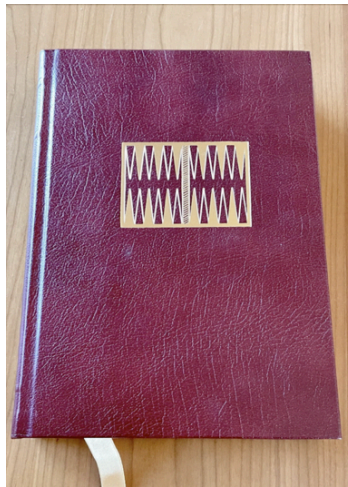

Backgammon Catalogue

October 2025

Books & Paper, Checkers, Cubes

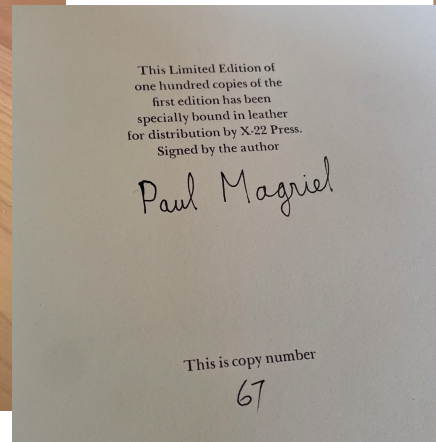


Items in this catalogue are ordered by price, from highest to lowest. Buyer to pay actual shipping costs.

To make a purchase, email your request, including the Item #, along with your name, shipping address, and preferred method of payment to: asteg@mindspring.com

Presentation Edition, Hardcover in slipcase (7.5" x 10.5" / 404 pp.)

First editions -- and even signed first editions -- of Magriel's 'Backgammon' are not terribly rare . . . unless they are one of the 100 gilt-edged 'Presentation' 1st Editions bound in red leather, individually numbered and signed by the author. This specimen, #67, is in as-new condition, including that delicious "new book smell" that takes me back to grade school. The only flaw is a small bit of tape affixed to the back of the slip-cover (see picture) -- which hardly matters since you'll be putting this on your shelf with the gold-embossed title on display.



Tournament Size - Bakelite

A pristine set of cherry-red and lemon-yellow checkers in an attractive ringed carving pattern. Possibly an early Crisloid set.

Diameter: 1.71" (43.43 mm)

Thickness: .46" (11.68 mm)

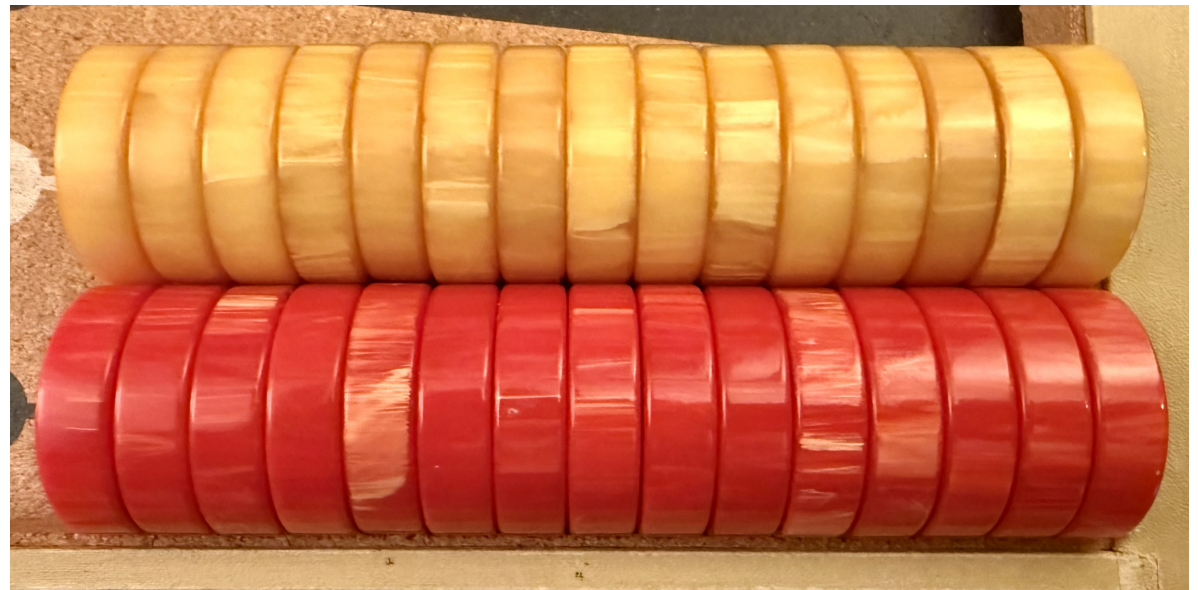
Lot Weight: 21.8 oz (618 g)

QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 10.25" (26.04 cm)

TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checker stack: 6.875" (17.46 cm)



C-0545: Checker Set of 30 (ca. 1970s?)

\$500.00

Tournament Size - Bakelite

Lovely deep butterscotch and green set with an attractive ring carving pattern and flat center. Plenty of bold swirling variations in the greens and subtler mottling in the yellows. These deserve a fine custom board to be built around them.

Diameter: 1.69" (42.93 mm)

Thickness: .46" (11.68 mm)

Lot Weight: 21.8 oz (618 g)

QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 10.125" (25.72 cm)

TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checker stack: 6.95" (17.65 cm)



Tournament Size - Bakelite

The thinner form of these bright red & yellow checkers is similar to that of modern checkers, so this set might be a good candidate if you're looking to swap bakelite into an existing board -- check those checker tray dimensions! In nice condition, polished to a gentle gleam. Just a couple of tiny edge flecks. The red stack is marginally shorter than the yellow, by just around .19".

Diameter: 1.72" (43.69 mm)

Thickness: .43" (10.92 mm)

Lot Weight: 21.7 oz (615 g)

QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 10.3125" (26.19 cm)

TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checker stack: 6.375" (16.19 cm)



Medium Size - Bakelite

This handsome complete set of backgammon implements (30 checkers, 4 dice, 1 doubling cube) date to the late 1930's and came from an Arthur Popper (AP Games) patented board that was too worn to salvage. The greens are of a particularly rich emerald color with subtle swirlings while the yellows are a solid putty color without swirls. Typical of these sets, there is some mild variation in the color hues, plainly visible in the photos. (Checkers only, \$200)

Diameter: 1.48" (37.59 mm)

Thickness: .46" (11.68 mm)

Lot Weight: 15.1 oz (428 g)

QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 8.875" (22.54 cm)

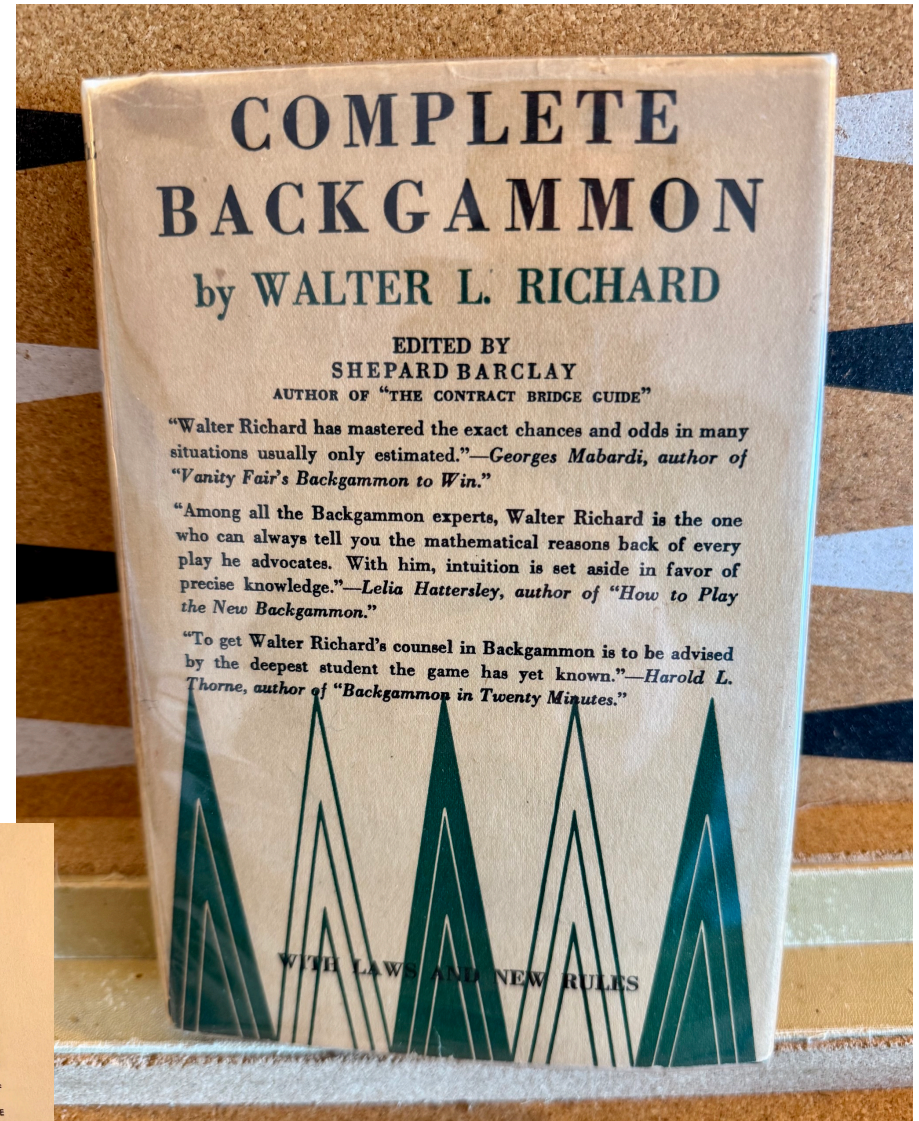
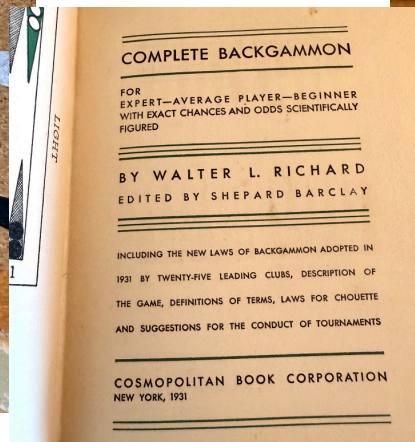
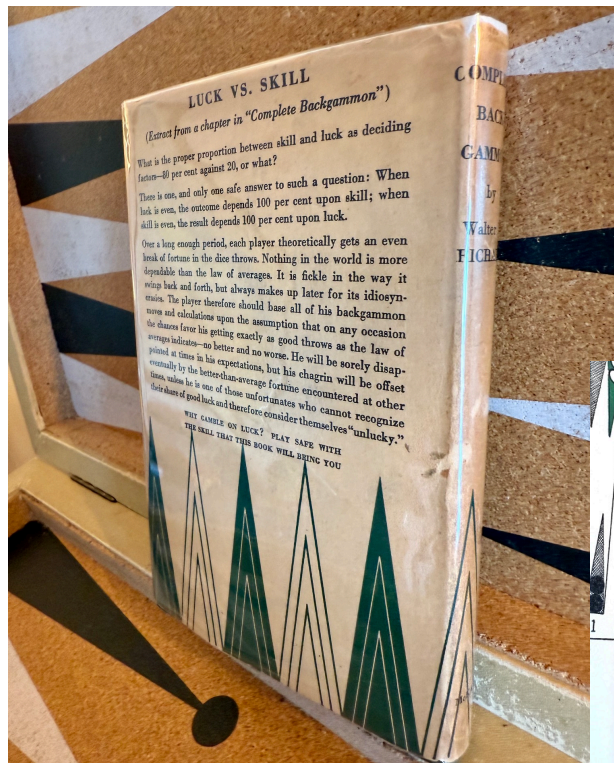
TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checker stack: 6.95" (17.65 cm)



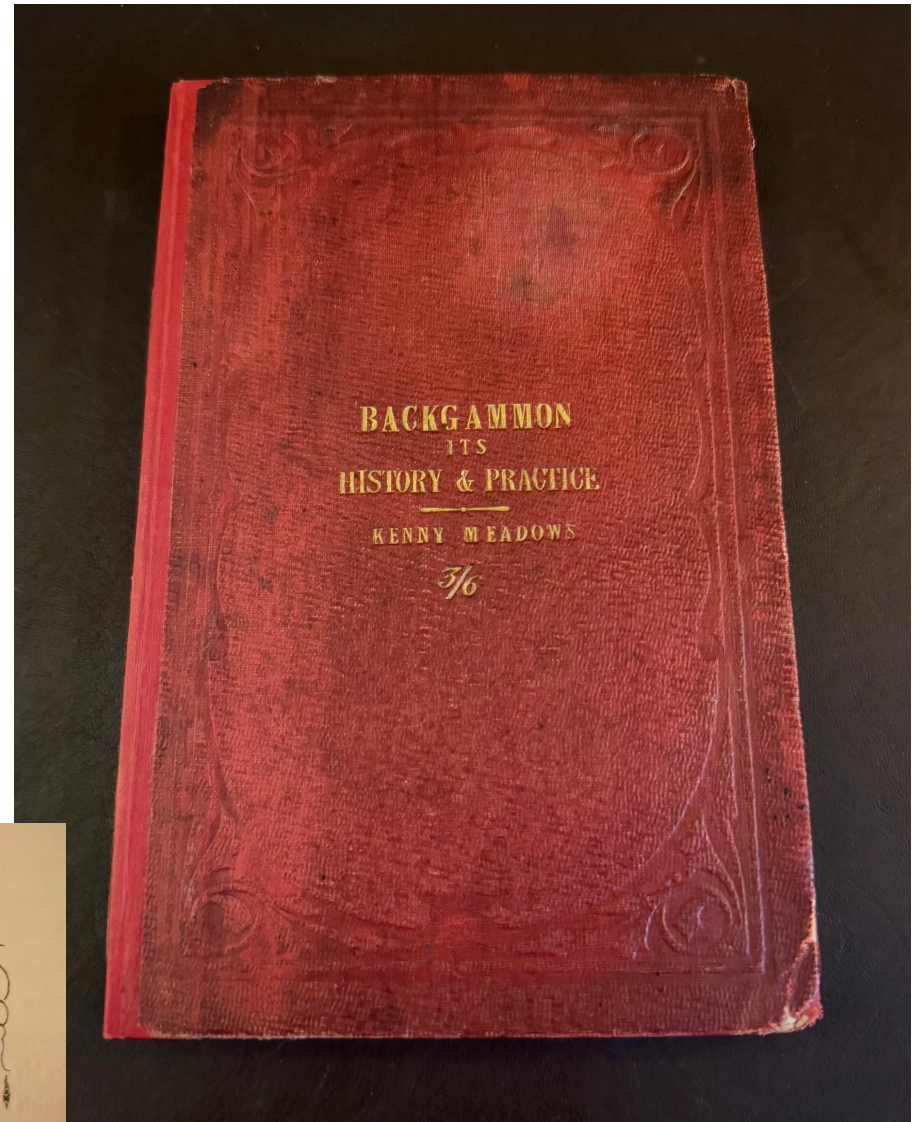
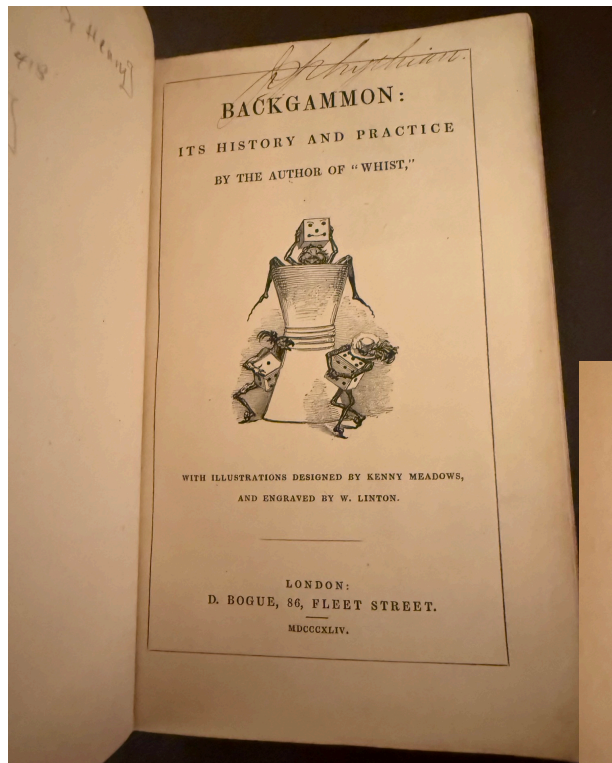
5th Printing (1940), Hardcover (7.5" x 5.125" / 116 pp.)

This is a very nice 1st edition printing of Richard's authoritative book on the game published in the spring of 1931 and including the newly-codified "Laws & Rules" of the game as agreed upon by the private clubs of the day. Original dust jacket is fully intact and enclosed in a mylar sleeve. The inside cover features a bookplate from The Princeton Antiques Bookshop in Atlantic City.



1st Edition, Soft card covers (4.25" x 6.5" / 79 pp.)

Here we have a scarce copy of the original 1844 printing that was re-issued during the 1930 backgammon craze in a facsimile edition under the title '*Comic Backgammon*'. This copy has been meticulously restored by applying the original cloth cover to fresh red boards -- even the original spine has been affixed to the new binding. Interior is in good shape, with some bibliographic pencil markings on the title and facing page, and a bookplate on the inside cover.



C-0002: Checker Set of 15 (ca. 1950s-60s)

\$250.00

Tournament Size - Bakelite

A gorgeous set of carved, blood-red checkers. There is one replacement checker that is not original to the set, but it is very unlikely anyone would notice it over the board. Can you spot it?

Diameter: 1.72" (43.69 mm)

Thickness: .46" (11.68 mm)

Lot Weight: 10.7 oz (303 g)

QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 10.3125" (26.19 cm)

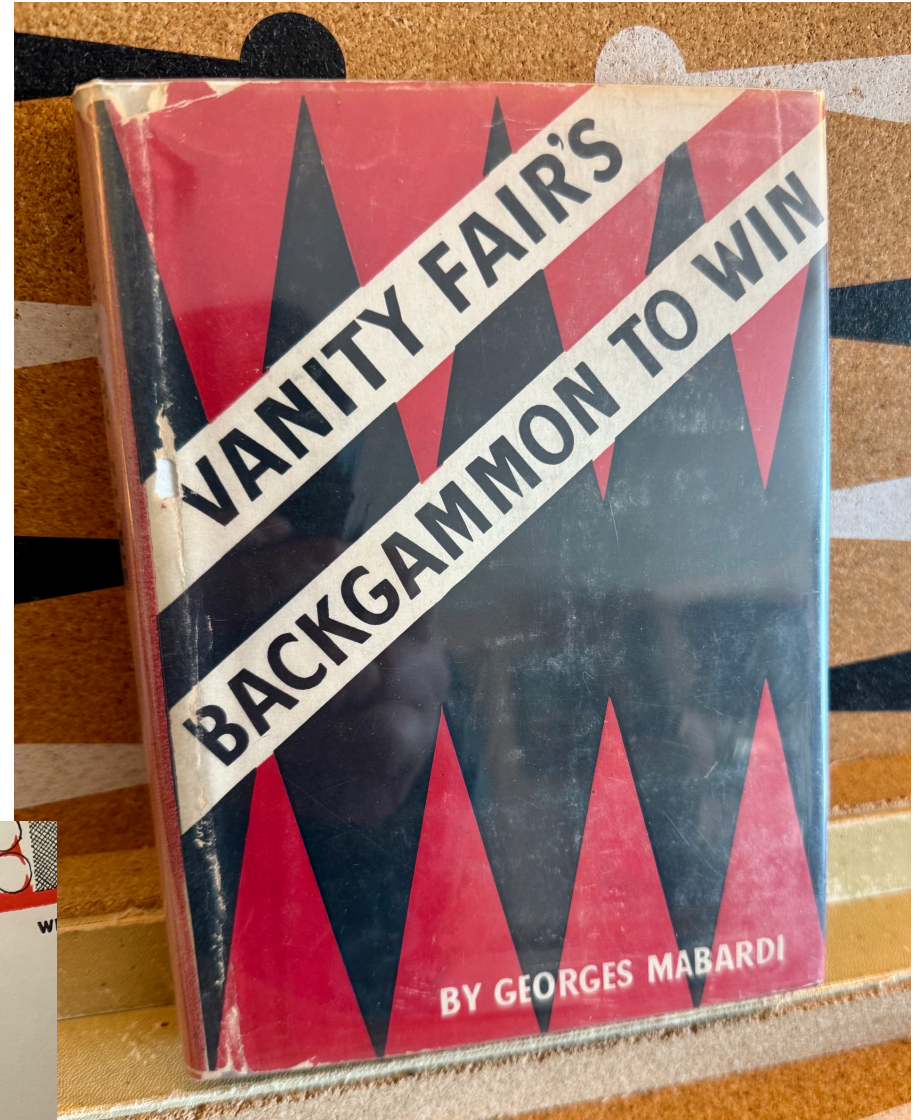
TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checker stack: 6.875" (17.46 cm)



1st Edition, Hardcover (7" x 5.25" / 158 pp.)

Vanity Fair brings all the bold graphical and illustrative style you could hope for in this delightful jazz-age gem. The bold theorizing by Egyptian master Georges Mabardi is often wrong-headed, even for its time, but along with a delightful chapter on etiquette his commentary provides a vivid and atmospheric account of how backgammon was played during its first US boom. Don't settle for the weak 1970's reprint, which stripped out the dozens of charming high-life images! While first editions are not rare, fewer have survived with their original dust jackets intact as we have here.



C-0503: Checker Set of 30 (ca. 1930s?)

\$225.00

Medium Size - Bakelite

This is a very unusual set of backgammon checkers in jet black and gold, with softly rounded edges. Having never seen a complete backgammon set with this style of checkers, dating them is anyone's guess, 1930s-60's. Definitely an interesting candidate for a custom "cafe size" luxury set.

Diameter: 1.44" (36.58 mm)

Thickness: .37" (9.4 mm)

Lot Weight: 9.2 oz (261 g)

QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 8.625" (21.91 cm)

TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checker stack: 5.5" (13.97 cm)



Standard Size - Bakelite

Owen trayner, mentiond by Paul Magriel in a 1978 New York Times article shortly after his death at the age of 67, was known as "Mr. backgammon" in Southern Florida. This custom cube bearing his name will be of interest to collectors interested in the Florida milieu or the wider backgammon boom of the 60's-70's.



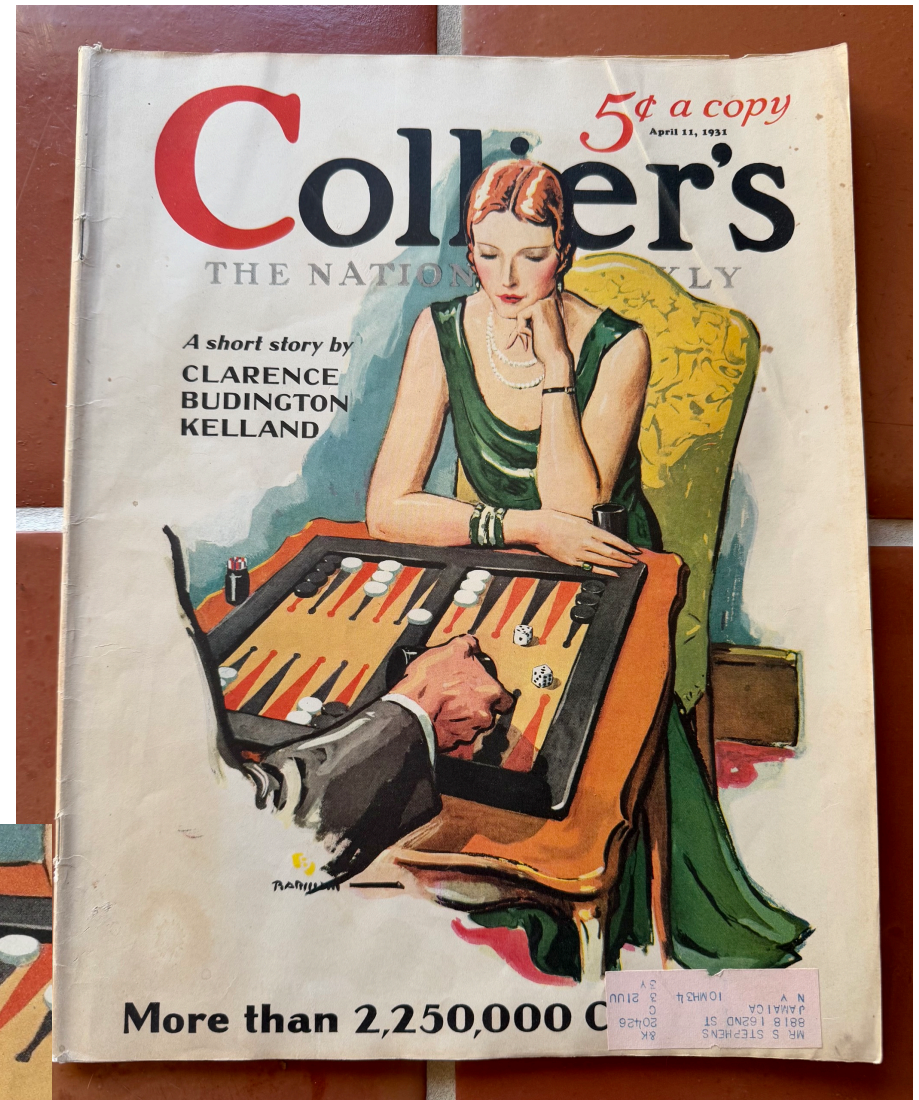
Size: 1" (2.54 cm)

Weight: .8 oz (23 g)

April 11, 1931 (14" x 11", 74 pp.)

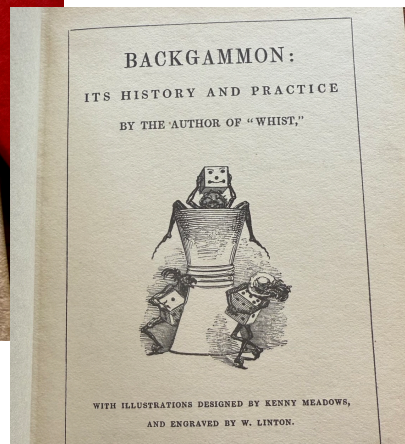
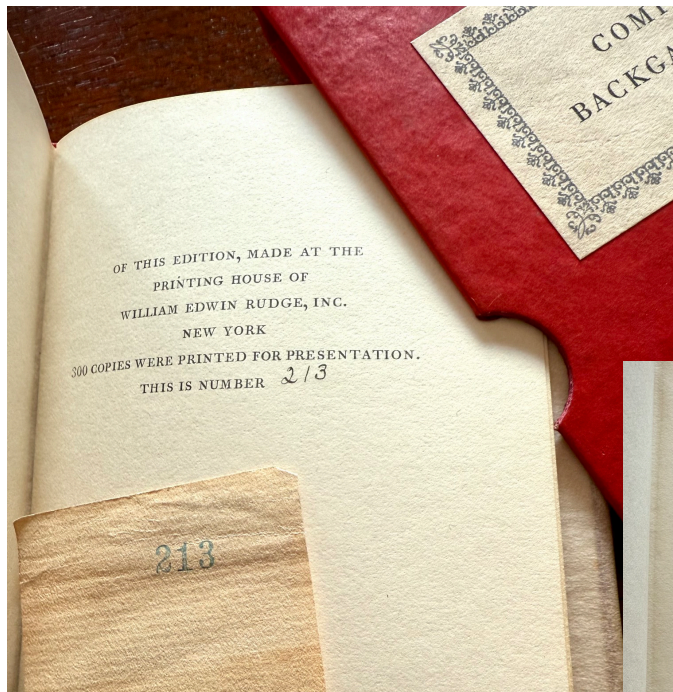
This issue of Collier's features a wonderful cover illustration by Jay Hyde Barnum capturing the stylish Jazz Age appeal of backgammon. A notable detail is the cylinder of "Backgammon Matches" at the side of the table, in place of a doubling cube.

This is a notably bright, complete copy of this desirable issue, ideal for framing. Note crease across upper right corner, some rolling of the spine near the upper staple, and some discoloration along edges. I recommend framing the entire issue as an artifact rather than removing the cover.



Presentation Edition, Hardcover (6.5" x 4.25" / 79 pp.)

A Barry Vail reprint of *Backgammon: Its History and Practice* (1844), this is a lightly satiric introduction to backgammon accompanied by whimsical illustrations. While the reprints are not rare, these individually numbered 'presentation copies' in their original slip covers are quite scarce. This one is notably fresh, with original crepe wrapper in place. (The underlying book cover is the same as the other copy of the book in this catalogue.)



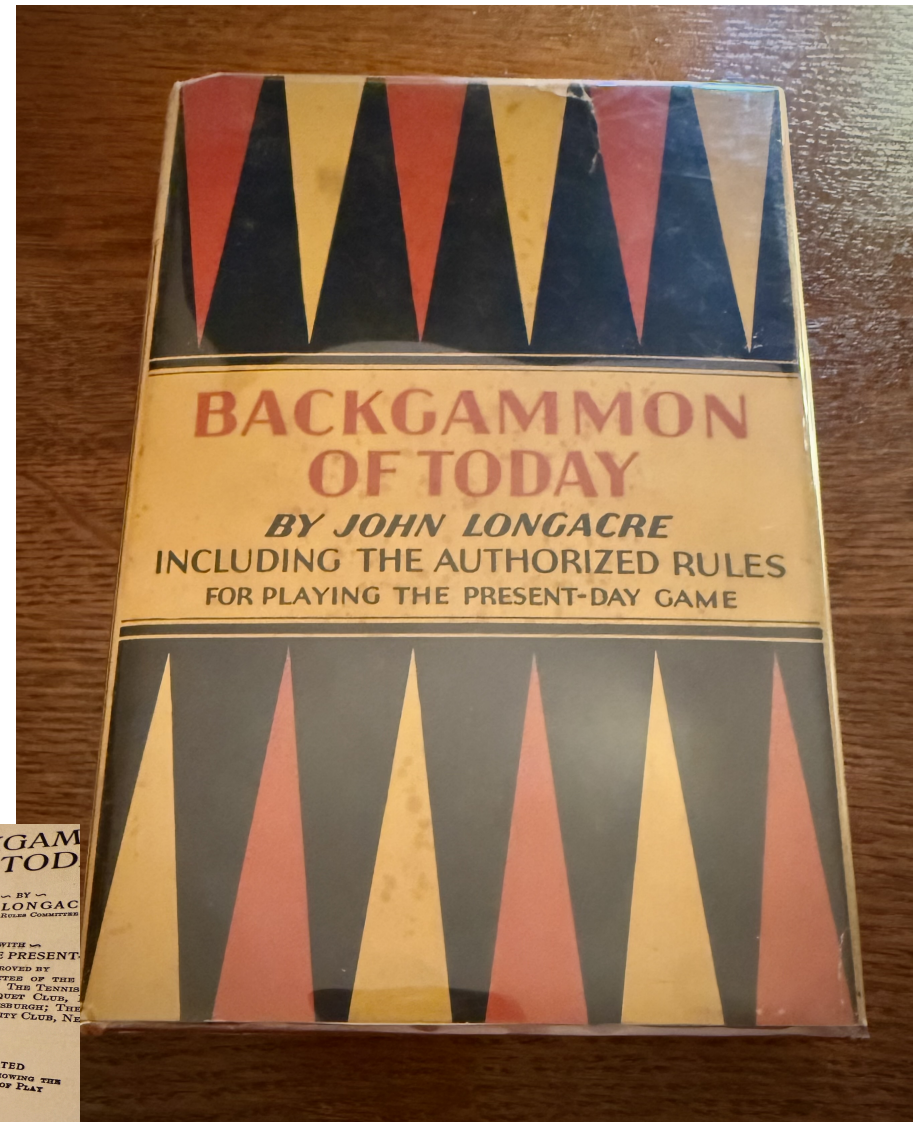
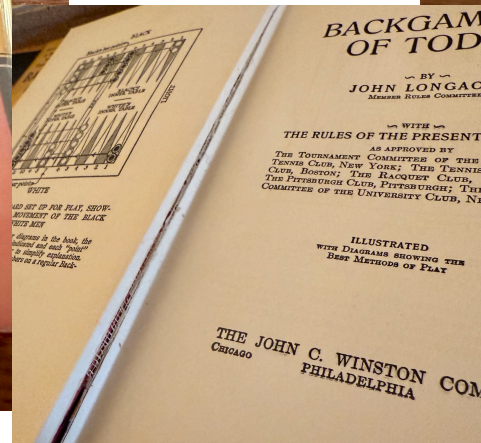
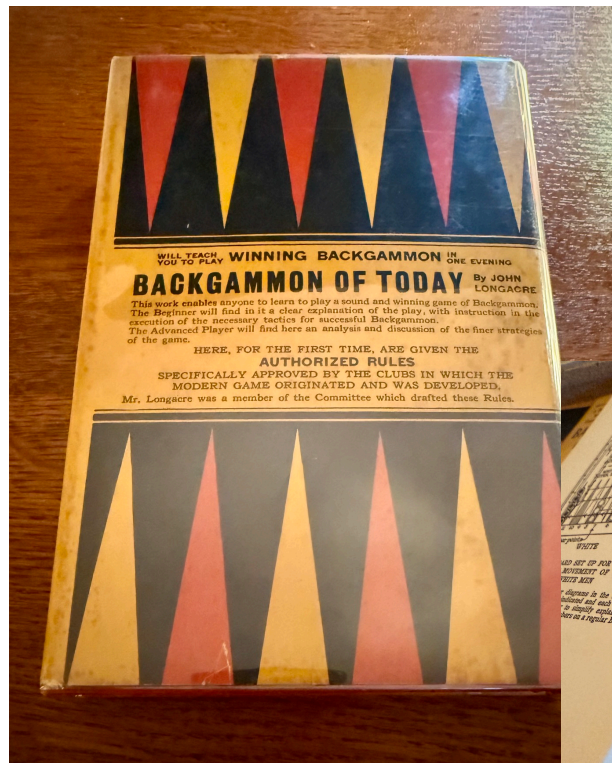
1982-83, softback journal (8.5" x 11" / 60+ pp)

Kent Goulding's *Backgammon with the Champions* marked a milestone in backgammon history as afforded our game the dignity of match transcription, aspiring to the professionalism of the chess world. Each issue, from the covers featuring charming sketches of the players, to the rigorous play-by-play commentary, provides a vivid portrait of the state of the game among the best in the early 1980's. It can still be highly instructive to read these commentaries so long as you have a trusted 'bot at your side to overrule the outmoded decisions. This is a complete set of the second Volume, in generally good used condition.



1st Edition, Hardcover (5.25" x 7.5" / 132 pp.)

Another stylish hardback from the 1930-31 American boom. Longacre was one of the major figures in codifying the rules, but was almost comically slow to grasp the concept of risk and reward when it came to doubling, as you will see here. This is a nice copy with the handsome dust jacket intact and in very nice condition save for a minor tear visible at the top front, and there is a split along the paper at the title page -- both visible in the images below, as is some mottling on the jacket.



Small Size - Bakelite

This small, gem-like set of carved bakelite checkers was probably produced by Drueke in the 1940's -60's. Excellent condition, as-new.

Diameter: 1.21" (30.73 mm)

Thickness: .34" (8.64 mm)

Lot Weight: 8.1 oz (230 g)

QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 7.25" (18.42 cm)

TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checker stack: 5.125" (13.02 cm)



Standard Size - Bakelite

This cherry-red cube would have come along with one of Arthur Popper's 'AP Games' backgammon sets from the late 1930's.

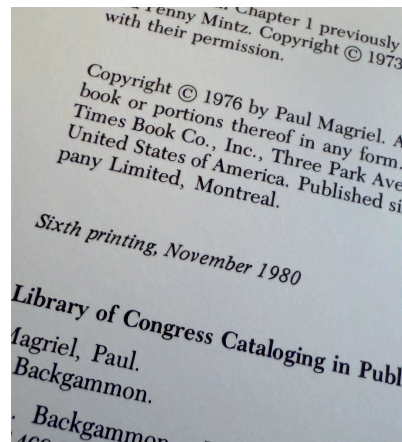
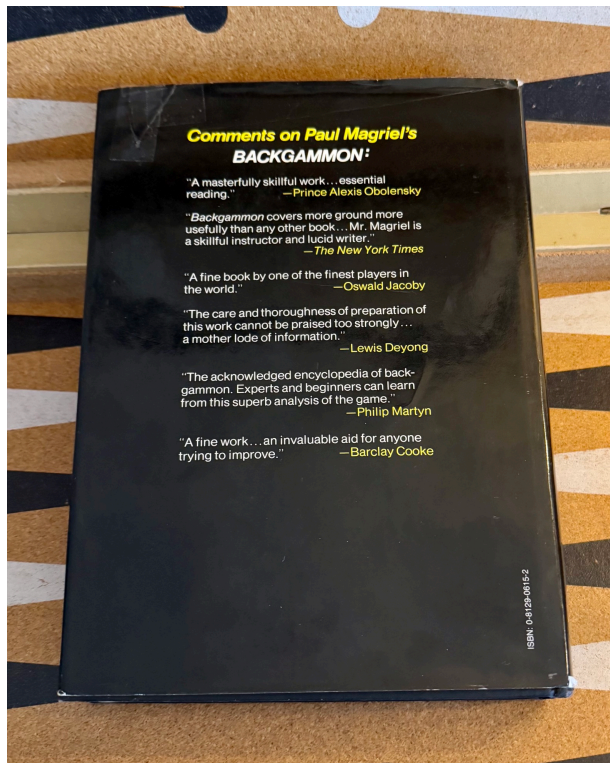


Size: 1" (2.54 cm)

Weight: .9 oz (26 g)

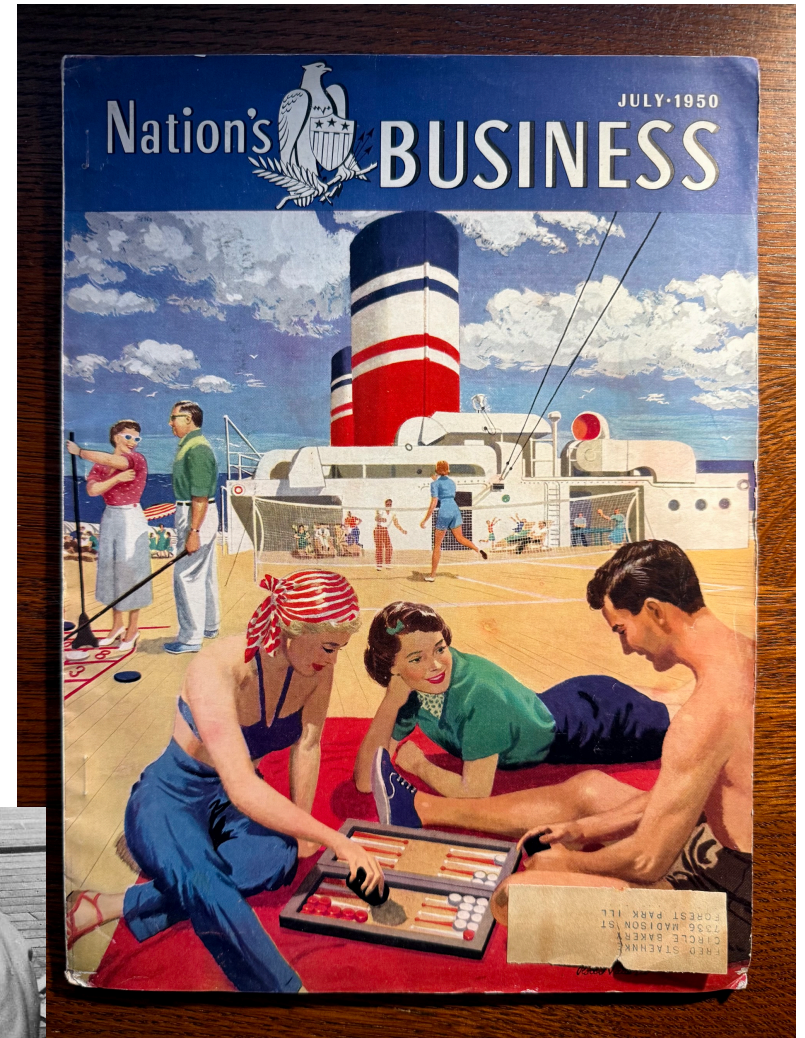
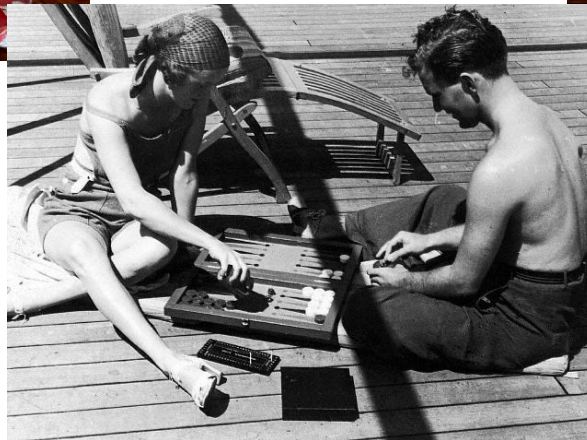
6th Printing, Hardcover (7.5" x 10.5" / 404 pp.)

'Magriel' remains the essential exposition of backgammon principles for the serious student of the game. Although computer analysis has proven some of the examples technically incorrect, Magriel's principles remain unchallenged. This original 1970's-era hardback with the iconic dust jacket intact (note small tape repair on upper left back side) should serve as a good talisman on your bookshelf -- once you've studied it. Very fine clean condition, virtually as-new, no markings.



July, 1950 (8.75" x 12")

This is a notably clean, bright copy of this 1950 magazine with its fabulous, iconic backgammon image. The whole magazine will fit neatly into a standard store-bought frame - or you can go the custom route for the full museum treatment if you like. Detail image shows that a previous owner attempted to lift the delivery address, causing a small chip underneath. (Personally, I like my framed magazines to have a label intact, marking them as genuine artifacts.) Also pictured below is the b/w 1930's photo that served as a reference photo for the artist.



Small Size - Bakelite

I've seen very few of the Popper-style bowl-carved checkers in this diminutive 1.25" style. The emerald green is typical of this late -1930's checker sets, but the light checkers are a lovely ivory-cream color rather than the usual putty-yellow. Unfortunately one of the creams is a flat replacement checker, and you'll be hard pressed to find a better substitute.

Diameter: 1.23" (31.24 mm)

Thickness: .33" (8.38 mm)

Lot Weight: 8.5 oz (241 g)

QUADRANT TOLERANCE

Width of 6 checkers: 7.375" (18.73 cm)

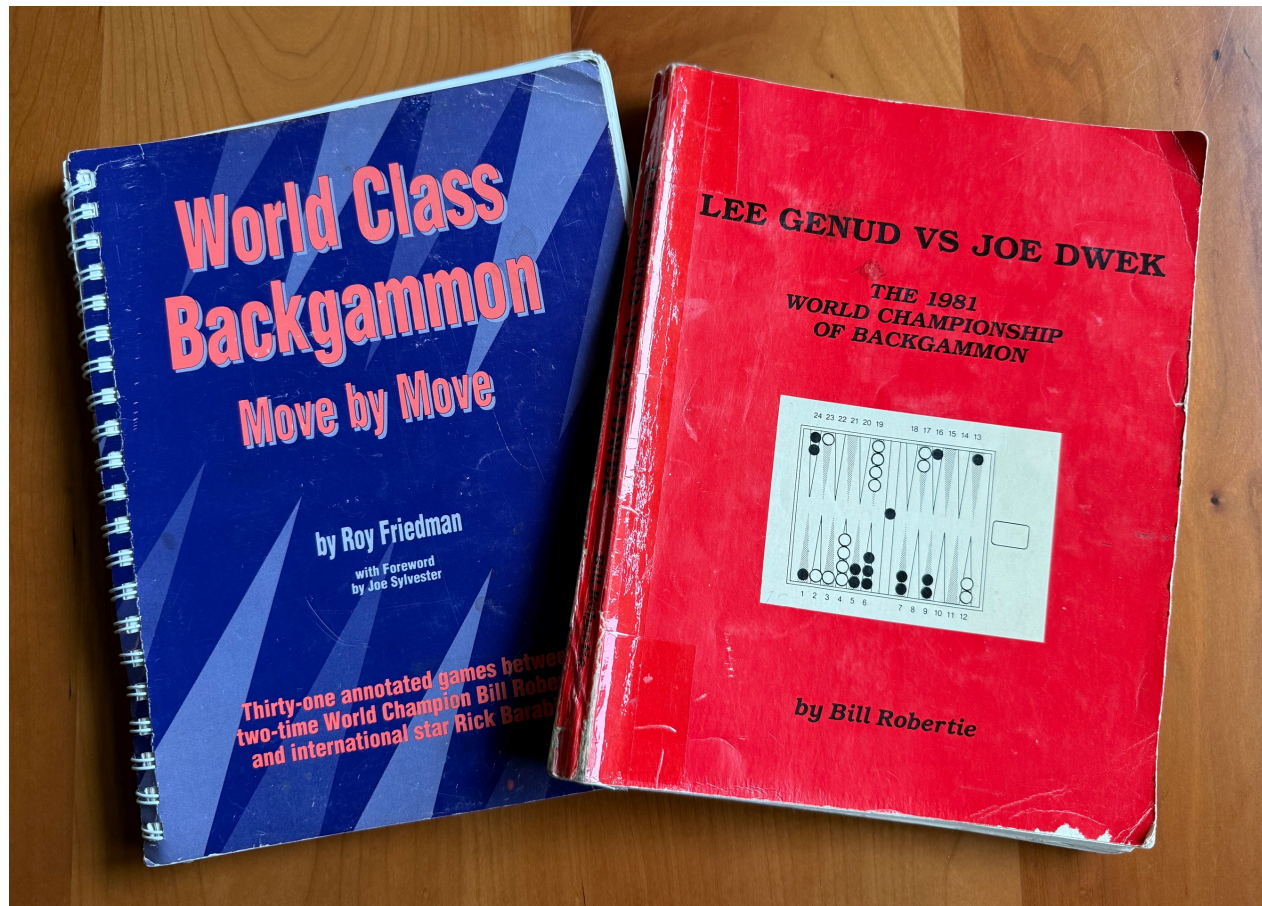
TRAY LENGTH

Length of 15 checker stack: 4.95" (12.57 cm)



1982 / 1989, softcover (8.5" x 11")

Here we have a pair of the great match transcription commentaries from the 1980's. While many of the arguments and recommended plays will have been overturned by the judgment of bots like XG, playing through these matches by transcribing them yourself as you play -- or better yet by allowing *Backgammon Studio* to rate your own play against that of the original experts -- can be a rewarding and entertaining way to study. Both copies are complete and essentially intact, but show wear, with occasional pen markings. The Robertie book has a rolled spine and the some pages are beginning to pull away from the glued binding.



New Yorker, advertisement (8.5" x 11")

Backgammon was in a popularity lull in the 1950's, but still associated with high-living glamor and sex appeal, as suggested by this stylish print ad. Note the page (the whole issue actually) was printed at a slight angle, as you can see if you look at the lower margin. There is also a very slight crease visible, owing to the magazine being folded over for delivery. The entire magazine will be sent to protect the ad in shipping. Careful removal of the ad will be the buyer's task, or perhaps best left to a professional framer.



 The main advertisement features a woman with blonde hair, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt with lace trim and a red belt, sitting at a table and playing backgammon. She is holding a glass of wine. The background is a dark, moody interior. The text on the advertisement reads:

IN YOUR WONDERFUL WORLD... **Lady Manhattan shirts**

What's your game? Backgammon or bewitchment, you'll make your own luck in Lady Manhattan's winning shirt. Its ladylike ways are more potent (and deceptive) than loaded dice! Further strategy... the tucked front, outrageously feminine nylon lace trim, French cuffs, extra-long stay-put shirt tails. Shirt: no-iron Dacron® and cotton in your favorite colors, \$10.95. Slacks: tapered cotton velveteen, \$17.95. All in sizes 10-18. Prices slightly higher in the West. Lady Manhattan, a division of The Manhattan Shirt Company, 1407 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.

LORD & TAYLOR NEW YORK, HECHT CO. WASHINGTON & BALTIMORE, MELLON'S CHARLOTTE, RICH'S ATLANTA, F. & R. LAZARUS COLUMBUS, L. S. AYRES INDIANAPOLIS, DAYTON CO. MINNEAPOLIS, MARSHALL FIELD & CO. CHICAGO & SUBURBAN STORES, BULLOCK'S LOS ANGELES, ROOS-ATKINS SAN FRANCISCO

Standard Size - Bakelite

This late-era bakelite cube with painted numerals appears is virtually as-new. Note the '8' and '32' are a bit off-center.

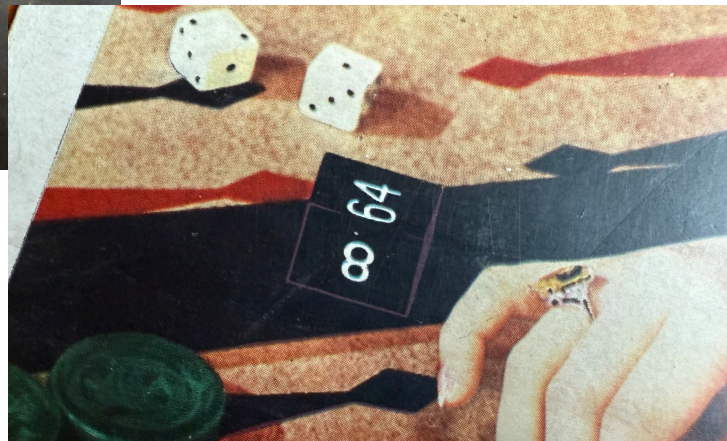


Size: 1" (2.54 cm)

Weight: .8 oz (23 g)

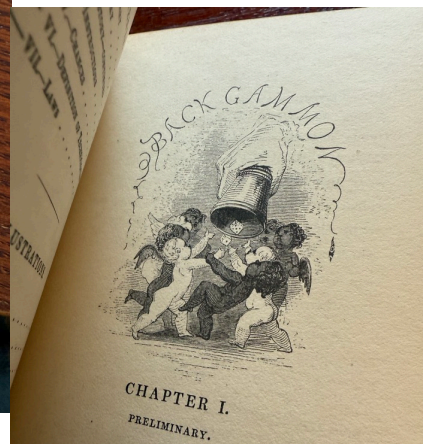
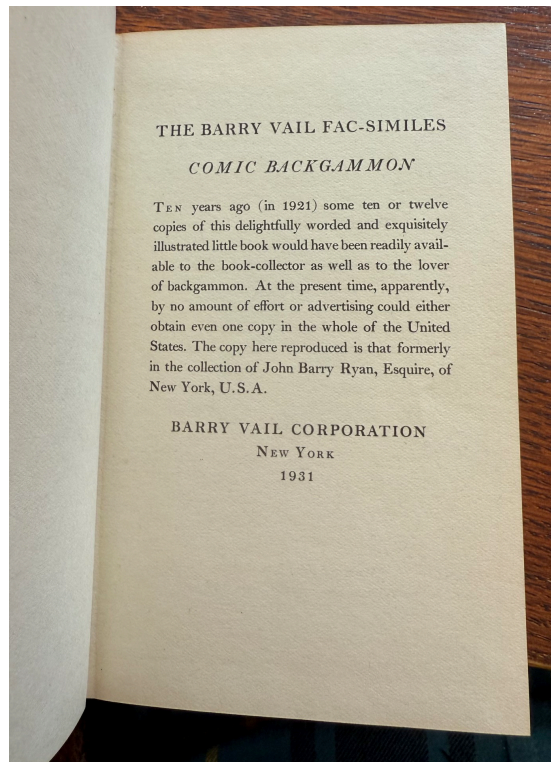
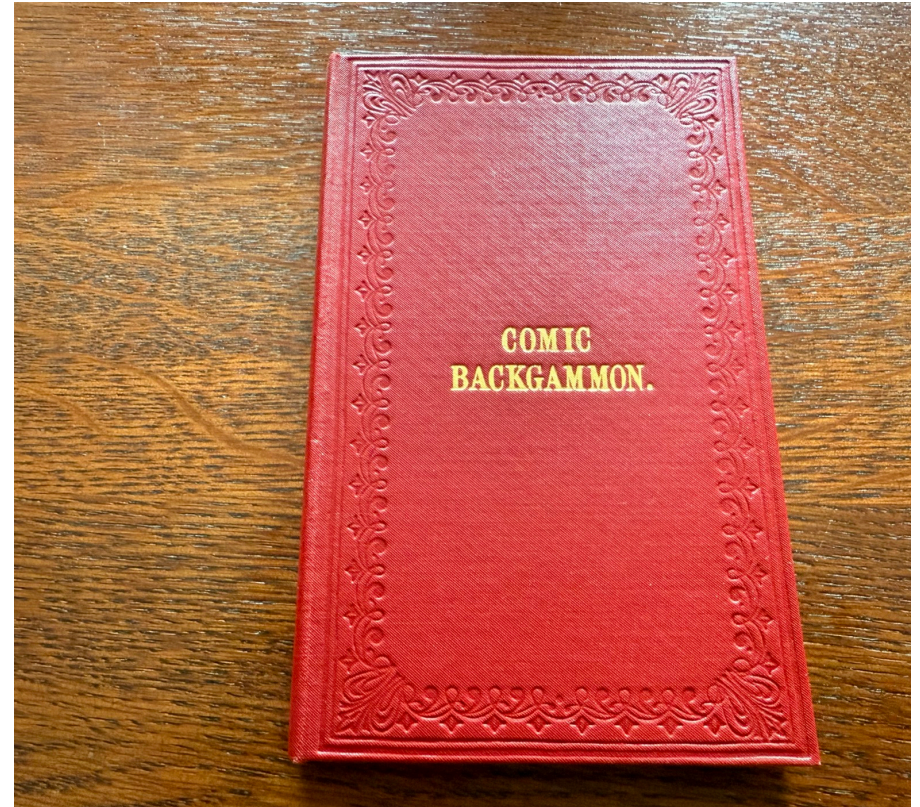
Period magazine, advertisement (approx. 8" x 11")

A 1933 ad rich in detail, showing the vivid diamond-tip variation on the popular dotted point style, doubling cube consistent with the 1930 numeral scheme, and the attractive carved "bullseye" style particularly popular among bakelite collectors. This ad was featured on the back cover of an unknown magazine, and so shows some wear / abrasions. Note the thinner top margin indicates the page was trimmed a bit from its original size.



Reprint, Hardcover (6.5" x 4.25" / 79 pp.)

A Barry Vail reprint of *Backgammon: Its History and Practice* (1844), this is a lightly satiric introduction to backgammon accompanied by humorous illustrations. A very clean, firm copy, not numbered. Comes in a nice thick mylar dust cover, not pictured here.

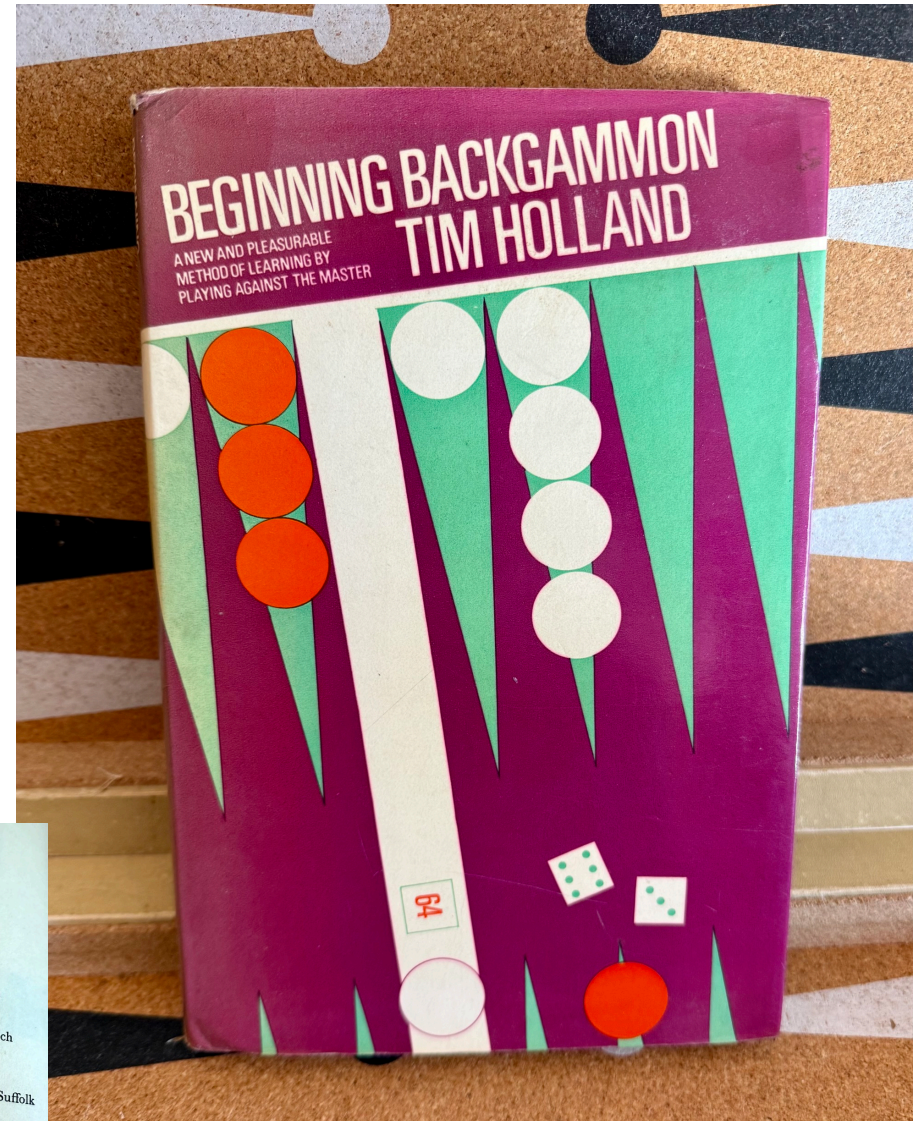


1st British Edition, Hardcover (6.5" x 9.5" / 209 pp.)

For the book collecting completist, here's a british printing of Tim Holland's first book, featuring an alternative dust jacket design. In solid, clean shape, some yellowing of pages.

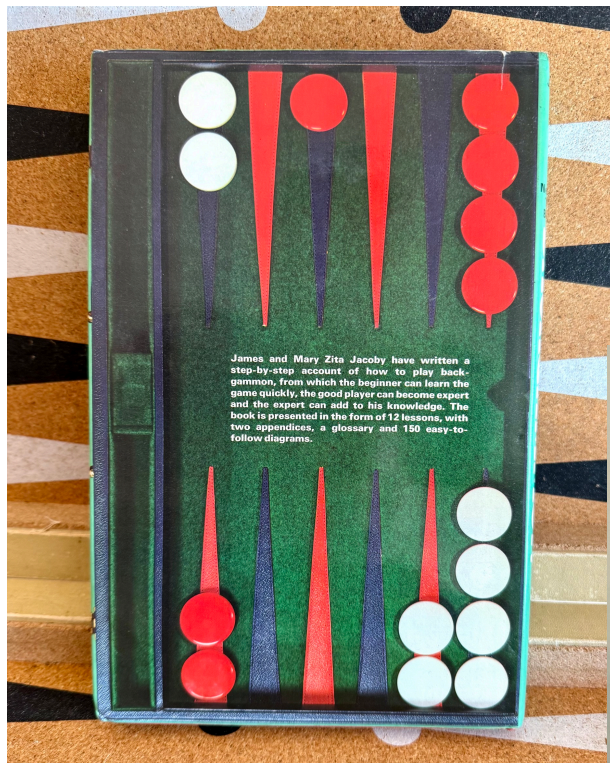


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ISBN 0 491 01861 4



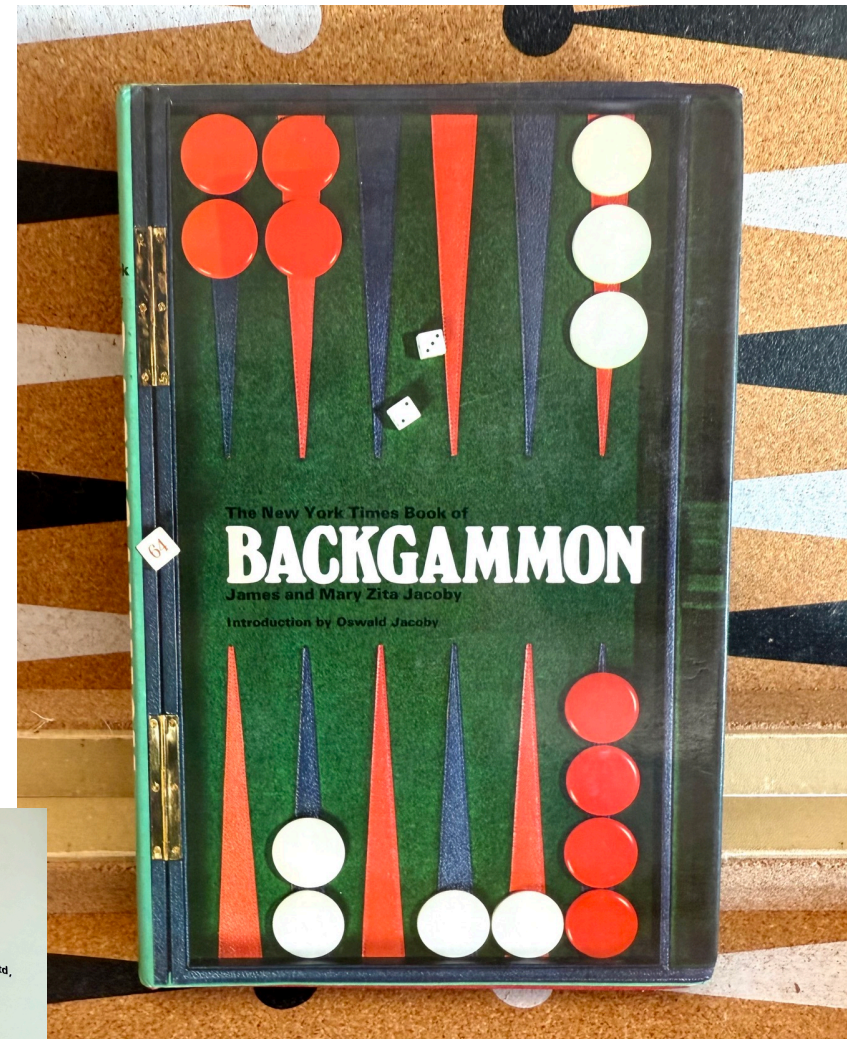
British Edition, Hardcover (6.25" x 9.5" / 175 pp.)

This first United Kingdom edition of James & Mary Zita Jacoby's 1973 (son and spouse of Oswald Jacoby) sports an alternative dust jacket. Difficult to find in the US at least, this is a very clean, as-new copy.



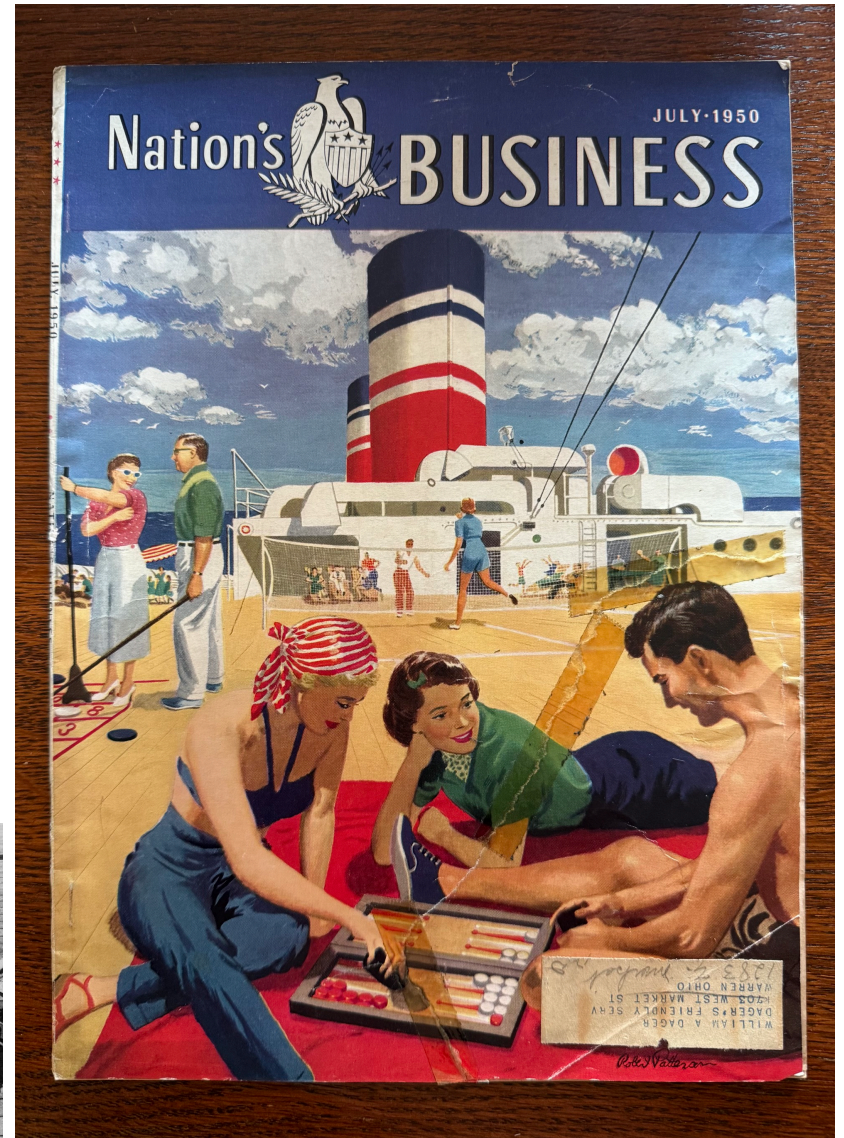
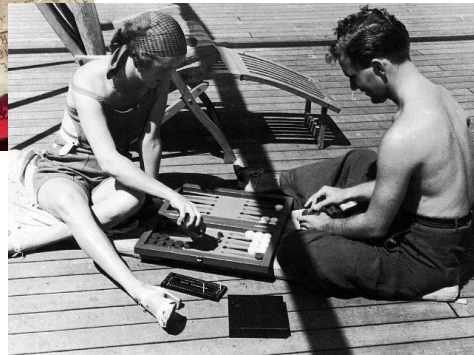
James and Mary Zita Jacoby have written a step-by-step account of how to play backgammon, from which the beginner can learn the game quickly, the good player can become expert and the expert can add to his knowledge. The book is presented in the form of 12 lessons, with two appendices, a glossary and 150 easy-to-follow diagrams.

First Published in the United Kingdom by A. & C. Black Ltd,
4, 5 & 6, Soho Square, London W1V 6AD.
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ISBN 0 7136 1490 0
Design by Jerry Lieberman
Printed in Great Britain by
Morrison and Gibb Ltd, London and Edinburgh



July, 1950 (8.75" x 12")

It took a few years, but I finally found a better copy of this magazine for framing on my office wall. As you see, this one has a large tear mended long ago with scotch tape, but this still makes for a terrific, colorful backgammon display and fits neatly into a simple standard frame. Pictured below is the b/w 1930's photo that served as a reference photo for the artist.



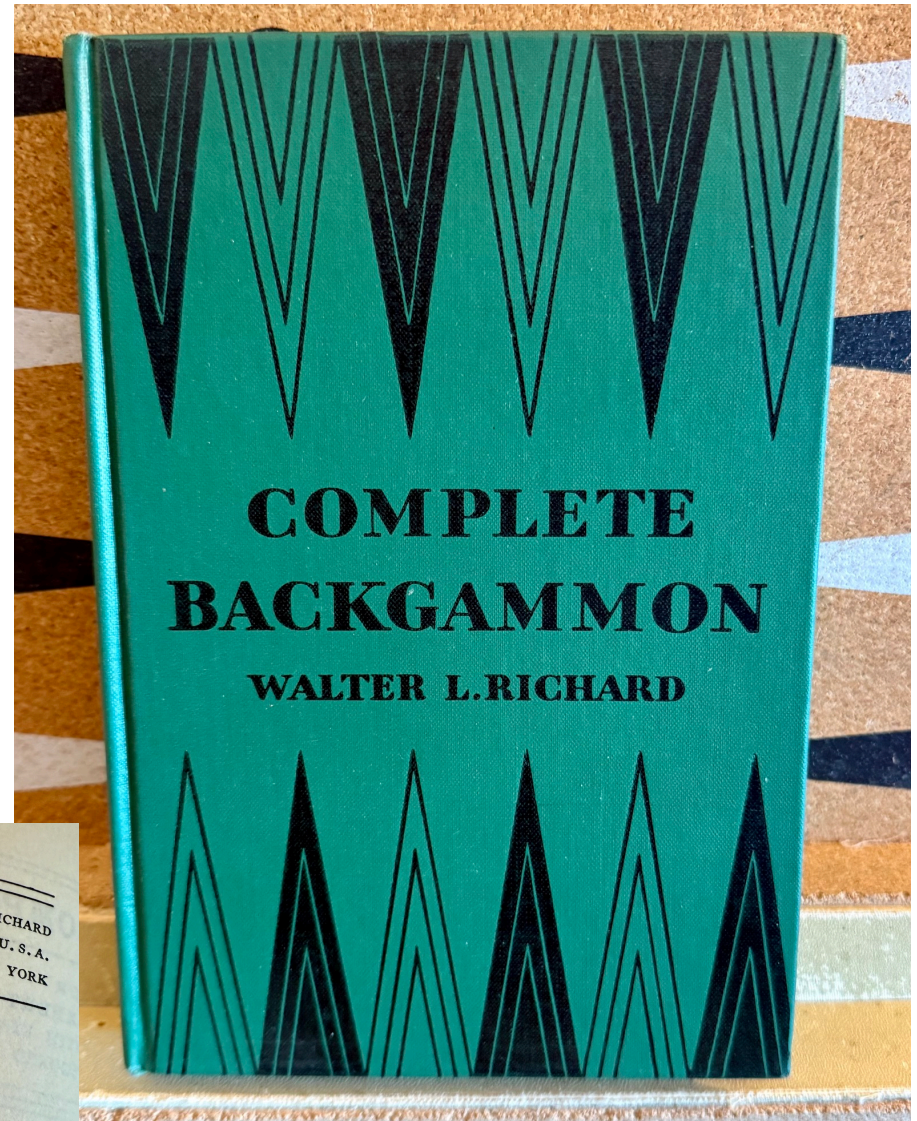
5th Printing (1940), Hardcover (7.5" x 5.125" / 116 pp.)

This is a clean later printing of of Richard's authoritative book on the game, originally published in the spring of 1931 and including the newly-codified "Laws & Rules" of the game as agreed upon by the private clubs of the day.



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BY J. J. LITTLE & IVES COMPANY, NEW YORK

*First printing, October, 1931
Second printing, November, 1932
Third printing, June, 1935
Fourth printing, December, 1937
Fifth printing, September, 1940*



Standard Size - Bakelite

This late-era bakelite cube with painted numerals shows heavy wear, with some numerals barely legible.



Size: 1" (2.54 cm)

Weight: .8 oz (23 g)

1937 AP Games Printing, Softcover (5" x 7.25" / 113 pp.)

This is a softback 1937 printing of Richard's authoritative book on the game published in the spring of 1931 and including the newly-codified "Laws & Rules" of the game as agreed upon by the private clubs of the day. AP Games, Arthur Popper's equipment company, licensed rights to print this edition for inclusion in their popular backgammon sets of the day. In clean, flat condition, some minor creases to the cover are somewhat exaggerated in these photos.

