet more improvement despite the ACM's splendid initial issue. Borsodi, a Hungarian who likely

came to the United States in 1889, became a naturalized citizen in 1896, and was successful both as a printer and in advertising, besides being a chess aficionado. By the time he published ACM, he had a quarter century of experience in the publishing industry. A widower with a young child (Ralph Borsodi, the future social philosopher), Borsodi remarried in 1898, had two more children, and apparently returned to Hungary in 1919, where his trail has been lost. His understanding of publicity and advertising helped the fledgling publication fit into a broad spectrum of the chess world, although his chess play was extremely modest. At the New York State Chess Association meeting at Lake Keuka in 1898, for instance, Borsodi played only in the third class of the general tournament, facing W. Scripture, whom he defeated in a best of six match 3½-½, thereby winning the \$5 prize. (ACM Sept. 1898, pp. 105-106)

Far stronger in chess, and chess writing, was ACM editor Charles

John S. Hilbert is the author of 14 books and many articles on chess history and chess biography. He has won three Fred Cramer Awards for Best Chess Book in the United States (1998: *Napier*, 2002: *Essays in American Chess History*, 2003: *Young Marshall*) and the First ChessCafe Book of the Year Award (2000: *Shady Side: The Life and Crimes of Norman Tweed Whitaker, Chessmaster*). His most recent work, *Albert W. Fox: A Chess Life on and Off the Board* (Publishing House Moravian Chess 2022, 620 pages) has just been released. *A biography and game collection for George H. Mackenzie* is due out in 2023 with McFarland.





Devidé (1856-1940). Devidé was a newspaperman, at one time associated with the *New York Evening Post*. He had magazine experience, working as an editor with the defunct *Columbia Chess Chronicle*, and later would be responsible for editing A Memorial to William Steinitz (1901), better known to older readers as a reprint by Dover Publications, renamed *William Steinitz: Selected Chess Games* (1974).

Better yet, Borsodi and Devidé assembled a group of highly visible contributors whose names were known throughout the chess world, including not only Frank Teed (1856-1929) and Walter Penn Shipley (1860-1942), widely respected in New York and Philadelphia chess circles, but also America's finest problemist, William Shinkman, as well as the country's leading players of national reputation: Edward Hymes (1871-1938), Albert Hodges (1861-1944), Jackson Showalter (1860-1935), and Harry Nelson Pillsbury (1872-1906). No American chess magazine had ever launched with finer and more diversified talent.

Yet one more contributor appeared on the magazine's masthead: Walter Pulitzer (1874/1878?-1926). Walter was a nephew of the far better-known Joseph Pulitzer whose *New York World* came to prominence by sensationalizing scandal and demonizing the likes of Robber Baron Jay Gould. Gould's eldest son, George Jay Gould, ironically enough was praised in the inaugural issue of ACM, the first of many in its "Gallery of Noted Americans who Play Chess." (The idea, of course, was to make chess seem more popular and mainstream by associating it with successful businessmen.) Years later, in 1917, Joseph Pulitzer's will established the Pulitzer prizes, America's premier awards for excellence in journalism. Walter Pulitzer became interested in chess through his fascination with chess problems, and soon began producing his own, which appeared in his small book, *Chess Harmonies*. (1894) In addition to contributing chess problems to ACM, the young Pulitzer composed poetry, wrote reviews, and even penned a "Caissa Waltz," the sheet music for which appeared in the October 1897 issue. He was discussed



▲ Lipschitz (seated left) playing Steinitz, a young Napier looking on. Borsodi, ACM publisher, stands at far left, next to Walter Penn Shipley. Photograph taken at Murray Isle, New York State Chess Association Mid-Summer Meeting. ACM Aug. 1897, p. 149

“
**No American
 chess
 magazine had
 ever launched
 with finer
 and more
 diversified
 talent.**
 ”

in the ACM's first issue. (p. 15) From the most dedicated player to the chess lover looking for light entertainment, the ACM had it all.

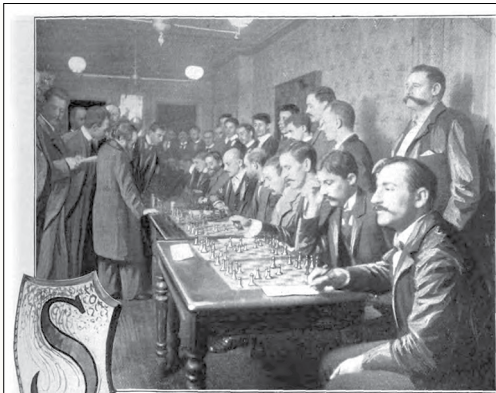
The ACM benefited not only from its chess talent, but also Borsodi's and Devidé's savvy in the world of

marketing, combining excellent chess for readers with features designed to increase its distribution. One brilliant combination was to offer from the start a feature on American chess editors. Pride of place in the inaugural issue was given to Miron Hazeltine (1824-1907), then 72, and considered the Dean of American chess columnists. Hazeltine began producing copy in the *New York Saturday Courier* in February 1855, and in August 1856 took over the chess column in the *New York Clipper*. He had not missed a weekly column in over 40 years. By promoting newspaper chess editors, the ACM hoped to increase its visibility through those very columns and to reach a large pool of potential subscribers: newspaper readers. The second issue featured



“
Of course, the ACM covered not only interesting exhibitions, but provided detailed coverage of local, state, national and international events, from club news to the gargantuan tournaments of the last days of the nineteenth century”

▼ Steinitz giving a simul at New York's Cosmopolitan Chess Club. He finished 15-0, with 3 draws. ACM July 1897, p. 91



Mr. Steinitz at the Cosmopolitan.

SIMULTANEOUS exhibitions are, as a rule, not attended with the same interest as before, although they give the weaker player an opportunity to test his strength on a first-class opponent, and at the same time the single player and his adversaries are placed on a level, which otherwise could only be brought about by the giving and taking, respectively of odds. Performances of this kind, however, have lately been overdone, and the single player generally finds himself in a very embarrassing position. If he makes a good score, there is no particular merit attached to it; if he makes a bad score, he has made himself ridiculous. The position of the opposing player is no more favorable; if he loses, it is, of course, no credit, whereas if he wins, he has done nothing to be proud of. For this reason simultaneous performances have ceased to be great attractions, unless they are given by a player of world-wide reputation, like Lasker, Pillsbury or Steinitz.

The Cosmopolitan Chess Club made a lucky hit in inviting the Past Master to give his first performance since his return from abroad. Eighteen members and invited guests mustered up courage enough to face the man who for over thirty years has held the championship of the world. The strongest players of the club, however, did not play, for some reason or other.

Before play started Mr. Steinitz inquired where the strongest players were seated. Some three or four were pointed out to him, whereupon he offered a gambit to every one of them. Mr. Steinitz was in very good form, and met not a single reverse. Only three of his opponents were fortunate in drawing a game, while he scored the remaining fifteen. A synopsis of the performance is appended:

1.....S. Neumann.....King's Gambit dec....	0
2.....A. Widmer.....King's Gambit dec....	0
3.....F. Martin.....Vienna.....	0
4.....S. Simon.....French.....	0
5.....M. D. Rome.....French.....	0
6.....H. Steinberg.....Giucco Piano.....	0
7.....W. H. Clay.....King's Gambit.....	0
8.....A. D. Dalbot.....King's Gambit dec....	0
9.....G. A. Rhamé.....French.....	0
10.....E. H. Cochrane.....King's Gambit dec..	½
11.....K. Kaufmann.....Vienna.....	0
12.....E. D. Lesser.....King's Gambit dec..	½
13.....F. Powers.....Cunningham.....	0
14.....H. Hammond.....Kieseritsky.....	½
15.....M. Spinnocci.....Vienna.....	0
16.....S. Voron.....French.....	½
17.....H. Schiller.....French.....	0
18.....D. Terker.....Falkbeer counter.....	0
Total—Steinitz won 15, lost 0, drew 3.	

Daniel Hervey, chess editor of the *Newark Sunday Call* (July 1897), and while the essays on American chess editors did not become a regular feature in the magazine, the articles that did appear were thoughtful and informative, as well as undoubtedly gratifying to their subjects.

Of course, the heart of the ACM, as with any chess magazine, was its games. The July 1897 issue included the first games annotated by Pillsbury, America's premier player since the death of Mackenzie. A game of greater historical interest today than when it was first published, was an early meeting between Pillsbury and a developing young player, one of eight blindfold games Pillsbury played simultaneously, finishing 6-0, with two draws.

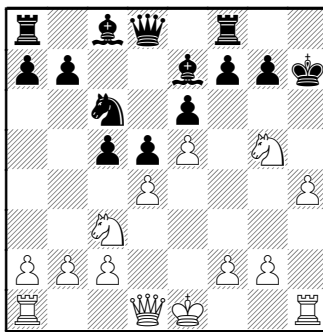
C14

Harry Pillsbury

Frank Marshall

Simultaneous Blindfold Display (1:8), Brooklyn, June 6, 1897
Notes by Harry Pillsbury
(Comments in italics are by Hilbert)

1.d4 e6 2.e4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♙g5 ♙e7 5.♙xf6 ♙xf6 6.♘f3 A rather uncommon attack, in the nature of a trap. 6...0-0 Premature. Black continues best with 6...b6, followed by ...♙b7. 7.e5 ♙e7 8.♙d3 c5 9.h4 ♘c6 Probably the best defense to the rather obvious sacrifice is 9...h6, after which White continues 10.dxc5 ♙xc5 11.♙e2, followed eventually by g2-g4. 10.♙xh7+ ♘xh7 11.♘g5+



11...♙g6? 11...♘h6 is necessary. Obviously after 11...♙g8 12.♙h5 ♙xg5 13.hxg5 f5 14.g6 wins. Also, if 11...♘h6 12.♙d2 ♙xg5 *The engines suggest Black has far better defensive resources, starting with 12...♙e8. 13.hxg5+ ♘g6 14.♙d3+ f5 15.gxf6+ ♘f7 with a winning attack. 12.♙d3+* The only winning continuation, as after 12.♙g4 ♙xg5 13.hxg5 ♙h8 and ..♙xg5 Black should win. 12...f5 13.exf6+ ♘xf6 14.♙f3+ ♘g6 15.h5+ ♘h6 If 15...♙xg5 White mates in three moves beginning with 16.♙g3+. 16.♘f7+ ♘h7 After 16...♙xf7 17.♙xf7 ♘h7 18.h6 wins. 17.♙d3+ ♘g8 18.♘xd8 ♙xd8 19.h6 ♙f6 20.hxg7 ♙xg7 21.♘b5 ♙f6 22.dxc5 ♙d7 23.♘d6 e5 An attempt to bring his bishops into action by giving up a pawn. 24.♙xd5+ ♙e6 25.♙e4 ♙d8 26.0-0-0 ♘d4 27.c3 ♘c6 28.♘xb7 ♙h6+ 29.♙xh6 ♙xd1+ 30.♘xd1 ♙xh6 31.♘d2 Obviously, if 31.♙xc6 ♙g4+. 31...♙f7 32.♘d6 ♘e7 33.♙a8+ ♘g7 34.♙xa7 ♙e6 35.b4 e4 36.♘xf7 ♘xf7 37.b5 ♘f6 38.c6 ♙d6+ 39.♘e2 **Black resigned**

This game was published in ACM July 1897, pp. 118-119.

Of course, the ACM covered not only interesting exhibitions, but provided detailed coverage of local, state, national and international events, from club news to the gargantuan tournaments of the last days of the nineteenth century: Berlin 1897 (Charousek), Vienna 1898 (Tarrasch won the playoff against Pillsbury), and London 1899 (Lasker). And while the level of annotations couldn't surpass those of Steinitz in his *International Chess Magazine*, for the times they were useful for players seeking to follow the games. An example annotated by Showalter:

**C84**

Carl Schlechter

Mikhail Chigorin

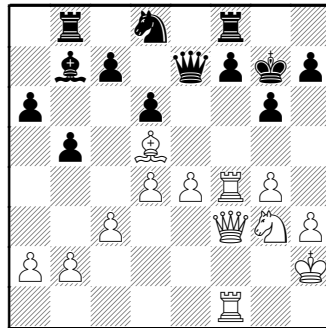
Round 15, Berlin, September 29, 1897

Notes by Jackson Showalter

(Comments in italics are by Hilbert)

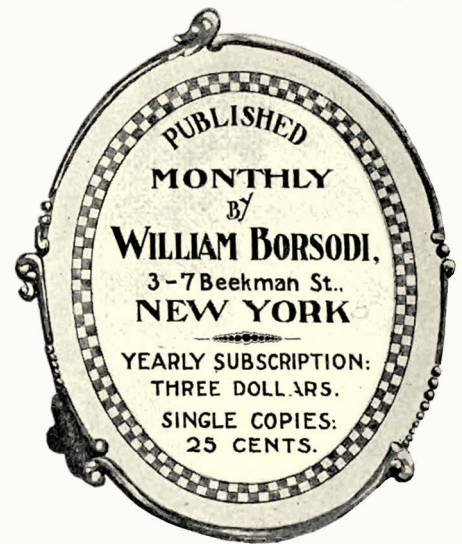
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 Morphy's favorite defense and long regarded as best, but later developments of the attack have shorn it of much of its former prestige, and I believe I am right in saying that most of the masters of today favor the Berlin, which they regard as at once more conservative and resourceful. 4.♗a4 b5 This variation of the defense is credited, I think, to Louis Paulsen. If properly met it yields Black no attack to compensate for his compromised queen's wing. This game splendidly illustrates the salient weaknesses of the defense. 5.♗b3 ♗b7 6.0-0 ♘f6 7.♘c3 ♗e7 8.d3 0-0 9.♗g5 d6 10.♘e2 ♘h5 Not well judged. It only temporarily stops the knight from g3, and besides furnishes a mark of attack and consequent lost time. 10...♘d7 was certainly better. If, then, 11.♗d2 ♘c5, or if 11.♗e3 ♘a5, getting rid of the dangerous white diagonal bishop in any case. Worthy of consideration, too, was 10...♘a5 which the engines prefer. 11.♗d2 Here rather than e3 to prevent ...♘a5. 11...♗h8 To free his f-pawn, but a lost move. He should have played ...g6 and ...♘g7. Black's game is decidedly inferior. 12.g4 12.a4. 12...♘f6 13.h3 ♘d7 13...d5. 14.♘g3 ♘c5 15.♗d5 But the bishop is now master of the situation and declines to be caught napping. 15...♘e6 16.♗h2 ♗b8 17.c3 g6 18.d4 ♘g5 If 18...exd4

19.cxd4 (not 19.♗xc6 ♗xc6 20.cxd4 d5!) 19...♘cxd4 20.♘xd4 ♘xd4 21.♗h6 and wins. *The engine suggests the position is equal.* 19.♘g5 ♗xg5 20.f4 Excellent. He must take, and White's heavy pieces now come quickly into decisive play. Mr. Schlechter lets out a few links of beautiful chess hereabouts. 20...exf4 21.♗xf4 ♗xf4 22.♗xf4 ♗e7 23.♗f3 ♘d8 24.♗f1 ♗g7



25.g5 The masterly link in the chain that binds. Black's case is now hopeless and the rest a mere matter of detail. 25...♗xd5 Bad, disastrous in fact, but what can he do? If 25...♗xg5 26.♗g4 wins the queen. 26.exd5 h6 27.♗e4 ♗xg5 The alternative 27...♗d7 28.♗f6+ ♗h7 29.♗e7 ♗c8 30.♘f5 gxf5 (if 30...♗g8, then 31.♗e8) 31.♗xh6+ ♗g8 32.g6. 28.h4 28.♗g4 ♗d2+ 29.♗f2. 28...♗d2+ A true disaster. 28...♗xd5 at least doesn't drop the queen. 29.♗e2 ♗xe2+ 30.♘xe2 f5 31.♘f4 g5 32.♘h5+ ♗g6 33.♘g3 f4 34.♗e4+ ♗f7 35.♗h7+ **Black resigned**

A delightfully sprightly contest and Mr. Schlechter's conduct of the attack simply beggars praise. ACM Nov. 1897, p. 362 (Showalter)



▲ The first ACM office was in the Financial District of Manhattan, south of City Hall Park, east of Brooklyn Bridge

dollars, while anyone subscribing after the August 1897 issue could, for four dollars, receive the last four issues of 1897 and all of 1898. Throw in another dollar, and the subscriber would receive 16 issues plus "one of Catlin's best made Improved Pocket Chess Boards." (August 1897, p. 140) The following month subscriptions were subdivided into \$3 for the annual, \$2 for six months, and \$1.25 for three months. But finances were already playing a significant factor for the magazine, as in October single issue prices doubled from a quarter to fifty cents. This increase would last only a short time but succeeded in further confusing potential subscribers. Money was the major issue, in part because subscriptions never reached a level to sustain the magazine's ambitious layout, size and illustrations.

A far more significant change occurred with the October 1897 issue, as Charles Devidé was replaced as editor and Luke D. Broughton, Jr. (1859-1947), took over the reins. A homeopathic physician by trade, Broughton eventually practiced in Brooklyn for over 60 years. In 1883 he graduated from the New York Homeopathic College, marrying into a prominent Brooklyn family two years later. An amateur musician, and at one time president of the Writer's Club of Brooklyn, Broughton was a life-long lover of chess, and for several years chess editor of the

AN UNEXPECTED DOWNFALL

The magazine started with so much promise. Yet despite having so much going for it, and the glowing reports offered in the weekly chess press, the ACM lasted only two and a half years, until the end of 1899. What went wrong?

Several factors doomed the ACM. One was the sense that the publisher and editor weren't entirely sure how to best handle subscriptions. By the third issue, August 1897, Borsodi had decided to call the first seven monthly issues, through the end of December, volume 1, then call volume 2 the January-December 1898 run. Subscriptions for 12 continuous numbers, whenever started, were three



WILLIAM BORSODI'S
Bureau of Graphics

209 EAST 23d STREET,
Telephone 671-18th. NEW YORK.

Illustrating and Designing
in all its branches, artistic judgment used in preparing.
Newspaper Illustrations, Advertisements, Stationery
Designs, Book and Music Covers, Magazine Headings,
Book Illustrations, Catalogues, Mercantile Work.

High Grade Engravings
in Half Tone, Line Work, Color Plates, Embossing
Plates, Wood Cuts.

Translations
made from and into all modern languages. Absolutely
reliable.

Getting Up
of Pamphlets and Circulars for Business Purposes.
Originality Guaranteed.

High Class Printing
Fine Stationery, Books, Magazines, Catalogues, Insur-
ance and Commercial Work.

Art Engraving, Printing and Embossing
Wedding Invitations
Reception, At Home and Calling Cards
Fine Monogram and Address Dies
Correspondence Papers and Envelopes

Specialties

PLATE ENGRAVING
STEEL DIE ENGRAVING
PLATE PRINTING
HAND PRESS STAMPING
AUTOMATIC PRESS STAMPING

▲ Borsodi had other interests than the ACM, including his lucrative engraving business. ACM Sept. 1898, p. 98

Brooklyn Standard-Union. The loss of Devidé, though, was a blow. Broughton had never run a chess enterprise larger than a weekly column.

More ominous still was the silent disappearance of Pillsbury's name from the list of contributors. What caused Pillsbury to drop his association with the magazine is unknown. Although his name disappeared from the masthead, Pillsbury's connection with Borsodi, the ACM publisher, resumed a year later. Borsodi was Pillsbury's manager for his planned national and international tour, culminating in England where Pillsbury played at London 1899. Borsodi accompanied Pillsbury through much of his tour, but, as we shall see, not all of it. (BDE Nov. 6, 1898)

A little heralded chess problem solver, E.W. Engberg, was added to the masthead in November. His initial role in the problem department was unclear, given that Shinkman's name continued to appear. Then, in December, as with the end of any calendar year, opportunity was given for editorial comment. Referring to the emergence of the ACM, Broughton noted that "All admirers of

chess literature are united in the praise of its quality. It stands out as the leader in artistic chess magazine productions. That it should be lacking in the support which is due from American players is the only mar upon its career, but it is not without hope." (ACM Dec. 1897, p. 391)

But the hope for financial salvation proved elusive. January 1898 happily saw the single-issue price return to twenty-five cents, but far more significantly, the page count was reduced from 64 pages an issue down to 44. Although the reduced price was noted, nothing was mentioned about the magazine losing nearly a third of its pages each issue. No reduction in subscription price was made. More disturbing still was the ACM's first double issue, produced for April-

May 1898. Besides its late arrival, no notice was taken of the fact that the page count for the double issue only came to 64 pages, or that by doing so the page count per month was further reduced to 32 pages, just half of what the magazine promised at the start. With the January 1898 issue, the magazine returned to its reduced, 44-page size. Volume 1 ended up weighing in at a respectable, but less than originally expected, 664 pages. Volume 2 would end up 527 pages.

Borsodi shifted his offices several times during the short career of the ACM, and his frequent moves could not help but detract from the attention he gave the magazine. In September 1897 he announced an office in Philadelphia, besides his New York office on Beekman Street. In May 1898 he moved to 20

East 23rd Street, but by November he moved yet again, to 30 East 21st Street. By January 1899 he was listed at 106 East 23rd Street.

THE DEMISE

This fourth move by Borsodi turned out to be his last, at least as far as his association with ACM was concerned. By March 1899 Borsodi had sold his interest in the magazine he had promised to improve. The new owner was a group named the American Chess Company, with headquarters at 132 West 23rd Street. The General Manager and Treasurer was now Julius W. Kruger, a figure entirely unknown to American chess players. The change of ownership also sparked yet another change in personnel. Shinkman and Edward Hymes were gone, but S.H. Chadwick and Hermann Helms were added to the masthead. And for once, briefly, Pillsbury's name also appeared again, although his private relationship with Borsodi had also disappeared: "With the change of ownership the engagement of Mr. Pillsbury came to an end, and the American champion will hereafter personally conduct his exhibition tour. The Magazine, however, retains the good

will of the distinguished master, and will have the benefit of his co-operation conjointly with a corps of well-known experts and writers." (ACM Mar. 1899, p. 396)

But these hopes, too, were dashed. The magazine remained plagued by late publication, largely owing to continued financial difficulties, as well as the change in ownership. Only two months later, in May 1899, almost every chess player on the masthead, and all the strong ones, had disappeared. While Broughton remained the editor, only Engberg, the budding problemist,

remained as Problem Department editor. By September, even Broughton had disappeared, and A.H. Bierwirth took his place. Little is known about Bierwirth,

“
By March 1899 Borsodi had sold his interest in the magazine he had promised to improve.



who Helms remarked was “a young member of the Manhattan Chess Club and a player of much promise.” (BDE Nov. 2, 1899) More troubles appeared in a delayed issue, just at the start of the chess season in New York, resulting in a double issue for October and November appearing, with a mere 75 pages for the two months. December 1899 saw the last issue of ACM, and included a game department of exactly one page, with three games, all borrowed from other sources. This left volume 3 at a disappointing six issues, and a total of only 264 pages.

The aftermath proved tawdry. In January 1900, a young woman, who had been in the country only a few months, arrived in New York with a “considerable sum of money, which she was very anxious to invest. She opened negotiations with several business agents and in a few weeks found herself the proprietor and editor of the *American Chess Magazine*, with offices at 132 West 23rd Street. For this property she paid over \$1,000, she says, and gave a chattel mortgage of \$500 on the plant and fixtures to W.E. Kruger & Co, the owners of the magazine.” The young woman, who didn’t even know how to play chess, had clearly been duped, paying an exorbitant price (the equivalent of \$35,000 in today’s dollars) for a “property” that had already failed, had no editor or staff, and had effectively ceased to exist. (*The Anaconda Standard* (Anaconda, MT), Jan. 23, 1900) Later in the year, a judgment for \$241 was filed against Krueger, the American Chess Company, and Borsodi, who apparently had not fulfilled their own obligations to a creditor. (*New York Times*, June 13, 1900, p. 12) And there the trail ends.

The *American Chess Magazine*, which had appeared to such fanfare and with such brilliant hopes, had faded before the chess public’s eyes. That chess public wasn’t ready, or willing, to adequately support a chess magazine, however beautifully conceived and initially executed. It would take nearly five more years, and with a much more limited focus, before a chess magazine appeared in the United States that would last for decades: the *American Chess Bulletin*. It would be over 30 years before printing costs for illustrations



▲ Pillsbury about to give a simul at the Deutscher Club, Milwaukee, January 8, 1899. He finished 23–1, with 1 draw. ACM Feb. 1899, p. 340

and photographs were lowered sufficiently for a publication like *Chess Review*, billing itself as “The Picture Magazine,” to flourish. But those are stories for another day. What remains today are the beautiful pages before you, of a magazine that once appeared, not without hope.

(Thanks to Alexey Root, author of *United States Women’s Chess Champions, 1937–2020*, for her editorial assistance with this article.) ■

▼ Officers and members of the New York State Chess Association. Annual Meeting at Saratoga, August 28 –September 3, 1899.

A.H. Bierwirth above a young Frank Marshall, ACM Sept. 1899, p. 100 (detail)



A. Wright. A. W. Orvis. J. P. Fay. D. F. Searle. E. Kemeny. A. H. Bierwirth. J. Wood.
 J. V. Baker. C. P. Weeks. L. Karpinski. S. Lipschutz. F. J. Marshall.
 D. W. Waller. D. Stuart. J. L. McCutcheon. J. H. Lurie. J. W. Young. Dr. L. D. Broughton, Jr.
 E. H. Underhill. J. Halpern. W. P. Shipley. A. Martinez.