A Note on "The Early History of the Theory of Strategic Games from Waldegrave to Borel" by Robert W. Dimand and Mary Ann Dimand

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In an article included in E. Roy Weintraub's volume *Toward a History* of *Game Theory*, Robert W. Dimand and Mary Ann Dimand (1992) correctly point out that James Waldegrave should be given credit for discovering in 1713 the idea of maxminimization in strictly competitive games and for providing the first explicit solution of a specific game, namely, the card game *le Her*. However, at the same time (1992, 17), they make the false claim that the solution found by Waldegrave is reported by I. Todhunter (1865).¹ The exact history is important because Dimand and Dimand (1992, 18) state that Fisher 1934 both "replicated" Waldegrave's solution and quoted from pages of Todhunter's work "that presented Waldegrave's solution," leading the reader to infer that Fisher simply copied Waldegrave's solution as reported by Todhunter. In fact, given that Todhunter does not mention Waldegrave's solution, there is every

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1. Robert W. Dimand and Mary Ann Dimand have acknowledged, in private correspondence, that their paper is in error on this point.

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reason to presume that Fisher "was unaware of Waldegrave's work" (Kuhn 1968, 4) and found the solution independently.

Todhunter (paragraphs 187–90 and 230) discusses some of the correspondence on *le Her* between Pierre Rémond de Montmort and Nicolas Bernoulli that is reported in the second edition of Montmort's "Essay d'Analyse sur les Jeux de Hazard" (1713/1714?). Among this correspondence is a letter from Montmort to Bernoulli that ends with a presentation of Waldegrave's solution. Todhunter (paragraph 230) discusses only the first part of this letter, which exclusively concerns issues other than *le Her*; in particular, he does not mention Waldegrave's solution. G. T. Guilbaud (1961) seems to have been the first modern writer to note that the latter part of the letter (translated in Baumol and Goldfeld 1968, 7–9) presents Waldegrave's solution.

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