

Editor note: Back in the September 2023 issue of the AGPI Quarterly, Vol. 7 No. 1, Jim Polczynski wrote about AGON, the first board game played on a hexagonal board. Member Fred Horn provides us some additional information on the game.

Article and photos by Fred Horn

AGON

was invented by Anthony Peacock, an inhabitant of London, England residing at 2 Cumberland Row, Islington, and introduced to the market in 1842. However, there are some sources that date the game around 1780 as a French invention by Adrian Veageois, but no evidence for this could be found anywhere.

In 1872 the English game company Jaques listed the game in their catalog for sale. About the "what and how" we do not know more because in WWII their London office and workplace were bombed by the Germans and burned to the ground. Their complete archives were lost.

play (not previously used on gameboards) and second because of the way the captured pieces are reintroduced onto the board. The capturing of enemy pieces by enclosing (the Custodian capture) was also for a long time not used in game play.

The goal of the game is simple: Move your King onto the middle field, surrounded by your 6 Pawns!

The starting setup is shown below for the Queen's Guard.

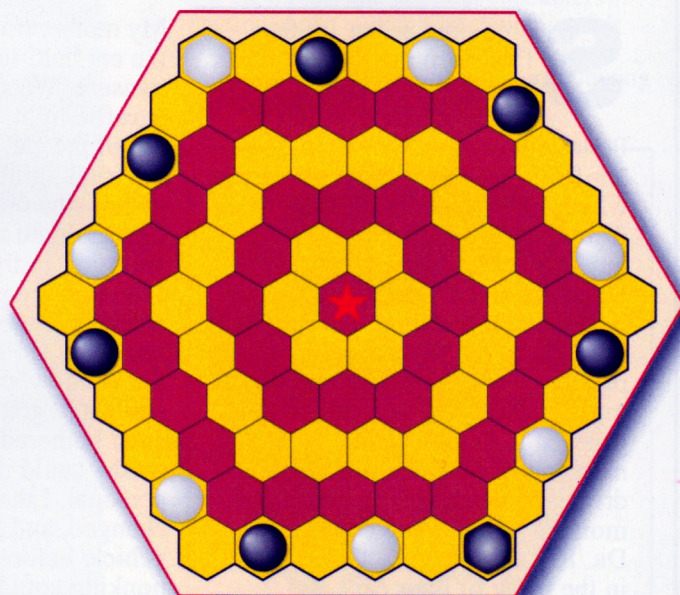
One starting variant is to have the two Kings opposite each other at the outer ring and thereafter players place their pawns, turn by turn on an empty place there. Then play continues as normal.

A variant for the above mentioned rules (the captured pieces are replaced by the opponent in his following turns) is that the capturing player places the captured piece (or pieces) on an empty space on the outer ring or the captured king on an empty field somewhere on the board on his turn. The opponent then takes his or her following (normal) turn. We are not sure what is the best strategic way to play!

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This is a wonderful game to play, so make yourself a gameboard, use two of your Chess kings as well as six pawns and play!

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AGON: The first game on a board with Hexagonal fields. In English-speaking countries this game is also sold under the title of QUEEN'S GUARD.

AGON, OR THE QUEEN'S GUARDS.

In this game each player has seven pieces, consisting of a queen and six guards. The diagram (No. 22) will show the position of the pieces on commencing the game. Having cast for the first move, the players move alternately one hexagon at a time, to the next hexagon of the same colour, towards the centre, it not being allowable to move any piece backwards. Whenever a piece (the queen excepted) is found to be placed between two of the adversary's, so as to form a straight line, on the board, this piece must be removed from the board till the next move, when it may be placed anywhere in the outer row. If the queen, in the same way, be found between two of the adversary's pieces, she must be moved from the board till the next move, when she may be placed on any vacant place the player wishes. Whoever first puts all his pieces in the centre, that is, the queen in the centre and the six guards around her, wins the game. The players, who sit opposite each other, should have the board placed with the corners right and left of each, as represented in the diagram. The colour of those pieces, the queen of which is on the right hand, is to be taken by each player. The rules of the game are to be had with the board and pieces.

No. 22

In the 19th century the game was often mentioned in books on games, see above—AGON, or the Queen's Guards.

The game itself is exceptional for two reasons. First, because of the use of hexagons as the fields of

