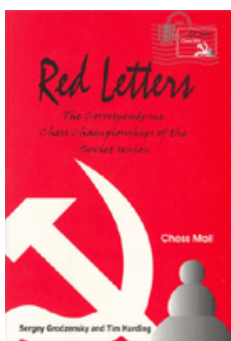




COLUMNISTS

The Kibitzer

Tim Harding



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In July, the University of Dublin will formally confer the degree of PhD on Tim Harding for his research into correspondence chess history. He is now extending the scope of his research and this month's article, which completes thirteen years of his series "The Kibitzer", presents two new discoveries about Philidor. A third will follow in the June column.

Philidor in the Newspapers

The digitisation of newspapers from the eighteenth century and early nineteenth centuries has begun to open up new possibilities for research into the formative decades of modern chess. The resulting databases, usually available through major libraries and universities, provide both an image of the actual text that can be read and printed out, but usually the opportunity to search for keywords and particular dates or date-ranges. The best ones enable you to find all references, either in editorial text or advertisements or both, to any word or combination of words. Word-searching for "chess" can sometimes give very disappointing results, as most of the hits frequently turn out to be for "duchess" and the like, although this partly depends on how well the work of digitising has been done and how flexible the search engines are. *The Times* was indexed long ago, but the other papers are effectively newly-reborn resources for the historian.

The Times of London was the first British paper to be made available in this way (from the start of publication in 1785 up to 1985) but now a much wider range of British and American periodicals, as well as the *Irish Times* (which began in 1859) and the *Freeman's Journal* have also become available, and probably the same is true of papers from other countries and in other languages.

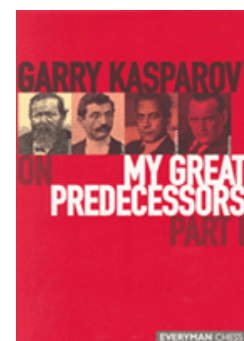


François-André Danican Philidor

It would be interesting to know, for example, about what (if anything) French newspapers had to say about the activities of Philidor. This article deals only with British newspapers, especially those which are in the Burney Collection at the British Library, which were made available in database format late in 2007. Previously this large collection of newspapers from the 17th and 18th centuries was only available on microfilm. Searching in the Burney Collection found 368 instances of "Philidor" (or the alternative spelling "Phillidor"), the majority in connection with his musical career. Clearly that is far too many to cite here but I have looked at most of them.

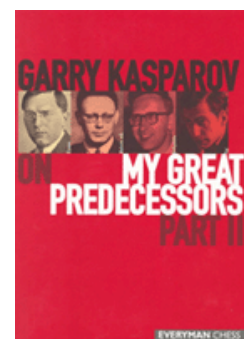
Some of the earliest references were about his father or his uncle, both of

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them musicians who used the same sobriquet, first applied to his grandfather according to Twiss. The *Daily Journal* (of London) on Tuesday 15 October 1728 mentions the death “last week” of “the Sieur Philidor, who had obtain’d a Privilege of settling concerts in the Palace of the Thuilleries”. This was apparently an uncle of the chess-master, whose real name was François-André Danican, and who was born in Dreux, France, on 7 September 1726. He died in London in August 1795 but the exact date is a matter of some dispute.

As I have found so much information about Philidor in the eighteenth century press, this story will be divided into two parts. Part One (this column) deals with the period before the French Revolution when Philidor was not only top of the world at chess but also a successful musical composer. Next month, Part Two, will look at the final decade of his life, and try to resolve the question of when exactly he died.

The best-known source for information about his life and chess career are the articles in *British Chess Magazine* of 1961 by Dr. Charles Michael Carroll (based on his thesis about Philidor) and before that George Allen’s *The Life of Philidor*, first published in 1863, including an essay by Count Tassilo von Heydebrand und der Lasa; this book is available as a reprint from Moravian Chess. Allen made use of various sources, including the “Anecdotes of Philidor by himself” published by Richard Twiss in his book “Chess” in the 1780s, but he found all sources unreliable to various extents, and Allen himself cannot be taken as gospel. Most recently, there appeared in French *Philidor, musicien et joueur d’échecs* (volume 28 in the series “Recherches sur la musique française classique”, published by Picard in 1995). This includes articles by Carroll and others, and which primarily deals with Philidor’s correspondence.

Early newspaper references

I was surprised to find the *General Advertiser* of Friday 17 February 1749 advertising a concert series, mentioning Philidor’s Coffee House. At that date “our” Philidor was not yet twenty-three years old, but it is almost certainly a reference to him. He had first visited London in 1747, according to Allen and Carroll, or possibly 1746 according to Dr. Jennifer Carter’s chapter on “Philidor à Londres” in the French book mentioned above. In 1748 Philidor returned to France where he wrote the first edition of his chess book, which was published in French in 1749. This first appeared in English translation the following year.

The *General Evening Post* on Saturday 24 Nov 1750 advertises that “this day was published”, at the price of three shillings, Philidor’s *Chess Analysed* (and the original French edition was available at 3s. 6d.). More advertisements appeared in this and other newspapers at later dates.

After this success, and having defeated all-comers at the board, Philidor had little more to achieve at chess for the time being, and concentrated on furthering his musical career. The *London Daily Advertiser* carried a news report on Friday 23 February 1753, saying that after one rehearsal for one of his concerts many people and the best connoisseurs were of the opinion that Philidor (“if he really is the composer”) “is in a fair way of making the same figure in Musick as he doth at chess”. The same day, an advertisement in the *Public Advertiser* says tickets for the concert may be had at his house, 1 Meard’s Court, Dean Street. After one more advertisement mentioning Philidor in January 1754 (he returned to Paris later that year) and another advertisement in 1764 (for a music book), Philidor was not mentioned in the English papers until 1773.

As the novelist Fanny Burney records in her diaries, Philidor had visited London in June 1771 bearing a letter of introduction to her father from the *philosophe*, Diderot, but it was 1773 when he returned to London and 1774 before the famous chess club at Parsloe’s was established.

There are many newspaper reports about Philidor in the Burney

Collection during 1773. On 26 May, the *Morning Chronicle* carried a note in French referring to him being at the head of music for both the church and theatre in France. On 2 November, it reviewed a musical drama called *The Deserter*, which had played in France some years earlier. Much later it was queried (*Morning Chronicle* and *London Advertiser*, 24 January 1785) whether Philidor did in fact compose the music for this and I am unsure of the true situation.

In 1774 there are no news reports in the Burney Collection about chess-playing, which was a private matter, but some advertisements mention his music or his chess book. In 1775 and 1776 I found no news reports or advertisements mentioning Philidor at all. In 1777 advertisements from 3 October for the bookseller J. Nourse, repeated in the *Gazetter* and *New Daily Advertiser*, listed “Philidor on the Game of Chess”, third edition, octavo, 2s. 6d. This was the most important edition of his work.

Greatest musical successes

On 8 September 1777, an advertisement in the *Freeman's Journal* for a concert to be held at the Rotunda in Dublin, conducted by a Mr. Pinto, listed one of the items to be performed as “A favourite new Concerto, concluding with a Grand March, accompanied with French Horns, Trumpets, Kettle Drum, etc.” by Phillidor. The Grand Overture of this piece evidently became a favourite with the conductor and Dublin's musically-minded socialites as it was listed again on 11 July 1780 to be performed in another concert at the same venue on (ironically) 14 July. In 1784, when a new comic opera by Robert Jephson called “the Campaign, or Love in the East Indies” was performed at the Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin, the music (according to the advertisement printed on 3 and 5 February) was adapted from work by over fifteen composers including Philidor. However, it is unlikely that Philidor ever visited Ireland as there are no newspaper (or other) reports of him doing so.



In 1778 Philidor was hardly mentioned at all in the British and Irish papers. There was one reference in a musical context in an arts article, but that year he was working on an important new composition, which is discussed in the third part of Carroll's article in *BCM*.

On 30 January 1779, an advertisement in the *Morning Post* and *Daily Advertiser* advertised a concert to be held on 26 February at the Free-Mason's Hall in Great Queen-Street, featuring the first performance (as the main item on the programme) of Philidor's musical setting of the Latin poet Horace's *Carmen Seculare*. Tickets were on sale at half a guinea from various addresses, including Philidor's: No. 20 in Duke-street, Piccadilly. This important premiere was advertised almost daily from then onwards in these terms: “The Learned and the Elegant are Invited to this Exhibition as to a new mode of Pleasure, arising from the union of ancient Poetry with modern Music”. To discourage robbers and the riff-raff, the advertisement warned that “no money will be taken at the

door". On the day of performance, four newspapers carried the advertisement so there was perhaps no sell-out of the house, but the high price was not reduced.

The day after the performance, the *Morning Chronicle* and *London Advertiser* carried a short report, promising a fuller review to follow. The Dukes and Duchesses of Gloucester, Cumberland, and Devonshire, and many of the nobility and literati were present, including Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds. Another paper reported that nearly eight hundred people were in the audience. On Monday, its critic noted that the thought of setting Horace's poem ("which, as a literary composition, is in many parts uncommonly beautiful, but extremely unequal") to music seemed "on the face of it to be a literary quixotism" but the result "does Mr Philidor the highest credit". The idea was not Philidor's but had been suggested to him by the (probable) translator, Barette. The style of the music was "of the true sublime" and came the closest since Handel died to his manner of composition. The only criticism was that it was all too grand and needed lighter touches which were likely to be made for future performances. The concert was repeated on the 5th and 12th of March. As an advertisement for the second performance stated: "Mr Philidor has carefully attended to the general Opinion on the first performance, and some alterations will take place".

The report in the *Morning Chronicle* of the 6th March noted that although the audience for the second performance was smaller, it was still select, with the Duke of Gloucester, Johnson, and Reynolds attending again, as well as other notables including Dr. [Benjamin] Franklin. Some parts were omitted so that the concert was shorter. "The performance was received with still greater éclat than before" and did great credit to Barette also, "while the musick considered altogether reflects the most brilliant lustre on Mr Philidor". There were some criticisms of Barette's translation of Horace, notably in a letter published on 22 March in the *Morning Chronicle* which noted that a better translation had now appeared in print.

Notwithstanding the view in some quarters that he had copied Handel, the *Carmen Seculare* was one of the highest points in Philidor's musical career and, as Carroll details, it was performed on many future occasions and in other countries to great acclaim. The earliest mentions of Philidor in *The Times*, which began in 1785, were advertisements in 1788 for the publication in print of his setting to music of the *Carmen Seculare* and for a live performance of it. This was an important occasion, as *The Times* on 29 April noted that the performance next day would be the only chance to hear the celebrated French singing-master M. Richer, stated to be Philidor's brother-in-law. The concert at the Great Hall, Hanover Square, was to be attended by the Prince of Wales and other leading members of society.

The Times of 8 June 1789 carried an advertisement for "a grand concert of vocal and instrumental music, entirely new and under the direction of Mr. Philidor." The concert that evening, "under the patronage of several Ladies of Distinction", included his setting of "An ode on His Majesty's Recovery". (King George III had been declared insane in 1788 but then unexpectedly restored to temporary health, as readers who have seen the film *The Madness of King George* will recall.) Carroll's article records that this was the last of Philidor's works to be performed during his lifetime, chiefly because the French Revolution broke out that summer.

Philidor's music was also going out of fashion perhaps. The last newspaper item I found was an advertisement in *The Times* on Tuesday and Wednesday 17 and 18 May 1791. This was for an unusual musical and dancing concert to be held on Thursday evening in the King's Theatre, with the work of several composers including Haydn and Philidor on the programme.

Was Philidor a swindler?

Dr. Carroll found a manuscript where Baretti wrote that the *Carmen Seculare* “brought me £150 in three nights, and three times as much to Philidor. It would have benefited us both greatly more, if Philidor had not proved a scoundrel”. To which Carroll commented that: “The significance of Baretti’s concluding remark is not known”. He did not guess at the reason and the matter has remained hidden until now in the newspapers.

The *Morning Post* on 7 April 1779 reported that “a very singular affair now engages the attention of the Polite World”. It claimed that Philidor had absconded to the continent about with £900, proceeds of the concerts, leaving Baretti to pay £50 for the room and about £300 to the musicians. Philidor was reported to have sent Baretti a letter from Dover saying that “business of the last consequence” had summoned him to Paris and he would remit money to Baretti from there. This allegation requires more research to verify it, or determine if it was just a scandalous rumour spread by Baretti, but evidently it was believed in some quarters to be true. A short satirical item in the *Literary Fly* on 17 April joked that:

“An anthem will be composed for the occasion by Mr. Phillidor, the moment he returns from his present foreign expedition, which he kindly undertook in order to pay into his old friend Horace’s own hands, the money which his *Carmen Seculare* produce din this most musical and learned country. All the performers will be paid before they strike a stroke.”

Since no more has been found about this, maybe it was all a libel or a misunderstanding. If Philidor really owed money, then he probably must have paid it back. Had he been prosecuted or lost his favourable standing in society on his next visit to England, we would almost certainly have been told about it. More research is needed!

Philidor’s displays at Parsloe’s

His heyday of the mid-1780s is well illustrated in the account given in Twiss’s book, which appeared in 1787, and which has also been digitised in the Eighteenth Century Collection Online. Philidor can be found there in volume 1, pages 149-171 (“Anecdotes of Mr Philidor, communicated by himself”), and volume 2, pages 215-7 (a few corrections and extra details). There is further material about Philidor in the second volume of Twiss’s *Miscellanies* (1805) including a list of some of Philidor’s later displays which will be discussed in next month’s column.



According to the anecdotes in Twiss’s book, Philidor first played blindfold chess when he was eighteen, and an account of him conducting two games simultaneously without sight of the board in Paris was reported in the French *Encyclopaedia*. Philidor beat both opponents. It was indicated that they were not total patzers as it was said they were men to whom he could ordinarily only give a knight, and moreover a false move was deliberately told him, as a test, which he detected. It was nearly forty years later when the reported exhibitions of this kind in London began. The earliest of these mentioned by Twiss occurred in May 1783 but it was not the first.

The *Whitehall Evening Post* previewed the occasion on Saturday 23

February 1782; it was apparently to take place that day, though this was not made explicit:

“The great match at Chess now pending in the club, is between Monsieur Philidor on one side, and the Hon. Mr Conway, Comte Bruhl and Mr Erskine on the other. The nature of the abovementioned match is the most extraordinary that can be conceived. There are to be three games simultaneously subsisting on three separate boards, each under the conduct of one of the former gentlemen; Philidor in the mean while standing out of sight of all the boards, and playing the entire three games, merely on the report he has of every succeeding move!”

The following Thursday, 28 February 1782, the *Public Advertiser* wrote:

The late extraordinary Match at Chess between Mons. Philidor and the three Gentlemen was certainly one of the greatest conceivable efforts of the Human Mind. A similar match with the same gentlemen... is to be attempted again...

On the 26 March, however, the newspaper had been informed this was not quite the novelty it seemed. According to one Keysler, a Father Sacchieri had been able to play three simultaneous blindfold games and hold a conversation at the same time, it was claimed. No more chess was mentioned that year.

From April, Philidor was preparing for a revival of his *Carmen Seculare*, for one night only at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, on Monday 13 May. Tickets were advertised at 10s. 6d. each for boxes and 5s in the pit, to include a free copy of the English translation. Philidor's address was given as 66 Jermyn street.

In 1783 the chess automaton was exhibited in Paris. The *Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser* claimed on 10 May that “all heads are turned here by the exhibition of an Automaton that plays at Chess, and would baffle the skill even of a Philidor”. This assertion was never tested. Philidor, now in his 57th year, was back in London.

Twiss's *Chess*, volume 1 (pages 152-4) reported on two displays in 1783, only one of which is found in the Burney Collection. The date Twiss gives (8 May) is contradicted by the newspaper account. Maybe that was the date of the lesser display he mentions, in which Count Bruhl (the Saxon ambassador, who had an English wife) made a draw, while Philidor defeated Jennings (who is not mentioned in any of the newspaper reports) and Erskine, giving a pawn and move to the latter.

On Tuesday 27 May, the *Whitehall Evening Post* reported that on the previous day he “performed one of those exhibitions for which he is so much celebrated”. This was almost certainly the one to which Twiss referred but that comment suggests that he may have already played others before 1783, apart from the one exhibition of 1782 cited above. One unclear point is that in the *Miscellanies* the date 8th May is given (and this turns up in ChessBase's databases) but the *Whitehall Evening Post* report states the display was on 26 May. The following paragraph in Twiss is exactly as in the newspaper.

“To those who understand Chess, this exertion of Mr Philidor's abilities must appear one of the greatest of which the human memory is susceptible. He goes through it with astonishing accuracy, and often corrects mistakes in those who have the board before them. Mr Philidor sits with his back to the tables, and some gentleman present who takes his part, informs him of the move of his antagonist, and then by his direction, plays his pieces as he dictates.”

His opponents in this triple blindfold simultaneous were Count Bruehl,

Mr. Bowdler (described as the two best players in London), and Mr. Mazieres. (Some reports, including that by Twiss, have “Maseres”.) He gave pawn and move to the weak opponent and just the first move to the others. Bowdler drew his game, which was one of the earliest by the master to be preserved.

Thomas Bowdler - Philidor

London blind simultaneous, May 1783

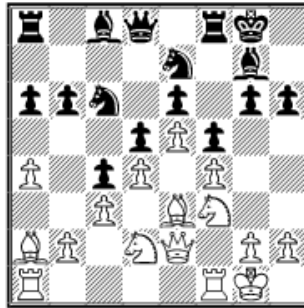
Sicilian Defence [B20]

1 e4 c5 2 Bc4 e6 3 Qe2 Nc6 4 c3 a6 5 a4 b6 6 f4 d6 7 Nf3 Nge7 8 Ba2 g6 9 d3 Bg7

Black's closed opening was probably unusual for the times.

10 Be3 d5 11 Nbd2 0–0 12 0–0 f5 13 e5 h6 14 d4! c4

Philidor has to block the position to prevent White's pieces obtaining access to the d4-square but now he has a typical French defence “bad bishop”. White should now try to lever the position open by b2-b3; Bowdler's next move suggests he was happy to get a draw if he could. Or, maybe he thought that he could win on the kingside.



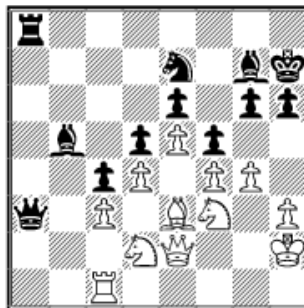
15 b4!? b5 16 Bb1 Bd7 17 Bc2 Qc7 18 h3! Kh7 19 Kh2 Na7 20 g4?!

Crisis time for Philidor; he must find some counterplay or risk being overwhelmed down the g-file. However, Bowdler has neglected to precede this attack by a4-a5! So there are definite chances for Black.

20...bxa4 21 Bxa4 Nb5 22 Bxb5 Bxb5!

Philidor does not shut in his bishop; he will open the a-file in a different way.

23 Rg1 Rg8 24 Rg3 a5 25 bxa5 Rxa5 26 Rgg1 Rga8 27 Rxa5 Qxa5 28 Rc1 Qa3



For the rest of the game, White has to defend, but he is able to do that thanks to the blocked nature of the position and some inaccuracies by his opponent.

29 Nf1 Qb3 30 Qd1 Ra2+ 31 Bd2 Qxd1 32 Rxd1 Ba4 33 Rb1 Bb3 34 Kg3 Nc6 35 Ne3 Bf8 36 Bc1 Ba3 37 h4 Bxc1 38 Rxc1 Ne7 39 h5 Re2

40 Re1 Rxe1 41 Nxe1 fxe4 42 Kxe4 Nf5 43 Nxf5 gxf5+ 44 Kg3 Bd1 45
Nf3 Bxf3 46 Kxf3 Kg7 47 Ke3 Kf7 48 Kd2 Ke7 49 Kc2 Kd7 50 Kb2
Kc6 51 Ka3 Kb5 1/2-1/2

Maseres - Philidor

London blind simultaneous, May 1783
(Remove Black's f-pawn.)

1 e4 Nh6

This unusual move is explained by the next, occupying the hole created by the odds on offer. Philidor is happy to block the center, knowing that the open f-file and White's inexperience will provide good chances later.

**2 d4 Nf7 3 Bd3 e6 4 Nf3 d5 5 e5 c5 6 c3 Nc6 7 Be3 b6 8 Bb5 Bd7 9 a4
a6 10 Bd3 g6**

As the bishop does not go to g7, this looks like a wasted move.

11 0-0 Qc7 12 Qe2 c4 13 Bc2 Rb8 14 Na3?

The knight has no prospects here and should be developed on d2.

14...Be7 15 h3 0-0



White has attempted nothing until now, but his next move implies an attack with f2-f4 and/or Qg4 or Ng4, so Philidor starts to get active.

**16 Nh2 b5 17 axb5 axb5 18 Qg4 Kg7 19 f4 Nh6 20 Qg3 Nf5 21 Bxf5
Rxf5 22 Qf3 b4**



Now Black has compensation for the pawn and the next move concedes the initiative altogether.

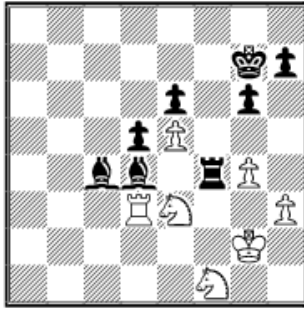
**23 cxb4? Nxb4 24 g4 Rff8 25 Qg2 Nd3 26 Bc1 Qb6 27 Nc2 Nxc1 28
Raxc1 Qxb2**

Pawns are level. Black has the bishop pair. It was imperative for White to try for an attack by f4-f5 here.

29 Ne3? Qxg2+ 30 Kxg2 Rb3 31 Rf3 Rd3 32 Rd1 Ba4 33 Rxd3 cxd3

Technique will suffice for the blindfold player now.

34 Nh1 Bb4 35 Rf2 Bc3 36 Ra2 Bb3 37 Rf2 Bxd4 38 Rd2 Rxf4 39 Rxd3 Bc4



Philidor keeps playing for simplification and eventually reaches a won king and pawn ending.

40 Nxc4 dxc4 41 Rf3 Rxf3 42 Kxf3 Bxe5 43 Ke4 Bf6 44 Ne3 c3 45 Kd3 Kf7 46 Nd1 Ke7 47 Nxc3 Bxc3 48 Kxc3 Kd6 49 Kd4 e5+ 50 Ke4 Ke6 51 h4 h6 52 Ke3 Kd5 53 Kd3 e4+ 54 Ke3 Ke5 55 Ke2 Kf4 56 Kf2 Kxg4 57 Ke3 Kxh4 58 Kxe4 Kg5 0-1

The following game was possibly the third played on this occasion, although Twiss later wrote that a display in 1790 was the only one from which all the games were preserved.

Hans Moritz von Bruehl - Philidor

London, May 1783?

Bishop's Opening [C23]

1 e4 e5 2 Bc4

Philidor has to meet his own favourite opening, played by one of his best pupils.

2...c6 3 Qe2 d6 4 c3 f5

The main idea of Philidor's Defence — although White has not played Nf3.

5 d3 Nf6 6 exf5 Bxf5 7 d4 e4 8 Bg5 d5

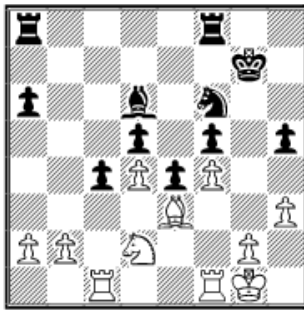
Black has a central pawn majority.



9 Bb3 Bd6 10 Nd2 Nbd7 11 h3

This, when followed by f4, concedes a protected passed pawn. White should play for f2-f3.

11...h6 12 Be3 Qe7 13 f4 h5 14 c4 a6 15 cxd5 cxd5 16 Qf2 0-0 17 Ne2 b5 18 0-0 Nb6 19 Ng3 g6 20 Rac1 Nc4 21 Nxf5 gxf5 22 Qg3+ Qg7 23 Qxg7+ Kxg7 24 Bxc4 bxc4

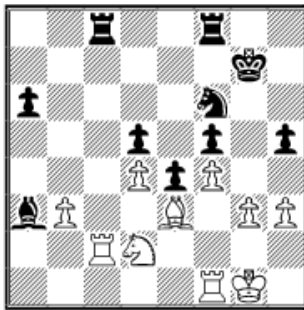


The blindfold player does not want complex tactics. Philidor, a century before Steinitz's theory, is happy to accumulate small positional advantages that he can exploit in the endgame.

25 g3?! Rab8 26 b3

This should have been played last move.

26...Ba3 27 Rc2 cxb3 28 axb3 Rbc8



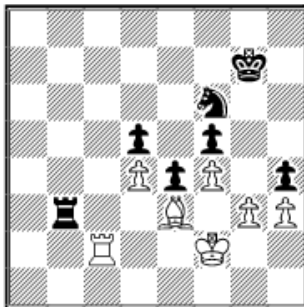
29 Rxc8

The player with sight of the board should have preferred the more complicated 29 Ra2, when Philidor must choose between 29...Bb4 30 Rxa6 Rc2 or 29...Rc3! 30 Kf2 Bc1. In the latter case, White must avoid 31 Rxa6? Bxd2 32 Bxd2 e3+ 33 Bxe3 Ne4+ 34 Ke2 (34 Kf3 Nd2+) 34... Nxc3+ etc.

29...Rxc8 30 Ra1 Bb4 31 Rxa6 Rc3 32 Kf2 Rd3 33 Ra2 Bxd2 34 Rxd2 Rxb3

Philidor knows about knight versus bad bishop advantages too, but the win is not yet clear.

35 Rc2 h4!?



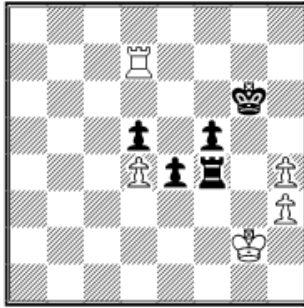
36 Rc7+

According to ChessBase, 36 gxh4 would be met by 36...Nh5 (If 36...Kg6, White prevents a king march by the pin 37 Rc6.) 37 Ke2 Ng3+ 38 Kf2 Nf1 39 Bc1 Rf3+ 40 Kg2 Ne3+ 41 Bxe3 Rxe3 42 Rc5 Rf3 43 Rxd5 Rxf4 with a winning rook endgame. Is there anything clearer?

36...Kg6 37 gxh4 Nh5 38 Rd7?!

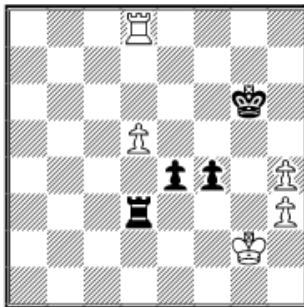
Why not keep making a nuisance of the rook on the c-file? Evidently White did not expect the reply.

38...Nxf4!? 39 Bxf4 Rf3+ 40 Kg2 Rxf4



Despite the pawn minus (after White's next move) it is clearly Black who has the winning chances.

41 Rxd5 Rf3 42 Rd8 Rd3 43 d5 f4



44 d6?

Apparently this is the losing move. The Count should have played 44 h5 +! When Philidor has a dilemma about where to place his king. If 44... Kf7, as in the game, then it is exposed to checks: 45 Rd7+ Ke8 46 Rd6 Rd2+ 47 Kf1 threatens to win the e-pawn by a check, and if 47...e3 48 Rf6. If instead 44...Kh6 to block the h-pawn and evade checks, then 45 d6 Rd2+ 46 Kf1 e3 and now we see why Philidor wanted his king on f7: here 47 Rf8 attacks the black f-pawn and draws.

44...Rd2+ 45 Kf1 Kf7

White cannot get his rook to the f-file because of the combined mating and queening threats.

46 h5 e3 47 h6 f3 0-1

A racehorse called Phillidor

One detail I have not seen mentioned elsewhere is that a racehorse was named after him!

Perhaps one of the greatest tributes that could be paid to Philidor was to name a racehorse after him — a detail that perhaps has not been noted before? The *Racing Calendar* of 24 March 1779 noted that at Newmarket on the coming Friday there would be a sweepstake between four horses, the owners putting up fifty guineas each. One of the contenders was Mr. Panton's "Phillidor". The *London Evening Post* on 8 April 1779 mentioned another race involving the four-year-old; it finished third of three. It also appears in other racing reports that season. Although the

horse appears not to have won any races that year, it cannot have been hopeless; in 1780 the Duke of Queensberry was running "Phillidor", presumably having bought him from Panton. Some horses on sale are described as "out of Phillidor's dam", implying it had good pedigree and was the half-brother of a horse with form. Moreover, in 1798 a couple of Tattersall's advertisements for horse sales included an eight-year-old hunter that was sired by the same stallion.

The horse named after him, now sold on to a Mr. Burt, was clearly past its best in 1782. The *Racing Calendar* of 9 October reported on a race held at Leicester on Wednesday 18 September: the Burgesses' Purse for horses that never won a race worth more than £50 (matches excepted). Phillidor fell in this race.

As there were no chess reports in the Burney Collection for 1784, 1785 or 1786, this column will take up the story again with 1787 next month.

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