

LETTER EXTRACTS FROM DALE BRANDRETH-CHESS BOOK DEALER

(17 Dec 1931-9 Sept 2019)

Judging by the obituaries and comments on Dale's death at a good age, his chess book business was a massive one outside his professional career as a University Lecturer in Chemistry. There are some impressive stories of a man with the grand passion on websites.

My time with him was Sept 1974 – 1986 and that only occurred because of the kindness of Alex Sharpe an English chess book dealer who gave me his address. A very lucky time for me because Dale had just bought some problem books which were my passion. Here is his first letter:-

Dear Mr Meadley

Sept 22, 1974

Thank you for your letter of September 12th. It is rather a stroke of extreme good fortune that you should write me at this time because just about a month ago I bought an extremely fine problem collection by a man, Clarence Southerland, who was formerly Chief Justice of the Supreme Court here in the State of Delaware. I am enclosing lists of what I have been able to list so far. There will be a bit more, but this is the bulk of it. Rather than respond to your individual requests, I shall simply send these lists which do include many of the items you enquired about. On the AUSTRALASIAN CHESS REVIEW I am afraid I cannot help right now. I would like to get some of the early years myself. Perhaps Purdy can help you, though I suspect you have already tried him. At least I shall keep it in mind should any turn up. On the Chess Amateur, I also cannot supply Vol.12 now, but there is always the chance that something will turn up.

I am glad Mr. Sharp gave my name to you. I have dealt in chess books and magazines for about five years now, and though I do it only as a side interest, I get much satisfaction and pleasure from being in touch with fellow collectors around the globe.

Demand is heavy these days, so I cannot guarantee everything will be left in these lists by the time you get them, but I try to apportion things anyway, rather than give everything to the first to respond, so the best way is to send me your requests and then I'll confirm what I can send. Terms are cash (International Money Orders are best) in advance and I pay the postage as surface book parcels. I have never had any trouble with people getting my packages, which are very well packed. As a reference I can suggest the current Australian Champion Robert Jameison with whom I've dealt for some years now. I can also send books fully insured as parcel post, but then the buyer must pay the postage. Most of these problem books are comparatively light so that in terms of speed and complete protection, it may be worth it. As a rough estimate, insured parcel post would be about \$1 per pound including insurance. Five typical A.C.White Christmas Series weigh 3 lbs per packing.

I normally do not have too much in the way of problem material because I am more interested in over-the board myself, but now and then problem items do come my way. Prices, incidentally, are high these days, but you will find that at least in the US my prices are about normal. There are very few dealers specifically in chess books, and more often than not, other dealers charge even more because they do not know enough about chess books.

I am also interested in exchanges, and my list of wants is very large, but to be very concise my first priority is for unpublished tournaments (I put out tournament books from time to time), letters from famous players, original pictures of famous masters, and a few magazines such as the Chess Amateur from 1918 to the end, La Strategie from 1931-the end.

I look forward to hearing from you. Sincerely Dale Brandreth.

I replied very quickly and got a response from Dale posted 6 October. The books are all mentioned in 'Gathering in the Christmas Series' in 'A Letter to Bert' so I won't duplicate here. Dale was impressed that I had bought \$118 worth in my first order but to get 6 of the rare Christmas Series volumes in one hit was just great! His lists were SGGA/B/C. Here is an extract from his letter

...I'll keep you in mind in case other copies later turn up. Had you written 6 weeks before you did, I could not have offered a single one of these items. A few, like the Robert Braune item, are so rare that in a lifetime you can count the number of copies you see on one hand.

Yes, it has its delights in being a collector and imagining coming upon a nice lot of rare material, but it happens seldom unless one has the means to travel quite a bit and poke around in out-of-the-way places. I've tried London twice with no success whatever. But these things occasionally happen more or less the way lightning strikes.

I can use the ACR for 1936 and I'll offer \$15 for it which you can deduct from the above sum if you accept. Perhaps you might one day run across some more.

In those days the Australian dollar was very strong and it cost me \$82.72 for his \$118 account. On ACR, it is hard to buy and it took me until June 1978 to complete my gaps. 1292/30 & 32 cost \$108 from Chess World where Mrs Rosemary Shiel was helping Cecil Purdy. They had bought the Victorian, Les Spinks collection from his widow paying \$700, mainly tournament books. Les was a strong CC player and official in the 1930's.

Dale sent the final list of the Southerland collection on Oct. 30.

Extract:- *Of the books you mentioned I think I might still have a copy of Lambe, but I'll have to search it out here and let you know. I do have a good run of Brentano's which I'll put together and offer you next time...*

It was clear Dale had a massive stock and perhaps he had that 'chess' home next to the family home then?

Nov 6 extract:-*...Thanks for letting others in Australia know of the chess items I am offering. It is amazing how fast this problem material went. Normally I could not get rid of problem items, but this collection had much scarce material and much in better than average shape and that evidently made the difference.*

No, I never heard of Sam Calthrop but I've never been much of a problem fan, so unless he was very well known here, I'd probably not know. I'll see if I can find anyone interested in a copy of American Chess Nuts such as you describe. Yes, I can use 1937 ACR less the December issue. Please credit yourself with \$10 for it. It isn't really necessary to send it air mail. It takes a while, but it will be fast enough if you send it surface mail. Well, I'll send this letter now, as I have to answer some postal opponents before I quit for the evening..

On Sam Calthrop, he played in the First American Tourney of 1857 and he was a player not a problemist. In my copy of American Chess Nuts purchased from Baruch Wood of Chess in 1967 was a newspaper clipping and a photo of Rev. Samuel Calthrop aged 86! It was this matter I told Dale. He also offered me most of Brentano's for \$40 which I bought along with \$350 worth of purchases, mostly problem works 15 of 24. He had some more fantastic scarce problem books and I had to buy them. Extract of his letter of Nov. 23 (hand-written):-

...I can tell you are a real problem devotee. I have had the chess book fever now almost since the day back in 1946 (Xmas) when for some reason I bought 13 chess books. Unfortunately at that time I did not have the foresight to buy some of the very fine items available in Philadelphia (and elsewhere) for a song as compared to today. I could have then had five or ten copies of "Chess in Philadelphia", which now goes for about \$30/40 for \$2/5, but I bought Reinfeld's books instead! From a pedagogical standpoint it was probably a good decision, but otherwise totally stupid. It was only about 2 years ago that I finally managed to obtain a copy of that book by Reichelm and Shipley. I make no special point of collecting problem material but otherwise, I believe I have the 3rd best chess book collection in the United States-Cleveland Public Library is first, Jim Gates of Columbus, Georgia is second, and, as far as I know, I am third though Sinnott of Massachusetts and Baer of Washington D.C. cannot be far behind.

I bought \$400 worth and he was still looking for the Lambe but found Lasker's Chess Magazine. His letter of 15 Dec wished us well for the vacation. His 27th Dec letter was terrific:-

Extract:-....The J.G.White collection in Cleveland is probably far and away the best in the world, and then must come the Royal Dutch Library Collection (van der Linde-Niemeijer) followed by Gates and Schmid. I might be next, but there is a question as to numbers. Quality etc. I have some early books, but I never made a fetish of it, because the prices are so high, the occurrences so rare, and because I mainly enjoy reading and studying the books I have rather than acquiring them. Ancient languages, i.e. of the 16th and 17th centuries are much more bothersome to decipher and the analysis and games themselves are only of historical interest – not to be despised, of course, but when I want to play over an exciting game I still seek my Aekhine books, or Keres, or Tal, and not Polerio, etc.

The Cook collection, or what is left of it, now resides at Princeton University. I have gone through the more modern section there is good, but not exceptional (a fellow named Spackman contributed the post 1900 material). The rare volumes and some letters, etc. are locked up and are not available on a Saturday (When I can get there most easily). But I am fairly sure that the bulk of the letters, ephemera, etc. were thrown out, GOD FORBID by the idiotic librarians or bureaucrats, and that was, in my view, the real value of the “Cook collection.” Cook had a houseful of material in Hoboken, but with a few minor exceptions, these letters, etc. much of it interesting correspondence with other collectors (J.G.White, van der Linde....) were not kept for the usual reason that it would be too hard to classify, who will ever look at it, et., etc. It is a real tragedy since contained therein were the real “secrets” of US chess history, collecting, personalities, etc – all of which is now gone forever. First edition Damiano’s are very rare and expensive, but what is in such a book is known and that is that. But the sort of things in Cook’s letters to his fellow collectors, other chess editors,”all that is now lost.

I have been thinking for some time of starting my own magazine for chess bibliophiles and collectors, but lack of time has so far been the big deterrent. As far as I am concerned, maybe a less periodic format such as a series of volumes of miscellany, articles, “missing games”,...would be better. I am a research chemical engineer by profession, and it is difficult to commit my time on a scheduled basis to something like a chess magazine with deadlines, constant changes of address, etc. etc.

No, I never got the Gilberg or De Visser collections. I think Gilberg’s stuff went to Yale Uni, but I’ll have to check on that. Again the volume of material appearing since 1900 is staggering, and such a collection unless greatly supplemented could not be in the running anymore. I really only know of MSS material at the J.G.White collection, in the private collections of David Lawson, Lothar Schmid, the van der Linde-Niemeijer collection, the J.G. Kramer collection, Burt Hochberg’s collection, and my own. I’m sure there is much more, but people really do not publicise their holdings very much. Please let me know as the parcels I’ve been sending arrive .All the best for 1975! Sincerely Dale Brandreth.

And now we are in 2020. What to think with the benefit of hindsight of the throwing out of the bulk of the letters and ephemera? My first dart is at the library which could have simply sent this material to the J.G.White Collection. Why throw it out? Surely not professional rivalry? The second dart is the mind-numbing loss of money by this throwing out. When did it happen? It has to be the 1950's possibly 1960's. Tremendous value is in this one-off material. It makes no sense to me. Letters today are very valuable and this sadly shows the lack of knowledge of the people in charge.

Jan. 20 1976 extract:-*...Speaking of the White collection, I was fortunate enough to be able to spend a day there in early January and looked at some of the bound volumes of correspondence from famous players and other chess notables. Such items are not properly indexed, but constitute the most interesting part of the entire collection...to me at least. And there is a ton of material*

March 3 extract:- *...There was a time some years back when I had a whole box full of Morphy and Fiske issues, some almost in mint condition, but alas I now have not one issue to offer and I've never found a single one in the past four years. I know one fellow who has some extras and I'll see what he wants for them. I know he wanted something like \$1 per issue about four years ago, and at the time I thought it was too much, but if he has not raised his price since, or if he needs the money, maybe I can get a few off him for less. I'll have to write him.... Re ICM, Steinitz, here I made up a pile of as many different issues as I could find. There are 22 different issues (one is a double issue which counts as two) for \$19 and the postage on the lot of the above books including these ICM's will be \$3.50. There are a number of other early American magazines which I can offer on this basis, and frankly it is about the only way to get them anymore because they are very hard to come by and prices for bound volumes and complete years are now just sky high. The best of the American magazines, in my opinion, was Borsodi's American Chess Magazine. It was an absolute gem with fine photos, annotations, etc., but it did not last a full three years. If you are interested, I can make up the longest run I can of individual issues and offer them as a lot....*

I bought many of the loose American magazines and Dale found the Lambe and sent it in January. \$105 with Chess in Iceland. In May he sold me the 1745 Stamma for \$200. Also a 1822 Cochrane (\$100 and a 1634 Salvio (\$400)(2 vols) He added a telling note to his May 10 letter:-

Extract:- *Incidentally, except for the Cleveland Public Library and the Royal Dutch Library in the Hague, I don't bother with libraries. Chess has never caught on with them, except maybe for current books, and they are slow to pay, largely ignorant beyond belief on chess books, so that there is no incentive.*

A sad indictment of chess collections in most libraries. I was sending some large drafts to Dale and one went for \$822.50 in May. It was my 'surge' period and out in western NSW, not being a drinker or club man, with a young family, this kept me happy. After all why not buy an asset with spare money? Why waste the money? One letter Dale photocopied and sent to me was dated 23 April 1873 from J.G. White to E.B. Cook. Another two from White to Cook dated April 13, 1898 and April 30 1898. The latter is about the Gilberg family trying to sell the late Charles Gilberg's library. There are some amusing comments in all the letters. White did not like German script! If anyone expresses interest I will transcribe them and email.

In Dale's 23 July letter he admitted being 'totally swamped' and then wrote almost 2 pages. Here is a long extract: *...Without doing some checking, which it would take me a great deal of time to do, I cannot say about the disposition of Walker's collection except for this, which I am sure of: very likely Rimington-Wilson got the bulk of Walker's collection because I have seen at least six books which I have handled which were from the the Rimington-Wilson Collection and which were signed by George Walker. However, J.G. White may have gotten a few. It is not unusual that collect somewhat split at auctions, due perhaps to a certain lot having little appeal for one collector.....*

The question of rebinding is one on which there is quite a difference of opinion, but in my view, and I think most collectors of very old and rare works would agree, books should NOT be rebound unless they are in very bad shape. The Ruy Lopez I am holding for you, for example still has the original vellum, and I think it would lose tremendously by being rebound. Many collectors will not touch a really fine old work that is rebound. I rather think that it depends a lot of the age, though. For example, I might not hesitate to have a 19th century book rebound if I could get a very nice job, but I would hesitate to have anything earlier rebound at all unless it was an exquisite job by a real craftsman. Nowadays these really fine jobs can cost in the hundreds of dollars themselves so it is a real question. To me something like a Ruy Lopez that is rebound in just a modern binding is obscene somehow.

I shall greatly appreciate anything you can do on the Australian Correspondence chess magazine.

I have heard of John van Manen through my friend Jeremy Gaige (do you have his first four volumes of Chess Tournament Crosstables, by the way---a monumental job of chess research. Do you have his address by the way. I want to ask him about some items in the library in Sydney. The bibliography on Australian chess literature would certainly be a help to me.

The problem on early chess in Australia and in America is very similar, and I think reasons are the same: in both cases there was relatively little time for leisure activity for the vast majority of people. Without any formal organization, there was little that would find its way into

newspapers or journals. I think the only hope, however, is to search a lot of early magazines and newspapers to find any mentions. I would think the chances are indeed slim.

It is very interesting about your inheritance of Ravenscroft's books. It is also quite common that people think the papers and miscellany are of no value and throw them away. Monetarily they may have limited value, but in the vast majority of cases where the individual has any standing as a composer, player, or historian, I dare say that the papers are the things of real value in the historical sense. After all, there one finds many a thing never printed, perhaps the pseudonym of a composer (A.C. White had many) or the answer to biographical details, etc. For example, one point of chess history that is all the rage now, and which totally fascinates me is the question of the conditions of the 1910 Lasker-Schlechter match. No one has ever been able to find the conditions in print, but the fable is that Schlechter declined to draw the 10th game and thereby win the match because he had won the fifth game by a fluke and did not want to win in this fashion. And that story has wide acceptance. But there has persisted another version for many years to the effect that Schlechter had to win by two points to gain the title. Edward Lasker, who knew Em. Lasker very well, and who was present at the 1910 match, told David Hooper, among others, that there was a "plus two" condition, i.e. that Schlechter had to win by two points in order to win the Match (title), and in fact, Lasker, who was very clever at making arrangements and in protecting his title, had himself published the conditions about a year before the actual match started for a 30 game match with Schlechter, and those conditions unmistakably included the "plus two" condition. Because sufficient money could not be subscribed for a 30-game match, the match was cut to ten games, and lo and behold...no match conditions ever surfaced for the 10-game match actually played!! Now in my view it would be unthinkable that Lasker would risk his title in a ten-game match with conditions less favourable to him than in a 30-game match. I am solidly in the "plus-two" camp. But fairy tales die hard, and we have those who defend Lasker to the extent of becoming downright nasty and libelous in their attacks on those of us who adhere to an honest belief that all the probabilities favour the "Plus-two" theory. Well it is a long and involved story, and I am thinking of tying everything together in a book of the match with extensive notes to all the games.

In short if I were you, I'd not rest till I'd done everything possible to rescue those letters if they still exist. Perhaps the best approach is to tell the family that Ravenscroft was an important part of Australian chess history and that in order that he can take his rightful place in accounts of the history of the game in Australia, that it is important that knowledgeable persons like yourself have access to them. An appeal to see that their family member gets his just credit in the field he liked so much might bring a favourable response. All for now, Dale Brandreth.

Great letter but sadly the last paragraph was too late for the family clean-up.

Extract August 10:-...*On the Lasker-Schlechter match: I believe that only a few people knew and were willing to let on that they knew the real conditions at the time of the match. I think that Schlechter was probably on his word to keep the final conditions secret. After all, no one to date has been able to find the conditions in print, yet the 3—game match that was proposed about a year before had the plus two condition in it. I frankly think it means nothing that a certain number of people have written that Lasker needed to win the last game. This was just speculation on their part. My guess is that Mieses knew the truth (I think he was close to Schlechter) and probably let the cat out of the bag at the time of Schlechter's tragic death in Dec. 1918. My speculation is that Mieses wrote something about this in one of his newspaper columns around that time, but so far I have not been able to prove this. Edward Lasker incidentally contradicted what he wrote in his book by telling two people, whom I know that Em. Lasker himself told him that "of course there was a plus two condition. Why else should I risk my title in a 10 game match?" His answer was that he was just writing stories in his books. He was very partial to Lasker and I think in his heart that Em. Lasker was unfair in his insistence on that condition. Obviously it was unfair.*

By mid 1975 I sent Dale a list of wants that I would only be trying to buy in the future. I was also buying from Fred Wilson at this time and we had decided to buy our old home in Narromine. Chess books had to take a back seat.

Extract 25 September:-...*I've noted your list of wanted books, and if and when I run across any, I'll certainly let you know. I've run down next to nothing for months now, but I have had other problems so that maybe it is a blessing. About the only thing I think I can help you with on your want list is the OUR FOLDER magazine which I believe I can provide a fair run as soon as I can get to sort things out here. I have a major reorganization problem to work out in terms of properly filing much of my own information (pamphlets, etc), magazines, and books and then setting aside the duplicates for sale. This is a major job, but I have an unfortunate habit of taking on too many side jobs like running tournaments for our chess club, etc and my efforts get too diluted. In any event I shall issue only a few more lists from now until the end of the year and then after that I shall see what I can dig out. I have so much material that I think I have a 6-month steady job to really put it all into shape. I am considering just taking off six months so I can finally get things ship shape, but I cannot afford to do that still for about a year and a half.*

...*Frankly I don't think much of Bernie Johnson's suggestions for disposing of the two collections. First, the libraries will probably have little interest at all unless they happen to have someone on their staff who is knowledgeable about chess books (very unlikely), and an auction sale at a chess tournament would be a disaster for the seller. Few practical players appreciate chess books in a book collector's sense. The best way by far would be to have a world-wide chess auction with a complete catalogue for sale at say \$1 (to scare away the nit wits who think they*

are clever by offering \$1.51 for a reco, Damiano, etc, yes, I've seen it happen...they get huffy when they are ignored). An advertisement in the BCM will do the trick. Of course all this only worthwhile if there w are some reasonably good books. I agree that common stuff could best be auctioned off to the run of the tournament players.

The Bernie Johnson anecdote on chess book library sales refers to an editorial by him in his National chess magazine 'Chess in Australia' (CIA) August 1975 which is given here as it is not often a chess magazine discusses this subject:-

PRIVATE CHESS LIBRARIES:-

It is surprising how often various people have contacted CIA asking what we thought would be the best way of donating or disposing of their fairly substantial collection of chess literature.

Twice in last three months we have had almost identical enquiries in this regard. In each case, the person concerned was a well to do, "getting on in years", keen chess enthusiast who wished to donate his complete chess library to some institution where it would be most valued.

There have been other enquiries from widows and/or friends of recently deceased chess players, who, in most cases had no practical need or use of these books. I suppose, directly or indirectly we have had probably ten such enquiries in the last five years.

Now, these are just the ones we have heard about! What about all those other people- say widows of chess players who had no connection or, in many cases, no interest in chess generally. Where have all these chess books gone?...To an unappreciative charity?...to a second-hand book dealer?...to the collector of waste paper?.. or even (heaven forbid) to the incinerator?

First things first! To whom should you donate your chess library? Would you offer it to (a) The Anderson Chess Collection at the Victoria State Library? (b) Any other State Library? (c) The Australian National Library at Canberra, (d) The closest Municipal library? € a prominent University library?,(f) a large established chess club?

What would be your advice? *Any of the above listed institutions seem quite reasonable and are undoubtedly the most obvious. However, as in everything there is a big "if". For instance would your local library want chess books? Would your state library want chess books? Has your established chess club got a library?-or if you give it to this particular club, would the material be accessible to the large and varied membership, or would it eventually "find its way into the home of the club secretary? Probably the M.V. Anderson collection would be the best bet pof those mentioned. But assuming it requires only one of each piece of chess literature, maybe the collection wouldn't need or even want it!*

But we cannot mess our donor about. He requires sound counseling. He certainly won't appreciate the suggestion that he "shops around" and find an appreciative done!

What say we put our collective thought power to this problem? CIA has much pleasure in advising that it will donate a \$10 open order on any selected chess dealer, advertising in CIA to the reader who comes up with what we consider the soundest advice and solution to this problem.

To demonstrate that CIA itself is not completely devoid of using imagination, here is what we suggest as a possible solution.

Auction sales, for a very long time have held a fascinating appeal and in addition can be a lot of fun. What say, at every large gathering of chess players, such as an Australian or State Championship (open or otherwise) or a large weekender, we hold an auction sale of chess books and /or equipment?

At these sales, which could (as a suggestion) be held immediately prior to the traditional lightning tournament, a lot of chess equipment and chess books could change ownership. Items could include (a) from donors and (b) from widows and/or friends of deceased chess players. Also those from sundry chess players who had no further use for such items.

All goods for sale could be listed (where possible) in CIA and other chess magazines prior to the event and reasonable "reserve" prices established. Proceeds of the sale could be distributed in various manner to deserving causes, i.e. those from a donor; 10% to the auctioneer (who would be called upon to do a lot of work, listing and selling etc) 10% to the tournament organizing body, 40% to the ACF and 40% to the affected state association. (b) from an isolated vendor of items, then a mathematical formula of distribution could easily be worked out with a reasonable return guaranteed to the vendor.

By this means, a donor now has the assurance that the chess community as a whole would benefit from his gift. Also that each item of his collection would be passed on to an appreciative collector.

Apart from this, just imagine the added interest and attendance that a large tournament would attract by this method.

Anyway, that's our suggestion. Can you do better?

It's over 40 years since I read this and I had quite forgotten how perceptive it was in raising funds for needy chess associations. Today ebay has its followers but postage is such a cost that an event at a tournament could be successful. Especially for the cheap items. The Melbourne Chess Club had one in 1985 called 'The Great Jumble Chess Sale' and I recall being asked about

the prices of some of the earlier books. The sale did very well . Bernie and Peter Parr the chess dealer in Sydney were quite taken with Dale's EXEN 1975 catalogue list with all those early treasures for sale of which I repeat some:-The Noble Game of Chess 1745 by Stamma \$200;Il Giuoco Degli Scacchi Del Dottor Alessandro Salvio 1723 \$175; Le Jeu des Echets Greco 1714 \$115;Gianutio, Libro Nel Quale Si Tratta Delia Maniera Di Giuocar' A Scacchi 1597 \$500;Damiano, Libro Da Impararea A Giocar A Scachi 1564 \$850;Salvio, Trattato Dell Invention Et Arte Liberale Del Gioco Di Scacchi 1634 \$400; Ruy Lopez Il Gioco De Gli Scacchi 1584 \$280 to name some. That list went to many chess fans as I copied it and sent it around. I never found out who owned these books before Dale but some had been owned by George Walker in the 1800's. I bought the Stamma, Salvio and Ruy Lopez from Dale and as Dale called it his 'Blue Moon' catalogue, he didn't get books of that quality often.

Extract 5 November:-After I wrote you on the Gittins book, I realized that I had already listed it at \$27.50 before, so I would stick with that price in case you did want it....I'll keep in mind your interest in the MacDonnell book too, but as you likely know, most of the items on your want list are rather scarce, and I don't have much confidence that Wilson and I together can turn up more than 50% of them in the next three years. The occasional good collection comes into the market place, but I am afraid that I have been particularly fortunate in the past two years and that I cannot count on turning up such things every year.....When you went to Sydney did you visit Purdy? I wonder if he has anything to sell, I, like you, am still interested in the early ACR's and he may still have some.

I am writing separately to Bernie Johnson to give him my views on selling chess books from collections. He will be free to quote me in part or in whole since I hope to disseminate the view that one should find a decent home for chess books rather than a "dumping ground"...

I am enclosing a list I've made for you and John van Manen (I still intend to write him eventually but I am so damned hard pressed for time that it is rather p) of all Australian and New Zealand periodicals listed on H.J.R.Murray's list of periodicals with chess columns (list unpublished I believe)..

There were 76 periodicals on that list which ended up incorporated in the 2011 Bibliography. Cecil Purdy had handed over running of the Chess World bookshop to Mrs Rosemary Shiel who helped with Dale's CCLA booklet wants.

Extract 20 Dec 1975:-...the Ruy Lopez was once Lothar Schmid's. I traded him a copy in better shape that was bound together with a copy of a very early work with a reference to checkers (draughts) plus some other items that I wanted of a lesser nature. But prior to that I think it will be very hard to trace. Many of these books have had 20 to 30 owners by this time, and some

could, I'll bet tell dark tales, had they lips and voices. Maybe it is better they don't, come to think of it!

I had asked Dale the provenance of the Lopez 1584 I had bought from him.

Extract Feb 13 1976:-Yes, the story concerning the battle of Trenton is known to me. Though right off I don't remember where I first read it, but I know it was not in Knight's book. Note the one item on my list VOVO on Caxton's "Game &..." I would like to read the Blades book on the life of Caxton, but I shall have to see where it is available.

I ordered many early BCM's from Dale and the VOVO Caxton but missed most of the BCM's.

Extract March 22 1976:-Of your recent requests I can send only a fraction of what you requested because the demand for the BCM's in particular was very heavy and I needed the money so I let most of them go...

Extract April 23:-I am writing this from my wife's parents place in Smiths Falls Ontario, a small town about 40 miles from Ottawa... I don't have all my records along, but I did bring your letter because I sent out a package...Your comments on your Dutch friend's Alekhine pictures excites me very much because I am a real fan of Alekhine's and plan to do a nice edition of AVRO 1938 as soon as I can get to it. It would be very nice to have some hitherto unpublished pictures for it. If your friend will send copies of the pictures, I will pay well for it. It is a great pity if such items are "born to blush unseen". If he would prefer chess books in preference to cash, I would do my best to get him what he wants and could send a packet of my lists. There are pictures of Alekhine with his cats in Euwe's MEET THE MASTERS if I remember correctly. When I get home I will send a Xerox so you can see if it is the same photo. I would be interested only in photos not already published.

Thanks for your best wishes for the US on its 200th birthday. I fear there are many serious economic problems for the countries of the West these days, and it is going to be one tough time to get these things worked out. It is quite worrisome to me what is happening in England, and I am sure there are no "band aid" remedies. Inflation and unemployment have brought Britain to the brink of ruin and it may well be that some drastic changes are necessary. The same things are happening in the US and we are going to have to find ways to better spread the wealth and open opportunities to everyone too if we are going to survive. It would seem obvious that a society which wastes resources and people cannot find meaningful work for so many must come upon hard times sooner or later, but the trends do not appear to me to be such as to alleviate the conditions. Well, all for now. I hope to go into Ottawa today and get to the National Archives to look up some chess references.

Extract May 14:....I am holding all the items you requested except the E.B. Cook which is gone in that form, however I can offer you the complete book in signatures unbound and in perfect shape for \$3.50. If you get them bound, you will have an excellent copy. If I had the time I would go ahead and have it bound myself, but eventually one gets to the point where one wants to just get rid of an extra job, etc. Now for the Twiss which I am also holding for you until I hear from you: it is the two vols (1787 & 1789) bound together in a full leather binding with gilt lettering and borders with the engraved bookplate of William Downes (of whom I know nothing) and stamped in the front with the stamp of Alfred N. Pray (a noted Californian collector and postal player who died at least 20 years ago), and pages are good laid paper and are nice and clean and crisp, and the binding is sound. The leather is somewhat cracked, but still in rather good shape. All told a very nice copy: \$165.00. All in all this is one of the best early books I know, especially to one interested in early chess books.

I'm enclosing a few new lists too. I plan to fly to Europe for a two-week buying trip on June 6th, but I'll send out all orders I have in hand before I go because things pile up something fierce in just one week. I hope to find things in Europe, but I shan't be too surprised to find little at any prices I can afford for resale. Still there is always the joy of the chase and I can see some chess friends too.

Yes, I did receive the lot of CCLA Record, thanks. Please deduct it if you have not done so. I'd check myself, but I want to rush this off so that you will have the Twiss quote in time. I forgot to Xerox the Alekhine cat photo, but I'll enclose the Xerox next time. I'll much appreciate your telling your Dutch friend of my offer. I looked at the Euwe book MEET THE MASTERS and find that the Alekhine picture does not have him with his cats, but the Alekhine book by Muller & Pawelczak does have such a picture which I'll Xerox and send next time. I also intend to make up a new list of problem literature I have as soon as I can get to it and I'll send that when I have it ready. I'm trying to clear out what stock I can prior to going to Europe both from a money standpoint and from the standpoint of getting more space.

The RETZSCH drawing I have shows the spider just making it over the edge of the table heading towards the Devil's opponent. Mt Retzsch (in the original publication agrees "spiderwise" with Hagedorn). I can't find my copy right offhand of the Xerox to compare with that.

I think Carter will win by a wide margin over any Republican. I saw the movie ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN the other night and was fascinated by it. Well, all for now, best wishes, Dale.

Extract May 25, 1976:-Just a rushed note to send you two lists (maybe I sent the OLDEX before), and the Xerox of the Alekhine photo. On List PROB-1 I offer you a 25% discount since you have been a good customer. Some of the items have been offered before, and a few have not. I am trying to reduce my stock, hoping that in Europe I shall be able to find plenty to fill up my

garage! In any event, I plan to embark on June 6th and have sent this PROB-1 list out to a few other customers, so if there are any items you like, I suggest that you let me know as soon as possible by an air mail letter. PS Just got your letter of May 20th with check for \$228.50 this morning before dropping this in the box I'm sending an insured parcel with all the items and am holding the following since you may see something in PROB-1 and OLDEX. Will keep an eye out for Chess Miscellanies.

Extract August 1 1976:-....I am now sending some more lists one of which has some problem material. Of the items you wanted from list OLDEX, I am afraid that you did not have much luck this time, but I can offer another copy of the Bonus Socius, not quite as good since the spine has been repaired with brown tape (cloth) and the leather covers are somewhat cracked (not bad though), contents excellent except that the fall-out page is torn down the crease (no loss of text and both pieces are all there). It is not as good a copy as the one in OLDEX, but the price is \$85 instead of \$110. On the list PROB-1 the items went very quickly even without discount, but I am sending you PROB-I, 13 & 17....The trip to Europe was quite nice although I did not find much in the way of early works. It takes a lot more time and travelling to do that I'm afraid and I just didn't have enough time to do most of what I wanted even though I did get to Sweden, Denmark, England and Germany.

Extract August 22:-....I found almost nothing old in Europe except for a nice little copy of CHESS MADE EASY London, 1740, with a nice frontispiece plate of two people playing chess with one kibitzer looking on. It was full calf and rather cute (a very small book) so I bought it even though the price was rather high \$100.....I never heard of Jerry Cole of Las Vegas. It isn't so easy to find BCM's for sale even in England. I would very much like to get a complete set of Vol.1 of Purdy's mag for 1929 for my collection. Do you know what the terminal issue was? I think it was in 1967 but not sure...The Sketchbook of American Problemists is the only real loss, though, that doesn't come by very often and is very nice. I was fascinated by the Olympics and was sort of glad when they were over since I really have too much to do to watch, but could not resist! There were many great moments.

It was surprising that the all-seeing Dale did not know of Jerry Cole at Las Vegas. The BCM auction I was in was conducted by Douglas Finnie of the Glasgow Chess Club and I just missed out to Jerry. As for ACR I didn't have any of the early years either. The final issue was Sept/Oct 1967. Cecil did not produce Nov/Dec. I am sure in one of Dale's letters around this time he mentioned he needed to make space in his garage for duplicates and so I guess he did not have the house next door.(Yes, 25 May extract)

Extract Sept 9:-Your news on the Alekhine pictures is very welcome indeed! I am greatly looking forward to them. Thanks for the note on copyright on one. I'll check on that before publishing it, of course. I'' certainly acknowledge Con's help and can send him money or chess books

whichever he prefers. If he wants books, please tell him to let me know what he is interested in. I'll wait to see the pictures before giving an evaluation. I certainly appreciate your help.

I sent the photos 21 Sept and a list of Chess World's Mrs Shiel had for sale.

Extract 1 Oct:-...I always mean to ask you where Narromine is in relation to Sydney and forget...Now I am sending you a cheque for \$19.60 in Australian funds which I have signed over to you because cashing Australian checks here can cost \$5 US for a single check. I was going to send it back to Robert Jameison but I had another check of his that I've misplaced and I've waited months hoping to find it, but never have. I am badly behind in answering his last letter and now it is almost embarrassing, but better late than never I guess. He is probably on his way to the Olympiad by now. This year I think it is something of a farce since I guess the Eastern Bloc countries will not play and since they are so strong it is a real disappointment. I think it was an extremely poor choice to hold it in Israel partly because it was there only 12 years ago and partly because of the dangerous political situation. In any event converted at the rate of \$1.24US to \$19.60, this is \$24.30 US funds, and I am sending it as payment of the \$14 US developing costs on the photos plus \$4.34 (US) postage leaving me = almost. Could you also pay Nieuwendyk \$25 US equivalent in Australian funds for me and take that as a credit too, since it may cost him a lot to cash a check of mine. I liked the Eliskases-Alekhine picture the best. The other Alekhine photo shows him looking down at his cat and even though interesting, it does not show Alekhine full face. The Euwe simul photo I can assure you I will never use without checking with the owner but frankly I don't think it shows all that much anyway since Euwe is so far away. Of the Chess World I could use 1962-1967 unbound if you can get them, but don't worry if they are not available since the cost is rather high for resale anyway, and is about 4 times what Mrs Shiel was selling them for four years ago. I was charging I think \$7.50 to \$8.00 per year unbound for the years after 1955 and I guess I could boost that slightly, but not too much, I think, without being simply out of line. Yes, I could use a set of the negatives for the Alekhine pictures please. Do you know if Nieuwendyk took any himself.

Extract Nov. 19:-.. I went to an auction of rare books recently and bid on four chess books but got only one since the prices were fantastic. A rather poor Tarsia Ruy Lopez went for \$350 (I sold a better one to you for less) and a 1656 Greco for \$600 plus a Boston 1805 I think for \$275. Well, that's life!

Extract Jan 15 1977:-..As late as it is for sending Christmas Cards, I am enclosing mine for 1976 and wish you all the best for 1977. I can no longer really keep up with my correspondence except in this late and lame fashion, but I fell already too much pressure, so I shall just have to admit to being a bit slower than I'd like and hope people can understand.

I think most of the prices I saw at that auction were not too bad for retail, but they were by and large just too high for dealers. I am sure that had one or two people not been there, I could have had everything for \$500 instead of the \$1100 or so that they actually went for (4 items).

Yes, I agree with you that the Lucena facsimile was not so good, but it will never be widely distributed, and it is about all there is on the Lucena, so I guess it is still worthwhile. Evidently the copy used in making it is not a complete copy either! And I don't think that is even mentioned... I received the Purdy magazines in good shape, thank you.

Extract March 12 1977:-...Well, either the Cook letters were thrown out or were traded (or maybe even just stolen by Dr.B) to Dr. B. I bought some Cook material from Dr. B. and I know he sold other such material to others over the past 30 years, so it has to be considered as a serious possibility. It is hard for a collector to understand how a library could dispose of such material, but frankly many librarians are little more than administrative paper shufflers without a trace of sense or feeling for books and history. Cook evidently had a house full of oddments, papers, etc-- --much as I have I guess, and when a great library (and Princeton, a rich man's school) does have a great library with many treasures bookwise) gets something like a chess book collection, - and remember that chess was absolutely nothing in this country until Morphy, then a long dead period after about 1880, and until Fischer. Now it is on the decline again, but it has reached a stage where it will always have some respectability and prestige now,...they really don't know what to do with it. Even Cleveland's White Collection suffers from the abysmal ignorance of the librarians there concerning the game itself.

If you write to Dr.B. you can ask him, but I'd bet you get a very snotty reply at best since he regards everything he knows as privileged information for which his clients should pay...and these days they surely do if they buy anything because his prices have gone to the absurd.

The weather is a lot warmer here now, and I dearly hope the winter is gone because it was really rough on the fuel budget. Many parts of the US suffered far worse since some had the really cold weather plus mountains of snow.

There have been so many frauds in terms of "planted" relics, etc, that I am never totally convinced unless they solidly confirm such finds with carbon dating and other techniques to rule out fraud.

In my Feb 10 letter I told Dale of Buschke's article on Chess Libraries from the May June 1939 American Chess Bulletin in which Dr. B. talks of his rediscovery of Cook's letters in Princeton. And that seemed to be at odds with Dale's 27 Dec 1974 letter. This was Dale's reply. The comment on "planted relics" referred to my question about the Venafrò chessmen in a Roman strata. Dr. Sanvito later had them radio-carbon dated and they were of the age of the Caliphs not 3rd/4th century AD. One wonders how a set of chessmen could end up in an earlier strata

without “planting” and I think the truth is that they belonged in a much later grave and over the centuries probably ended in a Roman hollow through heavy rain. My real worry was that one of his chess parcels was destroyed by fire in a local train accident but they turned up.

Extract May 7:-I am all but certain that the Cook material which Dr.B. has came from some sort of trade (I shall be generous and not assume that it was acquired in a dishonest way!) because he simply had too much of it to have acquired it in any other way---and it is known that Princeton did get the entire Cook collection. ...I’m relieved greatly that my last parcel did in fact get through alright. Like you, it always worries me since one can get back the money, but we cannot bring back a fine old item that may never again turn up. I don’t know if I even have the Truzzi book, but I do recall that there were some terrible errors in it....the worst being that I think he claims to have known Bobby Fischer when he was in the U.S. Armed Forces, so what can one conclude from such a statement. Nevertheless there may well be much of interest. Absurd.

I am not aware that any chess book has yet been subjected to any kind of modern analytical techniques to determine authenticity, etc. I am also unaware of any chess book forgeries.

The book written about is ‘Chess in Literature’ by Marcello Truzzi 1974. In the Introduction Truzzi’s friend Private Schultz played a game with Bobby Fischer in the U.S.O. center. Schultz and Truzzi had been drafted into the Army at Fort Jackson in South Carolina in 1959. Fischer, too, had been drafted. Truzzi was amazed that Fischer wrote a letter during the game which did not offend Schultz.

Extract May 30 1977:-...I hope to do some book hunting on the car trip as we go up to Canada (Toronto and Ottawa and Montreal) and also on the way through New England {probably won’t be much, but one never knows, so I am hoping

No, the Bonus Socius is not one of my editions, but I signed it for you anyway since I did have an article in it on my collection. Unfortunately I was never given the proofs to go over prior to the final running off and as a result there are a number of rather sloppy errors, including one in the title since I had titled it “Reminiscences of a Chess Book Collector”, but they have it “Collection” and I fear this was a typographical error rather than editorial since it makes little sense to me the new way. However, the thought content is preserved and I hope you enjoy it. Someday I hope to write a much more extensive account, perhaps expanding to a small book, but that will have to wait due to my extreme time pressure.

Well, it would be interesting to know what might be done as far as dating of chess pieces goes, and I shall have to ask about that. I have a friend whose daughter is an archaeologist and she

may know where to write to get a bit more information. If it has not been done, and I suspect it has not, it would be a good project since many PhD students are always looking for valuable topics. I agree with you that Golombek is not much of a scholar when it comes to early chess history, but sadly publishers seem to exert little pressure of this sort.

Extract July 27:-...I haven't yet met the friend's daughter who is an archaeologist, but that too may occur in the fall....I saw that Ruy Lopez too, and it was indeed very fine (\$500). I believe that the two I had several years back were real bargains since I have heard of at least two since that went for \$450 and \$350

Extract Oct 19:-...There is a bit of misunderstanding on the one loss of Capa's. That refers to his individual exhibition games. In simul he lost a low percentage but we do have several score losses. In fact I still think that I shall publish all the remaining games I found. Some have big blunders, but almost all have some points of interest. I would indeed be grateful for the score of Capa-Gibson and Longwill game.

I confess to not having turned every page in every book I've sold – often to my embarrassment because there have been a few with missing pages (I made good on them via refunds of course), but I usually “flash” through a book to see if there is any obvious damage, inserts, etc., and in so doing I sometimes notice marginalia which I do indeed look at for points of interest.

In collecting books I suppose there are many reasons, and I frankly was never into it as an investment because I like to look at the contents. But if one were to buy to invest, then no doubt one does better to select the best copies one can find of expensive books rather than many cheaper ones. I dare say that Damianos, Salvios, etc. will always be saleable whereas large lots of cheaper books require much more work and therefore usually bring a smaller fraction of their market value at a rate in excess of the inflation rates. That is not necessarily true of cheaper books, though there are exceptions.

I am hoping to get one or two fine collections late this year or early next year, and if so, I shall put out a special catalogue. For the rest of this year I think there will be not much more than a large list of tournament books, a long list of miscellaneous magazines and (hopefully) a comprehensive list of openings books arranged by openings.

Interesting thoughts on collecting. I once got a CPC issue from Dale with an original letter from G.H.D.Gossip inserted. Dale had missed it but it appeared in BCM when Ken Whyld ran that series of articles on Gossip in which he was helped greatly by Ken Fraser of the State Library of Victoria.

Extract Dec. 25.. *Thank you kindly for your letter of Dec 2nd and the Capa game. I forget if you gave me a reference t that game before and being here at my wife's parents' near Ottawa Canada I don't have all my files, so I can't check until we return home. It does seem incredible that Capa could have lost that as part of only a two-game exhibition. I don't think "brewer's fever" (a new term to me though I've experienced the affliction) was the answer since Capa did not drink alcoholic beverages generally. I shall check with Hooper on that point, but if he was not a complete abstainer, he was certainly a very light drinker. He had a great weakness for the ladies, however, and his failure vs Alekhine in 1927 is attributed to his dalliance with some hot dancer in Buenos Aires during the match, and his failure to take first at St. Petersburg 1914 may have been due to his escapade with a noblewoman just before a critical game he lost to Tarrasch. Of course, there is some speculation involved in that though the stories of the encounters are almost certainly true, I know of no definite reason for a sexual encounter to lead to defeat in a chess game. Of course, if he had been up most of the night prior to his Tarrasch game, it would not be that difficult to understand a lack of precision the next day. Anyone who has played competitive chess against good players knows full well that it is close to impossible to play well when one's head is pounding from brewer's fever or one feels like "death warmed over" from a night of dissipation and loss of sleep. Perhaps some Scot lassie took his measure the night before the game you sent!*

have not been at all well for over a month now, having some sort of 'flu that has greatly sapped my strength. I still have it, and though not bed-ridden I have to rest a good bit and take it easy. I did, however, just complete a 33-page catalogue of tournament books...the largest listing anywhere I believe. That is to say this is a listing of about 900 different items I have in stock for sale. My own collection has about 5000 tournament books. I hope someday to issue a bibliography of tournament books, but it has become a monumental job.

You asked about the White catalogue. I have never had copies for sale, but the publisher G.K. Hall, of Boston, gives no discount to dealers so I have not bothered, particularly since the volumes are so large and difficult to ship. When I next write I shall send you the Hall address and you can order directly if you want. The last price I knew was \$125 for the set of two vols plus shipping. There was a time when they had them on sale at about half-price, but I was not wise enough to buy then, and later they restored the price!

Do you know a fellow in Glenelg East, Australia, named John Bradlee? We corresponded for some years and he rendered some help on the Capa book, but he has become a very slow correspondent due to rather poor health, I think.

I didn't know Mr Bradlee nor did I know of the hot dancer Capa was with during the 1927 match. I told Dale in my 15 Feb letter that my buying was coming to an end due to wanting to buy our old home. I had had a very good run. I told Fred Wilson the same.

Extract Feb 28 1978:-*The G.K. Hall address is 70 Lincoln Street Boston Mass. 02111 USA. Although I am sorry that you will not be a customer for awhile, I hope you will still write since I always enjoy your letters and the discussions we have on chess matters. My prediction is that you will return to the "fold" as a collector. I think you are wise to invest in a house for your family since real estate seems to go ever upward all over the world. I did the same about seven years ago and have been thankful ever since. I won't try to tempt you with further lists when they are current, but I shall save the catalogues I shall bring out and send them to you from time to time as bibliographical items.*

Thanks for the check and also for the news of the Anderson Collection. I think I'll send a copy of my tournament book catalogue to Ken Fraser. I don't know if they buy current books or not, but it doesn't hurt to try.

One day I hope to get to Australia to visit that Collection. I hope to visit Holland and see The Hague Collection this Spring.

Well as usual I have more to do than I can do, so I shall have to close, but please write from time to time. I had thought to go full time into the chess field this year, but I don't know if I can afford it yet, so I may wait. At most I shall spend another four years at my full time job and will then retire with continuing medical benefits, and a small partial pension at age 50 (which age I shall reach in another four years).

I think we are square now in our accounts with my sending of the items promised in my Dec. 25th letter plus the two items held over (Lucena Catalogue TRF-30 and the Connoisseur item TRF-29)

Well, I hope to hear from you from time to time and I shall try to let you know of my collecting activities, etc. All best wishes, Dale Brandreth

I wrote to Dale 30 May sending him an article on the M.V. Anderson collection and enjoyed his article "The World of Chess Literature".

Extract Sept 22:1978:-*Sorry to take so horrendously long to answer, but I went to Europe for a month of chess book hunting in May and June and ever since then it has been sheer hell to try to keep up with everything. Also I've had to make some trips in connection with my regular job.*

In any event thanks for the Anderson collection article. I was fascinated by it and intend to write to Mr. Fraser to offer some items. Would it be alright if I made copies of the article to distribute more widely? I shall not do so without your permission.

On my "The World of Chess Literature"- I gave the essence of what I published as a lecture at the University of Maryland in 1973 as part of a course there on "Chess and Culture".

On the Caxton, I was repeating an oft-made claim, but I can't recall the source offhand. Frankly, I think that some of these questions are impossible to decipher for sure now except if some new more accurate dating techniques arise. But in terms of what is known and can be pieced together, you are probably right though I shall try to check further.

I see where Levy won his bet, though it was really only because he knows how the computer plays. In my view the advances have been extraordinary and in another 5 or 10 years (maybe less?) the best programs may well be able to beat strong G.M's.

Did you know there is an excellent reprint of the Liddell book out? I don't have one for sale, but I'll try to get it.

I'm enclosing some lists even though I realise that you may not be in the market for much right now. You may enjoy reading them anyway.

I was pleased Dale liked 'A Three Day look at the M.V. Anderson Collection' and that he wanted to reproduce it. OK by me. Dale was unhappy with the reply from Melbourne on his lists and Cleveland too apparently as I liked Mrs Loranth but how these libraries buy seems to be always a question of fighting for money.

Extract Oct 26:-...I haven't yet done the article of yours on the Anderson collection. I sent my lists to the Library but never heard anything from them. Frankly I have a low opinion of the people who are the guardians of most of the famous public chess libraries. The people at Cleveland are total ignoramuses- really beneath contempt. I can't say much of anything about those in charge of the Anderson collection except that several years ago I wrote a letter asking for some research help on a particular subject and was not favoured with so much as a reply. That pretty well turned me off on them, but since things do get lost and mislaid I" have to give them a second chance. The only public library I ever saw with knowledgeable people is the Royal Dutch Library in the Hague. At least one or two of their people are qualified to help and give opinions, and that is in addition to Niemeijer who is, of course, a real expert.

I've corresponded with van Manen before so I'll get a copy from him. Considering the help I gave on the newspaper columns I am rather surprised and not a little chagrined to have not heard from him directly.

Unfortunate that Melbourne did not reply as for John van Manen he moved to Modbury Heights SA the next year 1979 and was busy with his Bibliography in 1978. I am surprised he did not reply to Dale as he was a meticulous correspondent. As for Melbourne John and I were very lucky to have Ken Fraser there and his interest in chess. He helped us both out amazingly as has been commented on in 'Ken Fraser-A Quiet Achiever' which I produced in late 2014 after his death. His family were pleased and copied it from the CD for all and sundry (100+ pages). I sent

a copy to the State Library and the CD was 'filed' in a drawer only to be refound years later at my request for comment. I was then asked by the rare books librarian, a friend of Ken's, if I could send a computer copy as she couldn't open the disc on the library's computers. We did that and silence! Personal contact is the way to go and I'm sure these hiccups could all be sorted if I lived closer. I was hopeful it would appear on the library website as an addendum. Maybe part of it will one day. They are friendly enough there now as I have asked a question or two since and received positive responses but Ken spoiled us and that is that. Librarians are busy people and have multiple jobs. Chess is not the be-all and end-all of their work lives.

Extract Jan 23 1979:-..Not long after writing you the last time, I got a nice letter and good order from Ken Fraser and he does seem to know quite a bit and to be genuinely interested. I sent him the order some months ago along with more lists and hope to hear from then again. Actually, I am on good terms with the people at Cleveland, but sometimes get a bit disgusted since they seem to be ignorant of many common things and to have at best only a mild genuine interest in chess, but perhaps that is as much as one can expect from those who just make a living at it compared to those of us who are genuine fanatics!

I have not gotten to run off the copies of your interesting article on the Anderson collection, but I promise too much and just can't keep up to the schedule I set myself. I shall do it as soon as I can.

I still have so much to do on the Lawson stuff that I don't know where to begin, but I guess it will have to just come in stride. I am going to play a fair amount of over-the board chess this winter and spring and much of my book sales work will suffer, but I like to play.

I have much more to write, but I need some rest so excuse the shortness of this letter. I have some new lists and there are a few interesting items. The Selenus has been reprinted in Switzerland and I shall shortly list it. Price is about \$40.

Well, Melbourne did reply and Ken Fraser's letters were worth waiting for. The book on Ken I wrote can be viewed on ozproblems.com. As for the Selenus reprint this was to be the first disagreement with Dale I had and it went on for a while. My view was that reprints damaged the value of originals. Dale did not agree so we agreed to disagree! Dale's purchase of the David Lawson collection was great. Just imagine the Morphy material in that!

Extract March 9:-..I don't agree with you on reprints of such things as the Selenus. There is a distinct difference between tournament books which people actually use and read and items like the Selenus which I doubt that anyone really bothers to read anymore. But again, many collectors even of tournament books are not really at all interested in the reprints. In any event,

to summarize ,y view: I think that the prices of original tournament books are affected substantially by reprints whereas very old and rare books very little. And on the very old and rare items there can even be a reverse effect. The Selenus is such a fine looking book with its plates, etc, that I think a reprint may pick up interest in the original to the point where any decrease is at least offset by the resulting increase. It is of course basically speculation on these things, and I must reason from limited data, but as a dealer who has had a lot to do with these items, I think it is as good as one can do.

My reply was all about originals and reprints!

Extract June 24:-...I don't remember if you ever got a copy of my booklet on chess book collecting- I meant to write chess tournament book collecting in which I discussed the price situation in terms of supply and demand and in which I made the same point you do. But frankly, on something like a Selenus, the reprint makes very little difference because it is a simple fact that most collectors cannot really read the text of the early rare books they buy. How many people can actually read ancient Italian?(or German, of course, in the case of Selenus) Few English speaking people can even read old English from say the 1500's without special study. But most collectors of early books really don't buy the books for contents except in a rather casual way. After all, if the book has nice woodcuts, it is nice to look through it and admire them, what else? In the case of tournament books, however the situation is quite different because there are many —maybe most- people actually use the books to play over the games. So in that case there is a difference but it is often not disastrous. Other factors are involved, particularly if the reprint is complete (the BCM did a reprint of London 1883 which was not complete—and I can still get \$100 for a good copy of the original). There are still many collectors who want the original as issued.

You would need not only condition but other information as well in addition to a much broader data base to make any real case on Selenus auction prices. A few years ago I attended an auction in Philadelphia at which there were four good early chess books. There were two chess book dealers present—myself and one other, and between us we bid a 1656 Greco up to \$650. Had I not been there it would have gone at no more than \$200 if that.

Well, it is an interesting subject anyway....You are right...I should take it easier, but it seems like there are so many demands that I just can't meet all of them. It reminds me that I bought a book on how to cure oneself of nervous stress, but I can't find time to read it! Well, anyway, I play a ten day vacation day after tomorrow to drive to Canada with my family. That should be a bit of relaxation. Do you have a gasoline crisis there as we have here?

Incidentally, do you hear from Ken Fraser? I sent them one good order, but never heard any more from him. I hope everything was satisfactory. Perhaps I should write him again.

Yes, we had a gasoline crisis here but we were paying a lot more than \$1/gallon as they did then in the US. I told Dale Ken Fraser was a research librarian and that his replies varied in time. I also suggested he write him again. Many years later Ken was asked to stay on before his retirement to "deal with the family historians at the counter". They too, are genuine fanatics about their love. Ken stayed on because he liked dealing with the public and he liked research.

Extract August 19:-..Yes, we are still only paying about \$1 per gallon for gasoline here, and that is why the waste continues. They should tax it by another \$1 per gallon and use the revenues for research and development of alternatives and improved mass transit, but our politicians are too cowardly to tell the people the truth.

One final word on rare book prices: I am reminded of the story about two fellows arguing about economics and they finally agreed that there were only two people in the whole world who really understood economic----and those two disagreed! We all have out theories, and I only go on the basis of what I see and my own experience. Things do change over time so that what is true today may not be so nearly true five years hence.

I'd very much like to buy at least five copies of the limited edition of the articles you've written on chess—"A Chess Miscellany". I'd also like to buy copies of the Whyatt book, but if they can only be obtained through the Problemist, could you please send me their address since I'm not sure I have it.

I'll have to write Fraser again....

I am intending to publish my first work on chess problems called CHESS FANTASY as soon as I get the diagrams made. Andy Lockett on New Orleans wrote it, and I think it is interesting. All kinds of oddball stuff like very long mates, mates in none, chess mathematics problems of a chess problem nature. All told a lot of fun! I play only a small edition of about 250 copies, but will reprint if need be.

Bob Jameison may come to play in Lone Pine next year and will probably come to visit me if he does. I already had one Australian visitor two years ago—John Gray of the University of Townsville.

Extract Dec 28:- Thanks for your letter of Sept 12th which I am grossly negligent in not having answered sooner due to a lot of pressure and trips for my full-time job. Thanks for the check.

The Whyatt book is quite good and I compliment you on it. I could use 10 copies and I'll pay postage of course. Also I would like 10 copies of "Chess Miscellany" which perhaps you could include with Whyatt. I can pay cash for all these books, or you can deduct it from what you get from me. The "Chess Miscellany" certainly sounds interesting and I am very pleased to get the

plug via my EXEN list which was probably the best list I ever put out---maybe the best I ever will put out since such items come along once in a blue moon.

"Chess Fantasy" is coming along, but will have to be run off and bound. It is interesting—especially to problemists.

I certainly hope you and your family had a wonderful Christmas and will have a happy 1980!

I mentioned to Dale my interest in tracing the Paul Morphy chess set since John Keeble's attempt in the 1930's and felt that as the board existed why would anyone melt down the set?

Extract March 21 1980:-I am far behind again in everything ,but to tell the truth, my life is something of a juggling ac. I ever I stop, I think all the balls will fall on me and I'll be in over my head!

I received the Whyatt book some time back and I certainly want to thank you for inscription. It is a good book and shows the results of your work and research. The chess world can be grateful that it has some like yourself who are really willing to work on such books instead of the usual... weekend hack job.

The other Whyatt books did not yet arrive, but I am anxious to get them, and in fact, I can use another ten in addition to those you are already sending.....

I tried directly with Lawson to get the story on the Morphy set, but got no further than tracing it to some French aristocrat in the 1920's. I believe. If Lawson knows more, he isn't talking, and knowing his character, I can tell you that anything he says on such matters is subject to question, beyond what is already in print. The Morphy board I have is the one that he was given on his 12th birthday and which is pictured in the first issue of Chess World (Brady).

It just seemed to me that Morphy's chess set is out there rather than being melted down. Why keep the board and not the set? The Gasquet family were wealthy and admiring of Morphy's skill. Items in the chess world usually turn up in time. The lost Vicent book being one.

Extract April 27:-...How long ago did you hear from Lawson? He is quite old now and his ideas on many things are a bit foolish. He was trying to explain to me on one occasion how the insects might take over the world based on the childish and naïve assumption that because of their high rate of reproduction and rapid gain in size, that the entire world might be overrun with the buggers. I didn't bother to point out to him that you can't make something out of nothing and that the insects cannot feed on sand any more than we can, but for a supposed consulting civil engineer to spout such utter drivel, frankly I don't rate his theories on anything else too highly either.....

No, you are right---writing and publishing chess books is no easy way to riches....at least not of the currency type. There is a market out there, but it is diffuse and its interest ranges widely over the gamut of chess literature. At the height of the Fischer boom a few books did really well and chess in general was well off, but Bobby has evidently retired into his mental cellblock and will probably never venture out again. A tragedy.

It was my fault I never replied to David Lawson's charming letter about the Morphy chess board. He did mention that he'd done some digging and that sort of put me off. BCM 1934 p.406 stated the board was owned by Count Gasquet who lived in "the south of France"

Extract Oct. 23:-It is embarrassingly long since I last wrote, but a number of things have slowed me down not the least of which has been the fact that for my regular job this year I have travelled extensively (one trip to Europe, four to Texas, three to Canada, vacation to Arizona & New Mexico, and several other trips of shorter length). In addition it took me quite a while to find out and sort the Chess Player's Chronicle for 1885, but I'm happy to say that I did manage to put together two complete years and this morning I am sending you the following....

The Chess Fantasy by Lockett has had a sad end---probably. I told him he would have to have it retyped because the ribbon used was old and was too faint in many places. He (Lockett) did not like that too much, but I am so hard pressed time-wise that there was no way I could do it and paying to have it done would set me back quite a bit too, when I consider it would not be a big seller at all. The book was entertaining, but rather flawed I think in many of its claims on task problems, etc. When I looked at it more critically, I began to have some real doubts about the quality, and then, realizing that I am not a good judge of problem material, I started to back away, leaving the door open in case Lockett wanted to first get the thing typed again.

Lawson died a few months back, so I fear that anything he knew has now gone to the grave with him. I doubt that he had any special knowledge of the Morphy chessmen whereabouts, though....

Re the number of chess books: it all depends on what one counts as a book. Do magazines count at all, etc. I tend to favour the higher number.

I have not seen the van Manen article on Viner, but I would like to get a copy if you can get one.

I felt sad for Mr. Lockett and his lapsed book. But for some advice from Bernie Johnson, the printer of the Whyatt book I could have come to similar grief. I was also sad about David Lawson's death but he wrote a great book on Paul Morphy and that would be his epitaph.

Extract Feb. 2 1981:-Thanks for your Nov. 21st letter which has gone unattended too long due to the Christmas Season which always buries me and leaves me dazed for at least a month

thereafter. Every time I think I am going to get caught up, I buy another collection or take another trip, and so far this year I have already been on two company trips (my regular job that is). I bought Walter Korn's collection of largely endgame and openings material so I should have a few good lists out of that.

I certainly want 10 copies of "Australian Chess Lore" when it issues.

If I can find a copy of Lockett's MS again, I'll send you a copy of a chapter for your perusal. In addition to the re-typing job, I began to fear for the accuracy of parts of it. I was in a quandary and am rather disappointed with myself. When he first showed me the MS, I flipped through it quickly and saw that it was interesting and said I thought I could publish it. He was pleased because it was the sort of labor of love job that he had carried on for many years (he is close to 80) and wanted to see published before he died. But after starting to make the diagrams (a very time-consuming job) and reading the thing in more detail, I began to realize that it was really quite amateurish in some aspects and may be rather "haywire" in others as when he goes into mathematical aspects of some of the problems. I then got rather worried since I did not want to publish something that was full of rank amateurish mistakes. I did not want to hurt his feelings by telling him my doubts, and did not know whom to consult as an expert in some of the super-specialized areas, so I fell back on the necessity for re-typing---which was certainly true. I know that after I told him what had to be done, he clearly felt some antipathy for me, judging by some of his remarks, but I just felt I could not take four months of my time and spend \$1000 to try to fix up his MS. But I still feel bad that I made him unhappy. Of course, if the MS is rather shaky in places, it would do little to glorify his name in problemdom anyway, but maybe he would never see that. I can at least say honestly that his chances of having a regular publisher do anything at all with it are mighty small.

Re the largest selling chess book of all time: I have no idea, strange to say, but my guess is that it would be something like 'Invitation to Chess' by Chernev & Harkness, but without some cooperation from publishers, I have no way of knowing. I have heard from a good source that the all-time best seller on chess in Germany was Schonberg's 'Grandmasters of Chess', certainly a readable book' though full of errors. The Purdy book must be strongly in the running. Some of Reinfeld's could conceivably sold in the millions---and probably did since some came out in paperback editions by some of the big publishers.

If I live long enough to write my memoirs as a chess book dealer---I would want to do it virtually on my deathbed since I do not like to lie about people, but do not want to defend the many defamation that would ensue---the Lawson story would form a chapter and one so bizarre as to defy belief. He wrote nice letters, but I doubt that I shall ever meet a more totally dishonest person. Lothar Schmid would also command at least one chapter.

I encouraged Dale to write his memoirs now and publish posthumously. I even ordered 10 copies! With his death perhaps the family will find those memoirs and publish?

I again felt sorry for Mr. Lockett's MS and offered to take the chapter and show it to expert locals whilst suggesting Edgar Holladay in the US may assist. Most of the books John van Manen and myself published were very short runs (150 say) and all the typing work was done by John with guest authors writing their own including myself. Bernie Johnson charged very little for printing but the costs went right up after his passing. Tripled in fact. Regarding Whyatt I had 500 copies done and 40 years later I still have a few copies. The cost was \$1000 for the printing or \$2/copy and it was sold for \$3+postage. I got square-just! On the 'Chess Miscellany' the cost for printing the foolscap cover (50 copies) was \$15 locally from Tom Payne's print shop and say \$20 worth of paper, then the typing, stenciling off copies, binding by stapler and a red cloth cover strip over the staples. I was always a two-finger typist but you can get a lot done if you stick at it. That was the old way of printing off a cheap book with one's research saved. Not pretty but content OK.(both in 1979) Later came the print shops who did Australian Chess Lore 6 for \$300 (60 copies) in 1994 and today most owner published books are desk-top with computer MS and printed in situ. There is nothing better than a hard copy of one's blood sweat and tears. It was very enjoyable to see it in front of you and know one has done it oneself. We did my wife Norma's 1988 book on her family that way with stencilled pages. She is a good typist and the dear part of the book were the photos at \$500. There was an artists sketch of the family locale on the cover. The 200 copies are long gone for this large juicy book and requests still come from a historically minded member wanting a copy. There is almost one (200 pages) for emailing now but that is not really satisfactory though it saves postage which is an eye-brow raiser today. Perhaps Mr.Lockett was too old to go down that track but he could have with help.

Extract July 10:-Jim (Gates) stopped collecting because he found that it dominated his life too much, but then that was due to his buying everything rather than selected items. Collecting all depends on one's needs. To collect for ultimate profit is far different than collecting for content or to satisfy the urge to have "everything".

Re Lothar's library—details are given in the Swiss bibliographical publication on a recent list (one or two now enclosed). I don't recall the details but think he was already collecting in his teens. He saw Alekhine in Germany during the war and told me that "you were in the presence of a great man". Presumably he saw him at one of the tournaments then or at a simultaneous exhibition. I don't know anything else but what was in the Swiss article (copies still available). But if you write Schmid, ask him directly. He will probably write you an interesting letter in return...

My catalogue PROBEG-ONE will interest you since it has a lot of problem literature (much from previous catalogues but some new material). I decided that the best way was a make a large

comprehensive catalogue of everything I had on problems, endgame studies, and the endgame in general and to distribute it widely....I printed up 500 and will do more if needed, though I doubt it. I'll send a few extra ones to you with my next shipment to you. You may have some problemist friends who want one for curiosity sake if nothing else. It took me weeks to compile that 21-page catalogue (4 pages devoted to an essay plus a memorial on my friend and fellow-dealer Heinz Loeffler

I bid for quite a few items in PROBEG-ONE because it was unique with many hard to buy rarities getting over half. Dale had taken a stand for problems and endings making one's chess game better if they were studied. - Jim Gates sold his 12,000 item collection to Fred Wilson, one of Dales rivals. There is more on Jim in Bert. He was a building developer.

Extract August 25:-Thanks for your July 10th letter which I found waiting for me when I returned from Vacation. Glad you liked the article in my PROBEG-ONE catalogue. I am going to try to issue occasional special catalogues with such essays when the stock of certain types of material become large enough to warrant it. I have had some problem material here for some time, but when I bought Walter Korn's collection of endgame material, I had enough for quite a considerable catalogue. Of course, I can't do this sort of thing for a 1 or 2-page list, but in this case I ran off 500 copies and distributed them rather widely, sending as many as 25 copies to John Roycroft for his endgame study circle in London. So far I have done reasonably well with the catalogue from the sales standpoint, but the real measure of success will be not the good items which sell---anyone can do that---but the common and lesser ones. If I can sell a good fraction of that material, then I get some space as well as some investment back. It will be about three months still to make the judgment since I sent many copies surface mail around the world.

Your remarks on Rogers are interesting. I honestly believe that there are very real limits to how far a player can go as a practical player unless he has some comprehension of the fantastic subtlety and range of ideas presented in chess. Much of this is too far hidden and too seldom seen in the ordinary game, but if you notice Korchnoi's games, he like Lasker, finds ways to complicate positions and to take opponents out of the territory they know to that where they have to fight on uncertain ground. In such positions the Korchnois, the Laskers, and the Fischers make mincemeat of the lesser lights. Problems and studies show new ideas and open new vistas for the players who are capable of absorbing such new vitality into their own games.

Could you get your friend there who was Keres' friend to write an article on him for the magazine LASKER AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES? I can get it published there since I know Bob Long well (its editor) and write for it myself. Something like "The Paul Keres I knew" or "Memories of a Great Chessplayer-Paul Keres". Well, here is what I sent you yesterday.....

I wrote to Rurik Bergmann for some memories of Keres as he was an Estonian friend now in Australia.

Extract Nov 10:-..Normally you are so prompt about answering and settling accounts that I begin to wonder if one of our letters has been lost....I have a few more problem and endgame items to list soon, but I seem to now always have more items to list than I have time for listing. The PROBEG-ONE catalogue did fairly well, though not nearly so well as I had hoped since I sent at least 100 copies to Europe, Australia, and South America on a free basis to people I knew who might be interested and who have problemist friends. It seems that problemists, even more than other chess players, are reluctant to put any money into their hobby, with some notable exceptions, of course, such as you, Niemeijer, Roycroft (EG rather than problemist, of course), and by money I don't even mean large sums... just modest sums of say \$20-\$50 per year, Maybe more accurately, I should say they do not spend such sums with me! But my prices are usually competitive, so I think it is just the way problemists are. Difficult for me to understand since my attitude when I see a beautiful endgame study is to want to buy every book in sight on the subject so I can just dip into them at my heart's content and fantasize about the thousands more just as good that I have access to but no time to study! Perhaps others are smart enough to realize that they lack that time therefore why send the money. Overall I think most chess book collectors soon give up the idea of actually working their way through all their books, but the joy of ownership and the possibility of being able to read what one likes is a powerful incentive. I enclose a few new lists which may not have much of interest to you, but which you are the best judge of. All best wishes Dale.

A nice letter which would have been replied to more quickly had I not had to pay Fred Wilson \$200/month for the Carrera. But that was now done. Dale's views on most collectors are on the money. Few wish to pay good money for a chess book and I understand that. Too many other demands to be met.

Extract March 8 1982:-Thank you kindly for your letters of Nov. 10th and Nov. 26th. I am embarrassed by my inability to handle your letters far more promptly, but I have to frequently travel these days in my regular job, and that often entails losing many evenings and weekends I'd otherwise be home working on my books and correspondence. Also I thought I had the Godel, Escher, Bach here for you, but couldn't find it until today. It is really a fantastic book, but being not primarily chess I was hesitant about ordering another ten copies now that I have no more orders for it.

Your remarks about greed are all too true. This country is close to entering a depression again, and in fact, in large areas the unemployment rates actually exceed those in the great depression of the 30's. The only bright spot is that inflation has slackened, but I fear the price might be even worse. Guns are as everyone knows so freely available here to anyone, including criminals and

mentally deranged people, that any real unrest could touch off events that would have very sad consequences. If things do not improve a great deal in the worst areas within a year, there could be real problems---resulting in martial law here too. There is a big difference between now and the thirties: people have had a glimpse of the better life and material goods, and they see that everything in this country currently favors the rich and powerful. I work for a rich and powerful corporation and I know whereof I speak because I see how the upper echelons think. They are men of ultimate greed, low morals, and usually uncultured and of somewhat questionable mentality. Their knowledge of history is frighteningly poor and so you can expect very little in the way of decency, leadership, etc. Sorry to be so pessimistic, but everything I see about the Reagan administration tells me that we either have a sharp change of course or run the risk of changes so profound that no one can begin to assess the consequences to the entire world. Reagan was elected by a GREED MANDATE, nothing else...

It is good to look at the predictions we all make about politics and the economy. Perhaps Nancy Reagan kept the US government on track as Dale's worries seem overblown. I wrote to him about the total number of chess books/items in the world.

He wrote a short letter July 3 worried about the delay in my above reply (3 July). I was keen for him to buy some Australian Chess Lore 2 which had just appeared. So also had John Hammond's Purdy book which had Anne Purdy's wonderful biography of Cecil.

Extract July 15:-...*It will be fine to send copies of ACL 2. I can use 12 copies with the excess in credit to you as you suggested. I enclose a few new lists.*

Re your question about the number of chess items in existence, I think the number should be considerably higher than 20,000, but with a number of qualifications and questions. For example, what is a chess title? Is it only a book on chess published by a recognized publisher? If so, then one eliminates thousands of tournament bulletins which contain otherwise unpublished games by the greatest of players (I have over 4000 tournament books and bulletins myself, and many of these are not in the White collection. Some do not even give the name of the publisher/producer. The BCM, which now has over 1200 issues to its credit is counter as one item by the scheme Vella suggests, whereas 10 small pamphlets with nondescript material would count as 10 items! Most people would agree that such a scheme makes no sense. I suggest that the only sensible scheme is to count every issue of every magazine as one item. A bound volume of the BCM with 12 issues becomes then 12 items bound in one. I also suggest that every article on chess or largely on chess or some aspect of chess (chess players, chess intelligence, etc) be counted as one item, though if 12 such items are published together in a book they may be counted as one item collectively but that if published separately either originally or otherwise, they be counted individually. Newspaper columns would not count at all unless bound in a book with some continuity to the columns (a complete year, etc). Of course,

even there some fuzziness occurs, but that is at least only a second order effect in that case. Well, you see what an argument one can get into. On my basis, I think there are upwards of 400,000 items. On Vella's basis, which I consider artificial and misleading, I think he is still far short because the White collection has been quite unsuccessful in obtaining many of the ephemeral items and poorly distributed tournament bulletins appearing now on a worldwide scale. Still, on his basis, I would say that he is not off by more than 5000 items. Betts only covered titles of books in English and lacked thousands of ephemeral items such as policy manuals for local clubs, books of rules and regulations for various chess organizations, etc. By today I am willing to guarantee that on Vella's basis one could easily find more than 40,000 chess titles. Proving it is another matter! Best wishes Dale Brandreth.

This letter was quoted in full in 'Bert' p.100 and in 2020 I don't disagree with his analysis. I appreciate the late Ken Whyd Association has been making progress via country chess bibliographies but a very long way to go still. I kept no copy of my letter of 17 July.

Extract Jan 5, 1983:-Once again I am dismally slow in answering. I was away in Switzerland at the Olympiad in October and November and was already behind in my correspondence before I even left. Of the items you requested in your July 17th air letter only the Our Folder for March 1918g. 1924 were still here and I have set them aside for you in order to send them with anything you might want from the enclosed lists.

I had a really fine time at the Olympiad and was sorry that I was able to stay only five days (I was travelling elsewhere on the continent too). I met Robert Jameison briefly. It was too bad it was such a short time because we could have talked for hours except that he was playing for Australia, and was quite busy, of course, in taking care of his obligation in that respect. He did quite well too, winning one of the board prizes.

The situation in this country has certainly not improved since Reagan took over and in my view his foreign policy has been pretty much a disaster too. I hope we can survive two more years of him, but to be honest, I have some doubts about the ability of anyone, but a true genius to be able to effect much good because a US President has quite limited powers when it comes right down to the hard facts. A president's only real hope is to persuade the Congress to implement his programs, and that is seldom easy in itself since every faction has such selfish interests that the common good is generally lost sight of. Well, we can but struggle on and hope for the best while fearing the worst. I personally have little faith in these very old fashioned leaders such as Reagan. They have too little vision and seem bound by their failings. All the best for 1983! Dale

Extract March 2:-Thanks very much for your Feb. 17th letter. I was glad to hear from you because on TV here they showed the horrible destruction caused by the fires in Australia. I don't know

how close you were to any of that, but I was hoping that it spared you and your family and collection of chess books. It really looked awesome....

I haven't really been able to pick up any collections for a long time with any really old items. The Gates collection is now almost entirely dissipated and I doubt there are more like it in the Western Hemisphere, so I think we can hope only for the occasional gem from obscure sources. In some ways it is more fun to get such items.

I don't know about the NOVAG at all. There are so many models and variants around now that it is tough to keep up with them. I think they will have a great popularizing effect on the game...

Extract Sept 8:-Once again I am embarrassed by my slowness in answering your note (undated, but must have been at least 3 months ago), but it is getting difficult to keep from getting further behind. I retired from my regular job 5 weeks ago to have more time on my chess book activity and to at least for a while do some university teaching in Engineering at a nearby university. So far it has not helped: I am further behind than ever, but the magnitude of the job of getting really organized is such that I shall perform no miracles.....Not much news here. I have a wealth of material to list but not enough time to work on it. One improvement is that I have purchased a good computer system and intend to start using it to help with listing and sorting. Should be fun anyway.

How is your NOVAG on chess problems? I had one here for a while that was excellent up to five-movers, but I sent it back anyway since it did not meet the manufacturer's claims. It was a Great Game Machine with a Steinitz cartridge. Cost about \$325. I expect that in a year or two I can get a better one for half the price.

I told Dale my NOVAG was pretty weak on problems and couldn't solve the Indian 3-er no matter how I helped it. I sent Dale. Fred Wilson, Michael MacDonald-Ross, Dr. Niemeijer, Dr. Chicco and Barrie Ellen my 'Collectors Corner' letter midyear with a photo showing my library.

Extract Jan. 29 1984:- Thanks for your letter of Sept. 9th. I have indeed been super-busy this autumn teaching two Engineering courses, but this Spring term I shall teach only one in an attempt to honestly get caught up with some of my many chess projects. At Christmas we visited my wife's relatives in Canada for ten days and after a week back home I flew to California to buy a very important collection rich in chess history items-first list now enclosed with some fine material. I am gradually getting into better shape and hope now to get our correspondence back on track without these long breaks. ...

I bought an Apple III computer word processing and filing along with a letter quality printer (See O& R-THREE) for example of one typeface I have had with it—this was Xeroxed too so it looks better than my normal lists), And this promises to be a really big help. I intend to make a

catalogue of my collection! That will take several years, but it will help me eliminate duplicates, etc., and I shall publish it. It will be annotated and probably will run to at least two 500-page volumes. Ah. Well, I hope I can complete it! All the best for 1984! Dale

A worthy goal and even more worthy today if Dale completed it in draft form for his estate. Time will tell.

Extract March 12 1984:-...Actually I don't think chess book prices are rising these days. The Hyde I had is much better than any I have seen offered for at least five years (often they are not complete). Buyers of the heavy items are few and far between in the US and the dollar's strength makes it tough for everyone else. However, I have always found that these things go in cycles, and since the number of really fine early items only diminishes, things work out alright if one is not caught in a bind where he needs money.

I haven't re-evaluated where I am in terms of my collection's size, but I would estimate it has gone up by 30% since 1977.

The Ewart book is a strange phenomenon---a really fine book that few buy....now... but all will regret that they did not buy later. I bought 12 copies and sold 2! I shall have to wait. If I were to do a book like that in an edition of 500 copies, the price would be at least \$60. The publisher probably did 5000 and may have to remainder them! Crazy!

Well, I have to rush off to my course now. I hope to still do at least two more good lists of chess history and bibliography before June.

Extract July 6, 1984:-Thanks for your May 21st letter and order. I just got back from a six-week book hunting trip to Europe. It was quite an experience, though not very rewarding from the standpoint of old books. I did visit Lothar Schmid for a day and a half and saw what I think is the most fabulous private collection of chess books and ephemera anywhere. In many ways it is more interesting than the Royal Dutch Library's collection or the White Collection in Cleveland due mainly to Schmid's real passion and knowledge. His room of duplicates would be the envy of every collector anywhere. He has four Gianutios!!!

Extract Oct. 11:- Thanks for yours of recent date (undated). Yes, I can use 8 copies of Australian Chess Lore 3 to square our account. I plan a rather extensive catalogue of EG and Problem books soon and will send it when ready. I also have a few more chess column scrapbooks to do which feature chess problems and will include them on that list.

I actually think that the Gianutio is a good buy at \$1200. The fact that Lothar has four means little since he is just very adept at getting such items in his world-wide net. He will likely never part with more than two of the four and then only in exchange. Lothar's library is not open to

inspection, really, except if he knows one and has some interest in accommodating one, but it is in fact much more interesting than the bulk of the White Collection and the Royal Dutch Library collection because of the expertise with which Lothar has chosen the copies he has as opposed to the other two where they simply have copies. For the time being the Royal Dutch Library has two knowledgeable fellows doing the work, but that could always change on short notice.

Dale was right about the Gianutio price but I was winding down with a daughter nearing University. It is a fact that a 1000 chess book collection is hard to store and harder to do justice. I respect Lothar's way of improving his own collection by buying the best works and keeping them but 'cornering the market' as he did with multi copies of the Gianutio seemed excessive. Dale did not think so but his collection was massive by 1984 and these collectors are dealers first and always. There was one letter from Dale in March 1985 that I have lost and sadly I did not reply to.

Extract Aug.26 1986:- Dear Bob, I haven't heard from you in so long that I'm worried you're no longer a collector! I guess you can say the same of me, as a dealer. I've not had a problem list in a long time mainly because I have so much material right now that I don't know where to begin, but I do hope to get out the longest list of chess problem material ever before Christmas. In the meantime here is one list with some nice items including a few problem items.

I was surprised that you didn't get a copy of "The War of the Chessmen" from me since it is excellent for chess history and bibliography of the early days of chess in Europe. I hope everything is well with you. Best wishes Dale Brandreth.

I replied on 10 September that I was no longer a collector as the Australian dollar had floated and was now worth 60c US. When I bought my 'surge' material it was \$1.20 US. I just wasn't flush any more and had to pull the horns in. Our daughter too was going to Charles Sturt University Bathurst as a nursing student in 1987 .

And so it was all over. Dale had some astute comments to make about dealers and chess books over those years and now it is up to his family to sell what must be the largest collection in the United States. It will be interesting to follow as large collections are hard to shift and usually have to be split up. Perhaps some university there may be interested. I was grateful to obtain many of those old and rare books from Dale and Fred Wilson over those years as it has given me a hobby in rural NSW that has kept me sane.

Bob Meadley 3 Feb. 2020