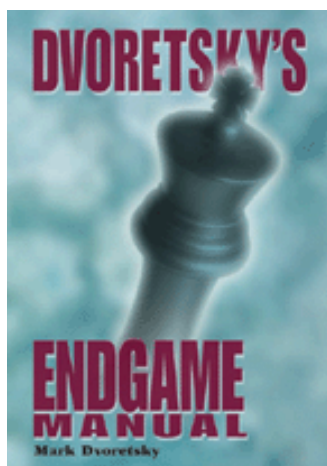




SKITTLES  
ROOM



## The More Things Change...

Edited by Hanon W Russell

*As controversy and debate swirl around the current world championship, we thought it might interest readers to see that the same kind of discussion was taking place a century ago. We present here copy of correspondence between Walter Penn Shipley and Max Judd concerning who had the right at the time to claim the title of U.S. Champion. It appeared in Lasker's Chess Magazine, November 1904, pages 13-15.*

### Mr. Shipley's Protest

At the request of Mr. Walter Penn Shipley we publish the following correspondence in the matter of the title of United States Chess Champion which has passed between the management of the St. Louis Tourney and Mr. Shipley, on behalf of Mr. Pillsbury.

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St. Louis, Mo., September 30, 1904  
Mr. Harry Nelson Pillsbury

Sir, Your letter of the 28th received. You are unnecessarily excited about nothing. You seem to think, and you wrote so, that I wished to rob you of your well-earned titles, and this is not so. If anyone is entitled to being called the champion of the United States it is H. N. Pillsbury; but what I maintain is this, that beating Showalter and Barry, etc., never entitled you to the

championship, for Showalter, when he played you, was not champion of the United States.

Or, to put it differently, let us say that Pillsbury has moved away from the United States and gone to live in Australia for good; then comes Napier, and challenges Marshall for the championship of the United States. Does it seem to you proper that the winner should be called champion of the United States?



*Max Judd*

To strengthen your argument, you write that you won first prize in Hastings, but what has that to do with the United States championship? It is true you claimed to be champion, and no one disputed you the title, and I repeat, If we had a United States champion, you were it, but what I maintain is this, that you never played for the championship; those you played with had no right to the title. You furthermore write again, if it is a tournament for the American championship, you should exclude foreigners. A pretty scheme to have the champion of America living in Vienna or London! This is provided for in our circular, which, when reading, you probably overlooked; foreigners' scores will not be counted when the winner of the medal is to be figured out.

Mr. Shipley is a good friend of yours Show him these lines, and I believe that he will help me to convince you that I did not wish in any way to harm you.

Yours as ever,  
(Signed) Max Judd

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Philadelphia, October 4, 1904  
Max Judd, Esq.:

Dear Mr Judd, It was only within the past ten days that it was brought to my attention that the St. Louis Tournament Committee proposed to issue a gold medal to the American

making the highest score in the tournament, with the announcement that the holder of the medal should hereafter be known as the American champion. This announcement came as a thundercrash to Mr. Pillsbury, and I do not wonder that it did. Mr. Pillsbury won the American championship years ago, and his title has never been disputed thereto, until the circular of your Tournament Committee was



*Walter Penn Shipley*

issued. When Mr. Pillsbury spoke to me about the matter, I told him I felt sure there was some mistake, as I could not believe that your tournament intended to rob him of his hard-earned title, or in any way raise a doubt that he was the American champion.

Your letter of September 30th. to Mr. Pillsbury, which he has handed to me (as you requested that he should do), fully explains matters. Your Tournament Committee has simply been laboring under a mistake as to the facts connected with the United States championship. In the letter you state that Mr. Pillsbury never was actually the American champion, as Showalter was not the champion when he played Pillsbury, and the matches between the two "were not played for the championship of the United States." In this you are entirely mistaken. I have followed chess matters very closely in this country and abroad for the past twenty years, but I do not ask you merely to accept my word for the fact that the championship was played for in both matches between Pillsbury and Showalter, and that Showalter was not only the recognized, but the actual champion of the United States when he played Pillsbury. I now give to you the following facts, which you can verify if you have any doubt as to the statements I have made:

After the death of Captain McKenzie, S. Lipschütz, who had won a number of matches and tournaments, was recognized both in the East and in the West as the American champion. That title was given to him by all the clubs and in the various chess columns published throughout this country and many of those abroad. I never heard the same in any way disputed. In 1891, Showalter challenged Lipschütz for a match for the American championship and a stake of \$750 a side. This challenge Mr. Lipschütz accepted, and if you will refer to the *International Chess Magazine*, by W. Steinitz, vol. VII, page

358, you will find the following:

"We are glad to announce that the match for the championship of America has been definitely arranged between the two distinguished masters, Messrs Lipschütz and Showalter, to begin at the Manhattan Chess Club, April 11th."

I might mention at this time that Showalter was known as the United States Tournament Champion. You will find this set forth on page 263 of the same volume. I personally saw part of this match played, and was in-formed by Mr. Mintz, who had charge of the match, the various conditions of the agreement pertaining to the same. In fact, I had been asked to subscribe to the backing of one or both players (I forget now which), but I declined. Thee match resulted in the score of: Lipschütz 7, Showalter 1, drawn 7.

The next match for the championship of the United States was played the latter part of the year 1895. If you will refer to the *British Chess Magazine*, vol. XVI, page 9, you will find the match spoken of as the championship match, and again on page 46, in the same volume, yon will find the following:

"The match for the United States champion-ship, between Messrs. Lipschütz and Showalter, was decided December 27, 1895."

Score: Showalter, 7; Lipschütz, 4; drawn, 3.

I was present at this match; talked with both Showalter and Lipschütz, and

went over with Mr. Showalter the agreement pertaining to the match before the same was played. There was no question whatsoever but that the match was played for the championship of the United States, and that at that time Mr. Lipschütz was recognised in this country, from California to New York, as the United States champion. Mr. Lipschütz spoke



to me several times after that match as  
to the likelihood of his challenging *Samuel Lipschütz*  
Showalter to another match, that he  
might be able to win back the championship, but his health was  
never such as to warrant him in issuing such challenge.

The next match for the championship of the United States took place at Philadelphia, in February, 1896, when Emil Kemeny challenged Showalter to a match for the championship of the United States. The articles in the agreement for this match, which were signed in Philadelphia (under said articles Dr. Persifor Frazer being the referee and myself the stake-holder), began with the following preamble:

"Agreement entered into by and between Jackson W. Showalter and Emil Kemeny for the purpose of a match at chess for the championship of the United States upon the terms as herein set forth."

This agreement was signed by both Showalter and Kemeny. The match resulted in a victory for Mr. Showalter.

The next match for the championship of the United States was played that same year, when Barry, of Boston, challenged Showalter to a match for the championship of the United States. You will find in the *British Chess Monthly*, vol. XVI, page 279, the following:

"Mr. Showalter, United States champion, was challenged by Mr. Barry, of Boston."

And, again, in the same volume, page 318, the following:

"The match for the American championship, between Messrs. Showalter and Barry, was concluded by the former winning the seventh game."

Score: Showalter, 7; Barry, 2; drawn, 4.

The next match for the United States championship took place in New York, in January, 1897, between Showalter and Pillsbury. Before the match started, I went over with Showalter the terms of the match; gave him

my advice as to several points and also as-sisted him in raising backing If you will refer to the *British Chess Monthly*, vol. XVII, page 184, you will find the following:



*Emil Kemeny*

"The great match between Messrs. Pillsbury and Showalter for championship of the United States came to an end by Mr. Pillsbury win-ning the twenty•first game... Mr. Pillsbury, however, won the twentieth game, and, owing to a great error of his opponent, probably through nervousness, he also scored the twenty•first, becoming in consequence the United States champion."

Score: Pillsbury, 10; Showalter, 8; drawn, 4.

In February, 1898, Showalter challenged Pillsbury to a return match for the champion-ship of the United States. If you will refer to the *British Chess Monthly*, vol. XVIII, page 120, you will find the following:

"The great match between Messrs. Pillsbury and Showalter for the championship of America began at the Postal Building, New York, on February 25th."

And, again, on page 198 of the same volume, you will find the following:

"The return match between Messrs. Pillsbury and Showalter for the championship of America, which began February 25th, ended on April 1st by Mr. Pillsbury winning his seventh game, making the total score: Pills-bury, 7; Showalter, 3; drawn, 2."

As to this match, which was held behind closed doors, only invited guests being present, for which a limited number of special cards of invitation were issued by both masters, and which were necessary to see the games played, I had the honor to receive from Messrs. Pillsbury and Showalter a card, which read as follows

No. 37  
H. N. Pillsbury and J.W. Showalter  
Present their compliments to  
Mr. W. P. Shipley  
and cordially invite him to witness the chess play  
in any of the games of their championship match at  
Room No. 201 Postal Telegraph Building  
253 Broadway, New York  
Play days••Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays,  
12.30 to 8.30 and 8.00 to 10.30 P.M.  
Please show this card at the door.  
New York, February 25, 1888

Thus you will see that Mr. Pillsbury has an undisputed right to the championship of the United States, and I have followed the title to this championship back to 1881, and give you there as my authority W. Steinitz, who was extremely accurate in matters of this kind. The title has never to my knowledge been in any way questioned in this country or abroad. Mr. Pillsbury not only values the title that he has honorably and by hard work acquired as a title second in importance only to that of the world's championship held by Dr. Lasker, but it is also to him financially a most valuable asset. There is due to Mr. Pillsbury (as I am sure no one recognizes more than yourself and your colleagues of the tournament that you are about



*Harry Nelson Pillsbury*

starting) thanks and good wishes of all chess players throughout the United States, as he has done more for chess in this country than any player who has lived since the time of Morphy, and when you have read over the facts as I have given them, I feel sure your committee will not hesitate to acknowledge the mistake it has made, and will thus relieve Mr. Pillsbury's mind.

It is hardly necessary for me to call to your attention that both the world's

championship as well as championship of the United States cannot be obtained by a mere tournament. When Pillsbury won the International Tournament at Hastings, in which Dr. Lasker had entered, no one ever thought that Pillsbury acquired thereby the World's champion-ship; neither did anyone consider that Mr. Marshall, who played in the Cambridge Springs Tournament, in which both Dr. Lasker and Pillsbury were entered, acquired thereby either the world's championship or the championship of the United States.

If the Monte Carlo Tournament Committee, when they hold their international tourna-ments at that place, were to announce that the winner of their tournament is to be known as the world's champion, I am sure such a claim would be received with ridicule and scorn by every right-minded chess player throughout the world. Mr. Pillsbury has al-ways been ready to defend his championship in a match, and still steeds in that position. It is true that he was one year abroad, but was ready then at any time to return home and defend the championship without making any charge far his bother than those allowed his opponent. No American, however, was willing to risk a match with Mr. Pills-bury during that time.

With kind regards and beat wishes for the success of your tournament, I remain,

Very truly yours,  
(Signed) Walter Penn Shipley

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